

Contending **FOR  
THE** Faith™

Volume XXXII, 2001

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS.

## A REVIEW OF THE DAVID BROWN – DANIEL CALLAM DEBATE ON ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Daniel Denham

From July 17th through July 21st last year a debate on Roman Catholicism took place at the Klein High School Gymnasium in Klein, Texas near the city of Houston. The debate was sponsored by the Spring church of Christ and supported by numerous brethren and congregations from around the country. **David Brown**, editor of CFTF and director of Spring Bible Institute, represented the Lord's church and **Dr. Daniel Callam**, Roman Catholic Priest and chairman of the theology department at the University of St. Thomas in Houston, represented the Roman Catholic Church.

### BRIEF BACKGROUND FOR THE DEBATE

The debate grew out of the annual Spring Bible Institute Lectureship earlier in the year. The lectureship was on Roman Catholicism. The advertising of that program brought out a number of Catholics to attend the lectureship. Several were upset over the subject matter and issued challenges to debate. Finally, the Catholics arranged for a challenge from Daniel Callam, and it was accepted on the provision that he could obtain official sanction by the bishop of Galveston-Houston diocese. This sanctioning was obtained. It should be noted that the Catholics purchased copies of the lectureship book and claimed at the time of the lectureship that it was terribly flawed with inaccuracies and misrepresentations concerning Catholicism. By the time of the debate the Catholics had several months to pour over the book and substantiate their charges against it. In the course of the debate not a peep was heard from Daniel Callam about the book and its supposed problems! Surely, had there been genuine problems with, it Callam would have made something of it. The book stood up under intense scrutiny. It ought to be in every library and used as a

tool for evangelism.

David Brown affirmed and Daniel Callam denied July 17th and 18th that "the New Testament is the exclusive authority in the Christian religion." Callam then affirmed and Brown denied on July 20th and 21st that "the Bible and tradition, as defined by the Roman Catholic Church, constitute the authority of the Christian religion."

### BROWN'S AFFIRMATIVES ON MONDAY & TUESDAY NIGHTS

In his first affirmative on Monday night, Brown properly defined and clarified his proposition. He pointed out what he was affirming and what he was not affirming by way of it. He noted that the issue between him and Callam over authority was of paramount importance. He emphasized that Catholic doctrine actually makes the scriptures inferior to the Catholic magisterium, which consists of all the bishops including the Pope as the bishop of Rome. This body has the final say in Catholicism on the meaning of any text and the essentiality of any doctrine.

Brown introduced in his first affirmative II Timothy 3:16-17 as proof of the all-sufficiency of the Bible in authority and in completely outfitting the man of God to accomplish his work. He pressed this passage in succeeding speeches. He also presented other arguments in support of the all-sufficiency of scripture, but it was clear that II Timothy 3:16-17 would be the focal point of the debate on that matter.

Brown also stressed with considerable force that, if the members of the Catholic magisterium were the successors to the authority of the apostles as Callam and Catholicism claim, then they should possess what the apostles possessed to prove their authority. He demonstrated that there

(Continued On Page 3)

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*Editorial...*

## THE PHARISEES WERE OFFENDED

The scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus why his disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders by not washing their hands before they ate. Jesus began his reply by putting his own question to them. He asked them, **“Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?”** By the use of the word “also” Jesus admitted the accuracy of their charge concerning his disciples. Well he should admit its truthfulness, for such action on the disciples’ part did not constitute sin against God. After pointing out to the accusers how by their traditions they had violated Exodus 20:12, Proverbs 23:22 and verses of like sentiment, our Lord further rebuked them by declaring to their face that they were hypocrites. Indeed, he pointed out to them that 700 years earlier their hypocrisy had been foretold (Isaiah 29:3). He concluded his remarks by emphasizing that their worship of God was “vain” (empty, pointless, worthless). This was the case because the commandments of men governed them and not God’s commandments (Matthew 15:1-9).

#### THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

Following these events, our Lord assembled the people and continued his teaching on these matters. The disciples then came to Christ. They asked him if he knew that his remarks had offended the Pharisees. With great boldness and candor Jesus made it clear that any religion (including that of the Pharisees) that did not have God’s approval did not deserve to exist and would be overthrown. Indeed, the Pharisees were blind guides leading the blind. Their destiny was “the ditch”. Then, at the request of the apostle Peter, Jesus explained the parable to them (Matthew 15:10-20).

With this account before us, let us focus on the concern of the disciples which they expressed to the Lord with the question, **“Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended...?”** Our English word “offended” translates the Greek word “skandalizo” of which Vine states that it “signifies to put a snare or stumbling-block in the way, always metaphorically in the N. T.” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 130). By the meaning of the word, and the context wherein it is found, it is obvious that the disciples were asking Christ if he realized that his censorious remarks of and to the scribes and Pharisees had served as a hindrance to their belief and acceptance of him. In his answer to the disciples, Jesus made it exceedingly clear that in obligatory matters God does

not practice that in which some preachers and elders in the church today have become quite proficient, specifically in the ability to water down the gospel in order to accommodate about every doctrine known among the sectarian denominational churches. Frankly, whether it be those who bind on men what God in the Bible has not bound (such as the Pharisees), or those who by their doctrines loose men from what God in the Bible binds on them, they all have taught for doctrines the commandments of men. Thus, their worship is vain, not founded by God, and all who follow such blind teachers will end up in a spiritual ditch. Further-

more, if they stay in that ditch until they die, they will lose their soul in a devil's hell. This is all the more reason to uphold the truth and expose error. This we will continue to do on the pages of *Contending for the Faith* as well our other endeavors, God permitting. Will you help us to do so? Also, it is my prayer that you will not be "offended" as we follow the teaching and example of Jesus in dealing with matters of error, and those who propagate it. In view of our study, woe be to those who are "offended".

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

## BROWN-CALLAM DEBATE...

(Continued From Page 1)

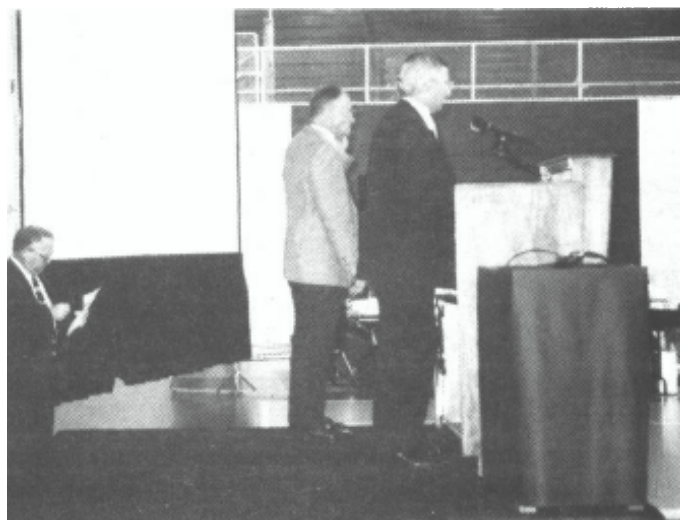
were "signs" that verified the power and authority of the apostolic office (II Corinthians 12:12). These were the credentials of their office. The apostles were "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:44-49). They could back up their claims with "signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit" (Hebrews 2:2-4). Brown challenged Callam to back up his claims and that of the Catholic Church with such demonstrations of miraculous power (I Corinthians 2:4; I Thessalonians 1:5). Furthermore, if the magisterium possessed apostolic authority, then its members would be necessarily inspired and could write scripture. If they have what the apostles had, then they should be able to do what the apostles did! If they cannot do what the apostles did, then they do not have what the apostles had! It is that simple. Brown pressed this point repeatedly. The Catholics were stunned by this approach.

Brown pressed his arguments in succeeding speeches and showed the contradictions of his opponent with considerable force. Brown made telling use of the vivid and well-designed charts that Lynn Parker had prepared for the debate. The charts helped to reinforce the passages and illustrate the admissions of Daniel Callam. Each evening brought at least one extremely damaging admission. On Monday evening, Callam stated that if he studied infant baptism on his own and came to the understanding from such study that it was unauthorized in the Bible, he would first go and ask his bishop what the position of the Catholic Church was on the matter. He then admitted that if the Church's view conflicted with the findings of his own study, he would then adopt the view of the Church! He effectively admitted that the word of the bishop was of greater weight than the evidence of the Bible! On Tuesday night he admitted that the scriptures were sufficient to provide completely the bishop with everything that he needed to carry out his work. The implication of that admission relative to the use of tradition is obvious. Brown showed how the admission was contrary to Catholic practice. Later in Brown's negatives on Thursday and Friday, he would show that Callam had rejected his (Callam's) own proposition on Tuesday, while implicitly admitting Brown's.

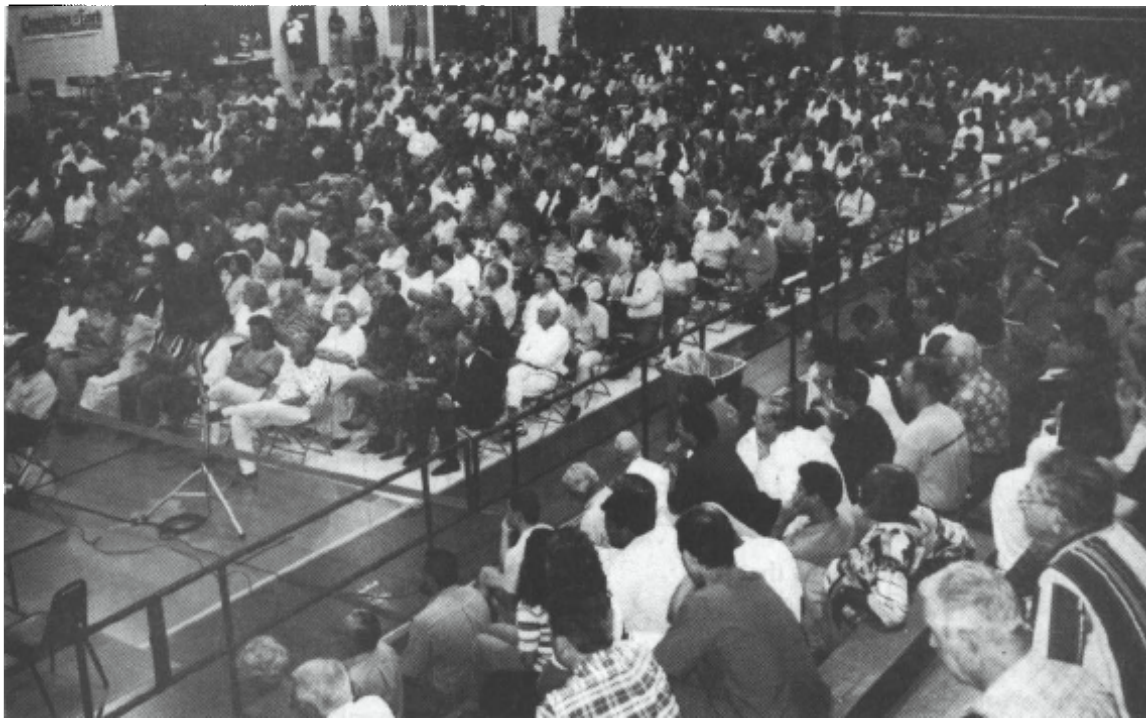
Brown also did an excellent job of summarizing and focusing on the central issue over Catholicism and its claims. Callam seemed never to grasp that issue himself.

### CALLAM'S NEGATIVES ON MONDAY & TUESDAY NIGHTS

Callam at the outset was charming, likeable, and seemed initially unflappable. However, as the debate wore on this latter characteristic disappeared, as he became more distraught over the weak case for Catholicism. He ignored Brown's arguments on the all-sufficiency of the Bible. He implied that the Bible was a living document that needed an authoritative and living body of interpreters to explain its meaning for each generation. He attempted to use our democratic processes to illustrate. Brown pointed out that, if Callam was hinting that the Constitution was a living document and the U.S. Supreme Court was a magisterium of some kind in order to complete the analogy, he had better be careful: for it was this theory of law that gave rise to *Roe Vs. Wade* and legalized abortion. Brown wondered out loud what Callam would have to say about abortion. Callam dropped the analogy. He spent most of his time trying to take over the affirmative and argue for Catholicism on an historical basis. He fervently attacked the



SPRING ELDERS KENNETH COHN (AT MICROPHONE) AND BUDDY ROTH WELCOME THE DEBATE AUDIENCE WHILE LYNN PARKER WAITS TO READ THE RULES OF THE DEBATE AND INTRODUCE THE SPEAKERS.

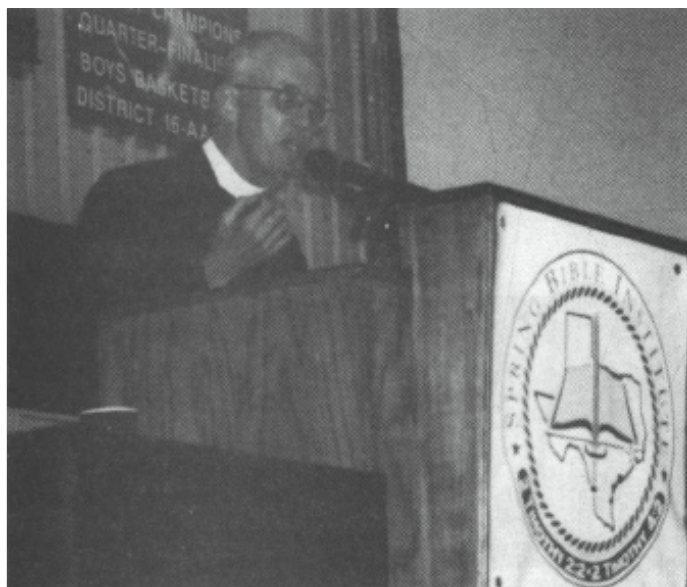


**THE DEBATE  
AUDIENCE FROM  
THE FRONT OF  
THE GYMNASIUM**

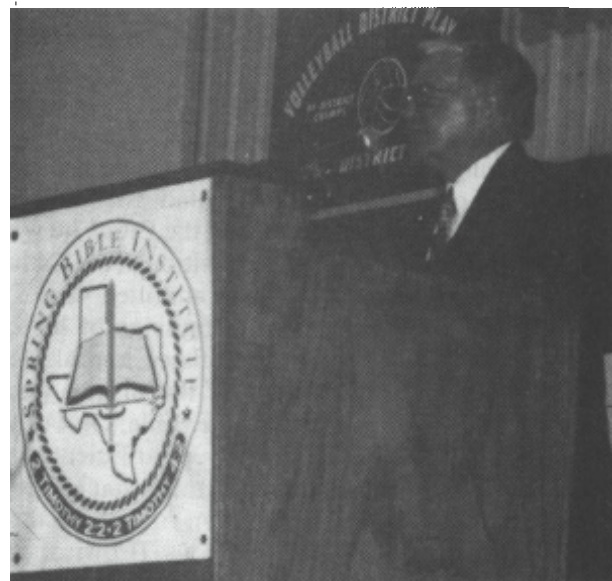
church of Christ on the grounds of the division that exists among us. He asserted that Catholicism knew no such disunity. He tried to paint a picture of the Catholic Church as one big happy family where everyone got along with one another.

Brown answered the charges of Callam by pointing out that there were divisions in the early church despite the presence of inspired apostles. In fact, Paul teaches that such divisions were necessary to reveal to all those that are really approved of God (I Corinthians 11:18-19). Unity in error is not apostolic; it is demonic in nature! Brown asked Callam about several divisions in Catholicism that Callam had failed to mention. Brown stressed that Protestantism

came out of Catholicism. He also referred to the “Old Catholics” who separated from Roman Catholicism over the doctrine of papal infallibility. The most telling point was raised when Brown brought up the name of Roman Catholic theologian **Hans Kung** who has been stripped of his official standing as a doctor of theology by his church, because he rejects the idea of papal infallibility. Brown utilized a number of quotations from Kung that laid to rest the Catholic claims on the historical foundation of the papacy and its supposed infallibility. The material greatly disturbed Callam.



**DANIEL CALLAM SPEAKS FOR ROMAN CATHOLICISM**



**DAVID P. BROWN, GOSPEL PREACHER, DEFENDS THE BIBLE AS THE ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE**

Callam asserted that Catholics actually held a "high view" of Bible authority. He stated that the Catholic Church has always encouraged the reading and study of the Bible. He made the claim that in fact the Catholic Church gave us the Bible and was responsible for establishing the canon. In response Brown documented specific cases where Catholic bishops and even popes sought to restrict the reading and study of the Bible by the common man. He also denied Callam's assertions on the canon, but reserved fuller response on the matter until his own negative speeches. Brown refused to turn the affirmative over to Callam despite the latter's obvious preference for it. He wanted Brown to follow his lead but did not like having to follow Brown's arguments.

Callam frequently protested against Brown's use of logic and the formulation of argument in logical form. He even stated at



**TEAM WORK**

TOP OF PICTURE, L. TO R.: DANIEL DENHAM, DAVID BROWN, LYNN PARKER. SIDE TABLE RIGHT: TOP: CODY DAMRON AND DON DELONG (SBI STUDENTS). BOTTOM OF PICTURE AT TABLE, L. TO R. RODDY COVINGTON, TRACEY DUGGER, AND GARY GRIZZELL—ALL GOSPEL PREACHERS. NOT PICTURED ARE GEOFF LITKE (SBI STUDENT) AND KEITH COHN WHO RAN AND HELPED WITH THE P. A. SYSTEM



L. TO R., DANIEL DENHAM, BROWN'S MODERATOR AND BROWN DURING ONE OF CALLAM'S SPEECHES

one juncture that, "If there is one thing wrong with Dr. Brown, I would have to say, he is just too rational."

**CALLAM'S AFFIRMATIVES ON THURSDAY & FRIDAY NIGHTS**

On Thursday and Friday evening Daniel Callam was finally in his long awaited affirmatives, but he again decided to switch. He spent most of his speeches in the negative attempting to attack the all-sufficiency of the Bible as the final authority in the Christian religion. He never defined his proposition, nor really even referred to it. He did reintroduce his assertions on and made some effort in pressing the matter of the canon. He launched more attacks against the church of Christ for its divisions and for being "too little." The influence of higher criticism in Catholic thinking manifested itself immensely on these evenings. As he pressed the matter of the canon, he said that we are not really certain if Paul wrote the epistles ascribed to him; he also placed the writings ascribed to John in the second century A.D. The only books that we can be certain of, he asserted, were the epistles of Peter. I wonder why? Callam also butchered 1 Timothy 3 and other texts in attempts to justify Catholic practices that are clearly contrary to explicit New Testament teaching. Postmodernism has greatly affected Catholic theologians.



CODY DAMRON (LEFT) AND DON DELONG WORK ON THE PROJECTION OF DEBATE CHARTS VIA THEIR LAP TOP COMPUTERS



**A VIEW OF THE AUDIENCE FROM THE BACK OF THE GYMNASIUM**

Callam attempted to side-step the issue relative to the performing of signs and wonders by asserting that Brown was the one obligated to do so by virtue of Mark 16:15-20. This quibble he clearly got from an ex-Pentecostal preacher turned Catholic, as Brown forcefully emphasized. The quibble fails to note that miracles have ceased (I Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:4-15), as Brown demonstrated, but the Great Commission remains in force (Matthew 28:20). The Catholics are among those who claim that miracles continue today. The quibble backfired on Callam.

After a brief flurry in his first affirmative Friday evening, Callam essentially gave up trying to press any case at all. He gave a pitiable personal testimony that showed how much he has given up for a fruitless cause to be a priest in Catholicism. He admitted the weakness of the case he had made and even said that other religions had given him trouble in trying to answer them. The fact that he missed is that one cannot answer error properly while in error himself! He praised David Brown's knowledge of the Bible. He

again derided the church of Christ for being "too little" and called upon its members to enter into "the big one," i.e. the Roman Catholic Church.

#### **BROWN'S NEGATIVES ON THURSDAY & FRIDAY NIGHTS**

As effective as Brown's affirmatives had been, his negative speeches were even more so. He pressed the arguments that he had introduced in his affirmatives and especially the matter of the all-sufficiency of the Bible and the nature of apostolic authority. For much of the time the Catholics in the audience sat stunned when David spoke. They would laugh briefly at Callam's jabs at the church of Christ and his attempts to dispense with certain passages. Brown's rebuttals were hard-hitting. The laughter and the smiles would soon fade.

Brown presented a thorough answer to the matter of the canon and demonstrated with documentation and illustrative charts that the books of the Bible were part of the canon because they were inspired—they possessed the necessary credentials to establish their inspiration. They were not accepted as part of the canon and thus became viewed as being inspired, but they were accepted into the canon because they were inspired. Sufficient evidence existed long before the first council ever presumed to sit in judgment on the matter for a reasoning individual to recognize the fact of their inspiration.

Brown also presented a number of changes that Catholicism had made relative to the Bible. From the use of religious titles to the papacy itself, Brown documented and refuted Catholic changes concerning God's word. He emphasized that the Bible is our final authority in religion.

He answered Callam's charges against the church of Christ. He repeatedly pressed the matter of Hans Kung much to Callam's discomfort. It is possible



**DANIEL CALLAM AT HIS TABLE DURING THE DEBATE**

that the good professor is at heart in sympathy at least somewhat with Kung. A number of American theologians in the Catholic Church are in full agreement with Kung. Brown said that he was glad that Callam was not around when the Ark was being built by Noah. He noted that Callam would have told the people that it was "too little" and to stay out of it! He pressed Matthew 7:13-14. The look from Callam was priceless. He looked disheartened and dejected. He also stressed that Callam's implicit admission of weakness in his case was not due to Callam's own failings but rather to the doctrine that the Catholic theologian was defending. Callam's ability is immense, but his doctrine is terrible!

The attendance each evening was excellent and the audience by in large was well behaved. One notable exception was a man who stomped out during Brown's last speech on Friday evening (July 21st). The man verbally took issue with Brown's teaching that many people are lost and in need of obeying the gospel of Christ as revealed in the New Testament. The man tried briefly heckling David and then quickly resorted to cursing and obnoxious remarks to others as he made his way noisily out of the building. The man's response provided a great opportunity for Brown to "shell corn" in preaching the gospel, and he did with telling effect, as he preached on the necessity of the gospel and the one church revealed in the Bible!

There were many other interesting points during the debate too numerous to cover at present. The truth did not suffer in the hands of David Brown. The cause of Christ was vindicated against Catholic doctrine.

—405 Main Street  
Roanoke, Texas 76262

*[EDITORIAL NOTE: Last year I participated as the speaker in two oral debates. The first one was with the strongly Calvinistic Baptists in Chula Vista, California. Donald Underwood, the preacher for the Chula Vista congregation, reviewed that debate on the pages of Contending for the Faith. Thanks again to Underwood and the brethren in Chula Vista who helped in that debate.*

*While I personally put in much work in preparation for these debates, I do not hesitate to tell you that they were a team effort. Daniel Denham was my moderator for each debate. Denham's thorough knowledge of the Bible in general, the ancient languages, and his extensive encyclopedic knowledge and recall of specific matters, people, books*

*and events relevant to such endeavors are amazing and indispensable in such efforts. Denham is preacher for the Roanoke Church of Christ, Roanoke, Texas I also thank him for writing the review of the Catholic debate.*

*Lynn Parker is my co-worker at the Spring Bible Institute. As our regular readers know he along with Denham are on the editorial staff of CFTF and monthly contributors to the paper. Again, for each debate I cannot overly emphasize the important part Parker played in making charts, offering much excellent advice and so many other significant matters connected therewith that are too numerous to mention. Parker's wife, Mary Ann, works as the secretary for the Spring Church and SBI. In the weeks preceding and during the debate she was (and is) a tireless worker. She smoothly expedited the extensive correspondence along with many tasks.*

*I also thank Spring member Andy Hastings, a graphic artist. He designed our brochure advertising the Catholic debate.*

*Roddy Covington, preacher for the Dayton, Texas congregation and instructor for SBI, worked in each debate. He distributed charts and helped in the necessary background study and providing good advice.*

*I express great appreciation to the Spring elders, Kenneth Cohn and Buddy Roth. Their determination to stand for the truth and expose error is exemplary. May their tribe increase.*

*The Spring membership and the students of the Spring Bible Institute were totally involved. Every one was active in some important way in this debate. It was a yeoman's task just to set up and take down everything involved. I deeply appreciate and thank all of them for their love for and willingness to defend the faith as well as their confidence in and support of me in this task.*

*Moreover, how can I properly and fully thank the multitude of individual Christians and churches of Christ that financially and in their prayers helped make the Catholic debate possible? Truly, there continues to be many who are willing to fight the fight of faith and are militant toward all forms of error.*

*Judy Conley, Darrell Conley's wife, transcribed the Catholic debate. Brother Conley, well-known, long-time and faithful gospel preacher works with the Northern Oaks congregation in San Antonio, Texas. Sister Conley's willingness to take on the task of the transcription is much appreciated. I hope that within the next six months to get the debate into print.*

*Also, I appreciate World Video Bible School for video taping this event. Videotapes of the debate may be ordered from them. Again, thanks so much to all those helping us in these efforts to propagate and defend the truth. May God's richest blessing be upon you. Please keep us in your prayers.]*

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

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# THE N.I.V. AND "SINFUL NATURE" IN LIEU OF FLESH

Jesse Whitlock

A noteworthy error of the NIV (Non-Inspired Version) is the changing of "flesh" to "sinful nature." There is no reliable lexicographer, to my knowledge, that will render the Greek word *sarx* as "sinful nature." Thayer has given the scholarly definition in his work as "...denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God" (Thayer, p. 571).

The NIV has changed the word "flesh" to "sinful nature" in the following places: Romans 7:5, 18:25; 8:3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13; 13:14; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 5:13, 16, 19, 24; 6:8; Ephesians 2:3; Colossians 2:11,13; II Peter 2:18. There may be others, but these are for sure. Ignoring these passages will not suffice. They are in the text of the NIV. Yet, man is the offspring of God (Luke 3:38). If you use and/or defend the NIV, I must ask if man inherited his "sinful nature" from God? Wait, you forgot to answer! We know that God gave his spirit to man (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Zechariah 12:1). Therefore, we see the influence of Calvinism in the pages of the NIV. This is Calvin's doctrine that man is born into this world as a sinful creature. "Nature" has to do with one's birth. "Sinful" means full of sin. Hence, the NIV advocates that one is born full of sin. Those who advocate the use of the NIV in Bible classes, pulpits, camps, and the like must address this glaring error!

The late Foy E. Wallace, Jr. has well written:

The odious nature of the NIV "our sinful nature" intermittent interpolation rebound with infamous impact on the natural lineage of Jesus. The genealogy of Jesus in the table of Luke 3 descends to Adam —so if the NIV of "our sinful nature" is true Jesus inherited the sin of Adam and was therefore by human Nature a sinner! That is the inevitable consequence.....

Robert R. Taylor, Jr. has queried:

But what else should one expect when he learns that one of the leading voices in the production of the NIV has a volume out on the five cardinal doctrines of Calvinism, one of which is total hereditary depravity or original sin?

The NIV desperately tries to substantiate the five cardinal points of Calvinism, and that includes Adamic sin, original sin, or inherited sin, hence, "sinful nature." The Bible is crystal clear and pointedly plain that such doctrine is false and contrary to God's word; Ezekiel 18:20; Psalm 58:3; Isaiah 53:6; 59:2; Matthew 18:3; 19:14; Romans 3:12; and so on.

For the record, there is a Greek word that can rightly be translated as "sinful," it is hamartolos. Mark 8:38; Luke 5:8; 19:7; 24:7; John 9:16,24; Romans 7:13; etc. There is a Greek word that can correctly be translated as "nature" *phusis* Romans 1:26; 2:14, 27; I Corinthians 11:14; Galatians 2:15; 4:8; Ephesians 2:3; James 3:7; et. al. One time the Greek word *genesis* is translated "nature" (James 3:6). Notice, none of these is *sarx*!

—1801 N. Adams  
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# TO PURGE OR NOT

Alton W. Fonville

When the subject of “church discipline” comes up, you can almost feel the tension in the air among brethren. Some are even bold enough to say, “who are we to say a brother or sister should be withdrawn from?” “No one is perfect; we all have sin”. It is evident from such response that little Bible knowledge is being demonstrated by the speaker. There is much clear teaching in God’s word about keeping the church pure so that it may be a “glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” We need only to read and heed those teachings like a good servant of Christ should.

## A PRINCIPLE DEMONSTRATED


Years ago, I saw demonstrated a principle which the Bible teaches, but at that time, it did not mean what it did in later life. My parents bought an old, “run down” peach orchard, and we cut those trees nearly to the ground, getting rid of the old “dead wood” pruning them severely, and applied fertilizer. I thought they would surely die. I was assured they would come back better next year. And, that is exactly what happened. Next year they put out new growth and started bearing good fruit. The next year after that, they

bore so much fruit the trees were broken down with the extra weight of the large, beautiful peaches.

As years passed and as I studied more of the Bible, I saw those exact teachings by our Lord and his apostles, and it made good sense in the spiritual realm. Listen to what Paul said, “**Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners**” (I Corinthians 15:33). Just a simple statement as this shows that we are affected by those around us. It may be for good or for bad. And if it is bad, we must make a change before our lives are changed in a bad way. Just as the dead, unproductive limbs had to be trimmed off the trees, so it is in the church. As dead limbs drain the strength of a tree and prevent it from being productive, dead or corrupt members of the Lord’s church drain the strength of the church and cause it to die a slow death.

This is not a study in methods of purging in church. It is only to show the necessity in it being done in order to obey the will of God. Jesus taught a very important lesson in Luke 13:6 about a fig tree. It was not productive and would have been immediately cut down after three years of expectation, but the vineyard dresser pleaded for some “special care” and after that, if it was still unproductive, it should be cut down. The question, “why cumbereth it to the ground?” is pertinent. We have no other purpose than to “bear fruit” in the kingdom of Christ, and if we are unprofitable, we are cumbering the ground. A person who is living in sin and will not repent is unproductive and should be cut off. Past performance in the kingdom will not suffice. A person can fall from “grace”. We do not believe the “once saved-always saved” doctrine of the devil. A good tree can quit bearing fruit and die. The Lord’s church is no different, being composed of people. “**Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit**” (John 15:2). Elders, leaders of the Lord’s church—TAKE HEED!

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# PENTECOSTALISM IN WINESKINS

Victor M. Eskew

The most recent issue of *Wineskins* (Volume Five, Number One), edited by Mike Cope and Rubel Shelly, fully supports the doctrines of Pentecostalism with regard to Holy Spirit baptism. The evidence is found in an article written by Edward Fudge entitled, "Immersion in the Holy Spirit."

## HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM IS FOR ALL

Fudge begins the article with this brief paragraph:

Almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ made atonement for sin and ascended to heaven to be exalted at God's right hand. Based on Jesus' accomplishments, God began to pour out the Holy Spirit on Jesus' followers on earth. This gift, promised by God through the ancient prophets and again through Jesus, was nothing other than immersion in the very Presence and power of God and of his exalted Christ. *Careful Bible study reveals the same blessing is available to every believer in Jesus today who will seek, ask, and knock* (p. 12, emphasis mine, VME).

Throughout the article Fudge sets forth the same arguments of the Pentecostals with regard to Holy Spirit baptism. His effort is to convince his readers that all believers can experience and have the same powerful, overwhelming, wonder-producing manifestations of Holy Spirit baptism as those of the first century. He writes:

Pentecost marked the beginning—not the end—of the time when God would pour out his Spirit on all flesh. No New Testament writer suggests that the immersion of the Holy Spirit or any of its manifestations were temporary, or that they were intended to end with some period or event now ancient to us (p. 14).

On page 13, Fudge reveals to us just how far he (and *Wineskins*) is willing to go with the effects of Holy Spirit baptism. He states:

The Book of Acts also reports great diversity in the effects of immersion in the Holy Spirit. Luke mentions at least a dozen different manifestations of that experience:

- Wind and fire (2:2-3)

- Spiritual praise in language naturally unknown to the speaker (2:4-8; 10:46; 19:6). Even at Pentecost, those who speak in other tongues are 'declaring the wonders of God,' not preaching the gospel as such (2:4, 11 NIV). Similarly, the Cornelius household was 'exalting God' (10:46).

- Signs and wonders (2:43; 6:8).

- The house was shaken (4:31).

- A vision of heaven and of the ascended Lord Jesus (7:55).

- An overwhelming sense of awe (2:43).

- An extraordinary spirit of sharing and generosity (2:44-46; 4:32).

- Gladness and joy (2:46; 13:52).

- A praise-filled life (2:47).

- Bold proclamation about Jesus as savior and lord (2:14ff; 4:8-12; 5:31-32; 6:8-10).

- Wonderful cleansing of the soul (15:9).

- Prophesying, or supernaturally delivering a message from God (2:17-18; 19:6).

## WAKE UP BRETHREN

After listing the various manifestations, the writer makes the following conclusions:

This scriptural diversity makes two things clear. First, that *when someone is immersed in the Holy Spirit, we may expect any of these manifestations, or any others which may please God who is sovereign and who gives the Spirit*. Second, that we must not require any particular manifestation on any given occasion, or judge the experience to be inauthentic solely by the absence of any particular biblical effect (emphasis mine, VME).


Fudge's message is clear, plain, and explicit. He believes that all believers receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit today. This baptism, he asserts, empowers them for service. It can involve numerous manifestations of the Spirit. Some of these could be miraculous, that is, supernatural in nature. One might even be able to heal the sick and raise the dead just as they did in the first century.

How long? Just how long will it be until brethren wake up to the real meaning of the teachings of the false brethren who are among us? And, how long will it be until elderships and preachers make a bold stand against the heresy that is being proclaimed? Wake up brethren! *Wineskins*, their editors, their writers, and their supporters are leading us into the depths of Pentecostalism. Mark and avoid them as the inspired Paul demanded (Romans 16:17-18).

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# 15th Annual Shenandoah Lectures

## *Introducing The Prophets And Their Message*

### February 16-18, 2001

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 16

9:00 am	My Servants—The Prophets	B.J. Clarke
10:00 am	Moses—The Man and His Message	Bill Burke
11:00 am	Samuel—The Man and His Message	Dan Flournoy
12:00 noon	LUNCH BREAK	
1:00 pm	Isaiah—The Man and His Message	Barry Grider
2:30 pm	Daniel—The Man and His Message	Carl Garner
3:30 pm	The Message of Lamentations	Carl McCann
4:30 pm	SUPPER BREAK	
7:00 pm	Jeremiah—The Man and His Message	Johnny Ramsey
8:00 pm	Elisha—The Man and His Message	Robert Taylor

#### SATURDAY, FEB. 17

9:00 pm	An Introduction to Daniel	Kevin Rhodes
10:00 am	Nathan—The Man and His Message	Matt Gibson
11:00 am	An Introduction to Jeremiah	Ken Ratcliff
12:00 noon	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 pm	The Prophets' Message to Israel's Shepherds	H.D. Simmons
2:30 pm	The Christ As Seen Through The Prophets' Eyes	Dave Rogers
3:30 pm	An Introduction to Ezekiel	Joseph Meador
4:30 pm	SUPPER BREAK	
7:00 pm	The Prophets' Message to Modern Man	Ronnie Hayes
8:00 pm	Ezekiel—The Man and His Message	Richard Melson

#### SUNDAY, FEB. 18

9:30 am	The Prophets' Message On Morality	Richard Massey
10:30 am	Micaiah—The Man and His Message	Dub McClish
12:00 noon	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 pm	An Introduction To Isaiah	Michael Light
2:30 pm	The Church As Seen In the Prophets' Eyes	Tommy Hicks
3:30 pm	Elijah—The Man and His Message	Rob Whitacre
4:30 pm	SUPPER BREAK	
7:00 pm	Non- "Profit" Preaching	Ken Hope
8:00 pm	The Man of God Out of Judah	Mike Vestal

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## Cross Dressing, Childrens' Summit, And Same Sex Marriages

Compiled By Mark McWhorter

Remember Mount St. Helens? Seven geological features resulting from the eruption in 1980 are highlighted at the Mount St. Helens Creation Information Center. These have been dubbed the Seven Wonders. Evolutionists do not like to be presented with this information as it is in opposition to their beliefs. The Seven Wonders are (1) a mountain rearranged beyond recognition in nine hours, (2) canyons formed in five months, (3) badlands formed in five days, (4) layered strata formed in three hours, (5) a river system formed in nine hours, (6) sinking logs looking like many aged forests in just 10 hours, and (7) a new model showing quicker coal formation (*Creation Illustrated*, Winter 2001, Vol. 7, No.4, p. 40). *[Children need to be presented with this information to combat the evolution they are constantly bombarded with in school and from the media. Magnify this with what would happen in a world wide flood with the volcanic activity associated with it, and it is very easy to believe that the Grand Canyon and other such geological features are the result of the Flood.—mtm]*

.....

"This is not health insurance," she (**Kristen Hemper**) says. "There is no other form of elective surgery that is covered under a standard plan, and there's no reason why this sort of insurance should be covered under the standard plan, when in fact it's elective, and it's not healthy for the baby." Abortions have been part of the basic packages offered by many major insurers, including two-thirds of all health insurance plans nationally (*Agape Press* email service, 1/2/01). *[She is so right. This is not health coverage. It should be called death insurance. It is outrageous that insurance companies cover abortion. One state has pending legislation that would outlaw insurance companies operating in their state from covering abortion.—mtm]*

.....

A Massachusetts judge ruled that school officials could not regulate a student's cross dressing. The 7th grade boy not only wears girls' clothing but also blows kisses at boys, wears make-up and uses the girls' restrooms. The judge stated that the boy has a gender identity disorder and must wear the girl's clothing as a necessity for his identity (*Education Reporter*, December, 2000, p. 2). *[Under this logic, a child could argue for nudity as proper identity for himself. The "victim" mentality is really getting ridiculous. Instead of encouraging self governance, this decision tells the boy that he can do whatever he desires, no matter how much it upsets others. Not to mention that this kind of behavior is unBiblical.—mtm]*

.....

According to preparatory documents, U.N. organizers of the child summit hope to redefine the role of families

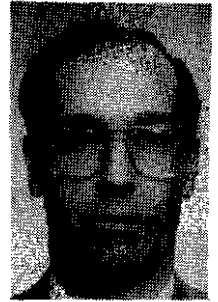
and government agencies in child-rearing and endorse the right of children between ages 10 and 18 to be sexually active and have abortions. The preparatory committee for the special session approved a preliminary agenda calling on the United Nations to ask world governments "to be actively involved in identifying the most effective ways to achieve sustainable social outcomes for children . . . adolescents should have opportunities to fully develop their individual capacities, capture the issues of fundamental importance." A committee statement of "emerging issues" said "significant" legal reforms had occurred in global laws regarding child rights since U.N. adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. But "the gap between children's legal rights and their rights in practice must be closed," the committee chairman wrote. "To ensure this, appropriate policy, budget and institutional reforms should be instituted in all countries" (*The Washington Times* internet article, 1/2/01). *[This is a most dangerous meeting that will take place. We must be very thankful that Clinton will no longer be President when this meeting occurs. Pray that new President Bush will send representatives who will stand for Biblical principles.—mtm]*

.....

A California church has purchased a 17,500-seat arena. Faithful Central Bible Church of Inglewood signed a \$22.5 million deal for the Great Western Forum in Inglewood December 28. It will hold worship services there on Sundays, and save the rest of the week for conventions, basketball games, ice shows, and concerts — and especially for Christian conferences and revival services, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. . . "Jesus said, 'Do business until I return,' and that's our plan," **Bishop Kenneth C. Ulmer**, who heads the 10,000-member church, told the Times. The facility is the first multipurpose arena owned by African Americans and will be among the largest places of worship in the country. . . The Southern California church eventually plans to add a conference center and luxury hotel to the 29-acre grounds, the newspaper reported (*Religion Today* email news service, 1/2/01). *[I do not think God had in mind owning and renting an arena as "doing business". I believe he meant preaching the gospel and performing benevolence.—mtm]*

.....

"I don't know if I could make a good record without swearing. That's how I express myself." — **Rapper Emi-**



nem, the recent recipient of four Grammy nominations, explaining to Access Hollywood the foul language on his latest record, *The Marshall Mathers LP*. His current video, for the song *Stan*, in rotation on MTV, depicts a deranged fan putting his pregnant girlfriend in the trunk of a car and driving off a bridge (*Parents Television Council* email service, 1/3/01). *[Surely no one calling themselves a Christian would buy such trash. One has a very shallow mind if he cannot express himself without cursing. Romans 1:32 condemns those who take pleasure in those who commit sin.—mtm]*

.....

“Even my parents don’t believe how sexual this is going to be. I’ve been trying to prepare them, but I don’t think they can really fathom what I’m saying. I may tell my dad to skip the [first episode] because I’m not sure that he’s ready to see that.”—Openly gay actor **Randy Harrison** who plays 17-year-old Justin on Showtime’s *Queer* (*San Francisco Chronicle*, November 26, 2000). *[This show is reported to be the most vile thing that has ever been shown on any major network in the United States. The show originated in England but even the British have said that the U.S. version goes much further than theirs. In spite of this, the critics are giving it the highest of praise. One can only pray that the show will fail.—mtm]*

.....

Culture Watch **Ben Overby** December 20th marks the one year anniversary of the Vermont’s same sex union leg-

islation. Gay-lesbian couples are afforded the same privileges and benefits as heterosexual couples, in the state of Vermont. Big deal? Indeed it is! It is social sanctioning of an immoral relationship. We are headed down a slippery slope at breakneck speed, the only cure for which is legislative and cultural reform. Interestingly, and sadly, the Dutch parliament is putting forward legislation that will permit same sex marriages as well as permitting adoption by gay couples. Notice that, “In the next few months, parliament will strike the words “mother and father” and “man and woman” from civil law, amending them to read “partners” and wiping out the last references distinguishing gays from heterosexual couples, (<http://www.guardianunlimited.co.uk/breakingnews/International/0,3561,627595,00.html>). *[Will America follow in the footsteps of the Dutch? The homosexual lifestyle is embraced by the popular culture, promoted by Hollywood, and increasingly protected and sanctioned through legislation. How long will it be before someone is fined for using the politically incorrect terminology of “Mommy” and “Daddy?” After all, such terminology does not bestow a tolerant attitude toward the progressive concept of “partners.” By the way, what would an adopted child call his same sex “parents?” I have got a suggestion. Call one Sodom, and the other Gomorrah.]*

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## EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS LECTURES

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#### FRIDAY, MARCH 23

7:00 pm .....Our Example Of Giving - Ephesians 5:25 .....Paul Sain  
8:00 pm .....Our Example Of Humility - Philippians 2:1-11 .....Garland Elkins

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 24

9:00 am .....Our Example Of Forgiving Others - Ephesians 4:23 .....Bobby Liddell  
10:00 am .....Our Example of Enduring Suffering- I Peter 2:20-25 .....Darwin Hunter  
11:00 am .....Our Example Of Courage - Matthew 23:13-33 .....Tracy Dugger  
12:00 pm .....LUNCH BREAK  
1:30 pm .....Our Example Of Concern For The Lost - John 14:1-29 .....Tommy Moore  
2:30 pm .....Our Example Of Learning To Work - Mark 6:3 .....Michael Hatcher  
3:30 pm .....Our Example Of Compassion - Matthew 9:36 .....Jerry Martin  
4:30 pm .....Our Example Of Pleasing God - John 8:29 .....Tommy Moore

#### SUNDAY, MARCH 25

9:00 am .....Our Example For Youth - Luke 2:41-52 .....Lynn Parker  
10:00 am .....Our Example Of Overcoming Temptation - Matthew 4:1-11 .....Jerry Martin  
11:30 am .....LUNCH BREAK  
1:30 pm .....Congregational Singing  
2:15 pm .....Our Example Of Self Denial - Matthew 8:18-20 .....Lynn Parker  
3:15 pm .....Our Example In Prayer - Matthew 26:36-36 .....Joseph Meador

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# A FIRST CENTURY GOSPEL FOR A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PEOPLE

Jason R. Roberts

There is no doubt when the gospel is preached and sown into good and honest hearts, that the result thereof is proof of its powerful converting influence (Romans 1:16; Luke 8:11; Matthew 13:23). It does not take the honest Bible student very long to recognize this sacred truth. When the book of Acts is read, the power of God's word is graphically pictured on the day of Pentecost, where it is recorded that some 3,000 souls were ushered into the church of our Lord via their obedience to the soul-saving, powerful preaching they heard. Indeed, **"the word of God is quick and powerful"** (Hebrews 4:12)!

What kind of preaching is needed for this age? Is the first century gospel capable of producing a twenty-first century Christian? Or has it been shorn of its power as Samson was shorn of his when his hair was cut? In answering the question, let us observe the first gospel message as it was preached on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40).

### A CHRIST-CENTERED MESSAGE

Of the twenty-six verses occupying Peter's sermon, seventeen of them are explicit references to Christ; that equates to 65% of his message (v.22-39). Verse forty is more than likely an implicit reference to Christ. A message that is not Christ-centered—that does not have Christ at its very foundation—is a Christless message. And a *Christless* message will not save a *hopeless* world!

Unfortunately, there are some misconceptions regarding what it means to preach a Christ-centered message. One of the more prominent misconceptions is that Christ-centered preaching is simply preaching about the life of Christ, his death, his burial and his subsequent resurrection. This kind of preaching (the core gospel, as it is called by some) is really all we need today—we are told. And thus, anything else is peripheral and quite meaningless to our listeners. It is true that preaching about the life of Christ is indeed a message we must hear and imitate (cf., Acts 10:38; 1 Peter 2:21). Equally true, the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord is a message which we need to hear—since it is the foundation upon which gospel preaching rests (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). But, is this the only kind of preaching that the world and the church needs to hear?



Later in the book of Acts we are introduced to a man named Philip, who **"went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them"** (8:5). Several years ago, I heard the late **Thomas B. Warren** preaching about Philip, and he said, **"You don't suppose that Philip went down to Samaria and simply said, 'Jesus, Jesus, Jesus' to his auditors do you?"** What did Philip preach to those Samaritans? **"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized. Both men and women"** (v.12). Thus it is clear that preaching Christ involves preaching: (1) The kingdom of God (The church). (2) The name of Jesus Christ (His authority). (3) Baptism (A prerequisite to one's salvation). It is interesting that these three fundamental points in Philip's sermon are repeatedly being attacked by the liberals among us today. They, though they would not admit it, evidently cannot stand the church for which our Lord died, thus they will not preach its distinctive nature (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:4). To quote one misguided, erring brother, "The Church

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Morning Worship	9:55 a.m.	Wednesday	
Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.	Bible Study	7:30 p.m.

**Fourth Annual Lectureship—October 14-18, 2001**

must change or it is going to die!” No, man must change or he is going to die—spiritually speaking! Furthermore, they will not preach the authority of the Bible, because the last thing they want the brethren in their pews to know is that there is an objective standard of truth which is to guide and govern their lives, to be obeyed, and from which they must not deviate (Psalm 119:105; John 12:48; Hebrews 5:9). Additionally, they refuse to preach the distinctive truth regarding baptism. They know that the vast majority of religious people repudiate the essentiality of water baptism for the remission of sins, even though Peter preached that it is essential (Acts 2:38). Eliminating from one’s preaching the essentiality of baptism for the remission of sins will eliminate people from going to heaven (Mark 16:16).

It should be noted that preaching on Social Drinking is just as relevant as preaching on the Crucifixion of Christ. Preaching on the issues of Immodest Apparel, Dancing, Abortion, Adultery, Homosexuality, Gambling, Change Agents in the church, and so on, is just as relevant as preaching on the death, burial and resurrection of our lord and savior Jesus Christ. They are those who would take issue with the above statements—sadly, even some who profess to be members of the Lord’s church. But Paul said to those Ephesian elders **“For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God”** (Acts 20:27). As long as our preachers remain silent as the grave on these previously mentioned issues and countless others, our brethren are going to be tripping into hell by the masses. And these preachers will sadly but surely follow them (Acts 20:26; II Timothy 4:1-ff).

#### A SCRIPTURE-FILLED MESSAGE

A sermon should begin with scripture, end with scripture and be filled with scripture. Peter’s sermon in Acts 2 was precisely preached in this manner. He quotes from the Old Testament prophet, Joel (v.16-21). He cites the miraculous deeds which Christ did in their midst (v.22). His death and resurrection are cited next (v. 23-24). He quotes David (v. 25-28). He preaches Christ’s coronation (v. 29-35). Again, the crucifixion is preached (v. 36). And, the sermon ends with scripture (v. 40). A sermon that lacks scripture has no power whatsoever. When the bulk of a sermon is filled with illustrations and funny stories and very little scripture, we have done an injustice to God and to the people to whom we are speaking. I distinctly remember something that the late **E. L. Whitaker** told us preacher students; he said, “Boys, when you get up to preach, make sure that your illustrations are the windows to your sermon and not the whole structure.”

What kind of preaching do we need in the twenty-first century? It is the same kind they needed last century. Yes, it is the same kind of preaching that was needed in the first century—a Christ-centered message that is full of the Bible. Anything less robs God of his intended purpose to redeem lost humanity.

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# Spring Bible Institute Lectures

## "A STUDY AND EXPOSÉ OF MORMONISM" (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints)

### February 25 - 28, 2001

David P. Brown, Lectureship Director

#### Sunday, February 25

9:30 A.M. .... "Mormon Doctrine of Apostles" ..... Daniel Denham  
10:30 A.M. .... "God's Infallible and Only Source Book for Man's Salvation is the Bible" ..... Keith Mosher  
4:00 P.M. .... "Direct Revelation of God is Unnecessary Today" ..... Jason Rollo  
5:00 P.M. .... "We Love the Mormons, but Oppose Their Fundamental Doctrines" ..... Michael Hatcher  
6:00 P.M. .... "The 'Two Sticks' of Ezekiel Thirty-Seven" ..... Clifford Newell

#### Monday, February 26

9:00 A.M. .... "The Account of the Origin of Mormonism Proves it False" ..... Jim Nash  
10:00 A.M. .... "Sidney Rigdon and Mormonism" ..... Paul Vaughn  
\*\*10:00 A.M. .... "Keep Yourselves in the Love of God" (Jude 21) ..... Anita Hochdorf  
11:00 A.M. .... "A Review of the Gatewood-Farnsworth Debate" ..... Lester Kamp  
1:30 P.M. .... "A Study of Joseph Smith" ..... Jesse Whitlock  
2:30 P.M. .... "Literary and Historical Characteristics of the Book of Mormon" ..... Gary Summers  
3:30 P.M. .... "A Study of Doctrines & Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of L.D.S." ..... Tom Wacaster  
DINNER BREAK  
6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:00 P.M. .... "Mormon Doctrine of Miracles Versus the Bible" ..... Michael Wyatt  
8:00 P.M. .... "Mormons and Plural Marriages (Polygamy)" ..... Don Walker

#### Tuesday, February 27

9:00 A.M. .... "Mormons and Zion" ..... Wayne Blake  
10:00 A.M. .... "Mormon Doctrine of the Priesthood Versus the Bible" ..... David Baker  
\*\*10:00 A.M. .... "Snatching Them Out of the Fire" (Jude 23) ..... Anita Hochdorf  
11:00 A.M. .... "The Mormon View of Eternal Life Versus the Bible" ..... Michael Light  
1:30 P.M. .... "Miscellaneous Mistakes of the Mormons" ..... Darrell Conley  
2:30 P.M. .... "The Absurdities of Joseph Smith's 'Prophecies'" ..... Gary Grizzell  
3:30 P.M. .... "A Study of Brigham Young" ..... Noah Hackworth  
DINNER BREAK - 5:00 P.M. SBI BANQUET  
6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:00 P.M. .... "The False Claims of Mormon Inspiration" ..... Paul Sain  
8:00 P.M. .... "The God of Mormonism" ..... B. J. Clarke

#### Wednesday, February 28

9:00 A.M. .... "The Bible Warns Against False Teachers" ..... Monte Evans  
10:00 A.M. .... "Mormons and Baptism for the Dead" ..... Marvin Weir  
11:00 A.M. .... "A Review of Mormonism Exposed by G. B. Hancock" ..... Don Tarbet  
1:30 P.M. .... "A Study of the Pearl of Great Price" ..... Kenneth Ratcliff  
2:30 P.M. .... "Mormons and the New Covenant" ..... Eddie Whitten  
3:30 P.M. .... "The Virgin Birth and Mormonism" ..... Danny Box  
DINNER BREAK  
6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:00 P.M. .... "The Mormon Doctrine of Man, Sin and Salvation Versus the Bible" ..... Jason Roberts  
8:00 P.M. .... "God's Temple versus the Mormon's Temple" ..... Bobby Liddell

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# SIDNEY RIGDON: CARRIED ABOUT BY STRANGE DOCTRINES

Paul Vaughn

The apostle Paul encouraged the Christians at Ephesus to be mature in their faith and not to be carried about by false doctrines. **“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”** (Ephesians 4:14).

In the study of Restoration history there are hundreds of men and women who stood firm for the simplicity of the New Testament pattern for the church, its work, and worship. They took their stand on the scriptures and would not deviate from the words of life. There were also those with wandering minds who never loved the truth enough to remain faithful, loyal to God and his word. One of those of contrary ideals and actions was **Sidney Rigdon**.

Sidney Rigdon was born on February 19, 1793 on his parent's farm near St. Clair Township in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. His parents were **William and Nancy Briant Rigdon**. He had two brothers, Carvel and Loammi. Sidney had one sister, Lacy.

## EDUCATION

William Rigdon did not believe in educating anyone who was able to work on the farm. Because of William's attitude about farm work and schooling, Sidney was rejected by his father to help him achieve a good education. Rigdon did attend a log schoolhouse near his home to get the basics. Loammi, Sidney's brother, was unable to work on the farm, so his father sent him to Transylvania Medical school at Lexington, Kentucky. William Rigdon said he could afford an education for one of his sons, but not more than one.

When Sidney saw that his father was not going to help him gain an education, he ignored the authority of his father by setting out to educate himself. Rigdon said, “that he would have as good an education as his brother got and they could not prevent it.”<sup>1</sup> Sidney then began to borrow as many books from his neighbors and friends as possible to read. His parent would not allow him a candle to read by at night, so he used hickory bark to gain enough light to read his books.

## GREW UP A BAPTIST

Rigdon grew up a Baptist in his religious beliefs. After his father's death, he worked on the family farm until 1817 when he was encouraged to preach by the local Baptist preacher. His mother sold the farm, moving in with her sister. Sidney went to live with **Andrew Clark**, a licensed preacher in the Baptist Church. Clark lived in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, just west of Allegheny County where the Rigdon farm was located.

In 1819 Sidney moved to Trumbull County Ohio and started preaching at Warren, the county seat. He worked with **Adamson Bentley**. Bentley was also one of the founders of the Mahoning Baptist Association. In 1821 Sidney was ordained a Baptist preacher.

Early in his development as a Baptist preacher, Rigdon came across the teaching of the Shakers. He rejected most of their teachings but continued to be interested in the Shaker doctrine of communal living. This false teaching would become a stumbling block of iniquity for him. A stumbling block of iniquity is an idol or a barrier in the heart of men that gets between men and God. The Jews had this problem at times (Ezekiel 14:3).



## CONVERTED TO CHRISTIANITY

Shortly after becoming an ordained Baptist preacher, Rigdon, along with Adamson Bentley, read the Campbell/Walker debate on baptism. Both men sought out to meet **Alexander Campbell** at his home. Once they met him, they spent the night discussing baptism and the Law of Moses. “On parting the next day, Sidney Rigdon, with all apparent candor, said, if he had within the last year taught and promulgated from the pulpit one error he had a thousand.”<sup>2</sup>

Sidney Rigdon was swift to proclaim his beliefs in the “ancient order.” But, he refused to give up his preconceived ideas which did cause problems between Rigdon and Campbell. Rigdon strongly believed in the direct operation of the Holy Spirit and communal living societies. He wanted to establish a community of all believers where all material things were held in common.

## MORMONISM

After the Campbell/Owen debate in 1829, Sidney Rigdon was convinced that his ideas on communal living were correct; they became a dividing wedge between him and Alexander Campbell. About three months after the problem arose on communal living with Campbell, three Mormon missionaries arrived in the area and converted Rigdon to Mormonism.

Rigdon had a powerful influence in the church where he was preaching and took a good number of those Christians in to the Mormon Church. Rigdon soon sought out Joseph Smith and allowed him to dominate his life. Rigdon was a steadfast adviser and friend to Smith until a problem arose over Rigdon's daughter and Joseph Smith. From that point on Smith tried to force Rigdon out of the Mormon Church.

### CONCLUSION

Sidney Rigdon's life is one of the most tragic of those in Restoration History. He saw the truth in God's word and stepped out of the denominational error for a very short period of time. His pride and self-will keep him from remaining faithful to God.

Rigdon had a powerful belief in his own correctness and rarely acknowledged personal error. He would see problems in Joseph Smith's life and teaching, but his pride kept him from admitting wrong. Sidney Rigdon died on July 14,

1876, in Friendship, New York. His body is buried in the Maple Grove Cemetery.

### ENDNOTES

1. John W. Rigdon, *Lectures on Early Mormon Church*, (Salt Lake City: Washington State Historical Society), p. 3
2. A. S. Haydon, *A History of the Disciples on the Western Reserve*, (Cincinnati: Chase & Hall, 1875), p. 19.

—1415 Lincoln Road  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

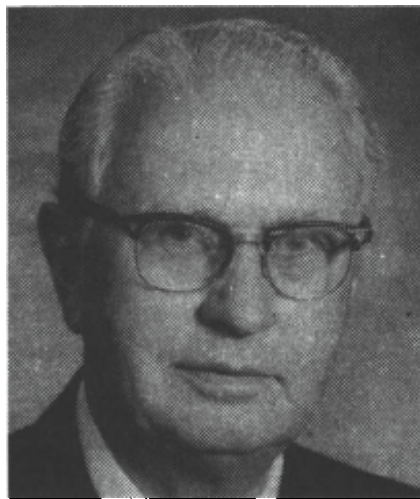
## ROY J. HEARN

### 1911-2000

Barry Grider

Roy J. Hearn, founder and long time director of Memphis School of Preaching, passed from this life November 25, 2000, just 10 days following his 89th birthday. Hearn was an outstanding Bible scholar who devoted his life to the training of sound and faithful gospel preachers (II Timothy 2:2). I deeply regret that I was not able to be present at his memorial service, having to depart on a scheduled journey to Southeast Asia the day after his passing. However, I am grateful to my wife for relaying my fond sentiments of brother Hearn to his family.

Brother Hearn was born November 15, 1911 at Wilmar, Arkansas, but most of his adult life was spent in Memphis where he graduated from Memphis Technical High School in 1930. On September 1, 1935 he married Sadie Tisdale. Together they enjoyed 65 years of marriage. Baptized by H. A. Brown in 1934, brother Hearn preached his first sermon in 1936. After several years of secular work he entered Freed-Hardeman College where he studied under the great N. B. Hardeman. Later, brother Hearn received his B. A. Degree, graduating magna cum laude, at David Lipscomb College, and M. A. at George Peabody College. Not only was brother Hearn involved in local preaching, he also served on the faculty of several Christian Colleges. Desiring to fulfill brother Hardeman's dream of a school devoted exclusively for training preachers, where only the



Bible would be taught, brother Hearn, in 1966, helped establish the Memphis School of Preaching. Now in its 35th year of operation, the school still maintains a rigorous and challenging curriculum that is still true to God's word. Brother Hearn's influence can still be seen and heard as one walks through the halls of Memphis School of Preaching. Before his death, he particularly was delighted to hear of the construction of the N. B. Hardeman library which is being built on the grounds of the Forest Hill congregation.

Since I entered the Memphis School of Preaching after brother Hearn's retirement, I did not formally have him as an instructor except when he taught Bible class at Knight Arnold. I still relish many memories of this uniquely gifted man. Though he was noted respectfully by his students as one char-

acterized by sternness and discipline, I shall always remember the private moments I shared with him in my office on Knight Arnold Road. I can almost today hear him clearing his deep voice as he approached my door, perhaps just stopping by to present a book that he desired to add to my library. The quiet moments I enjoyed with him and sister Hearn in their home shall likewise be cherished always. I knew brother Hearn in the sunset years of his life, and I often heard him speak of his desire to enter the home of the soul. Now that he has gone home to his reward, the words of the poet, which brother Hearn often used while eulogizing others, can now be said of him:

*Servant of God, well Done!  
Thy glorious warfare's past  
The battle is fought, the race is won,  
And thou art crowned at last.*

The funeral service for Roy J. Hearn was conducted Wednesday, November 29, at the Forest Hill Church of Christ. Curtis Cates, Walker Crossno, Neil Myers, and Sorrell Wesson spoke words of encouragement to the large gathering of family, friends, former colleagues and students of brother Hearn. Interment was in Memorial Park in Memphis. Please pray for brother Hearn's family, especially sister Hearn, and their two daughters, Dolly and Janet. May God bless the memory of this great soldier of the Cross!

—3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd. S.  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2560

Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# He's Not Aiming at the Apple

Jodie Boren



William Tell was a legendary hero of Switzerland. In 1307, when he refused to bow down to a cap on top of a pole, as the oppressive Austrians commanded, he was ordered put to death unless he would shoot an apple from the head of his little son. Tell accomplished this nerve-racking feat. He aimed and hit the apple saving his life and sparing his son from harm.

## SATAN'S FIERY DARTS

The William Tells (change agents) of today are not aiming at the apple but are shooting their fiery arrows of false doctrines (Ephesians 6:16) with seeming intent to cause apostasy. They seem determined to make the church a denomination. As the Gentiles did in Romans 1:25, these men are changing "the truth of God into a lie" claiming the church began during the restoration movement. This denies the great day of Pentecost that we read about in Acts 2. There it shows the church began on that day, and 3000 precious souls were added to it. This was the fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah 2:2-3 and Daniel 2:44 as well as the sayings of our Lord in Matthew 16:18; Mark 9:1 and Luke 24:44-49.

The Holy Spirit in II Timothy 4:3-4 describes the change agents and the people of today so well.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

Whether in ignorance or in order to draw disciples after them (Acts 20:30) or whether they have given heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, these change agents are glad to oblige those who want to hear smooth things. Their quivers are filled with arrows of false doctrine to please and tickle the ears of all those who want to feel religious but are not willing to pay the cost of discipleship. Many today, even within the church, do not have a lot for the truth (II Thessalonians 2:10).



## THE FIERY DARTS OF "SMOOTH THINGS"

These arrows of false doctrines, for example, tell the people that you do not have to be in the church of our Lord in order to be saved, and that one church is just as good as another. Other examples are: you do not have to be baptized to be saved; women should be allowed to lead in worship services in a public way; there is nothing wrong with adding an instrument to the worship services; one is saved by grace only and the false teachings go on and on. The people are being told what they want to hear, rather than what they need to hear.

In I Kings 22 we find that Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, joined with Ahab king of Israel to fight the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead. Jehoshaphat was not satisfied with the 400 prophets of Israel and wanted to hear from another. Micahiah, the son of Imlah, was called. This great prophet of God made a statement that we need to hear more of today. He said, in vs. 14, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak." Ahab hated him (vs. 8) because he did not like the truth Micahiah spoke. Ahab manifested the same mindset of so many who profess to follow the Lord. They want to hear smooth things and not the instructions of the Lord. Deuteronomy 30:15-20 tells us that life and death have been set before God's people. Life, if one keeps God's commandments—death, if one fails to keep his commandments. This principle is still in God's will today. Under the law of Christ, eternal salvation is to those who obey him (Hebrews 5:9).

As the Israelites of old asked for a king that they may be as other nations (I Samuel 8:5), so many of the Israel of today want the church to be a denomination that they may be as others around them. Brethren, BEWARE! "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith" (I Corinthians 16:13). The change agents are not aiming at the apple.

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas

# Congregational Development...

## Developing Evangelistic Fervor

Lynn Parker

There are few things that will kill a congregation more quickly than an attitude of indifference toward lost souls. Padlocks and empty church buildings may very well testify to the lethargic response of congregations to commands of heaven. The Lord's church was not instituted with a mission of simply paying the monthly light bill and holding assemblies three times a week. Is the congregation where you worship active in efforts to teach the truth and convert the lost? Is the church really making a difference in your community? You will not misunderstand the clear command of Christ: "**And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation**" (Mark 16:15). Excuses will not excuse the church from spreading the message far and wide. The early church taught midst persecution and at great personal peril.

**And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles...But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison. They therefore that were scattered abroad, went about preaching the word (Acts 8:1-4).**

Brethren in Thessalonica were commended because, in the words of Paul, "**For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak anything**" (1 Thessalonians 1:8). Have we even sounded forth a peep to our neighbors within 100 yards of our homes?

A graphic picture of our spiritual responsibility toward others is seen in the message to the prophet:

**So thou, son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand (Ezekiel 33:7-8).**

No doubt there will be both congregations and individuals who meet God in judgment with blood-stained hands. Indifference toward the lost damns your soul.

### PRACTICAL WAYS TO AWAKEN EVANGELISTIC FERVOR

There are no short-cuts to evangelizing your community. It takes planning, persistence, and hard work. More than saying, "OK—let's teach the truth to a neighbor this week," planning means that you prepare members of the church to approach and instruct the lost. Persistence tells us that even if door-knocking bore no visible fruit ten years ago, we do it again. Hard work includes sacrificing time in the Stratolounger in front of the TV in order to meet with a

prospect. It means that you will finish your pet project later, you will postpone that pleasure trip, if possible you will take off work early—all because a soul is precious. Next week is not good enough. The urgency of the matter proclaims, "**DO IT TODAY!**"

*Teach the prospective teachers.* Give them helpful tools, whether videotapes, charts, or something else. Present a teachers' workshop. Let experienced personal workers team up with a novice. Do not forget to include the teens in your preparation—they will contact souls with whom you would otherwise never come in contact.

*Keep the matter before the eyes of the congregation.* It is true that every Christian has a duty to teach others. But sometimes brethren are not self-starters. They wait to see others in action before putting their own transmission in "drive." If we want an evangelistically vibrant congregation, then elders and preachers had better lead the way. Let the church see urgency in the elders' concern for souls. If there are sheep that have gone astray or are on the brink of danger, it goes without saying that the elders will need to spend time making weekly visits. Impress on the brethren that the preacher does not just preach on evangelism—he practices it. Sermons on the subject will roll off brethren like water off a duck's back if the preacher is not energetic and burning with desire to see the lost saved. Indifference by the one in the pulpit can set the tone for the entire congregation.

*Teach children while they are very young that our Lord came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).* Let them have designated classes at every age level emphasizing the duty and opportunities before us in this area. Encourage everyone to bring visitors frequently and regularly. Why, you have three ready-made teaching opportunities before you every single week! Provide an assortment of tracts to put in the hands of co-workers and classmates, customers and neighbors. Put reminder posters up around the church building. Remind the church of our obligation in evangelism from the pulpit. Do this often.

The sign in front of the building is not sufficient to save the lost. There is no choice to make between being sound and being evangelistic—we must do both. The command is clear. The opportunities are before us. There is no excuse for the evangelistically dormant congregation.



—P.O. Box 39  
Spring, Texas 77383

# WHAT DOES THE CLAUSE "HE EMPTIED HIMSELF" MEAN?

Noah A. Hackworth

On his second journey Paul visited the ancient city of Philippi (Acts 16:12); later he wrote the Philippian epistle. In chapter 2:5-7, Paul wrote:

**Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:**

"Emptied himself" is the most powerful phrase in the text. What does it mean? What does it involve? Some people seem to be of the persuasion that Christ ceased to be God when he came into this world. Did he? No! A thousand times, no! And yet the statement means something. What the Lord did is represented as a voluntary act, but it did not make him any less God, or in any way strip him of the quality of "pure Godhood."

Undoubtedly Christ gave up his environment of glory. He took upon himself limitations of place (space) and of knowledge and of power, though still on earth retaining more of these than any mere man (A.T. Robertson).

## ABOUT THE TEXT

"Emptied himself" scholars say: "The word does not mean he emptied himself of his deity, but rather he emptied himself of the display of his deity for personal gain." The passage before us reveals what our Lord had and what he gave up, but this did not include the surrender of his deity. **Albert Barnes** has some points worthy of consideration.

In regard to its meaning here, we may remark, (1) That it cannot mean that he literally divested himself of his divine nature and perfections, for that was impossible. He could not cease to be omnipotent, and omnipresent, and most holy, and true and good. (2) It is conceivable that he might have laid aside, for a time, the symbols or the manifestation of his glory, or the outward expressions of his majesty in heaven might have

been withdrawn . . . Yet (3) this supposes no change in the divine nature, or in the essential glory of the divine perfections.

In his book, *The Timeless Trinity For The Ceaseless Ages*, **Roy H. Lanier** says:

He voluntarily condescended to veil his identity as God by becoming a man. In becoming a man he did not cease to be God, but that he did cease to appear in the sight of men to be God.



## PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

Christ Jesus left heaven's domain where he enjoyed "continuous existence," which is what the word "was" in John 1:1 means; and in this same text appears the word "with" which involves "a plane of equality and intimacy" (Robertson). When we realize what the Lord Jesus left behind when he came to this earth, it staggers the imagination. And we also realize he left behind a fellowship with God the father and God the Holy Spirit.

## THE "WHY" BEHIND IT

This good song explains it all. "Why did my savior come to earth, And to the humble go? Why did he choose a lowly birth? Because he loved me so!" Providing a bulwark for this song is the Bible's Golden Text: "**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life**" (John 3:16). The coming of Christ into the world and his suffering on the cross demonstrates God's everlasting love. "**...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee**" (Jeremiah 31:3).

Careful thought helps us to see that Christ demands so little from us when compared to what he did for us (He emptied himself), and this ought to make a difference in the way we live our lives. After all, our present sufferings (though we often fall beneath their weight) are not comparable with the glory that shall be revealed (cf. Romans 8:18).

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

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## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coc.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute** and the **SBI Lectures** beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (512) 643-6571, Michael Wyatt, Evangelist.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, Evangelist.

## —Wyoming—

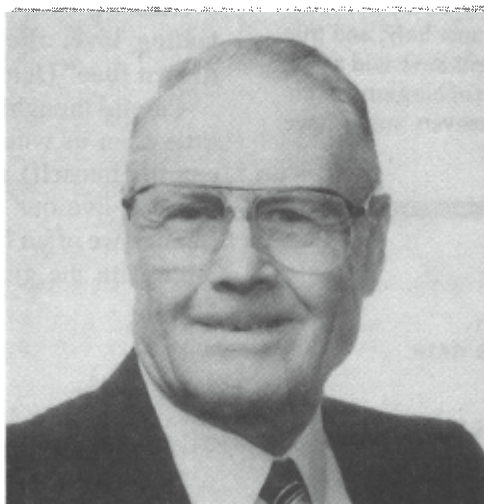
**Cheyenne**—High Plains Church of Christ, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Loran Gearhart, tel. (307) 634-3040.

## EARL TRIMBLE-GONE HOME

Don Tarbet

With sadness for our loss, and gladness for his victory, we make known the passing of our beloved brother, **Earl Trimble** of El Paso, Texas. Earl was born near Kingston, Oklahoma in February of 1921, and passed away October 25, 2000, at his home in El Paso following a brief battle with cancer. Trimble requested **Billy Mac Jobe** and **Don Tarbet** to speak at his funeral service, and they were assisted by Trimble's son, **Craig** of Arlington, Texas. A large number of friends, relatives and brethren paid tribute to him on October 30. Final ceremony was a military tribute at the Fort Bliss National Cemetery in El Paso.

Earl and his wife **Gay** had been married for over 60 years. He leaves



behind his son **Craig**, with his wife and two daughters of Arlington; and daughter **Carla Rodriguez** and her husband of El Paso. Prior to moving to El Paso in 1968, the Trimbles lived in Amarillo and attended the Southside congregation, where Earl served as a deacon. He began work for the City of El Paso in 1968, and was a supervisor for the Traffic and Transportation department until his retirement. Trimble spent most of his waking hours in the work of the Lord, either visiting, teaching, attending lectureships, or writing articles for brotherhood journals, as well as encouraging others in similar challenges. He and others would travel long distances to assist or encourage defenders of the truth in de-

bate or special encounters, and attended numerous brotherhood lectureships throughout the years.

Trimble is probably best known for his many very fine scholarly articles that were printed in various brotherhood papers and journals. Over 100 of such articles were received for publication over the years as he wrote on many timely matters. He was known for his strong stand for truth and his scholarly research in what he was preparing to write. He served for many years as an elder with the Eastwood congregation in El Paso before becoming a part of the Northside church about 14 years ago. Here, he was an apt teacher and worker, and very effective preacher when called upon to fill the pulpit. For many years, he and other Christian men would meet one night a week to engage in a deep study of various texts and subjects, and these studies would last way into the night.

"To Live is Christ" was the subject of his final rites. It was emphasized that he truly magnified Christ in his life by magnifying the Person of Christ, the word of Christ, and the church of Christ. His son Craig closed out the funeral service with a fitting tribute to his father. Craig stated that his father left his children a legacy of faith, as was seen in his unshakable belief in God, Jesus, and the power of God's word, and his example at home. Craig stated that he was a man of great conviction and had to be respected whether one agreed with him or not, but if there was any disagreement, Earl would deal persistently and gently with others. Many attended his funeral service that had either been converted by Earl, or who had been restored through his efforts. Craig also pointed out that his father knew the way to heaven, and that death had no sting for him.

Earl spent the better part of his El Paso residency on Luella Street, with the last 2 or 3 years preparing for his new residence on King Arthur Court. Just so, he has been preparing for his eternal journey and has made his way to the Paradise of God to await the final entrance into the court of King Jesus. Earl will long be fondly remembered by those who remain, as we recall his conviction and friendship. He was one of the finest and closest friends I have ever had in my life. He will not soon be forgotten. Many of his study books are going to be shipped to Takoradi, Ghana and placed in the library of the West Coast School of Preaching to assist the preacher students in their studies.

—215 W. Sears  
Denison, Texas 75020

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## The Last Word...

# FACING THE FUTURE

Eddie Whitten

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). No one can foretell the future with unerring accuracy. Most of us are carried about with winds of doctrine about which we are obviously unaware. It is a sad commentary when the whims of men become the criteria of our religious convictions. It has always been the case with mankind to be led by the vocal ranting of hobby-riders. The art of investigation has languished upon the beds of ignorance and indifference in every aspect of life. Letting someone else tell me what I am to believe and practice has been an all-too-common fact of life throughout the ages. Empires have arisen and fallen because of the ability of avaricious leaders to capture the loyalty of uninformed and trusting followers. Sadly, such trusting and uninformed loyalty is not limited to the political arena. The church of our Lord is burdened with the same unfortunate plague.

### "PERVERSE THINGS"

The apostle Paul knew that men would arise speaking perverse things to draw away men after them (Acts 20:29-30). History records the accuracy of Paul's words. The basis of "perverse things" can emanate only from the fertile wisdom and desire of men. The surprising nature of this fact is that those supposedly possessing such wisdom have not, and evidently cannot, see how foolish and unwise such

desires are. Paul exposes the foolishness of the wisdom of men in the opening sentences of 1 Corinthians (1:18ff). It is to be dutifully noted that in all cases of the wisdom of men receiving rebuke from the penmen of the Bible, it is because such so-called wisdom has been arrayed against the word of God. The wisdom of men as the criteria for religion has failed and will fail every time.

The realm of denominationalism continues to grow. Men continually contrive religious dogmas and gather to themselves those who are uninformed and ignorant of God's word. We often think about those who established the better known denominations such as **Martin Luther, John Wesley, John Smyth, Mary Baker Eddy**, et. al, but there are many more. There are advocates of hobbies among our own brethren who are on the same course of digression. The change agents are proliferating. They are openly advocating the idea of denominational identity for the church of Christ. Others are pursuing personal beliefs under the guise of infallible wisdom that will eventually result in the same end. The belief that mechanical instrumental music in worship is only an option, has already become a matter of contention. So will the teaching that the Holy





Spirit directly operates upon the heart of men separate and apart from the word of God. The doctrine that all we do in life is worship except when we sin, or sacrifice connotes worship in every case, is another nonsensical product of the self-acclaimed super intelligence of unapproachable, impeccable knowledge. Unquestioned, indisputable knowledge on the part of a man, or men, should be immediately questioned and disputed.

#### ABOUNDING ERROR

Factions, sects, denominations, schisms spawn from the false premise of thinking on a level of which others are not capable. One who reaches the level of not being able to be taught is in desperate need of teaching. Only Deity and the inspired writers of the scriptures are outside the scope of learning. Yet, every sect and denomination has developed from such selfish and egotistic persuasion.

What has all this to do with anything? It has everything to do with everything! Paul wrote the churches of Galatia regarding his past. He admitted he had made a mistake. He believed he should destroy the new philosophy, Christianity. After his conversion, he **"buffeted his body"** to make sure he did not go beyond the scriptures in what he preached (1 Corinthians 9:27). He preached only **"Christ and him crucified"** (1 Corinthians 2:2). He suffered horribly for the cause he preached. Still, he said he had not accomplished his goal. He did say that it was not his purpose to dwell on his past life. His future was before him, not behind him. He said, **"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"** (Philippians 3:13-14).

#### WE CAN REPENT

There is not a whole lot we can do about what we have already done. For those things we have done that are sinful, we can repent. Many have done that. For those things we have taught that are the products of human wisdom and

contrary to God's wisdom, we can repent. Many have done that. Many have not. Those who have not have left their first love and some have even gone to the extreme of forming denominations all of which are out of harmony with the gospel. Some will continue to do even that.

The church has faced many crises through the years. It will continue to face many more. We can all rest assured of the victory the faithful will win (1 Corinthians 15:51-58; Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 17:14). The sad fact of the future we face is the number of precious souls which will be lost as a consequence of following the wisdom of men out of ignorance of the scriptures and indifference toward the inevitable eternity that awaits all of us.

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## REPORT ON THE JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADE

David B. Watson

We read, with interest, the June/2000 issue of *Contending For The Faith* concerning "Franklin Graham And Lubbock, Texas" and "Billy Graham And Nashville, Tennessee". We then read, with even more interest, the July/2000 issue of *Contending For The Faith* concerning "Shame On Apostate Nashville Churches For Following Ichabod Rubel Shelly In Fellowshiping Billy Graham Crusade". Thus, when it was announced that the Billy Graham Crusade was coming to Jacksonville, Florida November 2-5, 2000, the Dean Road Church of Christ determined to place an ad in the *Florida Times Union* explaining "Why Faithful Churches of Christ Cannot Bid God Speed to the Billy Graham Crusade" (see article on p. 5). We approached several area churches of Christ to see if they were interested in helping financially to pay for such an ad. When several area congregations indicated that they were indeed interested, a meeting was held on Saturday September 30, 2000 to finalize plans for the ad. However, when we presented a copy of the ad that the Dean Road congregation wanted to place in the paper, the representatives (elders and preachers) of the other congregations present (at least five in number) indicated that such an ad was too negative. They determined to run an ad or ads that did not mention Billy Graham or his Crusade. They wanted to only point out passages such as Acts 2:37-38 and then list the churches sponsoring the ad.

### "...BUT RATHER REPROVE THEM"

The Dean Road Church of Christ knows that we need to be "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). The Dean Road Church of Christ also knows that we must also "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). We knew that an ad quoting Acts 2:37-38 was "speaking the truth in love." But we also knew that such an ad was not

"reproving" anything or anyone. Therefore, the Dean Road congregation decided to run our original ad on "Why Faithful Churches of Christ Cannot Bid God Speed to the Billy Graham Crusade" and somehow pay for such ourselves.

We learned that such an ad would cost approximately \$1,600.00 for a quarter-page ad or approximately \$3,200.00 for a half-page ad. Since we did not have sufficient funds to pay for such an ad, and since I was scheduled as a speaker on the upcoming Lubbock Lectures, I called Tommy Hicks at the *Southside Church of Christ* in Lubbock, Texas and asked him if he would approach his elders (Dale Stone and Malcolm Young) to see if they would grant permission for me to make an appeal for funds at the "Third Annual Lubbock Lectures" October 8-12, 2000. Not only did they grant permission for such an appeal to be made, they publicly endorsed our efforts and contributed money in the amount of \$1,000.00 to help pay for such an effort. In all, over \$3,000.00 was collected at the Lectureship to help pay for our ad. Because of the great response to our appeal at the Lubbock Lectures, we were able to purchase space in the *Florida Times Union* to run our ad not once, but two times. It appeared as a quarter-page ad on Thursday (circulation of 177,000) November 2, 2000 (the beginning day of the Crusade) and again in the Sunday paper (circulation of 240,000) on November 5, 2000 (the closing day of the Crusade). Total cost of the ads came to \$3,277.98.

The other churches of Christ in the area began running their ad on Acts 2:37-38 and another ad on Acts 9:6; 22:16 on the Sunday before the Crusade and then during the Crusade (a total of five ads were run by them). These ads listed the Dean Road Church of Christ as a sponsor/supporter of the ad, but all of the money we collected was spent only on

(Continued On Page 3)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$12.00; Two Years, \$22.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$33; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$50.00. Whole Congregation Rate: Any congregation entering each family of its entire membership with single copies being mailed directly to each home receives a \$3.00 discount off the Single Subscription Rate, i.e., such whole congregation subscriptions are payable in advance at the rate of \$9.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$21.

## ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

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

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by Contending for the Faith. 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 canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$60.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

Editorial...

## UNITY AND DIVERSITY

Most of the time we hear the term "unity in diversity" and not "unity and diversity." The first of these phrase is a contradiction of terms. Unity is defined "oneness" and diverse means "unlike" (*Webster's 9th New Collegiate Dictionary*). When I substitute the definitions for the words themselves, I have: "Oneness in Unlikeness." Just how can unlike things be one (Amos 3:3)? I may as well say "dryness in wetness" or "goodness in badness." With these words taken in their normal usage and paired as I have them, they are nothing less than nonsensical.

In the words "unity and diversity," I am saying that God's word demands "oneness" "unity," and "sameness" in matters of obligation. By obligatory matters I mean those things authorized by God's word (direct statements, implication, or examples [patterns]) (Colossians 3:17). The Bible authorizes in no other way. Whether we realize it or not, in our own communication with one another direct statements, examples, and implications are the only means whereby any language or form of communication works. It is the very nature of language.

In I Corinthians 1:10 Paul said:

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.

However, Paul was not of the same mind or judgment with Barnabas over whether to take John Mark on their second preaching tour; thus, they parted company (Acts 15:36-41). Is this the same Paul who wrote to the Corinthian brethren and begged them not to divide but to "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment"? Did Paul preach one thing and practice something different? The answer is, OF COURSE NOT.

Paul was begging the Corinthian brethren to be one in matters of obligation (what one must do to be saved and remain saved, Colossians 3:17). Paul and Barnabas did not differ over matters of *obligation*, but over *optional* matters.

## NO SIN IN MOTIVE OR ACTION

Regarding the "sharp contention" that resulted in the two men parting company, there is no evidence that either one of these two great servants of God sinned in motive or action (I John 3:4; James 4:17). In fact, after their separation the church in Antioch of Syria backed and commended them (Acts 15:40). Out of their difference in judgment (whether to take John Mark or not), two preaching tours emerged. Hence, unity, oneness or sameness must obtain or exist in all matters of obligation. Diversity or difference is al-

lowed in those matters wherein God did not specify who, where, when and/or how the thing authorized is to be done.

#### ELDERS AND EXPEDIENCY

In local church matters the elders make the final decision in optional matters (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:7,17; I Peter 5:1-3). Elders must know the difference in *obligatory* and *optional* matters. Elders must choose the most advantageous (without the element of advantage a thing cannot be expeditious) option in getting done only what God in his word has obligated the church to do? When the elders do not know these things, only confusion can result. If the church today does not evidence the fact that most elders do not know the aforementioned matters, then we do not know what it would take to prove it.

Today, those who advocate "unity in diversity" are trying to teach doctrines that are designed to make obligatory things optional. They teach that you can "opt" to observe the Lord's supper on Sunday or any other day. If it violates your conscience or if it is against your tradition to take it on Thursday night, then do not do it, but do not divide the church over your differences. If you must not use mechanical instruments of music in worship to God, fine. Just do not separate yourselves from those who do. In fact, just about everything that God has obligated man to do by his authoritative will has been dealt with in this erroneous manner. The result is that false doctrines are taught that loose men from what God in the Bible has bound on them (various forms of liberalism) and

bound on men what God in his word has not bound on them (various forms of "anti-ism").

#### GOD-APPROVED UNITY

There can be no God-approved or true unity that is not founded on and sustained by Bible authority. We readily see the need of properly constituted authority in the everyday affairs of life. How much more so is such true and necessary in matters pertaining to our eternal destiny (John 12:48; 14:15).

To treat obligatory matters as optional, or vice versa results in "a unity" as well as "a division" that is not authorized by the Bible. Hence, the tremendous importance of why men must learn and employ the principles of "...**rightly dividing the word of truth**" or ascertaining Bible authority regarding what they believe and practice (II Timothy 2:15; Colossians 3:17).

Thus, in matters of obligation, we are being urged on every hand today to agree to disagree ("unity in diversity") but not divide. **THIS IS NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN THE BASIC PREMISE THAT UNDERGIRDS AND PERPETUATES DENOMINATIONALISM.** Hence, those within the church who promote any view that espouses disagreeing over matters wherein God said that we must be of the same mind and judgment is a false teacher. He/she, along with this false doctrine, must be rejected for the sake of our own souls' salvation as well as the countless lost souls who must be taught the one gospel (Mark 16:15; Romans 1:16; Galatians 1:6-9; II John 8-11).

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

## Billy Graham Crusade...

(Continued From Page 1)

the ads that we ran. Total cost of their ads came to \$22,675.99. The Dean Road congregation believes that we accomplished more for the Lord with less expense.

Another ad also appeared in the paper with no name (telephone numbers only) dealing with "The Bible Answer To The Question: 'What Must I Do To Be Saved?'" When we called the phone numbers listed, we found out that it was an "anti" congregation (I do not know if the ad was paid for by the church or by individual members).

#### CALVIN WARPULA AND LIBERAL SAN JOSE CHURCH SUPPORT GRAHAM CRUSADE

After the Crusade ended, another ad appeared in the paper (see ad on p. 6) from the apostate *San Jose Church of Christ* in Jacksonville, Florida where **Calvin Warpula** is now employed as preacher. Warpula preached a sermon on Sunday evening August 20, 2000 in which he promoted participation in/with the Billy Graham Crusade. This is why the title of our ad was "Why **Faithful** Churches of Christ Cannot Bid God Speed to the Billy Graham Crusade." In the "San Jose Family Bulletin" (Vol. 46 Number

44) dated November 1, 2000 Calvin Warpula (under the column titled "Heart to Heart") writes:

Please join me in praying that the crusade this week will result in many people surrendering their lives to serve God by trusting in Jesus Christ as their Savior, repenting of their sins, and being baptized into Christ. Ten San Jose members are serving as counselors in the crusade with the hopes of meeting and teaching precious, honest people the gospel of Jesus. Everyone we teach we will try to bring to church here. I am sure that most of those we invite will have never attended a Church of Christ previously. As new people come, I know you will love and welcome them warmly.

I enjoy inviting people to visit us here at San Jose. Here's what those who are hungering and thirsting after God will find here:

**First**, the gospel that saves us from our sins and puts us right with God by the death and resurrection of Jesus;

**Second**, a loving, serving fellowship centered on Jesus and motivated by his sacrificial death for us;

**Third**, worship that follows New Testament teachings and practices with singing, praying, communing, giving, and teaching;

**Fourth**, a non-sectarian fellowship that welcomes everyone and looks to the Bible as our only source of faith and doctrine; and

**Fifth**, a non-judgmental stance that seeks to believe and practice the old statement of “In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; and in all things, love.”

#### **PAUL SAIN PRINTS TRACTS FOR DISTRIBUTION WHILE APOSTATES PROTEST**

In addition to our ad running twice in the local paper we also determined that we needed to purchase materials to hand out at/during the Crusade as had been done in Nashville, Tennessee by **Garland Elkins** and the students of the Memphis School of Preaching. We called **Paul Sain** in Pulaski, Tennessee to see if he could print additional copies of the same tracts that were handed out in Nashville with our congregational name, address and phone number on them. He graciously agreed to do so on short (extremely short) notice. Sain Publications finished printing the tracts on Monday, October 30, 2000. Since we did not believe there was enough time to allow for shipping (not to mention the costs of such), a trip was made from Jacksonville, Florida to Pulaski, Tennessee on Tuesday, October 31, 2000 to pick up the tracts (40,000 of them). A return trip was made on Wednesday, November 1, 2000. The tracts were unpacked and prepared for handout the next three nights (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) at the Crusade (Alltel Stadium). Total cost of these tracts was \$1,600.00.

In the meantime we sent out a letter to all area congregations for which we had mailing addresses (more than 60 of them) informing them of our intent to run our ad in the paper and to hand out tracts at the Crusade. A copy of the ad was enclosed as well as copies of the texts of the tracts (“Baptism: The Bible and Billy Graham” and “Which Church”). An appeal was made for money to help with the costs of the tracts and an appeal was made for helpers to hand out the tracts at the Crusade. Amazingly, I received a call from the “Pulpit Minister” and the “Youth Minister” of one area congregation. The “Youth Minister” is a recent graduate of one of “our” universities and is now in his first work. He did most of the talking and informed me that I was not “exercising wisdom” in what we were planning to do. He actually asked that we not hand out the tracts at the Crusade saying that they were too negative. It is nothing short of arrogance for a young man fresh out of school and in his first work to suggest that the tracts written by **Garland Elkins**—a veteran soldier of the cross—are not wise and are too negative. He informed me that he had written a tract entitled “What Do I Do Now” and was going to hand such out to people coming out of the Crusade each evening. His tract does not identify the congregation and pronounces God’s blessings on those who had attended the Billy Graham Crusade. What this young man wrote in his tract sounds more like what **Calvin Warpula** wrote in his bulletin than what the Holy Spirit wrote in the Bible. What is more disheartening to me is that I used to preach for this church (1980-1984) when it was a sound congregation with sound elders. During those years the church stood firm upholding the truth and opposing error (such as the Crossroads error—even when it tried to infiltrate the eldership—the Boston error and errors on Marriage, Divorce and Re-marriage). More recently, when **Rubel Sbelly** was brought to town by the apostate *Argyle Church of Christ*,

not only was such opposed by the Dean Road congregation (where I now preach) but also by this congregation (where I used to preach). But, alas, it seems they have learned to “exercise wisdom” and not be so “negative.” This idea that we should only engage in positive preaching and should not be negative (reprove and rebuke—II Timothy 4:2) is an indication that the Lord’s church is not just drifting, but is in danger of sinking in error! Do these brethren believe that it was positive preaching alone that caused the crucifixion of Christ?

#### **COWARDLY CHURCHES ARE SILENT WHILE THE TRUTH IS PREACHED**

Of the twenty-six churches that are listed in the city of Jacksonville, Florida (and others in the surrounding areas) only one other congregation actually helped the Dean Road members hand out tracts at the Crusade. *The Lincoln Villa Church of Christ* (**Nathaniel Stewart** is their preacher) helped the Dean Road members hand out tracts all three nights (we did not miss services on Sunday night to hand out tracts) of the Crusade (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday). We publicly commend them for being set for the defense and confirmation of the gospel of Christ (Philippians 1:17).

Beginning the morning our first ad ran in the paper until the present time, we have received numerous phone calls (both pro and con) as well as numerous cards, notes and letters (both commending us and condemning us) for what we have done. We have had visitors to our services who were there simply because of our ad. We have had numerous requests for the free tape that was offered in the ad. The tape we sent out had sermons on the question “What Must I Do To Be Saved?” and on “The Thief On The Cross.” Literally thousands of people now know of the Dean Road Church of Christ who had never heard of such before. Thousands of people have now heard/read the Bible answer to the question “What must I do to be saved?” Thousands know that we will not bid God speed to error or to those who believe it, teach it and/or practice it. And whether they agree with us or not, they know that we will stand firm for what the Bible teaches regardless of the opposition.

#### **THE REAL “MEAN SPIRITED” PEOPLE REVEAL THEMSELVES**

Those who oppose what we have done have called us “liars” and “demons.” We have been accused of “causing people to be lost.” We have been told that our efforts were “ill-timed” and at the “wrong time.” We have been called “cultic” and told that “we were doing a great work for the devil.” People have said they were “ashamed” and “disappointed” at what we did and that we were guilty of “judging.” One lady, who claimed to be a Holy Ghost filled tongue speaker, told us that the Holy Ghost told her that we should “repent” and “retract our ad.” One man called and said that we were “Satanists.” He said that he had been a member of the Church of Christ for a long time but would “never belong to our group again” because we had “blasphemed a Godly man.” Another said that we were “doing more harm than good.” Billy Graham was defended as being “a good man” who is “dedicated to preaching the gospel.” One lady was “infuriated” that we would “lambast

Billy Graham." And almost all who opposed us seemed to think that every passage of scripture in our ad was made null and void by them mentioning the thief on the cross. We have been called "hypocrites" and told that we need "unity" with Billy Graham and those who support him. We have been told that baptism in the Bible does not refer to water baptism (in the passages we quoted) but Holy Spirit baptism. We have been told that "Paul was not sent to baptize" and that the passages we used were taken out of context. One said that "Billy Graham is the nearest to God on earth" and that we will "wake up burning in hell." We have been told that we "do not know anything" and that "we must think that we are God." Some said that we "should have been put in jail" and that we should "close our church." Many of those who handed out tracts at Alltel Stadium were told they were "going to hell."

#### STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD

Regardless of the unjust criticism, we know we have been blessed in numerous ways by all of this and we re-

joice, believing that we have been a blessing to others. We remember the words of the Lord Jesus:

**Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:10-16).**

—1968 Dean Road  
Jacksonville, Florida 32216

*[The Dean Road Church of Christ ran the following article twice in the FLORIDA TIMES UNION—DPB, Editor]*

## Why Faithful Churches of Christ Cannot Bid God Speed to the Billy Graham Crusade

Jesus commanded, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39). It is with love for all (God and our religious neighbors), and ill-will toward none, that we are compelled to "give an answer to every man" (I Peter 3:15) as to why faithful churches of Christ cannot bid God speed to the Billy Graham Crusade.

The Apostle John wrote:

**Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (II John 9-11).**

The Apostle Paul said: "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27). The Billy Graham Crusade is coming to Jacksonville, Florida November 2-5, 2000. But the Billy Graham Crusade does not bring the doctrine of Christ in that all the counsel of God is not declared in answer to the Bible question "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 2:37; 9:6; 16:30).


The Apostle Peter was asked this question on the Day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter's inspired answer was then given, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). In the Nashville, Tennessee Crusade (June 2000) Billy Graham referred to Acts 2:38 saying, "Repent...for the remission of sins." Notice that he left out the part which said, "and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ." The Apostle John closed out the book of Revelation and the Bible by saying,

**For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book (Revelation 22:18-19).**

It is a serious thing to "take away from the words" of the Bible.

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Jesus Christ, himself, said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Again, in the Nashville, Tennessee Crusade Billy Graham referred to Mark 16:16 by saying, "He that believeth...shall be saved." Notice again that he left out the part which said, "...and is baptized."

The Apostle Paul wrote:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Galatians 1:6-9).

The curse of God rests upon any one who would pervert the gospel of Christ by taking away from the words of the Christ and of his inspired Apostles. The Apostle Paul warned us of such when he wrote:

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables (II Timothy 4:2-4).

The Apostle Paul also wrote, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). And the Apostle Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

Because the Billy Graham Crusade does not abide in, nor bring to us, the doctrine of Christ (all the counsel of God) we cannot receive such nor bid God speed to such. Because the Billy Graham Crusade does not give the Bible answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" but instead takes away from the words of the Bible, faithful churches of Christ can have no fellowship with such, but must rather reprove them. Because the Billy Graham Crusade will not tell people the same thing that Jesus told people to do in order to be saved, but instead perverts the gospel of Christ by preaching "another" gospel, and thus causes divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of Christ, faithful churches of Christ must mark and avoid such.

With love in our hearts for all, faithful churches of Christ, like the Apostle Paul, are "...set for the defense of the gospel" (Philippians 1:17). Faithful churches of Christ must preach the word and not shun to declare all the counsel of God. We plead with all to receive the word with all readiness of mind, and search the scriptures daily, whether these things are so (Acts 17:11).

**THE BIBLE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION  
"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"**

Hear The Word	Rom. 10:17
Have Faith/Believe	Heb. 11:6; Acts 16:31
Repent Of Sin	Luke 13:3-5; Acts 17:30
Confess Faith In Christ	Acts 8:36-37; Rom. 10:9-10
Be Baptized Into Christ	Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
Be Faithful To Christ	I Cor. 15:58

[Ad placed by unfaithful church of Christ—DPB, Editor]

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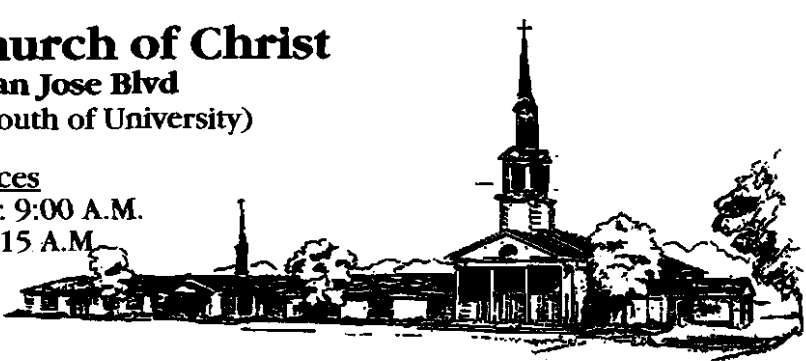
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# DR. RUBEL SHELLY SEZ

Marvin L. Weir

Most who read this article will know that Rubel Shelly was once a stalwart defender of the faith. He is now an apostate member of the body of Christ who loves to proclaim his superior intelligence while ridiculing the one and only true church. The "Dr." as used in the title of this article simply points to the fact that Shelly desires to be known as a rising star. The truth of the matter is that unless Shelly repents he will be known as a falling star who was lost.

## WARMED OVER DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINE

The August 25, 1999 edition of *Lovelines* (Shelly's bulletin, Vol. 25:34) has his response to the article in *The Tennesseean* regarding "name dropping." I wrote an article entitled "Religious Deceit" that explored the practice of dropping names from churches. The infamous scribe of Nashville now gives his thoughts (which were quite different from mine) regarding playing hide and seek with the name of the church. He says:

Although the article in question never raised the issue, the primary reasons church planters are slow to slap a denominational name on their churches are as follows: (1) most are theologically literate enough to know that denominational affiliation is not the key to newness of life, and (2) even the theologically illiterate know that people who are "church shopping" could care less about denominational brand names ... First, theologically literate persons know that the real issue in scripture is Jesus. The Body of Christ is essentially unde-

nominal. It is made up of all people everywhere who have been born anew—regardless of their denominational membership or lack thereof. The Baptist, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian pastors I know in Nashville are far more concerned to introduce struggling persons to Jesus than to recruit another member for their churches ... Second, people whose lives need spiritual focus and direction neither ask nor care about a teacher's denominational association ... So welcome to The Family of God at Woodmont Hills. We know the history of denominations. It's just that we're not so interested in perpetuating rivalry and sectarianism as in exalting Jesus. It's a great time to be alive (emph. MLW)!

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE BIBLE OR THEOLOGY—WHICH?

I do not know about the "theologically literate" but the folks who are Bible-based know that denominational affiliation has nothing to do with newness of life! One who obeys the gospel and is born again is added to the Lord's church by the Lord himself (cf. Acts 2:41, 47). The Lord does not add people to man-made religious groups that he did not build (cf. Matthew 16:18).

Those "church shopping" should care about the name of the church. Christ is the head of his body which is his church (Ephesians 1:22-23). There is only one body (Ephesians 4:4) and it is the only body that Christ has promised to save (Ephesians 5:23).


Shelly says that "theologically literate persons know that the real issue in scripture is Jesus." Remember the cry, "Give me Christ but not the church." This cry that Jesus is the only real issue in scripture is the same old "gobble-d-gook." One cannot have the head without his body! A person cannot have Christ without obeying the gospel plan of salvation. Salvation is located in Christ Jesus (II Timothy 2:10) and being sprinkled will not put one "into Christ" (Galatians 3:27). One cannot claim he has Jesus when he is not willing to follow in the Savior's steps (I Peter 2:21).

Shelly has the Baptists, Pentecostals and Presbyterians as part of the body of Christ! You will search the scriptures in vain for the church wearing the above names. Neither will you find the apostles teaching folks to be "born anew" and then giving no thought to their denominational membership! To be so literate, Shelly surely does not know very much about the Bible.

People who desire to know the truth had better be concerned with "a teacher's denominational association." Why? Because that teacher's focus will be on following denominational creeds instead of following the inspired word of God!

Shelly said Woodmont Hills was "not so interested in perpetuating rivalry and sectarianism as in exalting Jesus." Our scholarly, wayward brother needs to be reminded that Jesus will never be exalted in a denomination and it is the sects that have caused the division that the faithful abhor (cf. I Corinthians 1:10-13)!

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# GOD'S ELDERS, OR HIRELINGS?

Alton W. Fonville

In contrast to the hireling, Jesus taught a very strong and valuable lesson regarding the good shepherd. Of course we understand that elders are "shepherds" of God's flock, the church. The hireling is one who is interested in the personal rewards he receives and is not really interested in the welfare of those entrusted in his care. On the other hand, God's shepherd is truly interested in taking care of his charge, even to the giving of his life for his sheep. Listen to Job describe a hireling: "**Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling? As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work**" (Job 7:1-2). From this scripture and also Isaiah 21:16, we understand that the hireling is temporary, *i.e.* for a limited time, and seeks his own pleasures. He *cares not* for the spiritual welfare of those he is to oversee. He refuses to speak the truth to those in his charge, who are involved in serious soul damning sins, because those rebukes are "**hard sayings,**" and he does not want to suffer the ill effects of having said those things. Jesus taught it this way:

**But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep (John 10:12-13).**

## UNFAITHFUL AND FRIGHTENED SHEPHERDS

The hireling sees the "wolf" coming. He runs away and lets the sheep take care of themselves, or in some cases, the "hireling joins" the wolf. Does this sound familiar with some of the elders in the Lord's church today? It should, because it is a true picture of what is happening in so many different congregations across the brotherhood. I heard an elder one time say that "if we call being addicted to smoking a sin, we will have to start calling other things sin, too". And I said, "amen". In another case, one elder, whose own brother in the flesh was selling beer in his store near the church building, refused to take a stand against him. The church split over this matter. A more recent happening in Nashville, Tennessee on June 1-4, 2000, several congregations of the church went together and "joined forces" with the denominational Billy Graham crusade to help them. They even invited him to Nashville. This is an "easy to see violation" of God's teachings on "having fellowship" with

unbelievers, and partaking of their evil deeds (II Corinthians 6:14-19; II John 9-11). But, someone will say, "Oh, he is a believer in God". We will save that discussion for another time, but for now, it is clear that he has made himself an *enemy of God* in "pleasing man" rather than God, by his refusal to preach the truth on baptism (James 4:4).

## SHEPHERDS WHO REFUSE TO BE WARNED

Many elderships have been "warned" of pending dangers that are splitting churches across the land, but do absolutely nothing to *warn their members*. I know of some elderships who were adequately warned about some dangers facing the church. Later, when talking with some of the members, they acted totally surprised that such things were really happening in the brotherhood. The elders kept their mouths shut. They let the wolf come into the church and do his damage to the flock.

The hireling will not speak the truth about "immodest dress" being worn by the members. This is the case because sometimes, their own wives are immodest and they refuse to say anything. Of course there are many other things that could be mentioned here, but space will not allow it.

The hireling will sit by and let the church be taken over by the wolves. He will do this because *he will not take a stand* on and for the truth. He too, enjoys the favor of man more than the favor of God.

Did the Holy Spirit make a mistake in directing Paul to give elders in the first century church the warnings found in Acts 20?

**Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears".**

Why not resolve now that you are truly going to be God's elder, God's shepherd, not just a hireling? Make yourself aware of what is happening around you and warn your flock of the dangers (Hebrews 13:17).

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# WHAT SHALL I SAY?

Wayne Coats

When Israel encountered Ai in battle, because of the sin of Achan, Israel was defeated. Joshua lamented, **“O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies”** (Joshua 7:8)? To capitulate before the enemies of truth is fraught with grave consequences. No less serious and deleterious to the cause of Christ is the spirit of compromise and support given to false teachers in our brotherhood.

## SUPPORTING SPIRITUAL PERVERTS

When men pervert the truth of God, they are false teachers and should not be encouraged or supported. Just how much error will God tolerate? The case of **Ananias and Sapphira** will be the answer (Acts 5:1).

When Jehoshaphat **“joined affinity with Ahab,”** Jehoshaphat asked, **“Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord”** (II Chronicles 19:2). There were some **“good things found in ... Jehoshaphat”** (v.3). *Those good traits did not cover the bad.* The worst perverter of divine truth in our brotherhood has a few good things in his life.

The church at Pergamos tolerated those who taught error. God never approves of such compromisers. His verdict: **“Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth”** (Revelation 2:16).

## GOD HATES FALSE DOCTRINE

John wrote, **“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 10-11).

Some of my closest friends have turned aside and have become teachers of error. Can I support them with my contributions? May I lend them support and encouragement by sitting and listening to their heresy? Why can preachers change to purveyors of error, but I dare not change my pew place? **“God speed”** does not seem to be understood by many.

Remember the way of Cain, the error of Balaam, and the gainsaying of Korah (Jude 11)? Those fellows were a sorry lot, but there were those who **“had gone in”** and **“ran after”** them. *God said, “Woe unto them.”*

## “CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE”

The faithful must make tough decisions. With all the change and circus atmosphere that is being brought into the congregations along with the abandoning of the Bible in the pulpits, what can we do?

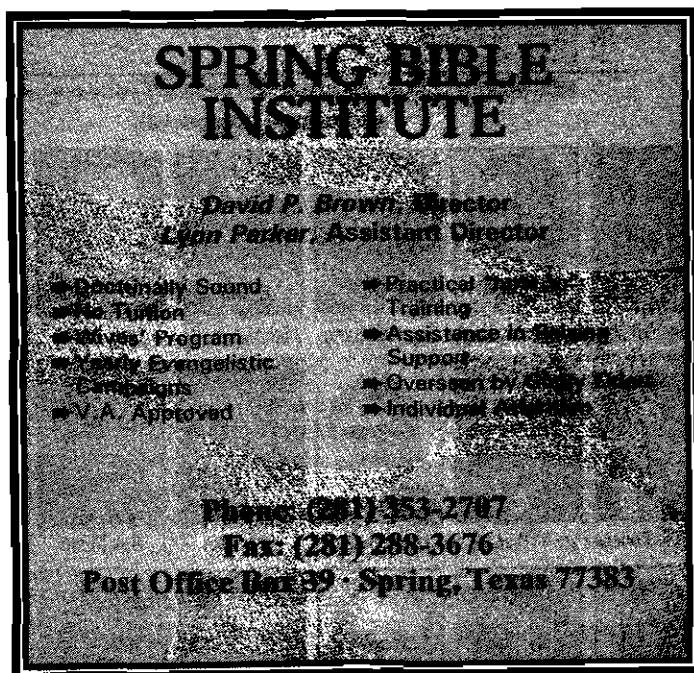
Suggestions by faithful sheep to hireling shepherds go for nought, and a word fitly spoken to the pulpit performer is like a fleeting sigh. Often the older members have toiled, sacrificed, prayed, and persisted for decades to sow the seed of the kingdom in their community. A faithful work develops and then a young, good-looking divine with all the credentials of a denominational pastor (except the clerical robe) is hired to palaver some mush. We who are older and imbued with a spirit of loyalty to God’s word shed tears of remorse. What in heaven’s name can we do on earth?

I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good (III John 9-11).

How can a brother or sister support a man like Diotrephes and **“follow not that which is evil”**? How can we bid God speed to a false teacher? But you say, “I’ve been a member of this congregation all my life.” That is another article in which we are seriously challenged to consider whether we are converted to a congregation or to Christ, whether we are bound to a building or bound as the bride to Christ. Do we observe Christ as our Passover, or do we just sit on some padded pew?

At 85 Caleb requested a mountain with its difficulties and challenges, but many today think the mountain is too high; it is so simple and easy just to sit silently. **“What shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?”** Never a word!

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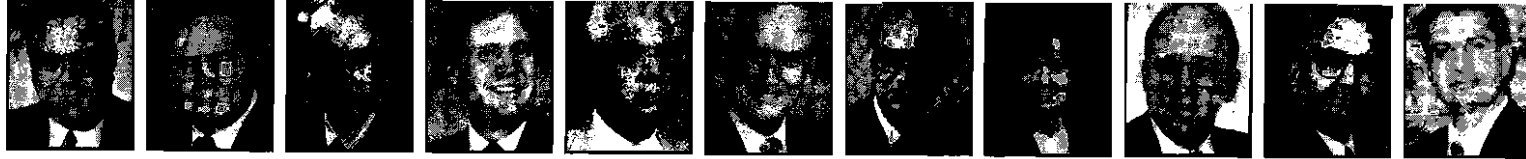


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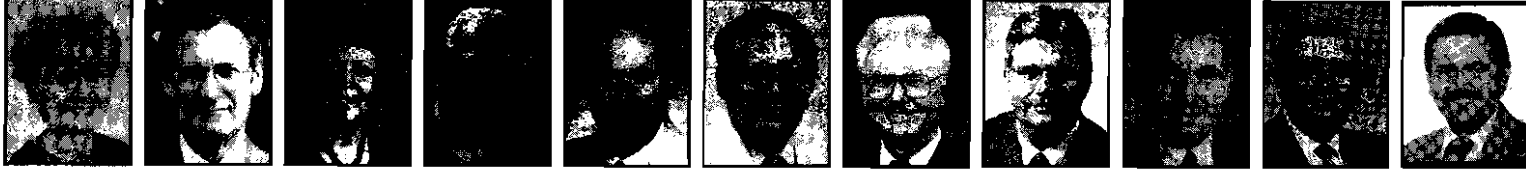
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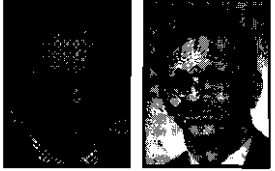
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**SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 2001**

- 8:30-10:20 A.M. "Introduction To The Book Of Genesis" (James Rogers)
- 10:30-11:30 A.M. "Why Study The Old Testament?" (Barry Grider)
- 6:00- 7:00 P.M. "Esau, Who Sold His Birthright" (Steve Ferguson)

**MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2001**

- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "God's Creation Of Heaven, Earth, Sea And All Therein (1:1-2:25)" (Billy Bland)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Sin Enters World, Consequences; First Messianic Prophecy (3:1-24)" (Dub McClish)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Eve, Who Failed To Listen To God And Was Deceived" Women's Class
- 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Cain Murders Abel, Punishment; Generations Of Adam (4:1-5:32)" (Lois Duncan)
  - Class 1: "First And Second Adam" (Bob Winton)
  - Class 2: "Genesis: Book Of Beginnings" (John Daniels)
  - Class 3: "Is The Genesis Record Mythological?" (Don Tarbet)
  - Class 4: "Documentary Hypothesis Refuted" (James Woodall)
- 11:50- 1:10 P.M. LUNCH**
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Sin Multiplies; Preparation For Flood; Grace Of God" (6:1-22) (Terry Hightower)
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Scientific Evidence For Biblical Creation" (Jerry Murrell)
- Class 2: "Characteristics Of God Revealed In Genesis" (Bill Brazier)
- Class 3: "Sarah, Woman Of Faith" (Women's Class) (Corinne Elkins)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Sin Punished; The Flood (7:1-8:22)" (Curtis A. Cates)
- 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. "Noah, Who Preached Righteousness" (Earl Edwards)

**TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2001**

- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "God Blesses Noah; Sons Of Noah; Their Generations; Babel; Shem To Abraham (9:1-11:28)" (Keith A. Mosher, Sr.)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Hagar, The Bondswoman Who Was Cast Out" (Women's Class) (Lavonne McClish)
- 11:00-11:30 A.M. Class 1: "The Ark And The Church Of Christ" (David Tillman)
- Class 2: "Genesis: Archaeological Confirmation" (Michael Hatcher)
- Class 3: "Can A Christian Be A Theistic Evolutionist?" (Donald Rhodes)
- Class 4: "Gap Theory Refuted" (Joel Wheeler)
- 11:50- 1:10 P.M. LUNCH**
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Abraham Entertains Angels; Sodom's Doom; Sin Of Lot's Daughters (18:1-19:38)" (Tracy Dugger)
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Scientific Refutation Of Organic Evolution" (Joe Nichols)
- Class 2: "Redigging The Wells Of Salvation" (Ira Y. Rice, Jr.)
- Class 3: "Lot's Wife, Who Looked Back And Is To Be Remembered" (Women's Class) (Carol Mangrum)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Abraham Lies To Abimelech; Isaac Born; Isaac Offered (20:1-22:24)" (John Moore)
- PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND SUPPORTERS SEMINAR**
- 3:10- 4:00 P.M. "Open Forum" (Garland Elkins)
- 4:00- 7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION**
- 7:00- 7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**
- 7:30- 8:30 P.M. "Joseph, Who Flew Temptation" (Roy Sharp)

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 2001**

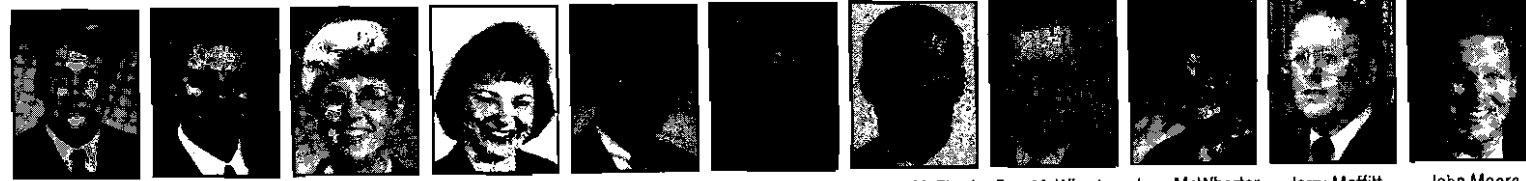
- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "Death Of Sarah; Wife Sought For Isaac; Death Of Abraham (23:1-25:18)" (Lynn Parker)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Birth Of Esau And Jacob; Isaac Lies; Blessed By God; Jacob Deceives Isaac (25:19-27:45)" (Don McWhorter)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Rebekah, Who By Faith 'Arose' And 'Followed' (Women's Class) (Denise Martin)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Jacob Seeks Wife; Sees Vision, Receives Leah And Rachel; Jacob's Children (27:46-30:43)" (Tommy Hicks)
  - Class 1: "Isaac And Christ" (Wade Webster)
  - Class 2: "Genesis: Lessons In Providence" (David Lemmons)
  - Class 3: "Is The Earth Old, Or Young?" (Charles Blair)
  - Class 4: "Gods Of The Canaanites Refuted" (Gary Grizzell)
- 11:50- 1:10 P.M. LUNCH**
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Jacob Departs; Is Pursued, Prepares To Meet Esau, Wrestles Angel, Meets Esau (31:1-33:20)" (Gary Colley)
  - Class 1: "The Abrahamic Covenant" (Bobby Wood)
  - Class 2: "The House Of God" (Tany Castaneda)
  - Class 3: "Rachel And Leah, Which Two Did Build The House Of Israel" (Women's Class) (Maggie Colley)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Dinah Defiled, Avenged; Jacob To Bethel; Rachel Dies; Generations Of Esau (34:1-35:43)" (Paul Sain)
- 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- 8:00 P.M. "Abraham, Who Looked For The City" (Garland Elkins)

**THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2001**

- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "Joseph Dreams, Sold; Sin Of Judah; Joseph A Slave, Prisoner (37:1-40:23)" (Wesley Simons)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Interprets Dream, Exalted; Jacob Sends Sons To Egypt; Sons Sent Again (41:1-43:34)" (Kent Bailey)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Tamar, Woman Of Tragedy And Incest" (Women's Class) (Jane McWhorter)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Plan To Keep Bargain; Judah Intercedes; Joseph Makes Himself Known, Sends For Family (44:1-46:34)" (Harrell Davidson)
  - Class 1: "Joseph A Type Of Christ" (Virgil Hale)
  - Class 2: "Genesis: Religious Errors Refuted" (David McElwain)
  - Class 3: "Were The Days Of Genesis 1 Eons Of Time, Or 24 Hour Days?" (Toney L. Smith)
  - Class 4: "Atheism Refuted" (Eugene Jenkins)
- 11:50- 1:10 P.M. LUNCH**
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Five Brothers, Jacob Meets Pharaoh; Famine; Joseph Blesses Sons Of Joseph (47:1-48:22)" (Jerry Moffitt)
  - Class 1: "Prophecies In Genesis Fulfilled In Christ" (Johnny Skaggs)
  - Class 2: "Carry A Little Honey" (Flavil Nichols)
  - Class 3: "Potphar's Wife, Who Lusted After Joseph" (Women's Class) (Irene Taylor)
  - Class 4: "Jacob Prophecies Concerning His Own Sons, Dies, Is Buried; Death Of Joseph (49:1-50:26)" (Bobby Liddell)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Open Forum" (Garland Elkins)
- 3:10- 4:00 P.M. INTERMISSION**
- 4:00- 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**
- 7:00- 7:30 P.M. "Abel, Who Yet Speaketh" (Robert R. Taylor, Jr.)

NOTE: There will be classes and activities for pre-school children daily, and also for the evening classes.

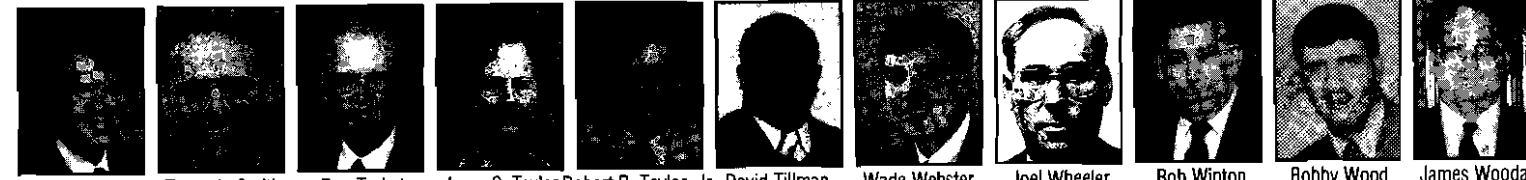
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# **DANGEROUS NATIONS**

Tom Moore

## **INTRODUCTION**

- A. For those who love to worry, current events continue to give them much opportunity.
  - 1. When the atomic age began, many built fallout shelters in their back yards, convinced that a nuclear attack was eminent.
  - 2. We fought the cold war.
  - 3. We continually develop newer and much more powerful weapons.
  - 4. Some in the past were certain we would fall to communism.
  - 5. As a result of all of this, many learned to fear the Russians and the "Red Chinese."
- B. In this sermon, I want to ask you what nations are the most dangerous to the church today.
  - 1. Some might be surprised that communism is not one that we should fear most.
  - 2. What are the nations that we should fear most?
    - a. Which ones are the most dangerous?
    - b. Let us proceed and see!

## **DISCUSSION**

- A. **THE CHURCH IS IN DANGER OF DOMINATION**
  - 1. The government of the church is spelled out in detail in the scriptures.
    - a. Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 5:22-24).
    - b. Elders are the appointed authority in the local congregation (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17).
  - 2. Too often, though, a man is allowed to become "dictator" in the church.
    - a. There was such a one written about in 3 John 9-10.
    - b. The Lord is to be the only dictator in the church.
- B. **THE CHURCH IS IN DANGER OF ABOMINATION**
  - 1. In many ways a Christian or a congregation can become something that will make God sick (Rev. 3:14-16).
  - 2. We need to remember that all the ways of the wicked are an abomination unto the Lord (Pro. 8:7; 11:1; 15:9, 26; 16:5; 21:27; 28:9).
  - 3. We must keep the church and ourselves pure that we not become an abomination unto the Lord.
- C. **THE CHURCH IS IN DANGER OF CONDEMNATION**
  - 1. It is important to remember that it does not matter what the world is saying about the church; it does not matter what one congregation says about another congregation, as long as the local congregation is doing the will of God.
  - 2. All too often we are more concerned about the condemnation of men than we are the condemnation of God!
  - 3. I Corinthians 11:34
  - 4. John 3:19
  - 5. Romans 8:1
  - 6. Remember condemnation begins in the house of God (I Peter 4:17).
- D. **THE CHURCH IS IN DANGER OF PROCRASTINATION**
  - 1. Getting people to put things off is one of the devil's greatest weapons.

- 2. Many are procrastinating when it comes to becoming a Christian.
  - a. II Corinthians 6:2
  - b. Acts 24:25
- 3. Romans 13:11
- 4. Therefore ... Ephesians 5:14



- E. **THE CHURCH IS IN DANGER OF DISCRIMINATION**
  - 1. The danger lies not so much in the church being discriminated by those without, but by practicing such within the church.
  - 2. The church of our Lord is not to discriminate because of race, social status, wealth, or heritage.
  - 3. James 2:1-10
  - 4. Galatians 3:26-28
- F. **THE CHURCH IS IN DANGER OF CONTAMINATION**
  - 1. We need to remember that the church is only as pure as those who make it up!
  - 2. Pollution is not just a problem with our environment, it is also a problem in the church.
  - 3. James 1:27
  - 4. Many in the first century were not doing this:
    - a. I Corinthians 5:1-6
    - b. I Corinthians 11:20-21 ... they had polluted the Lord's Supper into a common meal.
  - 5. Many today are polluting the Lord's church by—
    - a. Trying to be like the world.
    - b. Trying to bring the philosophies of men.
- G. **THE CHURCH IS IN DANGER OF DENOMINATION-ALISM**
  - 1. For those who still try to hold to the "Old Paths," the move toward denominationalism seems not to be possible.
    - a. But I assure you it is happening in many places.
    - b. For years, the denominations have tried to make us one of them.
    - c. Today, they are succeeding at an alarming rate.
  - 2. Liberals among the Lord's church cherish the thought of being unified with the denominational world.
  - 3. Many are trying to turn the church into a denomination through such things as:
    - a. Unity in Diversity;
    - b. Promise Keepers;
    - c. Having traditional and contemporary worship services; and
    - d. Changing God's plan of salvation.
  - 4. But the Bible says:
    - a. I Corinthians 1:10
    - b. John 17:20-22

## **CONCLUSION**

Let us contend for and practice the New Testament pattern in all things.

—2406 S. Main Street  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

# The Tragedy of Forgetting

By Jodie Boren



A while back I forgot something—I do not remember what—so my daughter laughed and said I was suffering from old timer's disease. A lot of jokes are made about old people forgetting, but the truth of the matter is that young people forget just as frequently as do old folks. We all forget things now and then! This is why Peter felt a keen responsibility to remind the brethren in Asia Minor of the truths they had been taught (II Peter 1:12-13,15).

## THE FORGOTTEN WORD

One of the main reasons we forget something is a lack of interest in that particular something. Because we will one day be judged by God's word (John 12:48), it is imperative that we respect and love and *desire* God's word (Psalm 19:7-11).

We are to hunger and thirst after the righteousness contained in God's revelation (Psalm 119:172 and Matthew 5:6). God warned Israel in Deuteronomy 4:23, "Take heed unto yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God." In Deuteronomy 6:11 Moses wrote, "beware lest thou forget the Lord." In Deuteronomy 8:11-14 we find a great exhortation not only to obey the commands of God, but to not forget the Lord.

Beware that thou forget *not the Lord thy God*, in not keeping his commandments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

## GOD IS FORGOTTEN

As Christians, we have, been delivered from the bondage of sin—we can not forget God!

All Christians are God's Israel of today (Galatians 6:16). Thus James says that we are not to be a forgetful hearer but a *doer* of God's word (James 1:22-25). In this context, James says the one blessed is the one that *continues* in the perfect law of liberty, i.e., the gospel. This, of course, means following the teachings of Christ.



## THE FORGOTTEN CHRIST

What will happen if we forget the Lord? We can turn to Jeremiah 23 and read the warnings given to the wicked priests and prophets some 600 years before Christ. The record states in verse 39, "Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly *forget* you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence." Can you imagine anything more tragic than being forgotten by God and cast from his glorious presence? It is terrible to even contemplate such a thing! Since the same God is still the sovereign ruler today as in Jeremiah's time, should we not heed that warning? Paul tells us in II Thessalonians 1:7-9:

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 everlasting destruction from the *presence of the Lord*, and from the glory of his power.

If we do not forget the Lord but serve him faithfully, the reward is great! Jesus said:

Verily I say unto you. There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life (Mark 10:29).

What a precious promise!

## HOW WILL GOD REMEMBER YOU?

It is no laughing matter to forget the Lord and his word. Our eternal destiny depends on our remembering the Lord and his covenant. Just as remembering names, dates, et. al takes desire, effort, and practice, so does remembering the Lord. May we all be diligent seekers of God (Hebrews 11:6).

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

# PREDATORS IN RESTORATION HISTORY

Paul Vaughn

A predator lives by plundering, robbing, and exploiting others. Predators in the church are no different in mind-set than predators in the world. Their attitude is rooted in selfishness and greed. Their desire is one of self will; they will have their way done at all times. Thus, they plunder and ravage God's people, reeking upheavals, causing pain, and suffering in the church of Christ.

There were predators in the Old Testament. Ahab and Jezebel had the heart of a predator. They wanted Naboth's vineyard and were willing to kill to have it (I Kings 21:1-16). Ezekiel prophesied against the sinful leaders in Israel. They should have been faithful shepherds, but they took care of themselves and did not feed God's people.

Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because *there was* no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them (Ezekiel 34:7-10).

Jesus warned of predators coming to destroy his sheep. They will look like lambs but have the heart and actions of wolves. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15). Paul cautioned the church at Ephesus about predators in the first century. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29).

There are predators in the church today, and there were predators in Restoration History. In this article, we will look at only a few of the predators that have tried to ravage and exploit the church.

## D. S. BURNET

David Staats Burnet was one of the most prominent men in the second generation of restoration leaders. He was a Baptist who was converted to New Testament Christianity in his twenties. He rejected human creeds for the Bible and helped to establish the Eighth and Walnut Street Church of Christ in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Burnet felt that it was his duty to organize a missionary society and set up a "pastor system" in the church of Christ. "He thus shelved the concept of a return to original Christianity in favor of a system of religion that would abide comfortably among Protestant denominational bodies."<sup>1</sup>

He knew that to achieve his goals he must get Alexander Campbell on his side. Burnet manipulated Campbell by adulation and flattery. The result was the creation of the American Christian Missionary Society in 1849.

The practice of "open membership" is another tenet that D. S. Burnet believed and helped to get started in the church. Burnet's manipulation of the church to accomplish his missions produced a departure in many churches from Restoration Plea. Therefore, by 1900, the brotherhood was shattered. Burnet was a talented man who could have helped the church to grow, but he used his abilities as a predator to plunder the body of Christ.

## L.L. PINKERTON

Lewis Littig Pinkerton was a man well-known for his liberalism. He was one of the men elected as one of the vice-presidents of the American Christian Missionary Society in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1869 a journal titled *Independent Monthly* was started to teach liberal views in the brotherhood, Pinkerton was co-editor with John Shackelford.

L. L. Pinkerton is most infamous for introducing mechanical instrumental music in the church at Midway, Kentucky in 1859. Pinkerton truly was a predator in the church. He used his talents to push a liberal view of the scripture, thus dividing many congregations. Throughout the brotherhood, an upheaval was started that plundered and ravaged church after church. Much apostasy came about because L.L. Pinkerton abandoned God's way.

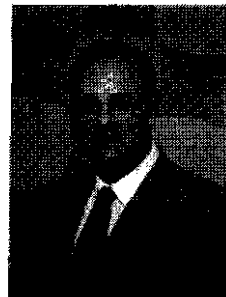
In this short article, it would be impossible to point out all the predators that have caused harm to the church of Christ. These two were of the liberal mind-set, but there are others who are just as much a predator in the church who proclaim "anti" doctrines in God's family. They have caused great harm to the body of Christ.

There are predators on the prowl today who are bent on pushing their agenda for the church. Therefore, Christians must be prepared to fight the fight of faith. The battle line is drawn. No quarter can be given lest one be ravaged by the predators.

## ENDNOTES

1. Earl West, *The Trials of The Ancient Order 1844-1865*, Religious Book Service, Germantown, TN: 1993, p.68.

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**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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

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**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

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**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806) 798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (512) 643-6571, Michael Wyatt, Evangelist.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, 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.

## Biblical Questions...

# What Does "Then Cometh The End" Mean?

Noah A. Hackworth

After making a number of important statements in 1 Corinthians 15:22-23, Paul said, **"Then cometh the end; when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power"** (v. 24). Anyone can see that the word *cometh* is italicized, meaning that it is not in the original text. The passage reads, **"Then the end."** There is no room for a thousand years in 1 Corinthians 15:24, but we must not be ignorant of this one thing: the end is coming. When? No one knows. The end will come when the Lord comes, but when will that be? Again, no one knows (Matthew 24:36). More important than knowing when the Lord is coming and when the end will be, is knowing why Christ is coming. The following reasons for

the Lord's coming and the end of time are clearly revealed in the scriptures.

1. To end time (1 Corinthians 1:7-8)
2. To abolish death (1 Corinthians 15:26)
3. To abolish all rule, authority and power (1 Corinthians 15:24)
4. To raise the dead (1 Thessalonians 4:15)
5. To render judgment (Matthew 25:31)
6. To deliver up the kingdom (Luke 22:29; 1 Corinthians 15:24)
7. To reward the faithful (Matthew 25:14, 23; Romans 2:5; 14:12)



8. To burn up this present earth (II Peter 3:10)

Knowing that the end is coming and that these things are going to occur, what should be our attitude toward life? Peter put the matter into perfect perspective: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of

persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming day of God..." (II Peter 3:11-12).

—4400 W. Tulare Ave.  
Visalia, California 93277

## The Last Word...

# Congregational Fellowship and Elders

Eddie Whitten

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). An unnecessary schism is developing in the brotherhood over the question of fellowship. Some are arguing that it is not possible, or scriptural, for one congregation of the Lord's church to withdraw its fellowship from another congregation. The principle argument being used to promote this position is that the eldership of congregation A has no authority over congregation B, therefore, it cannot discipline congregation B. There is, to my knowledge, no disputant anywhere making the argument that the elders of one congregation have authority over another. There are, however, responsibilities that elders must discharge with respect to the congregation over which they do have authority.

### BIBLE TEACHING REGARDING FELLOWSHIP

There are many passages regarding fellowship in the sacred pages of the Bible. Among those is our text, Ephesians 5:11. Perhaps the "unfruitful works of darkness" needs

to be defined. John 3:16 is called by men, "The golden text of the Bible." The context continues:

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd (John 3:17-20).

It is clear from these verses that those who follow the teaching of Christ are those who love the light, and those who do not walk in the light are lovers of darkness. Therefore, a valid definition of the "unfruitful works of darkness" is the works of those that do not walk in the light (teachings) of Christ.

Romans 16:17-18 reads:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

The "doctrine" they had learned certainly was composed of the teachings of Christ revealed to Paul and the rest of the apostles (John 16:13; Galatians 1:12). This helps us to understand the message of II John 9-11:

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, and bring not his salutation: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

The Romans passage states very clearly to avoid them that teach doctrines contrary to the doctrine revealed to the apostles. II John 10 says not to receive such doctrines and verse 11 says if we do, we become just as guilty as are they.

One more passage should suffice: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that



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walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (II Thessalonians 3:6). Paul says by inspiration that this is a command. One would have to take the position of the "saints only" brethren that Paul's letter to the church is really meant for the individual and not to the church. We correctly derive from these passages that fellowship must be denied under certain conditions to either an individual or a group of individuals (a congregation).

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS

Since one eldership has no authority over another eldership and cannot discipline another congregation, what then is their responsibility in the case of an erring congregation? Acts 20:28 outlines the responsibility of the eldership: **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."** Paul goes on to warn that there would be those who would rise up and teach perverse doctrines to draw disciples after them. The **"feeding of the flock"** involves the teaching of all that is right and scriptural. It implicitly teaches that they must not allow teaching that is not right and that is not scriptural. Hebrews 13:17 cautions: **"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."**

Elders have a sober and challenging responsibility to protect the flock from outside peril just as much as they have the blessed and awesome responsibility to teach the truth of the gospel. The authority of the elders of congregation A is limited to congregation A. Therefore, they should (must) inform congregation A that they cannot endorse the false teaching of congregation B, and that congregation A therefore cannot maintain fellowship with congregation B.

#### LOGICAL RESULTS OF THE FALSE DOCTRINE

What are the logical conclusions of the false doctrine that one congregation cannot withdraw fellowship from an erring congregation? Only two suggestions are offered here, but there are many.

*First*, such teaching would deny the right of any congregation to refuse, or deny, fellowship with any other congregation regardless of what is being taught. All who are to the least degree informed of what has happened, and is happening, in our brotherhood know there are many congregations that no longer hold to the "Old Paths" but are chasing after the doctrines of Baal. Instrumental music, women taking leading roles in the worship, denying the necessity of baptism for remission of sins, teaching the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, embracing denominationalism, agnosticism, and on and on is being taught in many congregations. According to the definitions of darkness given above, these are all unfruitful and are works of darkness. Therefore, according to the false teaching being addressed, faithful churches would be bound to extend the right hand of fellowship to any and all who teach such damnable doctrines. I do not think so!

*Second*, any "reproof" and any "rebuke" would be totally out of order by any teacher, preacher, elder, deacon or other member of a faithful congregation. No one would have the right to preach or write condemning error or **"contend(ing) for the faith"** (Jude 3), since there would be no need to try to correct the erroneous teaching or conduct of another. Yet, Paul wrote to Timothy:

**Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (II Timothy 4:2-4).**

Galatians 6:1 and James 5:19-20 addresses the need to restore brethren who are in error.

The opinions of those that teach error so often fly in the face of what the Bible teaches. Careful thought should always be taken to the ramifications that opinions might generate. In the case of one congregation not being able to exercise the need to withdraw fellowship from another congregation, such teaching could indeed result in irreparable damage to the beautiful bride of Christ.

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## CHANGING THE LORD'S SUPPER

Lynn Parker

Recently questions came to us concerning a congregation which "observed" the Lord's supper each first day of the week in the following manner: the congregation offers one prayer after which both the bread and fruit of the vine are served.

A meeting with the preacher of this congregation (we shall call him "brother B"), as well as another concerned member, was arranged in order to discuss the practice and study the matter. What we found was a brother who was quite defensive of the practice, insisting that this entire matter was a big "to-do" about nothing. Brother B's defense of this practice centered on primarily two arguments:

1. The prayers before the Lord's supper were not a part of the Lord's supper; thus, whether one prayer was offered or two during the course of observing the communion was inconsequential.

2. The New Testament accounts of the institution of the Lord's supper do not present a pattern for its observance. In other words they erroneously teach that the New Testament accounts of the establishment of the Lord's supper do not obligate the partakers thereof to offer a prayer before each emblem is eaten. They wrongly think that Matthew and Mark's account teach only that Christ "blessed" the bread before eating it. Thus, they falsely conclude that the "bless" the bread is not the same as giving thanks for it.

Four passages provide the inspired record of the Lord's supper being instituted. They are noted below:  
The chart following the passages will help to note the details of the Lord's supper.

### Matthew 26:26-29

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins. But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. ASV

### Mark 14:22-25

And as they were eating, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take ye: this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Verily I say unto you, I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God. ASV

### Luke 22:17-20

And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, (even) that which is poured out for you. ASV

### I Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink (it), in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come. ASV

(Continued On Page 4)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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Editorial...

## OF BB GUNS AND HEAVY ARTILLERY

In his book of sermons, *Shall We Know One Another In Heaven? And Other Sermons*, the late **Guy N. Woods** offered the following perpetually relevant material in his sermon entitled "Profile of Apostasy". Regarding certain (to borrow from one of **Tom Moore's** sermon titles) "Sissy Preachers" he wrote:

The strength and permanence of the Cause of Christ depend on those who represent it; whether the slide to apostasy now so evident will turn into an avalanche will be determined, in large measure, by the degree of faithfulness we of the present day exhibit. Sadly, there are, in every conflict, the "summer soldiers," and the "sunshine patriots," who do not hesitate to abandon the fight when the guns of battle begin to roar; who insist that they do not believe in digression, but who often bitterly criticize the efforts of those who do oppose it. What shooting they do is usually limited to sniping at their own front line soldiers! If they think that only BB guns should be used in defense of the truth, instead of the heavy artillery, they ought at least to use their BB guns (*Gospel Advocate*, 1988, p. 200)!

I only add one comment to Woods' warning—the present apostasy has, for some time now, been at "avalanche" proportions.

## INCONSISTENT AND HYPOCRITICAL BRETHERN

It was **Lynn Parker**, co-worker and staff writer for *CFTF*, who reminded me of Woods' timely observation. He remembered the quote while we were discussing certain inconsistent and hypocritical preachers as well as other brethren of the same stripe. These characters are "big" on "getting after" certain of their preaching brethren because those brethren are busy "getting after" false teachers and their "fellow travelers". Of course these "weak sisters" are really not opposed to "getting after" people. I know this because they routinely "get after" those of us who in no uncertain terms expose and mark false teachers. The late **G. K. Wallace** said the following regarding certain false teacher's efforts to stop faithful brethren from exposing them. Wallace stated, "They tell me that I can't use the Bible to get after them, but they don't mind trying to use the Bible to show me that I can't use the Bible to get after them."

Though I reported the following incident several years ago, the aforementioned discussion also reminded me of an incident that took place very early in the 1970's during the "Open Forum" conducted by Guy N. Woods during the old Freed-Hardeman College lectures. In one instance a brother criticized **Ira Rice's** dealing with false teaching and teachers. Woods asked Rice's critic whether his criticism pertained to a sin Rice had committed, or only a different

view of how false teaching and teachers should be exposed and marked. The critical fellow answered by saying that he disagreed with how Rice dealt with false teaching and teachers. To which answer Woods in his inimitable style quickly and concisely replied, saying, that since it was a matter of method and not sin to which Rice's critic referred, he (the critic) should expose false teaching and teachers in his own way, but whatever method he chose he must not neglect the exposure of such teaching and teachers. The truth of the matter is that there is no scriptural way to expose and mark one who is in error whereby he or she will like it. Attempting to expose and mark such persons so that they will enjoy it reminds me of the following statement. "There is more than one way to skin a cat, but there is no way the cat is going to like it."

Just as the fellow in the "open forum" was upset over someone doing something that he did not like or that went against his opinion, we will always have people in the church who get far more upset over their likes and dislikes being violated than they do with people who transgress the word of God. If such people would get as "hot and bothered" over false teachers and erring brethren as they do with those of us who consistently fight all manner of error and those who propagate it, maybe a little more would be accomplished in hindering the growth of sin in the camp of spiritual Israel. Instead, we not only have to be concerned about the Shellys et al., but also all the BB guns aimed at our backs by those who are only interested in fighting those who fight error. As one fellow said, "I'm so tenderhearted, I have a hard time contending for the faith." That kind of "tenderheartedness" is not of Christ! God of mercy, please deliver the church from such pitiful excuses for Christians!

#### OUR LORD'S EXAMPLE

Please consider the fact that the apostle Peter was a very teachable and no doubt pleasant and likeable person who desired with all his being to serve Jesus. However, please note how our Lord dealt with this apostle who, earlier in the same chapter, had a blessing pronounced upon him by Jesus. The scripture reads:

**From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men (Matthew 16:21-23).**

If some of our more "loving", "kind", and "tenderhearted" brethren as well as some of our "sissy preachers" had been observing this event, I am quite sure they would have been highly offended and pi-

ously indignant at our Lord's sharp, censorious and what they would call "unkind" rebuke of Peter. Furthermore, in opposing what I have just written there will be some who will employ the same type of pointed remarks. In doing so, they will be totally blind to the fact they are guilty of the same thing they seek to oppose and condemn. With such misuse of brainpower, is it any wonder that the church runs from one mess to another? Anyone who opposes any part of the Lord's will deserves to be dealt with as Jesus dealt with Peter—if not, why not? Whether hardened false teachers or misguided erring brethren, one cannot find a better example to follow in how to deal with them than the example of our Lord.

#### "OUR CATHOLIC BRETHREN"

Following the first night of our debate in July 2000 with the Roman Catholics, a sister who is a member of the Bammel Road Church of Christ e-mailed me to inform me that she was upset with the way we were dealing with our "Catholic brethren". In reply to her I told her that the Catholics were not my brethren and that I hoped she was not representative of the Bammel Road Church. Recently, this same woman e-mailed me to seek assistance in dealing with some Roman Catholics with whom she said she had been studying. She reminded me of the e-mail she sent me last summer. Then she reminded me that she did not like my "style" in the debate with "Father Callam" (her words). However, she now desired my help in answering a question she could not answer which question the Catholics had raised in their study. She closed her e-mail by wishing me a nice day. Any member of the Lord's church who thinks that the Catholics are "our brethren" and who refers to a Catholic priest as "Father" is more than likely in need of more help than I can give. Indeed, it would be interesting to know just who is teaching whom in such a study session.

However, the point in referring to the woman's letter is because she did not like my "style" of debating. The truth of the matter is that the church is full of people like this sister who think that if you tell anyone he/she is wrong or in sin, you are unkind, unloving and hateful. Or, in the case of debating if one presses the irrationality, inconsistencies, contradictions and implications of a false doctrine on the proponent of the error, people are so silly as to think such is unkind and mean. However, we should expect as much. When people have for many years been fed on a steady diet of "I'm okay, you're okay", the false doctrine that it does not make any difference what one believes just so he is sincere, one should always be "positive", anything negative is wrong, that love never corrects any one and that truth is relative and subjective, we should be surprised when we do not receive such criticism as herein discussed.

For emphasis I again note what Guy Woods observed. He wrote:

Sadly, there are, in every conflict, the “summer soldiers,” and the “sunshine patriots,” who do not hesitate to abandon the fight when the guns of battle begin to roar; who insist that they do not believe in digression, but who often bitterly criticize the efforts of those who do oppose it. What shooting they do is usually limited to sniping at their own front line soldiers!

#### HELPING THE CHURCH GO INTO APOSTASY

These “BB” church members have done more to help the church go into apostasy than the **Rubel Shelys** and **Max Lucados**. How is such the case? Through constant unfair and ruthless criticism of those with the courage and conviction to stand on the firing line of truth, they create a mindset in the churches that opposes any kind of rebuke, save the rebukes (“BBs”) shot at those who expose, mark and oppose erring brethren. These “BBs” are not one whit behind the ten faithless spies who opposed obeying God’s directive for Israel to take the land of Canaan (Numbers 13:31-33). And, as faithful as Joshua and Caleb were to God in the matter, they had to wander for 38 long years with the unruly crowd until God got rid of the whole faithless bunch.

Let us not, therefore, allow the inconsistent, hypocritical, “sissy preachers”, derelict elders and weak-kneed brethren stop us from following the example of the good Israelite Phinehas. When **Phinehas** saw **Zimri** and **Cozbi** in the very act of fornication, he took a javelin “**and thrust both of them through, the**

**man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from among the children of Israel”** (Numbers 25:1-11). Indeed, such things were written for our learning (Romans. 15:4; I Corinthians 10:1-12). The sad reality of the matter is that some never learn because they do not love the truth (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). Thus, if they had lived in the time of Phinehas, Zimri and Cozbi, they would have no doubt harshly criticized Phinehas for his use of the javelin. Such sinful conduct was the norm for the wandering children of Israel. Except for Caleb and Joshua, all the rest of those twenty years old and upward who came out of Egypt died in the wilderness (Numbers 14:22, 23). Provoked by such constant and routine rebelliousness by the unfaithful Israelites even Moses sinned (Numbers 20: 7-12).

#### NEVER GIVE UP!

What are we to do? We are to keep preaching and defending the truth, cowardly and gun-shy “BB” back shooting preachers, elders, editors and church members notwithstanding (I Corinthians 15:58; II Thessalonians 3:13; Revelation 2:10; II Timothy 4:1-5). Of a truth “**A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself”** (Titus 3:10, 11). Indeed, “That is the way that is right, and cannot be wrong!”

—David P. Brown, *Editor-in-Chief*

## ...The Lord’s Supper

(Continued From Page 1)

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	PAUL
Took bread	Took bread	Took bread	Took bread
Blessed it	blessed it	Gave thanks for it	Gave thanks for it
Took a cup	Took a cup	The cup	The cup
Gave thanks	When he had given thanks	When he had given thanks	When he had given thanks

A chart very similar to this one was prepared for our discussion but ignored by brother B. Yet by comparing these passages, it becomes evident that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul

are all describing the same order and actions when the first two say Jesus “blessed” the bread and the latter two writers record that he “gave thanks for it.” To “bless” the bread means to “thank or invoke a benediction upon” (Strong’s). This meaning is consistent between the four passages. It is not difficult to see unless one wants to defend a contrary practice.

Leaving his former argument, brother B asserted that the prayer was not a part of the Lord’s supper anyway. If it is the case that prayer is not a part of the Lord’s supper, why argue for even one prayer before partaking of the two elements of the communion? Why you could even dispense with prayer completely if you so chose. In a feeble effort to be consistent, brother B alleged that no prayer was necessary before partaking of the Lord’s supper.

We are not here discussing the “upper room”—an expedient. The Bible is quite meticulous in describing what took place in connection with both the bread and the fruit of the vine. We might ask the inspired Apostle, “Paul, how shall we properly observe the Lord’s supper?” Paul’s reply, no doubt, is given:

**For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink (it), in remembrance of me (I Corinthians 11:23-25).**

For honest hearts, that is as clear as crystal. Will man never tire of changing God’s blueprint? Ah, shades of Nadab, Abihu, Jeroboam,...

—P. O. Box 39  
Spring, Texas 77383

# A CRY FOR HELP

Marvin L. Weir

To whom do we turn when the going is rough and calamity seems to surround us? The Psalmist realized and accepted the very thing that the majority rejects today - help comes from Jehovah God!

Our present society has taken every opportunity to trample under foot God and his word. The faithful of God who set forth his truths are mocked and ridiculed. It is today as it was during the days of Isaiah when God's prophet said:

For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Jehovah; that say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits (Isaiah 30:9-10).

## NO REVERENCE FOR GOD

Instead of revering God, the majority of folks today revel in worldly wisdom and earthly pride. The apostle Paul pointed out the folly of such thinking to the Corinthians in saying:

For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And the discernment of the discerning will I bring to nought. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. Seeing that Jews ask for signs, and Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling block and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men (I Corinthians 1:18-25).

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## MEN NEEDED TO STAND IN THE GAP

The Psalmist cried for help because "the godly man ceaseth" (Psalm 12:1). It does no good to appeal to the masses because the majority has never seen fit to follow! Godliness will never win a popularity contest in this world. The warning that should be heeded is that "thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil ..." (Exodus 23:2). Godly men who prefer the "strait and narrow" path to the "wide and broad" way are not found on every street corner. It does seem in so many instances that the godly man has ceased to exist.

A cry for help needs to go forth for men who will stand in the gap (cf. Ezekiel 22:30). We need people who are willing to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-16). Without such men of God, the ungodly will flourish and prosper. May soldiers of the cross rise up to do battle against the wickedness that is choking the life from our nation.

The Psalmist cried for help "for the faithful fail..." (12:1). The devil is always seeking to sidetrack and devour (I Peter 5:8) those who are "walking in the light" (I John 1:7). The call of the world beckoned to Demas, and he forsook Paul (II Timothy 4:10). When faced with adverse circumstances, there is always the temptation to conform to the ways of the world (cf. Romans 12:1) and to neglect that which is above (Colossians 3:2).

## THE FAITHFUL MUST NOT STUMBLE

It is time to petition God that the faithful few not stumble or fail! The righteous must not "become weary in well-doing" (Galatians 6:9; cf. II Thessalonians 3:13). There is a battle to be fought and a race to run. May we heed the words of Paul, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

The Psalmist stated that God will "cut off falsehood, a flattering lip and a double heart" (12:2-3).

Our prayers should be that such would occur in this land in which we live. The arrogant attitude of the people boasted, "Who have said, with our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us" (Psalm 12:4).

Those today who are obsessed with humanism and are lovers of immorality will continue to do all within their power to destroy Christianity. They will not succeed. May we recognize where our help lies and at the end of our lives be able to say with Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (II Timothy 4:7).

—5810 Liberty Grove Rd.  
Rowlett, Texas

# REX A. TURNER, SR., MAN OF RENOWN, CROSSES JORDAN

Curtis A. Cates

Few men have had the impact upon the Lord's church and preachers of the gospel as has brother **Rex A. Turner, Sr.**, who was born in the Corner Community, Alabama, near Birmingham, on February 13, 1913, and passed to his reward on January 16, 2001, at the age of eighty-seven. Rex Aliwin Turner was a recognized and gifted administrator, powerful evangelist, outstanding author and editor, and deep Bible scholar. He was the eldest of seven children born to **Elijah Jesse** and **Mary Ellen Fikes Turner**. On December 24, 1931, Rex married **Miss Opal Shipp**, also of Corner. Their home was blessed by three children: **June Jacquelin Long** (deceased), **Mary Ellen Hargis**, and **Rex A. Turner, Jr.**



## A MAN WELL PREPARED

Brother Turner greatly prepared himself to serve the Lord and his cause. Having earlier attended the University of Alabama and Jacksonville State University, brother Turner was graduated with the B. A. degree from Samford University, the M. S. from Auburn University, the LL. B. from Jones Law School, and the Doctor of Education from Auburn. He also took graduate work from Harding Graduate School of Religion when brother **W. B. West, Jr.** was dean. Constantly reading and studying, brother Turner was a genuine scholar of the word, as well as in the field of history, science, education, and law. His grasp of the scriptures was truly amazing.

He was ever in great demand to preach in gospel meetings and in major lectureships. He began preaching nearly seventy years ago at Corinth, Cullman County, Alabama (March, 1932). A preacher's preacher, he served congregations in Warrior, Quinton, and Alabama City, Alabama, before moving to Montgomery, preaching at Chisholm, Highland Avenue, and many years at Panama Street, where he also served as one of the elders.

Brother Turner's talent as a college administrator is demonstrated in the fact that he started three large and successful institutions. In 1942, along with brother **Leonard Johnson**, brother Rex founded the Montgomery Bible School [later called Alabama Christian College, now Faulkner University]. The school was started with nothing except a promise of \$235. During his thirty-one years as president, the College moved to its beautiful new ninety-two acre campus, with its library, rotunda, two dormitories, cafeteria, gymnasium, and two high school buildings. Under his expert leadership, it also achieved full accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and

Schools. He founded the Alabama Christian School of Religion [now Southern Christian University] in 1967 and served more than two decades as its president, during which time the School moved to a wonderful new campus. His son, Rex, has followed in his father's footsteps as president of SCU, the University now having achieved Southern Association accreditation and awarding the doctoral degree. As a trained and experienced administrator [having earned the doctorate in higher education administration and having served as professor and administrator under brother Turner for twelve years], the writer feels qualified to assess brother Turner's administrative skills as outstanding!

## NOTABLE AND NOBLE WORKS

An accomplished writer, Rex A. Turner produced hundreds of manuscripts [chapters in books] and publications, including *Milestones in the Restoration Movement*, *Syllabus on the Intertestamental Period*, *Lectures and Sermons on the Fundamentals*, *Gospel Advocate Annual Lesson Commentaries 1975-1981*, *The Book of Daniel*, et al. He was also editor of *Sound Doctrine* for many years as well as directing two major lectureships which were on the cutting edge of promoting and defending sound doctrine.

Among the greatest privileges enjoyed by his acquaintances was the blessing of taking brother Turner's courses. They were unusually deep, taught by a master teacher. His requirements were challenging, and he would make one think and dig. He would bring forth the best efforts in his students. Truly, of the many scholars at whose feet the writer has sat, brother Turner was the most outstanding. The writer's assessment is shared by multitudes.

The following are but a few of the notable, noble, inspiring characteristics of this man, who was a second father to the writer: 1. He never lost his moorings or his roots; he was never arrogant and haughty but humble and meek. 2. The pure truth and a "thus saith the Lord" was his message. 3. His greatest emphasis was on training men faithfully to preach (II Timothy 2:2). 4. He desired never to turn needy, deserving students away. 5. He was an innovator and a pioneer on distance learning; he said "Not everyone can fold up a tent and go walk on holy ground" [meaning, move to the campus]. In that way, he trained thousands in many states. 6. He experienced some great sorrows, but never was he bitter. 7. He was so educated he could talk equally well to the "common man" and to the "scholar." 8. He always conducted himself as a Christian gentleman; never

was he out of character. 9. He worked more diligently, tirelessly than anyone else with whom I have been associated. When I would be weary from teaching in six or eight "clusters" in nearly that many states, there was brother Turner who was doing much more; I would take heart and push onward. 10. He would let people grow up; though having known me from but a child and having taught me in college, brother Turner encouraged me to prepare himself to teach, called me back to Montgomery, and treated me as a co-worker and an equal as he did countless others. 11. Dan, my son, recalled that brother Turner loved children, took a personal interest in Dan (at four or five years of age), and talked to him as if on brother Turner's own level. 12. He was supported and encouraged in his efforts in the college by his beloved wife, Opal (who preceded him in death), who would in the early days even milk the cows so the students would have milk for breakfast and who taught throughout the years at the college, by his brothers **James A. and E. J.**, who would get up early and throw papers or build houses in order to have subsistence support to teach in the college. Other dedicated faculty members made like sacrifices, so that the college would not fold in its early years. 13. He spoke of the Old Testament prophets almost as if he had eaten breakfast with them. 14. He was a man of constant prayer and a man of great faith, wisdom, and vi-

sion. 15. He deviated from the truth neither to the left nor to the right; he often spoke of the necessity of having a balance "wheel," meaning being Biblical. 16. He was a "friend who sticketh closer than a brother." 17. His highly esteemed contemporaries would certainly include such as **Guy N. Woods, B. C. Goodpasture, Gus Nichols, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Gaddys Roy, G. A. Dunn, D. Ellis Walker, W. B. West, Jr., Garland Elkins, Thomas B. Warren,** and others too numerous to name.

Rex A. Turner, Sr.'s memorial service took place on Friday, January 19, 2001, with five of his beloved students speaking: **Roger Dill, James Watkins, Furman Kearley, Raymond Elliott, and Curtis A. Cates.** A large crowd of former students, friends, and family were in attendance at Leak Memory Chapel in Montgomery, Alabama, and he was buried beside the gravesite of his precious Opal. We cherish his dear memory, thank God to have been loved by him, and pray for his family. Like Barnabas, brother Turner was a "good" man! Thanks be to God, our dear friend did not "have to cross Jordan alone."

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

## Sermon Outlines...

# THE WAY OF CAIN(Genesis 4:1-16)

Tom Moore

### INTRODUCTION

- A. "Woe unto them that have gone the way of Cain ..." (Jude 11)
  1. The word "woe" is a denunciation.
  2. Here Jude is condemning anyone who would go "the way of Cain."
  3. Cain was a man who had **HEART TROUBLE**, he wanted to do things his own way, without any or little concern for what God wanted.
- B. "For as he thinketh in his heart so is he" (Prov. 23:7).
  1. Man can never do better than his heart is good.
    - a. Matthew 12:34-35
    - b. A man's heart, in the Bible sense, is a man's mind.
    - c. A man is what he thinks.
  2. Matthew 15:18-20
    - a. It is what is on the inside that will make or break us.
    - b. It is a impure mind that defiles a man.
  3. Matthew 23:25-28
    - a. The Pharisees were more concerned with outward appearances, than what was on the inside.
    - b. Many look good on the outside, but are dead on the inside.
  4. Therefore, we need to heed seriously Proverbs 4:23.
    - a. We must give every effort to keep our hearts or minds pure.
    - b. Our destiny depends on it.

- C. Because of the importance of our heart condition, let us consider the **WAY OF CAIN**, and discover what his heart problem led to.

### DISCUSSION

- A. **CAIN'S HEART PROBLEM LED TO VAIN WORSHIP**
  1. Genesis 4:3-5a
  2. There are those today who contend that it doesn't matter how we worship God as long as we do it some way.
    - a. Many today, even in the church, are trying to change the pattern of worship in the New Testament.
    - b. Many are trying to bring in the instrument, choirs, singing groups, hand clapping and hand waving, etc.
    - c. Worshiping God is not commendable, unless it is pleasing unto God.
    - d. Are we worshipping to please ourselves or God?
  3. The Bible tells us that all worship is not pleasing unto the Lord.
    - a. Matthew 15:9
    - b. Thus, there is worship that is pleasing unto God and worship that is not.
    - c. John 4:24
  4. God had no respect for nor approval of Cain's worship.
    - a. It was neither in truth nor spirit.
    - b. God is more concerned in having us, than what we bring.
    - c. I Samuel 15:22





5. Cain's attitude was: "Please me first, God second."
- B. CAIN'S HEART TROUBLE LED TO ANGER**
1. Genesis 4:5b
  2. When Cain realized that his worship was not pleasing to God, he did not change, he got mad.
    - a. No sorrow for sin.
    - b. Cain was resentful and pouted, instead of being penitent.
    - c. Too many are like this in the church today.
  3. This anger of Cain shifted to his brother.
    - a. Is it not the way people usually act? When they do wrong, they get mad at somebody else.
    - b. Anger and ill-will are like a swarm of killer bees; they attack the victim with no mercy.
    - c. Who does anger honor?
  4. Cain had no reason to be angry; he had no one to blame but himself.
    - a. Job 19:29
    - b. Ecclesiastes 7:9
  5. It is true that we will all get angry from time to time, but...
    - a. Ephesians 4:26
    - b. Uncontrolled anger leads to even more sin; in the case of Cain it was murder.
- C. CAIN'S HEART TROUBLE LED TO HIS REFUSAL TO LISTEN TO GOD.**
1. Genesis 4:7
  2. The Lord warned Cain, but he refused to listen.
  3. Many today are refusing to heed the warning of God.
    - a. Matthew 13:13-15
    - b. Jeremiah 5:21
  4. Jeremiah 10:23
- D. CAIN'S HEART PROBLEM LED TO MURDER.**
1. Genesis 4:8
  2. Cain's heart problem grew worse and worse.
    - a. It began with vain worship, and moved to anger;
    - b. His heart was ever hardening, and now, it came to the point of murder.
  3. Most people would be appalled at this action of Cain.
    - a. But consider 1 John 3:15.
    - b. Are we murderers?
- E. CAIN'S HEART PROBLEM LED TO DECEIT AND DISHONESTY.**

1. Genesis 4:9
  2. Evil hearts cause sin to multiply.
  3. Cain tries to cover his tracks.
    - a. Numbers 32:23
    - b. You might be able to hide it for a while, but sooner or later it will be made manifest.
  4. Note that when one lies about an action, he knows it is wrong, or he would not lie.
  5. John 8:44 ...those who are involved in deceit and dishonesty are children of the devil.
- F. CAIN'S HEART PROBLEM LED TO PUNISHMENT.**
1. Genesis 4:11-12
  2. Cain failed to count the cost of his actions.
    - a. He, like so many, forgot ... Romans 6:23.
    - b. Hosea 8:7
    - c. Galatians 6:7-8
  3. Punishment awaits all the disobedient ... Romans 2:8.
- G. CAIN'S HEART PROBLEM BROUGHT A HEAVY BURDEN.**
1. Genesis 4:13
  2. Unforgiven sin is a load too heavy for ANY man to bear.
  3. Matthew 11:28-30 ... Many realize this too late.
  4. Cain lived in the bitterness of Romans 6:23, instead of the blessings of Romans 8:1.
  5. Don't try to bear the load yourself, it is more than you can bear.
- H. CAIN'S HEART TROUBLE LED TO SEPARATION FROM GOD.**
1. Genesis 4:16
  2. It was a sorrowful day for Cain when he left the presence of the Lord.
    - a. This is where heart problems ultimately lead, away from God.
    - b. Isaiah 59:1-2
  3. We need to remember Jude 24.
- CONCLUSION**
- A. Jude 11
  - B. May we never follow the way of Cain.

—24065 S. Main Street  
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## Current Events that Concern Christians...

# Gay Rights in Schools, Assisted Suicide, Girl Scouts

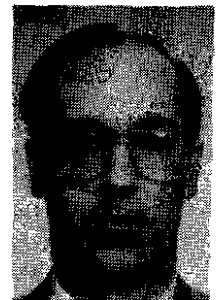
Compiled By Mark Mcwhorter

**WISCONSIN** — The Madison School Board Monday voted unanimously to hire a full-time advocate for homosexual and lesbian students in the school system. Board members voted 7-0 in support of the position after hearing testimony from roughly 50 or so on both sides of the issue—including Sol-Kelley Jones, 14, the middle school daughter of Madison therapist Sunshine Jones and her partner JoAnn Kell (*Maranatha email news service*, 2/27/01). [How long will parents who are Christians con-

*tinue to send their children to these schools? At some point, if it is at all possible, parents must decide that it is counterproductive to expose their children to this indoctrination.—mtm]*

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Twenty-two doctors legally helped 27 people kill themselves last year in Oregon — one of several stunning revelations found in the



annual report on the state's physician-assisted suicide program. Being a burden—that was the most common reason given by people in Oregon last year who asked a doctor to help them die. "One of the most shocking things is that a full 63 percent of the people who killed themselves during the third year of Oregon's legalized assisted-suicide law say they did so because they feared being a burden to their family and friends," said **Burke Balch**, with National Right to Life (*Citizen link* email service, 2/28/01). *[This is so sad. God's plan is that children take care of their parents. Children need to let their parents know that they will be taken care of in case of sickness. The church family can help as well. Statistics show, however, that less than 50% of grown children believe it is their duty to take care of their parents. When the parents do not have God as a comforter, and the children do not have Biblical responsibility, then it is easy to understand why the elderly sick would want to end it now. —mtm]*

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"[Girl Scout officials] seem intent on a cookie-cutter approach to shaping a new generation of like-minded women with disdain for the past. [The Senior Scout handbook for girls 14 and over contains exercises relating to] 'ending a pregnancy' and 'how to organize an event to make people aware of gender bias.' You might know a Girl Scout who earned a badge for selling cookies or learning to cook. But did you notice her 'Domestic Violence Awareness' badge? Girl Scouts executive director **Marty Eyans** boasts, 'We're not your mother's Girl Scout troop.' No kidding. Remember that when you consider buying this year's box of Thin Mints." —**Kathryn Jean Lopez** in *Organization Trends* (*The Federalist* email service, 2/27/01). *[Parents need to be made aware that this organization is not what it used to be. There are still some local chapters that have good qualities, but the national organization is becoming more and more anti-Bible. This just reiterates the fact that one needs to check out an organization completely before supporting it, even if it has been very good for a long time. —mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

At a time when humanity is trying to establish a "new world order," **Pope John Paul II** proposed a new era "of peace with God and among men," brought by Christ. "God and man, man and woman, humanity and nature are in harmony, in dialogue, in communion." The Bishop of Rome continued with his series of midweek meditations on man's end and his relation with creation, in the light of biblical passages. "Christ must cancel the work of devastation, the horrible idolatry, violence and every sin that the rebellious Adam has spread in the secular affairs of humanity and on the horizon of creation," the Pope added (*Religion Today* email service, 2-23-01). *[What hypocrisy. The Pope decries idolatry while at the same time permitting people to bow to him and kiss his feet. No one has been more rebellious against God than the Catholic church. —mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

**William Morris** is a "fundamentalist Christian" who prefers the moniker "Messianic believer." But, instead of

reinforcing traditional Christian ways, his literal reading of the Old and New Testaments has led him and others to swap Christmas and Easter for the Jewish rites which Jesus himself observed. That quest, which began for **Morris** in the early 1980s, has made him aware of tens of thousands across the globe who accept Jesus as Messiah, and also live according to the Jewish Torah. Some are Jews who have embraced Jesus, but a growing number are Gentiles. The Judaizing movement "is intensifying," said **Richard Landes**, director of the Center for Millennial Studies at Boston University, and cites reports of non-Jews studying the Talmud at universities. One reason some Christians take this step, he said, is that some harbor a "millennial" expectation of a final judgment in the near future. For them, he said, "Jewish religiosity is more in keeping with their millennial philosophy than the Christianity they grew up with is." (*Religion Today* email service, 2-16-01). *[This goes to show that their millennial views are not according to scripture. The scriptures are very plain in showing that the old law was nailed to the cross, and we are not to go back to that law. The Jews are no longer the chosen people of God and will not again become the people of God. —mtm]*

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Four black pastors from Michigan sent a strongly worded letter to **Rep. Tom Davis** (R-VA), chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee. Davis spoke last weekend at the Oakland County Republican Party's annual Lincoln Day dinner in Troy, Michigan. **Rev. Ira Combs**, **Pastor William Hailes**, **Pastor John Williams** and **Pastor Levon Yule**, are concerned over Davis' recent comments at a meeting of the *Republican Unity Coalition*, a gay-straight alliance within the Republican Party. At this meeting, Davis told his audience: "Getting more gays and lesbians to vote Republican should be an easier part of that voter matrix (for building majorities) than getting people of color." The pastors were insulted by Davis' remarks. They observe, "This racially insensitive remark seems to indicate how easily you would be willing to abandon outreach to African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Arabs, and other people of color. You appear to have calculated that rather than continue outreach to people of color, it's more politically convenient and profitable to water down your party's moral principles so you can pander to homosexual activists." ... "In fact, if you abandon the party's moral high ground on these issues, you will take away our strongest argument in explaining to African-American Christians why we are associated with the Republican Party, that being because the Republican Party's platform is more closely aligned with our Biblical principles" (*Traditional Values Coalition*, 2/16/01). *[We should be concerned that morality is being put on a back burner to expediency of winning a political election for the major parties. It seems that most folks are content to have more money in their pocket even if it means trashing the national morals. —mtm]*

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## Biblical Questions and Answers...

# "ARE WE GIVING GOD OUR BEST?"

Noah A. Hackworth

It is obvious that the question being asked can only be answered by the individual person. Aside from the Lord, I am the only one who really knows whether God is getting my best, and he does know! There is a principle expressed by Paul in the Galatian epistle that is here apropos: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked..." (6:7), or, as the original text would have it, "Be not misled." If I should think I am giving God my best when I really am not, then I have been misled; I am self deceived, but God is not. If one takes the time to trace the course of biblical history it will be seen that God has always without exception required the best from his people.

### OLD TESTAMENT TEACHING

Let us begin with Cain and Abel (Genesis 4). These two brothers were instructed by God to bring for an offering the firstlings of the flock; it was the best because it was what God required (cf. Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:4). Abel obeyed; he brought the required sacrifice, but Cain did not. The results can be anticipated: "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect" (Genesis 4:5).

Then there is the case of the patriarch Abraham. Some years after God summoned Abraham to carry out certain instructions (12:1-3), God said to him, "Sarah thy wife shall have a son" (18:10). Isaac was subsequently born to this couple in spite of the fact that Abraham had lost his reproductive powers while Sarah had never had them, or so the Greek *nekrosis* implies, according to **Moses E. Lard** (Romans 4:19). Some time later, God made a startling announcement to Abraham. He told him to take Isaac, his beloved son, his only son (Genesis 22:2), and offer him for a burnt offering. Isaac was the best sacrifice and God called for him to be offered. God required the best from Abraham and Abraham gave it (Hebrews 11:17). Dare we do less!

Finally, there were the animal sacrifices, required by the Lord. They had to be without blemish. They had to be the best. Anything less than the best was not acceptable (Leviticus 22:20). Can anyone show where God has changed this procedure? Does he not require the best we can give him? Does he not deserve our best? Surely all will agree that he does.

### NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING

Since we are God's people, we need to concentrate on giving our best to him, and the best we have is ourselves (Romans 12:1). The churches of Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea) were commended highly by Paul because they had given themselves (II Corinthians 8:5).



Problems are usually solved when we give ourselves wholly to the Lord. It is when we "keep back some of ourselves for ourselves" that we become miserable and end up with only "a form of religion."

### THE MATTER OF APPAREL

Women are required by the Lord to adorn themselves in modest apparel (I Timothy 2:9), and though the passage speaks of the adornment of women, would not the principle of modesty keep the men (most especially Christian men) from publicly exposing their "bare chests?" Yes! And most of us know this; but coming directly to the point and "shooting straight from the hip," we have to point out that immodest dress "veils" godliness in the Christian, man or woman. But now we come to another thing that is not indicative of immodesty but is at the same time important: what we wear when we come to the assembly for worship on Lord's Day. I know of no local church that has a "dress code" which is bound on the membership, but it is understood that everyone must wear clothes. No one would ever think of denying anyone "entrance" into the Lord's house because of the way one is dressed; and no brother would be denied the "right to serve" simply because of the absence of "suit and tie." Though some brethren are miserable when they wear a tie and even get "a little testy" when this is mentioned, it all comes back to what one is willing to do in order to give God the very best. Are we giving God our best?

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# The Significance Of Jesus' Baptism

## Matthew 3:13-15; 21:23-27

Jason Roberts

Our sacred text affirms:

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him (Matthew 3:13-15).

Why was Jesus baptized? Was it because he had sins that needed remission? After all, the Bible does teach us that baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; cf. 22:16). In fact, Jesus himself said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Peter recognized the truth of baptism's purpose when he penned, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us" (I Peter 3:21).

The Bible teaches us that Jesus was one "who knew no sin," "who did no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth," "who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:22). If our Lord was baptized because he had sins that needed remission, then by implication he transgressed the Law of God (I John 3:4), but he said, "...for I do always those things that please him." (John 8:29b, emp. added mine). If our Lord had committed one sin, he would have been a sinner. Consequently, he would have been in need of a savior. And he who needs a Savior cannot be one. The matchless life of our Lord was as pure as the driven snow.

### THE FIRST REASON

Jesus gave us the reason as to why he allowed John to baptize him. He said to him, "suffer (allow) it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (emp. added, mine). What does it mean to fulfill all righteousness? The word fulfill, (*pleroo*), means to fill up, to complete. The identical word is used when Jesus described the Law of Moses as something which he came to fulfill (Matthew 5:17).

The word righteousness is also found in I John 3:7 in the context of obedience, "he that doeth righteousness is righteous." It means attaining that inward character or quality of being just, or right with God. Did Jesus fulfill this quality of righteousness? The prophet Isaiah testified in the affirmative. The majestic prophet wrote in view of the death of our Lord, "He (God) shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:11). The apostle Paul, and his testimony regarding his own death, clearly reveals a similar thought:

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (II Timothy 4:6-8).



When Paul was in the city of Athens, he said that Jesus would "judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31). It is inconceivable for a righteous person to receive a crown of righteousness from someone who was not righteous. John, writing about Christ being the propitiation for our sins, identified him as "... Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1), thus he fulfilled the qualifications of being the satisfactory sin offering for the sins of humanity. Indeed, our Lord's character exemplified a life of righteousness.

### A SECOND REASON

In Matthew 21:23-27 another reason is given as to why Jesus was baptized. In this text we have the account of Christ teaching in the temple. The chief priests and elders question the authority of his teaching (v.23). Jesus responds by asking them a question, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or men?" (v. 24). Jesus, in effect, had them on the horns of a dilemma. They were unable to answer his question. However, by implication they knew that the baptism of John was divine in its given nature. But if Jesus had not been baptized, they would have had him on the horns of a dilemma. They would have looked him straight in the eyes and said something to the effect, "Well if the baptism of John is by the authority of heaven (God) then why have you not submitted to it?" Consequently, the credibility of Christ would have been diminished beyond measure.

The chief priests and elders knew that "all of God's commandments are righteousness" (Psalm 119:172), and that is why Jesus said that his baptism was to "fulfil all righteousness." (Matthew 3:15). Doing the commands of God makes one righteous. Jesus said, "... for I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29b).

If the sinless, pure, righteous son of God submitted to the father's will to be baptized, how much more should a sinful, impure, unrighteous man submit to the father's will to be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)?

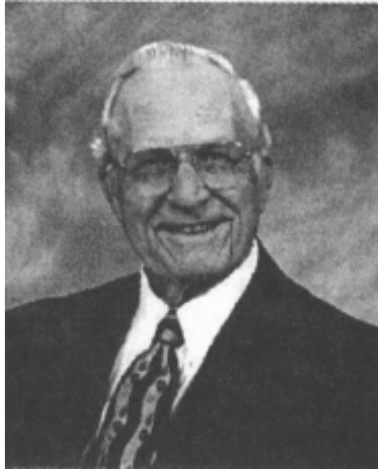
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# B.C. CARR, FAITHFUL GOSPEL PREACHER, PREACHING SCHOOL FOUNDER/DIRECTOR, EMINENT EDITORIAL STAFF MEMBER, DIES

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

When some men die it is almost like putting your finger in the ocean, pulling it out and saying, "Where's the hole?" They stand for so little that they make little difference to those about them living or dead.

Such could not he said of **Blevins Coe Carr**, who, at the age of 82, died of cancer on Saturday, January 13, 2001, at Red Bay Hospital in Red Bay, Alabama. Far more than most, this faithful gospel preacher, founding Director of the Florida School of Preaching, and editorial staff member of *Contending for the Faith* almost from its inception, left such an indelible impression across this brotherhood that he will not soon be forgotten.



## HIS BIRTH AND EARLY WORK

Born the son of **William Claude Carr** and **Cleo Melton Carr**, on November 9, 1918, at Dennis, Mississippi, B.C. was baptized into Christ in August, 1930. That he eventually became a powerful pulpiteer himself as well as a teacher/trainer of others as gospel preachers is a matter of record; but he did not start out that way.

After graduating at age 16 from Belmont High School in 1936 in nearby Belmont, Mississippi, he went immediately that fall to Freed-Hardeman College, graduating in 1938.

Upon leaving Freed-Hardeman, he got a job teaching school at New Site, Mississippi, where he met and married the former **Sybil Brown** in 1939. After teaching one term at New Site, he moved on to Marietta, Mississippi, where he taught school and coached for three years (1939-42). Moving to Florence, Alabama, in 1942, B.C. then worked as a uniformed Public Safety Officer for the Tennessee Valley Authority at Muscle Shoals.

Accepting employment with the Standard Brands Coffee Company, in 1945, he next moved to Decatur, Alabama. It was there that brother Carr's ministry as a gospel preacher had its real beginning. He and his family placed membership with the Grant Street Church of Christ, and the elders there started sending him out on weekends to preach at various nearby congregations.

This taste of gospel preaching precipitated resuming his education—this time at David Lipscomb College—the following year. Entering as a Junior in 1946, he got his B.A. degree in history in 1948 in the first graduating class after Lipscomb became a four-year college.

While at Lipscomb, brother Carr preached part-time on weekends at nearby Watertown, Tennessee. Some of his

classmates included **Clarence Dailey** as well as **Buddy** and **Bernie Arnold**. Both Clarence and B. C. were married students. To help fill out their financial needs both served as assistant dormitory supervisors; also B. C. worked part-time during the week as manager of the Lipscomb book store. Buddy remembers most how "gracious, quiet and serious about his studies" B. C. always was—"a consummate Christian gentleman in search of the truth about God's word and his church."

After finishing his degree at Lipscomb, brother Carr returned to Decatur, Alabama, preaching full-time for three years (1947-50) with the Somerville Road church there. During his ministry there, he preached

some by radio and also started the Piney Grove congregation nearby. As his reputation grew, he was invited for gospel meetings not just in Alabama but in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Georgia, as well.

"Oh, what tremendous meetings they were!" **Robert McAnally**, present minister of the South Florida Avenue congregation, exclaimed in his "TRIBUTE TO B. C. CARR" that appeared in their church bulletin, *The South Florida Avenue Messenger* for January 16, 2001. "Great numbers of people were converted, congregations established and others strengthened."

In 1950, the Carrs were invited to move to Lakeland, Florida, doing full-time work with the church then known as the Patterson Street Church of Christ. Following three effective years there, they moved on to further works in LaGrange, Georgia (1953-55), then to the Floyd Avenue church in Memphis, Tennessee (1955-60), during which time he took night courses at Harding Graduate School.

Returning to Nashville in 1960, B. C. worked a few years with **Roger Church** selling insurance. During this time he also devoted weekends and midweek services to preaching at Berry's Chapel, near Franklin, Tennessee.

## FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING

In 1964, the South Florida Avenue church (formerly Patterson Street) in Lakeland, Florida, asked the Carrs to move back there for good. It was during this time that brother Carr and the Lakeland elders, in 1969, began what became known as the Florida School of Preaching. As the founder/director of the school, he served in that capacity for 23 years prior to his retirement in 1992.

As for how and why the Florida School of Preaching began, the lectureship book for their 24th Annual Lectureship of January 18-21, 1999, tells the story. Though the

book was dedicated to brother Carr, he was asked to write that particular chapter for the book. Beginning on page 553, he wrote, in part, as follows:

The school began through a gradual process from the thinking of several people. One of the first to suggest that Florida needed such a school was B.C. Goodpasture, then editor of the *Gospel Advocate*. Brother Goodpasture was in a gospel meeting in Winter Haven in the late sixties. We attended almost every service and several times would go out for refreshments afterwards. We had known the Goodpastures in Nashville before moving to Lakeland in 1964. On one occasion brother Goodpasture talked about how we had lost Florida Christian College to the "anti" brethren, which left us without a school in the whole state that would train preachers. He had been working with the Nashville School of Preaching and was pleased with the results. He challenged me to start a school of preaching in Lakeland to fill a void that he felt was urgent.

Shortly after talking with brother Goodpasture, I talked with G. K. Wallace who had retired from Freed-Hardeman College and had moved back to Temple Terrace. His sentiments paralleled those of brother Goodpasture. Brother Wallace thought we had much to offer in the Florida climate. He could visualize people retiring who could come to Florida to help in this work. We talked with the elders of South Florida Avenue about the possibility of starting a night school in Lakeland. They were favorable to the idea and would give permission to let us use the building. We felt there were men with potential to preach and serve as elders or personal workers who would be eager to receive training. From the beginning it was decided there would be no charge for tuition. Students would buy their own books and attend classes which would enable them to be better servants of the Lord.

With these thoughts in mind Florida School of Preaching started at Lakeland, Florida, in early September, 1969. At first it had a curriculum for night school only. Classes were taught from 7 to 9 o'clock, two classes each night, on Monday, Thursday and Friday nights. Beginning with 30 students, enrollment soon grew to 33.

The first faculty, with B. C. Carr, the preacher at South Florida Avenue, as founder-director, included **G. K. Wallace**, Vice President Emeritus of Freed-Hardeman College; **J. H. Blackman, Jr.**, who preached at nearby Bartow; and **James Jordan**, minister and educator from Tampa.

Of the 33 who enrolled that first year, 27 completed the full year in school. By the second year, such interest necessitated that a second year's curriculum be added. Classes still were on Monday, Thursday and Friday nights; however, this meant that two classes would be going on at the same time each night. Attendance was growing and with it demand for a full-time school.

As the work load became heavier, by the end of the third year the elders could see that it was too much for one man to direct and teach in the school and to be effective as their full-time preacher. More and more time was being required to oversee this growing work.

The elders agreed that the school and the church should be separated as far as administration and operation were concerned; B. C. Carr would continue as Director of the school; however, a Board of Directors would be named to

be responsible for the operation. The church would continue to lend the use of its facilities and to furnish some financial support. All believed this was a good and scriptural work.

In April, 1972, the school was granted a charter with its own bylaws by the State of Florida. Though numerous brethren have served on the Board, and many good men have shared their time and talents in the teaching program, only two brethren have served as Directors of the school who had the day by day responsibility for carrying on its operation. B. C. Carr served as Director from 1969 until he retired in July, 1992. **Jackie Stearsman** was appointed then by the Board and has been Director ever since.

Literally hundreds have attended the school. At last report hundreds more were being baptized by these each year as well as many being restored. Surely the greatest legacy brother Carr could have left behind at his passing was the sound and faithful Florida School of Preaching of which he was both founder and Director Emeritus.

#### OUR FIRST MEETING

It was the Spring of 1947 when I first came to know B. C. and Sybil Carr. My father in the gospel, **A. R. Holton**, then was preaching to the Central Church of Christ, in Nashville, Tennessee. When he learned that I was fundraising to buy property for the church in Downtown San Francisco, he invited me to come to Nashville, saying, "There are barrels of money in Nashville."

By the time I arrived, he had lined up 13 appointments for me to speak to various congregations in and around Nashville plus 34 private interviews to raise the needed funds. It was after service the night I spoke to the Granny White Pike congregation that I was first introduced to the Carrs. We were all standing on the front steps of their former building when we met. From that night on we had been friends for well over half a century at his passing.

B. C. and I shared a mutual concern for the direction away from the truth of the gospel the church was taking—especially from the early 1960s onward. First there was Liberalism in general, later followed by the ravages of Campus Evangelism, Crossroadism, Bostonism, the Nashville Jubilee, the Willow Creek Community Church departures and many, many others. He endorsed my books *Axe on the Root—Volumes I, II and III*—warning of these errors (1966-70) as well as my militant publication, *Contending for the Faith*, of which I was the founding Editor for some 30 years (1970-2000). And when, in 1976, I saw fit to name an Editorial Staff for the paper, he was among the very first ones to be chosen. In fact, he still was on the

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staff until the day of his death. He was someone on whom I could always depend for counsel when difficult, doctrinal matters were abrewing.

**"AND IT IS APPOINTED..."**

When B. C.'s son, "Butch," telephoned that his father had just passed away on Saturday, January 13, 2001, I was in Pensacola, Florida, to speak to the Bellview congregation and to report on my most recent missionary efforts in Southeast and Southern Asia. The funeral was set for 3:00 p. m. that Monday, at Dennis, Mississippi.

As soon as I had spoken on Lord's Day morning, I canceled further plans heading for the funeral. Services were held at the Liberty Church of Christ, where he and Sybil were members. **Larry Sartain** conducted the congregational singing that brother Carr had requested. **Tim Spivy**, the preacher at Liberty, read scripture and delivered the obituary. Brief eulogies were offered by **Maurice Davis**, former student, and current Instructor, **Jackie Stearsman**, current Director of Florida School of Preaching; and by **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.**, longtime friend and gospel preacher. **V.P. Black**, another longtime friend, delivered the funeral sermon.

Survivors include his wife, **Sybil Brown Carr**, of Belmont, Mississippi; one daughter, **Linda Wyatt**, of Cordova, Tennessee; one son, **B.C. "Butch" Carr, Jr.**, of Booneville, Mississippi; three grandchildren, **Daniel Patrick Phillips, Jr.**, of Memphis, **Melody Beth Rains**, of Booneville, and **Melissa Lynn Scott**, of Memphis; three great-grandchildren, **Bradley Christopher Rains** and **Jacob Gregory Rains**, of Booneville, and **Samantha Lynn Scott**, of Memphis; four sisters, **Verlon Martin** and **Eva Davis**, of Belmont, **Bonnie Lodahl**, of Dallas, Texas, and **Reba Deaton**, of Huntsville, Alabama; two brothers, **Freeman Carr** and **Ellis Carr**, of Belmont.

Pallbearers were **Raymon Carr**, **Steve Carr**, **Lonnie Davis**, **Bruce Thorn**, **Stanley Carr** and **Kim Carr**. Honorary pallbearers were the elders of the Liberty Church of Christ. Burial was in the Lindsey Cemetery, at Dennis, near where B. C. was born 82 years ago.

—3809 Wind Valley Drive  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125

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## **"EXCEPT IT BE FOR FORNICATION"**

Barry M. Grider

Of all the departures from the faith that I have witnessed since my childhood, none has been more harmful and widespread than the false teaching surrounding marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Even some otherwise faithful elders and preachers have acquiesced to the trends of the times. However, despite an alarming number of homes being ripped apart by divorce and multiple marriages taking place thereafter, God's word does not change from condemning such activity to condoning it. It is good to remember the following account:

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery (Matthew 19:3-9).

### **WHAT THE PASSAGE TEACHES**

According to this passage, Jesus reinforces and restores divine teaching on marriage which was established at creation - one man for one woman for life. In verse 9 he gives

one exception for remarriage to another if a mate is still living. The exception is fornication, which covers a broad range of sexual immorality (adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.). It must be understood that when the innocent party (one not guilty of fornication) puts away the guilty, **the marriage ends**. If not, the innocent party could never remarry. The question arises, can the guilty party ever marry another with the approval of God? The answer is no! While such an individual can be forgiven of sin, he or she is not eligible to marry another ever!

Is this a difficult doctrine? It was for the disciples, and Jesus recognized it was so (Matthew 19:10,11). Many who are put away on scriptural grounds, despite their sinful behavior, often begin to feel sorry for themselves and bemoan the Lord's teaching. Solomon correctly observed, **"The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the Lord"** (Proverbs 19:3). The wise man is describing an individual who deliberately defies God's will and then complains to the Lord about the consequences of which he was adequately and sufficiently warned.

### **EUNUCHS FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN'S SAKE**

What should one put away on grounds of fornication do, seeing he or she can never marry again? Remember these words of Jesus, **"...and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake..."** (Matthew 19:12). Obviously, the Lord is not speaking of self mutilation, but rather one who keeps his body free from sexual impurity and the blight of wrong. I

have known several Christians who, having been put away on grounds of fornication, repented of their sin, and lived faithfully before God by remaining celibate the rest of their lives. God bless such individuals for their dedication, discipline, and courage.

As the church of Christ, we must continue to defend the Lord's teaching concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Not all brethren are willing to do so. I knew of one deacon who urged an unfaithful sister who happened to be living with her fifth husband to come back to church, despite the adultery, and enjoy sweet fellowship with absolutely no repentance. He said he would let God judge the matter. The fact is God has already judged in such matters through the pages of the Holy scriptures. Indeed, it is sad to be studying the Bible with someone whom you are trying to convert only to find out they are presently involved in an adulterous marriage. Unless they are willing to end that relationship, salvation is not possible because salvation necessitates repentance.

#### A NATION IN PERIL

It must be remembered that God places these restrictions upon us for the good of the family and the stabilization of society. Any society that disregards God's law on marriage will wreak havoc and chaos. No nation has ever survived for very long that had a divorce rate above forty percent. Presently, our nation hovers at a fifty percent divorce rate. Sadly, many members of the church contribute to and condone divorce for any cause. We can never forsake the clear Biblical injunction on this subject despite those who would seek to change the Lord's teaching.

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## Hermeneutics Controversy— The Spirit Verses The Letter of The Law

Brock Hartwigen

Proponents of the "new" hermeneutic divide the word of God into *spirit* and letter. The *spirit* is defined as intention or purpose, while the letter is defined as actual acts supported by direct statements, examples or implication. The "new" hermeneutic teaches that the church should be true to the *spirit* of the law and that obedience to the *letter* is optional. The "old" hermeneutic makes no such distinction.

"Old" or "new;" which is right? what did Jesus teach about the spirit and the letter of the law? There is one place where you might say that Jesus made a distinction between

the spirit and letter of God's law. In this account, Jesus did not authorize the idea that obedience to the *spirit* of the law is all that counts. In fact, he taught just the opposite.

In Matthew 23:23 Jesus criticized the Pharisees for paying attention to the letter of the law and not the *spirit*, "**ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin [letter], and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith [spirit].**" But, he did not endorse the "new" hermeneutic's view. He endorsed the "old" hermeneutic's view, equal adherence to spirit as well as letter. Jesus, first of all, endorsed adherence to the letter of the law when he stated "**these ought ye to have done.**" Secondly, he endorsed the need to be true to the *spirit* of the law when he went on and added, "**and not to leave the other undone.**"

The "new" hermeneutic's concept that the *letter* of the law is not important is wrong. The "old" hermeneutic's concept is right. Both the *spirit* and letter of God's law are of equal importance.

One important additional point: The spirit of the law is defined and flamed by the letter of the law. "**God is not the author of confusion**" (I Corinthians 14:33). God does not contradict himself. The *letter* of the law does not contradict itself. Likewise, the letter of the law does not contradict the spirit of the law. Any inferred *spirit* of the law that contradicts the plain letter of the law is a false inference.

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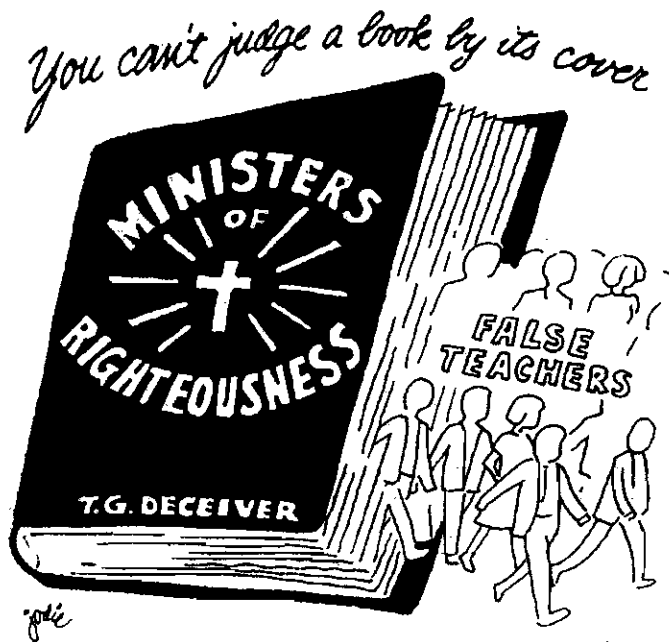
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Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# Ministers of Righteousness?

Jodie Boren



In Revelation 12:9 it is said of Satan that he deceiveth the whole world. Truly, he is the greatest deceiver. Satan is real! He is alive and working unceasingly to devour us (I Peter 5:8). He wants us to worship and serve him, and he will resort to any sneaky or under-handed method to accomplish his goal.

It is implied in II Corinthians 2:11 that if we are aware of Satan's devices—his schemes—his tricks—and take the proper action, he cannot get an advantage of us. The proper action is to put on the whole armor of God that we may stand against the devil's wiles (Ephesians 6:1). Or, as James says, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 5:7).

## "MINISTER OF LIGHT"

One of his most successful ways of deceiving people is found in II Corinthians 11:14-15. Here, Paul tells us that Satan's ministers can be transformed into ministers of righteousness. Just think of the many radio and television evangelists that appear as men of God but are inwardly ravenous wolves—false teachers dressed in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15). In this context, our Lord tells us they can be identified by their fruits (vs. 20). Also, many pulpits and universities are filled with false teachers—even within the church. Fortunately, we have many faithful and sound brethren who have not bowed the knee to Baal who do use the means of mass communications, the pulpits, and the classrooms, to preach boldly and clearly the truth of the gospel. But the aforementioned not only fleece people out of their money, but lead them spiritually down the primrose path to perdition. How tragic.

This perverting of God's word and deception is possible primarily because most people are Biblically illiterate. The false teachers present their messages with eloquence of speech and ambiguous phraseology so that to the unthinking it all sounds so plausible and desirable. The gullible public swallows it hook, line and sinker. Take instrumental music, for example. God's word on this subject is ignored and rejected. It is reasoned that after all, we are worshipping God, and the song service will be so much better with the accompaniment of a piano or organ. Surely God will be pleased. The bottom line, however, is these folks are doing what they want and feel is correct rather than what God has instructed us.



## CULTURE DOES NOT ALTER TRUTH

Throw in the concept that our culture is far different from that of the first century and what might have been true then, does not apply to us today. With these two concepts any change in doctrine can be justified. Just here we need to be reminded that God clearly warns, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it..." (Deuteronomy 4:2). In Malachi 3:6 we read. "For I am the Lord, I change not..." The gospel which is God's power to save (Romans 1:16) and that in which we stand (I Corinthians 15:1) is not subject to change for it is an everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6).

Does it not boil down to the fact that the majority of the people today, who profess to being Christians, are accepting these false teachers because this is what they desire? Is this not the same reasoning that some are now saying about baptism—that it is not essential to salvation, and that it has nothing to do with our entrance into the kingdom of God? If baptism can be thus viewed, then the biggest barrier to fellowshiping the denominations is removed. Like God's people of old who clamored to have a king that they could be like the nations around them (I Samuel 8:19-20), many of our so called gospel preachers are clamoring for the walls to come down so that fellowship can be extended to all believers whether they have been baptized or not. To be like the denominations seems to be an obsession with many of our brethren.

Instead of asking for the old paths, "where is the good way" (Jeremiah 6:16), people today are saying, "speak unto us smooth things" (Isaiah 30:10). We need to try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world (I John 4:1). Remember, you cannot judge a book by its cover!

—2557 Campus Court  
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# Epaphras, A Servant of Christ

Daniel Denham

Colossians 4:12-13 brings to our attention a remarkable Christian gentleman named Epaphras. Paul writes of him: **“Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I bear him record, that he hath great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.”**

The name *Epaphras* means “lovely.” It is an apt description of the character of this man. He lived up to his name spiritually, though the name may have been given because of comeliness in infancy. The name is a contraction of “Epaphroditus.” However, Epaphras of Colossians is not to be confused with **Epaphroditus** of the Philippian epistle. They are two distinct men, though both possessed many of the same wonderful attributes of character. Epaphras was a native of ancient Colosse, which lay in the beautiful Lycus River Valley in Asia Minor. Epaphroditus was a native of Philippi of Macedonia, which lay to the north of ancient Greece and is now part of Greece proper.

Colosse was an impoverished town at this juncture in its history, especially in comparison to the wealthy Laodicea and Hierapolis. Yet the city had a thriving congregation that faced numerous hardships and challenges, and Epaphras, as well as Paul, was deeply concerned for the brethren in his hometown.

Epaphras had brought word to Paul in Rome of the Colossians **“love in the Spirit”** for the apostle (Colossians 1:7-8) and had abode for some time with him during the latter’s first Roman imprisonment (61-63 A.D.). Paul had some high words of praise for this man. Let us examine some things that we know about Epaphras from the words of Paul: knowing that these words reflect God’s appraisal of Epaphras as they are inspired of the Holy Spirit!

## A MAN OF HUMBLE SERVICE

In Colossians 1:7 Paul refers to him as **“our dear fellowservant.”** The word rendered *dear* literally means, “beloved.” In the context Paul is stressing the mutual love that he and the Colossians all had toward Epaphras. He had by his service endeared himself both to the apostle and his brethren. The stem “servant” is from *doulos* and stresses the willing humility of Epaphras as the slave of Christ for their sake. He is called **“a servant (*doulos*) of Christ”** in Colossians 4:12 as well. The NKJV renders it “bondservant.”

He is also described in Colossians 1:7 by the clause, **“who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf”** (NKJV). The word “faithful” shows his obedience to the will of God, while “minister” identifies the area of that obedience. He is a “minister” (*diakonos*) of Christ. The word denotes a “servant” in its general sense, as used here. Though the derivation is disputed, some believe with good reason, that the term is derived from the idea of “laboring

in the dust” or “running through the dust,” i.e., to do service for someone. It stresses the menial aspects of the tasks at hand. It is a labor borne of humility. He was a faithful steward of all the responsibilities placed in his care by our Lord for the sake of the Colossian brethren. He understood the need **“by love (to) serve one another”** (Galatians 5:13). Epaphras was not a **Diotrophes**, who desired the preeminence (III John 9), but manifested the very spirit of Christ himself (Philippians 2:5ff.).



## A MAN OF A COOPERATIVE SPIRIT

The phrase “fellowservant” shows this vibrantly with the prefix *sun*, which technically is a preposition used as a prefix. It shows in a striking way a close and near connection, even that of partnership or companionship, as a preposition. It is used with the dative case. It is rendered most often as “together” when standing as a preposition. The conjoining of *sun* as a prefix to the stem *doulos* emphasizes the mutual bond that existed between Paul, Epaphras, and the Colossian brethren in their labors for Christ.

Epaphras practiced the axiom that **“we are labourers together with God...”** (I Corinthians 3:9). The Greek uses the same prefix in the form *sunergoi*. **Zane Hodges** renders this latter word appropriately as “coworkers.”

Epaphras worked with Paul and the brethren to further the cause of Christ. He understood that “kicking mules don’t pull and pulling mules don’t kick.” He worked with the brethren for the greater good. This kind of person labors diligently and does not care who gets the credit. He is not a “lone wolf.” He works well with people.

Epaphras would not have been a “hobby rider,” who goes around pressing his opinions to the division of the body of Christ. He would abide by Bible authority in matters of faith (I Peter 4:11).

## A MAN OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Epaphras traveled to Rome to bring Paul news of the faith of the church at Colosse, which news in turn encouraged Paul while the apostle was in prison. He comforted Paul in his sufferings (Colossians 4:11). He also “saluted” the church back home in Colosse in Paul’s letter in order to encourage them in their labors and thus also ease their minds relative to his own state in the capital city. Like Barnabas, he was a **“son of exhortation”** (Acts 4:36, ASV).

Epaphras understood the need for encouragement, especially in the face of hardships. A pat on the back, a helping hand, a kind word, and a pleasant temperament have helped many saints through great trials in life. Christians

are to “comfort” one another “together” and “edify one another” (I Thessalonians 5:11).

#### A MAN OF COMPASSION

He was genuinely concerned about the welfare of the saints at Colosse, as well as that of those in Laodicea and Hierapolis. He probably knew these latter congregations very well, especially if he had traveled to them in the service of Christ to preach to them. The three cities had close ties to one another in culture, kinship, and language, and despite the fact that Colosse had fallen on hard times economically while the other two were still highly prosperous, contact in trade and the mundane affairs of life was common. Many Colossians went to the other cities seeking work.

Because of his great concern, Epaphras prayed diligently for them “that” they “**may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.**” The word for perfect translates the Greek word *teleios*. It here contemplates moral and spiritual maturity. Such ones are obedient to the will of God revealed in God’s word. The word for “complete” is from *pleroo*. This word stresses the filling up, making full, or supplying of all that they needed relative to the blessings of God pertaining to his will. While the former (*teleios*) emphasizes the need for their obedience, the latter (*pleroo*) stresses the need for the loving kindness of God expressed through his bountiful gifts.

Christians are to have compassion and concern for one another (I Peter 3:8-9). They are to love one another with a “**pure heart fervently**” (I Peter 1:22). Epaphras exemplified this kind of love.

#### A MAN OF PRAYER

His compassion motivated his prayers on their behalf. Paul says that he was “**labouring fervently**” for them “**in prayers.**” Hodges renders the word for “**labouring**” (*agonizomai*) as “struggling.” It is used of the special pains and toils in which Epaphras was engaged in praying for the brethren. The word picture is that of a wrestler in a battle or a gladiator in a contest bending every viable effort, straining every nerve to gain the goal of victory. Epaphras was battling on their behalf and using prayer as his weapon. He “agonized” on their behalf.

All of the great men and women of the Bible were people of prayer. It is part of the spiritual armament that God has made available to the Christian soldier (Ephesians 6:18). Thus, we are to “**pray without ceasing**” (I Thessalonians 5:17) and “**continue earnestly in prayer**” (Colossians 4:2).

#### A MAN OF GREAT ZEAL

Epaphras’ zeal is seen in his prayers. He was “**labouring fervently...in prayers.**” The Greek uses the word *pantote* stressing the idea of “always.” The reason for this dogged persistence in prayer for them is stated in Colossians 4:13, “**For I bear him record, that he hath great zeal for you.**” The word (*zelos*) stresses his ardor, enthusiasm, excitement of mind and “boiling” interest in their well-being, as well as in God’s will being done by them and for their benefit. Observe that his zeal was self-evident to the apos-

tle Paul who could “testify” (bear record, KJV) of its truth.

Zeal is vital to the strength and growth of the church. We must be “**zealous of good works**” (Titus 2:14). But it must be zeal that is “**according to knowledge**” (Romans 10:2). It must be guided and directed in the right way through the word of God (Romans 10:17). *It must be governed.*

Let us learn from the great example of Epaphras. There are but few verses in the Bible about him, but what is revealed is packed with great power and beauty.

(1) Epaphras was a humble servant of Christ. (2) He was a man of cooperation with his faithful brethren. (3) He was a man of encouragement to good work. (4) He was a man of compassion who genuinely cared for brethren. (5) He was a man of prayer. (6) He was also a man of great zeal that animated everything that he did. Epaphras is the kind of man whom the cause of Christ in every place needs.

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10:00 a.m. "What About Snake Handling and Drinking Poison?" Kevin Beard  
11:00 a.m. "Modern Prophets: True or False?" Keith Mosher  
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# "A CHURCH THAT FLIES" BY TIM WOODROOF Has No Flight Plan

Paul Vaughn

Every year there are many good books written by our brethren. They cover a tremendous number of very important subjects and most are very interesting, well researched and deal honestly with the material and subject at hand. In this article we will evaluate a new book written by **Tim Woodroof** called *A Church That Flies*. There are boundaries in which I will stay within, praying that they are never crossed. First and foremost this review will be written in Christian love, showing Christian character and integrity. Jesus said in the sermon on the mount, **"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even to them for this is the law and the prophets"** (Matthew 7:12). The "Golden Rule" as it is called, is not a suggestion but a commandment for men to pattern their demeanor, so they can be pleasing to God. This does not mean that error will not be refuted vigorously. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and the scribes, yet is there anyone who would say, He did not love them? Therefore, I will not get involved in attacking personalities but will see if Woodroff dealt honestly with the subject at hand and if it was well researched?

### A SELF-CENTERED AND DISHONEST BOOK

I wish I could class Woodroof's book with the many excellent books written each year, but that is not possible. *A Church That Flies* is one of the most self-centered and dishonest books I have ever read! Tim Woodroff has set himself, and a few of his contemporaries, up as the standard for the church to follow and the rest of us are spiritually blind and primitive. He says that he is calling the church to a "New Restoration" because it has lost its way. In the preface of the book it is written:

This is a book written to members of the Churches of Christ as we begin a new millennium, facing all the challenges that changing times and circumstances present to God's people. It is written to, and in the context of a church that is trying to find itself.<sup>1</sup>

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There are congregations that are dying today for a number of reasons. Some of the catalysts causing congregations to die are apathy, compromise, false teachers, relinquished love for the Lord, and those lost in sin. But, these things were present in the first century church and the church of Christ has survived. It would take omniscient knowledge for Woodroof to be able to make the above statement. This writer knows of many congregations that are very loving, are missions minded, and are growing. Just because a person is not aware of a church on the pathway of light does not mean there are not any!



### NO PATTERN

Woodroof states very plainly that the church of Christ has stagnated because of the Restoration Plea of going back to the New Testament to restore the pattern for the church of Christ. Please note some of the quotes from his book.

We are to define ourselves by character and mind of Christ, not by finite set of religious forms, enacted in particular ways and at particular times.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the practices and habits bequeathed to us by the church of our fathers have lost all connection to contemporary minds and hearts. Once-vivid forms, with the passing of time, have become dead ritual and mindless liturgy and instinctive tradition.<sup>3</sup>

I have never been comfortable with the sectarian rhetoric of the 'one true church.' Our exclusivism and isolationism seemed to me to stem from equal parts arrogance and insecurity.<sup>4</sup>

Woodroof may not be comfortable with the "one true church" or the pattern for that church given in the New Testament, but the Lord is! There is a pattern for men to follow in the New Testament. It is written, **"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son"** (II John 9). The doctrine of Christ is the pattern for man to follow. If there is no pattern, as stated in *A Church That Flies*, the teaching of II John 9 is meaningless. Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"** (John 14:6). No man can direct his own steps or make his own way to God. But, those who affirm there is no pattern to follow are trying to develop their own way of salvation.

In the opening chapter of the book, Woodroof illustrates the development of flying for the time of the ornithopter-

ists ("wing-flappers") to the development of modern flight. The "wing-flappers" wanted to fly so they studied birds and tried to pattern ways of flying from watching birds. He applies the mind-set to early restorers as trying to follow the pattern of the New Testament church. He said, "Like the ornithopterists of old we assumed that 'function' was inextricable bound to 'form' that to fly with the first century required us to fly like it."<sup>5</sup> He is mocking and ridiculing the early restorers of the church and all who teach there is a God-given pattern to follow. Woodroof does not understand that when it comes to flying if there is no "flight plan," or pattern to follow, people get lost!

#### POOR SCHOLARSHIP

In writing any book the honest author would never misquote or apply any teaching to those in antiquity that they did not teach or say; it is a matter of integrity. In chapter six Woodroof said,

Thus, restoration churches were largely silent on issue of race and social justice, both in the mid-1800s (slavery and the Civil War) and in the mid-1900s (prejudice and Civil Rights).<sup>6</sup>

Did the early pioneers keep silent on those issues? No! In 1845 Thomas Campbell wrote in the *Millennial Harbinger* that Americans should not approve or practice slavery.

Upon the whole, with respect to American slavery, wherever distinguished by any inhuman and antichristian adjuncts, by any unnatural, immoral, and irreligious usages, we may justly and reasonably conclude that Christianity and truly moralized humanity prevail, it must and will go down; and that, in these respects, no Christian can either approve or practice it.<sup>7</sup>

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From 1845 through 1851 there were 24 articles concerning slavery in the *Millennial Harbinger*. In *The Evangelist* and *The Christian* edited by Walter Scott from 1833 through 1835, there were ten articles on slavery. The church in the mid-1800s was not silent on the issue of slavery.

The church today is not silent on the issue of race and prejudice. The Power lectures in 1997, hosted by the Southaven Church of Christ, Southaven, Mississippi, dealt with the subject of racism in a very powerful lecture given by Jim Dearman. I know of another preacher who gave a sermon on racism who found material from the Ku Klux Klan on his doorstep the next day. What did he do? Refuted the material of hatred the next Wednesday night. These issues are not dead issues in the church, as some claim, but are being addressed.

It is not known if these things were overlooked because of poor scholarship or if some other reason prevailed. Integrity demands the honest handling of any issue. To state something as a fact, when it is not, to belittle the church in the 1800s and today is not ethical.

#### COMPROMISE OR LEAVE

In the appendix of the book, Woodroof briefly gives a defense of the "Otter Creek Family of Faith" where he preaches. I found it interesting that they do not call it the church of Christ, since the book deals with a new call to restoration in the church of Christ.

He stated that whenever conflicts arise that "loving compromise is the appropriate course."<sup>8</sup> He goes on to say that when issues come up at Otter Creek, the elders will offer a compromise, "But where that does not suffice, they are not afraid to offer the door."<sup>9</sup> Is it loving to tell someone to compromise their beliefs or there is the door? This is exactly what the Christian church did in the late 1800s with the introduction of the American Christian Missionary Society and mechanical instrumental music in worship.

Woodroof has a plan for the church, in which he says has no plan. He also desires Christians to compromise their beliefs or leave. This attitude is void of any Christian character and love.

All of the issues Woodroof addresses in his book are not answered in this article; space and time will not permit it. On the back cover Mike Cope and F. Lagard Smith recommend reading this book. I do not because it is written from a prejudicial viewpoint by one who is trying to direct the church to fly away from the scriptures.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Tim Woodroof, *A Church That Flies, A New Call to Restoration in the Churches of Christ*, New Leaf Books, Orange, California 2000, p. XIII
2. Ibid. p. 30
3. Ibid. p. 135
4. Ibid. p. 141
5. Ibid. p. 7
6. Ibid. p. 85
7. Thomas Campbell, *Views of Slavery, Millennial Harbinger*, January 1845, Vol. II, No. 1 pp. 7,8
8. Woodroof, p. 200
9. Ibid.

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## One Woman's Perspective...

# "BUT I'M NOT PERFECT"

Annette B. Cates

Her face was tear-stained as she was encouraged by fellow Christians after having gone forward to confess her sins at the close of the morning sermon. She had not attended worship for several months. She had allowed the world to draw her away. Her marriage was in trouble. Life seemed to be crashing in on her. She felt she had so many problems, so many discouragements, and so many temptations that it was impossible for her to be faithful. Earlier, she had said to me, "But, I'm not perfect."

How often we have heard that lament! We also hear it when attempting to teach a non-Christian. "I cannot obey the Gospel. I'm not perfect." Some really think that they cannot become Christians until they are perfect individuals. For others, it is a cop-out, an excuse for continuing in sin. These are like Felix, wanting a more convenient season (Acts 24:25).

### FORGIVENESS IN CHRIST

**"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (I John 1:8-9). It is true that there will be no sin in Heaven. Thus, the Christian life is one of continually striving to live according to God's will to the best of our abilities, knowing that when we do sin we can have forgiveness. **"But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all**

**sin"** (I John 1:7). One who thinks that he/she cannot become a Christian, or cannot remain faithful because of a lack of perfection, is a person who has lost hope. That person needs to be reminded of the strength that comes from living according to God's word and of the surety of forgiveness when we stumble. None of us will be perfect in this life. If we were, we would have no need of Heaven.

### SOURCES OF STRENGTH

*We gain strength and hope when we meditate upon God's word.* We do not expect to be knowledgeable in any other subject field if we have never studied it. Why do we think we can live the Christian life without knowing how? The righteous person of Psalm 1:2 meditated on the law of the Lord day and night. The Israelites were instructed to hear the law, and to do it. They were further commanded to teach it to their children in an on-going process .... **"when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up"** (Deuteronomy 6:3-7). Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were able to remain faithful in captivity because they had been well-grounded in their youth (Daniel 1). **"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee"** (Psalms 119:11). The word teaches us how to live and helps us in overcoming the discouragements of life. We will never face a problem that God has not anticipated and given us an answer in the scriptures.

*We gain strength and hope when we are active in the service of the Lord.* It is not that God needs us, for he is in control with all things belonging to him (Daniel 4:17; Psalm 50:10-12). We are the ones in need of him. We benefit from our fellowship with him and with his people. This is where we find help for our woes. When we are a part of his people, not only will we receive the encouragement we need, we will be concerned with serving others in their times of trouble. **"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others"** (Philippians 2:4). Only then can we put our own problems in a proper perspective, for there are always those who are in worse condition.

All of us have blessings that are beyond comprehension. There is great joy in sharing those blessings with others. If there is strength in numbers, what could be more uplifting than being companions with those of like spiritual interests (Psalm 119:63)?

*We gain strength and hope when we pray, for this is communication with God.* Much is made today of such New Age ideas as transcendental meditation, yoga, and the



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Eastern religions and philosophies. Each stresses letting the mind idle on empty and concentrating on going "outside oneself." Does prayer to God not do this much more effectively? When we pray, we should be allowing the mind to "let go" of the distractions of daily life and leave our cares in the hands of God. This is meditation in the truest sense. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, reminds us that God cares for the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field, "... shall he not much more clothe you. . .?" (Matthew 6:25-30). "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live" (Psalm 116:1-2).

*We gain strength and hope when we seek and accept forgiveness. We truly have no hope when we are unwilling to repent of our sins and to do whatever is*

necessary to correct our wrongs. There is another problem, however, that plagues many people. That is a lack of faith in God's love to forgive ourselves when we have taken the steps of repentance. Once we have obeyed the Gospel, we have access to the cleansing power of Jesus' blood (I John 1:7). John goes on to say, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). We must, at that point, put the sin behind and get on with life. We cannot allow sins of long ago to deprive us of the joy of living for God today (Philippians 3:13)

"But I'm not perfect." None of us is. Not being a perfect person does not mean that we cannot live in such a way as to be pleasing in God's sight. God created us, he knows our temptations and has provided a way that salvation can be ours through obedience of the

gospel and living the Christian life. "Let us gain strength and hope from his word and his assurances, casting our self-doubts aside, and pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

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**The Last Word...**

# PREACHERS AND EGOTISM

Eddie Whitten

**"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to 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).**



We have a problem in our brotherhood. To make such a statement is not an earth-shaking revelation. We have many problems in the church, some of which are monumental and endanger the eternal destiny of the soul. Problems such as these must be dealt with and purged from the church in order to maintain the sacredness and integrity of the Lord's body. Some are just aggravating and serve no purpose other than to cause unrest among the faithful. Those who perpetrate such frustration seem to feed upon anything that upsets the peace and harmony of a congregation. I suppose we will always have troublemakers in the church—we always have had.

### PROBLEM PREACHERS

There is an element that does no apparent harm, but is harmful in ways that may not be easily recognized. This element is preachers! Preachers who love the Lord, who love to preach the word of God, who love the souls of every person to whom they preach, often fall into this pitfall. They are preachers who claim for themselves credit where credit is not due. They are quick to let others know how valuable they are to the work of the Lord.

It is true, and rightfully so, that preachers have a profound effect upon those who hear them preach. They are in the "spotlight." They supposedly are ones who have prepared themselves for the blessed privilege of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. They are the ones who have supposedly studied the scriptures and, therefore, speak as having the authority of Christ to support their statements. Those who have thus equipped themselves to expound the saving gospel deserve the appreciation of those who hear. They are deserving of words of encouragement and commendation. They are ones who are doing the best they can to influence the

lives and destiny of a world lost in the grasp of the Devil. Power, boldness and success unto those who rightfully and righteously deliver the unchanging word of the unchanging God!

What then is the problem of which we are concerned? It is a problem that many have acquired as results of the above named essence of a preacher—success, influence, boldness. They develop "I" problems. It is not uncommon



to hear preachers, some of them well known, make statements attributing the conversion of sinners to what "I" have done. The elevation of one's ego to the point he claims the credit for another's conversion to the Lord is a dangerous thing, bordering even on blasphemy! Think for a moment the import of such statements as, "I converted brother so-and-so." Did he really? That is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible says the saving power is the gospel! Paul said, "**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek**" (Romans 1:16). He also said, "**For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself**" (Galatians 6:3).

**THE PREACHER IS AN INSTRUMENT**

The point to be made must not be misunderstood. It is true that the preacher, whether he is in the pulpit, or whether it is a housewife speaking to a sinner across the kitchen table, is the instrument in the hand of the Lord by which the sinner learns the truth and comes to believe and obey the gospel. Preaching (teaching) must be done and by faithful brethren. It cannot be done by anyone else! The point to be made must be understood: It is not the preacher (teacher) who does the converting, it is the word taught! Paul stated, "**For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is**

**the power of God**" (1 Corinthians 1:18). He relegated himself, though an apostle, to the level of mere man when he said, "**Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase**" (1 Corinthians 3:5-6). To those he led to Jesus through his preaching, he said, "**for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel**" (1 Corinthians 4:15).

The danger associated with the egotism of preachers who make the claim of being the "converter" is defined as unbelief. Moses was told to speak to the rock to provide water for the children of Israel in the wilderness. Instead, in his anger toward the people, he said, "**Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?**" (Numbers 20:10). God punished Moses and Aaron because, as He said, "**Ye believed me not**" (Numbers 20:12; Psalm 78:22). Moses did not glorify God for that which God provided. The same is true for those mortals who assume the power of God to convert the sinner. All preachers today are mortal; not Deity! We should be the first to remember the words of Jesus, "**And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted**" (Matthew 23:12).

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## "A STUDY AND EXPOSE OF MORMONISM"

GARY W. SUMMERS

What has been the fastest growing religious group in the United States for the past 40 years? The answer is: the group that requires that you give up rationality and objectivity to be a member. If contradictions and doublespeak do not bother you, and you have no qualms about history being rewritten, then you could make a good Mormon. No, these are not facetious comments or exaggerations; the reader may judge the truthfulness of such statements for himself.

### 2001 SPRING BIBLE INSTITUTE LECTURES

Because of the current popularity of Mormonism (although they are now emphasizing the name "Church of Jesus Christ" rather than "Latter-day Saints" [LDS]), the Spring Bible Institute, a work of the Spring Church of Christ, Spring, Texas, devoted its 2001 lectureship to this topic. David P. Brown, evangelist with the Spring congregation, is the director of the annual lectureship and editor of the book entitled *A Study and Expose of Mormonism*.

At least one Mormon was present at most sessions, and the challenge to debate the validity of the Mormon religion was issued numerous times. Letters have also been sent to the leaders of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City; to date, they do not seem to be willing to defend what they believe—which is a violation of their own teaching! Consider what Joseph Smith, Jr. himself wrote:

Now, behold this is wisdom; whoso readeth, let him understand and receive also; For unto him that receiveth it shall be given more abundantly, even power. Wherefore, confound your enemies; call upon them to meet you both in public and in private; and inasmuch as ye are faithful their shame shall be made manifest. Wherefore, let them bring forth their strong reasons against the Lord (Doctrine and Covenants 71:5-8) (367).

The obvious question is: "Why will not the Mormons do what their own scriptures' teach them to do?"

### THE MATTER OF CONTRADICTION

This concept is not only important as it pertains to Mormonism, but to society in general (and especially the academic community which is also being governed by irrationality). It has long been recognized that A cannot equal non-A. By definition, for example, the set, A, of even numbers (2, 4, 6...) cannot include any elements from B, the set of odd numbers (1, 3, 5...). By definition the two sets are mutually exclusive. If we know that x is an element of A, then we know that x cannot be 7, 11, 25, or any other odd number. An even number by definition is non-odd. No number can be both even and odd at the same time.

So what are we to conclude when a religion teaches that polygamy is both right and wrong? To accept such a view, we have to believe that A can both be itself and not be itself at one and the same time, which is irrational and flies in the face of both knowledge and experience. This contradiction is brought to light in "The Mormon Church and Polygamy." When Joseph Smith, the self-styled prophet "wrote" the *Book of Mormon* (first published in 1830), he was against polygamy.

Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was an abomination before me, saith the Lord... Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; For I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts (Jacob 2:24, 27-28) (381). [Editors Note: parenthetical numbers refer to pages in the lectureship book.]

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## Editorial... "Jubilee" Stock Market Crashes

The Board of Directors of Christian Jubilee, Inc. has announced that "with great reluctance and much regret" "Jubilee" is canceled. The reason for its cancellation is "the cost of everything ... has steadily increased" and "despite fund raising efforts ... a deficit has accumulated each of the past three years." You may read the entire announcement on their web site <http://www.nashjubilee.org/> or you can write **Phillip Morrison**, Jubilee Director, P. O. Box 129004, Nashville, Tennessee 37212-9004 or send e-mail to [info@nashjubilee.org](mailto:info@nashjubilee.org) for the complete announcement.

Frankly, I thought there would always be some sort of Nashville "Jubilee". If nothing else I figured that due to the arrogance and pride of these white washed brethren, they would not totally go out of business. However, if we can believe their announcement, at least this effort to restructure the church with its platform of "change agents" is down and out. Let us pray that it stays down for the count.

## THE REASON FOR JUBILEE'S FALL

I ask, where is and/or what happened to the dedication and sacrificial service among these "loving brethren" necessary for the continuation of such an endeavor? Are not these brethren the "pace setters" and premier examples for all of us when it comes to our love of God and his cause? Why should "cost" be a problem to this "moneyed" crowd? And, indeed, it was (is) the lack of dollars that ended the whole "shin dig".

The truth of the matter is this, when people are taught that they can do as they please and have God on their side—they do! Thus, these spiritual elitists kept their money for themselves and did with it what they pleased. Thus, the great "Jubilee" fizzled—and great was the fizzle thereof!

## WHERE WERE THE DENOMINATIONS AND ECUMINISTS WHEN JUBILEE NEEDED THEM?

I wonder why the much-courted denominational friends of these brethren did not run over themselves to give their money to help their newfound ecumenical buddies in the church of Christ. Why did not **Victor Knowles** of the Independent Christian Church lead his "organ grinding" brethren to financially support their "weaker" brethren? Why did not **Dr. Rubel Shelly** call for **Dr. Billy Graham's** aid? Could not President **Steve Flatt** of David Lipscomb University work through his fellow academicians around the country for the purpose of helping "Jubilee" in its

hour of need? Could not **Jeff Walling**, the preacher of “what’s happening now”, muster the young people and young adults to contribute their pennies to “Jubilee’s” support? Why did not **Max Lucado** at least write one of his pabulum books of shallow spiritual romanticism and existentialism and donate the proceedings to “Jubilee”? Where were Madison, Woodmont Hills, and their “kissing kin” from Nashville and all over the nation when the bottom fell out of the “Jubilee” stock market? To borrow from Shakespeare the whole crowd is full of sound and fury signifying nothing. Oh well, there is always the old original gathering of apostates with their worn out “sugar and spice and everything nice” over in Tulsa town.

I rejoice when any tool of Satan is broken just as the Israelites rejoiced when David killed Goliath. The Nashville, Tennessee “Jubilee” was one the devil’s tools. Whatever small part *Contending for the Faith* had in “Jubilee’s” demise we are thankful to have been of service. However, I would be happier if I could see the death of the mislabeled and falsely so-called “Tulsa Soul Saving Workshop”, “Gulf Coast Workshop” and other such spiritual houses of religious prostitution.

#### THE SINGING SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

The previously noted camps of the religious racketeers among us best compare to the “groves” (the meeting places) of pagan worship recorded in the Old Testament. The apostates of Israel engaged in such worship in these places (I Kings 14: 22, 23, 24). God’s faithful of that day cut the groves down and burned them (Exodus 34:13; Deuteronomy 7:5; 12:3; Judges 3:7). Indeed, after the great contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, the great prophet directed that the false prophets of the “groves” as well as others of the same stripe be killed (I Kings 18:19, 20, 40). The killing of such prophets was the will of God set out in the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 13:5).

If we learn anything from such Old Testament accounts, it is that the faithful today must have the same attitude and response toward all false doctrines, teachers and religions whether in the church or out of it (Romans 15:4). Today, however, our weapon is the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17). In the proper hands it will slay all false doctrine and false teachers (Hebrews 4:14; Revelation 1:16; 2:16). Furthermore, it will properly persuade those who are sincerely and ignorantly in error to come out of the “groves” of false religions and apostate brethren (Isaiah 1:18; Acts 17:2; 18:4, 19; 24:25; II Thessalonians 3:2; Luke 8:11,15; II Corinthians 6:14-18). Woe to the members of the Lord’s church who lament the “cutting off” of today’s false prophets and the demise of their modern day “groves”. The faithful will always have the mind-

set of the apostle Paul when he said of certain false teachers of his day, “**I would they were even cut off which trouble you**” (Galatians 5:12)! Let us with the Psalmist affirm and declare, “**Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way**” (119:104, 128). Indeed, Jesus stated to his apostles, “**If ye love me, keep my commandments**” (John 14:15). As the apostle John wrote, “**For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous**” (I John 5:3).

In the previous Old Testament accounts of the execution of the false prophets, every cut of the sword into the bodies of the false prophets was one of love for God, his word and his people. Under the authority of Christ in the New Testament, the same is true when the sword of the Spirit cuts into the error of those who propagate false doctrine. Whether they bind where God has not bound or loose where God has not loosed in his word, they are thereby “marked” for the false teachers they are (Colossians 3:17; Romans 16:17, 18; Titus 1:9-15; I John 4:1; Revelation 2:2).

#### GOD’S APPROVED ARE MADE MANIFEST BY FACTIONS

Paul wrote, “**For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you**” (I Corinthians 11:19). Therefore, there can be great good that comes out of every proper confrontation of false doctrine and false teachers with the truth—the approved of God are made manifest. According to inspiration, heretics will always be in the church for that reason. Now, what are you going to do about it?

I sometimes hear well-meaning and sincere brethren lament that so much time must be taken away from saving souls to fight error within the church. Pardon me, but I thought that the fighting of error among the saints was anchored in the idea of keeping the church members saved. Is this not what Paul meant when he explained why he opposed the false teachers of his day? Of such confrontation he wrote, “**To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you**” (Galatians 2:5). It was not enough for Paul to take the gospel to those who had never heard it. Indeed, of those who had obeyed the gospel Paul did all he could to help them remain faithful to their calling (I Corinthians 15:18; II Corinthians 12:15). For such to be the case, error and those who propagated it had to be exposed. And Paul did not mind putting the spot light on the persons who were the trouble makers—“**Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works**” (II Timothy 4:14); “**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). "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred..." (II Timothy 2:16-18). False doctrine kills souls in and out of the church! Moreover, when Paul and Barnabas sought to preach the gospel to Sergius Paulus of Paphos, Cyprus, "the deputy of the country", a Jew and false prophet, Bar-jesus (Elymas), sought to prevent "the deputy" being taught. The Holy Spirit through Paul declared of and to this man, "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" By a miracle Paul caused Elymas to go blind. Certainly, we cannot work such miracles today for they have fulfilled their purpose. However, if we do not have the same attitude and action taught in the Bible and exemplified by Paul today toward such characters in and out of the church, we

simply are blind to the teaching of God's word concerning them—papers, schools of preaching, universities, churches, preachers, elders and such like not-withstanding.

#### "ITS NOT OVER TILL ITS OVER"

Let us not be deceived into thinking that because "Jubilee" has ceased operation that our work is done. There continues to be a great horde of "change agents" who in cunning craftiness are lying in wait to deceive (Ephesians 4:14). Over the whole brotherhood there is greater ignorance and lack of "common sense" than ever before. Worldliness, spiritual lethargy and selfishness are running rampant throughout the churches. Thus, the groundwork for liberalism (doctrines that loose men from what God in a rightly-divided-Bible binds on them) is laid (II Timothy 2:15). Now, more than ever, is the time for being circumspect and vigilant (Ephesians 5:15; I Peter 5:8). "These are the times that try men's souls." Therefore, the more need to heed and practice the following words of the apostle Paul, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (I Corinthians 16:13).

—David P. Brown, *Editor-in-Chief*

## MORMONISM REVIEW...

(Continued From Page 1)

Also, in Smith's Doctrine and Covenants (D&C), printed in 1835, the original section 101:4 denounced the practice of polygamy:

Inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: we declare that we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in the case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again (382).

In 1875 that section was removed from the book (382). Yet also included in the book of Doctrine and Covenants is a section in which God commands Joseph's wife, Emma, to accept polygamy. First, one finds a defense of polygamy:

David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me (132:38) (524-35).

Then comes the specific revelation for Smith's wife:

And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me: and those who are not pure, and have said they were pure, shall be destroyed, saith the Lord God (132:52) (525).

Not only was polygamy now authorized, but Emma had better not protest her husband's "legal" philandering:

And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. But if she will not abide this commandment she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her if she abide not in my law (D&C 132:54) (525).

Having more than one spouse, however, was granted only for men—not women.

And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore he is justified (D&C 132:62). But if one or either of the ten virgins, after she is espoused, shall be with another man, she has committed adultery, and shall be destroyed... (D&C 132:63) (525-526).

So, which is correct: the "inspired" Book of Mormon, which forbade polygamy, and the 1835 version of Doctrine and Covenants—or the later Doctrine and Covenants with its infamous Section 132, which authorizes polygamy?

When Smith died and Brigham Young gained control of the Mormon Church, he continued the practice of polygamy; in fact, he took several of Joseph's wives to be his (559). This immoral way of life is the reason the Mormons were despised and persecuted (although they never mention these facts in any of their propaganda).

However, Wilford Woodruff, a later President of the Mormon Church, "conveniently received a new revelation when Utah joined the United States":

There is nothing in my teachings to the Church or those of my associates, during the time specified, which can be reasonably construed to inculcate or encourage polygamy; and when any Elder of the Church has used language which appeared to convey any such teaching, he has been promptly reprovved.

And I now publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land (364).

Can A also be non-A? It can be in the Mormon Church. Apparently, being a logical, rational person is not required of Mormons. Polygamy is both all right and not all right. One thing is certain: God is not the author of such confusion (1 Cor. 14:40). Such chaos results from a man-made system, which Smith was making up as he went along.

#### FAILED PROPHECIES

“Mormon President Ezra Taft Benson...declared, ‘The ultimate test of a true prophet is when he speaks in the name of the Lord, his words come to pass’” (165). We can agree with this statement because it harmonizes with what the scriptures teach:

But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, “How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?”—when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him (Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

So, if a prophecy does not come to pass, the one who spoke it is a false prophet. Thus says the word of God, and at least one Mormon President agrees. The fact is, however, that Joseph Smith spoke several false prophecies. One chapter in *Mormonism* lists 20 failed prophecies (103-121). Many of these are part of Doctrine and Covenants. Consider the one, for example, in which Smith affirmed that New York, Albany, and Boston were to be destroyed by God if they did not accept Smith’s teachings (D&C 84:112-115) (D&C 109-110). Those cities have neither embraced Mormonism or been destroyed in the 170 years since Smith wrote those words.

Another false prophecy concerns the temple in Nauvoo, Illinois (D&C 124); it was never completed (112). Neither did Smith nor his descendants live in the fictitious temple “from generation to generation, forever and ever, saith the Lord” (D&C 124:590) (112)! Many more are cited, but even these three are sufficient to show that Joseph Smith was a false prophet, and the religion he established was a false religion.

#### ANOTHER DOCTRINAL FLIP-FLOP

If Mormons ever come to a decision on whether or not Adam was really God, they will still have to explain how those “inspired” prophets who taught otherwise could have been in error. No less a person than Brigham Young said in 1873:

How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed to them, and which God revealed to me—namely that Adam is our Father and God.... Our Father Adam helped to make this earth.... He brought one of his wives with him.... (212).

Furthermore, Young insisted that Adam was the father of Jesus. Some have denied that Young ever taught such a

doctrine, but a prominent Mormon, **Hosea Stout**, wrote in his diary on April 9, 1852:

Another meeting this evening. President B. Young taught that Adam was the father of Jesus and the only God to us. That he came to this world in a resurrected [sic] body... (212).

There is even a Mormon hymn which praises God as “our own father Adam” (213). Despite various denials that Young ever taught this doctrine, certain Mormon sources have acknowledged that he did (213). So the question would be: “Was Young correct in teaching that Adam created the world and is the father of Jesus, or was this second president wrong?” Remember that this same Brigham Young once boasted: “I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men that they may not call scripture” (211).

One would think that Mormons would be embarrassed and ashamed (not to mention confused) concerning what they believe. They are not unlike those in **George Orwell’s 1984** who believe whatever they are told at the moment—even if it contradicts what they were told the day before. We ought to pray that they will, like the prodigal son, come to their senses.

Someone might respond, “It’s easy for you to criticize, but we know for a fact that all in the churches of Christ do not agree with each other.” Really? It is true that we even debate amongst ourselves (because we are willing to put our beliefs to the test). Thus, it is possible to find brethren who disagree on certain subjects—but neither side in a dispute claims inspiration, and that distinction makes all the difference. Since Mormon presidents and prophets claim to be inspired of God, they cannot contradict one another. But they do!

#### MANY OUTSTANDING CHAPTERS

The material already cited is but a small part of the vast wealth of information this book contains. There are chapters that deal with the subject of direct revelation, the inspiration of the scriptures, the false claims of Mormon inspiration, and false teachers in general.

Historical evidence is provided in “The Account of the Origin of Mormonism,” “The Life of Joseph Smith,” “**Sidney Rigdon and Mormonism**,” and “A Study of Brigham Young.” The number of endnotes for these chapters alone totals 84.

The documents that form the core of Mormon teaching are also examined. Included are: “A Study of Pearl of Great Price” (168-200), “An Examination of Doctrine and Covenants” (139-67), and “Literary and Historical Characteristics of The Book of Mormon” (392-439). This latter effort contains more than fifteen pages of New Testament phrases distinctive and peculiar to the New Testament that Smith put in the book of Mormon, most of which was allegedly written before the time of Christ.

Another chapter that is full of historical data is “A Review of the Gatewood-Farnsworth Debate,” which took place in Salt Lake City in 1942. The propositions are given with a summary of each disputant’s main points (488-517). After the final debate between these two men (others followed this one), Farnsworth was excommunicated by the

Mormon Church (490). (Could that be the reason no one wants to debate any more?)

Many chapters deal with specific Mormon doctrines: "The God of Mormonism," "The Virgin Birth of Mormonism," "Two Sticks of Ezekiel 37," "The Mormon Doctrine of Apostles," "The Mormon Doctrine of Priesthood Versus the Bible," "Baptism for the Dead," "The Mormon View of the Hereafter," and "Mormonism and Zion."

Also included is a review of a classic book on this subject: *Mormonism Exposed* by G. B. Hancock, which was originally published in 1902. It did not take that long, however, for people to react to the publication of The Book of Mormon. Alexander Campbell set forth an appraisal of Smith and his "scriptures" in the Millennial Harbinger as early as February 10, 1831 (just months after its introduc-

tion). E. D. Howe published a book called *Mormonism Unveiled* in 1834, in which he set forth the true origin of Smith's "divinely translated" work.

Mormonism would easily be worth \$25 or more, considering the tremendous amount of information it contains, but until the book goes out of print, it is being sold for \$16.00 plus \$2.00 S&P (for 587 pages). Everyone needs the resource material on this subject that this book provides. It may be ordered from: *Contending For The Faith*, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 or E-MAIL [dpbrown9@swbell.net](mailto:dpbrown9@swbell.net).

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## HAVE WE BECOME DESENSITIZED TO SIN?

Kevin Beard

People can endure many unpleasant things if they allow themselves to become desensitized to them. This process may take place by enduring and ignoring it as much as is possible for a period of time. After enough time, the person no longer pays attention to what was at the beginning something very unpleasant. Another way this might happen is by building up one's resistance to something. Someone may be able to take only a small amount of some unpleasant activity at first, but then little by little he is able to endure more and more.

Satan understands that these principles work with many things in life, and he uses that against us. There are many things in the world that God-fearing people find deplorable. Satan knows that and also knows that it would be futile to try to plunge most righteous people into those kinds of things all at once. So, he seeks to bring about a desensitization to sin. If he can convince someone just to tolerate sin long enough, he will eventually convince that person to accept that sin. The process may take a long time, but Satan does not care about that. He is committed to his cause so much that he will sacrifice the time it takes to reach his goal of destroying as many souls as he can.

Is this process really happening? It certainly is. All one must do is observe what is happening in the world today, and he will see exactly how Satan has caused multitudes of people to become desensitized to sin. Have you been caught up in that trap? Have you become desensitized to sin? Think of these areas in which Satan has worked so diligently.

### THE CORRUPTION OF CHRIST'S DOCTRINE

The Lord's church today suffers from the widespread problem of a lack of understanding of and respect for the

authority of Christ. People in the church are rebelling against many of the foundational teachings of the New Testament. For many years now, there has been a gradual drifting away from the New Testament standard. Influential men have introduced new terms and concepts that have taken root and flourished. Where in the New Testament does one read of a differentiation between levels of fellowship? Does the concept of "unity in diversity" appear in apostolic writing? Did the idea that the church needs a "new hermeneutic" come from God? Which of the apostles argued over the principle of "pattern theology?" These are all concepts that have had tremendous influence on many Christians today, and because of that influence, many churches have begun to promote some kind of fellowship with denominational groups.

And what of the rejection of many basic tenets of New Testament Christianity? It is no longer uncommon to hear of congregations of the Lord's people who promote the use of women in leadership and teaching positions. We are no longer shocked to hear of churches that use "praise teams" or choirs or theatrical groups in their worship assemblies. Many of our brethren now dedicate babies, celebrate Christmas and Easter as religious holidays, lift up hands as the Pentecostals do, clap and shout during the worship or after baptisms, and divide their assemblies into children's churches, house churches, contemporary churches, and traditional churches. Some use anything and everything from denominational literature, to television shows, to local medical doctors, lawyers, and financiers who discuss medical, legal, and financial issues during their Bible classes.

These things did not exist in the church in New Testament days. They did not exist in the Lord's church a gen-

eration ago in America. How then have they come to be so prevalent today? It is through the desensitization process. Had Satan attempted to bring all of these things into the church at once, he would have failed miserably. However, by bringing in changes in small increments, he has succeeded in leading many Christians far away from the truth. He has succeeded in corrupting the doctrinal purity of the church with worldly doctrines and concepts. This all happened because members of the church either did not or would not see where all of those small changes were taking them. Now they are a part of a corrupt system and their corruption seems right to them! How sad it is that so many have been so deceived, and because they allowed themselves to become desensitized to the danger of sin, they do not even realize the deception Satan has worked in them.

#### THE DECLINE OF MORAL STANDARDS

Throughout her history, America has been, generally, a nation of high moral standards. We have valiantly stood against atrocities in other lands by committing the full force of American military might to put an end to those atrocities. The general population of America has largely resisted the moral and ethical corruptions so prevalent in other nations. The American public has had a general respect for religion and belief in God. However, that time of general moral uprightness is ebbing. A generation of Americans has arisen who want no restraints, who see no absolute standards, and whose main goal in life is to find pleasure, regardless of the cost.

We live in a nation where entertainment is god and Satan uses that god to teach all the nation to sin, just as Balaam taught Balak to cause Israel to sin (Revelation 2:14). Just think about what can be seen in nearly every living room in America today—sitcoms and dramatic television shows alike that glorify homosexuality, adultery, violence, blasphemy, and outright rebellion against God. No longer content with implying sexuality on TV shows, producers now do all but show the sinful action in full detail (and who knows how long it will be before they do even that!). Having fulfilled their mission of introducing homosexuality to mainstream America by the occasional appearance of homosexual characters, producers now have begun to put out entire series that revolve around homosexual characters. It is no longer taboo to show naked people (either of the same or opposite gender) in bed together. No more do censors cry foul when TV shows depict bloody, violent scenes. More and more offensive words and phrases find their way onto the airwaves every year.

How did all of this come to be? Why do Americans not rise up in arms against such an overt attack on moral decency? It is because they have become desensitized to the horror of what they see on their televisions. This situation did not happen overnight. Television programming did not go from "Ozzie and Harriet" to "NYPD Blue" in the blink of an eye. It happened gradually. At one time censors refused to allow the producers of "I Love Lucy" even to have a double bed in Lucy and Ricky's bedroom. They pressured the "Dick Van Dyke Show" into toning down Mary Tyler Moore's wardrobe because her Capri pants were too racy. But these standards of decency have slowly eroded.

A somewhat questionable scene here, an off-color comment there and after enough time there has developed an overly permissive standard that allows just about anything to be broadcast today. And the television industry continues the pressure to relax what little standards remain.

And so we find ourselves as children of God in a time when Satan is enjoying much success. In the church he has succeeded in slowly destroying people's devotion to truth through a gradual process of weakening, questioning, and compromising. In society he has succeeded in slowly destroying the moral fabric of our nation so that we are constantly barraged with assaults on our holiness. We must wake up. We must not allow ourselves to become desensitized to the attacks of our enemy. We must be sober and vigilant. Our adversary is on the prowl (1 Peter 5:8).

—P. O. Box 24

Fayette, Alabama 35555

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## The Chronicle And Methodists

Jerry Brewer

*The Christian Chronicle* is now aiding Methodists and ecumenicals in their work. The following classified ad appears in the March, 2001 issue of the *Chronicle*.

"Full Time Youth Minister Wanted for cooperative inner city youth program. Candidate may be recent graduate or graduating senior. Contact Steve Byrd at South Lee UMC, 601 SW 36, Oklahoma City, OK 73109, phone 631-4564 or fax 632-3384 at Asbury UMC."

I called the above number and verified that the "South Lee UMC" is indeed the *South Lee United Methodist Church*. The apostates who operate the *Chronicle* refused to carry ads for Gobel Music's book exposing the errors of the "Easy-To-Read-Version" but have no scruples against advertising for false teachers.

I remind you that this paper is owned by Oklahoma Christian University of Science and Arts whose president, Kevin Jacobs is a member of the *Quail Springs church of Christ*. I urge all of you to write letters to the editor about this. We ought not to let something like this pass from a paper which proclaims itself "An international newspaper for members of churches of Christ." A more appropriate designation would be "An ecumenical newspaper for members of Digressive Churches of Christ."

There is another classified in the same edition which seeks a "Youth Minister" for a "15-year-old non-denominational church with 40 teens" in Little Rock.

The mailing address is, *The Christian Chronicle*, P. O. Box 11000, Oklahoma City, OK 73136-1100 or you can go to their website at [www.christianchronicle.org](http://www.christianchronicle.org) and reply to them via email.

—308 S. Oklahoma  
Elk City, Oklahoma 73644



# RECENT "BILLY GRAHAM" ARTICLE REVIEWED

Gary McDADE

Perhaps in view of the support of the "Billy Graham Crusade" in Nashville, Tennessee last June by the *Woodmont Hills Church of Christ* where **Rubel Shelly** is the minister and where many teachers at Lipscomb University attend, among them **John Mark Hicks**, co-founder of the Cordova Community Church in Memphis, a review of a recent "Billy Graham" article which appeared in the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* would among other purposes show why such efforts ought to be opposed and rejected by faithful Christians and sound congregations. In typical fashion Graham poses a question, at least purported to be from a reader, and then gives his response. His question is:

Does any one denomination have a corner on the truth? I grew up in a little church that seemed to think it was the only way to heaven (or at least that's the impression they gave). Now that I'm older, I can't agree.

There is no indication given as to who the querist may be or of what religious affiliation he may be a member. If the individual was a member of the church of Christ, then he either had not been properly taught or he did not obtain a proper understanding of the teaching he received, for the

truth, the word of God (John 17:17), nowhere mentions divine acknowledgment or acceptance of denominations. Therefore, it simply cannot be that any one of them has "a corner on the truth" because not a single one of them owes its existence to the truth. If any one of them did a person could open his Bible and read, for example, about the Baptist Church of which Graham is a member and Shelly, Woodmont Hills Church of Christ, and Lipscomb University (at least in part) are supporters. Jesus Christ, who built his church (Matthew 16:18), spoke of his will concerning his followers "**that they all may be one.. that they also may be one in us.. that they may be one, even as we are one. ..that they may be made perfect in one**" (John 17:20-23). The truth of God states, "**Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment**" (I Corinthians 1:10). So, no *denomination* has a "corner on the truth" because no denomination is of the truth. The apostle John wrote, "**We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error**" (I John 4:6). When people do not adhere to the teachings of the inspired apostles they are in error.

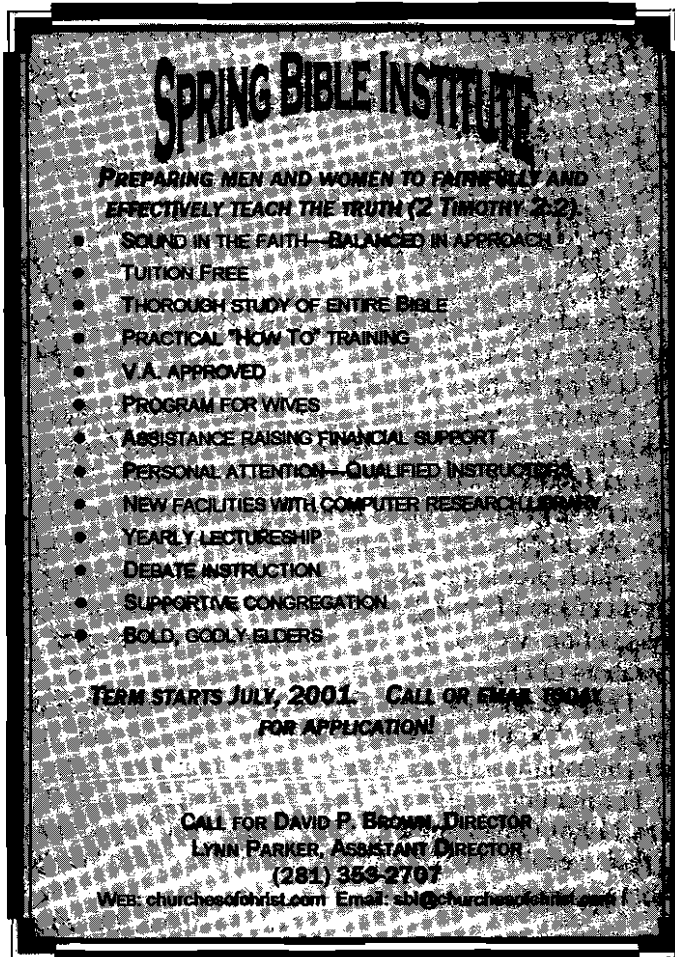
Graham's answer is presented in four paragraphs. The first one reads, "*I'm sure we'd all like to think that our own church or denomination is the right one, but God's truth isn't limited to any single group.*"

Certainly, Graham would like for *his* Baptist Church to be "the right one" and because of that belief he upholds teaching peculiar to the Baptist Church which differs with the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Pentecostal Church, and others. So, please, note that Graham is on record as saying he would like to think his church is "the right one." A weakening of prejudice against the church of Christ results when this fact is held in evidence.

Although Graham said, "God's truth isn't limited to any single group," the Bible said, "**But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth**" (I Timothy 3:15). If "the church of the living God" is not a "single group," then "the house of God" cannot be a "single group." Yet, "the house of God" has one head (Hebrew 3:6), one founder (Hebrew 12:2; Ezekiel 1:33), one purpose (Mark 3:25), and one destiny (I John 14:2).

The second paragraph reads,

Churches differ on minor issues, such as how they govern themselves or what they do in their worship services. This isn't necessarily wrong in God's eyes, because He hasn't given us exact instructions on every detail of church life in the Bible.



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Again, Graham is in error; for, indeed, God has given us exact instructions on the government and worship of the church. A denial of this fact constitutes a denial of Isaiah 9:6-7 where Isaiah prophesied that "the government shall be upon his [Christ's] shoulder" and he would "order it." It is not a "minor issue" to deny this sacred text.

Worship services must reflect what the Lord authorized (John 4:24; I Corinthians 14:40), and if "what they do in there worship services" is in error it can cost them their souls (Acts 5:1-11; I Corinthians 11:17-34).

The third paragraph reads,

But all churches and denominations that truly seek to follow Christ agree on the central truths of the Gospel: that Jesus was the divine Son of God, sent from heaven to save us from our sins by His death and Resurrection. They all agree we need Christ to save us, that we need to follow Christ and seek to do His will 'on Earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10).

Those that Graham mentions may agree in principle, but they clearly do not agree in practice because they insist on remaining in man-made denominations none of which are more than five hundred years old. They cannot be fellowshipped (II John 9-11).

The fourth paragraph reads,

Don't let your disagreement with a few Christians from your past keep you from Christ. He is the one who came to save you and the one you will meet in eternity. God loves you and wants you to come to know Him in a personal way. Open your heart to Christ and discover the joy of following Him.

Graham's close is the Calvinistic presentation of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit as he urged, "Open your heart to Christ" The Lord opens peoples' hearts with the apostles' doctrine (Acts 16:14-15; 2:42), and the teaching that people are saved anywhere but in Christ, that is in his church is not the apostles' doctrine (Romans 12:45; Ephesians 1:3, 21-23; 4:4; 5:23). Members of the churches of Christ are not the only ones who are going to heaven; they are the only ones who have the opportunity because their alien sins have been remitted! (Romans 16:16; Matthew 7:13-14; Acts 2:38).

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Graham's impaired health has been a subject of public notification, yet the "Billy Graham" newspaper column continues to be printed as if the material currently is being written by him. While we doubt it is current, the reference to the article under review as "recent" is attributable to the fact of its recent publication in the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* (February 2001).

—1511 Getwell Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38111-7299

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## WHY WE OFFER THE INVITATION

Gary Montgomery

The reports are becoming more prominent every day. God's children sit in a Sunday worship hour at a particular congregation and hear little Bible scripture given. Perhaps a text is read, comments and review given, and then the invitation. The conclusion that folks are asking "what shall we do?" is correctly presumed by the preacher of the gospel. But many modern-day preachers seldom mention a need for repentance and obedience to God's plan for regeneration, Baptism. Yes, I deem it a plan, "according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:11).

I received a mailing from a concerned elder in a neighboring congregation who evidently saw himself as a disciple of K. C. Moser, one who has been lifted along with his books, "The Gist Of Romans" and "The Way of Salvation," as a prophet of truth in a wilderness of traditionalism. Or so they think. In his writings, Moser declares "any (plan) removes Christ and the Cross from salvation." Great efforts are made to describe specific commands from God as "arbitrary" and that it "misconceives the meaning of obedience under Christ." Thus men like Max Lucado, a well-known minister and writer from San Antonio, tells church of Christ members and the world, "I want to encourage you to be baptized; I want to encourage you to read your Bible. But I don't want you to do any of that so that you will be saved." So, in the name of grace and faith,

we toss the waters of regeneration out the window of "unity and diversity!"

When Nicodemus comes to Jesus in John 3, he already knows about the Man. And many today say that the man Jesus saves you, and not the plan. But this ruler is asking about his purpose and his plan! Strange that our Lord did not say, "just put your faith in me and the cross." No, Jesus explained to him how entrance into the kingdom of God was only possible through a "spiritual birth plan" as he declared, "except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Later he tells those disciples in Luke 13 who asked about strange ideas, "except you repent, you will all likewise perish." More of that plan was given to the Eleven in Mark 16 when our Lord said, "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

There is a purpose and plan set forth by Jesus himself. And this "milk toast faith and grace" designed to embrace everybody's ideas of Jesus and his will in the name of religious unity is void of faith.

Let us preach Christ as Lord and Savior, and his gospel as the plan. A great plan that brings all baptized believers into his church, which is his body (Ephesians 1:22, 23). Nothing more, and nothing less.

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# DOBBS & DANCING & "ALL OF LIFE IS WORSHIP!"

Jesse Whitlock

Many were disappointed when the *Firm Foundation*, was recently renamed the *Flimsy Foundation*, on the basis of the editor's attempt to defend the false doctrine that "All of life is worship, except when we sin." Many capable brethren have exposed this doctrine as false and without scriptural support; i.e., **Eddie Whitten, Daniel Denham, Dub McClish, Don Tarbet, David Brown, Gary Grizzell, Curtis Cates, Garland Elkins**, and others. These have all pointed out, correctly, that "worship" comes from the Greek *proskuneo*. This is a compound word made up of the Greek preposition *pros*, which means toward and *kuneo*, which means to kiss. Vine has defined this word as an "act of homage or reverence to God." Obviously, this cannot be confused with one's service or duty to God. However, this seems to be what has happened in the mind of Dobbs and some of his cohorts.

This not-so-new view of worship was first made known to the brotherhood in the pages of *FF*, December 1998 on pp.6-7, in an article penned by Dobbs under the caption, "Is All of Life Worship?" Almost immediately we began to read articles and hear lessons from faithful brethren showing that worship and service are not always equivalent.

In Genesis 22, Abraham said, "...I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (5). Going up and walking back were not acts of worship. In 2 Samuel 12, "David arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped" (20). This, of course, all took place after he had learned of the death of his child. Luke records in Acts 8 of the Ethiopian eunuch who "had come to Jerusalem for to worship" (27). These passages and many others indicate that worship can

be punctuated by stop and go. Have you noticed that most of our worship services have opening and closing prayers?

Since Dobbs' position finds no support in scripture, it might be encouraging to his supporters to know that he does have support from dance instructors! I have just finished reading the November 18, 2000 edition of the *Corpus Christi Caller Times* (EA "Religion"), written by **Loretta Fulton, AP**. The heading reads, "Liturgical dances gaining interest among kids. More children eagerly learning form of worship." There is a picture of girls dancing, with the caption below: "Eight-year-old **Hannah Gregory** and **Rachel Bam**, 11, rehearse movement to liturgical dance, an art form they are learning as a means of worship." **Anna Gillette**, owner of **Turning Pointe Academy of Performing Arts**, is quoted, "For me, the most natural way to worship is by moving." The article went on to point out, "Accompanied by sacred music, the youngsters use an exaggerated form of sign language and body movements to act out the words to scripture or hymns. To them, sacred dance is every bit as sacred as singing a hymn or praying." A member of the Hillcrest Church of Christ (Abilene, TX), identified as **Dionne McCorquodale**, does not foresee the day when people will be dancing in the aisles during a worship service. However, it is likely sacred dance might be performed during a fellowship gathering, and is quoted, "It (sacred dancing - JW) would be completely appropriate and probably appreciated."

Those who are espousing the Dobb's doctrine will certainly appreciate the fact that "Now Gillette is teaching others, as well as performing at her own church, St. Paul United Methodist." Now, in addition to the claim that CHANGING diapers is worship, can be added moving and the sacred dance of the CHANGE-agents and denominationalism. Because, as the article concluded with another quote from Gillette, "The first few times we did it (sacred dancing-JW), we had a lot of opposition," she said, but eventually that CHANGED."

It would be my sincere hope and prayer that the pages of the *Firm Foundation* could CHANGE and once more ring true to the Book as they did under date of June 8, 1965, p.361, when it was rightly observed by the late **Roy H. Lannier, Sr.**, "A man serves God when he provides for his own family by putting food on the table, but he worships God when he gives thanks for that food before he eats it."

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in Truth" (John 4:24).

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## Current Events That Concern Christians...

# Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Baylor University, Madelyn Murray O'Hair

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon, controversial Unification Church founder, told an audience in a North Philadelphia church March 2 that Americans and their nation have been declining since the end of World War II "because they did not recognize the truth that was brought to them by Rev. Moon."

He added that "the truth I'm sharing with you tonight - this is the ultimate truth, directly from God." He also told them, "I'm an expert on the spirit world," and in the after-life, there are no nationalities or religious sects" (*Religion Today* email service, 3/7/01). [He is right that there will be no nationalities or religious sects in heaven. He needs to realize that he will not be there either unless he starts obeying the word of God. All Americans need the Bible sonlight instead of Moonlight.—MTM]

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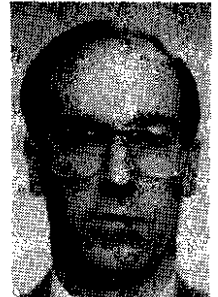
The Washington Times Foundation hosted an inaugural prayer luncheon during the past inauguration. Martin Luther King, Billy Graham, and Sun Myung Moon were honored at the luncheon. Robert Schuller of Crystal Cathedral fame, marveled at the "myriad" of different religious groups praying in the same room. He added about the apparent unity, "...the only way I can explain it in my theology is the Holy Spirit [and that] Jesus Christ has really diversified his investment portfolio" (*The Berean Call*, March 2001). [God does not diversify his truth among denominations and different religions. Moon even claims to be Christ. Are we to believe that God is pleased with such. Satan must be very pleased with such ecumenical thinking. We must ask if Shelly and others who now believe Billy Graham is a man of God, also believe Moon to be such. And if they do not, will they distance themselves from Graham for fellowshiping Moon? If not, why not? —MTM]

\*\*\*\*\*

A female cadet is pregnant at VMI and is planning on staying in school. If you remember, VMI was forced by the courts to allow women into its military training school. This is one of the outcomes forecast by those against such coercion. There will undoubtedly be more such pregnancies. This can only serve to destroy the high level of discipline the school has always maintained. On the positive side—the young woman is planning to have the baby instead of having an abortion. She should be commended for that decision (*Citizenlink* email service, 3/7/01). [Men and women should not be housed together. Nor should they be in such intimate contact as military training requires. The courts of our land have created a very bad situation at this school.—MTM]

\*\*\*\*\*

Baylor University dismissed a professor due to his stance for the Biblical account of Creation. Dr. William Dembski, director of the Polanyi Center, which was created to research the concept of Intelligent Design had released a report which stated that "intelligent design[has] a legitimate claim to a place in current discussions of the relations of religion and the sciences." University President, Robert Sloan, declared that creation science is not good theology. He stated that he would "be embarrassed for what I understand to be creation science to be taught at Baylor University." (*Answers Update*, January, 2001, p.13). [Baylor purports to be a "Christian" University. It would seem that they have denied the inspiration of the scriptures. If one cannot believe Moses how can they believe Jesus? (John 5:46-47).—MTM]



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The leading Bishop of the United Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Germany, **Hans Christian Knuth** (Schleswig) and Bavarian Bishop **Johannes Friedrich** (Munich) have suggested that Protestants may recognize the Pope, in a limited capacity, as a universally accepted spokesman. What Lutherans should not accept is his absolute power of jurisdiction in the church and the doctrine of infallibility (*Religion Today* email service, 3/15/01). [How absurd! How can the Pope be a universal spokesman of God but not have power of jurisdiction? —MTM]

\*\*\*\*\*

All but solving the mystery of the 1995 disappearance of **Madalyn Murray O’Hair**, federal authorities con-

firmed Thursday that bones dug up from a south Texas ranch in January are those of the atheist leader and two of her relatives. Scientists used medical and dental records to identify the remains of O’Hair, her son **Jon Garth Murray** and granddaughter **Robin Murray O’Hair** (*Law News Network* email service, 3/15/01). [This should put to rest those email bulletins constantly being sent out about her continuing to attempt legislation passage. She definitely is dead. And she is no longer an atheist.—MTM]

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## Luke Was Not A Doctor

R.C. Oliver  
(1918-1998)

*For many years R.C. Oliver taught English and Literature at Southwestern College. For much of that time he was the master of ceremonies at the "Open Forum" conducted by Guy N. Woods during the annual F&C lectures. Twenty years ago this coming May 27th at the Pinson, Tennessee Church of Christ building he performed the wedding ceremony for Joann and me. He was a much appreciated help to us when Joann was a younger preacher. —D.P.B.*

Luke was a physician, the beloved physician (Colossians 4:14), but he was not a doctor! The title “doctor” was not worn by medical men in Luke’s time, but teachers were then called doctors. Therefore one reads that Jesus reasoned with “the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers” (Luke 2:46-47). Again, in Acts 5:34 it is written: “Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space.”

Therefore, teachers were the first to be called doctors and the title was later applied to medical men, perhaps because they were recognized as learned men. Jesus’ attitude toward the title is expressed in Matthew 23:10, in the Geneva Bible, the 1560 edition, in the following manner: “**Be not called doctors: for one is your doctor, even Christ.**” Knowing how Jesus felt about wearing the title, it is not likely that Luke ever used the title in his lifetime. To call him “doctor” is to commit a serious error, to say the least, a misleading anachronism. If one wants to be correct, he will not call Luke “Doctor.”

Only recently have men begun to call themselves “doctors” at church functions. When I began to preach during the mid 30’s I cannot recall even one individual who allowed himself to be called doctor. Men then simply did not wear the title in the church.

To call men “doctor” at a church function is a departure from former practice. **Clem Thurman**, writing upon this

subject, wrote in *Gospel Minutes* on March 21, 1997 the following: “When I preached in Abilene, Texas thirty years ago. I became good friends with dozens of men on the faculty of ACU, nearly all of whom had earned doctorate degrees (PH.D. or similar). At academic functions they were usually called ‘doctor’ but at church functions, every one of them refused the title Doctor. And they were right.”

“**Ye are all one in Christ**” (Galatians 3:28) means that all titles, which by their very nature separate us, are prohibited. We are truly to be “one in Christ.” The Lord does not permit his people to wear titles in his church.

A historic discussion between **Ira M. Boswell**, a minister for the Christian church, and **N. B. Hardeman**, a minister for the church of Christ, took place in Nashville, Tennessee in 1923. In that discussion Boswell said in the very beginning of the first night’s session. “Just here let me offer a word that I may put myself right—that is I never refer to myself as “Doctor”...I am not a doctor, nor do I claim to be a “Reverend.” And he said this at the beginning of the discussion in that he had been introduced as “the Rev. Dr.,” and so his brethren “may not misunderstand.”

Therefore, in order to keep the record straight, remember that Luke is not an example of one who used the title “Doctor” in the church, neither should he be called doctor at church functions today! Therefore, as Jesus said: “**Be not called doctors: for one is your doctor, even Christ.**”

To those who love the Lord this will be enough said to get them to refrain from the use of all titles that will elevate to different levels in the church of the Lord.

—deceased

# MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC ARGUMENTS REFUTED

Paul Vaughn

The first major departure from the Restoration Plea, in the mid 1800's, was the introduction of the Missionary Society in 1849. The second major departure came in 1859 when the church at Midway, Kentucky started using mechanical instrumental music in worship. **Lewis Littig Pinkerton** was the preacher at Midway. He must be given credit for this fatal and historic step away from the New Testament pattern for worship.

Those who have taken the way of transgression have mounted argument after argument to try to justify their adding mechanical instrumental music to the worship of the church of Christ. Faithful brethren from the very beginning of this apostasy mounted a successful defense of the Scripture. They clothed themselves in the armor of God engaging in this spiritual battle, giving no quarter, and never once said, "cease-fire." Liberals heaved argument after argument, but their resolve was to go to the Bible and let God's word shed light on those antagonists of darkness.

## BOOKS WRITTEN TO REFUTE ERROR

There have been a number of good books written by sound brethren to refute the arguments of those who try to champion mechanical instruments of music in worship. One of the first and most outstanding works was written by **M. C. Kurfees**. It was called *Instrumental Music in the Worship*. Kurfees studies the Greek word "Psallo" and how it was used in history. He also looked at apostolic examples of music in worship. This compassionate defense of the truth is a must to have and read.

Once the arguments presented by the apostates on Psallo were answered by faithful defenders of church, the digressive's came up with different defenses for their error. Another book worth consideration is *Instrumental Music and New Testament Worship* by **James Bales**.<sup>1</sup> In his book, Bales shows what it means to worship in spirit and truth, appeals to the Old Testament, to the silence of the scriptures, refutes the arguments of instrumental music as an aid, and answers a collection of other arguments. It is a good tool to defend the truth.

**Foy E. Wallace Jr.** wrote a book looking at the dangers of mechanical instrumental music called, *The Instrumental Music Question*. Wallace included material by M.C. Kurfees, **Don Morris**, **Moses Lard** and **John Girardeau**. In the author's preface, Wallace said, "Battles do not stay fought, and victories do not remain won."<sup>2</sup> Because battles do not stay fought it is important to visit these good books to review how they refuted error in the past.

## DEBATES

Debates are far and few between today, but in the history of the church they were important avenues to defend the faith. There is always the need for public discussion of

the issues that have divided the church. Men of principle, who exhibit Christian character in their contending for the faith, will accomplish untold good in public discussions.

**N.B. Hardeman** was one of those great men of character who accomplished much in public debates. The Boswell-Hardeman discussion on instrumental music is a classic to read and reread. It was conducted at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1923. Boswell tried to prove there is authority for mechanical instrument music in the worship of God. Hardeman met every one of Boswell's arguments plainly and lovingly by mooring himself to the word of God.

**G.K. Wallace** was another one of those Christian soldiers who defended the truth against the advances of wickedness. He met **Julian Hunt** in debate on April 24-27, 1951. Hunt's defense was disarmed, overwhelmed, and made powerless by Wallace.

There are other debates that also need to be studied. *The Book-Miller Debate* and the *Highers-Blakely Debate* are but a few of many that have stood the test of time.

## THE TRUTH WILL PREVAIL ALWAYS

Mechanical instrumental music was introduced in worship at Midway over one hundred and forty years ago.' From that time period until today, efforts have been made to try to justify its use, but all have fallen under the weight of the Bible. Just as the faithful preachers in history stood firm, so must we today in this age of compromise. The encouragement of Jude to the early church to stand for truth is just as important in this modern age. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

## ENDNOTES

1. **PLEASE NOTE:** James Bales' teaching on divorce and remarriage is false teaching. *Contending for the Faith* and I stand opposed to his error on divorce and remarriage. But his book refuting the sin of mechanical instrumental of music in worship is an excellent defense of the faith on that subject.
2. Foy Wallace, *The Instrumental Music Question*, Wallace Publications, Fort Worth, p. VII. We also stand opposed to Wallace's position on divorce and remarriage.

—14150 Lincoln Rd.  
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## Congregational Development...

# "Stirring Up The Brethren"

Lynn Parker

It is never difficult to stir up strife and bitterness in the church. Sadly, it happens all too often. You can, however, stir brethren up in the local congregation for righteousness and good works. Our obligation toward one another includes this divine imperative: **"and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works"** (Hebrews 10:24). The actions of the one or several on behalf of the treasured cause of Christ Jesus can stimulate others to do likewise.

**For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them (II Corinthians 9:1-2).**

Tired, lethargic congregations can, in many cases, be revitalized when someone starts working. Work becomes contagious. Too many times we sit around twiddling our thumbs waiting for a "program to start." But what can be done? Where do we start? Here are a few suggestions that may help the congregation with which you labor to "get going."

*Firstly, you can visit the wayward.* You do not have to wait until a name is announced from the pulpit to express your concern to the erring. The obligation of every faithful child of God to the prodigal is plain enough (James 5:19-20; Galatians 6:1-2). Will you nightly stare at the TV waiting for someone else to start a program to reclaim the backsliding brothers and sisters in your community? You do it! And while you are at it, invite some brethren in the congregation to go with you. Tell another that you will be at his house next Monday night and that the two of you will go calling on beloved souls who have wandered away from the path of righteousness.

*Secondly, you can "knock doors" and pass out tracts.* Again, there is no need to wait for a "program" to start. Christ already commissioned the teaching of the gospel (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18ff). Why not, as a family knock on the doors of 20 neighbors this week? Invite them

to worship assemblies. Ask them to take a Bible Correspondence Course or better yet, study the Bible with you. Invite five other Christian families to help you knock doors this month.

*Thirdly, attend a good, sound lectureship or gospel meeting.* Take two families from the local congregation with you. Try to do this regularly. Expose others to an evening of fellowship, discussion, and a spiritual feast. Get the congregation out of the "recluse" mode and be involved with other faithful congregations.

*Fourthly, have a workshop — a special study on a selected topic.* Perhaps you can ask two "outside" speakers to come in and present lessons on evangelism during the course of a weekend. Or, ask several of the faithful men of the congregation to address the topics. They will grow as a result of their preparation for the assignment. You could take a book of the Bible or a section (say, I and II Peter) and engage in a study all one Saturday. Have a luncheon in between classes.

*Fifthly, host a retreat for young people.* Find out the dates for spring break and encourage your teens to set aside a Thursday-Friday-Saturday when you can all travel to any number of camps and enjoy special Bible training classes. Ask neighboring congregations to help by providing teachers as well as teens for the effort.

There are no quick, easy cures for spiritual lethargy. The remedy for inactivity is for someone to start the work. Do not become discouraged if others are slow or reluctant to get involved. It takes perseverance to move dead weight. Do what you can, with the abilities you have, and redeem the time (Ephesians 5:16). And even if no other brother or sister arises to help shoulder the load, you will have done the Lord's work and he will remember (Hebrews 6:10) and your labor will not be in vain (I Corinthians 15:58).



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# DYING IN SIGHT OF THE FINISH LINE

Jason Roberts

Another racing icon tragically died this past February on the final lap of the final turn of the legendary Daytona 500. Dale Earnhardt, Sr., known by racing fans as “The Intimidator,” died instantly of head injuries sustained in the tragic accident. Thousands of spectators waited in silence for the news of his condition, and at the age of 49, possibly the best known figure in motor sports history was announced to be dead.

The tragedy of Earnhardt’s death reminds us of several sobering lessons that are worthy of our consideration:

*Firstly, his death is a vivid reminder of the brevity of life.* Life is very short and it is often described in vivid terminology for us in the Bible. James described our lives like “a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James 4:14). Job said, “our days upon earth are as a shadow” and likened those days to be “swifter than a weaver’s shuttle” (Job 8:9, 7:6). Peter referred to life as being like grass that withers and a flower that fadeth away as quickly as the seasons change (I Peter 1:24). Someone has well said that “Man’s body is born for time, his spirit is given for eternity. The moment he walks through the door marked ‘life’ he immediately begins a hasty exit toward the door marked ‘death.’” Truly, “like sand in an hour glass—so are the days of our lives.”

*Secondly, his death is a vivid reminder of the certainty of death.* You would think that at the age of 49, Earnhardt still had a bright racing career ahead of him, but all of that was cut short in a matter of seconds. Just prior to the race, the camera showed Earnhardt kissing his wife. In the pit crew, he had his arm around his son and was later pictured as closing his eyes for a moment—perhaps praying for

God to protect him during the race? Little did he know that this would be the last time he would see his wife and four children on this side of eternity. In the March edition of *Sports Illustrated* Magazine, Earnhardt was reported to have said a few years ago that racing was his life and that he knew that there would come a time when he would have to walk away from his car. “I will know when that day will come,” he said. Unfortunately, that day never came. The wise-man expressed it ever so accurately when he said, “Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth” (Proverbs 27:1).

*Thirdly, the certainty of death is also pictured for us in Holy scripture.* It was the distressed David, who said to Samuel, “there is but a step between me and death” (I Samuel 20:3). Notice the proximity of David’s death was measured in terms of the distance between walking one step (cf., Psalm 23:4). How vivid! Furthermore, the Hebrews writer affirmed the certainty of our death—calling it an appointment which none of us can break (Hebrews 9:27).

*Fourthly, his death is a vivid reminder of the uncertainty of death.* While the Bible affirms the *certainty* of our death; it equally affirms the *uncertainty* of our death—that is we are left in the dark as to when we will die. The fact of our death is certain, the timing is uncertain. That being the case, may we all learn to “number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalm 90:12).

*Fifthly, his death reminds us of the importance of finishing the Christian race.* Think about it. Earnhardt had every intention of finishing the last lap of that race. He had completed 499 and 3/4 of the 500 mile journey, but unfortunately and tragically he died in sight of the finish line. *It is not starting the race that matters as much as finishing the race does.* No one receives a prize for starting the race. And, it is not enough for us to begin the Christian race, we must finish it. Also, the only way we will be able to finish that race to heaven is to be constantly “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2). When we reach the end of our Christian race, may we like Paul be found triumphantly and confidently saying, “I have finished my course” (II Timothy 4:7)!



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# GOD AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

- A. An 11-year old girl was raped by 4 adult men and then killed by stuffing her underclothes down her throat.
1. Picture yourself as being on the jury in this actual case, and helping to find them guilty.
  2. Question: What penalty should be given? If God were to decide what penalty should be given, what do you suppose he would say?
  3. In a February 23, 1994 newspaper, this criminal case was mentioned in an article where **Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun** announced that he could no longer vote for the death penalty any time.
    - a. For more than 20 years he voted for the death penalty in criminal cases brought before the Supreme Court—in numerous cases.
    - b. The newspaper said, "Blackmun expressed his unequivocal opposition to capital punishment in a written dissent to the court's refusal to hear an appeal from **Bruce Edwin Callins**, who was to be executed by lethal injection early today in Texas."
- B. God has always taught that the penalty for taking life must be the giving of life (Genesis 9:6).
1. The reason for this punishment is that man is made in God's image—with a soul from God.
    - a. This Bible principle is taught throughout the O. T.
    - b. The statement that man is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) still holds true today.
  2. Human life is so precious that God decrees a forfeiture of life for the one who takes another's life.

- C. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun stated that we should not practice the death penalty simply because it is not working.
1. But consider this:
    - a. God said do it, whether we think it works or not.
    - b. It will work - especially if carried out quickly.
  2. Justice Blackmun then stated that the death penalty should be abolished because some innocent parties are executed.
    - a. This may be true when imperfect people are carrying it out, but it also may have been true under the O. T. law when God commanded the death penalty.
    - b. Using this same reasoning we should also do away with court trials for everything, because an innocent party may be convicted.
- D. Let us now turn to the Bible and see what it says about the death penalty.



## DISCUSSION

- A. God gave the death penalty under the Old Testament.
1. For murder.
    - a. Leviticus 24:21
    - b. Numbers 35:30
  2. For death due to negligence after warning (Exodus 21:28-29).
  3. For rape (Deuteronomy 22:25).
  4. For adultery.
    - a. Leviticus 20:10-11
    - b. Deuteronomy 22:22
  5. For kidnaping ... Exodus 21:16
  6. For homosexuality...Leviticus 20:13.
  7. For bestiality ... Exodus 22:19.
  8. For disrespect toward parents... Exodus 21:15, 17.
  9. For unauthorized people approaching sacred furniture.
    - a. Numbers 3:10, 38
    - b. An example ... I Chronicles 13:9-10.
  10. For working on the sabbath ... Exodus 35:2.
  11. For being a false prophet or a sorcerer.
    - a. Deuteronomy 13:4-6
    - b. Exodus 22:18
  12. For worshipping false gods ... Deuteronomy 13:6-9.
- B. God gave the death penalty in the New Testament.
1. This is implied in Romans 15:4.
  2. This is given in principle through civil government.
    - a. Romans 13:1-4
    - b. Note that the right to take human life is for society as an organization, and not for individuals to act alone by taking the law into their own hands.
    - c. Under the law of Moses, civil and religious law were joined together under rules of the law.
    - d. Under the New Testament, the church does not function as a body to punish in civil matters.
      - 1) This does not mean that members of the church cannot function within God's civil power to punish evil-doers.

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- 2) If the government is God's "minister," how can it be sinful for one to be a part in it?
3. Now it is important for us to realize that personal vengeance is sinful.
  - a. Romans 12:17-21
  - b. Here we are told to leave vengeance up to God.
  - c. God's method of vengeance is two-fold:
    - 1) He uses civil power to punish evil-doers, as well as to protect those who do well ... 1 Peter 2:13-14.
    - 2) God will then punish all impenitent sinners (including murderers) in hell.
      - a) Matthew 10:28
      - b) Revelation 21:8

#### CONCLUSION

- A. But there are people today who will try to say that a "loving God" does not authorize capital punishment.
  1. We need to ask, was not God a loving God in the Old Testament when he authorized capital punishment? Note Jeremiah 9:24.
  2. Will God still not be a loving God when he destroys souls in hell.
- B. But then someone will ask, "How can one be pro-life and pro-punishment at the same time?"
  1. In other words, some feel that if we are for killing the murderers, we are inconsistent for opposing the killing of babies by mothers who don't want to bring children into the world.
  2. My answer to this question is one word: INNOCENCE.
    - a. Little children are innocent and have done no wrong.
    - b. Murderers, on the other hand, have committed evil against society.
- C. To those who say capital punishment does not work because the criminal cannot be reformed, need to remember that "reformation" is not the only reason for punishment.
  1. Punishment is also for the protection of society.
  2. Murderers who receive capital punishment will never murder again, and such punishment is a deterrent to others who would murder.
- D. It is very disappointing to see those in high authority argue as Justice Blackmun has argued.
  1. The turning away from Bible principles is the root of our problems in society today.
  2. Proverbs 14:34.

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# **Standing Upon Holy Ground**

Daniel Denham

In Exodus 3:5 God said to Moses from the burning bush, **“Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”** The time of this statement is about the year B.C. 1490. Israel is in Egyptian bondage, but the end of that bondage was drawing near. Moses was the chosen deliverer of the people, and on Mt. Sinai he received his commission. God had drawn him to the mountain of God by the miraculous wonder of the bush that was on fire but was not consumed.

## **MOSES GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Moses was eighty years of age at the time of this event, but still well able with God’s guidance and help to carry out the task ahead. He had spent his first 40 years of life in Egypt. Most of that time he had been a prince in Pharaoh’s house. He had been educated in the knowledge, manners and deportment of royalty. He was a man who **“was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds”** (Acts 7:22). In Egypt he learned to walk with princes.

Moses’ second 40 years had been spent in Midian as a shepherd tending the sheep of his father-in-law, Jethro the priest of God in Midian. Moses learned the toils and trials of the common man, and thus learned to walk with the people.

His greatest tests and trials were yet before him. He would have to help deliver Israel from bondage and then guide them safely to the borders of Canaan, **“the land flowing with milk and honey.”** This would cover the last 40 years of his life, and he would die somewhere on the peak of Mt. Nebo just outside of the land of promise and be buried by Jehovah in a hidden grave. This latter period of 40 years would involve great sacrifice, patience, and faith. Moses would not handle everything perfectly. He would have his own frailties and failings to overcome. Though he would die faithful to God, he would not be permitted to enter that land of rest itself as events then future from Exodus 3 would show! Moses would have to learn what it means fully to walk with God.

At the time of Exodus 3:5, Moses had been engaged in his pastoral duties. But Jehovah now calls him to shepherd the children of Israel. He is sent to Egypt to command Pharaoh to let Israel go. When Moses came into the presence of God on Mt. Sinai some 3500 years ago, God told him to remove his shoes **“for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”** In **“Standing Upon Holy Ground,”** Moses would learn some important lessons, which are still valid and relevant today. Let us examine some of them.

## **RESPECT FOR GOD’S AUTHORITY**

Standing upon holy ground, Moses surely learned that he must respect the authority and power of Jehovah God. Moses was a great man, even in worldly terms. He had dined at the sumptuous table of the king of Egypt, the most powerful, mortal monarch of his day. The 18th dynasty, a dynasty dressed in splendor and power – one of the great conquering dynasties of Egyptian history, was then at its high-water mark. The names of **Ahmoses, Thutmosis I and Thutmosis II** struck terror in the hearts of their contemporaries. Other rulers from the dynasty would leave their indelible marks upon history for good and for ill. Moses had been a prince in Egypt, a favored son of Pharaoh, probably of the great warrior king Thutmosis I. Yet this great man, Moses, stood in awe and fear of the majesty of the King of Heaven, the great **“I Am.”** The miracle of the burning bush underscored the august power of God and without doubt served to confirm to Moses the authority of the One to whom he spake **“face to face.”**

We too need to learn to respect divine authority. That authority rests today in God’s inspired word (II Timothy 3:16-17). It is vested in his son (Matthew 28:18). It is revealed in the testament or will of that son – the New Testament (cf. Matthew 17:5; Hebrews 1:1-2; Colossians 3:17; Galatians 6:2). When it comes to the terms of membership in, worship, organization, and work of the church, we must respect God’s authority (I Peter 4:11). When it comes to morality, we must respect God’s rulership over us (Titus 2:11-14). The lack of respect for divine authority inevitably leads to sin and apostasy.

A side note to observe here that illustrates the power of God and how men often ignore or otherwise disrespect it is seen in the matter of the burning bush. Many today, such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, scoff at the biblical concept of an eternal Hell where the wicked are tormented in flame but not consumed. These need to take note of the burning bush. In like fashion, the Jehovah’s Witnesses ridicule the notion of the physical universe being utterly consumed by fire. They do err **“not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God”!** They need to read I Kings 18 and observe carefully the contest on Mt. Carmel. Two great mountains in Bible history observed events that destroy such folly of men as present in Russellite doctrine. The failure to respect the power of God is the source of much foolishness in religion. If God says he will do it, that settles the matter.

## **REDEMPTION FOR MEN BY THE LORD**

On Mt. Sinai Moses was made aware of Jehovah’s plan to redeem Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. Moses would



be the instrument, or the agency, by which God would operate. But the deliverance would be by God's power. He would lead them out by his mighty hand. God would **"stretch out his hand, and smite Egypt"** and Pharaoh would let the people go!

We today should be aware of God's plan to redeem men from the bondage of sin. We should understand that as God had a plan then, even so he does now. One cannot have the Man – Jesus Christ – without the plan, which is the gospel of Christ. God is not haphazard in his dealings with men. To speak of divine government is to speak of divine law, which embodies the plan. There was a miraculous element involved in Israel's deliverance in the process of inspiration for the information that Moses received directly from God and the miraculous signs that confirmed that message. Likewise, the New Testament was revealed to and confirmed by miraculous signs and wonders by the apostles of Christ and those upon whom they laid their hands (Hebrews 2:1-4; Mark 16:20). There was also a non-miraculous element involved in that Israel had to accept the message, obey, and follow Moses out of Egypt. The gospel of Christ, revealed and confirmed, is sufficient to guide one out of the bondage of sin and deliver him safely into the land of rest (Romans 1:16-17; Acts 20:32). The gospel is God's remedy for the plight of man in sin. Human agency in applying that remedy is a part of the divine plan (I Corinthians 1:21).

#### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN TO GOD

The entire discourse between God and Moses demonstrates the amenability of men to God. Deism is a false philosophy. God has revealed himself in nature and in his inspired word. God revealed his will to Moses, and he expected Moses to comply. Now God has revealed his will to all men by his word. Initially this required direct, miraculous revelation, as seen by the discourse itself and of the oral presentation of that message conjoined with the miraculous confirmatory signs. But eventually this involved the indirect use of the medium of the written word and the diligent study of that word by men. This is how men know God's will today.

Moses was clearly responsible before God. He had to go to Egypt and carry out his work. Pharaoh was also answerable to God. He had to let the people go. Israel was not beyond the scope of God's will. They had to believe the message and leave Egypt under the guidance of Moses. All men today are amenable to God and to God's word (cf.

Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47; Romans 3:23; 5:12; 6:23). The fact of the day of Judgment implies accountability (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Romans 14:12; II Corinthians 5:10-11; Revelation 20:11-15).

#### THE FACT OF GOD'S CONCERN AND CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE

For 400 years in Canaan and Egypt, the people were afflicted in various ways by the Egyptians. After the death of Joseph, Israel's servitude in Egypt became bitter and oppressive, and Israel cried out for deliverance, but was not immediately provided with a savior. The brutality, humiliation, death, and sorrow that Israel faced daily at the whims and caprices of the Pharaohs of the period, however, did not go unnoticed by the eye of the Lord. Some may have thought that God did not see, or that He had forgotten his people, or even that he did not care and had reneged on his word. He had promised deliverance, but it had not come, until... The message to Moses brought down from Sinai assures us (as it assured Moses) that God remembers his people and that he cares deeply about their plight in life. Jehovah assured Moses that he remembered his promises, had seen the conditions of his people, had heard their cries, had knowledge of their agony, was angered by their oppressors, and was prepared to deliver Israel from them. He would punish Pharaoh and Egypt severely for the evil that had been committed against his people.

Christians should understand that God cares about His them today (cf. I Peter 5:7; Hebrews 2:18; 4:14-15). The church is the spiritual Israel of God (Galatians 6:16). We need to rest upon the promises of God (Matthew 28:20; Romans 8:28,31; II Peter 1:3-4).

#### THE FUTILITY OF EXCUSES

Moses tried to argue with God about the job he was to do. He sought to excuse himself from his responsibility. He had a "get someone else" attitude. He began to make excuses, but God answered every one of them. The excuses for the most part had to do with Moses own feelings of inadequacy, but God, who made all men, knew fully what Moses was capable of and held him responsible for it.

Excuses will not work. They are "but the patches for failure." They do not remove our responsibility. There are some things that no man can absolve us from doing (Galatians 6:5; Ezekiel 18:4).

#### GREAT LESSONS LEARNED

We have seen that Moses learned some great lessons while standing in the presence of God. These lessons surely included (1) the need to respect divine authority, (2) the place of redemption for men, (3) the responsibility of men to God, (4) the place of God's concern and care for his people, and (5) the failure of excuses.

Let us learn the same lessons that Moses learned while **"standing upon holy ground"** in Exodus 3ff. As we stand upon the holy ground of sacred scripture, let us tread carefully, reverently, and faithfully that we might be servants of God.

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Fourth Annual Lectureship—October 14-18, 2001

# "WHAT IS THAT WHICH IS PERFECT?"

Noah Hackworth

One of the greatest chapters in the New Testament is I Corinthians 13. It deals with the definition, nature, and demonstration of that love which is from above. After the inspired apostle completes his discussion of the characteristics of love, he turns his attention to a comparison between the permanent (love) and the temporary (supernatural gifts). Love never fails, but prophecy shall be done away. Prophecy, tongues, and supernatural knowledge will come to an end. Tongues will cease and knowledge will be done away (8). Love, however, will continue. The apostle is unquestionably teaching that "supernatural gifts" would terminate when the "perfect thing" came; but what the perfect thing is, is the question.

### EXISTING VIEWS

The belief that Jesus himself is "the perfect thing" is held chiefly by those of the Pentecostal persuasion, which of course is necessary in order to sustain their belief in tongue speaking. When we differ with them they tell us, "That's your interpretation." Unfortunately, some of our own brethren either hold the same view and/or lean heavily in that direction. Although none of us is infallible in our interpretation of the scriptures, the fact that the scripture must be interpreted cannot be denied by reasonable, intelligent minds. However, it must be admitted that there are rules and laws of language that govern biblical interpretation, which obligates us to avoid reading our own interpretation into biblical texts (II Peter 1:20-21). What all this means is that the evidence is clearly against making "that which is perfect" refer to Jesus. Too, making this phrase refer to something that we will possess in heaven, as is held by some, is overruled by the same evidence.

One view is as erroneous as the other. Gary Workman has made the meaning of "that which is perfect" perfectly clear. "Some have supposed that Jesus is 'the perfect thing' that 'will come' at the end of time.

However, the Greek construction denies this possibility for the word 'perfect' is neuter, which cannot refer to the mature Christ. The neuter terms 'infant' (brephos) or 'child' (paidion) were used for all youngsters, including

Jesus (Luke 2:16-17). So the baby Jesus would naturally be called 'the holy thing' (Luke 1:35; see also Matthew 1:20).

"But upon reaching puberty Jesus, like all others, was referred to in masculine terms. He is a person, not a thing; a 'he who,' not a 'that which.' I John 1:1, 3 is no exception because there the writer refers not to Jesus himself but to things about or 'concerning' him that were 'heard,' 'seen,' 'beheld,' and 'handled'" (*Studies in First Corinthians, The First Annual Denton Lectures*, p. 171, 1982, edited by Dub McClish).



### THE PERFECT THING

The phrase "to teleion" is literally "the perfect thing." This means it cannot refer to Jesus, a Person. It is clear to me that the phrase refers to the "body of truth," the parts of which had not all come together when Paul wrote the Corinthian epistle. At first this body of truth was fragmentary or "in part," but when all parts of truth came together, it constituted the "perfect thing," the completed body of truth which Jude calls "the faith" (v. 3). By the time Jude wrote, all the parts had come together.

### THE WHOLE AND THE PARTS

Everybody knows the whole is equal to the sum of its parts. Take a pie for instance. If I cut a whole pie into six parts and separate them one from another, the whole pie no longer exists. If I put each piece back together, I will again have the whole pie. The revelation of truth in the first century worked the same way. It was delivered a part at a time, here a little, there a little, and when all parts of truth came together the whole body of truth was completed. This is the obvious reason why Paul said, "**For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known**" (I Corinthians 13:12). Supernatural gifts made it possible for all parts of truth to come together. They were provisional and temporary, the means to the end. The end was the complete body of truth "signed," "sealed," and "delivered." The "perfect thing" is the whole truth, all the truth to which the apostles were guided (John 16:13). The "gifts" were necessary until the unity of faith was achieved. This means the unity of "the faith" (tes pisteos, the gospel), not one's personal, subjective, faith (Ephesians 4:13-14).

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## One Woman's Perspective...

# MY GRANDMOTHER'S BIBLE

Annette B. Cates

I never really knew my mother's mother. She passed away when I was two years old. I have a vague recollection of sitting on her lap. I have love for her, however, because she was my grandmother, and a lot of who I am goes back to who she was. So, what does her Bible have to do with this?

While I have the old family Bible from my father's side, I have no idea what became of my grandmother Riley's Bible. I feel certain that she had one, and that it read just like mine does. I cannot know if she read it very much, or studied it at all. Since she was not a New Testament Christian and my grandfather was, I do know she read or studied it with preconceived ideas about the words therein, but was never receptive to the truth contained in her Bible. I also know she had every opportunity to obey the gospel and chose not to do so. I am grateful for the strength of my grandfather who led most of his family in obedience to the gospel.

### THEY DRAW NIGH TO ME WITH THEIR LIPS

Recently, I saw a televised interview with a local denominational leader, arrayed in his robes, where he proclaimed regarding a gay-lesbian rights promotion at his church, "My Bible does not condemn homosexuality." I thought, either he does not have God's word, or he has not studied it, or he does not believe it. This is the attitude of all who claim to be Christians but are not obedient to God's word as found in the Bible. They are like the hypocrites of whom Jesus spoke in Matthew 15:8, 9:

**This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**

They believe in a pick-and-choose cafeteria style religion and live their lives accordingly.

Why do people take this path of error and stubbornly cling to it? It all goes back to Satan's influence. Just as his smooth words led Eve into sin, he has always appealed to humanity. Jeremiah wrote, "**The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?**" (Jeremiah 5:31). It is as if most people want just enough religion in order to be comfortable, but not enough to be committed to righteous living. They seem to reason that if they remain willfully ignorant, then they do not have to try to justify their actions. Further, if they can dismiss the Bible as not literally true, antiquated, and not applying to today's society, then obedience is not a necessity. These people have reduced God to a soft warm Teddy bear, to whom they can turn for solace, but nothing more.

These same attitudes are cropping up among those who claim membership in the church of Christ. They may say they are of this "persuasion," or have a "heritage" in the Restoration Movement. My grandmother might have been quite comfortable with these folk. It would have been easier for my grandfather if he had compromised a little here and a little there. But, if he had compromised, I would not have the memories that I do of hearing him discuss the Bible and speak of the oneness of the church for which Christ died. What if he had not listened with an open mind and obedient heart when the gospel was first taken to the community in which they lived in the early 1900's? Did the preacher that made the sacrifice to go into that South Alabama settlement where the true church did not previously exist do so in vain? This is the message we hear from some of today's preachers and when we read their books.



We need to realize that we cannot argue with God. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told of those who would try to convince God that they had called on him, "Lord, Lord," and that they had done works in his name, but God will say that He never knew them (Matthew 7:21-23). In Matthew 15:8, 9, Jesus described the hypocrites as those who honored him with their lips, but not their hearts: "**But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**" We cannot just do whatever feels right. "Anything goes" is not a standard of unity in any area, much less in religion. If the Bible means anything, it means what it says.

### WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE?

Yes, my grandmother's Bible was just like mine, and yours. It was of no less, or more, importance than it is now. Why did my grandfather obey the gospel and my grandmother reject it? It goes back to how they received it, to their basic attitudes. Evidently, my grandmother was satisfied where she was while my grandfather realized that unless his life conformed to what he read in the Bible, he was without hope. To her, the Bible might have been a coffee-table book, or something one should have but not take too seriously. To him, God's word was a lamp and a light unto his path (Psalm 119:105). Therein is all the difference.

—9194 Lakeside Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

## Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# "LORD, OPEN HIS EYES"

Jodie Boren

Did you know that a flatfish eyes change place? When flatfish, such as the flounder, halibut, and sole, are hatched, their eyes are located in the usual place, i.e., one on each side of its head. But after swimming around like other fish for a short time, a flatfish turns over on his side and begins swimming sideways. Shortly afterwards, the eye on the head starts moving to the upper side of his head! This is just another example of the creativity of God almighty!



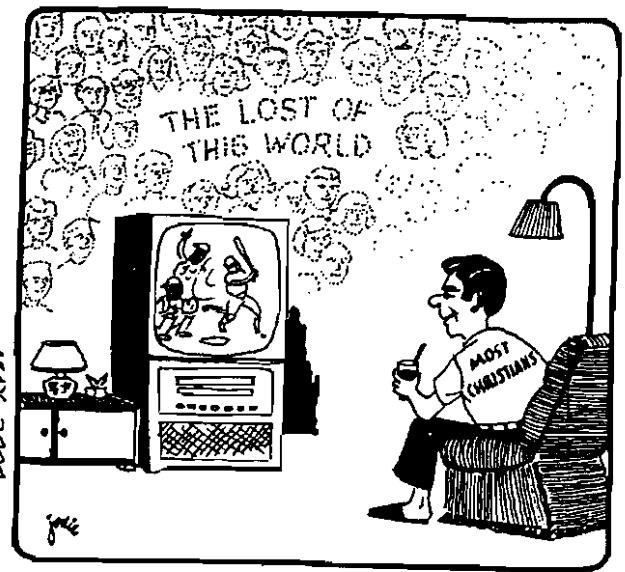
God created us with eyes. What a blessing to be able to see the beautiful things that surround us. When I think of the majestic mountains, the babbling brooks, the magnificent trees, the rolling plains, the awesome oceans, the delicate and gorgeous flowers, the birds of the air, the animals of the land, and the amazing creatures of the sea, one has to stand in awe of God! How terrible it would be to be blind.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. In Acts 4:24, Peter and John said, "... **thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is...**" His works are marvelous (Psalm 139:14) and declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1). Man is fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). God's creation is not just for our eyes to behold its beauty and wonders, but in Romans 1:18-20 we learn that God wants us to be able to see his eternal power and character, which are invisible by the visible things he has made.

We move now from the physical to the spiritual. God wants us to see (perceive or understand) the wonders of his word—his marvelous incomprehensible love and his amazing grace. Let us look at a couple of scriptures to show that sometimes the word "see" or "seeing" is meant for understanding. Paul tells us in Ephesians 3:8-9 that he was privileged to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ "and to make all men SEE what is the fellowship of the mystery" that is now being revealed. The plan of salvation can be understood by all. In James 2:24 after showing that Abraham's faith was justified by his works, the writer says, "**Ye SEE then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.**" Again the word "see" is used to mean to perceive or to understand.

We need to SEE how perfect, pure, true, and righteous is the word of God and more to be desired than much fine gold (Psalm 19:7-11). We need to have the attitude of the Psalmist whose delight was in the law of the Lord and in it he did meditate day and night (Psalm 1:2).

Just think of his word. It is truth (John 17:17); it teaches us (II Timothy 2:16-17); it saves us (James 1:21); his word



cleanses us (John 15:3); we are strengthened by his word (Acts 20:32); this word leads us (Psalm 119:105); his word is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword (Hebrews 4:12). No wonder we are to study the word (II Timothy 2:15) and let it dwell richly in us (Colossians 3:16).

Yet, multiplied millions of people today are as Isaiah prophesied hundreds of years ago. Listen to his words as Jesus quoted him in Matthew 13:14-15.

**And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith. By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and SEEING ye shall SEE and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED; lest at any time they should SEE with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.**

This was true in Jesus' day and it is sadly true in our day also! And we think how tragic it is that these millions are going to face God in the judgment unprepared.

As shocking as it might be, many of us who profess to be Christians are guilty of the same thing Isaiah said in the long ago. We are "at ease in Zion." We claim to SEE (perceive—know—understand) God's will and to have the truth but are we not BLIND to our Lord's marching orders to teach others? Many congregations are dying on the vine, as it were, because we are, as a whole, failing to teach others. And in those congregations that are growing, so much of the growth is done by the teaching efforts of so few.

In the book of II Kings and chapter 6, the people of God were surrounded by the Syrians. Elisha's servant was afraid. Elisha prayed (vs. 17) to the Lord "**OPEN HIS EYES**" that he might see the power of almighty God. **May our eyes be opened to our responsibility!**

Jesus said in John 4:35, "**...lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.**" We sometimes sing the song, "Lord lead me to some soul today." Do we really mean it?

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

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## —Alabama—

**Holly Pond**—Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, (256) 796-6802, (205) 429-2026. Sunday: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

**Somerville**—Union Church of Christ, located on Hwy 36, one mile east of Hwy 67, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tom Larkin, Evangelist, (256) 778-8955, (256) 778-8961.

## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Telephone: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

## —Florida—

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

## —Georgia—

**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1146, 1319 JFH Pkwy (US 41 NW) Cartersville, GA 30120. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: Cartersville-cofc@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —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.

## —Massachusetts—

**Chicopee**—Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive; Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, tel. (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coc.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9; 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratchiff, 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 Last Word...

# THE STANDARD OF SALVATION

Eddie Whitten

**“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever”** (I Peter 1:23). Nicodemus acknowledged that Jesus was **“a teacher come from God”** (John 3:2). Jesus responded by saying, **“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”** (v. 3). This answer stunned Nicodemus so that he asked Jesus how such could happen. Jesus answered again saying, **“Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”** (v. 5). Since that time, men have conjured up all kinds of fantastic imaginations to make what Jesus said fit their way of thinking. Some have made **“being born again”** an emotional existential moment in which some sort of trauma has occurred such as a car wreck, or an earthquake, or other violent event, from which they escaped unharmed. Therefore, they attribute

their good fortune to an experience with God in which they were born again.

A common version of **“being born again”** is that proposed by Calvinism. Mental assent that Jesus is the Son of God is all that is involved. One is born again the moment he believes that Jesus is Lord. Nothing is required of the individual for salvation who holds this view. He may be travelling down the highway, or sitting on a creek bank fishing, whatever. For some reason his thoughts turn to things religious and he finally sorts things out in his mind and he is convinced that Jesus is real, and he is born again. Many denominations hold to this belief.

These beliefs may be **“full of grace and comfort”** to those who hold them, but are they in harmony with what





the Bible teaches concerning being born again? This is the point in which human reasoning is pitted against what the Bible teaches. It is tragic that the majority of religious people choose to follow human reasoning.

#### BEING BORN AGAIN DOES REQUIRE BELIEF

There is no dispute that "belief" is a requirement to being born again. The Bible is very specific in this element. We read, **"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"** (Hebrews 11:6). There are many passages indicating that it is impossible to be saved without faith. We also read, **"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"** (Romans 10:17). Some will say, "If faith comes by hearing the word of God, and I Peter 1:21 says we are 'born again' by the word of God (our text, EW), then we are born again when we hear the word of God and believe." That may sound good, and men believe that is all there is to it, but God's standard of salvation indicates there is more.

#### OBEDIENCE IS A PART OF BEING BORN AGAIN

Man is reluctant to submit his will to another. Authority is a bad word in today's workplace. Independence is a way of life in America. We, however, are not talking about America; we are talking about heaven. The Creator of the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1) exercises authority over man whether man wants it, or likes it, or not. This fact is irksome to man. Men, for the most part, do not know the Bible well enough to understand that God has the spiritual, eternal welfare of man in his hands. God knows what is best for man and wants man to be saved. Peter records, **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"** (II Peter 3:9). Paul added, **"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer for Israel is, that they might be saved"** (Romans 10:1). The writer of Hebrews said that Jesus **"became the author of salvation to all them that obey Him"** (Hebrews 5:9). The word of God,

by which we are born again, says that our salvation depends upon our obedience to that word. The question then is, "What is involved in obedience?" Paul, the blessed apostle, stated by inspiration, **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"** (Romans 10:13). Calling upon the name of the Lord is confusing to some. Is it prayer? Is it some sort of emotional experience? Let Ananias, a devout man according to the law (Acts 22:12), answer. He told penitent Paul, **"Now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"** (v. 16). Thus, in order to be saved one must believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (Acts 8:37) obey the gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-4) by being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) which constitutes **"calling on the name of the Lord"** (Romans 10:13; Acts 22:16). This is the standard of salvation according to the Bible.

#### A STANDARD IS A CODE OF CONDUCT

Many are reluctant, even rebellious, when a "system" is mentioned. A "system" implies a law. Law is in opposition to Grace, they say. In so saying, man is making a law. His law is that there is no law, certainly a contradictory statement. They say there is no standard, which statement constitutes a standard. Therefore, the standard of men is arrayed against the standard of God. God's standard is the code of conduct of salvation. Firstly, what man must do to be saved, and secondly, how must man live in order to stay saved. No man can go to heaven trying to impose upon God his own standard of salvation. Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me"** (John 14:6). The standard God has given for the salvation of man depends upon our obedience to his will (Matthew 7:21) and the instructions of Jesus. Jesus said, **"Whosoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved"** (Mark 16:16). It is only common sense to obey the Creator of the Universe and follow his standard of salvation rather than the wisdom of man.

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## MAX LUCADO—MAX LAX

Gary W. Summers

*Normally we do not run in one issue three articles by the same author. However, when I read Gary W. Summers' evangelist with the Pearl Street congregation, Denton, Texas, excellent articles about Max Lucado, I thought they would carry more impact when they could be read one after the other as well as helping to get them to as many people as possible. Thus, herein they appear in the order in which they were originally published in the Pearl Street bulletin. CFTF commends Summers for his excellent study of Lucado's false views and fellowship with the denominations. Moreover, Summers' did a fine job in exposing those apostate brethren who criticized his expose of Lucado's erroneous works and conduct. —Editor-In-Chief*

Back in the 80's a strange television show premiered, titled *Max Headroom*. The title character had been nearly killed, and the last thing he saw before losing consciousness was the sign on a parking garage "Max. (Maximum) Headroom," followed by the clearance height. The sign made an indelible impression on his brain, and he took that for his name.

In the same vein, we would like to suggest a new term to describe liberals: Max-Lax, which stands for Maximum Laxity. What this new term means is simply that those who subscribe to this philosophy do not stand and uphold the truths of God; instead they encourage the maximum amount of lax thinking on nearly any subject. Some have this attitude toward doctrine and will not stand behind even the fundamental teachings of the New Testament on salvation, worship, or doctrine. Others will not take a moral stand against abortion, homosexuality, fornication, unlawful divorce and remarriage, gambling, or drinking alcoholic beverages. They too encourage a maximum amount of laxity. Some, of course, advocate the Max-Lax position in both areas.

### POSTER CHILD FOR LIBERALS

Max Lucado could be the poster child for Max-Lax theology; in fact, he could appropriately be called Max-Lax Lucado. His renunciation of New Testament teaching has long been obvious to most brethren (except for Max-Lax supporters). But for those who have been a little slow, per-

haps his new 64-page booklet will make it clear. Recently a mass mailout addressed to the "pastor" was sent to churches in several (if not most) states. Inside the package is a 64-page Max Lucado booklet published by Word, titled *He Did This Just For You*. This material is part of a promotional for "Easter" Sunday; the publishers want churches to buy and distribute copies of it (much was excerpted from *He Chose the Nails*).

We want to look at the way Max suggests that people ought to respond to the crucifixion of Christ. Three *steps* are presented, the first of which is: "Admit that God has not been first place in your life and ask him to forgive your sins" (48). Actually, that sounds like *two*, things, but why not allow maximum laxity toward arithmetic too, along with the scriptures? Max cites I John 1:9, although that verse is written to Christians—not to those wanting to know what to do to be saved. Is not this mishandling of the word an illustration of the maximum laxity under which that liberals operate? Certainly Max knows better than to use a scripture encouraging faithfulness in Christians in place of one dealing with the issue of salvation, such as Acts 2:38. Has he been influenced by his denominational friends, whom he so admires, more than by the very Word of God?

The second step is: "Agree that Jesus died to pay for your sins and that he rose from the dead and is alive today" (49), which is true, but why omit a direct claim about Je-

(Continued On Page 4)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by *Contending for the Faith* and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

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#### ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

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

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by *Contending for the Faith*. 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 canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

Editorial...

## PHONY BALONEY AT "THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE"

In our April 2001 issue of *CFTF* on page 7 we published an article by Jerry Brewer entitled "The Chronicle And Methodists". In that article Brewer quoted a classified ad that appeared in the March, 2001 *Chronicle*. The ad read:

Full Time Youth Minister Wanted for cooperative inner city youth program. Candidate may be recent graduate or graduating senior. Contact Steve Byrd at South Lee UMC, 601 SW 36, Oklahoma City, OK 73109, phone 631-4564 or fax 632-3384 at Ashbury UMC.

In the same article Brewer cited an ad from the same issue of *The Chronicle* in which a "15-year-old non-denominational church" in Little Rock, Arkansas advertised for a "Youth Minister".

Having read Brewer's article, on April 28, 2001 faithful gospel preacher Jeff Archey wrote the following e-mail to *The Chronicle*.

Brethren:

If, indeed, this paper is for "members of the church of Christ," why pray tell, was there a classified ad for the South Lee United Methodist Church in the March, 2001 issue?

It is evident that your recognition and use of many who are digressive is in each issue of the *Chronicle*. Many brethren wish your approach would be more sound than it is. However, to advertise for denominationalism reflects the approach of brethren who are endorsing "Billy Graham" crusades.

I realize a paper with such a magnitude as this one will allow things to happen unnoticed. If caught in time, I would think it would be corrected. However, too many things are showing up in the pages of the *Chronicle* that do not resemble New Testament Christianity.

I would lovingly encourage a review, repentance and retraction of this specific matter, my brethren.

Kindest regards,

Jeff Archey

Later on the same day Archey received a reply to his e-mail from Lynn McMillon, General Manager of *The Christian Chronicle*. McMillon wrote Archey saying:

Thank you for inquiring. It was actually a mistake. As you will note the ad reads "South Lee UMC" (.) That just did not register with anybody. Had it said "Methodist" it certainly would have registered. I first learned of it a month ago when a person from that church called us to ask why he had received a statement. Then I began to track the thing to see what had happened. The man had called the university placement office for a youth minister and they passed it on to us and it was mistakenly run

as an ad. It was never intended to be an ad. If you read *The Chronicle* you know that we never run ads for denominational churches and there certainly (sic) is no change in policy here. It was a mistake.

You might be interested to know that our circulation is larger than the next eight brother hood publications combined and we have a readership approval and credibility rating that exceeds all of them according to an independent study. Despite that we do seek to be fair to all of the diverse elements in our brotherhood. Best wishes to you.

Lynn McMillon  
General Manager  
Christian Chronicle

Archey did not mention the ad for the “non-denominational church” in Little Rock, Arkansas. McMillon is completely happy with such an ad or, the ad must be another “mistake”. Did not McMillon emphatically state: “If you read *The Chronicle* you know that we never run ads for denominational churches and there certainly (sic) is no change in policy here”? Why does not McMillon write the same statement in *The Chronicle*?

If McMillon’s statement is the guiding policy for the ads *The Chronicle* runs, what about the following paid ad herein appearing just as it was printed in the May, 2001

# INTRODUCING THE BIGGEST MIRACLE SINCE THE PARTING OF THE RED SEA.

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Chronicle? Can you guess what caught my eye when I read, “INTRODUCING THE BIGGEST MIRACLE SINCE THE PARTING OF THE RED SEA”? Indeed you can. It is the complete misuse of the word “Miracle” in the ad. Knowing that such misuse of Bible terms can indicate other amazing things to come, I decided to visit the Global Christian University web site. Without going into all of the liberal people and places (by liberal I mean those who by their false doctrines loose persons from what God in his word binds on them) mentioned on the various pages, I came to HYPERLINK <http://gcu.faithsite.com/top-ten.asp?SID=190&Type=1>. On the page is listed the following churches.

## TOP TEN CHURCH SITES

First Colony Church  
Brentwood Hills Church of Christ  
Ault Road Church of Christ  
White Plains Baptist Church  
Mercy Street Ministries  
Pleasant Union General Baptist Church  
Boone Church of Christ  
TownWest Church of Christ  
Wahiawa Church of Christ  
Woodmont Hills

Please notice that right in the middle of the previous list are three denominational churches. Frankly, if all the other churches of Christ in the list are on a par with Woodmont Hills, one had just as well attend the denominational churches listed therein, for there is not a dime’s worth of difference between them and the sectarian churches in the list.

Now, where did I learn of this ecumenical pottage? Why, it is in the paper with a “circulation ... larger than the next eight brotherhood publications combined and ... a readership approval and credibility rating that exceeds all of them according to an independent study.”—*The Christian Chronicle*. Moreover, just where does the Bible teach that the paper with the biggest circulation must be the best? If *The Chronicle* had been around on the day before the flood came I wonder what viewpoint it would have taken toward Noah, his message, and the ark?

In the August 2000 issue of *CFTF J. E. Choate* pointed out that *The Chronicle* ran “an advertisement for the Independent Christian Church soliciting teachers for the Kentucky Christian College,” while rejecting biblically sound material (Volume XXXI, No. 8, page 1). Will McMillon deny that such happened? Was it an oversight—a mistake? Or, was the Ken-

tucky Christian College ad for teachers in harmony with the advertising policy of *The Chronicle*?

Does the General Manager of *The Chronicle* honestly expect us to believe that he is “fair to all the diverse elements in our brotherhood”? It does not take a Solomon to see the rank bias of *The Chronicle* toward the *Tulsa Workshop*, the now defunct *Jubilee*, and any and every other activity and person of the same stripe.

Opposition to sectarian denominational error is on the “back burner” as far as *The Chronicle* is con-

cerned—and that burner is turned off with no fuel in the lines. In view of McMillon’s statement, “... we do seek to be fair to all of the diverse elements in our brotherhood”, I wonder if the General Manager would allow for *Contending for the Faith* to take out an ad such as the one taken out by Global Christian University? Do we even fit into McMillon’s “diverse elements” category?

—David P. Brown, *Editor-in-Chief*

## MAX LUCADO...

(Continued From Page 1)

sus’ Deity? The eunuch confessed, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). Both of these “steps” seem to be somehow just a little looser than the Bible records. Why has *Repent* been replaced by *Admit*? The two are not the same. Admitting that God has not been first in one’s life is not the equivalent of realizing that sin offends a holy God and that we need to give it up. One can acknowledge the resurrection of Christ without believing in the Deity of Christ.

The third point is: “Accept God’s free gift of salvation. Don’t try to earn it” (49). To whom is this final comment addressed? Would someone hearing about Christ for the first time read about the salvation that is offered and say, “Wow! This is a great offer. What do I have to do to earn it?” Most people would have more sense than to think of such a thing. But a legitimate question would be: “What are the conditions by which this great salvation can become mine?” In fact, that is precisely what the people on the day of Pentecost (which Max utterly ignores) did ask: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). They were not asking, “How can we earn salvation?” They were inquiring about the means by which they could obtain it.

Peter’s answer was not: “Admit, Agree, and Accept”; it was “Repent, and be baptized...” (Acts 2:38). If Max thinks these two things constitute EARNING salvation, he will just have to take that up with the inspired apostle who preached it—and then with the Holy Spirit who inspired it! Then Max can talk to the Father, who told the Holy Spirit what to say (John 16:12-13). He may also want to take issue with what Jesus taught in Mark 16:16: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.”

As do other spiritual leaders, Max also errs in attempting to use Revelation 3:20 to substantiate his third point, but once again he overlooks the fundamental question: “To whom is Jesus speaking in this verse?” The answer is that he is not speaking to sinners, teaching them how to become his followers; He is speaking to Christians who do not realize that they have shut him out of their lives.

But none of these things matters to Max. He does not want people to repent of their sins; otherwise, he would oc-

asionally *define* sin for people—the way Jesus did (Matthew 15:18-20) or the way other scriptures do (Romans 1:26-32; I Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8). And he does not think people need to be baptized in order to come in contact with the blood of Christ (Acts 22:16; Revelation 1:5). His views are explained in this booklet. These are Max’s words:

Would you let him save you? This is the most important decision you will ever make. Why don’t you give your heart to him right now? *Admit* your need. *Agree* with his work. *Accept* his gift. Go to God in prayer and tell him, *I am a sinner in need of grace. I believe that Jesus died for me on the cross. I accept your offer of salvation.* It’s a simple prayer with eternal results (50).

No, it is not! It is a foolish watering down of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Max has placed himself under the accursedness pronounced by Paul in Galatians 1:8. He is teaching a false “gospel.” If this simple prayer (which does not mention at all the Deity of Christ, repentance of sins, or baptism) is effective, why didn’t Jesus tell Paul to use it on the road to Damascus?!

Furthermore, why, after Philip preached Jesus to him, did the eunuch say he was ready to be baptized? Why didn’t he say, “I’m ready to pray the three-step prayer”? Why did Peter command that Cornelius and his household be baptized? Why didn’t he say, “I perceive you are ready to pray this simple prayer”?

For those who still can’t believe that Lucado would ever teach anything wrong, page 51 of this booklet consists of the heading, “YOUR RESPONSE,” followed by this sentence: “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God (finally, His Deity is mentioned, gws). I want him to be the Lord of my life.” This is followed by a line for the reader’s signature and a line for the date. This concludes the initial salvation process for Max. He says that you are now saved, as a result of following the three A’s that he has presented.

### POST-SALVATION BAPTISM

Now that Max has misinformed everyone about what to do to be saved, he has further instructions. He moves from the A’s to the B’s. It is at this time that he tells people to be baptized.

*Baptism* demonstrates and celebrates our decision to follow Jesus. The water of baptism symbolizes God’s grace. Just as water cleanses the body, so grace cleanses the soul (52).

It is so kind of Max to remember at long last that the Bible teaches something about baptism, but his incorporation of it AFTER salvation is all out of Biblical perspective. Exactly what scripture says that baptism demonstrates and celebrates our decision to follow Jesus? He cites Mark 16:16 and Acts 22:16, but these make no such claim. How does baptism demonstrate a decision? Where is baptism called a celebration? What verse says that baptism symbolizes God's grace, and how does it do so? Furthermore, grace does not cleanse the soul; the blood of Christ cleanses the soul, as Revelation 1:5 teaches. It does so WHEN we are baptized.

These claims are nothing more than Max's thoughts, and the scriptures he quotes refute the very thing he is trying to prove. Mark 16:16 does not say, "He who believes and is saved should be baptized," which is what Max has presented. It puts both faith and baptism BEFORE salvation, a fact Max once knew. Paul is told to arise, and be baptized, and wash away his sins. *He still had his sins!* Paul had been told to go into the city, and he would be *told what he must do*. Ananias did not tell him he had already been saved. He did not say, "Saul, you now need to symbolically wash away your sins." Instead, he told him that in baptism his sins would be washed away. To add insult to injury, Lucado concludes this section by adding: "Paul responded by being baptized immediately. You can, too" (52). Why does Max refuse to put baptism where the scriptures do—before salvation?

The second B is studying the Bible; certainly we are all in favor of that one; it is the only way people would ever learn that Max has not told them the truth.

The third B which he advocates is: "*Belonging to a church reinforces your faith. A Christian without a church is like a baseball player without a team or a soldier without an army*" (52-53). For proof, he cites some modern paraphrase that renders Hebrews 10:25: "You should not stay away from the church meetings, but you should meet together and encourage each other" (NCV). Obviously, "church meetings" is a loose rendering for "**the assembling of ourselves together.**" And one can only wonder what happened to "**and so much the more as you see the day approaching.**"

The key word, however, is *a*. Max-Lax advises the new "believer," as he calls him, to belong to *a* church. What does such terminology mean? Is he implying that denominationalism is authorized by God? If not, why does he not point out that, in being baptized, the Lord adds that individual to the church. Jesus only built one (Matthew 16:18). He only shed his blood for one (Acts 20:28). He nourishes and cherishes *the* church (Ephesians 5:29). There is *one* body (Ephesians 4:4), which Paul has previously defined or equated with *the church* (Ephesians 1:22-23). There was more than one congregation of that church; they existed in various locales. But there was only one true church in existence in the first century—or any century. No one would ever learn this fact from Max Lucado; one must come to understand it from the scriptures.

Max could just as easily teach the truth as he dispenses error. Most people have such esteem for his writing ability (and this beleaguered scribe has heard from most of them) that he would still have devoted fans even if he told them the truth. However, to have the endorsements he has received, he evidently thought he had to compromise to find a way of reaching those adoring fans. How sad that popularity took precedence over the truths about the cross of Christ.

Max may try to glorify Christ and the cross, but he has tarnished it and trampled upon it. Paul preached "**Jesus Christ and Him crucified**" (I Corinthians 2:2). That gospel message includes Christ's death for our sins, his burial, and his resurrection (I Corinthians 15:3-4). One obeys the gospel by being buried with him in baptism (Romans 6:3-5). For that reason, when Philip preached Jesus, the eunuch wanted to be baptized (Acts 8:35-36). Therefore, the cross cannot be preached without preaching baptism; they are joined together by God. Max should not have sought to put them asunder. One cannot profess adoration of the Lord while denying the very means he has chosen to save mankind. One cannot be blessed by God while teaching others a doctrine that will lead them to destruction. People need to be given the truth, not maximum laxity.

—312 Pearl Street  
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## MAX PASTOR

Gary W. Summers

The kingdom of Israel had been divided for more than 75 years. Those who ruled over the northern kingdom all walked in the ways of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel commit a great sin (II Kings 17:21). The kings of Judah, at first, tended to be obedient to God. Jehoshaphat began his reign very well, until "**by marriage he allied himself with Ahab**" (II Chronicles 18:1). What sadness the reader experiences, therefore, to discover that,

when a good king over a faithful kingdom went to visit one of the most wicked kings ever, he said, "**I am as you are, and my people as your people; we will be with you in war**" (II Chronicles 18:3).

The only appropriate response seems to be to scream, "Jehoshaphat! No! What are you doing?" God, through the prophet Jehu, did rebuke the king of Judah: "**Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord?**"

**Therefore the wrath of the Lord is upon you”** (II Chronicles 19:2). To draw the contrast even more sharply, someone might have pointed out to Jehoshaphat the following facts: “We in the southern kingdom have tried to please Jehovah. We have not set up idols—golden calves— as they have in the north. We still have priests from the tribe of Levi, as Moses commanded, instead of from every tribe of Israel. Our worship is centered in Jerusalem, as it is supposed to be, not in Dan or Bethel, as in the north (see I Kings 12:25-33). We have clung to the truth in these matters for generations. We have told the Israelites over and over that they are not walking or worshiping according to the will of God. And now, O king, you visit the wicked Ahab and say that we are as they are. How can the truth mean so little and your compromising be so great?”

**MAX AND PAT**

Anyone who can understand that situation should be able to understand the problem that members of the churches of Christ have with Max Lucado, as it relates to his guest appearance on the *700 Club* with **Pat Robertson** on Monday, April 2nd. This program for years has been the epitome of false religion. Its hosts not only ascribe various types of behavior erroneously to the Holy Spirit, but they also deny the fundamental and plain teaching of the New Testament concerning the role of baptism in salvation.

So imagine how faithful members of the Lord’s church feel when Max Lucado claims to be one of us and compromises everywhere he possibly can. As the interview came to an end, Pat Robertson said: “Max, it’s a joy to have you. We just thank God for the gift He’s given you, my brother.” Max replied: “I thank God for you. I sure do.” This mutual love fest occurred while they were shaking hands. Should Max love those who hate the Lord? (Of course, no faithful preacher of the gospel would ever be invited to appear on the *700 Club*.)

But Max is now a pastor, also. We have no way of knowing if he has been appointed as an elder (pastor, bishop), but he did claim to be one in the denominational sense of the term. One of the first questions Robertson asked was: “Are, are you pastoring at all?” Max responded eagerly: “I am. I am. I’m a full time (pastor) at the Oak Hills Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas.” This information was purposely elicited, despite the fact that it was in the form of a question. It had already been flashed on the screen: “Max

Lucado: Author/Pastor.” How embarrassing for true Christians.

As we all wished to admonish Jehoshaphat, one can envision preachers everywhere yelling at Max, “Do you know how many times we have had to explain that we are preachers and not pastors? How can you identify yourself as one of us and claim to be pastoring a church of Christ?” Of course, what could be expected from someone who has already given up the Bible’s teaching on salvation and worship? Max apparently delights in perpetuating ignorance of the truth.

**MAX THEOLOGIAN**

Max presented an interesting, if erroneous view of Colossians 2. Following is the conversation that occurred on this same program.

The gospels don’t refer to the nails, but Paul, in the epistle Colossians, chapter two and fourteen, says that Jesus canceled the debt that held the charges against us. He took it and nailed it to Christ’s cross. And so the picture there, you know, Pat, is so powerful. The, the, the list of my sins and your sins has been nailed to the cross, and and the blood of Christ has blotted out, the Bible says, covered all of those mistakes. What a powerful image that is.

It is true that Jesus took our sins upon him and paid the price for them, but that is not what this verse says. First of all, the subject of the verb is God, not Jesus. God (the Father) is the one in verse 13 who made us alive together with Christ; He is also the one who wiped out the handwriting of ordinances.

This handwriting of requirements (ordinances, KJV) is not a list of our sins. *The Pulpit Commentary* states: “This bond (with its decrees can be nothing other than ‘the law’ (Eph. ii. 14-16; Acts xii. 38, 39; Rom. iii. 20; vii. 25; Gal. iii. 21, 22, etc.)...Ó (20:4:89). Strangely, after citing all of these verses that pertain to the Law of Moses, this commentary then says that they do not refer to that law; but they obviously do. The correct view is stated in the *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*:

The cancellation of the bond was effected by Christ’s death. Thus it is pictured as being nailed once and for all...to the cross. Hence, the cross which meant the death of Christ meant also the death of the law which ceased to have its power over the people of God. Because Christ not only perfectly fulfilled the law, but also stood in the sinner’s place and accepted in His own Person the penalty due to the one who breaks the law, the very bond itself has been cancelled (70).

**Daniel Denham**, in his chapter, “Holding Fast the Head,” provided the following research for *Studies in Philippians and Colossians*, edited by **Dub McClish**:

William Hendriksen properly observes that “in the clearly parallel passage (Eph. 2:15) what has been abolished through the cross is not ‘a certificate of indebtedness with our signature on it’ but ‘the law of commandments with its requirements’.” Hendriksen, quoting F. W. Beare, adds, “It represents simply the law as a written code.” The Judaizers, who had heavily influenced the Colossians, had brought them into bondage of the law of Moses and, thus, Paul sought to impress upon the minds of his readers the fact that the law was no longer extant as the rule of faith and practice for anyone, let

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alone the Gentiles! The word rendered "ordinances" refers to the "decrees" and commands of that document. These were "against us" and "contrary to us" in that the law "condemned, but could not save" (247).

It is not the list of our sins, therefore, that was nailed to the cross; it is the law itself.

#### MAX PENTECOSTAL

Max tries to blend in wherever he goes (like a chameleon); so we should probably not be surprised by the following comments designed to support the charismatic movement:

I was really struck by the symbolism of, you know, when Christ's side was pierced by the sword, blood and water came forth.

At this point Pat Robertson chimed in, "Right." Apparently, neither of them knows that Jesus' side was pierced with a *spear*. The Greek word translated "spear" appears only once in the New Testament—in John 19:34. Thayer says that the Greek word refers to "the iron point or head of a spear; a lance or spear." The word translated "sword" appears 29 times in the New Testament; it is used four times in Matthew 26, thrice in Mark 14, four times in Luke 22, and twice in John 18. The two words are not the same, nor are they defined the same. Max continued:

And you know, throughout the New Testament water represents the power of the Holy Spirit, and the blood represents, of course, the redemption that we have. And they come together, you know, as a picture of what God wants to give you and gives, gives me. And that is, forgiveness and power. But not forgiveness with no power, not power with no forgiveness; but they come at the same time.

What? One wonders if Max has any clue as to what he is saying. Water represents the Holy Spirit throughout the New Testament? What does that make John 3:5 say? Must one be born of the Spirit and the Spirit? When John was baptizing in water, was he really baptizing in the Holy Spirit? When Peter asked of Cornelius and those with him, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" was he advocating that those who had received the Holy Spirit should be baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:47)? To what does "the washing of regeneration" refer, which is linked with the renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5)?

One might make a case for "the rivers of living water" representing the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-38), but certainly water does not stand for the Holy Spirit throughout the New Testament. The word translated "water" is found 79 times; perhaps Max could write a book about all those alleged times water stands for the Holy Spirit. Perhaps, when the disciples were on the sea of Galilee, Jesus came walking to them on the Holy Spirit. Are we to give a cup of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's name (Mark 9:41)? Is it the Holy Spirit who is raging in Luke 8:24, and the Lord rebuked him? When the disciples went into Jerusalem to prepare the Passover, did they really find a man carrying a pitcher of the Holy Spirit (Luke 22:10)? Did Jesus turn the Holy Spirit into wine (John 2)? Did Jesus meet the Samaritan woman by a well that contained the Holy Spirit (John 4)?

Let Max prove conclusively that water refers to the Holy Spirit even 5 of the 79 times. Water can have an occasional symbolic meaning—but certainly not enough to substantiate Max's extravagant claim.

Not only does the water that comes from the side of Jesus in John 19:34 represent the Spirit, according to Max (and virtually *no* commentator agrees with him), the Holy Spirit in turn stands for power (the blood standing for forgiveness). So we are given forgiveness and power together, he claims. So, the Holy Spirit does not just indwell us; he gives us some sort of power. Max did not elaborate as to the kind of power that is. Is it direct Spirit-on-spirit power? Or is it the power to work "miracles" or "speak in tongues"? Or does he mean that we have the power to overcome sin?

#### MAX BROADCASTER

Pat Robertson was delighted to inform his viewing audience that the 700 Club would be replaced by a special program on "Good Friday," April 13th. He asked Max to say something about it.

It's a *He Chose the Nails* (his bestselling book of last year, gws) television special. It's Jesus, Pat, from beginning to end. It's all about Christ, and some powerful music, some heart-changing music, uh, some of the the best artists in America, like Twila Paris and Wes King, some of them have written songs to go along with this. It presents the cross of Christ from beginning to end.

Needless to say, some members of the church who are Max's devoted fans will be shocked that he would use instrumental music to accompany this "special," but it will scarcely be news to anyone who has been paying attention to his past compromises.

Yes, Pastor Max has chosen to fight on the side of the spiritual Ahabs of the day. He delights in being in their midst and fellowshiping with them. Surely he does not mind all the honors he receives, either. As Jesus might say, "Assuredly, I say to you, he has his reward."

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# "MADNESS"

Gary W. Summers

The scribes and Pharisees were watching Jesus to see if he would heal on the sabbath day; they were wanting to "find an accusation against him" (Luke 6:7, KJV). He told a man with a withered hand to rise, but before he healed him, knowing their thoughts on this matter, he tried to reason with them: "Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good? to save life, or to destroy it?" (v. 9). The logic of the question escaped them entirely because they had departed from rationality. The text records their response: "And they were filled with *madness*; and communed one with another what they might do with Jesus" (v. 11, emp. gws).

The Greek word translated "madness" (*anoia*) is used in this form only one other time in the New Testament. The context of the other verse is not unlike this one, although it does not involve the Lord. Paul cites Jannes and Jambres as men who resisted the truth (II Timothy 3:8-9). He also says they were "men of corrupt mind, reprobate concerning the faith." They were the court magicians who withstood Moses. Can we see a pattern here? Whenever God's truths

are preached by his faithful servants, Satan always sends men to oppose them. These dupes challenged Moses, the scribes and the Pharisees criticized Jesus, and the Judaizing teachers stalked Paul. Some were arguing against Timothy.

Paul says that their folly (*anoia*) will be manifest to all men. How will men recognize that folly/madness? They will know it by the fact that their opposition to it does not come from reasoning with facts and drawing a logical conclusion; instead their hostility is emotion-driven. Emotion discounts the faculty of reason.

Jesus tried to get the scribes and the Pharisees to consider one basic point—not a conclusion constructed upon five nebulous implications. There is no evidence that his question even registered. They had already determined what they would do in advance of the situation; they could not be bothered by such trifles as THINKING! No wonder the King James translators selected "madness" to represent *anoia*.

But this Greek word is comprised of the prefix *a* plus the noun *nous*, which appears 24 times in the New Testament. The *a* serves to negate the word to which it is prefixed, as an *atheist* is the opposite of a *theist*. In the King James *nous* is rendered "mind(s)" 17 times and "understanding" seven times. The opposites of these, therefore, are "mindless" and "without understanding." Again we see that "madness" and "folly" are excellent choices for *anoia*.

The one who allows his/her emotions to govern him/her is acting in a mindless way. That individual is without understanding for the simple reason that he/she does not want to understand. The scriptures stringently warn us against throwing reason and common sense aside in favor of acting irrationally. Solomon records the truth of the matter: "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered" (Proverbs 28:26). Such wisdom runs counter to the philosophy of the world, which chants: "Trust your feelings." Jeremiah proclaimed: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). Acting emotionally often causes embarrassment and regret, once the intensity subsides.

Are emotions always bad? No, they can have great value if they are controlled and if they are in harmony with the truth. Unfortunately, however, such conditions are frequently the exception rather than the rule. When Joshua and Caleb reasoned with their brethren concerning faith and the power of God, it did not phase them. They picked up stones to kill them (Numbers 14:6-10). Later, the children of Israel were determined to have a king. Samuel pointed out the problems that having one would incur. Did the people even listen? They responded immediately, "No,

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but we will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations..." (I Samuel 19:b-20a).

Jesus, as already shown, was opposed by those who demonstrated no more capacity for reason than a pit bulldog who has mistakenly determined that an innocent child somehow constitutes a threat. Their overriding goal was to destroy the son of God. They would crucify first and think about their actions later (if at all).

The worst thing is that we have all been guilty of this behavior. If a friend is criticized, we become outraged and begin defending him even before checking the validity of the claims. We are likewise protective of family members. It pays to stop and get the facts. One ends up feeling so foolish when the truth becomes known by all. What can we do—besides pleading *madness* and confessing that we lacked understanding?

Sometimes an emotional response may be unavoidable, if we are caught off guard and have not had time to investigate a charge brought against one close to us. But those under consideration in the scriptures do not fall in that category. Jesus' adversaries had plenty of time to think through his teachings and his works. Those who threatened the apostles could not deny that they had worked "a notable miracle" (Acts 4:16). Facts, however, could not be allowed to stand in the way of their emotional commitment to the Law of Moses.

So what are we saying? Is it not the case that allowing emotions to run roughshod over evidence is not only destructive but fatal when time permits an honest evaluation of a situation? Someone, for example, may challenge a doctrine we have long believed. Is it right to assume that we are correct and he is wrong? Truth never suffers from investigation.

Unfortunately, some respond emotionally with, "Well that's what my mom and dad believed; so it's good enough for me." Really? Is that what the Lord Jesus taught? No, such sentiments are emotion-based and contrary to the Scriptures. Jesus said that the *truth* would make us free (John 8:31-32)—not our fathers or mothers, uncle Bill, the preacher in the family, or Pastor Bob. We shall be judged by the words of Jesus (John 12:48)—not the words of our parents, friends, neighbors, or the family priest.

#### EMOTIONAL MAX MARSHALS

Or Max Lucado. The spiritually-correct police take immediate umbrage when someone dares to challenge this popular writer on anything; anyone who opposes his doctrine—particularly his false gospel—is shot at (verbally, so far). Three weeks ago (February 25th) we published the "Max Lucado—Max Lax" article; protests began even before the article was printed (we put it on the Internet on February 21st). The very next day we received the following e-mail:

Brother Summers,

Coming up with names such as "Max-Lax" is mean-spirited. If you feel others are scripturally wrong, this is no way to convince them to change. Truth, SPOKEN IN LOVE, and reinforced with a SPIRIT OF LOVE will have a better result, whereas making up childish names will turn people against

what you have to say. It also makes you appear to be quite spiritually immature to stoop to such things. Your "Max-Lax" reveals a MAXIMUM LACK OF LOVE on your part. If anyone is deserving of the name "Max-Lax", it would be hard line brethren who have this maximum lack of love in the way they deal with those whom they disagree. Brother, you are in our prayers. May God bless you in the things that you do that glorify Him and build the brethren up.

In response, we resisted the temptation to point out that, in rebuking me for making up *childish* names, he did not hesitate to call me *serious* names, such as "quite spiritually immature" and possessing a "MAXIMUM LACK OF LOVE." Also, "lack" does not fit LAX. Probably we should have asked what kind of effect his TRUTH SPOKEN IN LOVE had had on Max and his followers. Below was our reply to his emotion-driven diatribe:

Thank you for your kind thoughts. I suggest, for your own benefit, that you do not read I Kings 18, in which Elijah mocked the prophets of Baal, or I Kings 22, in which Micaiah mocked the false prophets of Ahab. Perhaps you think these prophets of God were mean-spirited.

It never ceases to amaze me that the one who exposes error often times receives more criticism than the person who is actually the source of the problem, kind of like blaming Ken Starr for what Clinton did.

Have you thought that perhaps our "lack of love," as you judge it, is really hatred for every false way (Psalm 119:104)?

There has not been a further reply from this individual in the weeks following. Many of those who write really do not want to carry on a conversation or see what the scriptures teach; they simply want to blow off steam. Notice

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that, as is usually the case, none of the scriptures addressed in the article were dealt with; everything was reduced to a matter of "feeling."

The very next day (two days before publication), we received our second complaint.

Max L. has done more to bring people into the kingdom than you'll ever do. You are a joke.

Our response was:

How can one enter the kingdom without the blood of Christ? You would profit more from a study of God's word than from Max's.

This brief message was prompted by emotion rather than thought. The woman writing these words did not deal with any of the substance of the article; she also evidently felt it important to include an insult. It is precisely practice of *non*-thinking that kept the scribes and the Pharisees from confronting the truths that Jesus taught. He did not always agree with Moses; so He had to be wrong. Today the standard is Max Lucado. Anyone who disagrees with him *must* be wrong. Individuals controlled by their emotions never need to worry about truth and error; they are not required to evaluate or to "prove all things," as the scriptures teach. In effect, they can simply blurt out, "This is the way I feel, and anyone who disagrees is wrong."

Her assertion that Max has done more than I have is also wrong. Any Christian who leads even one soul to Christ will do more than Max ever will because he is dispensing a false "gospel" that cannot save anyone. Assuring people that they are saved when they are not does not bring them into the kingdom. The blind who teach and the blind who follow both end up in the ditch. What she should have said is: "Max is more popular than you will ever be, and he has infinitely more name recognition." That statement would be true, but alas! it is irrelevant. The student who graduates from one of our schools of preaching, who preaches the truth week in and week out, and baptizes just one person for the remission of his sins is greater in the sight of God than Max is with all of his fawning fans.

Another individual sent an e-mail eight days after the article appeared on our website; he directed it to the webmaster:

If man could get to heaven on works then Christ would not have to have died on the cross. Sorry fellas, but the doctrine of faith plus anything leads only to elevation above Christ. You may want to rethink Gary Summers as a theologian and writer where salvation is concerned. "By grace are you saved through faith not of works lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:9. P.S. By the way, the previous scripture was paraphrased.

Notice how widespread the doctrine of "faith plus nothing" is becoming. A great part of this popularity can be attributed to Max Lucado, who says it in tracts, books, radio broadcasts, and in personal appearances. The response we sent follows:

1. If you think we are teaching salvation by works, you are mistaken. We are well aware of what the scriptures teach concerning grace.

2. The Bible does teach something besides faith. If "faith only" is sufficient, then how do you account for what Jesus taught: "Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3)? Repentance requires EFFORT on our part. It is not works, but compliance. How do you account for what Peter said to those on Pentecost: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins..." (Acts 2:38)? Why didn't the inspired apostle say what you and Max do?

3. You may want to work a little yourself on theology. Salvation hangs in the balance. Only the truth will set you free (John 8:31-32); the teachings of men will make your worship vain (Matthew 15:9).

Undoubtedly, there will be several more complaints about the "Max-Lax" piece, since we are still receiving protests from another article published five years ago. But we have yet to receive the first e-mail which assesses the substance of what was written and concludes, "Therefore, you contradict the scriptures" or "Therefore, you are in error."

Some have complained about the manner of criticism. Some have questioned whether we had talked with Max personally and privately, as if that had any relevance. When someone assaults the public and insults the brotherhood through every means of communication possible, it is just a tad too late to go to him privately. He more appropriately fits the category of those Paul warned Titus about: "...whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain" (Titus 1:11).

Max is not a Judaizing teacher, but he does subvert whole households for the sake of dishonest gain. Likewise, he merits being rebuked sharply (Titus 1:13).

Anyone who contradicts the scriptures regarding salvation (especially one who knows the truth) is a false teacher. We do not apologize for calling to light his false doctrine. We are sorry that he is a false teacher, but we are not sorry to expose him as one, since his false "gospel" leads trusting souls to condemnation..

—312 Pearl Street  
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**"The chief cause of failure  
and unhappiness is trading what  
we want most for what we  
want at the moment."**

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# "SILENCE IS CONSENT"<sup>1</sup>

Gary McDade

Sometimes the observation contained in the title is true. Ezekiel spoke of silence constituting consent and gave the solemn responsibility of the watchman to warn of danger. Loss may come, but when the watchman warns, he releases himself from bloodguiltiness (Ezekiel 33:1-9). The concept is not exclusively an Old Testament demand (Acts 20:26-32). In an article on the "Importance of Loving Truth," **Johnny Ramsey** wrote, "We cannot genuinely claim to stand up for the sacred text while we allow error to run rampant."<sup>2</sup>

The desire for fellowship with other Christians must not override the truth, which serves as the sole basis for such fellowship from the beginning (John 17:20-23). Yet, the invitation comes:

*Good news! Mark your calendar for April 29. We are hosting the area wide "Growing By Sharing" series at Harding Academy. This is an excellent opportunity for the congregations in the area to come together to fellowship and worship. Our speaker for this event is Steve Flatt, president of Lipscomb University.<sup>3</sup>*

In a previous article,<sup>4</sup> the unreliability of Steve Flatt as a preacher of God's word was detailed. In particular, Flatt's alignment with **Rubel Shelly** was given. Additionally, Shelly's congregation, Family of God at Woodmont Hills/Woodmont Hills Church of Christ, advanced the **Billy Graham** Crusade in Nashville last June. Then, following efforts to warn brethren of the danger of having Flatt come to Memphis, an article appeared in the host congregation's bulletin written by Rubel Shelly himself.<sup>5</sup>

The Lord told his disciples wherein the fellowship of the faithful may be found, "**But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin**" (I John 1:7). The light is the light of God's word. The Psalmist wrote, "**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.... The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple**" (Psalm 119:105, 130). All who honor the teaching of the word of God may enjoy fellowship with God and one another. But, denominational division is sinful, standing condemned in God's word (I Corinthians 1:10) and a work of darkness with which Christians must have no fellowship. Paul wrote, "**And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them**" (Ephesians 5:11).

**Sir Edmond Burke** reportedly said, "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." Some say, "Silence is golden," but sometimes it is just plain yellow. And, **Robert Louis Stevenson** wrote, "The cruellest lies are often told in silence."

The premise "silence is consent" has many implications this year in reference to the Growing By Sharing. Perhaps there will be even within the host congregation someone

who will not be content to silently sit by and let the plans to bring Steve Flatt to Memphis find fulfillment through his finances and his family.

If "silence is consent," then this new direction being taken by the host congregation of this year's Growing By Sharing will be heard loudly and clearly.

## ENDNOTES

1. "Invasion of the 'Sludge Media'" in *Family Talk, The Lord's Family in Germantown*, Dave Phillips, ed. (Feb. 25, 2001), 34:8, p.3.
2. *Vigil*, Barry Elliott, ed. (Jan. 2001), 29:1, p. 1.
3. "Our Work Together" in *Family Talk, The Lord's Family in Germantown*, Dave Phillips, ed. (Jan. 21, 2001), 34:3, p. 6.
4. "Is It Nothing to You, All Ye that Pass By?" in *Good News from Getwell*, Gary McDade, ed. (Mar. 26, 2001), 42:13, pp. 2-3.
5. "Spiritual Considerations..." in *Family Talk, The Lord's Family in Germantown*, Dave Phillips, ed. (Apr. 1, 2001), 34:13, p. 3.

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and he'll be a ruler."

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# THE DANGERS OF LARGE ACTIVE YOUTH GROUPS

Brock Hartwigen

This article is not meant as an overall attack against all large active youth groups (LAYGs) and their activities. It is an examination of what LAYGs have produced and an attempt to explain why. It is also a plea for congregations with LAYGs to stop and examine what their group is doing and producing. I am well aware that the LAYG is a sacred cow for many in the church. I don't question that a lot of brethren could cite positive examples when it comes to LAYGs. However, it is my contention that LAYGs are generally detrimental to the spiritual well being of the teenagers who participate in them. Congregations with LAYGS should seriously reconsider their existence or at least how they can be modified to be productive instead of counter-productive.

## ORIGIN OF LAYGS

LAYGs did not really come into their own until the late fifties and early sixties. Before then church sponsored youth activity were sporadic and unorganized, if they existed at all. Today the church is reaping the fruits of over forty years of exposing many of its young people to LAYGs.

Jesus stated that "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). The bulk of the fruit brought forth by LAYGs is corrupt. I do not question that there have been some good LAYGS and that some of our youth have been able to withstand the corrupting influences of LAYGS, but overall, LAYGs have been not a blessing, but a curse to the church. Looking at adults who were involved in LAYGS as youths, one can see that the LAYG stunted the spiritual growth and development of a high percentage of them.

I know my views and conclusions goes against the norm. Please bear with me and let me explain. I was raised in the church, in small congregations. As a youth I never worshipped with a congregation that had a youth group. I use to hear about congregations with LAYGs and longingly wished for such. In 1965 I enrolled in Oklahoma Christian College. I anticipated meeting a lot of strong dedicated Christians students from large congregations who had the advantage of participating in LAYGs, but I was sadly disappointed. My impression after four years of college and meeting hundreds of students who came from congregations with LAYGs, almost without exception, was that they were very weak in the faith, did not understand the concept of the church and had little or no interest in serious Bible study.

Observation and experience over the last thirty-five years has reinforced my view. I have observed that generally the brethren who were raised in the church, but who were not exposed to LAYGs, have a better grasp of the concept of the church and are stronger Christians than

those who were raised in the church, but who had been exposed to a LAYG. Over the years I have talked with many members of the church about LAYGs.

Usually the brethren I talked to who tried to defend LAYGs did so by citing examples of faithful members who participated in a LAYG. But, reluctantly most agreed that their examples were not the norm, but the exception.

Let me briefly explain why I think that LAYGs generally tend to be harmful to the youth who participate in them.

*They promote a false view of the purpose and function of the church:* The purpose or function of the church is two-fold: One, the salvation of lost souls and the teaching and training of saved souls; Two, the praise and worship of the almighty God. It is not socialization, entertainment, fun and games. However, the basic purpose of a LAYG, or at least what it ends up accomplishing, is socialization, entertainment, fun and games. Teens who are part of LAYGs that provides these services develop a false impression of the purpose of the church. They see the church as an organization which exists to provide them with socialization, entertainment, fun and games. When they become adults, they tend to look for a congregation that offers these things instead of what it is suppose to offer. As youths they were trained to believe that the church exists to serve and entertain them. As adults they generally are not interested in serving God and the church, but being served by the church. We see this fruit in the adults of the church, who were exposed to LAYGs in their youth. They look for a congregation that will do for them, through programs and activities, instead of where they can do for God.

*They develop perpetual milk drinkers:* Someone might want to argue that their LAYG has regular devotionals and is not all socialization, entertainment, fun and games. Generally these devotionals simply give lip service to God. They help the adults in the congregation to feel good about the youth program. However, the time devoted to such activities is minuscule compared to the real function of LAYGs which is socialization, entertainment, fun and games. These devotionals are generally not beneficial. In fact, they tend to be a major problem in and of themselves. They tend to stunt the spiritual growth and development of the teens who regularly attend them. Youth devotionals are almost exclusively nothing but watered down spiritual milk. They rarely contain any spiritual meat.

When is the last time you heard of a LAYG gathering for an hour or two of serious Bible study? Generally, a devotional is short and about something in which the teens are interested. While this may sound good, it is not. The youth devotionals rarely are serious in-depth Bible studies. They seldom cover important doctrinal points that encourage

spiritual growth. Usually they are light, short application lessons. They also include songs that the teens enjoy and find fun to sing, once again emphasizing fun over worship and service.

Teens who are constantly fed this diet of spiritual junk food in their youth devotionals develop a taste for junk food and never develop a taste for real serious Bible study. They come to believe that short devotional lessons are all that they need. As adults that is all they will abide. They will not be interested in real meaty doctrinal nor serious in depth Bible studies, but only spiritual milk and junk food. They will not be willing to sit through a sermon, but will demand sermonettes. Today we find many adult members who complain if the preacher's sermon is longer or more in depth than what they grew accustomed to in their devotional services as teens.

*They undermine parental training:* Generally a LAYG will have standards that are looser than that of some of the teens' parents (i.e., movies to attend, dating habits, curfew hours, etc.). There will also be those of the group whose parent's rules are a lot more lax than even the group's standards. Parents who are really trying to train their children will find that their authority is being undermined by the youth group. Their children will not understand why their parents have to be so strict while so-and-so parents aren't, especially when so-and-so's father is an elder or a deacon. The argument "everybody else is doing it" will carry more weight in a teen's eyes when the "everybody else" is the LAYG.

Congregations with LAYGs should carefully examine the whole concept of the church providing special group activities for the youths of the congregation. Parents should carefully examine what their congregation's LAYG is doing and how it is affecting their children. Are the young people in your congregation learning to equate the church with socialization, entertainment, fun and games? If they are, then they are in trouble! Are they being taught by example that short, feel-good devotionals are all the spiritual food that they need? If they are, then they are in trouble! Is their parent's training being undermined by the LAYG? If it is, then they are in trouble!

Lest anyone think that this is just the view of an "old fogey" who has forgotten what it is to be a teenager, let me repeat that this is the opinion I formed as a freshman in college, when I was first exposed to a large body of college students who came from congregations with LAYGs. It has also been reinforced by observation and experience over the last thirty-five years. We need to seriously rethink the whole idea of LAYGs. We now have generations of young Christians who have been exposed to LAYGs and the fruit is apparent. By in large, the LAYG either stunted their spiritual growth or, sadly in many cases, actually killed them.

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# "Icono-WHO?"

Preston Silcox

The word is *iconoclast* and it means "one who destroys religious images or opposes their veneration." Although the word, itself, does not appear in the Bible, the idea is very prevalent. Numerous great Bible characters were iconoclasts.

Moses was an iconoclast. Exodus 32 records the occasion when Israel, in the absence of Moses, had Aaron to fashion a molten calf before which they bowed in worship and unto which they sacrificed. Upon being informed of Israel's sin, Moses "took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it" (Exodus 32:20).

Kings Asa, Josiah, Hezekiah, and Manasseh, among others, were iconoclasts. All these men led religious reforms during their reigns. These major reformations centered around the destruction of idolatry from the land of Israel. In passages such as I Kings 15:12; II Kings 23:4; II Chronicles 31:1; and II Chronicles 33:15, one reads that idols were removed, vessels were burned, images were broke in pieces, and altars were cast out.

New Testament writers, such as Paul and John, were iconoclasts. Paul instructed the Corinthians to "flee idolatry" (I Corinthians 10:4). In Galatians 5:19-21, the same writer lists idolatry as a work of the flesh and declares that all who partake in such "shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Similarly, John told his readers to keep themselves from idols and warned that all who do not, "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (I John 5:21; Revelation 21:8).

Like these great men, modern day children of God must also oppose the worshipping and honoring of idols. Even though hewn stones of false gods do not permeate our land, idolatry is a very present evil. Anything in the minds, hearts, and lives of men that takes the place of the one true and living God is an idol. Idols of this kind include the obsessions of power, pleasure, and possessions. In the pursuit of these items, man forsakes the God of the eternal in order to build altars to the gods of the temporal. Rather than bowing down before such useless gods, may the Christian burn the vessels, break in pieces the images, and cast out the altars of idolatry. Every Christian is to be an iconoclast.

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"The person who stands  
neutral usually stands  
for nothing."

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Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# "THERE IS A LION IN THE WAY..."

Jodie Boren



In Matthew 9:37 Jesus said to his disciples, **"the harvest is truly plenteous, but the labourers are few...."** Why are there so few labourers! Why are we not busy in the vineyard of the Lord? Jesus asked a most incisive question in Matthew 20:6. **"Why stand ye here all the day idle?"** There is so much work to be done and so few willing to be used in the service of the Lord. Like the slothful man of Proverbs 26:13, we cry out, **"there is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets."** It is just an excuse to avoid our responsibilities to the Lord. All of us have friends, love ones, and neighbors that are lost. We talk freely with them about the weather, sports, business and social matters etc., but we cannot seem to bring ourselves to talk to them about the most important thing in the world—their souls.

The fear of offending may well be "a lion in the way" that keeps some of us from sowing the seed of God's word (Luke 8:11). Jesus' disciples were concerned that the sayings of Jesus had offended the Pharisees (Matthew 15:12). Jesus did not speak words to deliberately offend, but his words were spirit and life (John 6:63) designed to lead his hearers into the ways of righteousness and salvation. If we speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) with a genuine concern and compassion for lost souls, we will have followed in the steps of Jesus. The great majority of people didn't believe our Lord when he was on earth and most will not believe us (Matthew 7:13-14), but that does not relieve

us of our responsibility to sow the seed. Remember, when we talk to some lost soul we are not his enemy because we tell him the truth (Galatians 4:16), but rather we are doing him the greatest favor he will ever receive.



To wail that "there is a lion in the way" that hinders us from teaching the lost could prove to be a lack of love. The apostle Paul was constrained by the love of Christ (II Corinthians 5:14) to preach the word. If we love the Lord we will keep his commandments (John 14:15) and one of the most central commands of Christianity is to preach the gospel (Mark 16:15-16). Paul felt he was a debtor to teach others the gospel (Romans 1:14-15) and thus he said, **"I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some"** (I Corinthians 9:22). Maybe we are lacking in love and do not appreciate our salvation as we should.

It is incredulous but some Christians hide behind "the lion" of embarrassment in failing to teach the lost. They are fearful that others may ridicule the strong teachings that we observe as we keep the commandments of the Lord which are unpopular with most of the world. Paul said boldly, **"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ Jesus said that whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven"** (Matthew 10:33). Rather than be timid may we say as in the words of the great hymn, **"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to defend his cause; maintain the honors of his word, the glory of his cross."**

There are other "lions in the way." A lack of faith—a lack of dedication—ignorance of the word—too busy—unconcern et al., et al. What is "the lion" that keeps you from working in the Lord's vineyard? Benjamin Franklin once said, **"He that is good at making excuses is seldom good at anything else."**

There can be no excuse for failing to serve the Lord. **"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always, having all sufficiency in all good things, may abound to every good work"** (II Corinthians 9:8).

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## "WHAT YET DO I LACK?"

Noah Hackworth

Matthew 19:1-15 records (1) the journey of Jesus from Galilee to Judea; (2) his discourse with the Pharisees about marriage, divorce and remarriage, and his (3) attitude toward little children. After Jesus blessed the children, one came to him (Mark's account has this person running to the Lord and kneeling at his feet, 10:17) with a question about eternal life (17). Jesus answered the question and set out the details of what this ruler, who was very rich, had to do. After hearing the words of Jesus, the ruler said, "All these things have I observed: what lack I yet" (20). After Jesus told him what was lacking, the ruler left because he not only had great possessions, he was unwilling to part with them. Even though Jesus loved this man (Mark 10:21) there is no evidence that he ever saw him again. The man was so close to Jesus and yet so far away. There are, in every congregation, many of God's people who appear to be so close to Jesus but in reality they are far away. Why?

### CONVICTION

God's people for the most part are lovely people, and so very precious; not only to God but everyone else as well. Reality, however, dictates that we, face an undeniable truth: some of our people have things missing which are essential to Christian living, congregational growth and world evangelism; and conviction is at the top of the list. Conviction involves certainty. There is apparently some uncertainty in the lives of some as to what they should be doing. As a consequence, they may very well be doing little or possibly nothing. When Paul said, "I am set for the defense of the gospel" (Philippians 1:16), that was conviction. His expression was motivated by an inward devotion to the truth. He is actually saying, "No matter what others say or do, I am set for the defense of the truth" This is the kind of conviction needed, and it must come from within: it cannot occur as a result of concern.

### LOYALTY

Loyalty involves constancy; it also involves consistency, and dependability. Statistics reveal that a great percentage of denominational people are really not loyal to

"their church." The procedure is "me and my life first; the church and religion when needed." Unfortunately, this same attitude is possessed by members of the body of Christ. The church for which Christ died is simply relegated to a secondary position, and the sad part is the fact that this action is painfully obvious. No matter what is said or done, you can never get people of this suasion to do little more than attend services on Sunday morning; but nevertheless, at the risk of sounding apologetic, perhaps this is better than nothing. Would to God that somehow, someday, this will change. We pray that it will and we will work toward that end.




### CONVERSION

Conversion to Christ is the most important as well as the most serious thing in life. It can never be under emphasized. The "conversion" of some is suspect. There is, at first, absolutely no way to tell whether a person is truly converted (changed). There are too many people who "go down into the water" with too much of the world still in them, and they "come up the same way." May it not be the case that we become so anxious for converts that we by-pass essential teaching in order to get people "under the water." Unless we baptize a "truly dead" person (dead to sin to the extent that he no longer wants to live in it), we are on a dangerous course. The result will be "another church member," but not necessarily a dedicated, loyal, Christian. It is also expedient to state that the "baptized person" must be truly converted to Christ. If the conversion is to Christ, the church for which he died will be at the top of the list of important things. The "pew" of the truly converted one will seldom be empty.

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## Queen of Sheba, Abercrombie & Fitch, "The Other Side", and Gay Liberation

Compiled By Mark McWhorter

Pro-life organizations are fired up over a pending federal regulation, devised during the last days of the Clinton administration, that could redefine the terms "fetus" and "child" and result in the legal use of newborns for scientific research. The regulation, cleared by the Clinton administration on January 17, but then postponed by the Bush administration, states that a newborn is still considered a "fetus" until it is determined the baby will live by "independently maintaining a heartbeat and respiration." Only when this determination is made is the baby considered a "child," according to the rule (CNSNews.com (3/21/01)). *(This is outrageous. The Clintons did not portray one bit of decency or morality. We need to pray that the Bush Administration will stop this regulation. —mtm)*

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The temple of the legendary Queen of Sheba could be larger than archaeologists ever imagined, says the Calgary professor heading up the dig in Yemen. Archaeologist Bill Glanzman expects work done this spring to shed light on just how big the 3,000-year-old ruins are—thanks to a \$300,000 grant from petroleum producer Nexen, Inc. Glanzman, a University of Calgary professor, said, "The sanctuary is much bigger than we have anticipated. Just the tiniest detail—even a few fragments of bone—give you a much bigger picture. A pile of animal bones left from sacrifices in the temple are part of the proof. Since the temple was sacred, nothing that entered was supposed to leave, even the carcasses of sacrificial animals." He added that vessels and fragments of cooking wares are also being tested at the U of C to determine what they contained. Tests done this spring will help archaeologists determine where to begin taking away the sand that has been windblown "6 to 8 meters deep in places" on the site. The ruins, called Mahram Bilqis or Temple of the Moon God, are expected to be a major cultural and tourist draw for Yemen. "Everybody is fascinated with the Queen of Sheba who is mentioned in both the Bible and Koran," Glanzman said (Religion Today email service, 3/21/01). *(It will be very interesting to see what new discoveries will come from this. All of it will no doubt give more support for the Biblical account of her visit to Solomon.—mtm)*

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A very popular mail-order catalog company, Abercrombie & Fitch, has released its Spring Break 2001 edition. The pages are full of young people cavorting with very little clothing on. Group sex, homoeroticism, exhibitionism, and blatant pornography are depicted in the pages of the catalog. The new edition, entitled "XXX", has 275 pages which flagrantly flaunt nudity (World, March 24, 2001, p. 9). *(Many young people now get these "catalogs" to not only see decadence but to learn from the writers where to find places to go and to shop for perversity. Yet there has been very little out-*

*rage by those who are always so "concerned" for the youth of America such as the ACLU, the National Education Association, the Democratic Party, and the American Psychology Association. The only conclusion one can draw is that they do not care if the youth are sexually degenerate. Of course, one only has to study a little of what they stand for to already know that.—mtm)*



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This year's Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion goes to the Rev. Arthur Peacocke, a physical biochemist who is also an ordained Anglican priest. Peacocke is the third scientist in as many years to win the honor. Peacocke was honored for what was described as his pioneering exploration of the "creative interaction of science and theology." Peacocke believes that evolution and theism needn't be enemies, and that God's hand can be seen throughout the process of evolution. "It isn't as though God is outside, coming in every now and again to kick things and tweak things, pushing them in the right direction," he explained. "God makes things to make themselves" (Maranatha News email service, 3/21/01). *(Evolution and theism are not compatible. Peacocke is not doing anyone a favor, except the atheist. By mixing the two one is able to put doubt in the mind regarding the inspiration of the scriptures. Once inspiration is doubtful there follows lack of respect and therefore non-compliance with God's laws.—mtm)*

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"The Other Side," a radical liberal "religious" magazine is highlighting "transgendered Christians" in its May-June 2001 issue. The online and print magazine feature will be dedicated to exposing the "spiritual ramifications of gender oppression." Chris Paige is the publisher of *The Other Side*. Paige describes herself as a lesbian, but believes that our culture does violence against individuals at birth by assigning them a particular gender. In her essay, "Non-Consensual Gender," she writes: "We are ASSIGNED a gender at birth. Nobody consults the child... This label is FORCIBLY applied and there no options or alternatives. Not even an area for discussion. THAT, my friends, is VIOLENCE." Paige is angered that people are either male or female and have no choice in the matter. Paige describes herself as a "Christian" from the reformed tradition, but she also says she has learned many spiritual insights from tribal and earth-based religions (Wicca) (Traditional Values Coalition email service, 3/23/01). *(This "lady" just does not know what she is talking about. A person's DNA determines what sex they are. You cannot decide you are a woman if you have a man's DNA. Even if you change the outward appearance, the DNA re-*

# DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES

## —Alabama—

**Holly Pond**—Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, (256) 796-6802, (205) 429-2026. Sunday: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

**Somerville**—Union Church of Christ, located on Hwy 36, one mile east of Hwy 67, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tom Larkin, Evangelist, (256) 778-8955, (256) 778-8961.

## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Telephone: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

## —Florida—

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

## —Georgia—

**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1146, 1319 JFH Pkwy (US 41 NW) Cartersville, GA 30120. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: Cartersville-cofc@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —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.

## —Massachusetts—

**Chicopee**—Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive, Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, tel. (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coc.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, 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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*mains the same. There is no violence involved or intended toward the lovely child. The violence (a battle from a spiritual perspective) is from the individual trying to fight God in living a sinful life.—mtm)*

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Spider silk is stronger and more elastic than Kevlar, which is the strongest man-made fiber. Dragline silk, the main support for its web, is a hundred times stronger than steel—a cable of this silk a little thicker than a garden hose could support the weight of two full Boeing 737 aircraft. It can also stretch to 40% of its length. Spiders can make silk at different speeds—up to 10 times faster when dropping to escape a predator. Spiders eat their own webs when they no longer need them. Spider silk owes its amazing strength and elasticity to its complexity. Man-made fibers are usually just simple strands of material. But a silk fibre has a core surrounded by concentric layers of nanofibrils (tinythreads). Some layers contain nanofibrils aligned parallel to the axis, while other layers contain nanofibrils coiling like a spiral staircase. The coiled ones allow the silk to be stretched, because they simply straighten up rather than break. The nanofibrils are also very complicated structures that have nanocrystals with electrical charges that stop protein chains from slipping (Creation ex

nihilo, March/May, 2001, p. 21). (Another example of the marvelous world that our Lord created. How can anyone believe that something this complex, yet so small, could possibly have happened by chance? —mtm)

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“Gay liberation was about the freedom to have sex, to break rules, to have no limits. And we can have most of that. We don’t have to be prudish—we just need to be prudent.”—San Francisco AIDS activist **Dan Wohlfeiler** writing at GayHealth.com, February 16 (quoted in Planet Out email service, 3/30/01). (I think that just about sums up what all of this has been about. They just wanted to break rules and have no limits. That is not even liberty as the Founding Fathers envisioned it, much less what God demands.—mtm)

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
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# THE SOUL— AN ANALYSIS OF MARK 8:36-37

Jason R. Roberts

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mark 8:36-37).

These two rhetorical questions, though posed by our Lord many centuries ago, are still of paramount importance for our day and time. There are three essential truths that surface when one carefully analyzes these two thought-provoking questions.

## A PERSONAL POSSESSION

**“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”** (v. 36, emp. added). Each person possesses within their fleshly tabernacle something that is unique, rare and very personal—a soul. When David realized that no mere man could satisfy the deepest longings and desires of his broken heart, he poured his petition before the ears of Jehovah saying, **“no man cared for my soul”** (Psalm 142:4). Further, the deep affection which Jonathan and David had for one another is captured by the simple and touching words, **“and Jonathan loved him (David) as his own soul”** (I Samuel 18:1, emp. added). The man who refuses instruction **“despiset his own soul”** (Proverbs 15:32). On the contrary, the man who **“getteth wisdom loveth his own soul”** (Proverbs 19:8, emp. added). The scriptures are replete, emphasizing the personal nature of the soul. There is only one you.

## A PRICELESS POSSESSION

*First, the soul's tremendous value is vividly expressed in the Lord's second question, “Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”* (v.37). The soul's value can be seen when one considers the Person Who created it. Man, the dual being that is, was created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27). Since God is a Spirit (John 4:24) and we are created in his image—then we bear the divine image of our creator within us.

In discussing the supreme worth of man above their idolatrous practices, Paul informed the Athenians that **“we are the offspring of God”** (Acts 17:29). The word, **“offspring”** is the same word found in Revelation 22:16, where Jesus describes himself as **“the offspring of David.”** That is Jesus' royal, lineage is traced to David. Our physical and spiritual lineage is traced to the **“Lord God (Who) formed man of the dust of the ground”** (Genesis 2:7, emp. added), and Who is the **“the Father of Spirits”** (Hebrews 12:9).

*Second, the value of the soul is equally seen when one considers the enormous price paid for it.* Peter wrote:

**Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But**

**with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot** (I Peter 1:18-19).

How anyone could stand within the shadows of calvary and witness the Savior of the world immersing his precious soul into a hell of suffering on their soul's behalf, and walk away without coming to a full realization of their soul's extreme value, defies human comprehension! In addition to when we partake of the Lord' supper, all of us should frequently take a mental trip up calvary's road. By doing so, we will once again be confronted by tremendous worth of just one soul and just how much one Man loved us by willingly subjecting himself to the agony of the cross in order to redeem that lost, hell-bound soul. When one no longer considers his soul possessing any value, there is one thing that is certain—he has stopped visiting calvary.

## A PURPOSEFUL POSSESSION

Since God created the soul and Jesus died for the soul, it is only natural for one to conclude that the soul has a purpose for existing. What is that purpose? *One, the soul must be properly nurtured* (I Peter 3:4). Like any living entity, the soul needs to be properly cared for. This can be done by one accessing a daily diet of God's word (Psalm 1:1). David said, **“My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word”** (Psalm 119:89). Paul instructed us to **“adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things”** (Titus 2:10).

*Two, the soul must be guarded from all evil.* Peter urged us **“to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul”** (I Peter 2:11). Paul admonished us to **“abstain from all appearance of evil”** (I Thessalonians 5:22). Satan is working overtime to hurl in our direction everything that will cause us to cheapen the value of the soul we possess, hoping that we will embrace the lusts of the flesh. May we earnestly endeavor to *resist, not assist* every effort he exerts (James 4:7), for we are not ignorant of his devices (II Corinthians 2:11).

—1601 E. Park Ave.  
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**“Don't put a question mark where God put a period.”**

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# HOW THE COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE DEVELOPED

Paul Vaughn

The need to train and develop preachers who have a knowledge of the Bible, character and skillful minds forced the development of schools of higher learning in the brotherhood. Thus, the stage was set for higher education to play an important role in the Restoration Movement.

## BACON COLLEGE

The first college to be organized by members of the church of Christ was Bacon College, named after Sir Francis Bacon. It was started at Georgetown, Kentucky on November 14, 1836, about four years before Alexander Campbell established Bethany College in Bethany, Virginia.

The first president of Bacon College was **Walter Scott**<sup>1</sup> but he resigned after one year and **D.S. Burnet** was appointed to succeed him. The original trustees of the school were **John T. Johnson, John Bowman, John Curd, John Duncan, Samuel Nuckals, James H. Davis, Henry Johnson, Philip S. Fall, T.C. Fournoy, G.W. Williams, Thomas Smith, H.M. Bledsoe, Asa Runyon, George L. Nuchals, and James Challen.**

The school came upon financial problems and was moved to Harrodsburg, Kentucky in 1839. Burnet resigned as president leaving Samuel Hatch to serve in that position temporarily until the school recruited James Shannon as the president in 1840. A number of problems that arose while Shannon was president as a result, he resigned in 1850 and moved to Missouri. The problems during Shannon's time as president caused the school to lose its credibility so the board suspended operations. **John B. Bowman and Major James Taylor** there took the initiative to mastermind a strategy to reopen the school. The school reopened as Kentucky University on September 19, 1859. The first president of the new school was **Robert Milligan.**

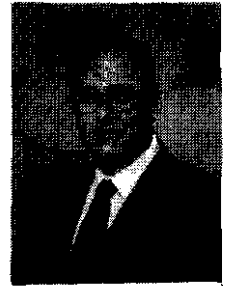
In Milligan's inaugural address, he said that there are ten schools (or departments) that are needed to make up a good college of liberal arts.

These are (1) Ancient Languages and Literature, (2) English, (3) Rhetoric, Oratory, and Belles-Letters, (4) Mathematics, (5) Natural Philosophy, (6) Chemistry and Physiology, (7) Natural History, (8) Civil History and Political Economy, (9) Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, and (10) Biblical Literature and Evidences of Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

The school started with one hundred ninety-four students, but enrollment decreased as the Civil War made its way through Kentucky. The Southern army won the battle at Richmond, Kentucky in August 1862, but was defeated by the Northern army at the Battle of Perryville in October 1862. During the battle at Perryville, over 8,000 soldiers were killed. "The wounded filled the resorts, the churches,

and the homes of Harrodsburg. The buildings at Kentucky University were commandeered as hospitals."<sup>2</sup>

The school was destroyed by fire from a faulty flue on February 16, 1864. Classes met in the church building and the Masonic Hall for the rest of the term. The Kentucky University had only fourteen graduates from 1859 through 1865.



## CONSOLIDATION WITH TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY

Transylvania University was founded in 1783 as a seminary academy, near Danville, Kentucky. In 1788 the school was moved to Lexington, Kentucky. It was supported by Presbyterians at first, but the trustees appointed a Unitarian as president so they withdrew their support of the school, and formed Kentucky Academy. In 1798 a new president was appointed at Transylvania that the Presbyterians supported so they merged Kentucky Academy and Transylvania Seminary to form Transylvania University. All was not good for the new university because the Kentucky Legislature in February of 1818 dismissed the trustees of the school and appointed new trustees that were unacceptable for Presbyterians to support. When the Presbyterians withdrew their support of Transylvania University the second time, they formed Centre College at Danville, Kentucky in 1819.

Transylvania University was controlled by different denominational churches (Baptist, Episcopal, and Methodist) until 1850 when it was returned to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. It then was lowered to a high school and almost closed until it was offered to Kentucky University in 1865.

When Kentucky University united with Transylvania University, the school kept the name Kentucky University. Within the university a college of Agricultural and Me-

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chanical Arts was formed as well as a College of the Bible. The College of the Bible separated from the university in 1877. It eventually developed into the Lexington Theological Seminary (a school of the ultra liberal Disciples of Christ). In 1908 the College of Agricultural and Mechanical Arts separated. It was renamed the University of Kentucky in 1916. Kentucky University was renamed Transylvania University in 1908.

The history of higher education, among the brotherhood in Kentucky is very interesting and at times mind-

boggling. The College of the Bible was a powerful force for good in its early history. In future articles, we take a close look at both the good and the bad that came out of the College of the Bible.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Dwight E. Stevenson, *Lexington Theological Seminary*, Bethany Press, St. Louis, 1984, p.410.
2. *Ibid.* p.411.

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## Sermon Outlines....

# THE DISOBEDIENCE OF SAUL (I Samuel 15:1-31)

by Tom W. Moore

### INTRODUCTION

A. In 1 Samuel 8 we find an incident that forever changed Israel's course - and it was a change for the worse.

1. 1 Samuel 8:1-7

- a. They rejected God as their King and wanted to be like the world around them.
- b. They were warned of the results of this kind of rebellion ... 1 Samuel 8:18-19.

2. Saul was the people's choice to be their first king.

- a. Saul's reign was filled with one indiscretion after another.
- b. But, Saul's error in 1 Samuel 15 was the straw that broke the camel's back—this caused rejection by God.

B. Samuel gives the Lord's instructions to Saul (1 Sam. 15: 1-3)

1. Samuel begins his instruction to Saul by reminding him where his kingship came from and that his total loyalty belonged to God.
2. Samuel tells Saul how the Lord remembered the Amalekites' evil deeds toward Israel, and wants them exterminated.
3. The command: 1 Samuel 15:3.

C. Saul makes ready for the battle (1 Sam. 15:4-5).

D. The battle was completed, but not as ordered (1 Samuel 15:6-9).

1. Saul and company came and smote the Amalekites.
2. But notice what is said in verses 8-9.
3. Saul won the battle, but he did not do everything the Lord said. He decided he would do it his way.

E. God declares Saul's disobedience to Samuel (1 Sam 15:10-12)

1. God tells Samuel that He is very grieved with the fact that Saul, whom He appointed king, would not follow Him.
2. This grieved Samuel and cried in prayer unto the Lord all night. Have we ever done this?
3. Samuel rises up to meet Saul and is told he is in Gilgal.

F. Saul is confronted about his disobedience (1 Sam 15:13-23).

1. First, notice the lies that are told by Saul in verses 13-15.
2. After the lies told by Saul, Samuel proceeds to rebuke Saul for not obeying the commands of God.
3. Notice Saul's reply ...
  - a. Verses 20-21.
  - b. He lies to himself and blames the people.
4. Samuel then in verses 22-23 responds to Saul's lies and excuses.



G. Saul pleads for mercy (1 Sam. 15:24-31).

1. Still making excuses, notice how Saul begins his plea for mercy ... verse 24.
2. Saul begs Samuel to stay to help him go to the Lord to ask for forgiveness.
3. Samuel said no. He says, "You rejected God, now God rejects you".
4. Consider what is said in verses 27-29.

H. Let us now consider some of the valuable lessons we learn from Saul's disobedience.

### DISCUSSION

A. SAUL BLAMES THE PEOPLE

1. 1 Samuel 15:14-15, 20-21.
2. The Lord told Saul in 1 Samuel 15:3 what was required of him, and when he was confronted about his disobedience—he blamed the people.
3. This is an age old problem: "Passing the Buck" ... It is the "I am never to blame attitude".
4. Do you remember Genesis 3:9-13.
5. How do people "pass the buck" today?
6. Remember, when you point the finger there are three more pointing right back at you.
7. In the day of judgment there will be no "passing of the buck".
  - a. John 12:48.
  - b. 2 Corinthians 5:10.

B. NEGLIGENCE IS DOING EVIL

1. 1 Samuel 15:19-20.
2. Saul evidently thought that doing only part of God's command was all right.
3. Samuel informed Saul that to do a part of God's will to the neglect of other commands is doing evil.
4. There are many in the world who think they are doing the good, but are only partially obedient— therefore do evil.
  - a. Many denominations do some "good things," but do evil in neglecting many of God's commands.
  - b. There are many in the Lord's church who are involved in "cafeteria style religion".
  - c. Doing some good things is not enough.
5. Remember the parables in Matthew 25 - they were all lost because of something they neglected to do.
6. Are we obeying parts of God's law to the neglect of others? If so, we are involved in evil.

**C. GOD DESIRE OBEDIENCE RATHER THAN SACRIFICE**

1. 1 Samuel 15:22-23.
2. Saul disobeyed God, but thought it was all right since it was done to worship Him.
3. From this we see that simply worshipping is not enough
  - a. It must be done in obedience.

- b. Worship not prescribed by God is rejected.

4. John 4:24.

**D. SAUL FEARED THE PEOPLE AND NOT GOD**

1. 1 Samuel 15:24
2. This is one of the reason there is so much error in the world today - because man fears man instead of God.
3. Saul blamed his error on fearing the people - what about today?
  - a. Fearful of losing friends, or not being popular.
  - b. Fearful of losing social status.
  - c. Fearful of loosing a promotion.
4. Notice what Jesus said ... Matthew 10:28

**CONCLUSION**

- A. May we never fall into the trap of Saul where he:
  1. Blamed others for his sin.
  2. Neglected the portion of God's law he did not want to do.
  3. Thought it was all right to change God's law because he was doing it to worship God.
  4. Feared the people more than God.
- B. Beloved, learn the lessons of history.

—24065 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

**BIBLE STUDY WORKSHOP:  
GETTING EXCITED ABOUT BIBLE STUDY**

Victor M. Eskew

The Bible is still respected as God's word by most people in the United States. It continues to be the nation's best seller. Owners of this wonderful volume do not always reap its benefits, however. They see the Bible as a book shrouded with mystery. They often believe that it is difficult and confusing to understand. Therefore, it often sits in the home and collects dust.

This seminar entitled, "Getting Excited about Bible Study," seeks to change all of this. The Bible is an understandable Book. It can be read and understood by all that have some knowledge of how to study. We want to give you the tools to engage in an effective study of God's word, especially within the New Testament.

The seminar involves 13 hours of instruction. It begins on Friday evening at 7:00 p.m. and concludes on Sunday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. The classes begin with a discussion of "The Importance of Bible Study." We will also survey the entire Bible that evening, putting it in an "easy to understand" format.

Saturday morning will involve a study of New Testament words. The definition of 40 New Testament words will be covered. We will also look at the geography of the New Testament. Those who attend will be introduced to the Roman Empire of the first century and the land of Palestine. Do not let these topics make you afraid to attend. The material will be discussed in very simple terms.

Saturday afternoon will involved some of the mechanics of Bible study. We will cover both the "Rules" and "Tools" of Bible study. That night we will examine several types of Bible studies in which one can engage. There will also be a brief lecture on "Building a Religious Library."

On Sunday morning, Victor Eskew will speak during both the Bible Class hour and Worship hour. His topics will be "The Bible Is God's Word" and "The Power of God's Word." That afternoon all 27 books of the New Testament will be over-

viewed. We will look at the purpose and key verse of each book.

When one completes this course, he will have a context in which to begin a much deeper study of God's word. He will also see that the Bible can be read and understood. Having this understanding will make Bible study exciting, fun, and enjoyable.

We would enjoy presenting this special weekend at your congregation. If you would be interested, please contact me at 870-236-6176. We can discuss all the arrangements for the weekend.

**FAYE CECILIA WARREN**

ARLINGTON — Faye Cecilia Warren, 79, died Monday, April 2, 2001, in Arlinghūebonnet Hills Mausoleum. Visitation: 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday at Bluebonnet Hills Funeral Home.

Ms. Warren was born November 15, 1921, in Beaumont. She married Dr. Thomas B. Warren in 1942 and he preceded her in death in August 2000.

She was also preceded in death by her son-in-law, Jon R. Coleman, in May 1999, and two brothers, James Henry Brauer and Coubr Brauer.

Survivors: Daughters, Karen Warren Waters and husband, Mike Sr., of Arlington and Jan Warren Coleman of Jonesboro, Ark.; son, Dr. Lindsey Warren and wife, Susan, of Henderson, Tennessee; grandchildren, Mike Waters Jr. and wife, Donna, Warren Waters and wife, Wendy, Jon Warren Coleman, Kyle Coleman and Thomas Bart Warren; great-grandson, Mike Waters III "Trey"; nieces and nephews, Mike and Carolyn Brauer, Steve and Kaye Baber and Lou and Sharon Brauer; and numerous other family and friends.

# WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

Annette B. Cates

For some time now, it has been popular for some young (and older) people to wear a bracelet with the letters WWJD, standing for "What would Jesus Do?" This is a good question for any of us to ask ourselves as we go about our daily lives as long as we answer the question honestly. Too often, however, we color what we think Jesus would do, by what WE perceive as acceptable behavior. A better question might be "What is it worth to my soul?" The answer to this question will give us a framework within which to live our lives as Jesus would have us to do.

How valuable is the soul? Jesus said in Matthew 16:26 that it is worth more than the whole world. God is the one who designed us and gave us a soul (Ecclesiastes 12:7). It is the one thing about us that will live forever. There are those who spend their lives seeking the fountain of youth, never thinking of the spiritual side of life wherein eternal youth can be found. They may ask, "What would Jesus do?" then go about their lives doing whatever they want to do, placing their souls in jeopardy. Solomon wrote of this principle in Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." The Christian's approach to decision-making is different, trained by what is taught in the Bible and respecting that as God's word.

We train our decision-making through developing a working faith. This is faith that God will give us strength to overcome temptation, face fear, answer doubt, and handle sorrow. When we look at the great chapter on faith, Hebrews 11, we notice the action verbs that accompany the vignettes of the individuals noted for their faith: Abel offered, Noah prepared, Abraham went out, Sarah judged, Isaac blessed, Jacob worshipped, Joseph gave commandment, Moses refused and chose, Rahab received, and others, too numerous to list by name, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, faced and overcame persecutions. The people of Hebrews 11 did not simply say, "I believe" and let it end there. They did more than "put a hand on the radio" and say, "Yes, Lord." When faced with a trial or temptation, they put their faith into action. Why? They knew the value of the soul.

We train our decision-making through desiring to live righteous lives. **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled"** (Matthew 5:6). We make it our aim to **"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..."** (Matthew 6:33). We must study God's word in order to know what his will is, and then do it (II Timothy 2:25; 3:16). We cannot do what we do not know to do, and we cannot shun that which we do not know to be evil. Herein is a problem with merely asking the question, "What would Jesus do?" Our lives must be filled with the fruits of righteousness (Philippians 1:11) which include spiritual knowledge, moral purity, and service to God and man. Why? We know the value of the soul.

We train our decision-making through understanding the importance of having a positive influence on others and leading them to Christ. Yes, it is true that God's all-seeing eye watches us; it is also true that the world watches us. We cannot say one thing and live another, and we cannot call ourselves Christian while participating in the things of the world. To do so is to be double-minded and unstable (James 1:8). The world sees this as hypocrisy, and rightly so. Further, we live in a society that is increasingly hostile to Christianity. Only about one-third of the world's population makes any claim to belief in Jesus Christ, and far fewer have knowledge of his church. Thus, it is incumbent on us that we present the gospel to as many as we possibly can and to support those who can and will go where we cannot. Atheism, secularism, and the doctrines of men will not save one soul (Matthew 15:9; Colossians 2:8); only the gospel can do that. **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"** (Romans 1:16). Why? We know the value of every soul.

It is good that at least some in today's world would ask, "What would Jesus do?" There are those who never give even that much thought to the impact of their actions. Let us make certain that our answer to that question when we make the decisions we face in life is based on the will of God as revealed in his word, and not on personal feelings. Let us answer in light of the question, "What is it worth to my soul?"

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
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# WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

Eddie Whitten

**“For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away”** (James 4:14). James asked this question to emphasize a point. People go about with the evident expectation of continued life. The need for preparation for the life to come is of no importance to those who are materialistic in their thinking. James points out that the material things of this life or not nearly as important as eternity, and uses the brevity of life to teach that lesson. The focal point of his statement is that compared to eternity, we are here on the earth for a precious few moments. Consequently, we need to make the most of our time while we have it.

Wasted years, wasted lives characterize the majority of human existence. It is the good fortune of just a few to have the privilege of hearing about Jesus. A few million in relation to many billions of people enjoy the blessing of knowing about and reading the word of God. It is, indeed, a wonderful privilege of living in a land where free course is ours to read, study, understand and obey the inspired gospel of Christ. Yet, there is the ever-consuming question of “What is your life?” “What is MY life?” Is it focused on the things of the world? Or on the weightier things of preparation for eternity?

## IS MY LIFE ONE OF OBEDIENCE?

Obedience does not necessarily mean assent! Do I understand and agree with the requirements for salvation? If I do understand and agree with such requirements it is not hard for me to do them. But, what if I understand such requirements but do not agree with them, what will be my response? Will I reject the Bible because I do not agree with its teaching? Rejection of the Bible based on such thinking spawned denominationalism. Understanding did not overcome disagreement with the teaching of the Bible, therefore obedience did not occur. Assent, or agreement, rather than obedience based on faith, controls the actions of all those that do not yield their will to the will of the father. Jesus taught that those who think this way will not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 7:21-23). We are saved by faith (Ephesians 2:8; Romans 5:1), and faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17).

## IS MY LIFE ONE OF SERVICE?

Service is also based on faith. If my conviction is strong, I will do what I can to be of service to God through my sincere and prescribed worship (John 4:23-24). I will also be of service to my brethren in the church. Paul wrote, “**Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ**” (Galatians 6:2). If my faith is true, I will serve my God through my example to others in my secular life. I will study, I will pray, I will give generously and cheerfully of my means to further the work of the church. I will take the

Lord's Supper on the first day of every week. I will assemble with the Saints every time the church comes together. Please don't use the term, “go to church.” The church is comprised of its members. It is not the building in which the church assembles. I will be kind and helpful to those outside the body of Christ. As Jesus taught, I will “**Let your (my) light so shine before men, that they may see your (my) good works, and glorify your (my) Father which is in heaven**” (Matthew 5:16). Christian service is a product of faith and obedience to God's word.



## IS IT ONE OF STRIFE AND CONTENTION?

Unfortunately and tragically, there are those whose life's apparent purpose is to keep strife and contention seething among brethren. Paul wrote, “**knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel**” (Philippians 1:17). Jude exhorted, “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Notice that Paul's “**defence**” and Jude's “**contend**” are for “**the gospel**” and “**the faith**” respectively. Both mean the same. It is the truth of God's word we are to contend for and defend. Any preacher, any Christian that is not willing to stand in the face of error and defend the precious word of God is not worthy of Jesus who died for him. That is not the problem faced in the church.

A major problem facing the church is the attitude and action of those who are using their life to try to destroy those who disagree with their personal judgment of another's personal judgment. It does not seem to matter what is right or wrong doctrinally, but who disagrees with their opinion. If it was just a matter of disagreement between

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two brethren regarding judgment and discussed between the two of them, it would be one thing. However, if in the case of disagreement on a matter of judgment between brother A and brother B, brother A begins to send letters to brethren C through Z soliciting resentment and rejection of brother B, then brother A is guilty of violation of scripture. The "abominations" of Proverbs 6:18-19, are "An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." Stirring up strife is condemned in Galatians 5:20.

**IS IT ONE  
OF PEACEMAKING?**

Jesus stated, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9). His reference in this passage was toward those who bring others into peace with God. It is also imperative that the child of God be instrumental in bringing peace within the body of Christ as well. James writes,

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (James 5:19-20).

Wisdom is always the appropriate use of knowledge coupled with patience and common sense. It just makes good common, Christian sense to see the best in others and exercise every consideration for his good. Pride is a curse not only to the individual possessed of it (I John 2:16), but it is also a detriment to the cause of Christ. One cannot be an example of the love and compassion of Christ by backbiting and badmouthing his brother. Being a peacemaker in the body of Christ is a high calling, one to which every faithful Christian should aspire.

Fighting error is a must for every Christian. Paul charged Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Timothy 6:12). He said he had fought a good fight (II Timothy 4:7). Fighting false teaching and false teachers is incumbent upon every member of the Lord's church. It must be kept free of false teachings (I John 4:1; Ephesians 5:11). Let us be careful, however, that it is the false teacher and false teaching that we fight, not a brother or sister who may differ with us on matters of opinion or judgment. "What is your life? it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanish away."

—3616 Brown Trail  
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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## DID JESUS SAY ANYTHING ABOUT MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE?

Jerry Murrell

The more I read what people have written concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage, the less it seems that Jesus can get a word in edgewise. Once, while discussing this subject with a brother, I asked to see his Bible to find out if it contained Matthew 19:3-12. I did this because of the conclusion he reached. His position indicated that he did not know whether Jesus had ever addressed any of the three subjects.

Unfortunately, such conclusions are not only being reached by this brother, but by others **“who [are] of reputation.”** Therefore, it will be the purpose of this article to examine the teaching of three brethren whose words are recorded in the March 2001 issue of the *Firm Foundation*. Fortunately, those **“that seemed to be somewhat”** are not the final arbiters in religious matters (Galatians 2:6).

After a solid article on the topic by **Bob Cruse, H. A. “Buster” Dobbs**, Editor of the *Firm Foundation*, added a sentence that attempted to build again the things that Cruse had just destroyed (cf. Galatians 2:18). Dobbs wrote: “It is possible for a person to be in a marriage situation that is intractable.”<sup>1</sup> In plain English Dobbs states that some people are in marital situations that cannot be fixed. This is the old “you cannot unscramble eggs” argument that **James D. Bales et al.** has advanced.

### REPENTANCE MAY BE DIFFICULT

I understand that people can get themselves into positions that make repentance difficult. For example, after World War II some brethren tried to raise one million dollars to take the gospel to Europe. If a brother had stolen the money they raised, he would have been rich. If he started a new business with the money, he might find it very diffi-

cult to repent. His repentance might mean that the people who worked for his new business would lose their jobs. It might hurt his employees’ children. Yet, he must give the money back in order to go to heaven.

Jesus said that it is **“hard for a rich man to enter heaven”** (Matthew 19:23). In Matthew 19 Jesus admitted that with men some things are impossible but **“with God all things are possible”** (Matthew 19:26). With God thieves can return money, eggs can be unscrambled, and adulterers can get out of adultery by ceasing to live in such an unlawful union.

### CORRECT

Next Dobbs quotes from **Foy E. Wallace Jr.** Wallace begins well by stating, “This law of divorce declares that remarriage by either party after unjustifiable divorce establishes a state of adultery for the one who does so.” Let us see where this premise takes us.

A person who remarries after an unjustified divorce is in a state of adultery.

Joe is a person who remarries after an unjustified divorce.

Therefore, Joe is a person who is in a state of adultery.<sup>2</sup>

A person who is in a state of adultery cannot go to heaven.

Joe is a person who is in a state of adultery.

Therefore, Joe is a person who cannot go to heaven (Galatians 5:19-21).

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Editorial...

## The Editor of the *Firm Foundation*—There He Goes Again

You will notice in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* three articles dealing with H. A. "Buster" Dobbs' (editor of the *Firm Foundation*) false doctrine pertaining to marriage, divorce and remarriage. Faithful brethren, Jerry Murrell, Lynn Parker, and Gary Summers authored these articles. Some of the same things are discussed in each article. However, each author deals with Dobbs' doctrine in a way that differs from his fellow writers' approach to the matter. In combining all three articles one has a thorough discussion and refutation of Dobbs' erroneous position on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

## AN INTERESTING EXCHANGE OF LETTERS

Herein I am also including an exchange of letters between Steve Thayer and Dobbs regarding the latter's comments appearing at the end of Cruse's article in the March 2001 issue of *Firm Foundation*.

Firm Foundation

Dear Sirs:

Having read the article by Bob Cruse in the March 2001 issue entitled "Some Things God's Marriage Law Does Not Say," I am very confused as to your position regarding the separation of an adulterous remarriage.

Brother Cruse seemed right on target with his statement "Counseling people to continue in adultery (see Romans 6:2; Colossians 3:7; Ephesians 2:3) constitutes a refusal to 'save a soul from death' (James 5:20)." Now I am not sure where his article ended. Was it at the end of his address or clear at the end of the article? If at the end of Page 12 then he certainly contradicts himself by the quotation of Foy E. Wallace and L.C. Sears who have the opinion splitting the marriage would also be wrong since it would harm the children. How ridiculous. Sure the divorce and separation of the two adulterating adults would cause pain to the children but since when did sin ever do anything else. The sin is the union God does not recognize.

Separation does not mean abdicating of one's responsibility to the children. These two parents must continue involved in the lives of the children while maintaining two separate households and remain separate the rest of their lives. Impossible? Yes, in today's self-indulgent "ME FIRST" society but not for those who long for eternity in heaven by remaining faithful in this life.

What is your position? Are you advocating no separation of an adulterous couple in order to protect the children such as, I'm sorry to see, Foy E. Wallace did?

I am eagerly awaiting your response.

Steve Thayer  
1921 Main  
Higginsville, Mo 64037

Mr. Steve Thayer  
1921 Main St  
Higginsville, MO 64037

Dear brother Thayer,

Thank you for your letter and your inquiry about my position on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

Basically, the position is that marriage is a lifetime contract and is to be permanent and enduring. The position is best summed up in these words: "Whosoever shall put, away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery."

The death of one of the marriage partners would be another exception (See Rom. 7:2).

Marriage must be had in honor and the bed undefiled.

Thank you for writing.

Faithfully,  
[signed]  
H. A. "Buster" Dobbs

---

Firm Foundation  
H. A. Dobbs

Dear Brother Dobbs,

Thank you for your response to my question regarding the article by Bob Cruse. However I must not have made myself clear as to my question.

My question is do you believe that a husband and wife that are living in an adulterous relationship due to an unscriptural divorce and remarriage should not divorce if there are children?

Thank you,  
Steven Thayer  
1921 Main  
Higginsville, Mo 64037

---

Sunday, April 08, 2001

Mr. Steve Thayer  
1921 Main  
Higginsville, MO 64037

Hello again Steve Thayer,

I do not deal in hypothetical propositions because there are too many imponderables and nuances.

It has been my experience that "what if" situations can lead to misunderstanding and, in some cases, unwitting misrepresentation.

If you have a Bible question, I will [sic] happy to attempt to give a Bible answer.

Thank you for writing and for your interest. Please be assured of my best wishes for you. Let us pray for one another.

Faithfully,  
[signed]  
H. A. Buster Dobbs

### "ROUND AND ROUND HE GOES WHERE HE STOPS NOBODY KNOWS"

Dobbs' will not answer "hypothetical propositions". They are "what if" Situations", for they "can lead to misunderstanding and, in some cases, unwitting misrepresentation". Thus, Dobbs' concludes that he does not accept Thayer's question to be a Bible question, for he wrote, "If you have a Bible question, I will [sic] happy to attempt to give a Bible answer."

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary gives the following definition for "hypothesis" (page 594).

1: a tentative assumption made in order to draw out and test its logical or empirical consequences 2 a: an assumption or concession made for the sake of argument b: an interpretation of a practical situation or condition taken as the ground for action 3: the antecedent clause of a conditional statement.

Syn HYPOTHESIS, THEORY, LAW mean a formula derived by inference from scientific data that explains a principle operating in nature. HYPOTHESIS implies insufficient evidence to provide more than a tentative explanation; THEORY implies a greater range of evidence and greater likelihood of truth; LAW implies a statement of order and relation in nature that has been found to be invariable under the same condition.

Now that you have read the exchange of letters between Thayer and Dobbs as well as Webster's definition of "hypothesis", I ask: WHAT IS "HYPOTHETICAL" ABOUT THAYER'S QUESTION—"DO YOU BELIEVE THAT A HUSBAND AND WIFE THAT ARE LIVING IN AN ADULTEROUS RELATIONSHIP DUE TO AN UNSCRIPTURAL DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE SHOULD NOT DIVORCE IF THERE ARE CHILDREN?" Does Dobbs mean to tell us that there are no marriages, divorces, and remarriages today that involve children? If that is the case, why did he write what he did in the March 2001? Can he not see that he was in his remarks dealing with the question that Thayer put to him? Indeed, Dobbs violated his own guidelines when he wrote on the subject following Cruse's article. There is no other conclusion to draw, but that Dobbs wrote what he did after Cruse's article to deal with the very question Thayer posed to him. Dobbs is slicker than proverbial "goose grease". However, he seems to have slipped down on the same grease he smeared on the floor.

### POOR OLE JESUS

The Lord had no problem dealing with topics regarding marriage, divorce, remarriage, as well as the Sadducees' "hypothetical" question regarding marriage in the resurrection (Matthew 19:3-10; 23-33). Can anyone imagine the Lord answering the Sadducees with Dobbs' answer of:

I do not deal in hypothetical propositions because there are too many imponderables and nuances. It has been my experi-

ence that 'what if' situations can lead to misunderstanding and, in some cases, unwitting misrepresentation.

Maybe the wisdom of Dobbs has enlightened us as to why Jesus was misunderstood and misrepresented (unwittingly or otherwise) by the Sadducees, Pharisees and their crowd. Our Lord just did not have Dobbs there with him to advise him about answering the hypothetical question posed to him by the Sadducees which question was, "**Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? For they all had her**" (Matthew 22:28). Poor ole Jesus; he only knew to answer with; "**Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God**" (Matthew 22:29). Christ then proceeded to explain the matter to them (Matthew 22:30-32). His answer "**astonished**" the "**multitude**" with "**his doctrine**". Well, we are astonished at Dobbs' answer too, but not for the same reason the "**multitude**" was "**astonished**" with Jesus' answer to the Sadducees.

#### PITIFUL OLE PAUL

First Corinthians chapter seven begins with, "**Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me; It is good for a man not to touch a woman**" (verse 1ff). This chapter has been abused about as much as any passage of scripture—and it dealt with the reality of situations existing at the time. And, Thayer's question to Dobbs is as grounded in the reality of marriage, divorce and remarriage in our times as those questions put to Paul in his day. There is nothing about Thayer's question that is "hypothetical"! Dobbs' is dealing with Thayer's question in the exact same way that he deals with questions put to him about his false doctrine on "except for sin, all of life is worship". And, what is his modus operandi? Explicitly (in just so many words) he denies it or he attempts to dodge, as he did with Thayer's question. He tells Thayer, "If you have a Bible question, I will be happy to attempt to give a Bible answer." It is rather obvious from the preceding statement that Dobbs does not accept implication as one of the ways the Bible speaks to man today (authorizes man today). That being the case, where did the Bible ever in just so many words (explicitly) address anything to H. A. "Buster" Dobbs, presently editor of the *Firm Foundation* who resides in Houston, Texas?

Let Dobbs affirm any or all of the following propositions:

1. "*The Bible teaches that it is a sin for the husband and wife involved in an adulterous union to separate (cease living as husband and wife) when children are involved in such a home.*"
2. "*The Bible teaches that it is a sin for one to teach that a husband and wife involved in an adulterous union*

*where children are involved must separate (cease living as husband and wife) or lose their souls when they die.*"

3. "*The Bible teaches that 'it is possible for a person to be in a marriage situation that is intractable.'*"

4. "*The Bible teaches (as Foy E. Wallace, Jr. taught) that in adulterous unions 'the man should be baptized', and remain in the scripturally unjustified union.*"

5. "*The Bible teaches (as Foy E. Wallace, Jr. taught) that the man in an adulterous union 'should be allowed to raise his family in the church and leave his past mistakes to God's judgment in the resurrection.'*"

6. "*The Lord has not legislated regarding adulterous unions wherein children are involved.*"

#### DODGE EDITOR DODGE— SEE THE EDITOR DODGE

On and on I could go writing more propositions such as the ones you have read, but the editor of the *Firm Foundation* is not going to touch *explicitly* top, side or bottom of anything that is going to further expose his unscriptural views on marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Indeed, it has been about 20 years since false doctrine concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage was being hotly discussed and debated. Dobbs gladly associated and fellowshiped with those men who stoutly opposed the very doctrine he (Dobbs) now advocates. Did he believe differently then than he does now? Or, was he playing "sly as a fox" in not declaring his true views? Whatever the case, he has now declared himself.

#### CALLING ALL CARS

Maybe it is time for Dobbs to call in the "big gun", **Lindell Mitchell**. Front and center Mitchell, your mentor has inserted his foot into his mouth all the way up to his knee; and, maybe he is about ready to bite down and chew. I wonder if Dobbs will call on **Dr. E. Claude Gardner, Dr. Jack P. Lewis, Dr. John Hobbs, Dr. Hugo McCord, T. Pierce Brown, Frazier Conley, and Randy Reagan** possibly others to express themselves on the idea that, "It is possible for a person to be in a marriage situation that is intractable." Maybe the preceding men as well as others will give us Bible authority to continue to support, write for a paper, or be in fellowship with anyone who propagates a false doctrine regarding marriage, divorce and remarriage. In view of the stand that McCord has taken in the past, maybe Dobbs will ask him to address the matter.

#### WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A FALSE TEACHER

Have we not yet learned that every person who teaches a doctrine that looses men from what God in the Bible has bound on them is a liberal? One does not have to embrace the whole liberal agenda, be a member of Woodmont Hills in Nashville, Tennessee, think

**Rubel Shelly** is the greatest Christian since the apostle Paul, been a speaker on the now defunct Nashville Jubilee and so on in order to teach rank error on a certain matters—the late **James D. Bales** is an excellent example of that—and so is Dobbs.

#### POOR OLE PETER DID NOT KNOW ANY BETTER

Peter taught, **“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”** (I Peter 3:15). Just remember, according to Dobbs Peter’s instruction does not cover persons “in a marriage situation that is intractable”. These poor souls will have to wait until the Judgment Day to find out directly from the Lord whether they have lived in sin or not. Now, how can such people sing, *“Blessed assurance Jesus*

*is mine, Oh what a foretaste of glory divine”*? I guess when they are worshiping they just do not sing that song. Yes, they must wait until there is no more opportunity for them to repent and bring forth the fruits thereof to learn whether heaven or hell is going to be their eternal abode. That thought gives a new twist to the meaning and force of Romans 8:24 as well as John 12:48; II Timothy 3:16, 17, and II Peter 1:3.

It seems that brethren in general never learn some things. Thus, many will always be found supporting some person, paper, school, church, family member, friend, or program regardless of the facts exposing the errors thereof. And, that is not “hypothetical”. It is reality!

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

## Marriage, Divorce,...

(Continued From Page 1)

### INCORRECT

Unfortunately Wallace’s words do not stop there. He went on to say, “But Christ omitted legislating a disciplinary procedure, indicating that such a legalized relation becomes a principle of moral conduct between the partners involved and God, and is left to his own judicial decision, not ours.” Wallace is to be commended for leaving legislation to God. No preacher, including Wallace, should speak where God has not spoken or contradict what God has said. However, there are some questions the answers to which expose the error of Wallace’s position. First, why would Matthew repeat a “disciplinary procedure” when he had just outlined one in the previous chapter (Matthew 18:15-18)?<sup>3</sup> Second, would Wallace argue that a brother who goes to a legalized gambling establishment is simply violating “a principle of moral conduct between the parties involved and God?” Would this mean that casino gamblers are not subject to church discipline? Third, if two “Christian” men “came out of the closet” after they were joined to each other in a Vermont style legalized “civil union” would they be proper subjects for church discipline? Fourth, the man who **“had his father’s wife”** (I Corinthians 5:1) seems to have been engaged in a “legalized relation”. Yet Paul would have **“such a one delivered unto Satan . . . that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”** (I Corinthians 5:5). What would Wallace have had Paul write to the church at Corinth concerning this problem?

Wallace then advances the view that Dobbs had set out earlier in the article. He states that “There are some things . . . done in certain circumstances which cannot in later circumstances be undone.” Fortunately the man who had his father’s wife did not feel that his relationship could not be

undone. From the scriptures we may conclude that he repented of his adultery instead of excusing it (II Corinthians 2:3-11).

### AN “EXTREME” VIEW?

Dobbs goes on to quote from the pen of the late L. C. Sears who served for many years as Dean of Harding College. Sears had written to James D. Bales soon after reading Bales’ book *Not Under Bondage*. He wrote:

Little did I realize that some in our time had become so extreme in their views on divorce and remarriage as to demand that marriages be broken up because of divorces before people became Christians, that some *refused baptism* who want to become Christians” (Emphasis mine JM).

This so-called “extreme view” is almost 2500 years old. Ezra, a man inspired of God, advanced it. In Ezra chapter 9, Ezra discovered that many Israelites were in marriages considered unscriptural under the Old Covenant. In Ezra 10:2, Shechaniah acknowledges that they had sinned in doing this, but there was yet hope in Israel. However, this confession alone was not enough to please God. Ezra called on the people to separate themselves from their unscriptural marriages to pagan wives (Ezra 10:11).

It is also not a new thing for preachers to refuse to baptize some people. John refused to baptize people who refused to repent (Matthew 3:7-10). According to the theory advanced in the *Firm Foundation*, John should have offered to baptize Herod and Herodias (Matthew 14:1-12). He might have done this if he had been trying to save his head instead of saving souls. However, he was a man of conviction, not some **“reed shaken in the wind”** (Matthew 11:7).

### GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

Dobbs closes his article with two significant comments. He points out that Wallace was not “disfellowshipped.” He speculates this was the case because of Wallace’s status

among brethren.<sup>4</sup> First, if Wallace's status prevented brethren from dealing with his error, then they were wrong. God does not practice respect of persons and neither should Christians (Acts 10:34; Galatians 2:6). Second, it seems more likely that brethren generally did not know of Wallace's views in this area.<sup>5</sup> As far as I know, Wallace's views in this area were only publicized with the publication of James Bales' *Shall We Splinter?*<sup>6</sup>

Dobbs' final significant observation is that there is "monstrous damage to children when parents divorce." If this is such an important concern, then maybe Dobbs will speak out more strongly against the first divorce in the future, instead of excusing it.

I would not dispute the impact divorce has on children is great. I would also argue that the impact that brethren have when they and the parents of those children wink at the sin of adultery is also great. **Melissa Etheridge** and her lesbian "lover," **Julie Cypher**, have a child. Would Dobbs argue that they should continue to live in sin "for the sake of the children?" In Ezra's day, some of the parents that had to separate had children (Ezra 10:44), but this fact did not

change God's will. It is my prayer that the Lord will raise up more men like Ezra who will teach all the truth even when it is not politically (religiously) correct. When Jesus legislates on a matter, man cannot change his will by popular vote or editorial pronouncement.

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 The word "intractable" is based on a compound Latin word from in - un, in, or into *tractabilis* - to handle. In English the word means not easily *relieved* or *cured* but in the context of the article Dobbs seems to mean that some marital situation are *impossible* to cure.
- 2 As long as it is assumed that the party involved does not repent, the conclusion drawn from Wallace's major is true.
- 3 Man put the chapters in the Bible so the first readers of Matthew would not see the same break between chapters 18 and 19 that we do.
- 4 This sounds similar to the Democratic attacks on former presidents in their efforts to defend Bill Clinton. One could just as easily defend the Missionary Society by noting that brethren of the past did not "disfellowship" J. W. McGarvey for his defense of it.
- 5 Another possibility is that brethren agreed with him, therefore, they saw no reason to break fellowship with him.
- 6 They are tepidly advanced in his book, *The Sermon on the Mount and Civil State*, pp. 37-39, especially 40-41.

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## Some Sinful Situations Are "Intractable"

Lynn Parker

"Intractable." That is what we hear concerning some unscriptural marriages from the *Firm Foundation* (March, 2001, p. 12).<sup>1</sup> The exact quote from the apparent editorial addendum is, "It is possible for a person to be in a marriage situation that is intractable." But that is not all we are told. We read on and see that "the following... gives us an insight from the powerful pen of Foy E. Wallace, Jr. about how to handle a circumstance in which whatever the person does is wrong."<sup>2</sup> Now it takes just a little research and further reading for us to understand the implications of these statements and the article in which they are made. The research leads us to define "intractable:"

1 : not easily governed, managed, or directed : [HYPERLINK "http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=obstinate"](http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=obstinate) OBSTINATE

2 : not easily manipulated or wrought <intractable metal>

3 : not easily relieved or cured <intractable pain>2 (Miriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)

The "intractable" statement previously mentioned, along with the *Firm Foundation* article (with quotes from the book, **Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Soldier Of The Cross**, edited by **Nobel Patterson** and **Terry Gardner**) clearly imply and/or explicitly teach several serious errors:

1. Some adulterous situations ought to be left alone for sake of the children involved.

2. Christ never explicitly commanded that the couple in an adulterous relationship separate as part of repentance; therefore, no separation is necessary.

3. "Christ omitted legislating a disciplinary procedure, indicating that such a legalized relationship becomes a principle of moral conduct between the parties involved and God, and is left to his own judicial decision, not ours" (Foy E. Wallace as quoted in the *Firm Foundation*). Thus, any decisions concerning intractable "adulterous marriages" ought to be left to those involved and the church should fellowship them regardless of the decision they make.

4. To break up a family because of a "state of adultery" is a "presumptuous procedure" that "reveals the tendency to displace God as the Judge of us all..." (Foy E. Wallace as quoted in *Firm Foundation*).

5. By implication, this editorial teaches that God (as Judge of us all) has not given legislation covering adultery and adulterous relationships.

#### DOES INTRACTABLE EQUAL UNTOUCHABLE?

If it is the case that some cases of adultery are "intractable," and intractable "adulterous marriages are to be given "diplomatic immunity," and "King's X" in the church, then perhaps there are some other sinful situations which



are intractable and thus untouchable. We see that some in the church must believe intractable situations are tantamount to those from which it is impossible to extricate oneself. In other words, some plead, "It's too involved, difficult, or sordid—leave this sinful mess alone!" Maybe they would say, "Absent an explicit declaration from the Lord—leave this alone. Implication is insufficient in this matter." Still, another thought might be that some see adulterous unions through emotional eyes and say, "Protect the children at any—and I do mean any—cost." Let us try this doctrine out for consistency and see how it fits. Here are some hypothetical folks with not-so-hypothetical situations.

#### SOME NOT-SO-HYPOTHETICAL SITUATIONS

*Bob is bank officer at a local branch.* During the course of six years employment, Bob embezzles more than \$200,000 from the bank. Bob has a wife and three children to support. One of the children has diabetes and requires expensive medicine. Bob has monthly bills to pay. Bob has family medical insurance through the bank. If Bob's acts are discovered, he will lose every material possession: his house, his cars, his ability to provide for his family, and the insurance coverage that provides needed medicine for his sick child. Bob cannot afford to pay the money back. Bob realizes that he has done wrong—he is in sin. What should Bob do? The situation is difficult. It tugs at the emotions. Our hearts bleed for the innocent children involved. Many in our society would see this as an "intractable" situation.

*Suzanne is an instructor at the high school.* Her husband is bed-ridden after suffering debilitating injuries in an auto accident. Suzanne has two children who love and respect their parents greatly. But Suzanne is a liar. Suzanne lied to get a job with the school, claiming credentials that she did not have. Suzanne lies to maintain her employment and even falsifies documents so that she can receive raises based on further education. The money is desperately needed to care for her husband and their beautiful children. Her work is excellent. The school has no complaints. Should she reveal the truth? After all, "her sin is hurting no one but herself," some might say. What if the church is made aware of the matter and Suzanne refuses to repent? Should the church discipline Suzanne? Many in society would see this as an "intractable" situation.

*Bill and Gail have four gorgeous children.* They are the "cream of the crop." Bill has had the same good job for 19 years now. They own a modest but comfortable home. They pay their debts in an honorable fashion. They are well

respected in the church as well as in the community. Their "marriage" appears to be a model of stability. Both teach Bible class. The perfect couple—or so they seem. But the long hidden secret from their past is that they never married. While married to his lawful wife, Bill began to date Gail. Fornication led to Gail's pregnancy, and they fled the state to start afresh in a far away town. The facts are made known to the church. Should brethren act or leave the matter alone? Should Bill return to his wife or stay with Gail and help rear the children? Is this an "intractable" situation? Many in society and perhaps some in the church would think so. Should Bill and Gail remain in the situation and let God decide their fates on Judgment Day?

*Barney owns a used car sales lot.* Barney is a member of the church. Barney has sold several used cars for good prices after rolling back the odometer. Barney has defrauded buyers. It is common knowledge that his business practices are less than honest. But Barney has a family at home depending on him. Based on what we are told by mere men, any action to be taken is a moral decision best left to Barney and God. This could be an intractable situation. The church surely would not want to destroy Barney's livelihood by withdrawing fellowship from a man who practices business fraud!

*John and Jennifer are introduced to the church as a wonderful young couple that has just moved into the community.* The congregation learns that they have been married one year, both are in their 20's, and both are finishing their degrees and working part-time. They are friendly and zealous. They are put to work in the church right away. However, there is an important fact of which the congregation is unaware. Jennifer left her husband—a faithful Christian—to be with John, her high-school sweetheart and "old flame." Jennifer filed for a divorce from her rightful husband so that she could "marry" John. Now there are no children involved here, and John and Jennifer have only been "married" a year. The situation comes to light and the church is faced with a decision. Some might say this is already an intractable situation—"leave John and Jennifer alone!" Others might argue that this is not yet intractable—Jennifer needs to return to her rightful husband.

#### SIN HAS HARD CONSEQUENCES

Even in these situations under consideration, there is a right way: repent. Repentance includes a separation. In such circumstances, both parents have responsibilities to the children. If by intractable situations we are emphasizing the difficulty brought on man by his own sinful decisions, then certainly there are intractable situations. "The way of transgressors is hard" (Proverbs 13:15). "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). But intractable does not translate into, "leave it alone!" One in Corinth had his father's wife, but Paul did not command the church to leave him alone (1 Corinthians 5:1 ff)! Quite the contrary! Humble, obedient children of God understand the teaching and application of heaven's will:

**3 For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing, 4 in the name of our Lord Je-**

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sus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus...9 I wrote unto you in my epistle to have no company with fornicators; 10 not at all (meaning) with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous and extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world: 11 but as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator (emph. LP), or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat (I Cor. 5:3-5;9-11).

The faithful do not re-write Second Thessalonians 3:6 to read:

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us, EXCEPT IN CASES WHERE THE SINFUL ACTS ARE INTRACTABLE FOR THE BROTHER INVOLVED, IN WHICH CASES, LEAVE THE SINNER ALONE TO MAKE HIS OWN DECISIONS.

#### GOD IS INDEED THE JUDGE

It is a poor view of the all-sufficiency of the Bible to allege that the Lord has not given us the standard by which these and other acts will be judged. It is a strange view of God that holds he will reveal right or wrong only when facing man on Judgment Day and consequently, when it is too late for man to repent. Wallace is quoted as saying, "if the Lord Jesus Christ had intended a course of action in these cases, he would not have left it for preachers to prescribe, but would have himself legislated it" (*Firm Foundation*). The fact is that Christ did indeed legislate on the matter! Read Matthew 19:9. Read First Corinthians 6:9-11. Read First Corinthians chapter 5. Read II Thessalonians 3:6 and James 5:19-20. Read the totality of all scripture pertaining to adultery, the salvation of souls, and church discipline. Read, and then draw the conclusions demanded by the Biblical evidence. Are the scriptures relevant for any and every situation (II Timothy 3:16-17; John 12:48; Psalm 119:104)? Listen to some and you must conclude that God did not address this matter. Each person, therefore, must muddle through his earthly sojourn without a clue as to whether he is in adultery or not, and if he is, what he should do about it. Who can believe it?!

Truth is not determined by nose-counts of "big names," nor is it determined by emotions. Surely, God is the Judge. And the Judge has given us his law by which we ascertain and obey the truth. When it comes to obedience, do not pick and choose between the easy matters and those that are labeled by some as "intractable."

#### ENDNOTES

1. The editorial statement in *Firm Foundation* is added to the end of a fine article by Bob Cruse, entitled, "Some Things God's Marriage Law Does Not Say." Again, Cruse's article is sound and timely. However, the editorial comments are a complete contradiction of the article by Cruse. For example, Cruse writes, "Counseling people to continue to live in adul-

tery (See Rom. 6:2; Col. 3:7; Eph. 2:3) constitutes a refusal to 'save a soul from death' (James 5:20)." The editorial counters Cruse with this statement regarding the situation of one with an adulterous marriage: "the man should be baptized and allowed to raise his family in the church and leave his past mistakes to God's judgment in the resurrection." Others are easily seen when the article by Bob Cruse is contrasted with the editorial that follows.

2. The editorial comments in *Firm Foundation* embrace the false notion that "there are some things that are not subject to the law of restitution, things done in certain circumstances which cannot in later circumstances be undone, which remain as matters before God and the individual, and therefore reserved for judgment" (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., as quoted in *Firm Foundation*). There is a difference between difficult situations and impossible situations. Adulterers can repent and ceasing committing adultery. Separation from an unholy union is involved. Heart-rending indeed may be the earthly consequences involved when one repents; but they are still preferable to burning in hell eternally and perhaps influencing others to do the same.

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# "SANCTIFIED COMMON SENSE": IS THE FIRM FOUNDATION CRACKING?

GARY W. SUMMERS

This year's March issue of the *Firm Foundation* has drawn considerable attention for the unusual treatment of a fine article. **Bob Cruse** of Red Oak, Texas, wrote "Some Things God's Marriage Law Does Not Say," and it appeared on pages 11-12. In this article the writer recalled that forty years ago brethren who had unscripturally divorced and remarried "were excluded from fellowship in Christ's church" (11). He contrasted this practice with the lame efforts of some today who attempt to justify "adulterous unions" by redefining *adultery* to mean "vow breaking" (a view now subscribed to by **Rubel Shelly**, which was the subject of this bulletin on April 1st). Cruse then examines the scriptures and concludes that this liberal theology will only perpetuate the problem, discourage people from repenting, and encourage adultery (12).

Now one might think that the editor of the paper would be in agreement with such a conclusion, but he immediately seeks to undermine it. A paragraph written in italics follows Cruse's article, and it begins with these words: "It is possible for a person to be in a marriage situation that is intractable" (12). What? The reader is stunned by this remark, but he thinks surely a clarifying explanation follows; unfortunately, he is right. The editor of the *Firm Foundation* appeals to **Foy Wallace** as his authority for the "intractable marriage" claim. He reprints five paragraphs from the recently published book, *Soldier of the Cross*, which is a biography of Foy E. Wallace, Jr. The closing paragraph on page 12 is not from the book; it belongs to the editor, although the reader has no way of knowing since his comments are not distinguished from the passages quoted.

## FOY E. WALLACE, JR.

Most of us have the utmost respect for Wallace. He was one of the leading forces in fighting against the doctrine of premillennialism and keeping it out of the church. He debated the Baptist, **J. Frank Norris**, in Fort Worth in November of 1934. This remarkable debate and its positive effects blessed this area for years. Wallace also was at the forefront opposing the new and (usually) inaccurate translations. He put together volumes of material for which preachers have been indebted for decades.

But like **James D. Bales** (not "Bates," which appears incorrectly three times in the *Firm Foundation* article), even the most brilliant are still men, and "It is better to trust in God than to put confidence in men" (Psalm 118:8). For that reason it is interesting that to counter Cruse's article an appeal is made to a man rather than the word of God.

The biography records an incident that occurred in Springfield, Missouri, where Wallace was holding a gospel meeting in the 1930s. An unscripturally divorced man came forward to be baptized. His current "wife" and some of the children had already done so. When the elders asked Wallace his judgment in the matter, he said: "*the man should be baptized and allowed to raise his family in the church and leave his past mistakes to God's judgment in the resurrection*" (12). Notice that there is no appeal to the scriptures in this decision; it seems to be based solely on pragmatic and (perhaps) emotional considerations.

Even though we esteem Wallace highly, this one view must be strenuously objected to because it is not in harmony with the scriptures. Suppose Herod and the daughter of Herodias had shown up at the Jordan River to be immersed by John. Would the addition of the child have altered John's view toward Herod? Would he now advise, "Go ahead and baptize Herod and leave his past mistakes to God's judgment in the resurrection"?

No. Unlawfully divorcing and remarrying another is wrong when it occurs. Twenty years of time passing does not "sanctify" the relationship. Twenty years and five children do not change wrong into right. Do those who have committed this sin want to go ahead and risk judgment without repentance? Even if they would be so foolish, the rest of us cannot accept such a violation of the scriptures.

The biography follows this incident with a lengthy—but undated—statement of Wallace's view. He seems to think that, when the problem of unlawful divorce and remarriage occurs, the Lord did not intend or command "a course of action in these cases" (12). Again, with all due respect to Wallace, this allegation is simply not true. First of all, John had prescribed a course of action when he told Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have her"

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(Matthew 14:4). What does such a sentence mean—that it is all right to go on just as you are without making any changes? Although this brief statement of John’s is not equivalent to saying they must divorce, separation is clearly required.

Jesus knew what had occurred in this situation, and He did not rebuke John for being too stringent or requiring something too difficult. Furthermore, what Jesus taught in Matthew 19:9 substantiates and echoes what John said. Consider the verse: **“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality [translated “fornication” in the KJV], and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery”** (Matthew 19:9).

This is a broader principle, but John’s statement rightly applies to it. Neither Herod nor Herodias had put away their mates for fornication. They put them away out of lust for each other; therefore, when they “married,” they committed adultery (sexual intimacy is presumed). They would continue to commit adultery as long as they lived with one another, whether for five years or fifty years, whether they had no children or ten children together. In other words, according to the principle Jesus taught, it was not lawful for them to have each other. What Jesus taught, then, does demand separation. No one could read what either John or Jesus said and come to the conclusion that people should continue as they are and leave their “past mistakes to God’s judgment and the resurrection.” Repentance requires doing something about it NOW!

**SOLDIER OF THE CROSS**

There is a great deal of excellent material in this book, but there are occasional portions that lack accuracy. A strenuous objection must be filed against these words:

While Wallace never preached on marriage and divorce as a hobby, he was not reticent to fully declare his views when the situation demanded it. Though Wallace was not “disfellowshipped” by those with whom he disagreed, others were less fortunate. This was largely due to the remarkable status Wallace enjoyed as the septuagenarian embodiment of conservatism (12).

This last sentence, so far as we can determine, is simply not true. It is obvious that Wallace never made a hobby out of the issue (unlike so many have during the past twenty years). He would have received tremendous criticism if he had. Perhaps the writer who levies this charge could pro-

duce the articles that Wallace wrote on this subject that would prove that his views were known far and wide. I did not know Wallace, but I telephoned two men well-known throughout the church who did. Both of them said (without benefit of any leading questions) that they never knew brother Wallace held such a view until James D. Bales read a letter from him a few years back at a meeting discussing that subject.

The suggestion that he received a “pass” on this issue based on his greatness and age is ludicrous. No one was more highly revered than Bales for his analytical abilities and his scholarship. But when he began to argue in favor of unscriptural divorce and remarriage, his position drew fire immediately—from those who loved him dearly. *The church is not about men; it is about Christ.* Our Lord and truth must receive our highest allegiance: Jesus, not a prominent brother of the 20th century, died for our sins; Truth, not a great man’s opinions, sets us free. Regardless of his great accomplishments, no man is above being challenged when he advocates a doctrine not taught in the scriptures which is harmful to the souls of men. Even Wallace, a hero to us all, would have been opposed by his peers if they thought he believed what has been shown in these paragraphs.

On Wallace’s behalf, we hasten to point out that the number of articles and books written on this subject in the 1930s and 1940s was considerably fewer than from the 1970s until now. We do not know how much time and consideration Wallace actually devoted to this topic; he was busy in so many other endeavors. His opinion seems to be a pragmatic one. We have not seen him try to redefine the terms *divorce* and *marriage*, as so many attempt to do these days. He did not write and pervert the scriptures in order to make his case. In fact, his reliance on the scriptures for this conviction is uncharacteristically slim. I cannot imagine that he would support Shelly, et al.

**“SANCTIFIED COMMON SENSE”**

Now I come to the closing paragraph, which contains the words of the editor of the *Firm Foundation*. But remember what has preceded it. The initial article, which set forth the Biblical position, was followed by this enigmatic statement concerning an “intractable marriage.” The example of such a marriage was an unscripturally divorced and remarried man with eight children, whom Wallace advised to remain as he was. The final paragraph begins thus:

Wallace was not trying to relax the strenuous teaching of the New Covenant on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, but was making an appeal to sanctified common sense.

What? Is this sentence intelligible to anyone? Can a person both uphold and ignore at one and the same time what the Lord says on any subject? If separation is required (“It is not lawful for you to have her”; he “commits adultery”), then how can one continue to have her without relaxing—indeed repudiating—what John and Jesus taught? Would not this be similar to saying, “While not relaxing what the New Covenant says about stealing, it only makes sense for this man to keep what he stole to support his family”? Keeping the word of God sometimes requires sacri-

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fices; the question is, "Are we willing to give up something that would keep us from heaven?"

Precisely the reason we need revelation is that **"our ways are not his ways and our thoughts are not his thoughts"** (Isaiah 55:8-9). Neither is our logic his logic, nor is our common sense ("sanctified" or otherwise) necessarily his. The editor refers to the *"monstrous damage to children when their parents divorce"* (12). This is undoubtedly true, but there are three things to consider by way of response. 1) No one said they had to divorce, but Jesus and John required separation. 2) The couple is not married in the eyes of God anyway, since one has an unscriptural divorce. This fact cannot be overlooked. 3) What future harm will be done to the children spiritually when they are older and they come to think that they too can divorce and remarry with God's permission and the church's endorsement? How many future homes may be torn apart because this couple's sinful actions were "sanctified"?

#### DOBBS' EMOTIONAL APPEAL

The article ends with an emotional appeal:

Would God that every parent take the innocent child into consideration before bringing down upon its head the bitter fruit of divorce (12).

*Why were not the children taken into consideration before the unscriptural divorce?* Why is it that, after an unauthorized remarriage has occurred, only then do we become concerned about the children? Where was the compassion prior to the remarriage occurring?

In this unscriptural marriage, either one of the parties was lustful and pursued another mate (as in the case of Herod or Herodias), or someone obtained a divorce for reasons unrelated to adultery. In the former case, the children were certainly not put first, ahead of the individual's unlawful passion. Now that they have what they wanted, we are conveniently expected to forget the past. In the second instance, one partner divorced another when there was no adultery. Why? Where was the concern over the children in that case? Some have even been known to forego divorce when adultery was committed—for the sake of the children. Yet others, without Biblical authority, call it quits because of various problems unrelated to adultery.

Why were not these divorces termed "a modern tragedy"? Why is it only *after* the unlawful marriage has been entered into that suddenly divorce does damage to the children?

At any rate, there is a precedent for the termination of unlawful marriages. It is true that we are not under the Old Testament (and have no desire to be), but the separations in the time of Ezra were approved by God, and they did involve children! The reason the marriages were unlawful is not at issue; the fact is: **"You have transgressed and have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel"** (Ezra 10:10). The faithful scribe then commanded them to separate themselves **"from the people of the land, and from the pagan wives"** (v. 11). The final verse of this chapter (and the book of Ezra) states: **"All these had taken pagan wives, and some of them had wives by whom they had**

**children"** (v. 44). Anyone who marries someone who is not eligible for marriage, according to the scriptures, must likewise separate, since it is not lawful to have that individual: Jesus calls it committing adultery.

Why would an editor run an article teaching the truth on an important Biblical issue, and then take up almost an equal amount of space contradicting it? Many are thoroughly perplexed and wonder what will be the future course of the paper. Having proclaimed one exception to what the Lord taught, on the basis of what a man said rather than the scriptures, one wonders if there will be more loopholes discovered soon. We certainly pray that this paper will not fall in line with those who have devoted themselves to the errors of brethren Bales, Hicks, and others who have sought to make the Lord's teaching "of no effect"—not applicable to anyone.

In fact, I could wish that we have somehow misunderstood the intent of the follow-up comments to Cruse's article. If there is some other meaning or intention, we would happily receive instruction and clarification in the matter. We would purposely misrepresent no one, for such would be uncharitable and counterproductive to the truth. Clearly, our purpose is the salvation of all.

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# PAYING DEBTS

Gilbert E. Schaffer

There are many ways of manifesting one's dishonesty. Perhaps one of the most glaring ways is to make debts and never pay them. Many times Christian people are overtaken by unforeseen circumstances which make it impossible to pay debts that have been made. However, when anyone leaves unpaid bills everywhere he goes, there is an element of dishonesty somewhere. The excuse may be given that he had an expensive family, that he made a small salary, or that he had not learned to live within his income. This may be true, but it does not excuse the person from meeting his obligations. One of the surest ways to ruin one's influence for good is to leave unpaid bills.

## THE INSTALLMENT PLAN

There are many factors that contribute to this sad situation, and the greatest of them is the installment buying. Business concerns know almost every person and the amount of his income. A man or woman that has a check coming in every month is listed on many companies' sales list. He has a credit rating in the city where he lives, and can just sign his name and the goods are in his possession. We need to learn that the payments come just as regularly as do our checks; therefore, everything bought on the installment cuts down our check for the month that much. There are many people who find themselves so heavily involved that they cannot meet all of their obligations. When this is true, someone must be found that will lend money or will go on a note; and if not, then the installment company comes and takes back its goods. It is such an easy matter for one to get so deeply in debt that he cannot pay, and friends must suffer the loss.

## PREACHERS ARE NO EXCEPTION

I suppose preachers are no exception to this situation, for now and then you learn of a preacher who will not pay his debts. There is one point that is not in the preacher's favor; and that is: he gets more publicity out of failing to pay than does the average man. A thousand people in an average city can fail to pay, and very little is said about it; but one preacher can leave unpaid bills, and the whole city and even cities where he goes know about it. Certainly people have a right to expect gospel preachers to be honest enough to pay all they owe. It is sad, but true, that when the name of some of our preacher brethren is called, we immediately think that he is the brother that left a certain city owing half the population; or he is the brother that some good brethren had to pay a note for.

Here are some of the excuses I have heard for the preacher(s) failing to pay: It is said that his salary is none too high, which is true. There are but few preachers that draw a salary on an average with the congregations that are supporting them. The idea of so many church members is

to keep the preacher poor and humble. While the salary of the preacher is none too high, the congregation expects him to take care of all the "tourist" preachers and the "money raisers" that blow into town. Then he is naturally expected to take care of the evangelist that is chosen to hold the annual meeting. There may be plenty of homes that are well supplied with servants, but it is needful that the preacher's wife do double duty while a protracted meeting is in progress. The average preacher can consider when he is being employed to work with a congregation that the above-mentioned expense must come out of his salary plus running expense of a car to do that work. Only a preacher and his family can realize the extra expense that comes in doing local work.

Recently in talking with a concern that had lost money in trusting a preacher, it was said that the preacher had an expensive family. The company was rather sympathetic toward him. It is true that some families are more expensive per person than other families. However; that does not make it right for them to live on unpaid bills. Many times the family is expensive because they have been able to live on what really belongs to someone else. But regardless of what may be the condition one finds himself in, he has no right to go ahead making bills he never expects to be able to pay.

The Bible teaches that we should pay what we owe, and only obligate ourselves to the extent that we can meet the obligations. When one makes obligations that he knows he cannot meet, he is dishonest in his dealings. Therefore, it does not matter who is involved whether he be a deacon, elder, preacher, or just a member of the church—he is obligated to pay all he owes. David said: "**The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth**" (Psalm 37:21).

Recently I heard of a man who calls himself a Christian. He had borrowed money with the promise to pay at a certain time. Now his children are old enough to send to college and he will not pay what he owes because he says he owes his children an education. He is not really educating his children. Some other father is letting his child go without an education because he loaned money to a dishonest man. Therefore, the man that will not pay what he borrowed is letting someone else send his children to school.

Honesty is at a low tide in this modern age. We need to take stock at home once in a while to see just how we stand. A dishonest person can never reach heaven. It is a sin that will condemn us at the great day

—*Gospel Advocate,*  
January 23, 1941

# BLOOD ON MY SWORD

Alton W. Fonville

I enjoy shopping “flea markets” for unusual items and just reminiscing the things of days gone by. Occasionally, I see an old World War sword in its sheath, all shining and bright. More seldom is seen a sword which has the “tell-tale” signs of old rust, indicating blood had been dried on it. Some swords, actually used in battle, are still found in rare cases.

Applying this to the spiritual, the Bible speaks of those who have enlisted in the army of the Lord, (those who have obeyed him in showing their faith by confessing him, repentance of their past sins, and being baptized into him for the remission of their sins) as soldiers of the Lord. They are admonished to put on the whole armour of God and taking the “**sword of the Spirit**” which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:10-17).

## A GOOD SOLDIER

Paul used the figure of a soldier to compare with **our work** for the Lord. “**Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier**” (II Timothy 2:3-4).

Notice that a good soldier cares first and foremost how he may please his commander. And if you look closely, you will see that Paul demonstrated his faithfulness to his commander, the Lord Jesus Christ. He did not shun preaching the gospel of Christ to any and all when he had the opportunity. Yes, he manifested in his body the marks of his devotion. He must have realized the importance of preaching the word, as he instructed Timothy, near the end of his life. Hear his words: “**Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine**” (II Timothy 4:2). Earlier, he had already said that the scriptures were, “**profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works**” (II Timothy 3:16-17).

With these thoughts in mind, it makes us wonder why so many Christians today are not following that same example, which was given us by our Lord, Paul and others of “the faithful.” In talking with some people about the problems of sin in the world and in the church, they make statements such as, “I will not judge that” or, “those problems are a long way off and I don’t have time to be bothered with them”, or, “I am not in the judging business”, or some other such statements. I heard an elder in the church say one time, “if we call being addicted to smoking a sin, then we will have to start calling a lot of other things sin too.” I said, AMEN! This same eldership refused to take a stand on the illegal divorce and remarriages in their congregation. But, many people will not take a stand when it comes to talking with those guilty persons—even in their own families.

They profess they love the Lord and obey him in all things, but they keep their swords carefully sheathed. They refuse to apply the word of God to situations because they do not desire to be thought of as judgmental. They are also of those who call us who do try, “radicals”, “legalists”, “hobby riding” and such like.

## I LOVE THEM TOO MUCH TO DISCIPLINE THEM

Some parents refuse to discipline their own children when it is sorely needed because they say, “I love my child so much, I can’t discipline him.” This is contrary to the word of God. The wise man said we **hate** our children if we do not correct them when needed. (Proverbs 13:24) Does not this principle apply to those in sin, when we refuse to warn, admonish, reprove or rebuke them? Instead of love, we are manifesting **hate** for them, and are letting them slide on down that wide road to destruction.

When we run from preaching and teaching the whole counsel of God, we are choosing the praise of men rather than the praise of God. We are “**of the world**” and make ourselves an “**enemy of God**” (James 4:4) A very important statement given in Jeremiah 48:10 applies here: “**Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.**” Is your sword bloody, or have you kept it safely sheathed? “**Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not**” (Proverbs 8:33).

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# SPIRITUAL ANOREXIA

J. A. McNutt

The Lord's church, being composed of fallible human beings, has always had its problems; it always has and it always will. Two men were discussing the greatest hindrance to the church in our day and one was arguing that it was indifference, while the other contended that it was ignorance of the word of God. Turning to a brother who had been listening to their discussion, they asked what he thought and his reply was, "I don't know and I don't care."

## RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE AN ANCIENT PROBLEM

Ignorance of the word of God or indifference toward its authority are deadly sins that will condemn many souls. Combine the two and man will be hopeless in the day of Judgment without defense or excuse. **"The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God"** (Psalm 9:17). God's people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6).

## JEREMIAH WEPT BECAUSE OF INDIFFERENCE

Indifference is an ancient and destructive sin. Six hundred years before Christ, Jeremiah lamented religious indifference. The Jewish nation had forsaken Jerusalem, a city of sacred memory, joyful association and center of divine worship. **"How lonely sits the city that was full of people! How like a widow is she who was great among the nations! The princess among the provinces"** (Lamentations 1:1 NKJV).

The people rejected God and Jehovah ceased to be a wall of fire protecting Jerusalem. Her glory had departed and the city was in ruins. The tragedy lies not so much in the broken walls, the stolen treasures, the desecrated temple and the people in foreign captivity, but the indifference toward the fate of the city. **"The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts; all her gates are desolate, her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted and she is in bitterness"** (Lamentations 1:4).

Jeremiah reminds us that a city once full of people sits lonely and solitary and the people are unconcerned. God's people are the church today. Our buildings are places to assemble for worship. If we spend millions for buildings to satisfy our pride and lose the people, we have lost the church. I marveled at great temples in London, but was told that few were interested in attending services anymore. I have heard of large and expensive buildings in our brotherhood built for entertainment, or to compete with denominational bodies and conform to the culture. But when the people ceased to hear the gospel preached, the attendance dwindled and few cared to attend anymore.

## WEeping OVER JERUSALEM

Hear the prophet's mournful plea on behalf of Jerusalem, **"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger"** (Lamentations 1:12).

Jesus must have loved Jerusalem, the holy city (Matthew 4:5). He longed to protect and to save her people but she refused, being unwilling to accept his teaching, so their house was left desolate (Matthew 23:37-38).

Jerusalem was dear to the heart of Jeremiah, but we are concerned about the heavenly Jerusalem where our loved ones will meet us and greet us in that city that God has prepared for the faithful. Our concern is focused on Christ who died for us on the cross of Calvary and the church that he purchased with his blood (Matthew 26:28). Jesus wept bitter tears over the fate of Jerusalem, but he died for the church (Acts 20:28).

When I think of Calvary and the price that Jesus paid for our redemption, I want to ask in the words of Jeremiah, **"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger"** (Lamentations 1:12).

I am persuaded that the greatest foe of the church today is not opposition from without, but soul chilling indifference within. Why are false teachers invited into the pulpit to entertain an audience, put on a show and draw the crowds, while promoting their errors. Why do the elders sit silent or nod their heads when the flock is being fed a diet of Calvinism or Neo-Pentecostalism by some of our pseudo-scholars from some denominational seminary.

One is reminded of the shepherds of Israel who fed themselves but neglected the flock which was scattered and destroyed (Ezekiel 34:1-10). God requires elders to feed and to protect the church (Acts 20:28-31). One of the great needs in the church today is for faithful elders. God will hold them accountable as guardians of the flock and when the chief shepherd appears the faithful elders will receive a crown of glory, which never fades away (1 Peter 5:4).

## THE CREEPING PARALYSIS OF INDIFFERENCE

Indifference is not a change in attitude that comes about overnight. It occurs so slowly that we are hardly aware of its development in our lives until it gains control. I am told that if a frog is placed in a basin of water and the water is heated .036 degrees per second that the frog will die when

it reaches 140 degrees without being aware of the changing temperature. The husband who truly loves his wife does not turn from fervent love to complete indifference overnight. I am sure that the church in Ephesus did not cease to love the Lord in 24 hours. Yet, Jesus rebuked them saying, **"Yet I have this against you, that you no longer love me as you did at first"** (*Weymouth's Trans*).

#### WHY HAS THE CHURCH CHANGED ITS ATTITUDE?

Having considered the tragedy of religious indifference, the loss of love for Christ and respect for biblical authority and the decline in religious fervor, why has this happened in our day? There must be a specific cause or causes. What is it? How can we reverse the trend and see the church grow as it did in the beginning?

We can preach the word without fear or any desire to compromise. We can uphold and defend the authority of the perfect law of Christ (*James 1:25*). We are not without law as the liberals falsely assume — the world will be judged by **"the law of liberty"** (*James 2:12; Romans 6:2*). That day of Judgment cannot be avoided (*Acts 17:31; Matthew 25:31-32*).

The world and many church members desire to be free from all restrictions imposed by law. They desire to be free from guilt caused by the violation of the moral code. So, they tell us that the Bible consists of "love letters", not laws. Salvation is wholly by grace, apart from any human activity or response. The "change agents" among us seem determined to change eternal principles by contending for a "new hermeneutic" that will allow them to interpret the word of God differently in keeping with the times. They would have us believe that there is no distinctive pattern in the holy scriptures.

Some insist that we should regard any man as our brother who acknowledges God as father. They seek open fellowship with the pious unimmersed and compromise with denominational bodies. They tell us the church is doomed unless we conform to the world and adjust to present day culture.

**Robert H. Bork** in his book, *Slouching Towards Gomorrah*, deals with the decline of morality in our nation caused by modern liberalism. He observes that:

thirty years ago Clinton's behavior would have been absolutely disqualifying . . . yet none of this appears to affect Clinton's popularity. It is difficult not to conclude that our moral perceptions and reactions have changed profoundly. If that change is permanent the implication for our future is bleak.

He adds:

...the themes of liberty and equality which were celebrated in the Declaration of Independence and are dominant in our culture today. These ideals have been pressed much too far and account for the cultural devastation wrought by modern liberalism.

Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the forces that advance the agenda of modern liberalism, the intellectual class and that

class's enforcement arm, the judiciary, headed by the Supreme Court of the United States. His conclusion is:

Our virtually unqualified enthusiasm for liberty forgets that liberty can only be the space between the walls, the walls of morality and law based upon morality. It is sensible to argue about how far apart the walls should be set, but it is cultural suicide to demand all space and no walls.

#### ARRIVING IN SODOM

Our liberty is in Christ Jesus and we are not bound by human tradition (*Galatians 2:3-5*). However, God has erected walls of morality to warn us not to indulge in sins of the flesh (*Galatians 5:13*). Tear down God's walls of morality and we shall be overcome with lust, filth and wickedness. We will no longer be "Slouching Towards Gomorrah," but we shall have reached the fullness of its depravity. TV programs sponsored by major companies are filled with filth, violence, premarital sex and perversion. They are leading our children to a moral sewer and to certain ruin.

#### WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Put on your armor and stand against the wiles of the devil. We are in a real battle, which involves Christ and his church. **"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places"** (*Ephesians 6:12*). Our armor is strong; the sword of the spirit is powerful, so preach the word. Truth will eventually win the victory and the church will survive.

—deceased

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# "WHAT IS TRUTH?"

Brock Hartwigsen

During the 1996 presidential elections, the *New York Times* had an editorial about the different pictures being painted by the Democrat and the Republican parties in their presidential election campaigns. The writer pointed out how both parties claim that their plans will benefit America and that their opponents plans will destroy America. The writer concluded that as Americans we have a choice as to which "truth to believe."

It appears from his article that the author believes that truth is relative and not definite. This author is not alone, many people believe that truth is "whatever works for you" and that it is always changing. Pilate of old had this same belief. In John's account of Jesus' appearance before Pilate we read:

**Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth (John 18:37-38)?**

It is apparent that Pilate's rejoinder was meant to ridicule Jesus. Pilate obviously agreed with the philosophers of his day that truth was relative and could not be known. Sadly today in the Lord's church we have people who by their teaching are also ridiculing Jesus when they proclaim that truth is relative and cannot be known.

Lynn Anderson in his book *Navigating The Winds of Change* quotes from a friend that "perceptions are reality." In other words what you perceive to be truth is truth for you or truth is relative and cannot be known.

More than likely Pilate did not understand the total implication of Jesus' statement when he said "every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Today though Christians can understand the implication of Jesus' statement because we have a record of what he earlier told the apostles about those who hear his voice.

## "WHAT IS TRUTH?"

John 10:27-28 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal

life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

"Eternal life" is based on our being sheep and hearing his voice. Who will hear Jesus' voice? Jesus told Pilate that it is those who are "of the truth."

If truth cannot be known because it is variable or, as Lynn Anderson puts it, "perception is reality," then how in the world could Jesus "witness unto the truth?" Jesus told Pilate that that he "was ... born, and ... came into this world" so that he could "hear witness unto truth."

That which is always changing, that which is simply every person's personal perception cannot be "witnessed" to by someone else.

In Jesus' prayer in the upper room with the apostles, Jesus asked God to "sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The answer to Pilate's question, "what is truth" is God's "word is truth." And what is God's word? The Bible is God's word.

Therefore, what is truth? The Bible is truth. While it is true that the Bible contains "some things hard to understand," (II Peter 3:16) that does not mean that it cannot be understood. If everyone would "study to show themselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15), then as Jesus promised, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Contrary to the nay-sayers, truth is constant and knowable to those who will open their eyes, ears and mind to the truth of God's word.

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# The Melodeon At Midway, Kentucky

Paul Vaughn

The city of Midway is a small rural community in the Blue Grass region of Kentucky. It is located about midway between Frankfort and Lexington, Kentucky. Today there is a two-year college for women located in the town called Midway College. The beginning of this college goes back to the early days of the Restoration Movement.

**Dr. Lewis Letig Pinkerton** moved to Midway in 1844, where a new church had just been established. Pinkerton preached the dedication of the new building on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 1844. In 1845 L. L. Pinkerton opened a school for girls in Midway called Baconian Institute. By 1847 the institute had developed into a school for orphan girls called Midway Female Orphan School. The school filled a void at that time in history, before the civil war, in Kentucky. Girls received very little education in antebellum Kentucky. The school for orphan girls taught the young ladies to read their Bible and teach their children. The Female Orphan School developed into Midway College. The college dated its establishment in 1847.

### THE MELODEON

In 1859 Pinkerton introduced the first mechanical instrumental music into the worship of the church at Midway. Pinkerton reasoned that the singing at Midway was so poor it needed help, so he added the Melodeon to the worship service at Midway. This was the second major step in the Restoration Movement away from the pattern for the church given in the scriptures. The first was the American Christian Missionary Society.

In 1860 a letter was sent to **Ben Franklin** questioning the use of mechanical instrumental music. Franklin's criticism against mechanical instrumental music was very strong and powerful in the *American Christian Review*. After Franklin's response to mechanical instrument music appeared in the paper "Pinkerton replied: So far as known to me, or, I presume, to you, I am the only 'preacher' in Kentucky of our brotherhood who has publicly advocated the property of employing instrumental music in some churches, and that the church at Midway is the only church that has yet made a decided effort to introduce it."<sup>1</sup> In his book, *The Search For The Ancient Order*, **Earl West** states that there were some churches using mechanical instrumental music as early as 1851, but they remain unidentified. **Aylette Raines** was a preacher at Millersburg, Kentucky. In his diary dated April 27, 1851, Raines wrote, "Brother S wishes to introduce the Melodeon into the church."<sup>2</sup> Raines' objection to it kept it out for a while, but the Millersburg church ultimately followed the pattern from Midway and not the pattern from God. It is the church at Midway, Kentucky that holds the dishonor of being the first church in the Restoration Movement to add mechanical instrumental music to the worship of God.

### THE MELODEON

The Melodeon was a popular musical instrumental in the mid-1800's. In 1836 22,000 were manufactured in the United States. It remained popular until organ manufacturers developed a less expensive organ.

The Melodeon that Pinkerton introduced at Midway has a colorful history. After it was brought into the worship of the church, **Adam Hibler**, an elder of the congregation, assisted by a slave named Reuben entered the building by night and removed the instrument of division from the church, building. Reuben passed the instrument through the window to Hibler. In the early 1900's it was discovered in the home of **Mary and Elizabeth Nugent**. Their father was a friend of Adam Hibler.

Today the Melodeon that caused great division in the body of Christ is on display in the library at Midway College. There are thousands of visitors that go to the library to view this instrument of pain and sorrow. The college has it displayed in a glass case to protect it from decay.

The church of Christ in the early 1800's was one body standing for the unity of all believers following the Bible and the Bible alone. As men began to leave their first love the things of the world absorbed their attention and desires. Being charmed by fleshly passions, they set aside their love for God to please lusts of the flesh. The "religious world" around them seduced many with the sounds of mechanical instrumental music. Though it was first announced by L.L. Pinkerton at Midway, Kentucky, churches far and near began to inaugurate mechanical instruments into the worship of God. Those who desired to "speak as the oracles of God" remained faithful to the Restoration Plea, but those of contrary attitudes formed what is known today as the Christian Church denomination. By 1968 that group would split again forming the Disciples of Christ and the Christian Church.

Today both groups (Disciples of Christ and Christian Church) have evolved into very liberal teaching people with no desire to follow the "Ancient Path" given in God's Word. The Melodeon at Midway is the monument to their departure.



### ENDNOTES

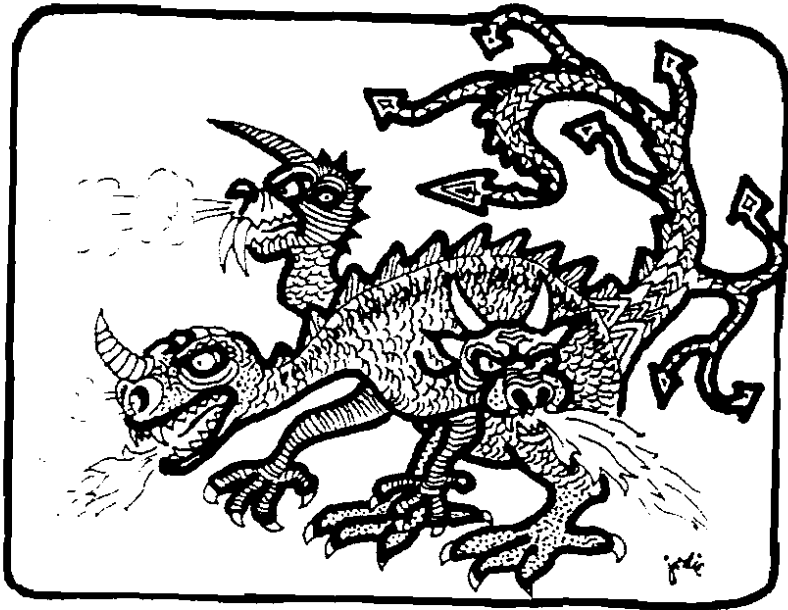
1. Earl West, *The Search For The Ancient Order* Vol. 1, Gospel Advocate, Nashville, 1974, p.311.
2. Ibid. p. 310.

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Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# God...An Evil Beast

Jodie Boren



Recently there was a guest editorial in the Abilene, Texas paper by a faithful Christian warning of the dangers of homosexuality and the other perverted lifestyles it could lead to if it becomes accepted in our country as a natural and alternate way of living. I wrote a letter to the editor commending this writer and also pointed out that such sexual behavior is an abomination to God. I further stated that one is not born of that sexual orientation but becomes a homosexual by choice. Otherwise, God would be a respecter of persons and it is fallacious reasoning to think that God would create a person as a homosexual and then condemn that person to hell for something over which the person would have no control.

An anonymous letter came really "raking me over the coals" for stating what I believe the Bible teaches so clearly on that subject. A couple of quotes from his letter is in order for this editorial. Of my letter to the editor, he said, "... rarely does one encounter that much ignorance compacted into such a small space." Then he said, Christians never think on their own. "they just read the stupid Bible and like the polly-parrots they are, repeat the words, hoping to be praised by the rest of the mindless robots. Grow a brain." He made other exacerbating remarks such as the God of the Bible is an evil beast and that the Bible was written, not by a god, but by fiercely ignorant, bigoted, superstitious men, such as yourself—but these will suffice. I realize that this is just one man's opinion, but it causes one to wonder how great a number of people who are perhaps of the same mind set. As you think of the immorality and crime that is in the world, it could be millions and millions of people.

It makes my heart sad to think that he and so many like him have such a contempt and gross misunderstanding of God and his holy word. How sad that they are so blind to the loving nature of our great God—his mercy—his justice—and his righteousness.



It also makes me realize how urgent it is for us to reach these lost souls with the saving gospel of Christ.

Would it not be wonderful if we could show them that God is not an evil beast, but is in truth the very epitome of love (I John 4:8; John 3:16); and that he wants all men to be saved (I Timothy 2:4)—that the law of the Lord is perfect—his statutes are right—his commandments are pure, enlightening the eyes—his judgments are true and righteous and are to be desired more than fine gold—and in keeping his commandments there is great reward (Psalms 19:7-11).

What a joy it would be if all mankind could have Jesus as the shepherd of their lives (Psalms 23; John 10:11-15); to know that he can be our friend (John 15:14); that he can be our mediator, our advocate, and our intercessor (I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:1) with God, our heavenly father.

Although there is great delight in teaching the lost the joys and blessings of being a Christian, we must also preach the whole counsel of God as did the apostle Paul (Acts 20:27). This would mean teaching them that only the obedient believers will be saved (Hebrews 5:9) and that the unbelievers and disobedient will be sent away into everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46).

We need to preach the word (Matthew 28:19-20) for God's word is truth (John 17:17) and it is by this word that one is begotten (James 1:18 and 21). We need to share with them the exceedingly great and precious promises of God (II Peter 2:4). And it is so important that we follow the steps of Jesus in such a way that others see Jesus living in us (Galatians 2:20).

Intellectually, we know there are evil and wicked men and women who hate God and his word, but it is somewhat of a shock when such anger is directed to you personally as was with the aforementioned letter. But may we never be deterred from faithfully proclaiming truth of the gospel for it is God's power unto salvation (Romans 1:16).

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

## Current Events That Concern Christians...

# Surrogate Parents, Democrats, Unitarian Church

Compiled By Mark McWhorter

"There seems to me to be too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the ichneumonidae [a parasite] with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of caterpillars, or that a cat should play with mice. Not believing this, I see no necessity in the belief that the eye was expressly designed." **Charles Darwin** in a letter of May 22, 1860 (quoted in *Back To Genesis*, January 20, 2001, p. 4)

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Prosperity is only an instrument to be used, not a deity to be worshipped.—**Calvin Coolidge** (1872 - 1933), speech, June 11, 1928

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In 1995, the owner of a graphic design company agreed to carry to term the child of one of her employees who was in a gay relationship. Two years later a baby boy was born, but the surrogate-mother agreement soon unraveled, with both the mother and father claiming sole custody. Last week, a New York State Supreme Court justice resolved the impasse by awarding exclusive custody to the father (Law News Network, 1/10/01). *[This demonstrates how technology used wrongly does nothing but create more problems. God's plan of one man for one woman is the only solution.—mtm]*

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"Statesmen...may plan and speculate for Liberty, but it is religion and morality alone, which can establish the principles upon which Freedom can securely stand."  
—**John Adams**

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A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both — **Dwight D. Eisenhower** (1890 - 1969), Inaugural Address, January 20, 1953

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Twelve of the most popular science textbooks used at middle schools nationwide are riddled with errors, a new study has found. Researchers compiled 500 pages of errors, from maps depicting the equator passing through the Southern United States to a photo of singer **Linda Ronstadt** labeled as a silicon crystal. None of the 12 textbooks has an acceptable level of accuracy, according to **John Hubisz**, a North Carolina State University physics professor who led the two-year survey. Errors in the multi-volume Prentice Hall "Science" series included an incorrect depiction of what happens to light when it passes through a prism and the Ronstadt photo. Hubisz said the

Prentice Hall series was probably the most error-filled. The Associated Press, "Study finds errors in science textbooks" as published in *The Plain Dealer*, January 16, 2001 (<http://www.cleveland.com/news>).

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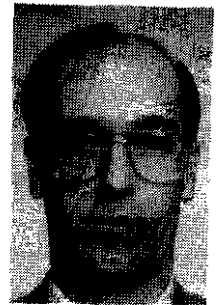
High schools and parents let many seniors waste their last year of school, which helps explain why one-third to one-half are not adequately prepared for college or the workplace, according to Education Secretary **Richard Riley's** National Commission on the High School Senior Year. Many students reported ditching senior classes because the atmosphere encouraged them to consider the senior year a farewell tour of adolescence and school. Many high school seniors literally check out, others spend more time working than going to school. About 30 percent of today's college-bound seniors have to take remedial courses in college, and many of those going directly into the work force find out they cannot get jobs that would ever pay enough to support a family. Unlike their counterparts in many other countries, American seniors are more likely to hold down a job than to take courses in science or math. Top colleges add to the problem by accepting many students by October of their senior year. **Andrew Mollison**, Cox Washington Bureau "Too many high school seniors major in wasting time" (*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, January 18, 2001 <http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc>.)

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Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there—**Will Rogers** (1879-1935).

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**Daniel Colwell**, who shot two people in a Georgia Wal-Mart parking lot, said he intended to get the death penalty because he wanted to die but couldn't kill himself. Now his lawyer is asking the state's supreme court to include the mentally ill in the prohibition against executing the mentally retarded. He says his client, who has schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, attempted "state-assisted suicide" (Law News Network email service, 1/22/01). *[The mentally retarded do not know that what they have done is wrong. This man knew that what he was doing was wrong. It matters not that he was attempting to do something bad enough to have the State sentence him to death. He killed innocent people and he must be duly punished for such.—mtm]*



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## —Missouri—

**Farmington**—Sunnyview Church of Christ, 2801 Hwy H, Farmington, MO 63640, tel. (573) 756-5925. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, 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

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The best example of Leftspeak Demo-goguery came from Rep. Pete Stark, who brought Satan into the discourse: "[Bush's budget] is the embodiment of the Antichrist. It goes against all the teachings of Christ. It turns its back on the poor, it turns its back on education and health care for young children. [It] flies in the face of all of Christ's teachings...." (*The Federalist* email service, 4/20/01). *[Would Stark be willing to show us the scriptures which teach his statements? Does Stark believe these are the God given responsibility of government instead of the church and the family? What is sad, is that the majority of Americans [while not willing to state it in the above way] agree with him. It is depressing that even many Christians now look to the government as their salvation.—mtm]*

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Two dozen dissidents have charged the nation's most famously accepting church with, of all things, being "extremely intolerant." The Unitarian Universalist Association, they contend, may welcome humanists, pagans and Buddhists, but it has little room for people who want to talk about God. On Saturday, disgruntled church mem-

bers will meet in Virginia to discuss plans for a new church body for Unitarians who want more God and less politics in church. The move raises questions about just how inclusive even a liberal church can be, and who can claim the mantle of Unitarianism. "The Unitarian tradition ... draws inspiration and sustenance from the divine," said attorney David Burton, a co-founder of the new Virginia-based group. "But Unitarian Universalism as it's practiced today is almost devoid of religious content." Atheists and theists, he said, "can't be in the same religion." The association, based in Boston, says it's not true that believers in God are unwelcome in its ranks. It is estimated half its congregations are theistic in some form, according to one church leader (*Religion Today* email service, 4/27/01). *[They may state a belief in God but they do not really have one. If they did believe in him, they would have nothing to do with the Unitarian Universalist folks.—mtm]*

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

# WHAT IS PARENTHOOD?

Noah Hackworth

Adam and Eve were not only the first created beings upon the earth (I Corinthians 15:45), they were also the first parents (Genesis 4:1-2). They were the parents of not only Cain, Abel, and Seth, but other children as well (5:14). The biblical record is silent as to the relationship Adam and Eve had with their children. They may have been "good parents" in the formative years of their children, but tragedy struck when Cain and Abel grew up. Cain murdered his own brother. Why did Cain murder Abel? "...Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

## AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY

Of all the responsibilities God has ever assigned to man, there is none greater than parenthood, and yet nothing challenges and brings more pleasure to the human heart. It is unquestionably among the most awesome tasks ever given to men and women because to it is assigned the care and keeping of immortal souls. As the song suggests, "A charge to keep have I, A God to glorify; A never dying soul to save, And fit it for the sky." Parenthood is so important that it cannot be over-emphasized. It carries with it a number of responsibilities that must be faithfully discharged to the very best of one's ability. At times even this is not good enough. Those who are immature, impatient, and self-centered should steer clear of parenthood.

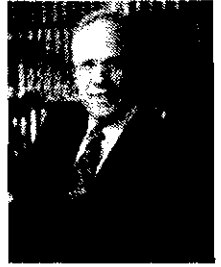
## INTENTIONAL

Induction into parenthood without intent sometimes occurs. Husbands and wives sometimes have children when they have not planned to do so. Parenthood is an experience, but not an "experiment." It cannot be morally undone. God does not intend for the unmarried to produce children, and even mature husbands and wives ought to "think twice" before committing to this responsibility. Once a commitment is made to parenthood, it can be one of the most pleasurable and challenging privileges God had ever given to humanity. Accidental birth is accepted by men and women of God, but it has interrupted the lives of more than a few. Nothing puts more strain on a young marriage than having children before planning and preparation takes place.

## TRAINING IS PRODUCTIVE

There are few things in life that can be accomplished without training. Almost everything requires preparation, but in the responsibilities of parenthood training is sadly lacking; many times no thought whatever is given to it. We parents must teach and train our children to be parents (Ephesians 6:14; Titus 2:3-5). Contrary to popular thought, those who have no children are not necessarily the

experts in child care. On the one hand, I would have doubts about seeking financial advice from someone who had gone bankrupt, or asking for marital advice from someone whose marriage had ended in divorce. On the other hand, those who have experienced failure in these areas might very well have good advice.



## NO PARENT IS PERFECT

There is no such thing as a "perfect parent." If perfection was a requirement for parents, no one could qualify. Parents are not perfect, nor are they expected to be. Not everything parents do will be right; mistakes will be made. Unwise decisions and inconsistent actions plague even good parents, but we learn from mistakes. On one occasion I was enjoying a video game with my granddaughter and I "goofed." She was very tolerant with me and said, "That's alright Papa; that's how you learn." Somewhere along the line the idea originated that parents should never admit their mistakes to their children. Such an idea is foolish and false. If parents have the humility and the intelligence to confess their mistakes to their children, they may save their integrity in the eyes of the children as well as maintain said relationships. Otherwise some children may be waiting for the day they will be free from "parental control." What a shame it would be more than heartbreaking for me to think that my children could hardly wait to grow up and "get away" from me. I sometimes "yearn" to have my children back home so I could tell them that I love them; again and again.

—4525 W. Caldwell Ave.  
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# POISON ARROW FROGS

Annette B. Cates

An entire world with all of its complexities can be found in a zoo. It is no less than amazing that God's creation is so full of variety. The animals were created with all they need for self-preservation. They can teach us much that we need to know in order to live successfully, spiritually as well as physically. One creature that offers us some practical lessons is the poison arrow frog. Its iridescent blue coloring and small body give it an appeal that draws many observers to the glass enclosed terrarium in which it is housed. However, its beauty is also its defense. It is kept behind glass for a good reason, for within its skin is found a deadly poison that South American natives learned long ago to use on their arrow tips to kill animals and enemies. Are there not temptations that draw us to linger, to touch, to imbibe, and to participate that ultimately will destroy us (Psalm 1:1)? Matthew 4:1-11 and James 1:14-15 demonstrate the avenues of temptation that appeal to humankind: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Each of these areas can be seen as a poison arrow frog.

## ITS BRILLIANT COLORATION

The poison arrow frog's brilliant coloration no doubt has a drawing power in the darkness of the South American jungle. A hungry predator would be enabled to see the little frog and think of having it for a tasty lunch. But, alas, not all that glitters is gold, and the predator becomes the victim. Is this not the deception of materialism? We want what we see, oftentimes not considering what we sacrifice in order to get it. How many jeopardize their souls by dealing unethically in order to get something more? How many have to work extra jobs, juggle the finances, and neglect the family in order to pay for "things" that will rust, wear out, or simply give way to the next fad that comes along (cf. Matthew 6:19-21; Colossians 3:1, 2; James 5:2, 3)? Robert Frost wrote a poem entitled, "Nothing Gold Can Stay," that shows the reality of the passage of time and its effect on all things as surely as a flower fades and dawn becomes day. Is the flash of bright color in the dark jungle all that it appears to be? Does it really bring happiness and satisfaction? What is it worth to one's spiritual well-being, to the soul (Luke 12:15ff; Matthew 16:26)?

## ITS TINY SIZE AND PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The poison arrow frog's tiny size and physical appearance add to its attraction. It looks as if it might make a neat pet. However, this is not an animal one would want to come home to every day. It would be okay to look at, but not to hold and to love. It is the antithesis of the worthy woman who knew that favor is deceitful and beauty is vain (Proverbs 31:30). Putting one's emphasis on the outward appearance and not developing the inner person is as de-

ceptive as the poison arrow frog's beauty. It serves only to entrap others as we see in Proverbs 6:24-26 where the "strange woman" entices a man with her flattery. In the end, the frog itself is used and destroyed. Destruction awaits those who do not learn that actions are what really count. "Pretty is as pretty does" is an old but true axiom. One whose total reliance is on outward beauty has not learned the value of self-worth (1 Peter 3:3-4). If some Hollywood-perfect face and figure is all that counts, what will replace it as the years go by and time takes its toll? Would we really want a life with no depth of understanding and wisdom and maturity?



## ITS FAKE WORLD

The poison arrow frog's world may also foster a false sense of pride and security. If it could have the kind of thinking that we people have, it very well may feel somewhat smug in knowing that it can attract, deceive, and destroy. Power over others is a dangerous thing, whether in the political arena, in the business world, in the home, and especially in the church. How many relationships have been destroyed because of a power struggle? There are those who would rule or ruin, not seek and serve as Jesus directed (Mark 9:33-35). In all areas we must examine our motives and make sure that they are pure and in the best interest of others, as well as ourselves. The temptation to achieve and abuse power is as real as any other temptation, and just as deadly. One has not gained anything if he/she has power over others, but not the love and loyalty of others. Would we really want that kind of power?

As I think of the poison arrow frogs in their controlled environment, I think of how I wish we could box up all of life's temptations and put them where they cannot contaminate us. There are many poison arrow frogs in our world that come at us in the form of worldliness and vanity. We must be vigilant, making certain that we are not drawn into their snare of superficial beauty glimmering in the dark. The attitudes and actions that would destroy us do not come to us bearing warning signs. They are encased in a facade of desirability and popularity. Only when we have developed our spiritual defenses are we prepared to overcome these temptations. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

—9194 Lakeside Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

# WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS!

Eddie Whitten

**“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”** (Matthew 4:4). While he was on the earth, Jesus demonstrated remarkable loyalty to the father. He, though himself God, remained in submission to the father in everything he did both in deed and in word. Note his comment in John 17:8:

**For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me,**” indicates his total submission to God. Again, Jesus professed His dedication to the Father in stating, **“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me** (John 6:38).

Obviously, the authority for what we do and what we teach rests within in pages of God’s Holy word. A careful study of the scriptures reveals that all things obtain by the authority of God, the father represented by the earthly frame of Jesus the man, God on earth, as revealed in the pages of the Bible by God, the Holy Spirit. Jesus spoke only those things authorized by the father. He was very careful not to inject into his teaching any doctrine not approved in heaven. That being the case, can we do anything more or less? Unfortunately there are emotionally challenging circumstances that produce ideas leading to serious consequences. Noble as we may appear, we do a disservice to God and to Jesus when we try to help Deity by explaining away matters which we think should be a little different than what the Bible may teach.

## BAPTISM

Men in general do not seem to be able to reconcile what the Bible says regarding baptism. Recently a picture was widely circulated in an article depicting a priest baptizing a man by effusion (pouring). What is wrong with that? What is wrong is that baptism is not effusion. The Bible says baptism is immersion. Firstly, the definition of the Anglicized Greek word for baptism literally means immersion, to dip or plunge. The scriptures say it is a **“burial”** (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 1:12). To pour water on one’s head and call it baptism is a departure from the authority of the scriptures. It is emotionally instigated, not inspired by scripture. Others, because of following man-made doctrines, so-call baptize infants by sprinkling a few drops of water on their innocent and incomprehensible heads. Infant baptism violates every requirement for baptism. Philip asked the Ethiopian nobleman, **“Understand what thou rearest?”** (Acts 8:30). The nobleman responded, **“How can I, except some man should guide me”** (v. 31). Philip preached unto him, Jesus. They came to a **“certain water.”** The nobleman said, **“See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I**

**believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”** (Acts 8:36-37). The point to be made is that the Ethiopian understood the teaching of Christ and believed it. Tiny infants can do neither. Why can’t men just abide by what the Bible says?



## DOCTRINES OF MEN

Without doubt, most men who invent “something new” religiously are devout men. (We put this statement in the present tense since it is still going on.) There are exceptions even to this generality. What are their motivations? Only God knows the hearts of men, but sometimes men make their hearts an open book. It is correct to say that ALL men who propagate new religions depart from what the Bible says. Honest observation forces that conclusion. Jesus asked, **“Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?”** (Luke 6:46). Again, Jesus said, **“Ye are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you”** (John 15:14). Yet, such men, either through disobedience or ignorance, depart from the teaching of the Bible when they propose a different gospel. Paul condemned such teaching in Galatians 1:6-9. He said, **“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”** (Galatians 1:8). He said that any other gospel was a perversion of the gospel of Christ. Notice the degree of emphasis Paul places on the prohibition. Not even an angel from heaven has the authority to preach another gospel than what is revealed in the Bible.

Tragically, we cannot appeal only to denominationalism for such perversion. Many preachers in the Lord’s church have chosen the popular way in departing from the living God because of unbelief (Hebrews 3:12). Departures have been amply documented thus averting any basis for denial. The Bible has become “God’s love letter to his

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children," or "God's ideal," or "God's general guidelines," but not God's all-sufficient pattern of salvation. Why can't men just do what the Bible says?

A.D. 70

Somehow, the destruction of Jerusalem has taken on greater significance than once thought. The imagination of man is a wondrous thing. We can imagine all sorts of ideas when we set the wheels in motion. What about the Jews, the Judgment, the Resurrection? Some say the end of the world has already come, that the resurrection has occurred and that Judgment has been pronounced on all men. The Jews, bless their hearts, are caught in an unthinkable dilemma and we are all living in some sort of unreal, ethereal, eerie, borrowed time.

The Bible does speak of the destruction of Jerusalem. There would be signs warning of its destruction that men could observe (Matthew 24:1-34; Hebrews 10:25). The temple and all records of tribal ancestry would be destroyed. Today no Jew can trace his ancestry to verify his tribal genealogy. No Jew can say he is of the priestly tribe of Levi. The temple, the meeting place of God with his

prophets, was utterly destroyed. That, and that alone, is the significance of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Anything more than that provides a "buffer zone" between the end of the Mosaic period and the Christian dispensation. Paul wrote to both the Ephesian and Colossian churches that Jesus had taken the old law (the Law of Moses) out of the way and nailed it to his cross! The Mosaic period ended when the church was established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ. This is what the Bible says!

The church of Christ has always been attacked by the more populous and popular human sects. It will always be. But there is a more devastating force than denominationalism. It is the emotionally driven thinking of well-meaning people within the church itself who take upon themselves the impossible task of "helping God out" in deciding what God meant to say. Why can men not just do what the Bible says! God does not need our help, we need his word!

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# Mormonism

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## **Only Three Classes Of People Are Free (In The Sight Of God) To Marry**

Thomas B. Warren

**“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery”** (Matthew 19:9). With this statement, Jesus set forth the sole circumstance (fornication) under which one with a living former companion can marry without sin. This statement was made during a conversation with some Pharisees who, in hoping to trap Jesus into making a statement which they could use against him, had posed a question concerning the circumstances under which a man could put away his wife. In answer, Jesus first referred them to a verse of scripture which set forth the original design of marriage. The Pharisees, seeing that they had not yet accomplished their purpose, then asked, **“Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away?”** Likely they sought to put Jesus in the position of contradicting the law of Moses. But this Jesus never did. Rather, he showed that Moses suffered (allowed) this because of the hardness of heart of the people. But in the New Covenant, the strictness of the original law would be restored.

### **A VERY IMPORTANT STUDY**

The importance of this study could hardly be overestimated. Upon the correct solution, and application of that solution, depends man's happiness for this life especially for the life to come. Whether one spends eternity in heaven or in hell may very well be determined by what is true of his relationship in this matter.

It seems that within just the past few years this problem has become more acute. One direction of this growth

seems to be toward the idea that men out of the church are not amenable to the law of Christ and so may divorce and remarry any number of times in violation of the law of Christ and, so long as they obey the civil law under which they live, continue to live with the partner they had at the time of being baptized into Christ. How [can one] account for growth in this particular direction? Perhaps we cannot. I know that I am not going to impugn anyone's motive in the matter. But I do know, from actual experience with myself; that it is sometimes easy to have our spiritual vision dimmed by previous conditioning. We can “see” what we want to “see”—if we are not very careful! Divorce and remarriage is a problem which involves the deepest, most tender, and intimate emotions which man may have so far as human relationships are concerned. Many times children are involved. All of these things stir our hearts. We must carefully **“examine ourselves”** (II Corinthians 13:5) lest we be guided by our heart and not by the scriptures!

Since the question may have so many and varied aspects, the problem of approach seems important. This [article] will deal with an affirmation of those who can marry with an accompanying negation to serve as a further clarification.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO MARRY?**

Put in simple terms, this affirmation is a statement setting forth those who *can* marry without sinning in so doing, or, it might be stated as follows: those who do not sin when they marry. This, of necessity, demands that they themselves marry a person who belongs in one of these classes.

(Continued On Page 4)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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## Editorial...

### "FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS"

The title of my editorial is the descriptive sub-heading appearing on each issue of *Contending for the Faith* on the front page under the name of the paper. Some have opined that this means that the paper is not for every Christian. If that is the case, then please tell me the name of the paper that is published expressly for non-elders, non-preachers, non-teachers, and unconcerned Christians. And, if there is a paper that caters to those who are not elders, not preachers, and not teachers, who is going to read it—unconcerned Christians? It is difficult enough to get the so-called "sound brethren" to read their Bible with regularity. How much more difficult it is to get them to read a gospel paper. Trying to get most brethren to keep abreast of events past or present in the brotherhood is comparable to attempting to keep the hog washed and out of the hog wallow—it is next to an impossible task.

#### THE "PLACE" OF CFTF

Some people piously declare that there is a "place" for *CFTF* in the brotherhood (if they admit that it has a place besides the wastebasket)? But, what do they mean by *CFTF* having a "place" in the brotherhood? The only thing I can think of is that because we "name names" and pull no punches when it comes to dealing with error and those who propagate it (whether the error is to the right or left of truth), it is too strong for those who are not elders, not preachers, not teachers or those unconcerned Christians. Pardon me, but has anyone ever read in the Bible in general and the New Testament in particular all the accounts of ungodliness, weakness, immorality and apostasy among those who were God's children? Indeed, God not only put the Bible into the hands of "elders, preachers, teachers and concerned Christians", but he made it available to non-elders, non-preachers, non-teachers, and unconcerned Christians. Moreover, he did not limit the Bible to church members only. He also made it available to atheists, agnostics, infidels of every description, apostates of every kind, and every enemy of righteousness. The goodness and wickedness of King David along with God's commendations and sharp rebukes of him are recorded in the divine volume for saint and sinner to read. If some of my more wise and prudent brethren had been advising God about what to include in the New Testament for all the world to read, at least they would not have included the letters of Paul to the

church in Corinth. Certainly the Corinthian epistles are not for the non-elder, non-preacher, non-teacher, and the unconcerned Christian. Indeed, if God had adopted the editorial policies and philosophies of some papers, elders, preachers and educators among "us" we would have one Bible for the atheists and agnostics, one for the pagans, another for sectarian denominationalism, one for faithful Christians, another for weak Christians, and still another one for non-elders, non-preachers, non-teachers, and unconcerned Christians. But, the Bible that was available to **Barton Warren Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell, David Lipscomb, J. D. Tant, Joe Blue, Joe Warlick, N. B. Hardeman, Guy N. Woods,** and their kind past and present, is the same Bible that is

and was available to **Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Antony Flew, "Pope John Paul", Joe DiMaggio, Michael Jordan** and my aunt **Bernice** and **uncle Bill**. It will, therefore, continue to be the policy of *Contending for the Faith* to comfort the afflicted (those in such straits because they live and uphold the truth) and afflict the comfortable (those who would compromise the word of God and trouble the saints for the sake of a false peace), not the other way around. We will forewarn that others may be forearmed and do it candidly, frankly (sometimes sharply and bluntly) and certainly without fear or favor.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

108 Camelot Drive  
Weatherford, Texas 76086-5906

May 30, 2001

Mr. David P. Brown  
Editor, *Contending for the Faith*  
P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

Dear Brother Brown,

Again, it was my pleasure talking with you by phone this afternoon when I renewed my subscription to *CFTF*. Indeed, you are in my prayers. Continuing in your good works, may the Lord's church and his cause be strengthened and many Christians become increasingly better informed and led to greater fidelity to Christ.

As a 1954 graduate of *Abilene Christian College*, I am especially grateful and thankful for my having been able to go to that school. I have spent most of my adult life as a high school teacher of Chemistry and Physics, and even though I was a science major at *ACC*, my most prized and valued courses were those in Bible under godly and dedicated teachers. (I took more than twice as many hours in Bible courses as were required for graduation.) It seems apparent that the evidences which are available attest to the fact that *ACC* then, regarding the faith, was a much better school than the present-day *ACU*. Tragically, those who cherish and respect God's holy word can today find little good to say of *ACU*.

Perhaps, brother Brown, you are already acquainted with the following true narrative. Our late brother **Don Morris**, when he was President of *Abilene Christian College*, in a stirring and informative manner (and by no means with a joyous and self-satisfying demeanor) wrote a masterful treatise on the apostasy of *Add-Ran Christian College*. This school was named after **Addison** and **Randolph Clark**, sons of the founder. For several years after its founding in the late 1800's in the town of Thorp Spring, Texas, three or four miles northwest of Granbury) the school was recognized to be faithful and loyal to the teachings of the holy scriptures. However, many students—desiring, apparently, to please themselves

rather than to please God and leaning on their own understanding rather than seeking and following truth as revealed in the Bible — clamored for a piano or organ to accompany their singing in worship. The school administration acquiesced to their demands. (O, that all those who claim allegiance to Christ today could put away their arrogance and in humility remember and be guided by the words of the apostle Paul when he exclaimed, "**For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ**" (Galatians 1:10).)

The school moved from Thorp Spring to Waco, and then from Waco to the present campus southwest of downtown Fort Worth where it has for many years operated under the name *Texas Christian University*. Thorp Spring Christian College was established to take the place of the departed and apostate *Add-Ran Christian College*. One of my distant relatives attended *Thorp Spring Christian College* with **Don Morris** in the early 1900's.

Of special significance and importance in his review of the school in Thorp Spring, brother **Morris** noted that **through many years much error and false teaching in the church can be traced to "our Christian colleges"**. In times past I with enthusiasm supported *Abilene Christian College*, but it does not require superlative perceptive ability to see the validity of **Don Morris'** shrewd observation. It is my belief that *ACU* is propagating much error and is unworthy of the support of Christians. Even in the church today there are Christians who, regarding the faith, are endeavoring to be ingenious, clever, inventive, and resourceful, always looking for something new or different or more exciting. Why can Christians not understand, brother **Brown**, that the great confusion and division and apostasy in the religious world can likely be traced to a lack of respect and reverence for the revealed word and, thus, for the Lord God himself?

Thank you for reading this. As much as I would like to hear from you personally, I know you are very busy and that your time is at a premium. Therefore there is no need for you to reply.

In the love of Christ,  
**Gerald Anderson**

## Only Three Classes... (Continued From Page 1)

1. *Those who have never been married previously may, without sin, marry as long as they themselves marry an eligible (in the sight of God) person. "But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned..."* (I Corinthians 7:28; cf. I Corinthians 7:9).

2. *Those who have been previously married but whose former companion is dead.* Paul stated the matter in this fashion:

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (Romans 7:2-3).

3. *Those who have been previously married but whose former companion was guilty of fornication (unfaithfulness to the marriage vow).* Here, our text (Matthew 19:9), shows plainly that Jesus gave to the innocent party the right to seek another marriage partner. If Jesus had given no exception, his language would have taught that *every* person who puts away his companion and marries another is guilty

of adultery. But Jesus did not do that—he did give an *exception* making it clear that those whose companions have been guilty of *sexual unfaithfulness* may put them away and marry another, not being guilty of adultery in so doing. This means *physical unfaithfulness*—the act of [fornication]—not merely lusting in one's heart (Matthew 5:28).

The negation, put in simple terms, is a setting forth of those who cannot *marry without* sinning in so doing. Or, it might be stated as follows: those who do sin when they marry. Just who are these?

1. *Those who have a living former companion who was not put away because of fornication.* In Matthew 19:9, Jesus said, "...and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (compare Matthew 5:32).

2. *Those who marry anyone who has a former companion (still living) who was not put away because of fornication.* In Matthew 19:9, Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (compare Matthew 5:32).

3. *Those who were put away because of their unfaithfulness (Matthew 5:32).*

The verses to which I have referred so clearly teach the positions set forth as to permit no doubt in the matter.

—Deceased

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# IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR THEE TO HAVE HER

Gary McDade

The utterance of these words by John the Baptist brought down the wrath of royalty upon him. Herod the tetrarch was in an unscriptural marriage with Herodias, his brother Philip's former wife. Herod was fearful of the multitude, so he could not put John the Baptist to death. However, when Herodias' daughter danced before Herod on his birthday, he was so moved that he cast better judgment aside and offered her anything she wanted. *Imagine the effort the girl put into that lascivious spectacle after her own mother urged the performance anticipating the release of all restraint from the gratified ruler. And, what reward did the raunchy romp return? John the Baptist's head in a charger (Matthew 14:1-13).*

## SILENCE IS NOT ALWAYS GOLDEN

Why could not John just simply keep quiet about the personal, private lives of the aristocracy who did not seem likely to obey God's will anyway? Why could he not just *keep quiet like so many elderships in the churches of Christ* today who reason that the personal, private lives of the members under their charge are no concern of theirs? Why could he not just keep quiet about the subjects of marriage, divorce, and remarriage like the majority of preachers whose wrists are shackled in the golden handcuffs of the worldly members who pay their salaries? It seems a most unusual concern John the Baptist had for Herod and Herodias. Why bother? Why pry? Why risk his life to make that politically incorrect point?

The answer is discovered in exploring the purpose for John the Baptist's ministry. The prophecy his father, Zacharias, gave provides the explanation:

*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:68-79).*

The prophecy of Isaiah concerning John the Baptist also made it plain:

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever (Isaiah 40:3-8).

## JOHN LOVED SOULS

The work of John the Baptist was to prepare a frail, dying human race to receive salvation from sin in Christ. If like those mentioned earlier, he did not care that someone's soul was in jeopardy, he might as well never have been born. Today, people, otherwise good people, play favorites and customize Christianity to meet their "felt needs". John the Baptist knew differently. The principle of rightly marrying was "to die for."...

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# THE DECEIVING AND WEAVING OF PHIL SANDERS

David B. Watson

*[The background for the following article is found in the appearance of Phil Sanders, with Steve Flatt, President of David Lipscomb University, and others about two years ago as fellow speakers on two seminars or series of lectures at the Lhemman Avenue Church of Christ, Bowling Green, Kentucky and the Granny White Pike Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee. Contending for the Faith dealt with such in its July 1999 issue. As David Watson reveals in the following article, a discussion regarding Phil Sanders' fellowship of Steve Flatt ensued over the internet in a discussion group. As Watson's article reveals, this discussion involved Sanders.]*

*I have waited all this time (two years) before saying anything further about the matter. Why did I do this? First of all, in the July 1999 issue of CFTF I had offered enough adequate evidence as well as argued my case well enough to uphold the truth on fellowship as well as expose the error pertaining to the same. In the second place, as Watson points out, Sanders argued that adequate time ought to be given for people to repent. QUESTION: Has enough time passed for Sanders et al. to repent of fellowshiping a false teacher such as Steve Flatt? Sanders has given no indication that he violated the scriptures in fellowshiping Steve Flatt in the previously mentioned activities (the same is true concerning Earl Edwards and Mack Lyon who were fellow speakers with Flatt). Yet, Sanders continues to pass himself off as a stalwart for truth and opposed to error. Therefore, CFTF offers the following well-written, well-argued, and documented article dealing with the matter herein noted.*

*Obviously, some people think that error circulates apart from and independent of human agency—it mysteriously moves like a virus or bacteria through the air to infect the unwary person. Such, of course, is not the case at all. Just as gospel truth circulates by being taught by human agents and good examples are set by people living it out in their daily lives, just so false doctrine is spread by false teachers and bad examples are set by bad people living wrongly. The notion that one can oppose false doctrine while letting the person who teaches and/or lives it alone is at best ridiculous and at worst horrendous. When Peter conducted himself wrongly Paul withstood him "to his face". Why did Paul treat Peter this way? Because Paul loved God, Christ, the truth, the church, Peter and those who were led away from the truth by Peter's bad example (Galatians 2:11-14; I Corinthians 13:6). Can we do less and remain well pleasing to God (II John 8-11)? dpb—Editor-in-Chief]*

The Apostle Paul wrote: **"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple"** (Romans 16:17,18). Notice the phrase **"deceive the hearts."** There are those who will practice deception in matters of religion! One of the ways deception is practiced is to use the same word in different ways. **Carl Ketcherside** had to use erroneous and unscriptural definitions of "gospel" and "doctrine" in order to push his program of "unity in diversity" and "fellowship without endorsement." **Rubel Shelly**, following in Ketcherside's steps, has sought to impose an arbitrary vocabulary and artificial definitions upon the meaning of the church, the one faith, and the fellowship of the saints.

## A MODERN EXAMPLE OF DECEPTION

Now notice some more recent examples of deception concerning the use of the word "error." Phil Sanders wrote\*, concerning his appearance on a lectureship along with false teacher Steve Flatt, that he believes Flatt to be in "error." He wrote: *"You know when someone does teach error, some patience ought to be shown to that brother."* Again he writes: *"One does not approve and support heresy by being patient."* Thus, any fair-minded person would believe that Phil Sanders believes that Steve Flatt is in "error" and has advocated "heresy." He goes on to say: *"I have personally spoken to Steve about a number of issues and will continue to speak as I see them arise. Problems =*

*doctrinal errors."* Again, any fair-minded person would believe that Phil Sanders believes that Steve Flatt is involved in "doctrinal errors." He writes yet again:

There are still many problems with error in the Nashville area. The fact that some of us are trying to be patient and reach as many as we can for the truth before the split happens in no way means that we condone error. I daily speak about the errors that surround me to the many faithful brethren of the area.

Now, notice that he uses the word "error" three times in this statement in relationship to Steve Flatt.

But, now notice his about-face concerning Steve Flatt's "error." After writing all of the above quotations in reference to Steve Flatt, the next day he says this: *"But I want you to produce evidence of his error, and I will not accept the guilt by association argument as a response. Tell me what Steve teaches that is in error."* He continues by saying: *"You must prove that Steve teaches false doctrines. You have assumed what you have not proved."* Then, when it was pointed out to him that he had already admitted that Steve was in "error" and that Steve advocated "heresy" and that Steve had "problems = doctrinal errors" and that such an admission meant that Steve teaches "false doctrine" he said this: *"The problems of which I speak are not Steve's personal teaching, but the teaching of some at DLU."* Now we see that when Phil Sanders used the terms "error" and "heresy" and "problems = doctrinal errors" in the context of Steve Flatt teaching "false doctrine" he was not speaking of Steve's personal teaching, but the teaching of others who are at David Lipscomb University.

But, four days later, this same Phil Sanders does another about-face concerning whether Steve Flatt is in "error" or not. He writes:

*Is Steve Flatt's soul worth fighting for? Are my brethren at Granny White and Lehman Ave. worthy of my support in their OPPOSITION to error? I believe they are, and I will support them in that opposition. Now you can criticize me if you wish, even mark me as a compromiser. But I will go on fighting against error.*

In this statement he indicates that Steve Flatt is indeed in "error" and that he and other brethren are in opposition to that error.

He next claims that his failure to publicly rebuke Steve Flatt's error is justified by II Timothy 2:24-26 which he quotes as follows:

**And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.**

If this quote means anything at all in relation to Steve Flatt, then it means Steve has "wronged" someone and needs "correcting" because he is in "opposition" to the "truth" and needs to practice "repentance" and "escape from the snare of the devil."

But then, amazingly, two days later he writes this: "*I am not aware of Steve Flatt holding a doctrinal position that is in that category.*" The category to which he refers is II John 9-11. That passage reads as follows:

**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.**

Thus, his conclusion is that even though Steve Flatt has committed "error" and "heresy" and has "problems = doctrinal errors" and that such "error" needs to be "opposed" and "fought against" and that Steve Flatt needs to be "corrected" in his opposition to the "truth" and brought to "repentance" so that he can "escape the snare of the devil" he is not aware of Steve Flatt holding a doctrinal position that is in the category of "transgressing" the "doctrine of Christ."

One person stated that Phil Sanders "spoke with forked tongue." I would say he talks out of both sides of his mouth. A logician would say he is inconsistent and contradictory. The Bible says he is "by good words and fair speeches" trying to "deceive the hearts" of others! DO NOT BE DECEIVED, BRETHREN! Steve Flatt is a documented false teacher and Phil Sanders is in violation of II John 9-11.

#### THE WEAVING

**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).**

When Phil Sanders was accused of violating this passage by appearing on a lectureship with false teacher Steve Flatt his response was as follows: "*Should someone come to me denying that Jesus came in the flesh, I would readily refuse to fellowship him. This is not the case with Steve Flatt.*" He further stated: "*I am not aware of Steve Flatt holding a doctrinal position that is in that category.*" Thus he says: "*Yes, I am in fellowship with Steve Flatt...*" Then, when confronted with the error of his own that II John 9-11 only refers to Deity of Christ he starts to "Weave" by saying: "*My brief reply to Lynn, (Parker - DBW) I believe, has been used to say more than I wish to say.*"

In the book "Change Agents And Churches of Christ" by William Woodson, we find these quotations in Chapter Three under section IV (Instructions For Change Agents) on pages 125-126: "Strategy one: Weave!" Change Agents are instructed:

Teach new ideas for a while, stretching your church out beyond comfort zones and into fresh thinking. At first you may hear, 'Wow. I never noticed that in the Bible before!' This is only mild disequilibrium. But, when you feel your church approaching the limits of tolerance, back off! Talk about familiar and safe things for a while. Then, move back out to the cutting edge again.



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Again, "Weave in and out: first with new ideas, then actually implement new practices."

Phil Sanders does just as the above instructions say to do and next speaks as follows:

I wrote this in 1989 and have not changed my view on the passage. I quote in part: "Christians, moreover, are to reject false teachers. They are not to receive them into their homes or give them a greeting. There is to be no compromise with or blessing of the false teacher. To receive or to greet a false teacher is to share in his evil deeds. False teaching is evil; we need to remember that. God hates a liar. False teaching lies about God and lies about God's Word. It leads saved people away from the truth and divides the body of Christ (I John 2:19). It offers false hopes and ends up destroying all who believe it. False teaching is a great evil."

Now, if Phil Sanders wrote the above statement in 1989 and has not changed his position on the passage (II John 9-11), then why did he write what he did as previously quoted saying the passage deals only with the Deity of Christ? In 1989 he believed that 2 John 9-11 applies to every essential doctrine of Christ. But in 2000 he indicated that it applies only to the Deity of Christ. Then, when such error was opposed, he goes back to believing it applies to "every essential doctrine of Christ." (As a side note: what doctrine of Christ is nonessential?) He "weaves" in and then he "weaves" out and now he "weaves" back in. Further, if II John 9-11 does indeed "apply to every essential doctrine of Christ" then why would it not apply to Steve Flatt's "error" and "heresy" and "problems = doctrinal errors" that need to be "opposed" and "fought against" wherein Steve Flatt needs to be "corrected" in his "opposition" to the "truth" and brought to "repentance" so that he can "escape the snare of the devil?"

The fact of the matter is that Steve Flatt is a false teacher who leads saved people away from the truth and divides the body of Christ with his change agent philosophy. Phil Sanders received him and gave him greeting at a lecture-ship on which they both appeared. This brother compromised the truth by not reproving him publicly (Ephesians 5:11). He continues to receive and give greeting to this false teacher claiming that Steve Flatt is not a false teacher as categorized in II John 9-11. He thus, shares in Flatt's evil deeds. Brethren, be not deceived by all this "weaving" in and out on passages of scripture like II John 9-11.

#### THE TRUTH

**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).**

False teachers have for years been trying to sustain the idea that the phrase "the doctrine of Christ" in the previous passage only applies to the doctrine or teaching about Christ (his Deity and his coming in the flesh) and that it does not apply to the doctrine or teaching from Christ (that which Christ taught personally and through others). It is important, therefore, to know whether the "doctrine" or "teaching" of Christ in II John 9-11 refers only to the teach-

ing about Christ or to the teaching from Christ. **A. T. Robertson**, noted Greek scholar, unequivocally states: "Not the teaching about Christ, but that of Christ which is that standard of Christian teaching as the walk of Christ is the standard for the Christian's walk (I John 2:6)." (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. VI, page 254). **Joseph Henry Thayer** in his Greek-English Lexicon says it is "the doctrine which has God, Christ, the Lord for its author and supporter," listing II John 9 as an example of this usage (page 144).

In Matthew 16:12 we have "the teaching of the Pharisees." We read: "**Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**" The Greek word translated "doctrine" in the previous verse is the same word translated "doctrine" or "teaching" in II John 9. If the doctrine or teaching of Christ in II John 9 means only the doctrine or teaching about Christ, then does the teaching of the Pharisees in Matthew 16:12 mean only the teaching about the Pharisees? If you can see through a ladder, then you can see plainly that the teaching of the Pharisees means that which the Pharisees taught. Likewise, the doctrine or teaching of Christ in II John 9-11 means more than the teaching about Christ. It refers the doctrine or teaching that Christ did and that he commissioned others to do (Matthew 28:18-29; Acts 2:42; II Timothy 2:2).

The doctrine or teaching of Christ in II John 9-11 has the same meaning in the latter part of the passage as it does in the first part of the passage. When John writes, "**He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son,**" does he mean that to abide in the teaching is to continue only in the belief that Jesus came in the flesh? Or does it mean that we are to continue to walk in the truth (II John 4; III John 4), and to abide in the teaching of which Christ is the author and giver? To abide in the doctrine of Christ is the same in context as to "walk in truth." To abide in the doctrine of Christ is to "**walk in the light, as he is in the light**" (I John 1:7).

There is an emphasis in the New Testament upon our continuing faithfulness — our abiding in the doctrine. The early disciples continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine or teaching (Acts 2:42). If we walk in the light (keep on walking in the light) then we have fellowship one with another (I John 1:7) and we have fellowship with the Father and the Son (II John 9-11) so that the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse us (keep on cleansing us) from all sin. There is a definite correlation in the scriptures between doctrine and fellowship. We cannot simply ignore doctrinal differences and have the kind of fellowship taught in the word of God. Let us diligently strive to learn the lessons taught in II John 9-11.

**Note:** All quotes from Phil Sanders are taken from his own published e-mail messages to an e-mail list during the month of January 2000.

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# THE 'ANTI CHRISTIAN' MYTH OF A FLAT EARTH

Keith Sisman

It seems absolutely incredible today that when the Apostle Paul says the gospel was spread throughout the entire world, that he had in mind a flat earth.

When Paul wrote to the Romans (Romans 1:8), he writes of their faith being known throughout the whole world, thus indicating that at this time the gospel was being spread, not only throughout the Roman Empire, but beyond the Roman Empire. So what about America and Australia?

## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Before we deal with this problem let us think about this, it is not the rejection of the gospel that leads a person to hell, it is sin that condemns. The gospel when obeyed will save, and will continue to save a faithful person. Whether one has heard the gospel or not, an accountable person who has not obeyed the gospel will go to hell. Therefore, it is not the disobeying of the gospel that condemns, but sin. For all have sinned (Romans 3:23).

If those who have never heard the gospel are not condemned, then evangelism would be cruel. But the lost are going to hell, the gospel is their only opportunity for salvation (Romans 1:16). It would have been horrific if people living in countries such as the Americas did not have any opportunity of salvation until the 1500s. So how far could the gospel have been spread in the early years of Christianity?

## DID ALL HEAR?

The earliest date for Christianity arriving in Britain has been set at the year A. D. 37 although other historians date it around the year A. D. 58/63. Eusebius, the fourth century historian, says "The Apostles passed beyond the ocean to the isles called the Britannic Isles". Tertullian says "The regions of Britain which have never been penetrated by Roman Arms have received the religion of Christ".

Now lets look at what the scriptures have to say on this (NKJV). In Romans 1:8 we find "**that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.**" Note, not "part" of the world, or "known" world but the "whole world".

In Colossians we find in chapter 1 verses 5 and 6 "**because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of truth of the gospel which has come to you, as it has also in all the world.**" This should settle it, the gospel was heard throughout all the world in the first century.

But how large is all the world? Only people are accountable to the gospel; where there were no people, there was no need for the gospel. *This is important.*

The Celts or Gauls were the descendants of Japheth and form the western Indo-European peoples. They brought

with them a belief in the primitive pagan religions of the orient and east. From what we know of their religious beliefs we can see clearly eastern influence, which is to be expected if mankind originated from Babel (Genesis 10, 11). Also the similarity of western (Druid), eastern, oriental and North/South American religious beliefs and practices seems to suggest a recent migration of mankind, agreeing with the Biblical account of nations.

## FALSE TIME SCALES

We must not be trapped into accepting evolutionary times scales or ignoring the consequences of a retreating Ice Age caused by a recent global flood. The flood would have occurred only about 2500 years before the time of Christ. Then there was the time it took to migrate after the dispersion at Babel. Many natives of different continents have their own accounts of the flood, and some their account of the Babel dispersion. To date I have located over 280 different flood myths/legends. This is just what we would expect to find if the dispersion is recent, as the Bible teaches. Migration would not have reached the extent it has today. Both northern and southern hemispheres would have been much colder and sea levels lower, allowing access to "land bridges". There is no need to suppose for example that Australia had inhabitants. If this is correct, then there was no need for the gospel to be preached there and elsewhere. Two thousand years ago much of the earth's land mass would have been unpopulated. Therefore, there was no need for the early church to reach these areas.

## ANCIENT TRAVELERS

So what about America? Harvard professor Barry Fell, in his book *America BC*, has listed a number of sites both in North and South America where ancient artifacts from the Middle East and Europe have been found. Also a study of comparative pagan religions reveals a common link. Roman navigators knew the earth to be round, not flat. The circumference of the Earth was measured two hundred years before the birth of Christ by Erasthenes. The Bible teaches that the Earth is a sphere. The British Celtic church taught that the Earth was round as the did the Catholic Church. So where did the idea of a flat Earth come from? The first author to promote a flat earth scenario in detail was Washington Irving. Irving, who died in 1859 wrote considerably on Christopher Columbus, to whom the glory is given for discovering the Americas. Several editions of his work was produced, the first in 1828. Some were single volumes, others 2, 3 or 4 volume sets.

The legend of Columbus' sailors living in fear of falling of a flat Earth at the very end of the sea grew from Irving's history. The religious world, particularly the Anglican faith in England, with their high church liberal theology

eagerly accepted such stories, along in 1859 with Darwin's published theory of evolution *The Origin of Species*. Two English atheists in the 1800s (**John Draper** d. 1882 and **Andrew D. White** d. 1918) promoted even further the story of Columbus and a flat Earth. Yes, the idea that the early pre-reformation church taught that the Earth was flat is an fabrication by anti-Christian Humanists living in the nineteenth century! The work of Irving has been countered by **Samuel Eliot Morison**, an expert on Columbus who has opposed the 'flat Earth' story as "misleading and mischievous non-sense,...one of the most popular Columbian myths." Morison's book, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea, a Life of Christopher Columbus*, came out in 1942.

So what is the real story of Columbus? The Celts, and later British sailors had been reaching North America by way of Greenland and across to Newfoundland for centuries prior to Columbus reaching America in 1492. Also Nordic Vikings had been making the same perilous journey from about A. D. 1000.

Early sea travel was dangerous, death was common; if the small boats did not sink in a storm, they could be lost due to poor navigation. Illness, particularly scurvy was rampant after two to three weeks away from fresh fruit and vegetables. Their diet consisted of meat and biscuits when the fruit ran out.

Columbus was a business man. He wanted to find an effective trading route from the East Indies. He knew of the British fishing fleets of Newfoundland and the impossibility of finding a passage there. He decided to go south, far more dangerous, but if he could find a passage for trading vessels, he would be rich.

So could the Romans make the same journey? It is also now known that the Romans had navigational aids, though very primitive, that allowed them to sail out of sight of land. It was taught until recently that early sailors sailed in sight of land. This is now known to be incorrect.

We also know from archaeology that the Celts, Iberians, Egyptians, Libyans, and Phoenicians visited the Americas. In 1 Kings 10:22 the scripture reads, "For the king had merchant ships at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys."

King Hiram was king of Phoenicia, the Phoenicians were capable of going to the Americas. These ships were away for three years, we can guess they were not out on a day trip down the coast!

It was possible in the first century to make long sea journeys to the Americas. It is unlikely to have been undertaken by Roman naval transports, but smaller privately owned trading ships.

Native American legends tell of visitors from a strange land with strange powers, could this be Christians with the power of miracles?

#### THE REJECTED GOSPEL

To be saved without Christ (John 3:16-36; Mark 16:16) is impossible. All who sinned are lost without putting on Christ (John 14:6). So the world is lost without Christ. This is of deadly importance, because of Adam sin entered the world and through sin death (Genesis 3:3, 19; Romans

5:12-19 and 1 Corinthians 15:45-49). In Romans 3:23 we learn that all have sinned. So because of the transgression of Adam and his wife we need another Adam the man Jesus Christ who laid down his life as a sacrifice for all of mankind, so that we may be saved (1 Corinthians 15:21, 22, 45). The Bible describes all humans as sinners since the beginning, and it follows that all humans have descended from the first man, Adam, except Eve his wife (Genesis 3:20. Acts 17:26). We learn, therefore, that there is no salvation through Christ if Adam was not a real person and the first male. There is no room for long timescales or evolution here. There is no reason not to believe what Paul wrote under inspiration, that the gospel was taught to the "Whole World" in the first century. That mankind has rejected that gospel, the same gospel we have today is not the issue man has been given the opportunity. The greatest obstacle in promoting the gospel to a lost world is the rejection of the Gospel by a lost and dying world.

My main sources are listed below. Others are too numerous to mention.

*Ante Nicene and post Nicene Church Fathers.*

*An Ice Age Caused By The Genesis Flood*, by M J Oard.

*A Study of The Biblical Flood*, by M. Fox (highly recommended).

*Unlocking The Mysteries of Creation*, by D Petersen. (I don't agree with everything Petersen writes, but the book is worth having).

*Fingerprints of the Gods*, 'A Quest for the Beginning and the End', by Graham Hancock. First printed 1995. (some useful material from an agnostic!)

*Folk-Lore in the Old Testament*, Studies in Comparative Religion, Legend and Law by Sir James George Frazer (Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge), 1918 in three volumes.

*True Science Agrees with Bible*, by Malcolm Bowden.

*America BC, ancient settlers in the New World*, by Harvard professor Barry Fell, 1972.

*Admiral of the Ocean Sea, a Life of Christopher Columbus*, by Samuel Eliot Morison, 1942.

*A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, by Washington Irving, several editions from 1828.

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# WHAT DOES THE LOCAL CHURCH OWE THE ELDERS?

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

- A. It is usually easier to think in terms of what others owe us rather than what we owe them.
  1. The human mind is prone to think almost exclusively in a selfish direction.
  2. For example: Many are looking for a local congregation to meet their needs, instead of looking to meet the needs of the congregation.
  3. This, though, is not a biblical view:
    - a. Philippians 2:3-4
    - b. I Corinthians 10:33
- B. When we speak of obligations within congregational leadership, usually the first thing that comes to mind is what does the eldership owe the local church?
  1. What the elders owe the local church is a crucial and important issue, but there is another side to the coin.
  2. It is also important to stress the local church's responsibility to the elders.
  3. If the work in the local congregation is to go well – both elders and members must know and perform their respective responsibilities toward each other.

## DISCUSSION

### A. KNOW THEM

1. I Thessalonians 5:12.
2. This "knowing" entails much more than a simple acquaintance.
3. The dislike many brethren have for their elders often stem from second-hand information and from watching their performance from a distance.
4. To truly know the elders we must love them for the person they are, and respect them as shepherds of the flock.

### B. ESTEEM THEM

1. I Thessalonians 5:13.
2. To "esteem" means to hold in the highest regard.
  - a. Paul says not only to esteem them, but to highly esteem them.
  - b. Elders need to be highly esteemed because of the great responsibility they have chosen to undertake ... (Hebrews 13:17).
3. Hours and hours are spent by faithful elders in shepherding the flock.
4. Many speak with disrespect concerning the eldership – this is contrary to I Thessalonians 5:13.
5. Paul said, "Be at peace among yourselves" (I Thessalonians 5:13).
  - a. But how can this be fulfilled if we are constantly criticizing and finding fault with those whom God says we are to esteem in love?
  - b. Besides, who ever said the elders were perfect, and incapable of making mistakes?
  - c. Remember, criticizing and trying to help and encourage are two different things.

### C. COUNTED WORTHY OF DOUBLE HONOR

1. I Timothy 5:17-18.
2. Because of the responsibilities involved in shepherding the flock – the eldership is worthy of honor.
  - a. In fact, Paul mentions "double honor".
  - b. Honor upon honor.
3. Elders are worthy of receiving honor – not constant hindrances from the congregation.



### D. BE SLOW AND CAUTIOUS IN CRITICIZING

1. I Timothy 5:19-20.
2. Elders are now, and have always been, the target of severe criticism by the unknowing, the unthinking, and the unkind.
3. We are living in a time when people are so sensitive that you can't tell them anything without them getting mad and "biting your head off."
4. You may disagree with the decision made by the eldership in an area of opinion – and that's fine, but we should not try to disrupt the church and the eldership over such.
5. Now, if there is a "sin" (a transgression of the law; I John 3:4) in the eldership – then that is a different matter.
  - a. Remember, though, one should not even listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 17:6).
  - b. "Witness" means to give evidence, to bear testimony, to give proof.
  - c. Thus, we are not to listen to hearsay, only to proof give by two or three witnesses.
6. But there is something to be done even before this (Matthew 18:15-17).
7. Many are always quick to believe the worst in someone.

### E. OBEY AND SUBMIT

1. Hebrews 13:17
2. We are to obey and submit to the Lord's delegated authority.
3. We are showing a rebellious and sinful attitude toward God to do otherwise ...
  - a. Remember Numbers 16 .
  - b. The rebellion of Korah.
4. We hinder greatly the efforts of the elders if we refuse to submit to their God-given authority.

## CONCLUSION

- A. We are just as wrong when we fail in our duties to the elders as they are when they fail in their duties to us.
- B. We must submit to God's arrangement.

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# GOOD MANNERS AND RESPECT AT FUNERALS AND WORSHIP

Bruce R. Curd

In this day of casual come-as-you-are, wear-what-you-want attitude, we would like to ask where is our respect for bereaved families and, most of all for the God of heaven?

In early April, in a letter addressed to *Dear Abby*, a woman from Texas wrote:

I recently attended a funeral where I was shocked at some of the clothes worn and the lack of respect shown. (In 1993, my brother died, and one of my cousins wore a dress in such a bright color it hurt my eyes to look at it. She also wore a ring on every finger.)

My curiosity was aroused concerning appropriate funeral attire, so I went to the public library and read everything they had on funerals, as well as *Miss Manners* and *Emily Post*. Here is what I found:

1. Don't be late.
2. Wear dark clothes.
3. Don't wear more black than the widow.
4. Wear minimal jewelry (wedding band, tasteful earrings, watch, tie tack.)
5. Humor is acceptable as long as it is tasteful and low-keyed.
6. If it's acceptable to the family, exes may attend or serve as pallbearers.
7. Family members only are allowed to sit in the family section. (No exes.)
8. The time for hugs and acknowledgments is when the family is receiving guests at the funeral home or at the cemetery—NOT as people pass by the coffin to pay their last respects to the deceased.
9. Don't bring babies or unruly toddlers.
10. Don't get up and leave during the service.

I hope this will answer some questions for people, so we can all start to show more respect to the families and to the deceased.

## MORE RESPECT FOR THE DEAD THAN GOD

Generally, people show far more respect for their dead loved ones than they do our loving Heavenly Father and His beloved son. Although, as the above letter shows, respect for the former is declining. As regarding the funeral, we have seen all pallbearers wearing suit and tie, and some would even borrow a suit if they did not have one for the occasion or decline to serve. Most other men present would also be well-groomed, as would the women. Nothing gaudy, or for vain display, would be seen.

But times have changed—yes, drastically so, both at funerals and at worship. What the woman described in the foregoing letter is now common practice at funerals. Of the ten points stressed in her letter, only a very few would, of course, apply at a worship service. Numbers 1, 4, 5, and 10 would certainly be applicable, as well as others that will be mentioned.

## WHERE IS OUR SENSE OF MODESTY?

It grieves our hearts, as surely it must that of our Holy God, to see the sloven laxity and the brazen flaunting of respect that is now on display in most church services. For example, the same men, who at one time would borrow a suit to wear at a funeral, will come to worship God in a pair of blue jeans that may be tattered and torn, and with shirt hanging out, and hair disheveled and uncombed. We have cringed in our seat to see such, moreover, sometimes a brother, with a pack of cigarettes bulging in the shirt pocket, as he served the communion to the audience. Now, it is very common to see our men folk clad in shirts with logos of sports figures, race cars, country musicians, movie stars, or the name of the manufacturer displayed either on the front or back (sometimes both) of their clothing item. Oftener than not such shirts are of the loudest and brightest colors. To say the least, such displays are out of taste and wholly inappropriate for worship occasions. All such detracts from our stated purpose for being in the assembly: to worship Almighty God! Our womenfolk are not far behind when it comes to their clothing. The sheer, see-through, form-fitting, tops should never have seen the light of day. The ever popular mini-skirt should never be worn anywhere or at any time (except in the bedroom) by women professing godliness. **Mary Quaint**, the designer of the mini-skirt, said it was specially created to show off the legs of it wearer. Some who have worn this item in times past,

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with little sense of modesty yet remaining, have been seen frantically trying to cover their nakedness with material that wasn't there. Others, unabashedly, showed their charms with total abandon.

When we had thought we had seen it all, now comes the "belly button" craze. We see it everywhere on the streets, in the malls, and the shopping centers. When will we see such in our worship services. Time will tell. Is there no sense of modesty anymore? Can we no longer blush at the vulgar practice of more and more exposed flesh in our society. For shame (Ezra 9:6; Jeremiah 9:6)!

And what with the jewelry craze? As with clothing, the sin-crazed rock crowd, along with other music and the movie industries have set the pace (and the style) for us. Every Jezebel, with her slinky movements, her winking eyes and her sexy charms have become our models. We buy and wear her clothing (or lack of it), her makeup, and her jewelry. As a result we are now seeing rings on every finger, a multitude of rings in the ears, the eyebrows, on the toes, in the nose, even on the tongue, and yes, around the "belly button." Where else only God knows. Speaking of women's clothing and attire, the apostle Peter wrote,

**Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. (I Peter 3:3, 4.)**

Now the hair fashions (?) are something else. Women (and men) wear their hair in the most bizarre styles and colors imaginable. Colors, yes, we used to have them: blondes, brunettes and redheads. Now we have oranges, greens, blues, purples, and everything in between—like genies out of a bottle. And sometimes all such is filled with sticky goo and spiked to stand up and out over the head. One girl was seen with one side of her head closely shaved and the other with flowing hair to her shoulder. A young man was noticed with a wild and weird "Mohawk." Both sides of his head were shaved, and in the center the hair was left long (perhaps five inches), and all of this ghastly sight was saturate with a gooey mess that held it upright from the nape of the neck forward to the forehead. It looked much like a peacock tail mounted on his bald pate. And the young fellow seemed to wear it proudly. Horrid, you say. Yes, absolutely ridiculous. Given a little time, such will likely come to church.

There seems to be no rhyme or reason for such departure from that which is acceptable and the norm except rebellion and the lawlessness that characterizes our sin-sick age. Another factor may be the desire to imitate our peers no matter how far out and absurd their actions may be. Slezzy and sin-hardened hairdressers and beauticians and other merchandizers can overpersuade and dare gullible folk to try the latest fad and such starts the ball to roll.

Moses wrote in Exodus 23:2: **"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."** Neither should we follow the crowd to be popular or to be accepted, if by doing so we are lead

into evil and rebellion. Christians are to avoid the very appearance of evil. (I Thessalonians 5:22.) No man, woman, boy or girl should ever entertain the idea of following the multitudes in such weird behavior.

We need more Ruth's and Naomi's (Ruth 1:16); more Vashti's and Esther's, who defy the ways of the world and dare to be different, even though it may cost one her crown or even her own life (Esther 1:10-22; 4:10-17). And we need more Joseph's who will flee the enticements of the flesh in order to be true to God, to himself and to his trust. (Genesis 39:7-9.) And more Daniel's who would choose the lion's den rather than to disobey his God (Daniel 6), and his three friends, who would not burn because they would not bow to the king's command (Daniel 3). May God give us more youth like these.

In conclusion we quote excerpts from a statement by the elders of a congregation in Kentucky that are appropriate:

As elders of the \_\_\_\_\_ church of Christ, we understand the scriptures to teach that there is "one lawgiver," namely, Jesus Christ (James 4:12.). We are not in the business of making laws where Jesus has not authorized. However, we also understand that as overseers of the \_\_\_\_\_ church of Christ, we have the obligation to see that things done by the church are done in harmony with the law of the Lawgiver (Acts 20:28.) All things must be "done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40.) Thus, in matters of expediency we elders must under obligation of the "chief shepherd" (I Peter 5:4), "take the oversight" (I Peter 5:2) and "rule well" (I Timothy 5:17) by seeing that the church protects her influ-

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ence. We, the elders, believe the following are in the best interests of the church at \_\_\_\_\_ (Under the heading *Dress Code* the letter continues:

We, the elders have decided that we would like for all members of the \_\_\_\_\_ church to dress appropriately for worship. We ask that all women, when they attend Bible study and/or worship of the \_\_\_\_\_ church wear dresses skirts and such like, and please do not wear slacks or pantsuits, and such like. We ask that all men who participate in worship assignments at the front of the auditorium or ushering at the back, to not wear T-shirts. We would like for the men to wear a shirt with a collar, and would prefer that you

wear a tie, but the tie is optional. Absolutely no shorts should be worn to Bible study and worship by children, teenagers, or adults. We ask that no one wear clothing with excessive advertisement, especially of a derogatory nature. We ask that all dress modestly and appropriately for worship.

Let us all remember that **“the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.”** (Habakkuk 2:20.)

—340 Caraway Drive  
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## LESSON ONE...

# PERSPECTIVES ON MODERNISM AND LIBERALISM

Wayne Coats

The doors of darkness had been nailed shut for hundreds of years and it seems that there were no cracks through which faint rays of light could seep through. To my right is a large book titled, *The History of Greece*. Other books relate the tremendous power and growth of the Old Roman Empire. It poses a baffling problem for one to note the downward plunge into the abyss of superstition, ignorance, medieval darkness and immoral degradation which hung as a curse over mankind for a millennium after the Greek and Roman civilizations had reached such high peaks of performance.

### THE DEVIL'S WORK

The answer to the problem can be resolved only by admitting that the devil desired to plunge men into the labyrinth of ignorance. The god of this world is highly successful at blinding the eyes of people with the veil of darkness, **“... lest the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them”** (II Corinthians 4:4). It is the case that myriads of **“... men loved darkness rather than light”** (John 3:19). It is also the case that, **“... when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened”** (Romans 1:21).

The Spirit of God has not always continued to tolerate the stubbornness of wicked men. God has and will give up on man. How frightening to realize this terrible truth! History has a way of repeating itself. Countless libraries have

been filled with volumes which describe the horrendous conditions which prevailed during the dark ages.

As was true among the ancient Hebrews in Egyptian bondage when a deliverer was sent, so the medieval curse began to fade very slowly, almost silently and imperceptibly, except for the agonizing moans and shrieking screams of the long line of martyrs. Before the last faint, flickering, candlelight flames of truth were snuffed out, a few men began to read about its precepts. Coupled with this was a very strong sense of nationalism which began to arise in various parts of Europe. Why should men express their loyalty to Rome more than to France, England or Germany? Some would not do this.

It may seem strange, but the Renaissance began down in Italy in the very shadow of the Pope. The term denoted an Enlightenment for some, but for the Germans such was a time of “clearing up.” That a lot of “clearing up” needed to be done could not be denied. The cost was extremely high and persisted for many years.

### RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

One of the forces of opposition to the corrupt clericalism of the Catholic system of the time was known as Humanism. The Humanist concept stressed the critical attitude and gave great emphases to secular matters. The greatness of man and his elevation through reason was emphasized. Supernaturalism, meaning the Catholic system, began to be rejected. Corruption and avarice were very prevalent among the clergy. A well known axiom was re-

peated which said, "The clergy did the praying, The nobility did the preying, The serfs did the paying."

One of the very influential Humanists was **Desiderus Erasmus**. His broadsides were leveled against the vices of the clergy. Over in France, **Lorenza Valla** and **Jacques Levre** helped in the cause of Humanism. In Germany, **John Reuchlin** joined against the Romanists and had to flee for safety to Heidelberg.

**Edward Herbert** was a very influential deist who declared that anything beyond reason could not be proved, and without proof such could only be superstition. The deist rejected all ideas of revelation. Herbert was actually reacting against the vagabond monks and also the priestly myths and tales.

To **Baruch Spinoza** must be given credit for developing the foolishness of pantheism. In the shallow thinking of Spinoza, there was no room for Almighty God. Pantheism joined with the skeptics, infidels, agnostics and atheists in denying the existence of Jehovah God. To the pantheist, the world is god, and god is the world.

Early in the twelfth century universities were established at Salerno in Italy, and in Germany at Tübingen, Bologna, Heidelberg, Ingolstadt and Erfurt. In Scotland universities were started at Glasgow, Aberdeen and St. Andrews. These universities were dwelling places for all kinds of false theories, especially Humanism.

One of the early philosophers in Germany who contributed his sleaze of guesswork to Satan's cause was **Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz**. I do not know how Leibnitz found out that, "his god was the original monad among many monads which were infinite in number." Such fool notions were constantly conjured up by German theologians. Each did his destructive work against the cause of truth. They died and have been forgotten for the most part and to try to find anything of value which they left behind is a futile search.

One of the most vitriolic of men was **Denis Diderot**. His pen was kept busy attacking the Catholic religion. Diderot wrote:

The Christian religion is to my mind the most unintelligible, the most metaphysical, the most entangled and obscure, and consequently the most subject to divisions, sects, schisms, heresies; the most mischievous for the public tranquility, the most dangerous to sovereigns by its hierarchic order, its persecutions, its discipline; the most flat, the most dreary, the most Gothic and most gloomy in its ceremonies; the most puerile and unsociable in its morality — the most intolerant of all.

One could assume that Diderot did not have much love and affection for Catholicism. He stated that belief in God would end in a few years. It is interesting that belief in God continues while perhaps not more than one of thousands may have heard of Diderot. It is certain that Diderot helped the cause of atheism. He wrote, "I would sacrifice my life perhaps, if I could annihilate forever the notion of God."

One needs to stop for a brief glance and consider the work of **Jean Astruc** (1684-1766). Astruc was the personal physician of King Augustus III of Poland. While

studying the laws relative to clean and unclean animals as mentioned in the Pentateuch, Astruc wrote a book of over five-hundred pages in which he set forth his subjective guesswork and assumptions. Astruc found out that Almighty God is referred to in the Pentateuch as Yahweh and also Elohim. He leaped to the theory that the Pentateuch had at least twelve sources and many authors. Astruc assigned Exodus chapters one and two to Amram. He also claimed Joseph and Levi wrote many sections of the material. How the doctor knew so much, he doesn't tell us. Astruc was so proud of himself and his work. He wrote so very humbly, "Free through the pathless haunts I roam, Where mortal feet have never strayed."

The bigoted plagiarist should have told us that he copied the excerpt from **Lucretius**. In his great modesty Astruc informs us that he was so proud of his efforts in helping Moses out of some very careless writing. There is no doubt that Astruc laid some groundwork for the source theories and form critics which German infidels used in subsequent years.

By the time of **Herman Samuel Reimarus**, deism was being flaunted far and wide. As a professor in the University of Hamburg, Reimarus exerted a tremendous influence. In his *Wolfenbuettel Fragments*, the matter of divine revelation was rejected. The crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites and the resurrection story were simple myths. Jesus and the apostles were imposters. Both Judaism and Christianity were founded by imposters.

In employing the Historical-Critical method of study, Reimarus completely rejected Jesus Christ as the Son of God. When such gods as German rationalists become the idols of some of our university professors, there is no hope that the deity of Christ will be taught.

#### COPYCATS

I cannot help but wonder how some of the modernists in the universities can feel so elated and thrilled in recommending the old historical-critical and literary-historical methods of Biblical interpretation, when they surely know that the old German Rationalists used and emphasized such methods, and thereby they ended up denying every shred of supernaturalism. It does not take a Solomon to see this. Will the copycat modernists admit that such men as Reimarus denied the deity of Jesus Christ? Did he teach that Jesus and the apostles were imposters? Did he cast aside the Biblical miracles as myths? He certainly did, and in the face of that, such men as **Carroll D. Osburn** will write in an effort to justify the Literary-Historical methodology of analysis. Moreover, when one reads the efforts of so very many of the old Rationalists, one is impressed with the tremendous differences of opinion which obtained between them. It just seems that those old infidels had all the answers before they had the questions.

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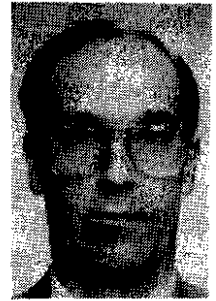


## Current Events that Concern Christians...

# Ecumenical Charter, Reincarnation, Female Prom Kings, Children and TV

Compile By Mark McWhorter

Church leaders from Europe's main Christian traditions and young people from across the continent gathered in Strasbourg, France, Sunday to sign an ecumenical charter intended to boost inter-church relations. At a packed ceremony April 22 in Strasbourg's historic St. Thomas' Lutheran Church, attended by leading church officials from throughout Europe, Orthodox Metropolitan Jeremie, the president of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), and **Cardinal Miloslav Vlk** of Prague, president of the Council of European (Catholic) Bishops' Conferences (CCEE), signed the "Charta Oecumenica" — a set of "guidelines" to promote cooperation among churches in Europe (Religion Today email service, 4/25/01). *[They might as well cooperate with one another. They certainly are not cooperating with the Lord. The thing to note is that as ecuminism gains backing, those of the Lord's church will be more and more ostracised. That is those of the Lord's church who stand for the truth. The change agents will be more than happy to join in on the ecuministic train.—mtm]*



\*\*\*\*\*  
One in four Central Europeans believes in reincarnation, or for what many hope— "a chance to try again." This information was announced by theologian **Jutta Burggraf**, University of Navarre, at the 22nd International Theological Symposium held in Pamplona, Spain, recently. He explained, "In the past few decades, the doctrine of reincarnation has spread throughout the Western world, because it is quite attractive to a mentality that refuses to address the ultimate." He continued, "This way we do not have to take things seriously and the decision for or against God can be postponed. A door is always open; there is always a chance to try again." The German theologian asked: "Can a person find his identity if he is unaware of his previous forms of existence, or is he obliged to bear the consequences of an unknown past life? The Christian faith has the answers, which are more liberating with regard to man's existential questions on 'the beyond.' Restless wandering of 'separated souls' is not necessary, because God can make us happy in an instant and promises us resurrection of body and soul," he concluded (Religion Today email service, 5/1/01). *[It is ridiculous that a person would believe in reincarnation. It would require knowing that an afterlife exists. Yet, there is no way to know unless someone from there is living and can tell you about it. And it would require a beginning of the spirit. Reincarnation believers rarely have the answer to a beginning of the spirit realm because on the whole they reject God.—mtm]*

## Christian Graces (II Peter 1:5-6)

August 24-25, 2001

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8:00 PM VIRTUE

H. D. Simmons  
Bobby Bates

### Saturday, August 25

9:00 AM KNOWLEDGE  
10:00 AM TEMPERANCE  
11:00 AM PATIENCE  
12:00-1:30 LUNCH BREAK  
1:30 PM GODLINESS  
2:30 PM BROTHERLY KINDNESS  
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"In law enforcement, it's our job to uphold the law. The law allows him to do this, and we will support this like we support any other law. ... Currently, he is letting his hair grow. The second year of this process involves him living as a woman, and in the third year of the process he undergoes surgery, and applies for legal feminine status." —Bexar County, Texas, **Sheriff Ralph Lopez** on the sex-change operation of one of his deputies, **Lt. Brian Lunan**, to Reuters, March 5 (Planet Out email service, 5/1/01). *[There is something wrong with the law when it allows someone to do this. This person's DNA will still be male long after he has surgically altered his body and filled it with drugs.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*  
Columbia University psychiatry professor **Dr. Robert Spitzer** made a landmark presentation to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) on Wednesday. Spitzer told the nation's psychiatrists that his research shows homosexuals can change their sexual orientation. "I interviewed 200 subjects who claimed that they had changed their sexual attrac-

tion from homosexual to heterosexual,” Spitzer said. “Essentially what we found is that first of all, in terms of sexual attraction, the vast majority had made major changes.” Does that mean Spitzer believes homosexuals can change to heterosexuality? “Absolutely! Absolutely!” he said. “I approached this quite skeptical and I’ve been convinced otherwise.” **Dr. Joseph Nicolosi**, president of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH), said the findings are monumental — and will be difficult to ignore. “This is clearly a historic event in the history of psychiatry’s understanding of homosexuality,” said Nicolosi. What makes Spitzer’s new position so monumental is the fact that he was the chief architect in the APA’s 1973 decision to remove homosexuality from its list of disorders. “In other words, he normalized homosexuality,” Nicolosi said. One major question — Was Dr. Spitzer’s work influenced by a religious bias? “I am an atheist, Jewish, secular humanist,” Spitzer said. “I was before this study, and I continue to be one now.” He said there is no reason to believe that those he interviewed were lying about their change from homosexuality. The research included people with five years of recovery currently engaged in healthy heterosexual relationships (Citizen link email service, 5/10/01). *[Anyone can change from sinful behavior. It may be more difficult for some than others—I would never deny that. But God expects a person to overcome fleshly desires to live the pure life of a Christian. If it were impossible to do so, then God would not be a loving God. He would be judging some on something that He had created them impossible of obeying.—mtm]*

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Students at Ferndale High School in northwestern Washington State have picked a lesbian as their prom king. Seattle’s KOMO TV reports that lesbian senior Krystal Bennett won the election at last weekend’s school prom. After posing for photos with the prom queen — who was also female — she danced for the rest of the evening with her girlfriend (Planet Out email service, 5/8/01). *[This is ridiculous and disturbing. There was a time when a school administration would have had the authority and respect to throw out the election results and tell the students to vote for a male. Not*

*anymore. This school administration stated that this was a way of showing support for her lesbianism.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

By age 18, the average child has been exposed to 360,000 commercials. One command is hammered into malleable minds: buy, buy, buy — things will make you happy. No wonder we’ve become a nation of hyper-consumers whose lives are largely dedicated to acquisition. Television has also shaped the savagery into which we are sinking. In the first 18 years of life, the average child will witness 16,000 dramatized murders, as well as tens of thousands of assaults and other acts of mayhem.” —**Don Feder** (The Federalist email service, 5/8/01). *[Do you allow your child unsupervised television time? Do you use the television as a babysitter? What does it take in the child’s life to counter-balance the above? God will hold parents responsible for what they allowed into their children’s lives.—mtm]*

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Pro-family groups are about to face a new foe at the American Civil Liberties Union. *The Boston Globe* reports that for the first time in the organization’s history, it will soon be led by an open homosexual. The *Globe* says 35-year-old **Anthony D. Romero** will succeed Ira Glassner as executive director of the ACLU in September. Romero is described as a New York public interest lawyer who currently serves as a director of the Ford Foundation’s program for human rights and international cooperation, the foundation’s largest program. Romero says his goal at the ACLU will be “to promote a new generation of committed civil libertarians and civil rights activists.” And in a statement which may cause particular concern for conservatives everywhere, Romero also says he will work to make the ACLU even more prominent in local communities (Agape Press email service, 5/3/01). *[Get ready for intensified attacks against the Bible and Biblical morality.—mtm]*

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

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## The Online Academy of Biblical Studies

Tom L. Bright

*The Online Academy of Biblical Studies* is a work of the Phillips Street church of Christ in Dyersburg, Tennessee. It is under the oversight of the Phillips Street elders, with **Tom L. Bright** serving as the Director. This work is supported by interested individuals and congregations from all parts of the United States.

*The Online Academy of Biblical Studies* (hereafter referred to as OABS) is exactly what its title suggests. It is a school emphasizing the Bible and Bible related subjects. It is live and interactive on the internet each Saturday. By live we mean the students actually see the instructor as he

is teaching the class. Interactive means the students can communicate with the instructor as he teaches the class in this virtual classroom.

Each school year is comprised of two semesters, each semester being eighteen weeks in length. Seven hours of classes are offered each Saturday. It takes four years to complete the curriculum.

In our first semester, we had twenty-eight students. At the present time, we have thirty-eight people who have applied for admission for the beginning of our next semester in August 2001. We are not so naive to think that every one

will be accepted or will even follow through. However, if we can enroll just seventy-five percent of those applicants, we will be pleased.

Our current teachers are: **Ted J. Thrasher, Gil Yoder, Ron Cosby, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., Marion Fox, Harrell Davidson** and myself. Others who have agreed to teach in the school are: **David Lemmons, Virgil Hale, Toney Smith, Larry Powers, and B. J. Clarke.**

*The Online Academy of Biblical Studies* is not in competition with the sound schools of preaching in the brotherhood. We are simply filling a void. There are many people desiring a greater knowledge of the word of God. However, for various reasons, they are unable to attend a full-time school of preaching. Now they have an opportunity by which they can enhance their knowledge of God's word while staying at home.

We will be adding a new class every August for the next three years. Therefore, in the 2003-2004 school year, we will have four classes running simultaneously. Needless to say, in the next few years, we are looking forward to an exciting and interesting time. Only God knows the good that can be done through this medium.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF OABS

There are other encouraging aspects of this great work. We have broadcast live some debates in the last year and a half. All of these have been encoded (recorded in a special format) and placed on our Web site so anyone with Internet access can view them. There are other debates on our Web site that we were not able to broadcast live because of the unavailability of some things needed for live broadcasts. In such cases as these, we normally broadcast them on a twenty-four delay.

Currently we have the Cook-Underwood Debate on the Spirit's work in salvation, the Brown -Callam (Catholic) Debate on the authority of the Bible versus Catholic tradition, the Laws - Schoenig Debate on the existence of God, and the Bright - Jackson Debate on the duration of miracles. Other debates conducted by faithful brethren will be placed on our Web site in the future, with each of them being broadcast live on the Internet if possible.

We have several brotherhood lectureships that can be viewed on our Web site. We now have the 21st and 22nd Annual Phillips Street Lectures from Dyersburg, Tennessee, the 2001 Trenton Lectures from the Trenton Church of Christ in Trenton, Tennessee, the 6th and 7th Annual Northeast Oklahoma Lectures from the Lee and Walnut Street Church of Christ in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, the 2001 Spring Lectures on Mormonism from the Spring Church of Christ in Spring, Texas, which were all broadcast live on the Internet. We also have the 18th Annual Mid-West Lectures from the 39th Street Church of Christ in Independence, Missouri and the 15th Annual "Seek The Old Paths Lectureship" from the East Corinth Church of Christ in Corinth, Mississippi.

In addition, the elders of the Green Plains church of Christ in Murray, Kentucky have given us permission to encode and place on our Web site a program they oversee, called "Searching the Scriptures". This is a weekly ques-

tion and answer period that is broadcast over TV and is seen in some seven states in the Southeast. The program is moderated by Virgil Hale, local Evangelist for the Green Plains congregation. The panelists are faithful gospel preachers from the Southeast.

Every Sunday morning and evening, the worship services of the Phillips Street congregation are broadcast live on the Internet. All of the sermons preached during these broadcasts are placed on our Web site. If you know of some person who is homebound and has Internet access, this is a means by which they can have the gospel preached in their own home.

In the future, our plans are to put more debates and lectureships on our Web site. As the opportunity affords itself (technology wise), we will broadcast these events live.

We want to encourage all of our readers to avail themselves of what OABS has to offer on our Web site. Simply go to our web page and click on the appropriate links. Our address is: <http://www.oabs.org/> We think you will be encouraged by doing so.

For anyone interested, we are willing to come to your congregation and give a presentation (free and with no obligation) on the Online Academy of Biblical Studies. You can contact me at: [tlbright@oabs.org](mailto:tlbright@oabs.org). My phone number is (731) 285-5666 (office) or (731) 285-5062 (home).

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## Restoration Reflections...

# SCOTT COUNTY, KENTUCKY

Paul Vaughn

The history of the church of Christ in Scott County, Kentucky depicts fantastic successes and extreme failures. Scott County is located in Central Kentucky about Ten miles North of Lexington, Kentucky. It was the home of many men who proclaimed the Restoration Plea, of following the ancient paths found only in the New Testament for the church. **Barton W. Stone, John T. Johnson, John Allen Gano, Jacob Creath Sr., Jacob Creath, Jr., Philip S. Fall, and John Smith** lived in the county at one time.

The first religious group to be established in the county were Baptists. In 1785 the Great Crossing Baptist Church was organized. The church was made up primarily of followers of **Colonel Robert Johnson**. Some of the preachers at the Great Crossing Church were Philip S. Fall (1821), Jacob Creath, Sr. (1823), and Jacob Creath, Jr.

The first Presbyterian Church was organized in Scott County in 1793. It was not until 1817 that the first Methodist church was established. These groups became fertile ground to those proclaiming the return to the "Ancient Order."

### ROBERT MARSHALL

One of the first men to herald the time-honored plea in the county was **Robert Marshall**. He was one of the men who participated in the Cane Ridge Revival in 1801. He was also among the men who signed the Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery on June 28, 1804.

Marshall preached for the Blue Springs, Presbyterian Church in Scott County and the Bethel Presbyterian Church on the Scott-Fayette County line. When Marshall started to preach a return to the Bible at Blue Spring the leaders of the church closed the doors. The Bethel church supported the teaching of Marshall, forming the Bethel Church of Christ. Subsequently Marshall digressed in his teaching and returned to the Presbyterian Church leaving many new converts at the Bethel church.

### BARTON W. STONE

Barton W. Stone moved to Scott County in 1816. He was the principal of the Ritten House Academy in Georgetown, the county seat. When Stone moved to the area, it was notorious for corruption and wickedness.

Stone was not in Georgetown long until he helped organize the Lord's church in the city. It was very small at first, only six or seven members. The congregation grew very quickly to over two hundred.

In 1819 Stone bought a 123 acre farm in Scott County. He purchased the farm from **Isreal Grant**, a nephew of Daniel Boone. Last year **David Brown** and I were able to tour the farm and the house Stone lived in at that time. Today it is owned by a retired professor from Auburn University. He inherited it from his parents and has restored part of the house to show the walls of the original Stone home. *The Christian Messenger* was published in the basement of the house. Shortly after the time Stone purchased his farm, the brethren approached Stone to be their full-time preacher. He gave up the job as principal with the Rittenhouse Academy and took the job as minister on a full-time basis. The time drew near for the congregation to support Stone, but they could not carry out their obligation to him. Stone said, "Fair promises kept up my spirits; but at last I had to borrow a good part of the money and pay the debt myself."<sup>1</sup>



### THE CHURCH AT GEORGETOWN

The church at Georgetown had some of the most notable preachers stand in its pulpit. Barton W. Stone, 1816-1834; **T.M. Allen**, J. T. Johnson, 1831-1851; John Allen Gano, 1839-1845; Jacob Creath, Sr. and Junior; **D.S. Burnett** and **L.L. Pinkerton** (one of the first true liberals in the

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**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 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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**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1146, 1319 JFH Pkwy (US 41 NW) Cartersville, GA 30120. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: Cartersville-cofc@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —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.

## —Massachusetts—

**Chicopee**—Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive; Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, tel. (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coc.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

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**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Richwood**—1600 Brazosport, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30; 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, 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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church). During the Civil War Moses Lard and "Raccoon" John Smith lived in Georgetown. While Smith was at Georgetown, the Confederate troops occupied the town. Smith was stopped by one of the soldiers one day demanding to see his pass to be on the street. "Smith stepped toward him, and, raising his shriveled fist, shook it at the stalwart soldier, saying: 'This is my pass, sir!'"<sup>2</sup>

After the Civil War the church at Georgetown, Kentucky began to drift from the scriptures. R.C. Cave, whose modernism surpassed most liberals, was one of the preachers during that period. Another preacher at Georgetown was Ira Boswell, 1916-1934. While at Georgetown, Boswell met N.B. Hardeman in debate over mechanical instrumental music in the worship of church in Nashville, Tennessee at the Ryman Auditorium, May 31 through June 5, 1923.

The road of digression moved the church at Georgetown in a direction away from the Restoration Plea. Today it is a part of the very liberal Disciples of Christ denomination.

It saddens the heart to see the history of the church in Scott County, Kentucky. All the advantages and talent that were prevalent in the county soon vanished in the wind leaving the county without any people striving to follow the "Ancient Order." In 1979 the Killen, Alabama Church of Christ set out to reestablish the church.

What happened in Scott County, Kentucky is being repeated in many congregations today in the brotherhood. Brethren are forgetting the "Old Paths" that brought them close to God. My heart is broken.

## ENDNOTES

1. Barton W. Stone, *Biography of Elder Barton W. Stone*, Cincinnati, J.A. & U.P. James, 1847, p.70.
2. John Williams, *Life of Elder John Smith*, Nashville, Gospel Advocate, 1956, p. 459.

—223 W. Maple Ave.  
Lancaster, Kentucky 40444

# **WHATEVER BECAME OF SIN?**

Noah A. Hackworth

There is no textbook in existence that more perfectly describes the existence, nature and fiction of sin than the Bible; it gives us the only inspired account of the subject (II Timothy 3:1-17). However, an interesting study of our subject, though uninspired, is a book written by **Karl Menninger, M.D.**, titled "Whatever Became of Sin?" It was published in New York by Hawthorn Books, Inc. It was copyrighted in 1973, with the first printing occurring in 1975 and the fifth printing in 1976. More than 125,000 hard bound copies are in print. As an uninspired book it is a real eye opener. According to **Seward Hiltner**, Professor of Theology and Personality, Princeton Theological Seminary, **Richard G. Gray**, *Saturday Evening Post*, and **Robert Kirsch**, *Los Angeles Times*, the book takes a look at the totality of man's social condition. But of course man's social, moral and spiritual condition was infallibly set forth and discussed by the greatest psychologist and physician in the world some two thousand years ago. But whatever became of sin remains one of the greatest questions of all time. We shall study it from the biblical point of view.

## **DEFINITION LOST**

It has been suggested by some that sin defined as "wrong-doing" will eventually be eliminated and consequently disappear from the dictionary. If this occurs, Situation Ethics will certainly be partially responsible. Society has reached its present level of degeneration because the true definition of sin has been lost. The attitude that there is no such thing as sin presently exists in the minds of more than a few. Sin translates the word (hamartia) and literally means "missing the mark" (Vine). The KJV says sin is a "transgression of the law" (God's law). The ASV says sin is "lawlessness." It is not difficult to see that sin is anarchy, lawlessness, transgression, wrong-doing, et al. We need to understand the nature and function of sin, and we need to know that (1) where there is no law there is no sin (Romans 5:13), Paul did not know lust until the law made him aware of it (Romans 7:7), and (2) sin is not inherited, it is acquired (I John 3:4). Acquired traits are neither transmitted, nor inherited. Man sinned, but sin did not change his nature.

## **SINS HAVE BEEN HIDDEN**

Paul said, "Some men's sins are evident, going before unto judgment; and some men also they follow after" (I Timothy 5:24). People who are of the suasion that they can permanently "hide or conceal" their sins are doomed to failure. God told his people long ago, "...Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23). Achan took of "the devoted thing and hid it in the earth in the midst of his tent," but his sin found him out, and the anger of Jehovah

was kindled against Israel (Joshua 7:1). Sin can never be hidden from God, and it cannot be permanently hidden from others.



## **SIN HAS BEEN DENIED**

One of the first things people often do with regard to sin is to deny their guilt. The "defense mechanism" immediately springs into action, and attempts to explain away sin in order to ease the conscience are begun. This initiates action on the part of others to convince and convict the guilty and bring them to repentance, without which they will ultimately perish (Luke 13:3). No one can afford an ego that cannot accept guilt. Simon could have denied the charge levied against him by Peter relative to his actions regarding the gift of the Spirit, but he did not because he could not. The evidence was there. To his credit Simon confessed his sin and was forgiven.

## **SIN IS MADE RESPECTABLE**

Television with its ungodly producers have made sin to look respectable. Adultery, fornication, extortion, dishonesty, and almost every kind of immorality conceivable has been "glamorized" by the "tube." But God has never looked upon sin with respect and neither should we. We must not offer comfort to those who are living in sin and we have a "love message" for them: repent

Sin is devastating to all of us. It wrecks our lives, destroys our homes, and separates us from those we love. The "pleasures" of sin will, however, be short-lived. Its final reward is death (Romans 6:23).

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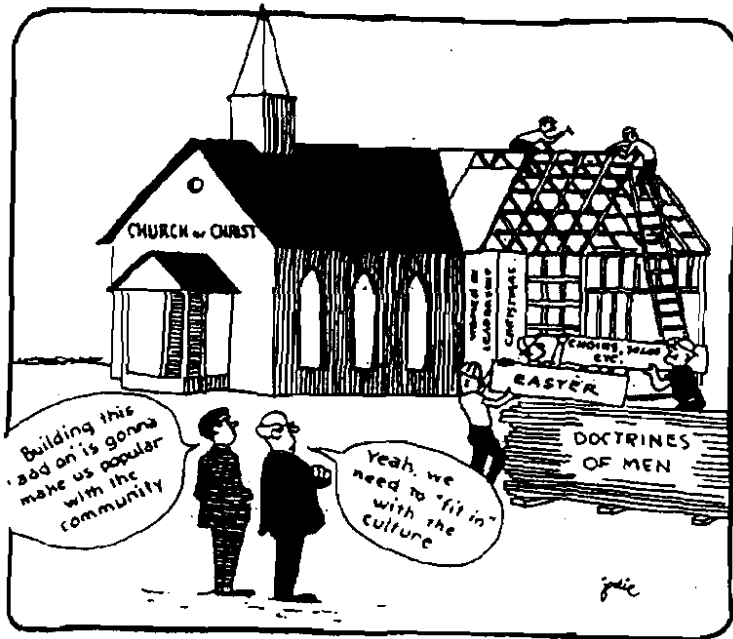
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Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# Culture With its Special Days —From God or Men?

Jodie Boren



Much is being said and written advocating that the church of our Lord needs to change to keep up with our changing society. Those clamoring for change are saying the church cannot grow unless it changes to fit in with the culture of our day. This teaching is contrary to God's way. Paul, inspired of God, gave the same order to the churches of Galatia as he did to the church at Corinth (I Corinthians 16:1). These orders came from the Lord (I Corinthians 14:37). Paul preached the same gospel in every church (I Corinthians 4:17). The gospel of Christ transcends the changing cultures because it is an everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6)... because it is the gospel of the great commission which is to be passed on from generation to generation (Matthew 28:19, 20) until the Lord comes again. Obviously, the Lord gave mankind, in this great commission, a gospel that would lead men from earth to heaven in all cultures and in all times.

Today, many congregations in their seeming desire to be accepted by the denominational world have been seduced by the devil and are "building" into the worship of the church such practices that are unauthorized by the Lord. For example, some congregations are having special Easter services and are actually saying, "We believe we are called to be Easter people." One can read where the disciples were called Christians (Acts 11:26) but no *where* in God's word can you find even the slightest hint of the dis-

ciples being called "Easter people" —whatever that means!

The word "Easter" is found only once in the KJV (Acts 12:4) but in most of the other translations —even the NI—the word is translated "passover," which according to *Thayers's Greek Lexicon* is correct. **Albert Barnes**, the noted Presbyterian scholar, said:



The word 'Easter' now denotes the festival observed by many Christian churches in honor of the resurrection of the Saviour. But the original has no reference to that; nor is there the slightest evidence that such a festival was observed when the book was written. The translation is not only unhappy, as it does not convey at all the meaning of the original, but because it may contribute to foster an opinion that such a festival was observed at the time of the apostles.

Authority from God to worship him in truth and in spirit comes to us in the scriptures in three different ways: (1) Direct Statement (2) Apostolic example, and (3) Implication. "Easter" is not found in any of these methods of understanding God's will for us. Therefore, the observance of Easter as a special day is unauthorized by God— which means any such addition to God's way is sin (Deuteronomy 4:2 and Revelation 22:18-19).

The churches of Galatia had mixed the law and gospel. Among other departures from the divine pattern was THE KEEPING OF DAYS which Paul condemns. "**Ye observe days, and months and season and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor on you in vain**" (Galatians 4:1-11).

We must never minimize the importance of the resurrection. By it, Christ was declared to be the son of God with power (Romans 1:4). It is only through the resurrection that we have hope (I Corinthians 15:1-22, I Peter 1:3 and I Thessalonians 4:14).

We remember his resurrection every Sunday in the memorial supper (I Corinthians 11:23-26). To have a special day to celebrate his resurrection is to transgress the doctrine of Christ (II John 9-11).

Christmas, Easter, Good Friday, and such like religious festivals are from men—NOT GOD! Remember, Paul says we are not to be conformed to this world (Romans 12:12).

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

# THE CHURCH, THE BEAUTIFUL BRIDE OF CHRIST

Eddie Whitten

Members of the church of Christ are divided into several "camps" largely because they have lost, or never had knowledge of, the nature of the church; what it actually is. The mention of the church brings to the minds of some one thing and to the minds of others something entirely different. Some believe the church is something one "goes to" because it is expected of them since they are members of it. Others believe it is of a more social orientation where friendship and church activities produce a feeling of "belonging" and acceptance. Others want their children to be with other children their age regardless of what they are being taught in the classroom and from the pulpit. Some still think the church building and large numbers in attendance are marks of Christian doctrine. Making the children happy (so they will not be bored and eventually leave the church) is criteria for many. There are even some that wish to "get lost" in the crowd so nothing will be asked or required of them. They do not participate in any aspect of the work of the church and they are happy in their passive role. Some have even voiced the reason for their attendance at this church or that is because of the casual attitude toward dress and worship.

In contrast to the thinking noted above, we might do well to notice that some wish to "take charge" and have a leading voice in everything that is done in the church. They that are of this nature are usually opposed to anything in which they are not involved in a leading way. Their priority is usually not what is best for the church but what will serve to promote them.

Notice that in all of the above illustrations, the sanctity and integrity of the church is not of primary importance. It is shameful that the influence of worldliness has affected the faithfulness of the majority of members of the Lord's church, but it has. For these reasons, it seems in order that we "consider our ways" relative to the church of Christ, the beautiful Bride of Christ.

## WHAT THE CHURCH IS

One does not "go to church" as the term is generally used. This would indicate a place, or an event. It is neither. The church is a body of believers consecrated to the belief that God exists, that Jesus is the son of God, the Bible is the word of God and who have rendered obedience to God's will. Involved in every vestige of this belief is the knowledge of the need to, and willingness to, submit one's will to the will of God. Jesus said without this one cannot enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 7:21). Those who comprise the church make up the Bride of Christ (Revelation 21:2, 9; also cf. Ephesians 5:25-32). As a bride must be to her husband, the church must be faithful to the Bridegroom.

Paul referred to times when the church meets together. In rebuking the saints in Corinth, Paul said, **"Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it...When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper"** (I Corinthians 11:17-18, 20). Paul's emphasis in these passages was the abuse of the Lord's Supper, but the point to be made is that the church (members) came together as the church in one place.

Therefore, the church is not a building. It is not a place even though the individual members assemble in one place. The church is made up of members. Every member is one in the church, an awesome responsibility!

## THE COST OF THE CHURCH

The very thought of the cost of the church should chill the blood of every member. The life of Jesus, his blood, his suffering as a sinless sacrifice for our sins should humble the toughest heart. God, the father, used four thousand years to prepare the world for the advent of his son. Jesus came to redeem man from sin (Genesis 3:15; Galatians 4:4). He taught men how to live righteously. He was crucified according to the scriptures, was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures (I Corinthians 15:3-4). Paul addressed the Ephesian elders: **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood"** (Acts 20:28).

The value of the church is appreciated if we comprehend its cost, God gave his son, and Jesus gave his life in sacrifice for us. The cost for the church is the very lifeblood of the Son of God!

## OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CHURCH

Understanding what the church really is and what its cost, the question arises: "What should be our attitude toward the church?" The answer should be obvious, but is it? One could say that attitudes toward the church are absolutely atrocious! Based upon undeniable demonstration, a majority of members of the church have gone completely casual in their relationship to the church in various ways. The first, and foremost, is the casual way in which we offer our worship. Irreverence in conduct during worship cannot be unnoticed. Nothing more than a cursory glance at peo-





ple during the worship reveals a lack of devotion to what is going on. Space does not allow enumerating the distractions taking place, but for your own education, just take notice at any time during the worship and see what we are saying.

Second, the casual way we dress for worship should be an insult to God! Respect for a social function is reflected to a much greater degree than respect for the salvation provided to man by the grace of God. On Sunday mornings our dress shows a greater expression of respect than it does on Sunday nights. Question: Is worship on Sunday night any less worship than worship on Sunday morning? Why then, do we reflect a disrespectful attitude for God and Christ in our worship on Sunday night? Men come home from the workplace on Wednesday afternoon, remove the suits and ties they wear on the job and change into their grungiest attire to assemble with the saints to worship on Wednesday night. Does not God deserve our highest respect when the church assembles for worship? Does not Jesus deserve our highest respect for giving himself to save us from sin? The

answer should be obvious, but facts are facts, and the fact is we dress as if we have no respect for either!

#### THE DESTINY OF THE CHURCH

The destiny of the church is heaven. Paul's pen of inspiration so states in Ephesians 5:27. Salvation is an individual matter, therefore, we know he is not speaking of a collective body of saints. He is saying that to be saved one must be a part of the one body, the church, the bride of Christ. He is saying that one must be faithful and obedient. One must submit his will to the will of the father. He must respect the father and the son in the way he worships, in the way he dresses and in the way he conducts himself before the world. Let us consider our ways and present the church to the world in righteousness rather than let the world reduce the church to its low and unholy estate.

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## MAX AND MIDTOWN

Brethren who welcome or flock to hear Lucado are Maximizing apostasy

Tyler Young

Baptists love him. Methodists too. Pentecostals can't get enough of him. Even Catholics adore him. And sadly, many of our own brethren, rather than being ashamed and embarrassed by him, are just as enamored as our denominational friends with **Max Lucado**. The prolific and talented author may be the best known preacher in the churches of Christ in modern times. His numerous books have topped best-sellers lists for years, making his one of the most recognized names in the religious world. But Lucado's popularity outside of the brotherhood does not concern us as much as what he represents within the Lord's church. His ungodly ecumenism is representative of the growing trend in the church of abandoning Christ and his truth in order to embrace denominationalists.

### "TRUTH SACRIFICED ON THE ALTER OF FELLOWSHIP"

In a 1998 *Dallas Morning News* article, "The Grip of Grace: Lucado puts new face on Churches of Christ," columnist **Paul R. Buckley** noted Lucado's belief that denominationalists are his faithful brethren in Christ and added, "More and more Church of Christ members are thinking what he is thinking." Tragic, but true. As a proud champion of "unity" with sectarians of all stripes, Lucado's high profile has made him the epitome of the apostasy ravaging our great brotherhood. That new face he has put on the churches of Christ is not one of faithfulness; it is the visage of corruption and condemnation.

Informed brethren are well aware of Lucado's longstanding contempt for truth. "Minister" of the Oak Hills Church of Christ in San Antonio, Lucado has found plenty of time to be of service to denominations, speaking for Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Catholic Churches. He has swapped pulpits with the "Reverend" **Buckner Fanning** of Trinity Baptist Church. Although he has appeared numerous times on interdenominational programs, the most notorious was when he took the stage at a *Promise*

*Keepers* rally several years ago. Standing before a broad spectrum of sectarians, Lucado made a mockery of the biblical doctrine of unity, declaring all who believe in Jesus to be in fellowship one with another. The major doctrinal differences on fundamental matters of faith which are the basis of denominational division apparently mean nothing to him. Truth is gladly sacrificed on the altar of fellowship. Denominationalism is sinful, and the word of God prohibits fellowship with it, but Lucado is not going to let a little something like God's word deter him from holding hands with those who trample the commands of God and pervert the gospel of his son.

But Max not only fellowships false teachers; he is one. Back in December of 1996, Lucado invited listeners of his Upwards radio-program to pray the "sinners prayer" to ask God to save them. The program's announcer then added, "And friend, if you prayed along with Max Lucado just now here on Upwards, we want to welcome you to the family of God." Lucado then encouraged those whom he deceived into believing they were saved to be baptized, but was careful to say, "But I don't want you to do any of that so that you will be saved. I want you to do all of that because you are saved." It must not bother him to contradict the inspired apostle Peter, who did not tell his audience to pray to be saved, but commanded them by the authority of Christ to be baptized "**for the remission of sins**" (Acts 2:38). Saul was told to be baptized in order to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16; cf. Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21). The Lord wants people to be baptized so that they will be saved; Lucado does not. And he dares to call Jesus "Lord"?

### "HERESY TO THE MAX"

In his recent book, *He Did This Just For You*, Lucado took another opportunity to deceive his readers, saying,

Would you let [Jesus] save you?... Why don't you give your heart to him right now? *Admit* your need. *Agree* with his

(Continued On Page 4)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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

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## Editorial...

## UPCOMING CHANGES

For many years *Contending for the Faith* has had an *Editorial Staff*. It was and is composed of a select list of persons who supported and promoted the paper. Because they believed in the work of *CFTF* as well as being good writers, they were invited to be on the *Editorial Staff*. Such a list was never meant to be an honors list only. To the contrary, it was intended to be a working list made up of brethren who desired to be regular contributors to the paper and who worked to help the paper grow in circulation and influence. Over the years the *Editorial Staff* has changed for various reasons. We certainly appreciate all those who have remained true to the reason they were invited to be a part of it. Rather than remove persons who have ceased to write for the paper for whatever reason and add others to the *Staff* to take their place I have decide to go another direction.

Beginning with the 2002 January issue of *CFTF* we will no longer have an *Editorial Staff* as such. The people who write regularly for us at present will continue to write each month. Our regularly writers as well as others who are writing in any given issue will be listed at the beginning of each issue of *CFTF*. Our regular writers will be listed under the themes about which their articles are concerned and under which they presently write. Also, the title of their articles will be printed. Other writers will be listed by name with the titles of the articles they have written.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Subscription Prices Are Going Up.* The last time prices were increased was January 1997. At that time the paper became privately owned and we expanded the size of the paper from 16 to 24 pages. From that time until this a one-year subscription has been \$12.00 per year—\$1.00 a month. A two-year subscription was \$22.00—.92 a month for 24 months. Over the last four and one half years we have absorbed paper, printing, and postal rate increases. However, due to rising paper costs and the latest postal rate increase we must raise our prices. **Beginning in January 2002** the cost of a *one-year subscription* will increase to \$14.00 per year—\$1.17 cents per month and a *two year subscription* will be \$26.00—\$1.08 per month. Our foreign rate will be raised from \$21.00 to \$23.00 per year—\$1.92 per month. The "*Whole Congregation Rate*" will increase to **\$11.00 per family** when each family in a congregation is subscribed to *CFTF*—.92 per month for each family. The advertising rates will remain the same.

*[Of late I have printed several articles dealing with marriage, divorce, and remarriage (hereafter referred to as MDR). I have done the same in this issue of CFTF. In these articles the truth of the Bible on these important matters has been presented.*

*After the issue that dealt with Buster Dobbs' erroneous views set out in the March 2001 issue of Firm Foundation, Dyrel Collins mailed his book entitled "Marriage is God's Plan" to people connected with CFTF as well as others who are not. Collins was extolling Dobbs' position and criticizing what he calls the "traditional" view of MDR. Collins' book is chocked full of all kinds of error on MDR. In reality what was published in CFTF was Bible truth on MDR. Not long after receiving Collins' book I received the following letter. I am herein printing it. It speaks for itself. -DPB*

July 3, 2001

Dear Brethren,

It is with great regret that we inform you of the division of the Frisco church of Christ in Frisco Texas.

We write this letter to warn you that the division was caused by a book written by Dyrel Collins entitled "Marriage is God's Plan." To summarize this book, which is a very perverse attack on the biblical teaching regarding divorce and re-marriage, Mr. Collins believes that men and women can divorce and re-marry at will, regardless of the circumstances. They can remain in the second, third, etc. marriage as long as they repent after each divorce for "breaking the marriage covenant" (the definition of adultery according to Mr. Collins), and give a bill of divorcement. We mark Dyrel Collins as a false teacher (Rom. 16:17, II John 9-11).

What Mr. Collins offers in the book is nothing more than rehashed arguments presented by John Edwards, Olan Hicks, and Truman Scott that have been soundly defeated by faithful brother's such as Bill Jackson, Andrew Connally, Wayne Jackson and others long before the first publication date of Mr. Collin's book (1996).

Dave Miller has offered to debate Dyrel Collins anytime regarding Mr. Collins' views. This offer has still not been accepted.

Brother Tom Warren stated correctly when he said there are only three classifications of people qualified to marry:

- 1) The person who has never been married
- 2) The person who is a widow/widower
- 3) The person whose spouse committed fornication and was put away (divorced) for that reason.

The teaching of Matthew 19:9, Matthew 5:32, Luke 16:18 is plain. To hold to the view Mr. Collin's represents is to twist the meaning of the scriptures and base your beliefs on human emotions. It also requires you to ignore the significance of fornication and misuse and misinterpret Bible passages to come up with a non-sexual meaning for adultery. Mr. Collin's seems to also dismiss the consequences associated with sin.

Unfortunately, Jim Pyburn (the former minister at Frisco church), Zerrial Bass and Burley Stinnett (former deacons at Frisco church) and Charles Haley (former elder at Frisco church) have chosen to follow, support and profess (or at least refuse to deny) the false doctrine put forth in the above-mentioned book. This includes being the source of funds to not only publish the book, but mail it out to elders, preachers, directors of schools of preaching, and lectureships across the brotherhood, twice. They have since started a new congregation in Frisco called Central church of Christ.

As long as they hold to this false doctrine, we have no choice but to mark and avoid these men as false teachers (Romans 16:17, II John 9-11).

Let us make it perfectly clear, none of the above-mentioned men, including Dyrel Collins have any association with the Frisco church of Christ. The Frisco church of Christ will abide by what is taught in the Word of God in all matters and refute liberal propaganda.

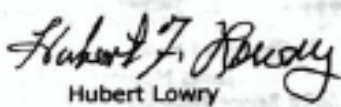
We ask that you continue to pray for us as we seek to teach only the sound doctrine found within the Holy Scriptures.

In Christ,

  
Chuck Davis

  
Brian Kidd

  
Kevin Lowry

  
Hubert Lowry

# Max Lucado...

(Continued From Page 1)

work. *Accept his gift. Go to God in prayer and tell him, I am a sinner in need of grace. I believe that Jesus died for me on the cross. I accept your offer of salvation.* It's a simple prayer with eternal results (emphasis, in original).

It is a simple prayer which results in eternal damnation for those who believe and teach one can be saved by saying it. Where in the Bible was anyone ever told to pray to God in order to receive forgiveness of sins? This is heresy to the Max. No more evidence is required to know that, regardless of his sincerity, Lucado, like his denominational associates, utterly rejects the plain teaching of God and is helping others to do the same.

## A "GOD THING"?

Only brethren who have the same blatant disregard for Bible truth would feel comfortable welcoming an infamous heretic like Lucado. The Midtown Church of Christ in Forth Worth is a prime example of just such brethren. This congregation, which has a membership of about 700, was featured in local newspapers when it opened its doors to the charismatic church Calvary Cathedral International after the denomination's facilities were destroyed in a tornado. Now Calvary Cathedral owns the property, with its 2,000 seat auditorium, and is allowing Midtown to assemble there until they move to a new location. An article in *The Fort Worth Star Telegram* about this new partnership was accompanied by a photograph of Midtown's preacher, **Jim Hackney**, and Calvary Cathedral International's pastor, **Bob Nichols**, standing together in the pulpit and praying for each other's congregations.

Though the two churches have separate worship services (Midtown's singing is still a cappella, while Calvary Cathedral's features a "praise band"), the sharing of facilities has been heralded as further indication of the willingness of churches of Christ to accept denominationalists. A Dallas-Fort Worth religious news publication praised the joint venture, calling it "a God thing." Another *Star Telegram* piece noted that Hackney appeared on a platform with Protestant and Catholic ministers at a Fort Worth in-

terdenominational Easter sunrise service. The gathering, which was organized by the Carter Riverside Area Pastors Association, was led in a meditation by Hackney. Like Lucado, Midtown and Hackney are obviously quite comfortable dirtying their hands with the sins of sectarians.

## MIDTOWN AND MAX

It should come as no surprise, then, to know that the Midtown Church of Christ recently invited Max Lucado to speak for them. While the welcoming of a false teacher of Lucado's stature to our area is disturbing in its own right, equally distressing is the fact that other brethren from our immediate area took their young people to hear the wolf in sheep's clothing. It is hard to know what is worse: the wolves themselves, or those who lead the precious lambs to their feet. Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). How do brethren justify supporting an event at a congregation like Midtown to hear a preacher like Lucado when scripture obligates us to "turn away" from such heretics? By participating with and promoting those who give a platform to the likes of Hackney and Lucado, brethren are partaking in their sins. So said the apostle John: "Whoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God... If there come any unto you and bring not his doctrine, receive him not into your house...for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 9-11).


Those brethren who welcome Lucado or who flock to hear him either agree with his heresy or they do not—assuming, of course, they are aware of what he believes and practices. (Given his notoriety, it is hard to imagine brethren would not know where he stands. If some are ignorant, we cannot help but wonder if it is not willful ignorance. Why haven't their elders or preachers informed and warned them—Acts 20:28ff; I Timothy 1:18-20; II Timothy 2:17-18; 4:1-5; Titus 1:7-13?). If they agree with his heresy, then they, like he, have also abandoned the truth. If they do not agree with his heresy but support events where he is featured anyway, then they are willfully exposing brethren to those who could lead their souls astray. The latter is just as damning as the former.

It is bad enough that brethren like Max Lucado are proudly prostituting the truth and dividing the blood-bought bride of Christ, it is even more heartbreaking that others will participate with them in their evil deeds. That some brethren are silent about these things, refusing to heed the word of God and oppose the false teachers corrupting the brotherhood—is inexcusable. But when brethren go so far as to aid and abet the enemies of truth, it is more appalling still. If we love their souls, we cannot join hands with them, but must admonish them—kindly, but firmly—to repent of promoting apostasy and cease running with the devil.

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# FOUR STEPS TO APOSTASY

Kevin Beard

The past twenty years have seen much change in the church. So much change has taken place that it is possible to compare two congregations of the Lord's church in the same location and see very little similarity. One congregation may be labeled "conservative", "mainstream", or "traditional", the other congregation may be labeled "liberal", "progressive", or "contemporary". And the differences between the two are significant, doctrinal differences, not merely differences of opinion or personal preference.

## MORE DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINE EMBRACED

The past twenty years have seen members of the Lord's church embrace more and more denominational doctrine and practice. Who would ever have thought that our brethren would reject the essentiality of baptism? Yet some in our brotherhood have done just that. Who would ever have thought that members of the Lord's church would put women into leadership positions in the church over men? Yet the practice has been going on for some time. Examples of this kind of departure from the faith could be multiplied. But the question is, how did all of this come about? If we can learn the answer to that question, we can see how to avoid that process of departure.

What took place in the church of Christ at the close of the twentieth century is nothing new. People have been departing from the faith for centuries. The specific problems may not always be the same, but the process is. These changes never occur overnight. They do not occur as result of some sort of religious coup d'etat. They occur when people cease to follow the New Testament standard. Paul instructed Timothy to "**Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine**" (II Timothy 4:2). Why did he charge Timothy to do this? Because some would not adhere to that word Timothy was to preach. Paul said, "**For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables**" (II Timothy 4:3-4). In this admonition Paul describes the four steps to apostasy. What causes an individual or a church to go from faithfulness to apostasy?

## THE "STEPS" LISTED

1. *They will not tolerate sound doctrine.* People do not always enjoy what is good for them. Everyone knows that a proper diet is necessary for optimum health, but many people prefer to eat the kind of foods that hinder good health. The same problem exists in the spiritual world. The whole doctrine of Christ nourishes us. It is sound. The word "sound" means, "in good health." Sound doctrine is that which is whole and complete, and promotes good spiritual health. When Paul told Timothy to preach "**the word,**" he

instructed him to deliver sound doctrine to the people. This requires preaching "**all the counsel of God**" (Acts 20:27). We are not at liberty to customize the doctrine of Christ. Yet people sometimes prefer to omit certain parts of Christ's teaching. When this happens they have taken the first step to apostasy.

2. *They seek teachers who will ignore sound doctrine.* When people cease to tolerate sound doctrine, they cease to tolerate those teachers and preachers who proclaim sound doctrine. The obvious solution to their problem is to find preachers and teachers who will preach and teach only those things that these people have decided they want to hear. Notice that Paul described their action as being the result of following "their own lusts." Their own desires become more important than Christ's authority and so they look for someone to teach those things that they desire to hear. Now these teachers may not necessarily teach things that are inherently false, but they fail to preach the whole

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truth. Any preacher can satisfy any audience if he simply determines not to preach some parts of Christ's doctrine. If his audience does not want to hear the truth about the essentiality of baptism, or the one church, or marriage, divorce, and remarriage, or anything else, he can preach everything in the New Testament except those things and his audience will be happy. When people seek such compromising teachers, they have taken the second step toward apostasy.

3. *They turn away from the truth.* Eventually, people will become disenchanted with the concept of "truth" when the truth conflicts with their lifestyles. Those who cannot endure sound doctrine and then seek compromising teachers will eventually become less concerned with whether a teacher proclaims the truth. When human opinion and personal feelings become the standard by which a message is judged, then truth becomes irrelevant to them. Thus, they no longer care whether or not the sermons they hear come from the Bible. They think "book, chapter, and verse" preaching is trite. This third step toward apostasy opens the door for many things and ultimately leads to the fourth step.

4. *They are turned aside unto fables.* If people no longer want to hear the whole truth and no longer think the concept of truth is significant, then the only thing left for them is to be turned toward things that are not true. If they cannot

be comfortable hearing the truth, then the only thing left for them to listen to is falsehood. This was the state of the people in Isaiah's day. The Lord said they were rebellious, lying children who refused to hear the law of the Lord. They said to the seers, "See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isaiah 30:10). It is tragic that many of our brethren have gone through those four steps to apostasy. They no longer want to hear the truth of God's word, but they are happily living their lives being willingly deceived by false teachers who fill their listeners' minds with fables. We must be aware of those steps toward apostasy so that we never take the first one. How do we prevent that? By heeding the instruction Paul gave initially: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2). This is what all preachers must do and this is what all Christians must desire. No one said Christianity would be easy. Sometimes it requires us to make difficult choices. But there is still only one way to heaven and that is by doing the will of the father which is in heaven (Matthew 7:21).

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# No Child of the Devil Has the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Tim Nichols

The notion that all influences of the word of God are equal to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is mistaken if it is even believed by anyone. Although I have never heard anyone make that claim, I have heard arguments against it several times over the past few years. Whether or not it is a straw man, I am not qualified to say.

## THE WORD CAN HARDEN THE DISHONEST HEART

The word of God does not always produce faith. It is not always gladly received. The preaching of God's truth to unfaithful Israelites who died in the wilderness **"did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard"** (Hebrews 4:2). It often produces unyielding resistance and it is sometimes given little notice at all. Even when accompanied by great wonders in the hand of Moses, the word **"hardened"** the heart of Pharaoh and God generated that response in that he was the Originator of the commands that were resisted (Exodus 4:21; 7:3, 13, 22, 8:15, 19, 32, 9:12, 34, 35, 10:1, 20, 27, 11:10, 14:4, 8, 17). Ezekiel lived among a rebellious people who, like so many throughout history, had eyes to see and ears to hear and yet refused to use them (Ezekiel 12:2). The children of Israel were often **"a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord"** (Isaiah 30:9). They had opportunity to know the will of God, but they chose their own thoughts over those of Almighty God (Isaiah 65:2). God provides mankind with opportunity even when he knows in advance that many will respond to his word with rebellion (Ezekiel 2:6-8). Stephen preached saving truth that had a decided influence upon his hearers, but that influence is not one that brought about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The very opposite was the result because these were men and women who, like their forefathers, **"always resist the Holy Spirit"** (Acts 7:51). The Holy Spirit had the same effect upon ancient Israel when they **"would not give ear"** (Nehemiah 9:30), when they grieved the Holy Spirit and became his enemy by their rebellion to his words (Isaiah 63:10).

**But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they might not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which Jehovah of hosts had sent in his Spirit by the former prophets: therefore there came great wrath from the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 7:11, 12).**

In the New Testament age men also respond to God's word in various ways. Some **"thrust it from"** them and **"judge"** themselves **"unworthy of eternal life"** (Acts 13:46). Sometimes the word falls **"by the way side"** (Matthew 13:4) where it has no positive effect upon those who do not give it consideration. Others accept **"it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God,**

**which effectually worketh in you that believe"** (I Thessalonians 2:13).

## THE WORD CAN SAVE

In Acts 2:41 we read the beautiful account of the glad reception of the word of God on that Pentecost day when the gates of the kingdom were opened. There, we read that those who **"gladly received"** the word of God were baptized and added to the church of our Lord. Notice the meaning of the words. They **"gladly"** (*asmenos* in Greek, meaning "with pleasure"), received the word of God. This word for **"gladly"** is used in Acts 21:17 for the joyful reception that Paul had in Jerusalem. The term **"received"** (*apodechomai* in Greek, meaning "to take full, i.e. welcome [persons], approve [things]") is the term that is used for the full reception of Jesus by the multitudes after he had healed the demon-possessed men in the country of the Gadarenes (Luke 8:40), the pleasant welcome extended to Paul and Barnabus by the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:4), the reception that Apollos was to receive in Achaia after learning the way of the Lord more perfectly (Acts 18:27), the manner in which Paul received those who came to him while imprisoned at Rome (Acts 28:30), the way that Paul received gifts (by which he had all, abounded, and was full) from the Philippian brethren (Philippian 4:18).

We can see that this glad reception of the word of God was full, complete, yielding, and obedient. Upon hearing the bulk of Peter's inspired sermon, those who were about to gladly receive the word of God were **"pricked in their heart"** and called upon the apostles to teach them what they must do (vs. 37). Peter then told them what they needed to do in order to obtain the remission of their sins and spoke many other words to them as he implored them to save themselves (vss. 38-40). They responded by this glad reception of the word which involved baptism and being added to the church (vs. 41). Their obedient response to the word involved baptism for the remission of sins and their submissive response was their glad reception of the word.

The aorist tenses of the Greek language used for the participle and verbs in verse 41 do not suggest the order of discrete events often suggested by those who attempt to say that the glad reception of the word was one thing— and that after that action was completed the next action (being baptized) was begun and then finished— and that after that action was completed the next action (being added to the church) was begun and then finished. I want to be careful not to suggest that this is not among the linguistic possibilities, but such an order of separated events does not inhere in the tense used. The aorist merely states that these things occurred or were done.



If I were to say that some child jumped over the ditch, landed on the other side, and was added to the number of those other children on the far side of the ditch," no one would assume that I meant to say that the child had jumped over the ditch — waited a period of time, landed on the other side — waited a period of time, and then later became one of those on the far side of the ditch. It would be clear that the "landing" and the "being added" were consequences of the act of jumping and very much a part of it. It should be easily seen that "gladly receiving the word" involves much more than merely hearing it indifferently with the ear, sensing it without response in the mind, or even mentally accepting the truth of it while planning to obey it at some point in the future. If there is some loose sense in which the word can be said to have been "received" prior to obedience to it, that sense is not found in Acts 2.

#### THE "GLAD RECEIVER"

A stronger case could be made for a disobedient and unresponsive "hearer" being a believer than for an unresponsive and as yet disobedient "receiver" being in the category of "glad receiver" of the word. Words like "belief," and "believe" are used in scripture to refer to both the loose variety and to the more exacting obedient sort. Some "believe" in the sense that they accept the fact that Jesus lived, and even that he is divine (Mark 3:11; John 12:42; Acts 19:15; James 2:19), but we recognize that they are not "believers" in the sense or to the degree that they follow, obey, and are saved by him (John 3:16-18, 36, 5:24, 6:47, James 2:17 et. al.). We can find no instances of anyone in the New Testament "gladly receiving" the word of God in the sense of merely having had it register a motion on his "hearing" ear drums or enter through his reading eyes.

In recent years and months we have heard much discussion in the brotherhood concerning both mode of the "indwelling" of the Holy Spirit and the question of how he operates upon the heart of the Christian. These are two different topics that seem to be constantly bumping into one another. This article is not sufficient to answer all of the various thorny questions and arguments that seem to be circulating among us, but you are invited to thoughtfully consider the following as it relates to both the mode of the "indwelling" and to the operations of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts.

Concerning this word "dwell" (*oikeo*), we read the following in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament:

This word... can mean intrans. 'to dwell,' 'to live'... and also trans. 'to inhabit,' 'to take as one's abode'... More important, however, is the fact that [*oikein*] is used to describe inward psychological and spiritual processes. Similarly we read in R. 7:18: 'For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing'..., and 7:20 goes on to say that sin dwells in me.... The dwelling of sin in man denotes its dominion over him, its *lasting connection with his flesh*, and yet also a certain distinction from it. The sin which dwells in me... is no passing guest, but by its continuous presence becomes the master of

the house.... Paul can speak in just the same way, however, of the lordship of the Spirit. The spiritual part of man is not set aside, but impressed into service (Vol. V, p.35).


When one gladly receives the word, submits to it with all his heart, and makes the commitment to walk in the ways of the Spirit, he makes the conscious and willful choice to make the Spirit the Master of his physical house. Although the word "*oikeo*" does not always imply dominion (Acts 28:16), it is clear that it often does have that connotation (Romans 7:17-20). This connotation seems to fit perfectly with all else that is revealed in the New Testament concerning the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian.

One who has not yet fully and gladly received the word of God has not yet made the Holy Spirit the Master of his house. The one who has a budding faith in the things revealed in the word and who intends to obey has not yet given him dominion and a lasting connection with him. The one who is about to be lowered into the watery grave of baptism has not yet completed the process of gladly receiving the word. As he is being lowered, he is in the process of submitting until it can finally be said that he has submitted and begun his walk in the light of God's Spirit-inspired word where he is no longer in darkness, where he has fellowship with those to whose number he has been added and where the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses his sin (1 John 1:6,7).

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# GOD'S FAMILY

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

- A. Family is important to us.
  - 1. We treasure family relationships, memories, gatherings, etc.
  - 2. I suppose that is why God chose the concept of "family", as one of the ways he refers to his church ... Ephesians 3:14-15.
- B. We often speak of our church family and how precious it is to us.
- C. Let us spend a little time discussing "God's Family".

## DISCUSSION

- A. DESIGNATIONS USED TO DESCRIBE THIS FAMILY
  - 1. "Brotherhood"
    - a. I Peter 2:17 ... we are to love the brotherhood or brethren.
    - b. "Brother" (or brethren) is found 319 times in the New Testament, where "sister(s)" is used 22 times.
  - C. By and large, these terms define a physical relationship, but these words are sometimes used in a spiritual sense.
  - d. I Peter 5:9 ... III John 10.
  - e. These verses stress a relationship between Christians – a relationship that places them as one concerning a standing in Christ.
    - 1) Galatians 3:26-29
    - 2) By no means does this remove the distinction between the genders or their unique, God-given responsibilities, but it strengthens our understanding of the close relationship that should exist between siblings in the spiritual family—we are a family!
    - 3) I Timothy 5:1-2 ... a family relationship is here clearly described.
- 2. "Child" (or children) is used 168 times in the New Testament.
  - a. About 80% of the time, the terms (child/children) are referring to a physical family.
  - b. However, we are called the "children of God" ... Romans 8:16.
- 3. "Household of God" (or, house of God).
  - a. Ephesians 2:19-22
  - b. I Timothy 3:14-15
  - c. "Having a great priest over the house of God" (Hebrews 10:21).
  - d. I Peter 4:17
- 4. God as "Father"
  - a. I Corinthians 8:5-6
    - 1) Since God is our father – we are his children.
    - 2) A family relationship is clearly seen.
  - b. John 8:44
    - 1) There are only two spiritual families.
    - 2) We are members of one or the other.
- 5. Jesus as "Son" - thus, our elder brother.
  - a. Hebrews 3:3-6
  - b. Hebrews 7:25 ... As our elder brother, Jesus intercedes in our behalf.

## B. TO ENTER GOD'S FAMILY THERE MUST BE A BIRTH

- 1. It is noteworthy that Jesus compares our entrance into salvation, and thus into the family of God, as a birth.
- 2. John 3:3-5; cf. Acts 2:38, 47.
- 3. As one is born into a physical family, so must we be a partaker of the spiritual birth to be a part of the family of God.



## C. THE FAMILY CONCEPT IS A PERFECT PARALLEL TO THE CHURCH

- 1. It denotes a sense of belonging.
  - a. Isn't wonderful to know that we have a place in the family of God? That we can belong to the greatest family in the world.
  - b. Belonging to a family bond provides:
    - 1) Comfort ... II Corinthians 1:3-7.
    - 2) Strength ... Ephesians 4:11-16.
- 2. It signifies relationships.
  - a. We have a unique relationship with the Father and with each other.
  - b. I Timothy 5:1-2 ... Good family relationships demand appropriate conduct.
  - c. John 16:23 ... We can approach God – as our Father – in prayer!
  - d. Colossians 1:12 ... We have an inheritance from the Father.
- 3. It draws a line.
  - a. Everyone is not in the family of God.
    - 1) Our Heavenly Father designated certain entry requirements, and if these criteria are not met, one is not a member of the family.
    - 2) Merely running with the family does not make you a part of the family.
  - b. Along this line it is important for us to remember that Satan is subtle (Genesis 3:1) and his sole intention is to separate us from the Father.
    - 1) One of his most effective attacks upon Christianity has been the blurring of lines concerning just who is and is not in the family.
    - 2) If you were to ask various people in the community how one becomes a part of the family of God, you would get many different answers.
    - 3) Again, notice how the Bible says we are born into the family of God (I Peter 1:23; John 3:3-5).

## D. ALL OF GOD'S FAMILY ARE IMPORTANT

- 1. In our physical families we all have different abilities and appearances—but all are important and loved.
- 2. The same holds true in the family of God.
- 3. I Corinthians 12:12-27.

## E. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD'S FAMILY

- 1. II Corinthians 6:17-18 .. be separate from the world
- 2. Ephesians 5:1-2, 8 ... We are to be like our Father

3. John 13:35 ... Love motivates others to be a part of God's family.
4. Galatians 6:1-2 ... We are to bear each other's burdens — lean on each other.
5. Matthew 28:18-20 ... We must try to bring others into the family.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF GOD'S FAMILY  
(Romans 8:16-17; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 3:2).

—24065 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

## FALSE TEACHERS DESCRIBED

Kirk Talley

Recently, I was speaking with a good friend, who is also a member of the Adel Church of Christ in South Georgia. She informed me of a bed and breakfast there that had been bought by a "community" religious institute. Not only is there a church beginning, the people in charge of its organization are also making plans for a school to be added to its structure. Also in this religious body, a man claimed to be able to produce gold dust due to an ability that God had bestowed upon him, and if anyone were to come and financially contribute to his cause, this ability could be passed on to him or her. How ridiculous!

The fact is this brethren, friends, and enemies; we have too many false teachers in the world today! One false teacher is too many, but we have hundreds upon thousands of false teachers putting out false doctrines and creating false hope. Souls are being condemned daily as they go on following these individuals that will ultimately walk them through the gates of Hell!

We as Christians, and also those that are seeking the truth, should know how to discern a false teacher when one approaches. It is possible that one day, if not already, one may move into town, knock on your door, call you at home, and/or visit your child at school. We must know beforehand that false teachers have the wrong motive and method, the wrong message, and the wrong master. Let us examine these points.

Most false teachers have the **WRONG MOTIVE AND METHOD**. Just as in the case mentioned above, many today will seek fame and fortune and use "religious" experiences to mask their true intent. They will often times stage

events designed to encourage attendance, because they know that when people come, money comes as well! We need to be well versed in the scriptures so we do not fall prey to these individuals. When one comes along giving the impression that he or she wants praise, remember that our Lord told his disciples that they were to do good works to glorify their father which is in Heaven! (John 3:17; Acts 2:47) Consider Ananias and Sapphira, (Acts 5:1 f) and how that they came to give their offering with the idea of deceit and self-gain. What happened to them?

Of course, all false teachers have the **WRONG MESSAGE**. Galatians 1:8-9 states, "**But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.**" If any message other than the word of God is preached, the one presenting the lie will be accursed! When we listen to a speaker, we need to hear them preach and teach Jesus Christ and not themselves. Phillip preached to the eunuch Jesus, and then the eunuch was baptized (Acts 8:27f). To preach Jesus is to preach baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Who cares about gold dust and earthly wealth when it comes to salvation? Those that are in Christ are born not of corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:18-19). We are born of the word of God (I Peter 1:23). Christ is the Word John 1:1, and life is in the word (John 6:51). False teachers have the wrong message.

False teachers also have the **WRONG MASTER**. Simply stated, they serve themselves. No man can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13). Sometimes even those within the brotherhood will fall to this temptation. Liberal brethren serve the mass, not the Master. Their motivation is self-gratification. Their method is whatever works. Their message is pleasing to the ear and their master is the largest crowd. "Whatever pulls them in!", they say.

The false teacher will be exterminated one way or the other. Either we as Christians will stand up and fight together against this foe, or the Lord will take his vengeance with fire and brimstone (II Thessalonians 1:8).

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**Fourth Annual Lectureship—October 14-18, 2001**

# "DO YOU WANT SOMETHING NEW?"

Noah A. Hackworth

All the Athenians and the strangers sojourning in Athens spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing (Acts 17:21). They really had leisure for nothing else; they spent their time trying to hear something newer than what they had heard. Two thousand years later nothing has changed; to tell and hear the latest news is still the philosophy of more than a few. In the minds of many this would be "gossip," a thing certainly forbidden by the New Testament (I Peter 4:15).

"Something new" always refreshes our spirits and gives us hope for the future. In fact, the Lord not only promised his people "new things," he identified them and made them available. The new covenant for example, In Jeremiah 31:31, the Lord said, "...I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." In Hebrews 8:7-13 this covenant is "spoken" of as a reality. It was a "new covenant," unlike the old and much better (8:6). There are many other "new things" that have been promised to us by the Lord. Consider, a few of them.

First, a new Name. "And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all the kings thy glory, and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name" (Isaiah 62:2). It was in the city of Antioch that this new name was given. The disciples were called Christian's first in Antioch (Acts 11:26). The key to this verse is the phrase "were called." It is the translation of the word "chrematizai" which is unique in that it always involves a divine calling. The Wise Men were "warned of God" in a dream that they should not return to Herod (Matthew 2:12). It was "revealed" to Simeon that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ (Luke 2:26). Cornelius was "warned of God" to send for Peter (Acts 10:22). In these three passages there are two important things: (1) the calling or warning is from the Lord, and (2) the word translated is "kramatizai" or a form of it. This demonstrates the fact that the "new name" came by the Lord.

Next, there is the New Birth. Under the old covenant one was admitted into God's family by a physical birth; but under the new covenant one must experience the new birth; one must be "born again," of the water and the Spirit (John 3:1-5), and it was not until the seventeenth century that John 3:5 was considered to refer to anything, save baptism. Since then the passage has been "twisted" and "turned" every which way to avoid the necessity of baptism. Men seek to do what the Lord says is impossible. No one can enter the kingdom of God without being "born again." The idea that a person can be "baptized" without being immersed is foreign to reason. Since baptism is compared to a birth we know that the subject to be born must be smaller than that in which it is enclosed. The child to be born or brought forth is smaller than that by which he is sur-

rounded, i.e., the child is enclosed within the mother. So the subject of the new birth must be surrounded by enough water to immerse him. Otherwise he cannot be, born or brought forth. As a child is "buried" within the mother, so a candidate is buried within the water and hence comes forth from it. This is the new birth!



Last, there is a New Life. "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). New Testament Christianity permits those who embrace it an opportunity to "start over". When we obey the gospel we can all have a "new lease on life" (II Corinthians 5:17). The past disappears if there is true repentance. The Lord said, "...And their sins will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12). The past is forgotten. So, do you want something new? Well, how about a new name, a new birth, and a new life? If "something new" excites you, you can have it, and it is free.

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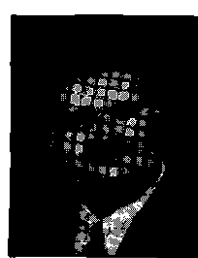
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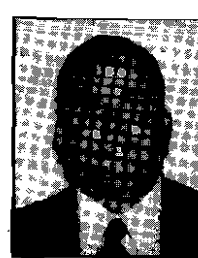
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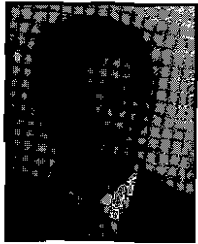
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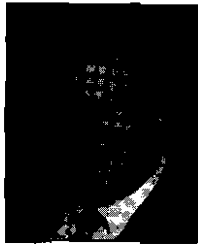
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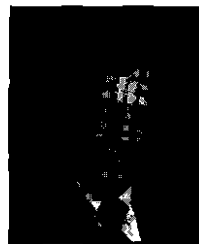
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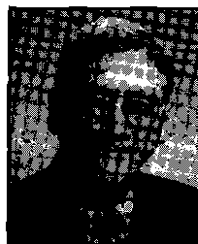
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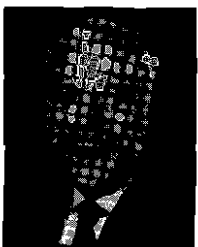
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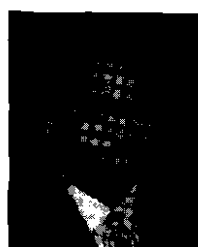
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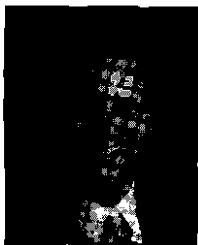
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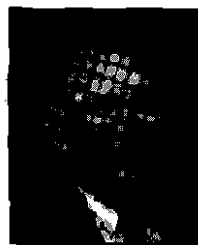
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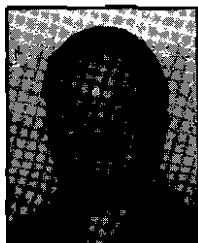
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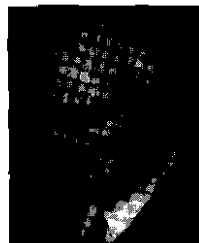
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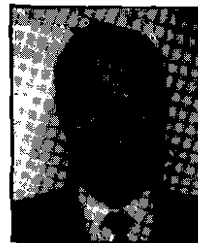
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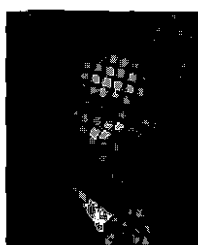
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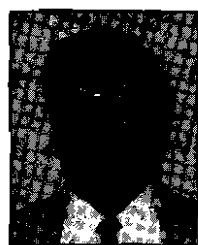
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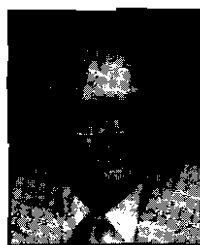
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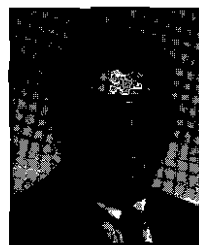
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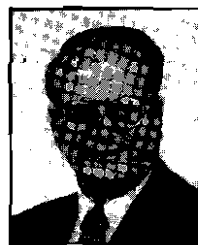
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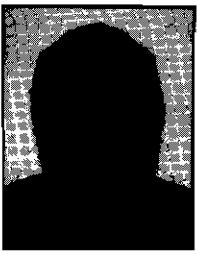
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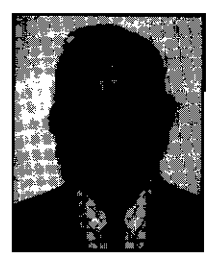


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**This Year's Theme:**

# "THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL"

## October 14-18, 2001

### Sunday, October 14, 2001

- 9:00a.m. Johnny Oxendine "Not Ashamed of the Gospel"
- 10:00a.m. Curtis A. Gates "The 'Core Gospel' Examined"
- 11:00a.m. Lunch Break
- 2:00p.m. Jack Stewart "The Bible's Word 'Grace'"
- 3:00p.m. David Baker "Begotten Through the Gospel"
- 4:00p.m. Danny Douglas "If Our Gospel Be Hid"
- 5:00p.m. Dinner Break
- 6:30p.m. Dale Stone Congregational Singing
- 7:00p.m. Foy Forehand "The Gospel of Jesus Christ"
- 8:00p.m. David Watson "Boldly Speaking the Gospel"

### Monday, October 15, 2001

- 9:00a.m. Paul Merideth "The Bible's Word 'Gospel'"
- 10:00a.m. Jerry Brewer "What Preaching the Gospel Involves"
- 11:00a.m. Lester Kamp "The Foolishness of Preaching the Gospel"
- 12:00noon Lunch Break
- 2:00p.m. Rick Popejoy "Hindering the Gospel"
- 3:00p.m. Eddie Whitten "The Truth of the Gospel"
- 4:00p.m. Dub McClish OPEN FORUM
- 5:00p.m. Dinner Break
- 6:30p.m. Dale Stone Congregational Singing
- 7:00p.m. Keith Mosher "The Mystery of the Gospel"
- 8:00p.m. Jason Roberts "A Life Becoming the Gospel"

### Tuesday, October 16, 2001

- 9:00a.m. Lynn Parker "The Bible's Word 'Doctrine'"
- 10:00a.m. H.D. Simmons "Afflictions of the Gospel"
- 11:00a.m. Floyd Johnson "Living by the Gospel"
- 12:00noon Lunch Break
- 2:00p.m. Roelf Ruffner "Perversions of the Gospel"
- 3:00p.m. Tom Bright "Gospel Versus Doctrine"
- 4:00p.m. Dub McClish OPEN FORUM
- 5:00p.m. Dinner Break
- 6:30p.m. Dale Stone Congregational Singing
- 7:00p.m. Ira Y. Rice, Jr. "Set for the Defence of the Gospel"
- 8:00p.m. Robert Taylor "The Gospel Paul Preached"

### Wednesday, October 17, 2001

- 9:00a.m. Sam Dilbeck "The Bible's Word 'Peace'"
- 10:00a.m. Ronnie Hayes "The Power of God unto Salvation"
- 11:00a.m. Tracy Dugger "Those Who Obey Not the Gospel"
- 12:00noon Lunch Break
- 2:00p.m. Richard Melson "Called by the Gospel"
- 3:00p.m. Randy Mabe "The Certified Gospel"
- 4:00p.m. Dub McClish OPEN FORUM
- 5:00p.m. Dinner Break
- 6:30p.m. Dale Stone Congregational Singing
- 7:00p.m. Kenneth Ratcliff "The Gospel of Peace"
- 8:00p.m. Tommy J. Hicks "The Glorious Gospel"

### Thursday, October 18, 2001

- 9:00a.m. Richard Massey "The Bible's Word 'Obey'"
- 10:00a.m. Gary Summers "The Gospel Preached to Abraham"
- 11:00a.m. Marvin Weir "If I Preach Not the Gospel"
- 12:00noon Lunch Break
- 2:00p.m. Perry O'Dell "Fellow Laborers in the Gospel"
- 3:00p.m. John Moore "Entrusted With the Gospel"
- 4:00p.m. Dub McClish OPEN FORUM
- 5:00p.m. Dinner Break
- 6:30p.m. Dale Stone Congregational Singing
- 7:00p.m. Dalton Key "The Gospel of the Kingdom"
- 8:00p.m. B.J. Clarke "The Gospel of God's Grace"

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# **Lack Of Respect For Preaching and Preachers**

Lynn Parker

The work of gospel preachers is deemed to be of utmost importance to heaven. Preaching is not a pastime or a waste of good talent.

**For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Corinthians 1:17-21).**

God's only begotten Son—a preacher—came "to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:79). An aged apostle's last letter to his beloved son in the faith exhorted Timothy to, "preach the word; be instant

in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine..." (II Timothy 4:2). Paul apparently thought that preaching was crucial to the salvation and edification of souls.



And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, 19 serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews; 20 and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but hath shewed you, and hath taught you publickly, and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ...24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God... 26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of men. 27 For I have not shunned to declared unto you all the counsel of God (Acts 20:18-27).

Do you realize though that, either knowingly or perhaps unconsciously, a congregation can show mighty little respect for the preacher and the work of preaching? While we twiddle our thumbs, discuss the weather, and finally wonder why any particular congregation is stagnant and near death, it might be profitable to give some scrutiny to the preacher and his work, or more specifically, the congregation's concept of the preacher's work.

Do you show little or no respect for the work of preaching? You do if you expect the preacher to be the "errand boy," secretary, chauffeur, and handyman for the church. I preached at a congregation once where the preacher had traditionally written the bulletin, copied the bulletin, folded the bulletin, and mailed the bulletin (the preacher had also—out of tradition—locked and unlocked the building at every assembly). When I involved others in the work of folding and mailing so I could spend more time studying and teaching, one sister was heard telling others, "he's getting others to do his job." Interview a dozen members and you may get as many ideas as to what the preacher should be doing! If we have the preacher (1) study, (2) preach, and (3) teach, he will fill up much more than a forty-hour work week. That is what God expects of his preachers. Look at the response of the apostles to certain work that would distract from their most important, heaven-assigned tasks:

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And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2 Then the twelve called the multitudes of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word (Acts 6:1-4).

Certainly we realize that we cannot improve on God's job descriptions! Let the preacher preach. Preachers should always "have something (Biblical) to say instead of having to say something." Let him spend substantial time in Bible study so he has biblical, meaningful, challenging sermons to present. Let the preacher spend time in the week preparing for and conducting Bible studies with the

alien sinner. Others can open the building. Let the preacher spend some time, not with those who had a routine appendectomy or summer cold, but with those spiritually sick who need to be restored. Others can buy office supplies or mow the yard at the church building. Are there not those retired brothers and sisters that can fold and mail the bulletin? Is there someone in the congregation that can volunteer to type letters and check on the widows?

A good, sound, hard-working preacher is valuable to any congregation. The message that he preaches and teaches is more precious than gold. It prepares souls for eternity. Show respect for the work of preaching. God would have it that way.

—P.O. Box 39  
Spring, Texas 77383

## Restoration Reflections...

# THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY: A CAUSE OF DIVISION AND HEARTACHE

Paul Vaughn

A democratic nation is one whose people hold the ruling power. It is government of the people and by the people either directly or through elected representatives. The people set the standard of authority, making their own laws to follow.

### THE CHURCH IS NOT A DEMOCRACY

The church of Christ is not, nor has it ever been, nor will it ever be a democracy! The one who has the power to set the standard for the church is Jesus Christ. He paid the piercing, severe, and agonizing price for the church which no other person was qualified to do. Paul told the elders from Ephesus to "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Therefore, the church is a theocracy, God-ruled and not ruled by the people.

The church has a distinctive mission that must be carried out. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). In carrying out Jesus' command to evangelize the world Christians must be careful not to violate the sovereignty of Christ. "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).

### JESUS HAS PROVIDED THE MEANS FOR EVANGELISM

The only organization authorized to carry out the Great Commission is the local congregation. The church at Antioch, located in the province of Syria, sent Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-3).

Local congregations can and do cooperate in teaching God's word as long as neither congregation usurps the autonomy of the other. Autonomy does not prohibit local congregations working together. The only institution authorized in the scriptures to evangelize the world is the church of Christ. There is no greater institution other than the local church approved by the Lord to send out missionaries to preach the word.

### CHURCH GROWTH FROM 1800-1850

The church of Christ saw remarkable and wonderful growth in the early 1800's. Congregations were being established and established churches were growing. This steady growth was impeded by a digression that whisked away most churches into apostasy. This apostasy came in different forms, but one of the most obvious false teachings came in form of the missionary society. Some of the early restorers tried to change the organization of the church as to its missionary work.





The American Christian Missionary Society was formed in October 1849 in Cincinnati, Ohio. **Alexander Campbell** was elected president of the society, while **David S. Burnet, John T. Johnson, John O'Kane,** and **Walter Scott** were vice-presidents. The result of expanding beyond the scriptures to develop a society to do the work of the church caused division and heartache in our great brotherhood. The fruit of this strange seed that was dispersed to the wind helped in the development of the Christian Church denomination.

From the very beginning of the Missionary Society, faithful brethren put on the gospel armor to oppose the advances of the works of darkness. One of the soldiers who carried on the battle opposing the unscriptural society was **Jacob Creath, Jr.** Creath's arguments against the missionary society centered around the premise that there was no scriptural authority for such organization. Thus, it was a question of authority in religion, the dividing line between the body of Christ and the rest of the religious world.

#### RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

The issue is deeper than the American Christian Missionary Society. It is respect for the religious authority of Christ. God has provided a way to evangelize to the world; it is through the local congregation. The Restoration Principle of "speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent

where the Bible is silent," respects the authority of Christ and his word.

When the early restorers adhered to the Restoration Plea, there was unity and the church grew in number and in knowledge of God's word. As men begin to drift from going to the Bible to see what God has authorized, division and sectarianism raised its prideful head.

When men organize anything different from God's plan, it exalts men's teaching over God's. The missionary society is sinful, because it did not come from God, but from men.

The same attitude that introduced the American Christian Missionary Society to the church is prevalent today. God has set the standard for worship, teaching the lost, helping the needy, and how congregations can work together in cooperation.

There are some brethren who totally reject the authority of the scriptures by turning loose all moorings to the Bible. There are others who bind where God has not bound, thus causing division and heartache in the body of Christ. Until both come to the conclusion that it is sinful to substitute men's wisdom for God's wisdom, there will be division.

The battle line is drawn in the sand. Let us fight the fight of faith, showing Christian love. But, never, never, never reject the authority of the Lord (Colossians 3:17).

—223 W. Maple Ave.  
Lancaster, Kentucky 40444

## A New Commentary

### A SIMPLIFIED STUDY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

BY

**Thomas F. Eaves, Sr.**

*The late Thomas F. Eaves, Sr. Dear friend, outstanding scholar and teacher, valiant soldier of the cross, local and world evangelist, completed an outstanding book just before passing entitled, A Simplified Study of The Acts of the Apostles. This 273 page, cloth-bound book is in-depth, yet simply executed. The charts and special studies enhance its usability. This vital volume should be in the hands of every Christian (Indexed, ideal for class study). — Curtis Gates, Director, Memphis School of Preaching*

*It is my genuine pleasure to commend this book: A Simplified Study of The Acts of The Apostles. Thomas F. Eaves, Sr. (now deceased) is the author. Brother Eaves and I were friends and collaborators in the Lord's church for approximately forty years, and I considered him to be a faithful and able gospel preacher, a great defender of The Faith, and an unusually good Christian. Brother Grizzell is the publisher and rendered valuable assistance in the production of this book. — Gerald Elkins, Instructor, MSOP*

*A Simplified Study of the Acts of the Apostles is the last writing of brother Eaves. Originally printed in Telegu for the India Mission work. The author spent 25 years training Gospel Preachers. Now all may benefit from his scholarship. Beautiful Hard Back, 273 pages, Illustrations, Abbreviated 10 Page Index Good for Class Study • Helpful for new Converts Class. Every teacher of God's Word, Elder and Preacher would benefit from this Commentary. An excellent gift in teaching a friend or family member about New Testament Christianity. "About the Author" section written by Gary L. Grizzell. "Introduction" written by Bill Dudney, missionary to India.*

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## Current Events That Concern Christians...

# Special Rights for Drag Queens, Sexual Orientation Discrimination, Floating Clinics, Census Results

Compiled by Mark Mcwhorter

A bill (AB 1649) promoted by lesbian Assembly woman **Jackie Goldberg** (D-Los Angeles) will provide special rights for drag queens and redefine sex in California state law. Assemblyman **Ken Maddox**, (R-Garden Grove) says Goldberg's bill "turns the 'Rocky Horror Picture Show' into California labor law. This is essentially designed to create anarchy for the people of California. It's a complete attack on normalcy."

If passed, this law will punish businessmen, schools, and even Christian bookstore owners if they do not wish to hire drag queens. The bill leaves it up to the courts to rule on whether or not businesses must allow men to wear dresses to work. The bill allows the state to fine businesses as much as \$150,000 if they "discriminate" against drag queens and men or women undergoing sex change operations.

In related news, a New Jersey state appeals court on July 3, ruled that "transsexuals" are a handicapped group and cannot be discriminated against in businesses. The decision was hailed by the ACLU and Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, a radical homosexual legal group. This decision will affect public accommodations, employment, and housing (Traditional Values Coalition e-mail service, 7/4/01). *[Christians need to step forward and tell their local, state and Federal government officials that they do not want this perversion forced upon them.—mtm]*

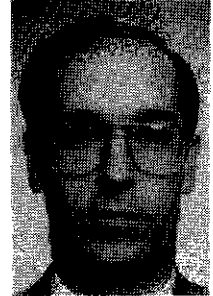
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The United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (August 31-September 7 in Durban, South Africa) will be focusing on "sexual orientation discrimination" as a key issue. Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with radical homosexual groups, will be pushing for worldwide bans against "discrimination" directed at homosexuals. Canada's pro-homosexual policies have recently resulted in a Christian man being fined for publishing an ad listing Bible verses against homosexuality; a Christian printer fined for refusing to publish pro-homosexual literature; a Christian mayor being prosecuted for failing to proclaim "Gay Pride" celebrations (Traditional Values Coalition e-mail service, 7/4/01). *[The push for such rights is gaining momentum around the world. Be wary of any large treaties that the U.S. is considering signing with the U.N.—mtm]*

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A pioneering Australian doctor has unveiled controversial plans to set up the world's first floating euthanasia

clinic, which would drop anchor off the Australian coast, and administer lethal injections or drug dosages to terminally ill patients who wish to die with dignity, according to *The Guardian Observer* (UK). Although the practice is illegal in Australia, **Dr. Philip Nitschke** says he intends to take advantage of the Netherlands' decision to legalize euthanasia and buy a Dutch-registered ship so that he can circumvent Australian law. Nitschke's idea of a floating euthanasia clinic would also be a world first, although a maverick Dutch doctor, **Rebecca Gomperts**, is in the process of raising money for the world's first floating abortion clinic. It would drop anchor off the coast of countries, such as Ireland, where abortion is outlawed (Religion Today e-mail service, 4/12/01). *[Amazing to what lengths those who love evil will go in order to indulge in their heinous and evil deeds.—mtm]*



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The appointment of homosexual activist **Scott Evertz** to be the Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy is sending the wrong message to those concerned about the AIDS epidemic. Evertz has stated that he will target the black homosexual community to help homosexuals overcome their fear of being stigmatized for engaging in homosexual sex. Evertz apparently believes that "stigma" and "homophobia" cause the spread of AIDS. **Mark Tuggle**, a black homosexual activist with Gay Men of African Descent claims that black preachers are partly responsible for the spread of AIDS. According to Tuggle, "Homophobia is a co-factor to HIV and AIDS. Because of homophobia, men who partner with men won't discuss their sexual behavior or thoughts with each other." He also says, "When you go to church and the preacher tells you homosexuality is a sin, you do not feel valued" (Traditional Values Coalition e-mail service, 4/15/01). *[Telling people not to engage in illicit and immoral sex is the reason that these people engage in it and thus spread disease? So if we tell them that they should have sex with anyone they want and have no guilt for any reason, then the spread of disease will decrease???? Does this mean if we tell our children to play in the street any time they desire, that fewer children will be killed in the streets by vehicles?? Should we quit telling people to wash their hands before meals? This might decrease the amount of food poisoning. And we should encourage every school age child to carry a*

gun with them and point it at people with the safety off—obviously fewer people would be shot and killed. If I would quit thinking that these folks are sinning, they would feel better about themselves, and thus have less disease? It is my thoughts that are making these folks have disease?? How absurd!—mtm]

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In Arizona, there is more evidence that society no longer fears God. The State Senate has approved a bill that will eliminate laws dealing with prohibitions against unmarried sex. According to *The Arizona Republic*, supporters of the repeal say the laws no longer fit modern society and discriminate against unmarried couples and homosexuals. But those who spoke against the bill say the laws promote marriage and set a moral standard for society. Formal approval by the Arizona House is still needed. But that is expected because the bill received initial approval there (Agape Press email service, 4/27/01). *[Are they willing to say that God is no longer fit for modern society? Many of them probably would. However, man does not decide what is moral. Only a higher authority can do that. If they do not believe in God, then they have no right to say that morality laws are not fit for modern society. They cannot logically say that moralists are wrong—mtm]*

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Census news about the state of the traditional family in our country—For the first time, the number of “nuclear” families in the U.S. — those with a married mom and dad living with their kids — has dropped below 25% of all households. At the same time, the number of couples living out of wedlock has skyrocketed in the last ten years, up more than 70% since 1990. Pro-family groups say the numbers represent troubling indicators of deep societal problems (Agape Press email service, 5/15/01). *[This is not just the result of the non-religious. Most denominations and now even many of our brethren teach that divorce is Biblical. Why would anyone be surprised in the resultant statistics? And if marriage is not important enough that God cares if a couple stays married, why should he care if they ever get married? —mtm]*

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Charisma News reports TV evangelist Jimmy Swaggert is attacking the Trinity Broadcasting Network, charging it with being the leader of the apostate church. Swaggert says the modern church is in the worst condition ever since the Reformation and has effectively “left the cross.” He says that as a result, “every weird doctrine” that can be thought of is being embraced — in most cases, without question. In the current issue of his ministry’s newsletter, Swaggert writes that because of false doctrine, the church “is little led by the Holy Spirit anymore, but instead by spirits.” According to Swaggert, TBN has become the “de facto leader” of this apostate church. The Louisiana-based evangelist enjoyed a high profile until a sex scandal in the 1980s greatly diminished his ministry (Agape Press email service, 5/18/01). *[While I would agree with some of what Swaggert is saying, this is the pot calling the kettle black. Swaggert is so far removed from the Truth that he*

*cannot recognize it. And one wonders if he truly believes that the Holy Spirit is still infusing truth, how does he know who is getting the actual truth and who is being led by evil spirits? —mtm]*

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When people hear the term “house church” these days, it often comes up in reference to what is happening with persecuted Christians in communist countries like China and Vietnam. Obviously, that is not the case here in the United States. People interviewed by *The Times* say they started or joined house churches for a variety of reasons. Some are rebelling against the contemporary culture of the megachurch, where services are as choreographed as Broadway musicals. Others say they have been alienated by pastors who hoard power or by churches that experiment with doctrine and styles of worship. Also, many parents say they grew to question the custom of dropping off their children in a Sunday school classroom instead of worshipping together as a family. But house churches can have their own set of problems. Many such groups have faced protests from neighbors complaining about the extra traffic on their streets. In some cases, municipal governments have become involved and tried to use zoning laws to stop the meetings. And there are other concerns. For example, in trying to avoid the conflicts they experienced in their former churches, house church groups may tend to shun allowing any leadership at all. That can result in things such as “group think theology”, which may not necessarily reflect sound Biblical teaching (Agape Press email service, 5/4/01). *[It is encouraging to see that a significant number of individuals are seeing the foolishness in modern day evangelicalism. The change agents should take note of this. And those who teach the truth should take the opportunity to let folks in their community know that there is no staged production nor playing with proper worship, but only the pure gospel being preached and practiced in their worship services.—mtm]*

—420 Chula Vista Mt. Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

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## REMINDER!

If your address label has the date  
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## LESSON TWO...

# A PARTICLE ABOUT THE LITERARY-HISTORICAL APPROACH

Wayne Coats

In a preceding article, we mentioned that **Herman Samuel Reimarus** was among the first to use what came to be known as the Historical-Critical method of study. In spite of such an amazing, marvelous, essential, rewarding method of arriving at the truth (modernist and infidel truth - that is), Reimarus and others ended up as infidels who rejected every shred of that which is supernatural.

### "PROOF-TEXTING"

Let us look at how one fellow praises the literary-historical method and then we will be able to see how and why the modernists, rationalists and infidels recommend the method so highly. In his book, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, by **Carroll D. Osburn** of Abilene Christian University, we are fed a steady morsel about the literary-historical approach to Biblical exegesis. We will be led to the "proof-texting approach", which is sectarian in its results. "We must replace the rampant 'proof-texting' by ... firm literary and historical controls in Biblical analysis and responsible theological inquiry." If we do as Osburn declares that we must, will we align with the infidels in denying the inspired book?

We will have more to say in a subsequent piece about **Baur**, but here we need to know that Osburn wrote, "*Baur's school of historical criticism at Tubingen tried to reconstruct the history of the early church before the appearance of such gospel myths.*" "Baur described two parties, the Petrine and Pauline and their respective views which were contradictory." I tell you, that "historical critical" method which we must utilize is some more humdinger.

Please notice that, "Religious liberalism was a product of modern philosophy, modern science and modern enlightenment."

Attempts to relate Christian thought to the present, insistence upon open-mindedness, use of literary and historical methods in Biblical analysis, and concern with the social implications of Christianity were valuable contributions to Christian thought.

That literary and historical method of analysis might be valuable in making infidels out of people.

Against literary-historical criticism, interpretations derived by 'proof-texting', i.e., understandings derived apart from historical and literary criticism, emerged due to doctrinal necessity.

The preceding gem of brilliance says that we cannot arrive at Biblical truth by "proof-texting". One must utilize the historical-literary-critical method in order to arrive at truth. This in principle is exactly what the Catholic bishop would affirm. Such arrogance assumes that one cannot sit

down with the Bible and with an honest heart understand that which he reads. Such is pure poppycock. What would Osburn have us to do with our Bibles? We might as well cast them aside unless we are trained in the literary-historical method as asserted by the Abilene professor. Can you not see that? The Catholic bishop tells me that I cannot arrive at the truth by my own personal study; Professor Osburn tells me that I must not use the proof-text method because I will arrive at understandings due to doctrinal necessity. Such perfidy! Such arrogance! What happens when two or more modernists use the historical-literary-critical method of analyses and interpret texts altogether differently? It is sheer nonsense to assume that God stated his word in a method and manner beyond our comprehension.

### THEY HAVE TAKEN AWAY THE BIBLE

In the long ago, a sorrowing, sighing woman sobbed, "**They have taken away my Lord...**" (John 20:13). We can truthfully say, "The modernists have taken away my Bible." They reject the inspired word of God.

In his criticism of **J.W. McGarvey** and **David Lipscomb**, Osburn does not like the methodology employed by those old brethren. "While McGarvey tried to arrive at the truth, ...his historical conclusions are shaped by his views on inerrancy." I wonder who and what shaped Osburn's views. His efforts were based upon the wish, giving father to the thought. He guessed at inerrancy and then built a system upon the sandy thesis.

Poor Lipscomb "avoided discussion of critical thought." It so happens that I have every word David Lipscomb ever wrote in the *Gospel Advocate*. I have spent untold hours reading what Lipscomb wrote. I would not be so loose with the truth as to charge Lipscomb with "avoiding critical thought." It is of little importance, but I can point to several articles in the old *Advocate* which David Lipscomb wrote on the *subject of* "Higher Criticism" which might possibly suggest that he thought of himself as being qualified to speak about the matter. One can also read the articles which Lipscomb wrote on liberalism and modernism. Additionally, there were numerous articles written by other brethren who addressed the claims of the critics.

Osburn tells us, "To accept the Bible as scripture is not to renounce reason, so literary and historical criticism are both legitimate and necessary, and not to be rejected because of misuse by some." If that is so, please help to determine who is guilty of misuse. How can we know? We still must rely on some sort of self-proclaimed mediator and we hope he will not misuse his methods, but of course we will never know until some modern Diotrophes arrives with the truth in his knapsack.

We may not like to hear it, but the sage of Abilene says, "... there remains no viable alternative to the proper literary and historical approach which have presented problems." For shame! The "proof-texting" method is obsolete and will not work. The literary-historical approach presents problems in exegesis, so whatever method may be suggested, one can pay the price and pick his choice. The Catholic says, "I'll pick the priest to interpret the text." The Holiness-Pentecostal says, "My pastor with the enabling power of the Holy Ghost will tell you what you need to believe." The Mormon muses, "I will listen to Joe Smith who

had peep stones. He will interpret for us." The Adventist declares that "Ellen G. White saw visions and she can tell us what to believe." The Jehovah's Witnesses will make a plea for Judge Rutherford and finally the modernist professor will strut forward and begin to squawk about Reimarus, Baur, Paulus, Bultmann, Wellhausen and Tillich, et. al. Of course, the modernists and liberals never make any sense.

—705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27122

## One Woman's Perspective...

# I SURRENDER ALL

Annette B. Cates

On any given Sunday around the world, Christians somewhere will sing the song, "I Surrender All." However, relatively few will think of the implication of these words and focus on them as they should. Would we REALLY surrender all for the cause of Christ? What have we surrendered? Are our ideals, convictions, and actions different from those of the world? Are we going about living just like people around us who make no profession of belief in God? The character of Ruth exemplifies true surrender of self for a higher cause. She literally left all to make Naomi's God her God (Ruth 1:16).

### "WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING"

The account of Ruth, as found in the Old Testament book that bears her name, is familiar to all of us. Naomi, her husband, and her two sons had migrated from Bethlehem-judah to the land of Moab to escape the famine that was ravaging their homeland. The distance was only about thirty miles, but to them, with transportation and roads as they were at that time, it may as well have been around the world. While there, misfortune continued to plague this little family. The father, Elimelech, died, leaving Naomi a widow. The two sons married Moabitish women. No doubt, this was an added trial for Naomi, as she was a worshipper of the true God and the Moabite people were idolaters. No matter how many good and positive qualities these girls may have had, this had to be a concern for Naomi, for the spiritual well-being of her sons was at stake. Further, she probably realized that the more a young couple has in common, the easier it is to adjust to marriage. The backgrounds of Mahlon and Chilion and Ruth and Orpah were totally different and this no doubt added to Naomi's concerns.

In time, both sons died. Naomi learned that the famine in Bethlehem-judah had passed and she decided to return home. She felt she had nothing left to keep her in Moab. She had lost her husband and both of her sons. As Naomi started down the road toward home, both Ruth and Orpah accompanied her. However, after a short distance, Naomi

encouraged the young women to return to their people. She kissed them, and they wept. Both said they would go on with Naomi, but she asked, "Why?" as there were no other sons to whom they could be married later. Orpah kissed Naomi again and left. On the other hand, Ruth demonstrated a different attitude. Her decision was firm—she would go to Bethlehem-judah with Naomi. She chose the higher road, not the easier one. We cannot know all of the factors she considered. Naomi had probably treated Ruth and Orpah as daughters-in-love, not as foreign women whose only tie to her had been the legalities of marriage, and even that tie was gone with the deaths of her sons. How much, also, had Ruth learned of the true God and the necessity of following him instead of the lifeless, useless idols of her people? The Bible goes on to tell of Naomi and Ruth as they settled in Bethlehem-judah, of Ruth gathering the gleanings of the harvest in the field of Boaz, and their eventual marriage that placed Ruth in the lineage of Christ. We learn that Ruth was a person of love, industry, and self-surrender. The book of Ruth is not only a historical account of a family, it shows the power of the providence of God in our lives.

### RUTH SURRENDERED ALL

*Ruth surrendered all when she left her home and family. She left all that was familiar to her. Moab was her home; the culture, customs, and religion of Moab had been hers. Judah would be an alien environment to her. She would know no one but Naomi. What of her own family? Were her parents living? Did she have brothers or sisters who loved her? All we can know is that she told Naomi, "...thy people shall be my people..." (1:16). Does this apply to us? How many would preach the gospel, but are held back by loved ones they feel they cannot leave? Are there those who could go into a foreign field, but lack the courage to venture into unfamiliar surroundings?*



# DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES

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**Holly Pond**—Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, (256) 796-6802, (205) 429-2026. Sunday: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

**Somerville**—Union Church of Christ, located on Hwy 36, one mile east of Hwy 67, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tom Larkin, Evangelist, (256) 778-8955, (256) 778-8961.

## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Telephone: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

## —Florida—

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saunley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

## —Georgia—

**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1146, 1319 JFH Pkwy (US 41 NW) Cartersville, GA 30120. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: Cartersville-cofc@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —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.

## —Massachusetts—

**Chicopee**—Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive, Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, tel. (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coc.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

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*Ruth surrendered all when she left the material security she had known in the past.* In Judah, she found herself in poverty. In Leviticus 19:9-10, God gave the instructions for leaving the corners of fields unharvested in order for the poor and the stranger to have an opportunity to gather for their needs. Ruth had to go into the field of Boaz to gather grain that had been left for the needy so that she and Naomi might have food to eat. There are times when Christians are called upon to make financial or other sacrifices as part of their service in the Kingdom of God. Do material concerns hold us back from serving?

*Ruth surrendered all when she left the idols of Moab for the God of Judah.* However, in contrast to the unknowns involved with leaving home and security, there is no downside to leaving false religions for the Living God. Ruth may have faced the scorn of those people she had known in the past who did not understand her newfound convictions, but this is no sacrifice when one realizes that the God of Judah was (is) the God of salvation. There are those who know the truth and understand that unless they become New Testament Christians, leaving the denominational doctrines in

which they have participated in the past, they will be lost eternally; yet, they cannot bring themselves to step out into the aisle, going forward to put on their Lord in baptism. Likewise, there are erring Christians who allow stubborn pride to keep them from repenting of public sin. There are those who would rather accept the unproven and often illogical atheistic theories of a textbook than to admit there is a God in Heaven who created all things. They cannot surrender themselves in humble obedience to God's will.

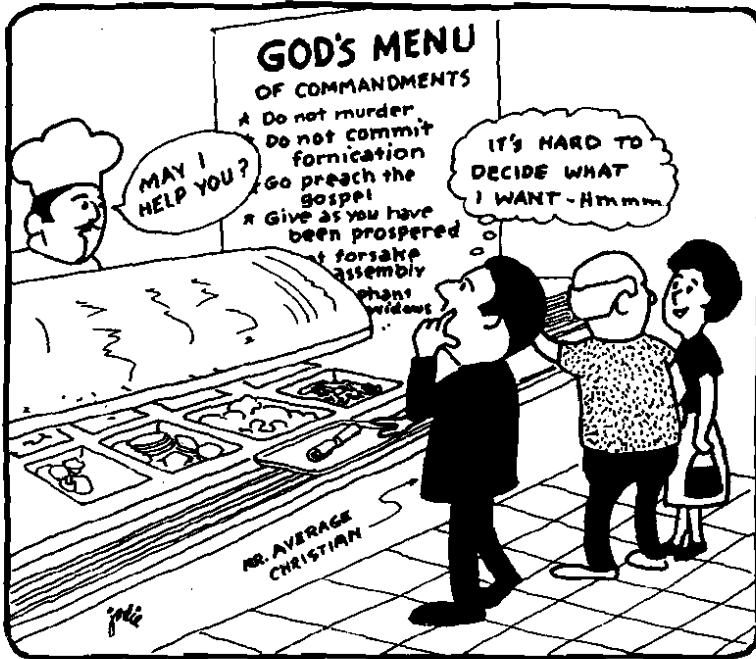
When we sing "I Surrender All," do the words reflect our actions and attitudes? If there is anything that we are unwilling to surrender in the service of God, we need to examine whether the cost of our souls is worth it. This world is going to pass away and with it the philosophies of men, the "things" we think we cannot live without, and the loved ones so dear to us. All we really have are our souls, and they are worth all the world.

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# The Cafeteria Approach to Christianity

Jodie Boren



In a cafeteria there is a wide variety of salads, entrees, vegetables, breads, desserts, and drinks. As you go through the line, you see the various items and select only those you want. This has great appeal for satisfying our physical hunger, but this approach to God's commandments will not feed one's spiritual body and will doom one's soul to perdition.

## OBEYING THE WHOLE COUNCIL

We cannot afford to be selective in the commandments of God we choose to obey. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Salvation is only to those who obey (Hebrews 5:9). Which of our Lord's commandments can we fail to keep and still be pleasing to Him? Most of us would rise up in holy indignation if someone suggested it wasn't necessary to assemble on the first day of the week to worship God. We look forward to the coming together with those of like faith. Those great songs of Zion stir our hearts and the communion service is a sobering reminder of Jesus' sacrifice for which we are so thankful. If the preacher does not preach too long, we are comforted by his good sermon—especially if he hits the alien sinner hard with the gospel plan of salvation. But if he starts talking about our Lord's command to go and teach the lost, the great majority of us turn on our selective cafeteria mode and tune him out.

Did the Holy Spirit have us in mind when he had John pen the following words, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:4). In failing to obey this command to teach, are we any less guilty than the one who hasn't obeyed our Lord's command to be baptized? When the Bible speaks of obedience, no where does God leave the decision up to us as to whether we want to obey only certain commandments. The great principle laid down in Deuteronomy 12:32 is still in effect today under the law of Christ. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." Jesus said it like this, "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).



## A MOST IGNORED COMMANDMENT

The great commission is perhaps Jesus' most ignored commandment. A teacher recently told a small west Texas congregation that if a farmer puts gasoline in his tractor, you know he is planning to use it. He then told the congregation that their baptistry was dry and had been dry for months and it was obvious, therefore, they had no intention of using it. How sad! We preach the truth of God's word but obey only those commands that we are comfortable with and that requires but little effort. Because of this we could easily make the words of our Lord applicable to the situation today by substituting the average "Christian" for the "scribes and Pharisees". Then the Lord would say to the whole world, "All therefore they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matthew 23:3).

Whether it is the Lord's command to go into all the world and preach the gospel—or whether it is his command to give—or whether it is his command to visit the fatherless and the widows—or whichever commandment it is, as his servants ours is not to question or make a choice but to obey. "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11:28). "To obey is better than sacrifice" (I Samuel 15:22).

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

# **BINDING AND LOOSING**

Eddie Whitten

So much attention has been given to the destructiveness of "Liberalism" infecting the church in the last many years that "Anti-ism" has seemingly regained some of its former influence among our brethren. The excuse, "Well, it is closer to the truth than liberalism," is not an acceptable escape. The fact of the matter is that "Anti-ism" is just as wrong and sinful as "Liberalism."

Jesus gave the limitations for faithful worship when he promised the apostles that He would build His church. He said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). It is evident from this statement that Jesus gave to the apostles permission and obligation to allow in the church that which is allowed in Heaven, and deny to the church that which is not allowed in Heaven. The NASV renders this verse correctly. Many verses confirm the revelation of scripture which the apostles preached (I Corinthians 2:13; Galatians 1:11-12; I Thessalonians 2:13; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3, among many others).

## **EXPEDIENCY CONFUSED**

We must be acutely aware of Bible authority! Without respect for the authority of the Bible for what we are and what we do, we have no pilot, no helm, no rudder to keep us on the road to heaven. It has long been established that Bible authority may be ascertained in three basic ways: direct statement (in its various forms), implication (or, necessary inference), and approved example. These are, in spite of the vocal, yet baseless, objections of the liberals, the only ways of determining whether an action is authorized, or not. Some are trying to add expediency to these three methods of ascertaining Biblical authority. Let us consider why expediency is not a method of determining whether an action is authorized, therefore demonstrating it to be a method of ascertaining authority.

Authority is that which allows an action. Unless forbidden the lack of authority is that which prohibits an action. The lack of understanding of this very basic principle resulted in the division of the church in the latter part of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century. This led to the establishment of the Christian Church and the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship, the missionary society, etc. Expediency is that which allows any action that falls within the limits of authority. An example: Elders are men who lead, feed, rule over, superintend, protect, and have the oversight of the congregation (Acts 20:28; I Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:7, 17; I Peter 5:2). They must meet certain qualifications to serve in that capacity. They exercise authority over the congregation in which they serve. They have authority! Yet, their authority is not

the legislative authority. They operate only in the confines of Biblical authority. Their area of authority is known as expediency!

Expediency requires two elements. First, there must be an obligation for an action. For instance, the church is to come together for worship (Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:25). The assembling together of the Saints is an obligation. Second, there must be an advantage involved to accomplish the obligation. A meeting place is necessary for the Saints to assemble. What would be the best way to accomplish the obligation? That may vary in individual circumstances. A separate building, rented rooms, a house, under a tree are all possibilities. The most appropriate way to meet for worship becomes expedient to accomplish the obligation.

The church has been given the marching orders of the Master. Matthew 28:19 tells us to go teach all nations. "Going" is the obligation. How we go is left up to us. Today, in most cases it would not be expedient to walk from California to New York when there are many better ways to accomplish the obligation. The best way is the expedient.

## **WHY "LIBERALISM" AND "ANTI-ISM" IS SIN**

Expediency is the only area in which elders operate. They cannot add to or take away from the Bible and bind such on the congregation. Neither can they neglect or ignore laws God has bound on his children. What God has willed, man cannot change. When God has loosed (approved or allowed) it is not within man's authority to change it. "Anti-ism" is guilty of binding upon God's children what God has allowed his children to do. Not permitting the action of people to do what God says they can do is assuming authority that is not given. That is sin! "Anti-ism" has many facets all of which, having been bound upon people, constitute sin.

"Liberalism" is the opposite extreme of "Anti-ism." Instead of binding upon people that which God approves, liberalism allows actions that God has forbidden. Thus, allowing what God has forbidden transgresses his law (II John 9). Transgression of the law is sin (I John 3:4).



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Let us hasten to issue a disclaimer at this point. Freedom to do things authorized in a different manner from what others do can be a matter of expediency. As long as such conforms to that which is authorized it should not be the concern of others. It is only when opinion is pressed as a matter of obligation that it violates God's limits as to binding or loosing.

#### THE FALLACY OF COMPROMISE

There is danger inherent in the excuse, "Well, they are closer to the truth than liberalism." There are some things done in denominational bodies that are according to the truth. It is not the truth that condemns one's conduct. It is the absence of truth that kills. Were it not for error, all people would be saved. The truth of the matter is that error is not truth! Those not engaged in worshipping God in spirit and in truth are worshipping in vain (Matthew 15:9) because they are not following what God has either bound or loosed. We do not have to look at religious bodies other than the Lord's church to find the attitude that "Anti-ism" and/or "Liberalism" is a matter of choice. Do not be de-

ceived, brethren, one is just as much in violation of God's law as the other. John warned against receiving false teaching into your house (II John 10) and says that they that giveth them (the false teachers) God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (v. 11). That makes those who compromise the truth of God guilty of sin either by binding where God has not bound, or by loosing where God has not loosed.

We must not, as God's children, compromise truth under any circumstance. It may be convenient to worship at a location closer to our home. It may be that we have good friends that are liberal, or anti. It may be that there is not a faithful congregation near our home and would necessitate travel of perhaps several miles. None of the excuses we offer will, or can, displace the sin of compromise. John still says that, "**they that worship [God] must worship him in spirit and in truth**" (John 4:24). Anything less, or more, than that is unacceptable in the sight of God.

—3616 Brown Trail  
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## Mormonism

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## JUBILEE: FOR WHOM THE BELLS HAVE TOLLED

J. E. Choate

"Jubilee calls it quits after a twelve year stint." This is the headline on page three of the July 2001 *Christian Chronicle* announcing closure on Nashville Jubilee, Inc. The editors of the *Christian Chronicle* are prone to write stories with obvious biased agendas favoring one side while blind-siding another. The article is a poor piece of journalism as the unidentified writer steered clear of the personalities and forces which led to the crumbling of Jubilee.

### RUBEL AND FRIENDS ARE NOT FRIENDS TO THE LORD'S CHURCH

The Nashville news media got it right that Jubilee folded because the rank and file of the hundreds of area churches of Christ eventually lost all confidence that **Rubel Shelly** and his associates were friends of the "traditional" churches of Christ by branding and giving the churches of Christ a denominational identity. Some respected leaders in churches of Christ who were early friends of Jubilee as speakers and supporters later on boycotted Jubilee.

How the following can be explained is far beyond me. Why were **Lynn Anderson** and **Leroy Garrett**, these two enemies of the "traditional" church of Christ, featured on the last Jubilee. And, why was **Don Finto** left out of the alien mixture. In a Jubilee promotion breakfast on the eve of Jubilee '97, **Max Lucado** said publicly that Don Finto is his hero. What motivated Abilene Christian University and Lipscomb Bible faculty to show up on the last Jubilee? **Mark Black**, **Douglas Foster**, **John Mark Hicks**, **Rubel Shelly**, **Gayle Napier**, **Max Lucado**, and **Jeff Walling** had destroyed every possibility that Jubilee could succeed by staging some of the most bizarre religious exhibitions seen in Nashville since the days of **Jesse B. Ferguson**.

### THOUGHTLESS JOURNALISTIC NONSENSE

It is a continuing source of aggravation to read the statement of the editorial policy of the paper that the "*Christian Chronicle* is a newspaper committed to the highest standards of journalistic excellence and seeks to inform, inspire and unite churches world wide." In my biased personal opinion, this is a piece of thoughtless nonsense. In the words of a recent editor, and I agree, the *Christian Chronicle* has been the launching pad in some degree for every new religious fad coming down the pike ranging from the Promise Keepers, **Peter Wagner's** "Third Wave," **John Wimber's** "Vineyards," **Bill Hybel's** Willow Creek Community Church concept, the Toronto Airport blessing, and the scavenger dogs of the Jesus Seminar at the foot of the cross of Jesus. Some of the endorsements comes from by-passing and ignoring the realities and influences of neo-liberal theology, and the "church growth" gimmicks which are curled up in the programs of our liberal brethren.

**Olan Hicks** raised two questions in the sixth and seventh years of the annual meetings of Nashville Jubilee, Inc., in his publication *News & Notes* about Jubilee. The first question Hicks raised in his 1994 publication — "Will they be able to kill it [Jubilee]?" And soon after Jubilee '95, he raised the second question— "JUBILEE, A BATTLEGROUND FOR WHAT?"

I propose to answer the two questions. The first one as a church historian, and the second one for the reason which Aristotle gave that man is so constituted by nature that he has the natural curiosity to know what the documented facts are.

I begin with the major premise that the biblical churches of Christ do not constitute a structured sectarian definable

(Continued On Page 6)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Editorial...

## MAX LUCADO'S IDENTITY PROBLEM

On August 6, 2001 *The Baptist Standard* published an interview with Max Lucado by Toby Durin, writer for the Baptist paper. The article is entitled "MAX LUCADO: King's author". With the article there is a picture of Lucado and his wife Denalyn signing Lucado's books at Dallas Baptist University where he received an honorary doctorate in the Spring of 2001.

In answering questions regarding why he is "a Church of Christ minister" and his "call to ministry" Lucado tells us what we have known for a long time—"I went ... to Abilene Christian University, where professors had a profound influence on me." He revealed that after receiving his master's degree in Bible from ACU and "then two years' experience in a church in Florida"... "I began to be aware of some of the legalisms in the Churches of Christ". Lucado then comments that he "had been part of a church in Abilene that was a progressive, grace-oriented church and wasn't feeling I needed to change churches." Following his return in 1988 from Brazil he "had an opportunity to join forces with Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago and others." Continuing his comment on his "ministry" Lucado said:

I don't consider myself a revolutionary; I'm not trying to wake everyone up. But a lot of them have written me off... But I really don't consider myself a Church of Christ minister. I consider myself a minister at Oak Hills, which happens to still call themselves a Church of Christ. But if I should leave Oak Hills, I couldn't see myself going to another Church of Christ. I would go anywhere the Lord sends me. I think I would make a good Baptist.

Another question asked Lucado by Durin was, "What do you say to those who say you sound more like a Baptist than a member of the church of Christ?" Lucado answered:

I say, 'Thank you.' I really do, because I have benefited so much from the teachings of Baptists, especially in the area of understanding God's grace. When I was working in the oil fields in West Texas, the truck I was driving had a radio that could only pick up one radio station, and I heard a Baptist preacher present the gospel. He made it sound so sweet and so simple that I pulled over to the side of the road and rededicated my life.

When asked about the meaning of baptism Lucado remarked:

There are those in Churches of Christ who teach baptism is a work necessary for a person to be saved. I cer-

tainly do not hold to that, but I think it is something sacred to God and is to be exalted. We teach immediate baptism. Somebody who has accepted Christ can be baptized immediately here, just as the Philippian jailer was in Acts 16. I know many Baptists practice that as well, but I know there are many who disagree with me.

#### THAT FOR WHICH LUCADO APOLOGIZED AND THAT FOR WHICH HE DID NOT

On August 14, 2001, Lucado offered an apology of sorts on his web site for part of what he said in the previously noted interview. In his web site comment he specified the part of the interview for which he "apologized". The quote begins: "...I don't consider myself a revolutionary"...and closing with the sentence..."I think I would make a good Baptist." Earlier in this article I gave the complete quote. He said his words were "careless, insensitive and disrespectful. And, most of all, they really don't reflect my heart. My affection for the Churches of Christ runs deep." He continued with:

And what about the phrase, "I would never serve in another Church of Christ"? What's missing on paper is the tone of voice and personality of this part of the conversation. The truth of the matter is that the sentence was an attempt at levity. A lame attempt. Something more in the manner of: "It's not that I wouldn't serve at another Church of Christ, but more that another church of Christ probably wouldn't want me."

This does not come across in the article. Regretfully, arrogance and aloofness does. For that I am deeply sorry. I can't "unsay" the words, but I can apologize for them. Please forgive me.

Any "Church of Christ" that would have Lucado must believe that baptism is not in order to the salvation of the sinner. Thus, it would be an apostate church. In receiving into its fellowship those who are not baptized for the remission of sins, given enough time to follow such a view, it would cease to be the Lord's church at all. It would become just another manmade institution—a sect among the sects. Which, evidently, is what Lucado and company desire to be.

In the interview in the *Baptist Standard* Lucado made it clear that:

There are those in Churches of Christ who teach baptism is a work necessary for a person to be saved. I certainly do not hold to that, but I think it is something sacred to God and is to be exalted.

Lucado did not apologize or ask forgiveness for teaching his false doctrine about baptism. However, with that statement he further confirms why he said over a radio program some years ago that all a lost person had to do to be saved was ask God to forgive him. Thus, Lucado is forced to consider anyone who believes in Christ as savior to be saved without being

baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27; I Peter 3:21).

Lucado is denominational to the core. And, whether he becomes a Baptist by associating with them, having them acknowledge him as such, and wearing the Baptist name or not, he certainly holds their false doctrine on baptism.

#### A SOLUTION TO LUCADO'S IDENTITY CRISES

If the Oak Hills church in San Antonio, Texas would change its name to Oak Hills Baptist Church, Lucado would automatically be a Baptist preacher. Thus, the Oak Hills church and Lucado would be where they need to be without anyone having to move. If Lucado and the Oak Hills church will not repent of their sins, then let us pray that the Oak Hills church, Lucado, and all who believe as they do will move out of the Lord's church into whatever denomination makes them feel most comfortable.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### POSTMODERNISTS

##### RICHARD T. HUGHES AND R. L. ROBERTS

A good example of the postmodernism propaganda machine is seen in the following example. **Richard T. Hughes** and **R. L. Roberts** have recently authored a book entitled "The Churches of Christ." Hughes is professor of Religion at *Pepperdine University*, Malibu, California. Roberts has served as the Archivist in the Center for Restoration Studies, *Abilene Christian University*. In a review of their book contained in a flyer advertising it, more proof of the influence of postmodernism is evidenced. Such is discerned from their viewpoint of the church. Please study the following quote. It reads:

This volume tells the story of the Churches of Christ, one of three major **denominations** that emerged in the United States from a religious movement led by Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone in the early nineteenth century. Beginning as an effort to provide a basis on which all Christians in America could unite, the leaders of the movement relied on the faith and practice of the primitive church. Ironically, this unity movement eventually divided precisely along the lines of its original agenda, as the Churches of Christ rallied around the restorationist banner while the Disciples of Christ gathered around the ecumenical cause. Yet, having begun as a *countercultural sect*, the Churches of Christ emerged in the twentieth century as a *culture affirming denomination*. This brief history, together with biographical sketches of major leaders, provides a complete overview of the **denomination** in America.

The book begins with a concise and yet detailed history of the **denomination's** beginnings in the early nineteenth century. Tracing the influence of such leaders as Stone and Campbell, the authors chronicle the triumphs and conflicts of the **denomination** through the nine-

teenth century and its reemergence and renewal in the twentieth century. The biographical dictionary of leaders in the Churches Christ rounds out the second half of the book, and a chronology of important events in the history of the **denomination** offers a quick reference guide. A detailed bibliographic essay concludes the book and points readers to further reading about Churches of Christ (Bold and Italics mine-DPB).

At this writing I have not read the book promoted by the flyer. However, from the flyer alone I can determine the disposition of the authors toward the church. Notice in their remarks how they refer to the Lord's church as a "denomination" (no less than six times) and "sect" (one time). Furthermore, in the following sentence from the flyer the authors reveal their postmodernist bias. The sentence reads, "Yet, having begun as a **countercultural** sect, the Churches of Christ emerged in the twentieth century as a **culture-affirming** denomination (Bold mine-DPB)." Please notice the bolded words of the sentence: "countercultural" and "culture-affirming". These are words that reveal the biased postmodernist mindset of the authors.

Remember, postmodernists believe that the interpreter of the Bible cannot escape the influence of his cultural, historical, social, or religious conditioning. As **Walter Liefeld** wrote:

Underneath much of the discussion is the idea that we cannot ever arrive at the true meaning of a text because our own "horizon" prevents us from achieving an undistorted perception of the "horizon" of the biblical writer.<sup>1</sup>

From the so-called "scholarship movement" (a motley collection of postmodernist professors who are members of the church of Christ) comes the following quote regarding their view of the impact of culture on understanding the scriptures. The quote reads:

The interpreter who approaches a text, it is argued, already brings along a certain amount of cultural, linguistic, and ethical baggage. Even the questions the interpreter tries to ask (fails to ask) of the text reflect the limitations imposed by that baggage; they will in some measure shape the kind of 'responses' that come back from the text and the interpreter's understanding of them.<sup>2</sup>

The words of the promotional flyer previously quoted betray the philosophical and theological prejudice behind the authors' work. Hughes and Roberts do not believe that one can know the Bible as those in the first century knew it. Thus, they believe and teach that the church always will reflect the cultural, social, and historical bias of those who interpret the scriptures and, therefore, the conclusion(s) drawn

regarding them. These are they who have advocated the "new hermeneutics" as the correct approach to the interpretation of the Bible. Thus, postmodernism is the mother to her illegitimate child, the "new hermeneutics". The postmodernist/"new hermeneutiker" (as **Terry Hightower** calls them) believes and teaches:

1. It is false to view the Bible as an inspired blueprint or pattern.<sup>3</sup>
2. It is wrong to treat the Bible as "propositional."<sup>4</sup>
3. Not enough attention has been given to the different kinds literature of the Bible (poetry, epistle, parable, apocalyptic).<sup>5</sup>
4. The "old hermeneutic" does not take into account the historical context in interpreting scripture.
5. The "old hermeneutic" assumed the early church could put scriptures together from a complete canon, thus drawing conclusions from the various passages.<sup>6</sup>

Space does not allow for a full examination and refutation of these false views. However, in the upcoming Denton lectures, I have adequately dealt with and refuted them.

#### IS IT "C" OR "c"?

In the case of Hughes and Roberts' new book this means that they apply the terms "denomination" and "sect" to the "Church of Christ" (as well as capitalize the "C" in the word church: one of their ways of referring to the Lord's church as a denomination). Why do they call the church a denomination? They do it because they do not believe it possible to reproduce the church today just as it is revealed on the pages of the New Testament. Why do Hughes and Roberts hold such a crazy view? It is because they do not believe the New Testament to be an inspired, infallible, and divine blueprint. Thus, to them, it is not the final, absolute, objective, complete and humanly attainable standard in matters moral and religious. Hughes and Roberts do not believe one is able to understand the scriptures apart from one's cultural, social, etc., setting in life. Many years ago Hughes clearly stated that he did not believe the Bible to be an inspired, infallible blueprint or pattern.<sup>7</sup> But postmodernists/"new hermeneutikers," such as Hughes and Roberts, expect their multi-cultured readers with their minds variously seasoned thereby to reach the same conclusions as they do when they read and reason with the authors' "culturally," "socially," etc., flavored and charged words. This sorry view is nothing less than absurdity gone to seed. It simply allows people to believe whatever is right in their own eyes (Judges 21:25).

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**DR. MICHAEL ARMOUR AT CANE RIDGE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CELEBRATION OF POSTMODERNISM**

From DallasNews.com of the *Dallas Morning News* comes more evidence of postmodernism in the Lord's church. On August 4, 2001 "the Cane Ridge Preservation Project of the Disciples of Christ hosted a celebration" at the old Cane Ridge meeting house in Bourbon County, Kentucky. "The underlying goal was to restore fellowship among three estranged traditions that trace their roots to the Restoration Movement that began there."

Dr. Michael Armour, former minister of the 900-member Skillman Avenue Church of Christ in Dallas, lectured and preached during the gathering. He challenged the Churches of Christ to embrace fellowship with the other groups in the spirit of the movement's forefathers. Resist "isolationist" tendencies, he said, or else risk becoming irrelevant and ineffective.

"The postmodern world is committed to diversity and harmony," he argued. "Now more than ever, if we remain divided, we will limit and even impair our witness to the world as Christians."

Armour advocates postmodernism. He actually calls for "unity in diversity" when he speaks of "The postmodern world" being "committed to diversity and harmony." What he advocates is the desire of many today namely, the "community church" concept. Such churches require one to believe in the Fatherhood of God, Christ as his son, and only savior. But, just exactly at what point one obtains this salvation is not important (usually it is "salvation by faith only"). One is not to question another on such matters. However and whenever one was "saved" he/she is now to serve and worship God in whatever way it suits him/her—shades of Cain (Genesis 4; Hebrews 11:4). All other beliefs are virtually irrelevant. Thus, doctrine is not important.

In these churches everyone does his/her best to dodge any doctrinal differences they have. In reality they are all denominational rather than non or undenominational. There is no harmony in such an arrangement. Moreover, they hate all who seek to do only what the Bible teaches (authorizes by direct statements, implication, and example), because they do not believe one can understand the Bible beyond what I have previously noted. They are a perfect example of compounded confusion.

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**BRIAN YEAGER GOES "ANTI"  
(HOSEA 4:17)**

On August 1, 2001 Yeager released the following statement. In part it reads:

I, Brian A. Yeager, am no longer practicing, teaching, or suggesting that Institutionalism is biblical. I guess that makes me "Non-Institutional". I believe this is what the Bible teaches and this is what I teach (1 Peter 4:11). Hope this clears up any questions. Yes, anyone may make that as public as they wish.

Yeager preaches for the Butler, Pennsylvania Church of Christ and they, evidently, believe the same thing he does. Yeager and the Butler church, therefore, have embraced the explicit doctrines of the "anti" cooperation, "anti" orphan home, "anti" helping non-saints out of the church treasury, and "anti" kitchen in the building hobby riding brethren. However, will they embrace the implications of their doctrine? Please remember truth does not imply error. Hence, Yeager and the Butler congregation now hold views that imply:

1. A Christian who takes one thin dime out of the church treasury to buy milk to feed a starving infant will go to hell when he dies unless he repents of such a sin.
2. Christians who eat a meal in a church building will go to hell when they die unless they repent of such a sin.
3. Christians do not sin when money out of the church treasury is used to provide toilets whereby members may eliminate from their physical systems the remains of meals they ate in their own homes and prepared in their own kitchens.
4. It is a sin for a Christian mother to breast feed her infant child or to give it a bottle of milk in the church building.
5. It is a sin for a church member to drink water in a church building.
6. It is a sin to have a water fountain in a church building.
7. It is not a sin to have a urinal in the men's restrooms in the church building.
8. It is not a sin for an "anti" preacher to eat his lunch in his study in the church building as long as he does not allow any one else to eat with him, except maybe his wife and/or his children.

On and on I could go with the ludicrous implications of these brethren's false doctrines, but lack of space demands I stop.

Suffice it to say that the "Antis" (those who bind on men that which God does not bind on them in his word) and "liberals" (those who loose men from what God in his word has bound on them) to a certain extent occupy common ground: both enjoy legislating for God. And, why do they do it? Neither the "anti" nor the "liberal" is content with only what God has authorized. As far as the "anti" is concerned, God did not have enough sense to issue enough rules. For the "liberal" God was too strict, thus he has too many

rules. Moreover, each faction has no compunction of conscience when it comes to dividing the Lord's church over their hobbies. The "antis" with their doctrines stifle, strangle and hinder the church while the "liberals" by their doctrines send it into the oblivion of denominational sectarianism.

Yeager and the Butler congregation (like all "antis" of various stripes) have steered so hard to the opposite direction in order to stay out of the ditch ("liberal") on the left side of the road they have overcompensated. Thereby they have run head long into the ditch ("anti") on the right side of the road. Allowing for the road to represent the truth (John 8:31, 32; 17:17), I never have thought that the ditch (error) to the right of the road (truth) was any more pleasant a place in which to wreck one's faith than the ditch (error) to the left of the road (truth). After all you have only traded one ditch (error) for another ditch (error). In either case you have wrecked your faith (I Timothy 1:19).

#### THE "ANTI" BRAND OF UNITY

I wonder what side Yeager and the Butler church will take on marriage, divorce, and remarriage—the **Homer Hailey** position (basically the late **James D. Bales'** doctrine) or those who oppose that view. Do they believe in "mental divorce" or otherwise? Will they support *Florida College* in all things, or will they be upset over recent charges that *Florida College* has allowed error regarding the creation of the earth to be taught. On which side will they stand? Will Yeager and the Butler church side with **Jeff Asher** who af-

firmed that Jesus never used any divine attribute on earth? Or, will they side with **David Bonner** who affirmed that while on earth in the flesh Jesus had and used divine human attributes? While on earth could Jesus have sinned or was it impossible for him to sin? Some "antis" say yes, some say no. With which position will Yeager and the Butler church side? I am sure that Yeager and the Butler church will "side" with the "right side" of the "anti" side". The truth of the matter with most of these brethren is this: As long as an "anti" opposes cooperation between churches (sponsoring churches), helping non-saints out of the church treasury, orphans' homes, and a kitchen in the church building, they will manage in some way or another to hang together—and hang together they will.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Walter L. Liefeld, *New Testament Exposition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), p. 23.
2. Carson, Part 2: "Christian Scholars Conference" (Malibu, CA: Pepperdine University, July 1987), p. 128. From a paper presented to the conference describing the approach of the "New Hermeneutic."
3. C. Leonard Allen, Richard T. Hughes, and Michael R. Weed, *The Worldly Church* (Abilene, TX ACU Press, 1988), pp. 40, 58-59.
4. Bill Swetmon, "The Historical Method in Hermeneutics," *Image 5* (July 1989), p. 23.
5. Leroy Garrett, "In What Way is the Bible Authoritative?" *Restoration Review 29* (March 1987), p. 43.
6. Roy B. Ward, "The Restoration Principle: A Critical Analysis," *Restoration Quarterly 4* (1965), pp. 203ff.
7. Allen, Hughes, and Weed, *loc cit*.
8. Omri Elisha, Religion Section, "Estranged 'Restoration' churches recall revival that launched their movement" (Dallas, TX: *The Dallas Morning News*, August 18, 2001)

—David P. Brown, *Editor-in-Chief*

## JUBILEE. . .

(Continued From Page 1)

denomination despite the *Chronicle's* support of **Richard Hughes** and **Douglas Foster** who attempt to make their case with the full editorial support of the *Chronicle* editors.

I think of myself as a disciplined Restoration church historian. And I am confident that I understand as an "arm chair theologian and philosopher" to some extent what my liberal brethren have in mind when it comes right down to the concepts of neo-modern-liberal theology. I earned the three-year seminary degree in the prestigious Vanderbilt School of Religion. My initial purpose was to learn the substance and parameters of post neo-orthodoxy theology. The theology of **Barth**, **Bultmann**, and **Tillich** are now mostly dovetailed into the theology now identified with the **Jesus Seminar**. I have no inclination to speak or to write on frivolous matters down off in some remote "foggy bottom."

I have been interested in Nashville Jubilee, Inc., since its incorporation in 1989. The three sponsoring churches of Nashville Jubilee, Inc., were the **Madison**, **Woodmont Hills**, and the **Antioch Churches of Christ**. The "three preachers" who took the lead in organizing and directing Jubilee were **Rubel Shelly**, **Steve Flatt**, and **Walt Leaver**. Their vision for Jubilee was perhaps much like the **North American Christian Convention** which brings **Independent Christian Churches** together in a great annual fraternal meeting. It is a time of great joy for the **Digressive** to honor their church and to celebrate its unity and its strength with the common resolve to glorify and to build up their denomination. The success of the **NACC** has been spectacular since its first meeting in 1927 to the present. The **NACC** was organized in 1926 to stop the liberal **Disciples** from exercising control over the local churches through their national and local conventions.

The "conservative" and "liberal" **Christian Churches [Disciples of Christ]** fought running pitched battles over the next forty years to determine the control over the local churches—by the local elders, or by the national and re-

gional convention officers. The separation in the Christian Churches had to wait until the 1968 Restructure before becoming two separately defined denominations. This proved to be a flawed and fatal error in the strategy of the Disciples of Christ to form a denomination with the design in mind to capture and to force the Christian Churches into their orbit for the single minded purpose of local church control. The liberal Disciples have lost ground ever since.

#### SHELLY KNOWS THE HISTORY

Rubel Shelly is acutely cognizant of the present strife and controversy in the ranks of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ. Rubel Shelly knows the history and the enormous success of the Independent Christian Churches wrought through the NACC halting and stopping the liberal Disciples of Christ in the closing years of the 20th century. **Isaac Errett**, founder of the *Christian Standard*, did more after **Alexander Campbell** to create the sectarian theology of the Independent Christian Church thereby making it one of America's most viable and successful denominations. The NACC from its inception has been the supporter and champion of the Independent Christian Church—not its enemy as are certainly the “change agents” to the “traditional” churches of Christ. Is it not strange that Rubel Shelly, this chief divider of the biblical churches of Christ, should fancy himself as a pacifier and peacemaker?

The case is entirely different with Jubilee. The paramount hidden agenda of the “makers and shakers” of Jubilee has been to attack and to destroy the identity of the biblical churches of Christ, and to create a neo-modern Christian Church “like denomination.” This was the paramount reason why Jubilee failed. The “change agents” have been striving to undermine and destroy the “traditional” churches of Christ since the defunct *Mission* and *Image* papers started publication. This also is the case with *Wineskins*. The names of the first generation of “change agents” who put the biblical church of Christ under attack are in a book published in 1966 and titled *Voices of Concern*.

#### A “WANTA BE” CAMPBELL

Dr. Shelly perhaps may envision himself as the reincarnation of Alexander Campbell, Isaac Errett, **David Lipscomb**, and **N. B. Hardeman** destined to become the one supreme leader of the churches of Christ of the 21st century. He may have been led to believe in his early formative years by the likes of **Thomas Warren** that he had all the potential charismatic gifts to become one of the greatest Restoration leaders of this age. There is no evidence to suggest that Steve Flatt and Walt Leaver have little more than a popular secondary knowledge of Restoration history.

I was on the floor of the North American Christian Convention for several days when **Adron Doran** and I were researching and writing the Calhoun biography. Rubel Shelly has appeared on NACC as an honored fraternal guest speaker with nothing favorable to say about the biblical churches of Christ. Rubel Shelly is the brother who publicly apologized during Jubilee for the role David Lipscomb played in dividing the Restoration churches early in the 20th century.

#### A FALSE ACCUSATION

Jubilee prospered without too much criticism from some until Jubilee '91 when a “mad cow” like virus struck Jubilee which could not be erased, cooked, or burnt out despite the efforts of the Jubilee “shakers” and “makers” to do so. The hapless family counselor of the Harpeth Hills church of Christ made his “off-the-wall” scurrilous attack on the biblical churches of Christ in both Lipscomb and Jubilee settings. He described the biblical churches of Christ as being dominated by “power mad” authoritarian elders whose control lead to incest and other deviate forms of sexual behavior within churches of Christ families.

I went on the Lipscomb campus to talk with the Lipscomb student counselors who defended the contention as to the credibility of its documentation. The best answer I got was that this was in a college text book, but without a single reference whatsoever to churches of Christ. No such researched and documented study has ever been made within churches of Christ. **Guy N. Woods** wrote an article in the *Gospel Advocate* protesting the accusation. The incumbent Lipscomb president marched off down to the Advocate office to call its editor on the carpet for printing the article as if this were his God-given imperative to do so. There was no denial of the story from either Lipscomb or Jubilee officials that the biblical churches of Christ are so polluted according to the accusation made by the Harpeth church counselor. This was the single event which sullied and ultimately triggered the ignominious decline of Jubilee and its demise in 2000. Brother Hicks, this is one of the battlegrounds, and we know what battleground.

I had paid little attention to Jubilee up to this time, but I attended and chronicled every Jubilee afterwards in numerous articles which have been printed in several church of Christ journals. Only one person has challenged my credibility of factual reporting as to what Jubilee is and what went on in the annual events. This brother is **Phillip Morrison**. He soon learned in a series of personal letters that this is not a matter for “bush leaguers” to address. While large numbers over the years do not and have not read my articles in four papers—*Contending for the Faith*, *Biblical Notes*, *Firm Foundation*, and *Yokefellow*, they can be fetched up in the search engines of the *World Wide Web*, and I did not put them there.

#### SHELLY—AS SILENT AS AN OYSTER

We are made to wonder why Dr. Shelly was not the first to tell us that Jubilee would be no more. The first formal announcement was made in a church publication of the Twickenham Church of Christ which received national press “hee haw” notoriety by switching from apostolic doctrine to the Mayberry theology according to Barney and Goober. Not one of the original creators of Nashville Jubilee, Inc., has given out so much as a “peep” why Jubilee folded. Odd it is that Jubilee 2001 had already been set up on the Woodmont Hills Family of God web site with Jeff Walling slated to be keynote speaker. Why was Jubilee 2001 aborted? We await answers from Shelly in an answer to Olan Hicks' first question—will they be able to kill



Jubilee. Max Lucado had delivered the coup de grace to Jubilee even before the opening session of Jubilee '97. Lucado's radio speech in which he taught that salvation comes as the result of a sinner's prayer without baptism for the remission of sins beat him to Nashville. This was at the time when a vast advertising scheme was in full gear to introduce Max Lucado to the general area public. A huge crowd flooded the new magnificent coliseum the first night in downtown Nashville. The Jubilee planners had in mind a meeting that would put the 1922 Hardeman Tabernacle on the back burner. But alas Shelley, et al, this great event turned into a grand debacle for Jubilee's future. The Nashville news media had a field day in opining that Jubilee was standing on tottering legs and might not survive.

On the eve of Jubilee '97, sixty-eight leaders and concerned members of the churches of Christ in the Nashville area met in an informal meeting in the the Concord Road church of Christ. They passed no resolutions, nor issued any joint declaration stating their opposition to the Nashville Jubilee, Inc. They took no concerted action against Jubilee. They gathered to let it be known that whatever confidence once enjoyed by Jubilee was now gone, and no longer would they be silent in their opposition to Jubilee. That meeting meant that Jubilee could not survive as time and events have proved.

#### "SLIP SLIDING AWAY"

However, Jubilee was not yet finished. **Philip Morrison** issued the formal announcement that there would be a Jubilee '98 with the strange statement that "more churches are providing more money... than ever before." Jubilee '98 came off with one of most bizarre religious gatherings every witnessed in Nashville. Who will forget the coffin and the fresh dug grave on the Jubilee stage. A woman led the singing assisted by instrumental music, and choir groups on the stage with her. **Harold Hazelip** was the emcee of the meetings. Thousand and thousands of empty seats soared to the ceiling around the floor where the bulk of Jubilee attendants sat. But there still had to be a last Jubilee 2000 with Lynn Anderson as the key note speaker. Lo and behold there was Leroy Garrett on the program. What could have been more fitting to signal the end of Jubilee than the presence of these two ancient foes of the churches of Christ. The crowd at Jubilee 2000 had dwindled down to a ghost of its former years. Who killed cock robin? This is a good question in a Jubilee setting.

Jubilee went out, not with a bang, but a whimper. The last announcement was already carried on the Woodmont Hills Family of God web site that there would be Jubilee 2001 with Jeff Walling slated to be the keynote speaker. For some reason known only to God and the Jubilee people, not another formal statement to this day has come from Woodmont Hills that Jubilee would be no more. Dubious reasons were given why this monumental failure had come to pass which were set forth in a brief nebulous article in the *Christian Chronicle*.

#### ADDENDUM

Since 1992, I have written a large number of articles covering a wide range of subjects ranging from Willow Creek Community Church to the Jesus Seminar. I have

been encouraged to write as I have by some of the most highly recognized and respectable people in churches of Christ. Much of my research was done in the Vanderbilt University Library and the library on the Lipscomb campus. I have been assisted in my research by eminent scholars in the Vanderbilt School of Religion faculty who provided answers to questions beyond my scope of information. Another administration in another time could turn Lipscomb back onto the main road which David Lipscomb chartered. It will take more than PR rhetoric to do it.

**James O. Baird** and I met as freshman in Freed-Hardeman College in 1938. Our friendship continued until the time of his death. We were in a never ending communications with each other. His last letter came a short time before his death. I share this letter with the readers that I have received constant support from my brethren who have sat in high places in churches of Christ. This letter came from James Baird dated July 20, 1992 written under the letter head of Oklahoma Christian University of Science and Arts:

Dear J. E.,

I have read with interest your book reviews in the *Firm Foundation*. I appreciate them a great deal. You are better qualified academically and in terms of background information, to evaluate some of the things our brethren are reading and writing today than most of us.

I just wanted to drop you this note by way of encouragement, with the expressed hope that you keep it up.

Most sincerely,  
James O. Baird  
Chancellor Emeritus

We live in a free country and I have exercised my liberty, no less nor more, than my brethren, who have kept the biblical churches of Christ under attack now for forty years. I am not angry with them, why should they be so perturbed that I write as I do? I am also writing for audiences yet unborn who will look back and want to know what happened in the churches of Christ in these turbulent times. Today's stories will be history tomorrow. I solicit future historians to pass judgment on what I have written over a period of some fifty years.

My books have been reviewed in *Times*, *New York Times Book Review*, *Gospel Advocate*, and *Discipliana*, and others. My Vanderbilt Ph.D. was in English with a minor in history. I also studied journalism in Murray State College in my early years. I am fully confident that I understand and respect the principles of free American journalism. I am unlike Paul who was not "a whit behind in scholarship" of the leading rabbinical scholars of his day. But I am close enough behind our most learned scholars that tracking them is like tracking a full moon across a clear night sky in October.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Blvd.  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

# NO MORE JUBILEE, PLEASE

Jeff Sweeten

The "Jubilee" that convened in Nashville may not have had any earth-shattering impact here in Comanche, Texas but nationwide it has caused more hate and discontent in the brotherhood than any heresy since the Crossroads/Boston Movement. After twelve years of causing divisions in the church and ridiculing faithful Christians, promoting apostasy and apostates, and romancing denominational error, the Nashville Jubilee called it quits; and none too soon.

## MORRISON'S ATTEMPTED SMOKE SCREEN AND WHAT HE LET SLIP

In *The Christian Chronicle* (7/01), director Philip Morrison did his best to put a positive spin on the event's demise, citing cost of attendance concerns in the Nashville area. But blaming Nashville for \$140 hotel rooms and \$10 hamburgers is misdirected spin. Those kinds of prices are no exception to the rule at sporting events, rock concerts, seminars, and other forms of entertainment. This tomfoolery was nothing more than a smoke screen to hide the real reason for the Jubilee flop.

Morrison let it slip when he admitted that churches "who decided to maintain neutrality in regard to Jubilee's controversial aspects quit contributing." He confessed, "churches weren't willing to sponsor it." Why? Because, the Jubilee was "a divisive event in the Nashville area."

## "MAYBE JUST MAYBE"

Being an eternal optimist about the resilience of the Lord's church, maybe, just maybe:

1. churches of Christ are sick and tired of the spineless, simpering, compromising positions that many of our headliner speakers are taking with denominational error. It may have boosted book sales, but it was tearing the kingdom apart.

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:17-18).

2. Elders, whose fingers are on the pulse of the Lord's church, are realizing the importance of an informed flock. Jubilee is far, far away from Comanche, but its nasty, shallow ripples have not only rocked the boat, they have capsize the faith of many, and "through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you" (II Peter 2:3). "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

3. Christians are waking up to the identity crisis we have when lines of fellowship are crossed indiscriminately, but not with impunity!

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

We love our denominational neighbors, but not enough to disregard God's word.

4. Stewardship in God's service is coming into perspective. We will be held accountable for what we support; and, the accountability goes both ways. Missionaries, orphan's homes, and brotherhood publications need to account, not only for their work, but also for their doctrinal stand in Christ. "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). Supporting a work or worker that disregards God's word puts the steward's soul in jeopardy.

## WE ARE BETTER AND STRONGER BECAUSE JUBILEE IS GONE

Jubilee crumbled, not only because it was heretical and divisive, but also because maybe there is an awakening among the saints concerning the Lord's church. How could anyone say, "a lot of good was done," about an event that fostered the ridiculing of Christians and the creating of strife in the Church? With respect to Phillip Morrison, Jubilee was not good, and we are a better, stronger brotherhood with its demise.

—500 North Pearl Street  
Comanche, Texas 76442-2436

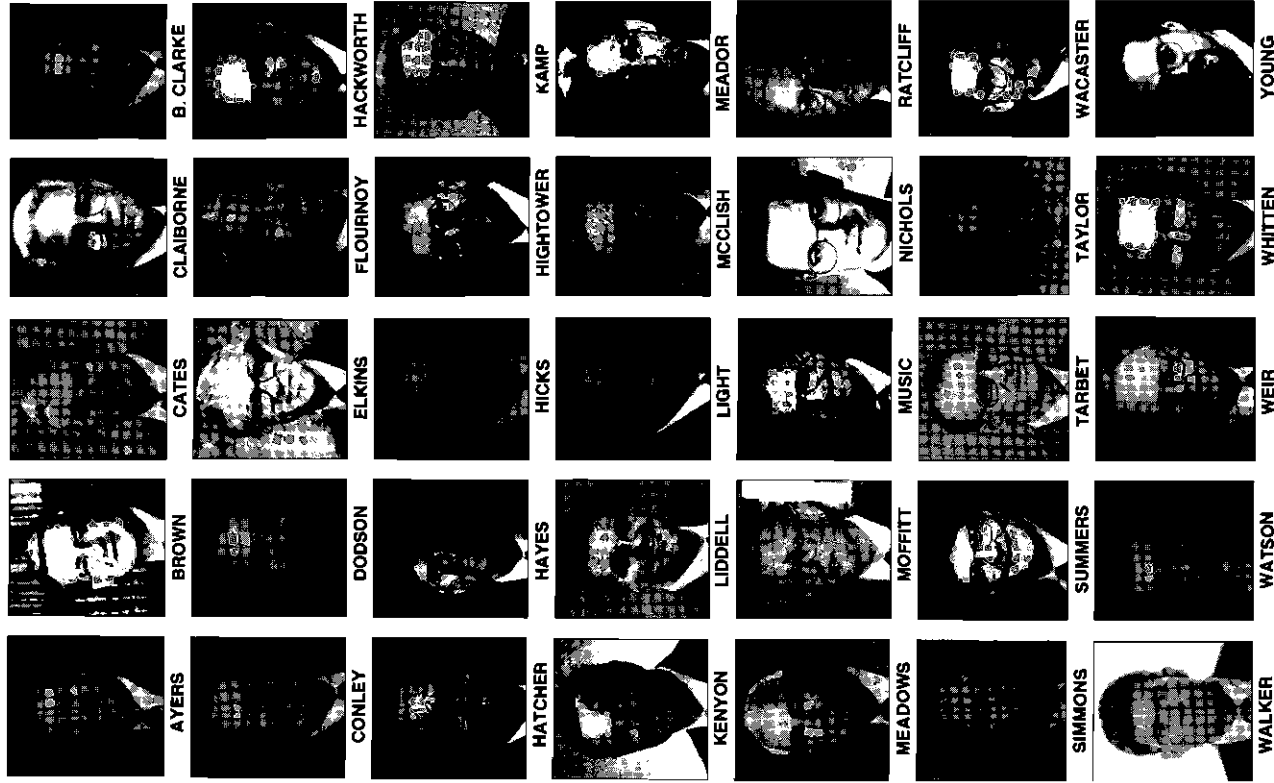
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Fourth Annual Leadership - October 14-15, 2001

# TWENTIETH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES

## DUB MCCLISH, DIRECTOR



# STUDIES IN 1 AND 2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

## NOVEMBER 11-15, 2001

### TWENTIETH ADL SCHEDULE

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 11	
9:00 AM Don Tarbet	First and Second Timothy and Titus—An Introduction
10:00 AM Dub McClish	The Qualifications of Deacons and Behavior in the Church (1 Tim. 3:8-16)
12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM Brian Kenyon	Answering False Doctrines: Does Paul teach that a bishop can drink no wine (1Co. 10:16), but a deacon can drink a little (1 Tim. 3:3, 8)? Does Paul authorize and advocate the appointment of deaconesses (3:11)? Does Paul teach the doctrine of universal salvation (4:10; cf. 1:3, 6; Tit. 2:11)? Can unmarried men ("the presbytery") impart spiritual gifts by laying their hands on others (4:14)?
3:00 PM Michael Hatcher	Paul's Care for and Charge to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:3-18)
4:00 PM David Wilson	Paul's Final Charge (1 Tim. 4:1-22)
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM Lester Kamp	Paul's Thankgiving for His Salvation (1 Tim. 1:12-20)
8:00 PM James Meadows	The Qualifications of Bishops (1 Tim. 3:1-7)
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12	
9:00 AM Eddie Whitten	Qualifications and Responsibilities of Elders (Tit. 1:1-16)
10:00 AM Michael Light	Answering False Doctrines: Are we saved, called, and predestined by grace alone, apart from any works whatsoever (2 Tim. 1:9)? Do the axils of society signal that these are "the last days" and that the Lord's return is imminent (3:17)? Does Paul teach that nothing is inherently impure (Tit. 1:15; cf. Rom. 14:20; 1 Cor. 6:12)? Is it sinful for a woman to have a career or work outside her home (2:5)?
11:00 AM Goebel Music	Paul's Charge to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:1-11)
12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM Jerry Moffitt	The Qualifications and Work of Gospel Preachers
3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM	Should We Change Our Attitude Toward Homosexual Behavior and Practicing Homosexuals (1 Tim. 1:10)?
3:45 PM Tyler Young	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM B. J. Clarke	Warnings About Riches and a Final Charge (1 Tim. 6:3-21)
8:00 PM Terry Hightower	Sundry Exhortations to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:10-16)
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13	
9:00 AM Ken Ratcliff	Salvation Through One Mediator (1 Tim. 2:1-7)
10:00 AM Tim Ayers	Answering False Doctrines: Are the "righteous" not under law (1 Tim. 1:9)? Does Christ excuse animosity in and extend mercy to ignorant unbelievers (1:13)? Does Paul require literal lifting of our hands when we pray (2:9)? Is it sinful for women to style their hair and wear gold and pearl jewelry and expensive clothes (2:9)?
11:00 AM Dan Flourmy	Doctrines of the Faithful Christian Soldier (2 Tim. 2:1-13)
12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM Robert Deason	Difficult Passages: In what circumstances can a woman teach, speak, or ask a question when men are present (1 Tim. 2:11-12)? In what sense will a woman be saved through childbearing (2:15)? Is a serving elder or deacon disqualified by the death of his wife or believing children (3:2, 12; Tit. 1:6)? Do the qualifications for elders and deacons allow for "moderate" drinking (3:3, 8; Tit. 1:7)?
3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM	
3:45 PM Robert Taylor, Jr.	Is There Such a Thing as a False Teacher? Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM Winford Claiborne	The All-Sufficient Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1-17)
8:00 PM Garland Elkins	Difficult Passages: How did Paul meet the first qualification of an apostle in Acts 1:22 (1 Tim. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1; Tit. 1:1)? What is "the law" to which Paul refers, and in what sense is it not for righteous men (1 Tim. 1:8-9)? Is one saved before he learns the Truth (2:4)? Was Eve's sin worse than Adam's (2:12-13)?
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14	
9:00 AM Tim Nichols	Salvation Through the Grace and Mercy of God (Tit. 3:1-15)
10:00 AM Noah Hackworth	Difficult Passages: Must an Elder's children still be living at home for him to be qualified (1 Tim. 3:4-5)? Must all of an elder's children be Christians (3:4-6; Tit. 1:6)? Does having unmarried children who have left home disqualify an elder (1 Tim. 3:4-5; Tit. 1:6)? By whose hands did Timothy receive a spiritual gift (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6)?
11:00 AM Joseph Meador	The Explicit Warning of Apostasy (1 Tim. 4:1-9)
12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM H. D. Simmons	Duties Enjoyed on Various Classes and God's Grace Revealed (Tit. 2:1-15)
3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM	
David P. Brown	Is Doctrine Important (1 Tim. 1:3-7, 19-20; 4:1-6, 13, 16; 6:3-6; 2 Tim. 4:1-5; Tit. 2:7; et al.)?
3:45 PM David P. Brown	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM Bobby Liddell	Respective Duties and Roles of Men and Women (1 Tim. 2:8-15)
8:00 PM Curtis A. Gates	The "Workman That Needeth Not To Be Ashamed" (2 Tim. 2:14-28)
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15	
9:00 AM Don Walker	Instructions Concerning Elders and Sisters (1 Tim. 5:17-6:2)
10:00 AM Tommy J. Hoke	Difficult Passages: What is meant by <i>enrolled as a widow</i> , and why the age limit of sixty years or older (1 Tim. 5:9)? Why does Paul seem to condemn marriage for some widows, but recommend it for others (vv. 11, 14)? To what time does the <i>last days</i> refer (2 Tim. 3:1)? To what does the <i>washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit</i> refer (Tit. 3:5)?
11:00 AM Marvin Weir	Timothy's Personal Relationships and the Care of Widows (1 Tim. 5:1-16)
12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM Tom Wacester	Answering False Doctrines: Is the celibate elder more virtuous than Scriptural marriage (1 Tim. 5:11)? Does Paul calculate "evangelistic authority" over elders and congregations (vv. 19-20; cf. Tit. 1:5; 2:15)? Does Paul authorize "social drinking" for Timothy (1 Tim. 5:23; cf. 3:8; Tit. 1:7; 2:3)? Does Paul teach that Jesus is the only person in the Godhead (1 Tim. 6:14-16)?
3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM	
Gary W. Summers	Are There Any Scriptural Limitations on the Role of Women in the Church (1 Tim. 2:8-19)?
3:45 PM Gary W. Summers	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM Ronnie Hayes	The Challenge to Endure Persecution for the Lord's Sake
8:00 PM Derrell Conley	1 and 2 Timothy and Titus—A Summary

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## LESSON THREE

# KINSHIP WITH INFIDELS

Wayne Coats

His name was **Francois Marie Arouet**, but at the age of twenty-four the restless young fellow changed his name to **Voltaire**. As a young person Voltaire studied with the Jesuits in Paris where he said he learned nothing, but "Latin and nonsense."

Voltaire wielded a pungent pen and his diatribes landed him in jail very frequently. It seems that the Bastille was not an effective deterrent to Voltaire with his cutting criticisms. The Catholic church was despised by Voltaire and with each letter he wrote, he would close it by writing, "crush the infamous one," by which he meant the Pope.

In one of his diatribes against religion, the voluptuous Voltaire wrote:

What kind of God does the Christian theology offer? A tyrant whom we should hate. He created men in 'His own image,' only to make them vile. He gave us sinful hearts to have the right to punish us. He made us love pleasure so that He might torment us with frightful pains ... eternal. He had hardly given us birth when He thought of destroying us. He ordered the water to engulf the earth. He sent his son to atone for sins. Christ died, but apparently in vain for we are told that we are still stained with the crime of Adam and Eve; and the Son of God so acclaimed for mercy is represented as waiting vengefully to plunge most of us into hell, including all those countless people who never heard of him. I do not recognize in this disgraceful picture God whom I must adore. I should dishonor him by such insult and homage.

### THE PERFECT ENVIRONMENT FOR REVOLUTION

The lewd lifestyle of England was a perfect match for the licentious Voltaire. Prostitution was rampant. One writer stated that as many as fifty-thousand prostitutes plied their trade in London. There were twenty houses of homosexuality in London and the average London male consumed one-hundred gallons of beer each year. Signs were displayed outside beer joints which promised to help a man get drunk for a penny and he could sleep on straw in the basement.

Punishment was often barbaric and inhumane. Crimes were punishable by the victim being strangled and burned alive. At times some were disemboweled, beheaded, quartered and left for vultures to feast upon.

**Montesquieu** wrote, "There is no religion in England. If religion is spoken of, everybody laughs." **David Hume** wrote, "England has settled into the most cool indifference with regard to religious matters that is to be found in any nation in the world."

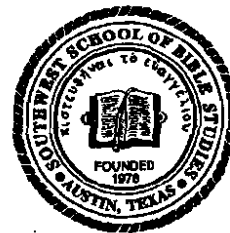
The social conditions in France were not any better than that which was found in England. Materialism, clericalism, humanism, and other "isms" contrary to the pure word of God prevailed. Some have said that in France there were 420,000 clergymen. There were eighteen archbishops, 109 bishops, 40,000 priests, 50,000 assistant priests, 27,000

priors, 12,000 canons, 20,000 clerks and 100,000 monks and nuns. There were 740 monasteries. Each year the church collected up to twenty percent of the landholders' cattle which resulted in the bishops, abbots, friars and monks being fabulously wealthy.

These benighted conditions were opposed by various ones as they were able. Voltaire said that, "Two million peasants had to wear wooden shoes in winter and went barefoot in summer while the Catholic church revelled in its wealth."

The hatred of the church by Voltaire was expressed in his vituperative diatribes and there is no doubt that his sleazy efforts were influential and impressive. **Will Durant** wrote, "Voltaire is without question the most brilliant writer that ever lived." Perhaps it is my prejudice, but I fail to see anything in the works of Voltaire which excites my praise and admiration.

It was a time when revolt was imminent. Society was seething somewhat like a boiling cauldron. In fact, the French Revolution occurred in 1789, but Voltaire died of an overdose of opium before the eruption occurred. He did his part to incite the revolting spirit.



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## WAS INFIDELITY SO SUCCESSFUL?

Along with me, you may wonder how and why the forces of infidelity could be so successful in that faraway time. I may not have sufficient or acceptable answers, but at least they make sense to me. Infidelity was so successful because there was so little opposition. It was **Edmund Burke** who reminded us that, "The only thing for the forces of evil to succeed is for good men to do nothing." Just as **Diogenes** walked about the streets of Athens in broad daylight with a lantern in his hand hunting for an honest man, it was certainly the case that good and honest men were scarce on European soil at a time when such was desperately needed. The church was so horribly corrupt as to be unable to present any degree of opposition, which allowed the rationalist to have a circus.

The enemies who had espoused humanism conspired together in their opposition to supernaturalism. Rarely, if ever, did anyone arise to dispute with the atheists, humanists, and rationalists who were ensconced in the universities. The serfs had no way of expressing their feelings and if one should arise and try to speak he might have been rewarded with the guillotine or fiery faggots.

Joining with Voltaire in his opposition to the inspired record was **Henry Bolingbroke**. It is interesting that

**Bolingbroke** declared: "Paul was a fanatical visionary; **Leibnitz** a chimerical quack and religious teachers were learned lunatics. The Old Testament was nonsense and lies."

Every student of Christian Evidences will likely be familiar with the efforts of David Hume. Hume rejected everything pertaining to the supernatural. He was antagonistic toward any word respecting miracles. Hume wrote,

No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact, which it endeavors to establish. A miracle can never be proved.

Hume asked, "What was the cause of the first cause?"

He ridiculed those who did not accept the historical-critical methodology. Our modernist brethren should offer up their prayers to David Hume.

There is no question that Hume influenced a lot of people with his prattle—who influenced others with their atheistic babbling. Error can soar as if on eagle's wings, while the truth moves in sloth-like fashion.

—705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27120

## Biblical Questions...

# What is the Regeneration of Matthew 19:28?

Noah Hackworth

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28).

The comments of Jesus relative to the "regeneration" actually grew out of a previous discussion with the disciples wherein they asked, "Who then can be saved" (Matthew 19:22, 25). The apostle Peter subsequently said, "...Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" (27).

### USE AND DEFINITION

The word "regeneration" occurs but two times in the New Testament: In Matthew 19:28, which we have cited above, and Titus 3:5 which says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

In the former it is almost universally understood to mean a new state of things, not of persons, a peculiar era, in which all things are to be made new: such as the formation of a new church on the day of Pentecost... (Alexander Campbell, *Christianity Restored*, p. 268).



1. The Regeneration, or, More Literally, the Renovation. This means simply the gospel dispensation, embracing the whole period of time from the setting up of the kingdom of Christ on the day of Pentecost until the end shall come and He shall deliver up the kingdom to His Father (James M. Mathes, *New Testament Christianity*, Edited by Z. T. Sweeney, Volume 1, pp. 368-369).

"*Palingenesia*" is the translated word. W. E. Vine, though he has some comments about the word which have no biblical support (viz., "...And Israel, in apostasy, is restored to its destined status, in the recognition and under

the benign sovereignty of its Messiah”), has defined the word: “palin, again, genesis, birth.”

#### WHEN THE REGENERATION BEGAN

It is not difficult to determine when the “regeneration” began. The regeneration would be that period of time when Jesus would be “sitting on the throne of his glory.” The two things would be simultaneous. If Jesus is now sitting “on the throne of his glory,” the regeneration is in progress. Jesus is now sitting on the throne of his glory; the regeneration has therefore begun. It began when Jesus began to “sit.” He sat down upon the throne when he ascended into heaven and was crowned King. David said, “**Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion**” (Psalm 2:6). On the day of Pentecost, Jesus was on his throne. He was “sitting;” Pentecost was therefore the beginning of the regeneration. Christ was raised to “sit” (rule). Peter said, “**Therefore being by the righthand of God exalted, and having received of the father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear**” (Acts 2:33). The same apostle also said, “**Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him**” (I Peter 3:22).

#### THE WASHING OF REGENERATION

Relative to Titus 3:5, “the washing of regeneration,” anyone can see that in the New Testament a race, or particular class of people is called a generation (*cf.* Genesis 5:1). The regeneration would therefore be a “new creating man,” a “spiritual cleansing” which is called “the washing of regeneration.” Regeneration is descriptive of a process composed of several things.

This process may consist of numerous distinct acts; but it is in accordance with general usage to give to the beginning, or consummating act, the name of the whole process. For the most part, however, the name of the whole process is given to the consummating act, because the process is always supposed incomplete until that act is performed (Campbell, *Christianity Restored*, p. 270).

The “washing of regeneration” has to do with baptism or immersion, because immersion, all things being equal, is the thing that finalizes the process of regeneration or “new creating” men.

#### THE TWELVE APOSTLES ON TWELVE THRONES

According to Matthew 19:28, another thing that will be going on simultaneously with the reign of Christ on his throne is the twelve apostles sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. There is an inseparable connection between the regeneration, Christ sitting on the throne of his glory, and the twelve apostles on twelve thrones. The “thrones of the apostles” refer to the apostolic office. The apostles were to exercise the authority given to them by Christ. They “remitted” or “retained” sins by teaching the people what they must do to be saved (Matthew 16:19).

Mathes says, “The twelve apostles upon their thrones of judgment were the high court of heaven, appointed by the

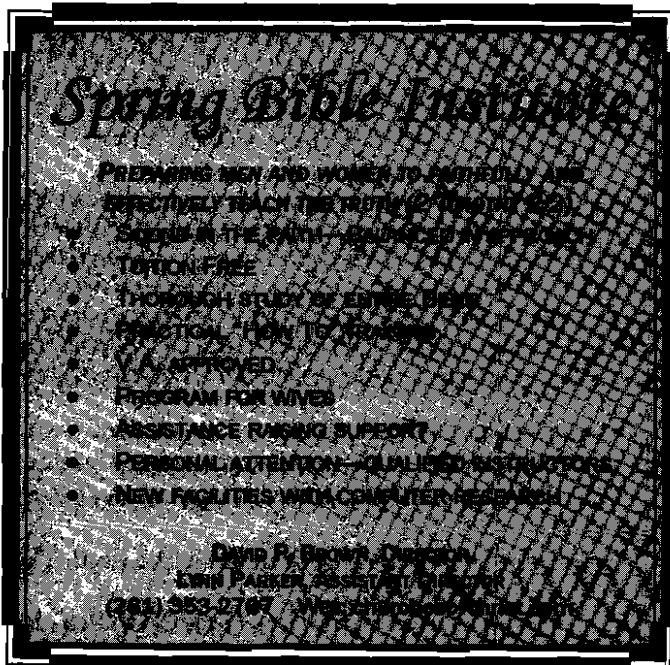
King himself to decide all questions that might arise after the organization of the kingdom of Christ (*New Testament Christianity*, p. 374). The apostles began their judgments in Acts chapter two when Peter told the multitude what they must do to be saved.

#### THE APOSTOLIC OFFICE DISCONTINUED

There are no apostles living today, but their fruit remains. Jesus said, “**Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide...**” (John 15:16). The words of the apostles are authoritative, and therefore binding; they were the “ambassadors” and “witnesses” of Christ. We really cannot be ambassadors and witnesses for Christ today; we simply do not have the credentials to be either. It is more correct to say that we “preach the word of the original witnesses.” It is unfortunate that some folks think that only the actual words of Jesus are important. The Lord stated to the apostles, “**He that heareth you heareth me: and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me**” (Luke 10:16).

Regeneration has to do with things (Matthew 19:28) and people (Titus 3:5). It began on Pentecost and will continue until the end of time. Jesus is now sitting on the throne of his glory; the apostles are exercising their authority through the New Testament. Things are “bound and/or loosed” depending on the response of people to the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42). We were introduced into a “new state of things” on Pentecost, and we continue to enjoy them, and the thing that puts us into a position to enjoy them is the “washing of regeneration” or baptism into Christ for the remission of sins.

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# GUILT BY FELLOWSHIP

Lynn Parker

[In an article by David B. Watson entitled "The Deceiving And Weaving of Phil Sanders" published in the July 2001 issue of *Contending for the Faith*, the inconsistencies and deception of Phil Sanders was revealed, discussed, and exposed. In the following article by Lynn Parker, Sanders' erroneous concept of fellowship is set out and refuted. Evidently Sanders is not alone in his false concept of fellowship. While Nashville is not the only city composed of Christians who seemingly do not know much about the biblical doctrine of fellowship (or else they do not care), it certainly has its share of them. Evidently, there is an attitude among some that allows them with a clear conscience to sit in judgment on what commands of God ought to be obeyed and which ones are not necessary to obey.

Sanders has written some excellent material in which he exposes postmodernism and its attendant evils. But, he is blind to the teaching of the New Testament regarding what it teaches concerning fellowship. Thus, his conduct undermines his proper and forthright attack on postmodernism.

Steve Flatt, the President of *David Lipscomb University*, has done all he could to promote and fellowship the false teachers who believe and propagate the false doctrines Sanders has opposed. However, Sanders has no problem remaining in fellowship with Flatt. Sanders speaks and writes against the very things and people Flatt supports, promotes, and fellowships. However, Sanders defends his own fellowship with Flatt and company. Indeed, it is difficult to hear Sanders deal with postmodernism while at the same time viewing his conduct in this area of his life. What good does it do to refute a false doctrine, yet, by companying with its supporters, treat them as if they are sound in the faith? The Bible aside, has Sanders and company never read of how J. W. McGarvey tried to continue in fellowship with the apostates of the nineteenth century with no profit to himself or the cause of Christ?

In the May 1998 and July 1999 issues of *CFTF* we dealt with brethren who teach, as far as I know, no fatal error; but they fellowship those who do. On June 6, 1998 Phil Sanders, Hardeman Nichols, Jeff Jenkins, and Mack Lyon companied with Flatt at the Granny White Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee as fellow speakers. Earl Edwards, Mack Lyon, and Phil Sanders fellowshipped with Flatt on March 27, 1999 at the Lehman Avenue Church of Christ in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in a similar program as the one held at Granny White. *The question has never been a question of Edwards, Lyon, Nichols, Sanders, and Jenkins (although I know nothing about his beliefs) teaching false doctrine.* However, as far as I know one's conduct is as important as what one teaches. One may teach the truth and practice error. One may teach error and practice error. One may teach the truth and practice the truth. If James was not advocating the sentiment of the previous sentence and rebuking brethren for teaching one thing and practicing something else, pray tell what was he doing? No child of God can in any form or fashion bid God speed to the proponents of error and be considered faithful to God. No matter how much truth he knows, how popular he is, or how well he presents his material, he is in error. What is there about this biblical doctrine that is so difficult to understand?

In the November 2000 issue of *Contending for the Faith* I pointed out the sad facts regarding Mack Lyon's political alliances (Phil Sanders looks on Lyon as one of his heroes). I plainly laid out the facts of his fraternal associations (See "Apostate Quail Springs Church Fellowships Baptist Church", column 1, page 6). In view of their fellowship with each other, more needs to be stated regarding the importance of these brethren "practicing what they preach".

Now, it may come as a surprise to some that the Edmund Church of Christ not only sponsors "In Search of the Lord's Way" with its speaker Mack Lyon, but also they oversee the work of Dave Hogan (unless such has changed in recent months). Hogan, had the fellowship of the faithful *Jurong* and the *Lim Ah Pin* churches of Christ in Singapore withdrawn from him in 1993 because of his false views. In Singapore he taught:

1. A dual fulfillment prophecy of Isaiah 7:14.
2. All of life is worship.
3. When a believing, penitent sinner is baptized he is simultaneously baptized in the Holy Spirit.

If Hogan has repented, no one knows anything about it. Does anyone think that the Edmund church cared one way or another about these matters? Does Lyon or Sanders concern themselves with being in fellowship with this man-made fellowship?

It is obvious that Sanders learned a great deal from Lyon (and no doubt others) about opposing certain errors while fellowshipping those who propagate them. I trust that a close reading of Parker's article will cause at least a few people to understand that it is not enough to teach the truth and oppose error. But, there must also be the practice of the truth—including that part of it that teaches the practice of scriptural fellowship.—Editor-in-Chief]

If you lived in the first century A.D., you surely would not expect to hear this conversation between two brethren:

**Paul:** Are you in fellowship with Hymenaeus? Yes or No?

**Timothy:** Hymenaeus is my brother in the Lord. There are issues between us.

**Paul:** Hymenaeus is my brother in the Lord also, and I too would say that there are issues between Hymenaeus

and myself, but that doesn't answer the simple question: Brother Timothy, are you in fellowship with Hymenaeus? Yes or No?

**Timothy:** Yes, I am in fellowship with Hymenaeus, but that does not mean I approve of every decision he makes or that I fellowship every person he may fellowship.

A conversation similar to this one took place over the Internet on a Bible study list in January, 2000. After repeat-



edly being asked to explain his relationship with Steve Flatt, Phil Sanders made this incredible statement concerning his personal friend (and false teacher):

Yes, I am in fellowship with Steve Flatt, but that does not mean I approve of every decision he makes or that I fellowship every person he may fellowship.

#### A SERIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING

Sanders' comments illustrate a troubling and serious misunderstanding concerning fellowship. John wrote:

**That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ:...If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin (I John 1:3, 6-7).**

When one is in fellowship with God, he is in fellowship with all of God's faithful children. God's faithful are those that **"walk in the light"** (I John 1:7). One walking in darkness forfeits his fellowship with God. If one is not in fellowship with the Father, he is not in fellowship with the father's faithful children. To fellowship those in darkness—such as false teachers—is to walk where the faithful dare not tread. It is sin. Sanders is apparently concerned about Steve Flatt's circle of fellowship for he adds this disclaimer: "...that does not mean...I fellowship every person he may fellowship." Now, let us see if we can understand this new doctrine of fellowship. Sanders would have us believe that he can be right in God's sight while fellowshiping a false teacher (Flatt); and further, he can fellowship Flatt while Flatt fellowships those he (Sanders) cannot fellowship. Find that in scripture if you can!

Can one be guilty of sin by fellowshiping a false teacher? Phil Sanders and others say, "no."<sup>1</sup> The apostle of love answers, "yes."

**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).**

While some hate the very idea of "guilt by association," the Bible does teach the doctrine of guilt by fellowship (II John 9-11). In the same exchange of letters, I proposed to Sanders the following two "versions" of II John 10-11 from which he could choose to sign the one he would affirm. I have signed the one I would affirm and the one I would deny.

#### WHICH PROPOSITION WILL YOU AFFIRM?

II John 10-11: 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.

Affirmative: Signed Lynn Parker

Negative: Signed \_\_\_\_\_

If any cometh unto you and bringeth not this teaching, receive him into your house, and give him greeting, for he that giveth him greeting doth not partake in his evil works.

Affirmative: Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: Signed Lynn Parker

His answer to me of II John 10-11 was a short, non-responsive quip with a personal insult attached:

Should someone come to me denying that Jesus came in the flesh, I would readily refuse to fellowship him. This is not the case with Steve Flatt, Lynn.

Your bravado is overstated.

Phil

#### HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP

Through inspiration, Paul warned of false teachers and their damning influence on souls: **"Now I heseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them"** (Romans 16:17). **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"** (Ephesians 5:11).

**This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which led the way to thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: of whom is Hymenaens and Alexander; whom I delivered unto Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme (I Timothy 1:18-20).**

**But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some (II Timothy 2:16-18).**

**But shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse (Titus 3:9-10).**

Paul did not encourage false teachers. He was not ambiguous in his relationship toward them. God decides who is in fellowship and provides man with the criteria for determining fellowship. To ignore God's lines of fellowship is to sin. Paul was not merely suggesting when he wrote, **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness..."**

#### END NOTES

1. In the many exchanges of correspondence in January, 2000, Phil Sanders repeatedly castigated the idea of guilt by fellowship. Just one example was in the Sanders' letter of January 19, 2000 (10:54 PM) in which he wrote, "I do not believe in guilt by association or that Mack is a false teacher."

—P. O. Box 39  
Spring, Texas 77388



# CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

Can you imagine what it would be like to live in a society where citizens could flaunt the rules and absolutely no consequences would follow—no fines, no imprisonment, or the like?

Can you conceive of a home environment where children are allowed to do whatever they please with utterly no discipline imposed?

Total chaos would reign in either of these instances.

Yet, there are countless congregations of the Lord's church who practice little, if any, discipline of the wayward.

Is it any wonder that the brotherhood is weaker today than it has been in several decades?

Exactly what is church discipline?

In its broadest sense, it involves everything from the most basic instruction that a newborn child of God receives – to the radical "surgery" sometimes required in the withholding of fellowship from the impenitent.

For the purpose of this study, we will be discussing the terminal act—the church's obligation to withdraw fellowship from the disorderly.

## DISCUSSION

### I. NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORITY FOR DISCIPLINE

- A. There is ample authority in the Bible for the practice of church discipline.
- B. Matthew 18:15-17 ... a brother who wrongs another, and will not repent, is to be counted as a heathen.
- C. Romans 16:17 ... those who cause division are to be marked and avoided.
- D. I Corinthians 5:1-13 ... the immoral is to be "taken away" (v. 2), to be "delivered unto Satan" (v. 5), and to be "put away" (v. 13).
- E. II Thessalonians 3:6 ... the church is "commanded" to withdraw from the disorderly.
- F. Titus 3:10 ... we are to have no fellowship with a "factious man" or one who is divisive.

### II. THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

- A. It is not an act of revenge.
- B. It is never to be exercised in a haughty or spiteful manner.
- C. Church discipline is both corrective and protective.
- D. Church discipline is designed to save the erring child of God.
  - 1. I Corinthians 5:5 ... "that the spirit might be saved"

- 2. Matthew 18:15 ... to "gain" the wayward.
- 3. II Thessalonians 3:14 ... to make him "ashamed".
- 4. Galatians 6:1 ... that they might be "restored".



E. Church discipline is designed for the protection of the Lord's church.

- 1. I Corinthians 5:6 ... a little "leaven" (evil) can affect the whole church.
- 2. Romans 16:17-18 ... to prevent the deceiving of the weak in faith.
- 3. I Timothy 1:19-20 ... to prevent the shipwrecking of other's faith.
- 4. II Timothy 2:16-18 ... to prevent the overthrowing of the faith of others.

F. Church discipline is also important in preserving the integrity of the church before the eyes of the world.

- 1. I Timothy 5:14 ... never giving occasion to the adversary for reviling.
- 2. I Timothy 6:1 ... that the name of God not be blasphemed.
- 3. II Peter 2:2 ... that the truth not be evil spoken of.

### III. CONDUCT DESERVING CHURCH DISCIPLINE

- A. Matthew 18:15-17 ... a brother who has sinned against another.
- B. Romans 16:17 ... those who initiate division.
- C. I Corinthians 5:9ff ... the immoral.
- D. I Timothy 1:19-20; II Timothy 2:16-18 ... the false teacher.
- E. II Thessalonians 3:6 ... those who walk disorderly – those not faithfully serving the Lord.

### IV. HOW SHOULD THE FINAL ACT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE BE ADMINISTERED?

- A. Qualified men are serving as elders are to lead the church in the withdrawal of fellowship. Church discipline is not an "elder act" behind closed doors.
- B. The entire congregation is to be involved and apprised (I Corinthians 5:4). After the Lord gave His instructions regarding the procedures for restoring the brother who had wronged his fellow, notice what Jesus said Matthew 18:20.
- C. The Lord give a blessed promise to congregations who practice church discipline.
- D. The Lord acts along with the church in discipline.

## CONCLUSION

- I. Loving discipline is as much a trait of New Testament Christianity as scriptural worship, scriptural organization, and the like.
- II. The question that should haunt us is: "Can a church that utterly refuses to practice church discipline be a faithful New Testament church?"

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## Current Events that Concern Christians...

# Hospitals Catering to the Spiritually Ill Wildlife Refuge 2001, Embryonic Stem-Cell Research, and More

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

*The National Organization for Women has joined forces with activist transgender and hermaphrodite groups to fight for the "right" of hermaphrodite children to avoid having surgery to correct their malformed sex organs. A hermaphrodite has both male and female characteristics. Surgery is used to assign the correct "sex" to the child. NOW has partnered with GenderPac, headed by a male-to-female transgender named Riki Wilchins and the Intersex Society of North America (ISNA). Wilchins and ISNA believe that there are more than two sexes and that hermaphrodites are simply another sex. Wilchins has referred to "male" and "female" as being "narrow, outdated, binary gender stereotypes" that must be rejected. The goal is to deconstruct all concepts of male and female in an effort to remold our culture into a society where male and female distinctions are blurred and every kind of sexual activity is permissible (Traditional Values Coalition email service, 7/20/01). (Some folks just keep finding ways to legitimize perversion. God said that he created two sexes, male and female. Nothing that some civil law says will change that. While it is unfortunate that there are some rare occurrences of someone being born with physical manifestations of both sexes, their DNA will show that they are one or the other.—mtm)*

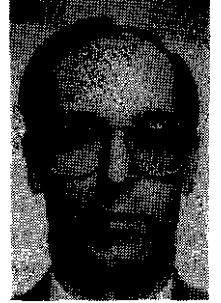
\*\*\*\*\*

Many hospitals in the South are doing more to take care of not only the physical and mental health of critically ill patients, but also the spiritual. Some hospitals have built-in house baptistries for patients who want to be baptized and whose denominations do not allow sprinkling. Pikeville Methodist Hospital recently installed two baptistries. Chaplain **Mark Walz** tells *Religion Today* the baptistries became necessary because many people the hospital serves recognize only one form of the Christian purification — full immersion. **Furman Hewitt**, director of the Baptist House at Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina, says hospital baptistries are an interesting twist to the push in the medical field to deal with the total person — physical, mental, and spiritual (*Agape Press* email service, 7/23/01). (This is very interesting. It is nice to see a hospital trying to do its part in serving the whole patient. Hopefully some teaching will be done as true baptism and conversion occurs.—mtm)

\*\*\*\*\*

American Family Association of Michigan leader **Gary Glenn** has called upon Michigan law enforcement officials to carefully monitor this weekend's homosexual "Wildlife Refuge 2001" event. Glenn expects illegal sex

acts to take place at this event. The homosexual male-only event is a sex orgy that includes a sadomasochistic (S&M) "human dog show." Men will be dressed as dogs to serve their masters. One homosexual S&M site describes itself as a resource for the "human dog training community" and touts its site as "The Website for Gay Male Masters/Trainers and Their Dog Boys/Pups." This particular web site sells human doggie equipment for sale and shows men dressed as dogs sitting in cages. This is another example of how perverted the homosexual movement is and why we must continue to fight against homosexuals being allowed to indoctrinate our children in public schools. S&M behavior and worse are part of the lifestyle of homosexuals (*Traditional Values Coalition* email service, 7/20/01). (Do I need to say anything??-mtm)



\*\*\*\*\*

Twelve years after **Jose Morales** and **Ruben Montalvo** were sentenced to 15 years in jail for murdering **Jose Rivera** in New York City, a Jesuit priest has come forward to testify that the two men are innocent. **Father Joseph Towle** revealed that in 1989 he was called to the home of a teenage boy, **Jesus Fornes**, who told the priest he was the person who murdered Rivera. Towle had encouraged Fornes to go to authorities with his information, and Fornes did. But he was too late. A jury never heard his direct testimony, and Morales and Montalvo were convicted.

For the next eight years, Towle remained silent, feeling that it was his moral obligation to do so. In 1997, however, Jesus Fornes was murdered. And with Fornes' death, Towle believed that it was time for him to come forward with his secret. Towle disclosed his story in May 2000, and Morales' attorney filed a new appeal. But before he even took the witness stand Tuesday, prosecutors began questioning the legitimacy of his testimony, saying that it was impermissible under church law for Towle to make his statement. They cited his sacred responsibility to keep confessions secret. The Archdiocese of New York, however, gave its full support for Towle's decision to come forward, noting that what Fornes had told his priest was not a formal confession (*Religion Today* email service, 7/20/01). (This shows the complete lack of scriptural reasoning that the Catholic church uses. How can it possibly be right for someone to allow persons to be incarcerated for 12 years for something they did not do? And allow the murderer to stay free? Now the "Church" is saying that it was not

really a confessional after all. It would not matter if it were a confessional. The Bible does not recognize such a perversion.—mtm)

\*\*\*\*\*

Some scientists contend that embryonic stem-cell research could result in new treatments for disease. Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., has joined them. While the physician-turned-senator is normally considered a pro-life advocate he recently called embryonic stem-cell research an “evolving science with tremendous potential for good and harm.” Frist now supports embryonic research, within parameters — “If the cells that are used for research are cells that would otherwise be discarded or disposed of or thrown away,” he said (Citizenlink email service, 7/25/01). *(Dr. Frist knows better than this. The only ways to get embryonic stem cells that are going to be thrown away is to create a human life in test tube or abort a baby. Thus one must create life for experimental purposes or kill a life for one to have these throw away cells. There is no difference between sacrificing these children for the potential “good of our society” and ancient societies who killed their children on the altars of pagan gods for the good of their societies. We just want to think of ourselves as more advanced and less barbaric. However, the barbarism we inflict on these poor unborn children is kept in the secrecy of the lab, hospital, or clinic so that the majority of folks never have to face the facts. —mtm)*

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## News Release . . .

### FOURTH ANNUAL LUBBOCK LECTURESHIP PLANNED

The Southside Church of Christ, located at 85th Street and Quaker Avenue, in Lubbock, Texas will host its fourth major annual lectureship October 14-18, 2001. The theme selected for the FOURTH ANNUAL LUBBOCK LECTURESHIP is- “The Glorious Gospel.”

Adhering to the lectureship’s theme, the Scriptural contexts where the word “gospel” is found were used to determine the individual topics. This approach produced a wide and diverse range of subjects to be covered. The FOURTH ANNUAL LUBBOCK LECTURESHIP will truly be a comprehensive study that will help those attending to better see the nature of the gospel, the magnificence of the gospel, and what the Christian’s responsibilities are to the gospel.

One of the highlights of the ANNUAL LUBBOCK LECTURESHIP is the “OPEN FORUM” conducted each afternoon, Monday through Thursday. During this forum, any and all Bible questions asked by the audience are welcomed.

This year’s speakers will be coming to Lubbock from fourteen different states to participate in the lectureship.

The speakers are: David Baker, Jerry Brewer, Tom Bright, Curtis Cates, B.J. Clarke, Sam Dilbeck, Danny Douglas, Tracy Dugger, Foy Forehand, Ronnie Hayes, Tommy Hicks, Floyd Johnson, Lester Kamp, Dalton Key, Randy Mabe, Richard Massey, Dub McClish, Richard Melson, Paul Merideth, John Moore, Keith Mosher, Perry O’Deil, Johnny Oxendine, Lynn Parker, Rick Popejoy, Kenneth Ratcliff, Ira Rice, Jr., Jason Roberts, Roelf Ruffner, H.D. Simmons, Jack Stewart, Gary Summers, Robert Taylor, Jr., David Watson, Marvin Weir, and Eddie Whitten.

All the lectures will be recorded on audio and video tapes by TULLSTAR and may be obtained by those who desire them. Again this year, a beautiful hardback book (500+ pages) containing all the lectures will be available during the lectureship.

Exhibit space is available for both commercial and non-commercial interests, subject to invitation and/or approval by Southside’s elders. Housing in the homes of local Christians will be provided as long as it lasts. Several major motels are located only a short distance from the Southside building. RV spaces, with hookups for water and electricity, are available at no charge on the church parking lot by advance registration.

For more information, you may contact the church office by writing to: Southside Church of Christ, P.O. Box 64430, Lubbock, Texas 79464-4430, or by phoning (806) 794-5008. You may also contact Tommy J. Hicks by phoning (806) 798-1019 or by email at: tomhicks@hub.ofthe.net.

# “...He Looked For a City...”

Jodie Boren



Among the heroes of faith that are named in Hebrews chapter eleven is Abraham. It is said of him that **“by faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country... for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God”** (vss. 9, 10): This city of God, our heavenly home to be, is described in Revelation 21:10-21. Since we have never experienced heaven, the only way in which we can grasp its glory is to have it described in the framework of our earthly experience. So, God paints for us, in terms that we can relate to, the beauty of this great city—or heaven. A big city is filled with intrigue and inspires us with all its glamor, culture, learning, and the like. This conception gives us a little understanding as to how beautiful heaven will be.

Heaven is a literal place (John 14:3). However, it is not physical place; just as God is literal but not physical (John 4:24).

Jesus further describes heaven as a house with many mansions (John 14:2). As we think of a mansion, our minds conjure up a palatial home representing riches, splendor, beauty, security, fellowship, joy, peace, and so forth. Heaven will be all of these and so much more that it is beyond our ability to even imagine the glory of it.

God also uses types to help us appreciate heaven and long to be there. A type simply means a foreshadowing (or representation) of that which is to come. The garden of Eden is thus a type of heaven. When God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the garden, it was truly a place of paradise (Genesis 2:8-14). Note that **“the tree of life”** was in the midst of the garden (vs. 9). In Revelation 2:7 we

read, **“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise (heaven) of God.”** If there were no other thoughts on heaven in the Bible but this, it alone should be enough to make us greatly desire to go there.

The land of Canaan is another type of heaven. The children of Israel lived miserable lives as slaves to the Egyptians for four hundred and thirty years (Exodus 12:40). God promised them that He would deliver them from their afflictions and give them the land of Canaan, a land that flowed with milk and honey (Exodus 3:17; 12:25). This land was to be a land of rest to them from the arduous lives they had lived under the Egyptians. As they made plans to enter in and to take Canaan, twelve spies were sent in to search out the land. In Numbers 13:21-27, they reported it was truly a land as God had promised it would be. Heaven will be such a “land” where we

can lay our burdens down and receive eternal rest: where God **“... shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain”** (Revelations 21:4).

We have only touched “the hem of the garment” in speaking of heaven and its glory. We must be reminded, however, that Peter speaks of heaven as **“an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you”** (I Peter 1:4). We occasionally hear of someone who inherited a huge earthly fortune and, being human, it is hard not to have just a twinge of envy. You need not be because if you were to inherit all the riches of this world, they would pale into insignificance compared to the incorruptible crown of righteousness (II Timothy 4:8 and Revelations 2:10) that the faithful Christian will inherit on that great judgment day.

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. No one will get to heaven by accident. We are saved by the grace of God, but we appropriate that gift by believing and obeying our Lord. Heaven is too beautiful and glorious a place to miss. Let us all walk in the steps of Jesus so that in that judgment day, we can all hear our Lord say, **“well done, good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord”** (Matthew 25:23).



—2557 Campus Court  
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# CHARLES CROUCH: A PREACHER OF INTEGRITY

Paul Vaughn



Beginning with this article, every few months I will focus on a faithful preacher, elder, or teacher of the gospel of Christ who have spent their lives proclaiming the Restoration Plea. We will not abandon the study of the Restoration history, but we are mindful that one day some will be interested in the persons and events of our time. One day, historians will write about preachers and events of today, so these articles will serve as markers in antiquity. We will also see that there are many faithful veterans of the cross. Some we know very well and others who have been working in the kingdom with very little recognition, who have weathered the forces of evil by being dedicated to the "Old Paths."

Integrity is defined as "the quality or state of being of sound moral principle; uprightness, honesty and sincerity"

(Webster's). All Christians should lead lives of integrity, Christians should also be honest and sincere people. This quality is a prerequisite for those who proclaim the gospel of Christ. **Charles Crouch** is a preacher of integrity, always seeking to be upright and honest with God and his word.



Charles was born on September 8, 1920 in Wellington, Texas. His parents were **Charlie D. Crouch** and **Mary L. McDowell Crouch**. Two years after his birth the family moved to Portland, Tennessee, where Charles grew up. Charlie D. was a gospel preacher so the family moved often. Charles has an older brother, **Brodie Crouch** who lives in Spring Hill, Louisiana. Brodie has been preaching for 60 years.

Charles obeyed the gospel in 1934, a week and a month before his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. He preached his first gospel sermon 1942 in Baltimore, Maryland. While in Baltimore Charles entered the army serving in Florida, Saipan, New Caledonia, Okinawa, and Korea. He served in the army from 1942-1946. His job in the military was Adjutant Personnel officer in a military hospital. He left the service as 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant.

In 1944 Charles married **Mildred B. Boyd**. Mildred is from Jasper, Tennessee. Her parents were **William Reece Boyd** and **Bessie Brown Boyd**, both were members of the church of Christ. Charles and Mildred met first at church in Clarksville, Tennessee. They have two children **Barbara Jean (Mrs. Norman C. Fox)** and **Charles David**.

## DECIDING TO PREACH FULL-TIME

While in the army Charles made a decision to preach the gospel full-time. His first course of duty was to talk it over with his wife, Mildred, to see if she was willing to make the sacrifices it took to be a preacher's wife. Mildred's answer was "yes" so he began to prepare himself for the task at hand.


Charles entered David Lipscomb College to complete his education. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1949, he then entered George Peabody College receiving his Master of Arts in 1950. He began full-time preaching with a congregation in North Birmingham, Alabama in 1950.

## A WRITER, DEBATER

During his life Charles has written two books, *Principles of New Testament Christianity* and *Studies in Galatians*. He has also written two tracks, *Why There is No Parallel*, a track refuting antiism, and *God's Plan of Salvation*.

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**Somerville**—Union Church of Christ, located on Hwy 36, one mile east of Hwy 67, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tom Larkin, Evangelist, (256) 778-8955, (256) 778-8961.

## —England—

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## —Florida—

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

## —Georgia—

**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1146, 1319 JFH Pkwy (US 41 NW) Cartersville, GA 30120. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: Cartersvillecofc@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —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.

## —Massachusetts—

**Chicopee**—Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive; Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, tel. (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coe.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

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**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Richwood**—1600 Brazosport, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30; 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, Evangelist.

## —Wyoming—

**Cheyenne**—High Plains church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Gerald Reynolds, tel. (307) 635-2482.

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In 1948 he debated **James A. Brown**, a preacher with the Seventh-Day Adventist. The proposition was, "The Sabbath of the Ten Commandments is in force today and binding on Christians and the scriptures so teach."

### STUDY HABITS AND LIFE'S GOAL

Charles starts each day with the reading of God's word. He will get up early in the morning and read a chapter out of the New Testament three or four times. He uses his mornings for Bible study and lesson preparation.

I asked Charles how he viewed the church today? His answer was "that it is made up of the most wonderful people on earth." Yet, "facing major problems because of liberalism." Charles believes that there are many faithful servants of God working extremely hard for the cause of Christ, but there are also some "elders and preachers who are weak in the faith." Weakness in the faith is a trademark of those who have not spent time with God's word.

I also asked Charles how he would want history to remember him? He said, "I am more interested in how God remembers me than man." What a wonderful attitude, one that truly manifests a heart of humility.

My wife and I first met Charles and Mildred while we were helping establish a congregation in Brown County, Ohio. Charles was the preacher at Hwy. 32 Church of Christ, Mt. Orab, Ohio. While in Ohio I had a debate with a representative of the Christian Church, Charles helped with the charts in that debate. There are many things that I have learned from Charles Crouch, but perhaps the most important thing any preacher could assimilate from his life is his love for the word of God and his desire to handle it honestly. Every gospel preacher would be a man of principle if he were more concerned about what God thought of him than men.

Charles has been preaching for sixty years. Today he preaches for the Sweeden's Cove Church of Christ, South Pittsburg, Tennessee and the Hamilton Ave. Church of Christ, Richard City, Tennessee. Charles and Mildred make many personal visits each week, working hard for the Lord. It is our prayer that they have many more years together in the service of the Master.

—223 W. Maple Ave.  
Lancaster, Kentucky 40444

# OF HATCHETS AND HAPPINESS

Annette B. Cates

Two sayings come to mind: "Nobody ever forgets where they buried the hatchet" and "If you bury the hatchet, don't leave the handle sticking out." These expressions pretty much sum up the topic of forgiveness. Most people, especially non-Christians, tend to follow the first one. The second one reminds us that once a wrong has been corrected it should be forgotten forever. How much happier we would all be if we sought and offered forgiveness as the Bible teaches! The Christian's relationship to God depends on a penitent heart, an humble spirit, and a recognition that God's grace covers sin.

## A "MULTI-FACETED" SUBJECT

Forgiveness is a multi-faceted subject. It involves our asking for forgiveness when we sin, God's forgiving us when we repent, and forgiving ourselves when we have done all we can to correct a wrong. A fourth aspect is forgiving others when we are the ones who have been wronged, and that is the focus of my thoughts on hatchets and happiness. Along with "please" and "thank you," the phrases "I'm sorry" and "I forgive" mark us as a civilized society.

*It is important to settle differences before they grow into real problems.* People get along best when they are willing to make concessions when it is appropriate. **"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"** (Romans 12:18). Open communication and concern or love for one another can mend relationships before they become strained. 1 Peter 4:8 tells us that love covers **"the multitude of sins."** Sometimes events occur where no hurt was intended. This is the point where we see the wisdom in Jesus' admonishment to go to the one we feel has wronged us (Matthew 18:15). It is incumbent upon us to discern between actions that are innocent in nature and those where hurt is intended. Each of us is responsible for and in control of our own actions and thinking. To harbor grudges against another person brings no resolution to problems and serves only to leave the hatchet in a handy place.

*There are misconceptions about what forgiveness is and what it is not.* Sometimes we hear a public plea to forgive a mass murderer or even entire societies for past atrocities. Sometimes we are told to "forgive and forget" regardless of the circumstances. Is unlimited forgiveness an obligation for a Christian? Where do we keep the hatchet?

*Forgiveness is not forgetting without repentance* (Matthew 18:15-17). In Luke 17:3, Christ stated, **"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him."** It may be that the one who committed the wrong feels no remorse and does not want to be forgiven. In such a case, however,

we cannot allow bitterness and resentment to rule our lives. We should remain ready to forgive and pray for reconciliation.

*Forgiveness is not excusing the action or tolerating the error.* Peace at any price is no peace at all. A wrong that is covered over without a basis for doing so is like dusting some ashes over smoldering embers. We may not see the fire, but adding the slightest bit of fuel will cause the flames to explode again, possibly with greater damage.

*Forgiveness is not universal and impersonal.* Only those who have been wronged can extend forgiveness. We cannot ask for, nor can we receive, forgiveness on behalf of another person. To think that it can be done and that we should do so is part of today's feel-good philosophy and psycho-babble.

*Forgiveness is overcoming resentment and putting the past behind, never to bring it up again.* As the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:13, forget **"...those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."** Forgiveness must be given freely, no strings attached. Repentance should be followed by rejoicing (Matthew 18:12, 13; Luke 15:7). It takes courage to say, "I was wrong, forgive me."

*Forgiveness is the cultivation of mercy and compassion, while putting away any sins that might prevent us from fully participating in our part of the process* (Matthew 5:7; Matthew 18:33; James 2:13). We must keep in mind the fact that we, too, are capable of sin and are in need of God's forgiveness (Matthew 6:12, 14-15).

*Forgiveness is a new beginning that is created out of past hurts.* It is a healing process that gives closure to wrongs committed against us. The relationship may be changed by events that have taken place. It may be that even though forgiveness has taken place, trust will have to be restored, and that will take time. It may be that we have new insights into the weaknesses of the other person and will need to develop new ways of relating to him or her. Regardless, the emphasis must remain on the future and on rebuilding what was destroyed when the problem arose.

If we follow Biblical principles regarding forgiveness, we will be much happier people. Happiness is found in burying the hatchet, handle and all, then forgetting where it is so that it can never be used again.



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# Submission to Man's Law

Kenneth D. Cohn

The writer of old declared: **“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”** (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Jesus also stated: **“If ye love me, keep my commandments”** (John 14:15). Therefore, the Christian legitimately asks: **“What shall my relationship be with civil government? What are my obligations to the government? Does such have sanction from God?”**

Beginning in Romans chapter 12 and continuing on into chapter 15, the inspired apostle Paul sets forth practical applications of the gospel in the life of the Christian. These applications are characteristic of and mandated by the transformed life. It is living proof of **“that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”** In a distinctly new topic, yet continuing the same message, Paul in chapter 13 discusses the relationship of the Christian to civil authority.

## BACKGROUND

The Jews in Palestine greatly lamented their subjection to the Roman government. Many believed that submissiveness to Rome violated Deuteronomy 17:15 which said **“Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.”** Their rebellious attitude toward Rome, a civil government, eventually resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The Jewish Christian, coming from such a background, may have concluded allegiance to Christ the heavenly King precluded subjection to any civil authority.

Before becoming Christians, most Gentiles worshiped idols (Acts 17:16). Previously they confessed Caesar as god and king. But as Christians they confessed Christ as Lord and King. Therefore, some Christians may have concluded that allegiance to earthly rulers, particularly Roman civil authority, was incompatible with allegiance to Christ the King. So the topic of the proper disposition of Christians toward civil government in the first century was important and necessary. It is no less important or relevant today.

## MAN'S OBLIGATION

The instructions of chapter 13 are connected to the transformed Christian life of chapter 12. In obedience to the law of God, therefore, the Christian will also be obedient to the law of the land. The only exception is when the law of man contravenes divine law (Acts 5:29).

Civil governments are ordained of God. However, when Pilate reminded Jesus of his power to either crucify or release him, Jesus responded to the Roman government official with: **“Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above...”** (John 19:10-11). God gave Nebuchadnezzar **“a kingdom, and**

**majesty, and glory and honour”** (Daniel 5:18ff). But, God also took it away from him. God is not a God of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33). Therefore, he desires things to be done decently and in order (I Corinthians 14:40). Civil authority exists as God's mechanism to promote and preserve social order. Through that mechanism God intends to restrain public mischief as well as promote and preserve the common good. No civil authority has a practice of punishing good because it is good or rewarding evil because it is evil. However, history is replete with examples of men calling good evil and evil good (Isaiah 5:20; Malachi 2:17). Persons who violate civil law have in effect violated the will of two authorities—civil government and God's. This is the case because such violators have resisted God's ordained means of regulating society.

Because civil authority has divine sanction to preserve social order, civil authority implicitly has the right to exact taxes, subsidize its operations, and pass laws to regulate society. The Christian's life has been transformed by a willing renewal of the mind. In honor and love of his Master, the Christian will comply with God's will in all things. Thus, Peter wrote:

**Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God (I Peter 2:13-16).**

## “REASONS” FOR NOT SUBMITTING

Compliance with cumbersome, confusing statutes can be daunting for the citizen. Civil authorities face no less arduous task in the administration of such statutes. The Internal Revenue Code of the United States is just such an example. *Money* magazine annually submits a hypothetical set of income tax data to a number of tax professionals for return preparation. A significant percentage prepares the income tax return incorrectly. The effort, however, is made conscientiously and in expectation of full compliance. No less should be expected from the faithful Christian.

Christians and the churches they constitute are subject to myriads of state and federal rules and regulations. All churches, for example, are subject to federal payroll tax reporting requirements. They may be required to withhold payroll taxes and remit and report such to the federal government. All too often churches are not in compliance with some aspect of their reporting obligations. This includes the various works of congregations, such as preaching schools. Indeed, such schools are subject to various statutes regulating some aspect of their work.

In Texas, schools of preaching are subject to state laws governing the characterization of courses, credits granted, or certain protected use words such as “college”. This is the case unless the school has been “accredited” by the state or been granted a “certificate of authority” by the state. Therefore, a preaching school may not use the word “college” or its cognates to describe itself or its courses. It may not state nor imply that it is providing a college level



education or that its credit hours are transferable to an "accredited" institution of higher learning.

**WHY SOME ARE NOT SUBJECT  
"UNTO THE HIGHER POWERS"**

Why do churches and preaching schools fail to comply where there is no violation of Acts 5:29? Some reasons for this are offered, none of which is an exception to Roman 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-16. (I am excluding reasons such as unenforceable, or nonenforced archaic, statutes.)

**Complex rules** - Payroll tax rules, although complex, are not beyond the grasp of the non-professional church treasurer. Excellent manuals in non-professional language exist to assist the church treasurer in compliance. Also, most churches have very simple reporting requirements. Preaching schools, by their nature, deal in complexity and, therefore, may not reasonably resort to the complexity excuse to justify noncompliance with state statute.

**Unique rules** - Church treasurers should not assume that a church is like any other business. It is not. The manuals referenced above clearly set forth the distinctions; therefore, uniqueness of the rules offers no excuse for non-compliance. Although there are exceptions, preaching schools typically are a work of a sponsoring church. They are, therefore, subject to many of the unique rules applicable to churches. Even more so, preaching schools are unique unto themselves being subject to rules not applicable to churches. By assuming sponsorship, churches must inform themselves of the unique rules applicable to preaching schools and comply.

**Ignorance of the rules** - Ignorance in this instance does not in any way imply diminished intellectual capacity. Typically, church treasurers, are uncompensated volunteers serving limited terms. Consequently, they do not make the effort to inform themselves regarding payroll tax reporting requirements. Ignorance has never been an excuse for noncompliance. Elders, or the men of the congregation, should see that the ones responsible for compliance are informed of the rules and that there is continuity from one treasurer to the next. The administration and faculty of preaching schools are generally compensated and have

greater longevity; therefore, they should be better equipped to inform themselves of the law's demands.

**Willful disregard of the rules** - Or perhaps this should be willful ignorance. Usually, the easiest path to follow is to disregard the rules. The Internal Revenue Service is understaffed and not able to monitor compliance of untold thousands of churches. Unless some egregious flaunting of the rules, such as **Jim Bakker's** PTL organization, the potential tax revenue from noncompliant churches is just not there. Again, such is not an exception to Romans 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-16.

Preaching schools that promote themselves as offering college level instruction in violation of Texas state statute may be ignorant of the law. That some accredited institution of higher learning will accept credited hours may be no more than an effort to be informative. Nevertheless, whatever the motive or excuse may be, if such schools know themselves to be in violation of the law and do not bring themselves into compliance with it, they violate God's general mandate to be obedient to civil authority unless civil authority violates God's will (Acts 5:29). (As a matter of information, the elders of the Spring church of Christ know that Spring Bible Institute is compliant with state law.)

**TO OFFEND IN ONE POINT OF THE LAW IS  
TO BE GUILTY OF ALL (JAMES 2:10)**

People have a tendency to compartmentalize their lives. In one compartment, our relationship with our fellow man or our family, we are diligent to honor, uphold, practice and defend the teaching of the New Testament. In another compartment, our relationship with civil authority, we are less diligent particularly when there seems to be no civil reward for compliance or punishment for noncompliance. The Christian, however, conscientiously seeks to honor and obey civil authority and makes every reasonable effort to correct instances of noncompliance. Let us, therefore, demonstrate our transformed lives by being exemplary citizens of our nation knowing full well that our ultimate citizenship hangs in the balance.

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## MATERIALISM

Noah A. Hackworth

*[EDITORIAL NOTE: A few weeks ago brother Noah Hackworth suffered a stroke. At present he is in rehabilitation in Visalia, California where he and his wife Glenda reside. Noah preaches for the West Visalia Church of Christ.*

*Noah and Glenda are highly esteemed close friends. Noah and I have traveled the world together and I know of no more genuine soldier of the cross, brother in Christ, and dear friend to me than Glenda and he are.*

*Noah is making progress, though I know it is not as quickly as he would like. Brother Hackworth has spent his life faithfully proclaiming Christ and him crucified in the state of California. He is faithful to the cause we all hold dear. We look forward to the time that he will be able to write for us again, fill the pulpit in the West Visalia church building, direct the annual West Visalia lectures, and be active in lectureship and gospel meetings around the country. Until he is able to write again, I will use articles previously written by him in CFTF.*

*Our prayers are for Noah, Glenda, the Hackworth family, and the West Visalia Church of Christ. If you would like to communicate with the Hackworths their address appears at the end of the following article by Noah.—DPB]*

**“Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise”** (John 2:16). These are the words of Jesus in his rebuke of those who profaned the temple. John chapter two records several significant things in the life of Jesus: (1) his attendance at a marriage feast in Cana of Galilee; (2) the performance of his first miracle; (3) a visit to Capernaum; (4) his arrival in Jerusalem; (5) the cleansing of the temple, and (6) the observance of the passover feast. When Christ arrived in Jerusalem he immediately went to the temple. What he found was the desecration of his father’s house; it had been turned into a common marketplace where a band of religious racketeers were exchanging godliness for gain. Facing those who were attempting to serve God and mammon (cf. Matthew 6:24), Jesus immediately expelled them from the temple. They had turned the house of prayer into a den of robbers (cf. Matthew 21:13). Paul the apostle was speaking of such men when he mentioned the disputing **“of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness”** (I Timothy 6:5). When Jesus departed from the temple for the final time, He said, **“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate”** (Matthew 23:38). They had filled up the measure of their fathers (cf. Matthew 23:32). It is a

matter of great significance that in the mind of Jesus the temple was no longer “God’s House” but “their house.” From the dawn of human history materialism has posed a threat to religion. Even in the development of the chosen race the material thing attracted attention. The patriarch Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children (Genesis 37:3). As a result, Joseph’s brothers hated him. A conspiracy to kill him was soon deployed, but Judah said, **“What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood”** (37:26)? Consequently, Joseph was sold for twenty pieces of silver to a company of Ishmaelites who were headed for Egypt (37:28). **T. H. Leale** commented:

Judah’s proposal contains words of mercy, but it was mercy mixed with covetousness. It is not unusual for covetous men to urge their objects under a show of generosity and kindness. But if he did, it was the ‘profit’ that wrought upon the company. The love of money induced them to sell their brother for a slave. A goodly price at which they valued him! But let not Joseph complain, seeing that a greater than he was sold by Judas Iscariot for but a little more.



(Continued On Page 14)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Editorial...

## “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27)

Since September 11, 2001 there has been a world wide avalanche of sympathetic statements expressed to all those who lost family and friends in the airline terrorists attacks in New York, Washington D. C., and Pennsylvania. How could one not be greatly moved by such catastrophic outlaw operations?

We have also noticed great unity in the U. S. regarding punishing the perpetrators of these evil deeds. And, punished they should be (Romans 13). However, the sad inconsistency and hypocrisy of our nation in these and other matters is despicable.

#### SIN DOES NOT GO UNPUNISHED

Our government and many Americans care nothing for the untold thousands of hijacked and murdered unborn babies. Moreover, the effort to ignore and repudiate God's moral laws regarding homosexuality is shameful. Also, the home as God would have it is under attack. Those who claim to be the friends of mankind perpetrate all of these terrorists attacks. Those who support and work for such ungodliness are not one whit behind **Osama Bin Laden** and his ilk, for all concerned have committed their heinous deeds based on false philosophies and religions. And, be sure God sees it all. Indeed, he takes note of it in his book of flawless and consistent justice.

The materialism and military might of America received a blow to its mid-section when the three planes crashed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. All of the riches, power, and might of the United States of America could not stop what happened (Psalms 20:7). And, the truth of the matter is that when persons are willing to give their lives for a cause, little can be done to fully thwart their purposes.

Recently a brother in Christ asked me if I thought this was God's judgment on the U. S. for its materialism and immorality. That I do not know. However, I do know that God has allowed such to happen in the past and that Paul warned, “**Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap**” (Galatians 6:7). From the Old Testament we read, “**Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people**” (Proverbs 14:14). “**The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God**” (Psalms 9:17).

## THE FOUR HORSEMAN OF THE APOCALYPSE

The four horseman of Revelation six will ride in this present world until time is no more. They are the white horse of conquest, the red horse of war, the black horse of famine, and the pale horse of death. Together they declare to mankind that an ultimate, complete, and final judgment is coming. Also, they teach us that this world is not a good place to live forever. In that sense I know that what happened in a matter of moments on September 11, 2001 is a warning that man, left to his own devices, is a pitiful and frail creature, sifted by the Devil and reserved for eternal misery and destruction (Proverbs 14:12; Jeremiah 10:23). There is, therefore, only one escape from **“the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”** (Revelation 21:8). It is Jesus Christ, his gospel, and his church (John 14:6; Romans 1:16; Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; 2:47; Ephesians 5:23; 4:4; 1:22, 23). As 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).

**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men** (II Corinthians 5:10, 11).

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

\*\*\*\*\*

## **“DO NOT SIN AGAINST THE CHILD” (Genesis 42:22)**

God ordained three institutions for this present world—the home, civil government, and the Lord’s church. When the word of God is followed, each of these institutions compliments and harmonizes with the others. However, when any one of these institutions steps out of its God ordained sphere of work and influence trouble and hurt always follow. Civil government has no scriptural right to usurp the place of the home or the church in the divine scheme of things. Neither does the church have authority from God to function as a home or the home as a church, or as the Roman Catholic Church believes and has practiced—to run the home and the government. In other words neither the President of the United States, Congress, or the Supreme Court is the head of my house nor are the elders of the church the head of it either. It is scripturally incumbent on civil government and the church to help the home do its work without usurping its place in the divine scheme of things. Each of these

God-ordained institutions has the responsibility to help the others be just what God intended them to be—nothing more or nothing less. Of course throughout history this has rarely been the case. However, one would think that the Lord’s church would surely understand the purpose and design of the home, civil government, and the church. But, on second thought, I suppose in this day of biblical ignorance, lethargy, and lack of respect for biblical authority, that would be expecting too much. However, may I emphasize that if the gospel and the church of our Lord may be and must be restored according to the divine pattern (and it can be and has been), then the same divine pattern authorizing such a restoration also authorizes the restoration of the home and civil government. If man must restore the gospel and the church (and he must—Colossians 3:17), he is no less accountable and obligated to God to fight for the ascertaining of the truth of God regarding the home and civil government.

### **THOSE WHO HATE GOD’S INFALLIBLE PATTERN FOR LIFE AND GODLINESS**

Liberalism (doctrines that if followed loose men from what God in the Bible has bound upon them) by its very nature cannot leave the church to do the work God authorized it to do and the home to function as God intended. Because the liberal has rejected the authority of the scriptures, he has no compunction of conscience when it comes to teaching doctrines that blur and, yes, erase the lines of distinction and separation between the home, the church, the government and their respective organizations and works.

In these comments I am especially concerned about the lack of understanding and respect for the Bible’s teaching regarding the distinctive organizations and works of the home and the church. Sadly, too many well-meaning and sincere elders have never understood that they are not the heads of the families (other than their own) that comprise the churches they superintend. And, while they are expected to help the home be what God intended it to be, they have no authority from God to take the place of parents, even when parents are abdicating their God-given responsibility. Moreover, they do not have biblical authority to employ or appoint someone to usurp the authority of the husbands and fathers, the persons whom God appointed to be heads of their own houses (Ephesians 5:23)—who are authorized to provide for their own (I Timothy 5:8). Neither do they have the authority to infringe upon the wife’s and mother’s God-ordained place and sphere of influence. These are they who are charged by God **“to rule”** the home under the headship of their husbands (I Timothy 5:14). Elders have no authority from God to take the place of parents in their singular responsibility of nurturing and admon-

ishing children in the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). While all Christians must obey elders when those elders are faithful in their direction of the church they oversee, children are not to obey elders in the same areas of conduct in which they are to obey their parents (Hebrews 13:17; Ephesians 6:1). Elders have an obligation to teach parents and children what their responsibilities are to one another, but they do not have the authority from God to take the place of parents in doing only what God ordained mama and daddy to do. Faithful husbands and Godly elders will do all that is within their authority to prohibit such from happening. Certainly we do not want to be found doing evil **“that good may come”** (Romans 3:8).

#### **“THE BEST INTENTIONS OF MICE AND MEN...”**

One of the positions that has worked very well to destroy what God intended the church and the home to be and do has been the so-called “youth ministers”. When such a position was created, did elders intend to usurp the authority of the parents? I dare say they did not. In fact, I am sure that the intention was to help young people in giving them special attention. But, sometimes these “helps” have a way of turning around and biting the hand that created them.

Well do I remember the late **G. K. Wallace** pointing out how the colleges operated by the brethren had enough wisdom not to chose a preacher in his early twenties (possible unmarried) to “minister” to a dormitory full of young women on the college campus. Yet, he pointed out, elders routinely choose such men to “shepherd” the young people in local congregations while many of the parents do their “own thing”. Remember it was when Rehoboam chose the unwise council of the young men over that of the seasoned and wise council of his older advisors that evil came to pass (II Chronicles 10). Will we ever learn from these Old Testament examples (Romans 15:4)?

#### **GOD’S YOUTH MINISTERS**

I like God’s youth ministers because God knows best. Indeed, God’s youth ministers are called parents (those whom God has authorized to provide for children what God intended them to get in their upbringing—Ephesians 6:1-4). Let them work together for the good of their own children and become involved in their children’s lives. Let elders, preachers, and Bible class teachers teach and train Christian parents from God’s word those things that pertain to their responsibilities in home life (Colossians 3:17). And, also let them teach these parents to organize themselves (work with one another **“decently and in order”**—I Corinthians 14:40) to whatever degree of organization is necessary to expedite their work in family associations and fellowship (which would include socializing) and so on. *No one is opposed to or-*

*ganized youth groups just as long as the parent’s biblical responsibility to “mind the kids” is not altered or usurped thereby.* The problem arises when parents with encouragement from well-meaning elders, preachers, and certain other parents turn their children (teenagers in particular) over to inexperienced young men, and sometimes women, who themselves are in need of direction from older and wiser heads. *Where in the Bible is there a direct statement, implication, or an example to authorize such activity?*

Many in the church know so little about ascertaining Bible authority they do not know there can be no expediting without something to expedite, and that something to expedite is that which is authorized. Thus, without authorization there can be no expedition because there is no obligation to discharge. If some fathers cannot see the wisdom of God in this, then the next time you need a “sitter” for your beautiful fifteen year old daughter while you take mom out to supper, just call in a twenty-two year old single young preacher to take good care of her until you get home. In the privacy and seclusion of your own home, they can study **LeRoy Brownlow’s** book, “Some Do’s and Don’ts for the Christian”, especially part 1, chapters 6, 7 and part 2, chapter 9.

#### **THE MINISTRY OF MINISTERIAL MINISTRYING**

*Yes, I am fully aware that the Bible authorizes persons to be employed by the church to work in teaching the alien sinner, edifying the saints, and in benevolence.* These are the three areas in which the church is authorized to function as it does its part in helping to save souls. Of course this would include the expedients involved in discharging one’s obligations in these areas. Church secretaries, church custodians, church treasurers, church librarians, preachers, and the like are a few good examples of expedients in such areas. However, I do not understand that these important helps are labeled “the Secretary Ministry”, “the Custodian Ministry”, “the Church Treasury Ministry”, “the Song Leading Ministry”, “the Church Librarian Ministry”, “the Pot-Luck Ministry”, or, as one Texas church had, “the Ministry of Involvement”—figure that one out. Maybe the previous term is somewhat like the Athenians’ altar to the Unknown God—sort of a catchall ministry to include the ministries of which no one has yet thought.

If some of my present day brethren had been viewing the Lord washing the disciples feet they, no doubt, would have wanted to have a “Foot Washing Ministry”, or if they had witnessed the Philippian jailor washing the stripes on Paul and Silas’ backs they would have thought it wholesome to have a “Washing the Stripes Ministry”—no doubt a very important “ministry” in time of persecution. Moreover, they probably would have employed someone to do it,

printed him business cards with his title clear, and given him an office with the Minister of Whatever written on the door.

**"TEMPTED AND TRIED I'M OFT MADE TO WONDER..."**

The only time I have ever been tempted to think that a "Youth Ministry" might possess some merit is if it included the authority to spank the "living daylight" out of some of the children that keep their parents cowered down like whipped puppies while their children run into the elderly and run riot on the church premises. And, such parents will give an account to God for placing such a temptation before some of us. Indeed, I wonder how a "Children's Bottom Beating Ministry" would be accepted by the elders. Well, guess what, we already have those who are designated by God to engage in such necessary and loving work—again, they are called parents. All of that being the case, I do have the authority to teach and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine, regarding these and other matters that pertain to life and godliness and that I will do (I Timothy 6:2; II Timothy 4:2; II Peter 1:3). Indeed, parents have the responsibility to exercise the needed discipline, not me—though, as previously noted, I am sorely tempted at times to demonstrate to such parents how it is done. Simply put, such parents do not love their children to the point of teaching and training them—which training includes proper preventive and corrective discipline (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 29:15; Hebrews 12:6, 7). What a Shame! How many shepherds of the flock go to such parents, sit down with them and teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly regard-

ing what all is involved in parenting? Certainly, if elders are qualified to serve as elders they have had experience in such matters (I Timothy 3:4, 5; Titus 1:6).

**WHAT IS MEANT AND WHAT IS NOT MEANT**

What I have previously written and what brother Chesser has written in his article to follow does not mean that every single solitary young adult who works with young people is a liberal or that all such young adults are seeking to lead other young people with whom they work away from the Lord in any form or fashion. What we do mean is that the emphasis must be on speaking as the oracles of God and doing only what is authorized—calling Bible things by Bible names and doing Bible things in Bible ways (Colossians 3:17; I Peter 4:11). Let us **"make all things according to the pattern"** (Hebrews 8:5). Among other things this means we will learn and respect God's institutions and those persons he places in authority over his institutions as well as how he desires they function. Indeed, we dare not alter his system in any way whatsoever.

Many church members (and not a few elders, deacons, parents, and preachers) are adept at taking an expedient (an orderly advantageous means, aid, help, or method to a biblically authorized end—the discharging of only what God has authorized us to do) and making it the end within itself. Thus, the end result in some instances is the proverbial "tail wagging the dog"—sort of a "Tail Wagging Ministry" without too much concern for the dog that wags it.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

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## LIBERALISM AND YOUTH MINISTERS

Frank Chesser

*[EDITORIAL NOTE: The article that follows is an excerpt from a new book entitled "The Spirit of Liberalism". Frank Chesser, a faithful gospel preacher who presently preaches for the Panama Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama, wrote it. Brother Chesser loves the truth and is a Bible quoting "proof texting" preacher. He, by a faithful life of preaching the gospel, defending the truth, and rearing a family is well qualified to write on this timely subject. It is reproduced here with the permission of the author and publisher.*

*The Spirit of Liberalism is composed of 205 pages. It is divided into 20 chapters. The titles of the chapters are: "Liberalism Does Not Tremble", "Liberalism and the Past (Part I)", "Liberalism and the Past (Part II)", "Liberalism and the Past (Part III)", "Liberalism and Grace", "Liberalism and the Cross", "Liberalism and Love", "Liberalism and Faith", "Liberalism and Law", "Liberalism, Gospel, and Doctrine", "Liberalism Is Progressive", "Liberalism and Preaching", "Liberalism and Missionaries", "Liberalism and Youth Ministers", "Liberalism and Marriage", "Liberalism and the Role of Women", "Liberalism and Pride", "Liberalism and Its Fruit", and "Liberalism and Exclusiveness".*

*In the Preface of the book brother Chesser wrote in part the following about his work.*

*This book is candid. It could not be otherwise. It is based on divine truth, and truth is candid. ...*

*This book is intolerant. It has zero tolerance for the spirit of liberalism. Liberalism is the breeding ground for pride, self-will, and human's tampering with things divine. Toleration for liberalism is toleration for sin. ...*

*This book believes truth can be known. Liberalism loves to ask, "Do you think you know all truth?" Liberalism, which is pride incarnate, thinks only pride would answer affirmatively. ...*

*This book was composed in sorrow. The harm that liberalism has done to the church for which Jesus died, the truth of the Bible, and the souls of men is incalculable. The insidious evil liberalism that necessitates this effort and kindred endeavors by faithful brethren to defend the faith is a brotherhood tragedy. ...*

*This book is being sent forth in hopes that it will encourage the faithful, serve as a deterrent to those who are considering embarking on the road of liberalism, and snatch yet receptive souls from the devouring jaws of this stupendous evil.*

*Because so much of the evil done by liberals has been and is wrought among young people, I have selected a portion of brother Chesser's chapter on "Liberalism and Youth Ministers". It is my desire and prayer that brethren will give close consideration to what brother Chesser has written and understand what happens when God's pattern is ignored, not respected, and not followed. Also, please buy the book, read it in the light of the Bible, think about it, and benefit from all of it. Indeed, buy several copies and give them to as many people as you can. —DPB]*

The neglect, misuse, and abuse of youth in the church today is a brotherhood tragedy. As the Moabites feared Israel would **"lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh the grass of the field"** (Numbers 22:4), even so, the spirit of liberalism has licked up a host of young people and deposited them on the road to spiritual ruin. Liberalism has performed much of its wicked work through youth ministers.

God has his youth ministers, and they are called parents. There are exceptions to the rule, but speaking generally youth ministers are symbols of parental neglect. If parents were functioning according to God's design for the home, there would be no need for an employee of the church to minister to the youth. Elders have hired youth ministers to do the work that God has ordained for the home.

Some of God's greatest servants failed in their own homes. In spite of his well-known personal failings, David was a mighty man of God. However, his home was a disaster area. Polygamy and over-involvement in the affairs of state no doubt played major roles in his failure as a father. Regarding one of his sons, Adonijah, it is expressly stated that he was reared in the absence of discipline, having never been called into account for his improper conduct (I Kings 1:6).

Relative to his personal righteousness, the biblical portrait of Eli is exemplary. During Israel's conflict with the Philistines, even as his grandson was near birth, his primary concern was with the ark of God (I Samuel 4:17-19). However, his failure as a father led God to say, **"For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not"** (I Samuel 3:13). It was Samuel who delivered this tragic news to Eli, yet his sons fared no better. **"And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre and took bribes and perverted judgment"** (I Samuel 8:3). It is possible that Samuel was often an absentee father (I Samuel 7:16), therefore allowing his sons to grow up in a home frequently vacant of strong fatherly presence and influence.

"Latch-key kids" is a phrase of recent invention to describe children who come home from school to an empty house. Regarding intimate, emotional, conversational,

biblically instructive contact with children, many of the homes of members of the church are parentally uninhabited. Both parents work, come home weary; and allow toys created by technology to baby-sit their children until bedtime. Saturdays are catch-up and fun days with parents and children often going in opposite directions. Many devote an hour on Sunday to perfunctory worship, lease the remainder of the day to leisure, and start the whole process all over again on Monday. Consequently, the stage has been set for youth ministers.

Youth ministers are "gap fillers." They are hired by elders to fill the gaps in the lives of children left by parents in regard to spiritual and social activities. Concerning the latter, they are professionals. In most cases, elders hire a youth minister who himself is a youth. Being only a few years at best out of his teens, he has intimate knowledge of fun and frolic. There are no gaps in his monthly social calendar. Youth ministers often

know more about the young people under their youthful oversight than the parents, because they spend more time with them.

Regarding spiritual activities and biblical instruction, youth ministers are frequently spiritual catastrophes. Their biblical knowledge is diminutive, and what little they know is so dominated by the spirit of liberalism as to render them the most dangerous influence in the lives of these young people. Deficient in Bible knowledge, they are unable to discern the exclusiveness of New Testament Christianity. Their "no big deal" spirit toward various tenets of inspired teaching renders useless the whole concept of biblical authority. If their life depended upon it, they could not articulate the difference in the church that cost Jesus His blood and some denomination void of a divine right to exist. They do not believe there is any difference.

Youth rallies are significant events in the lives of youth ministers and those committed to their care. Many of these gatherings are nothing more than Pentecostal pep rallies. The speakers are professionals in creating an emotional climate. They are full of jokes and stories. They are comedians, not preachers; entertainers, not spokesmen for God; actors, not teachers of truth. Attentive minds and calm reflection on faith-building, biblical truths are supplanted by

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clapping, swaying, and displays of emotion. The participants return home in touch with their feelings, but not with God through the enlightenment of distinctive Bible truth.

One of the most popular and well-attended youth rallies is Winterfest. Headquartered in Edmond, Oklahoma, the Winterfest organization is a money-making enterprise that is void of deep reverence for the majesty of God and the authority of his word. In their rally in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, February 16-18, 2001, they featured during a Sunday morning worship service, a slovenly dressed actor portraying Jesus' partaking of the Lord's supper. For some forty-five minutes, carrying a bottle of liquid and two loaves of bread, he traipsed about the stage and through the audience, quoting scripture, eating bread, and passing out pieces for some in the assembly. Elders who allow the young people under their oversight to be influenced by such spectacles of blasphemy shall surely answer to God in the Judgment. Moreover on their website, Winterfest promotes a CD entitled "Radical Praise Movement," and then proclaims, "We need a worship revolution." It is crystal clear as to what this detestable organization is endeavoring to do to the minds of youth.

Youth ministries are often emblematic of pastoral neglect. It is the responsibility of pastors to oversee the flock. Their duty demands intimate knowledge of every sheep. They shall account to God for every one (Hebrews 13:17). Some elders employ youth ministers as though they were maintenance men. cursory attention is given to the young man's convictions on essential matters of biblical teaching. Little emphasis is placed on his depth of Bible knowledge. In spite of their lacking a thorough knowledge of his position on all matters of faith, they proceed to place under his youthful oversight the precious souls of young men and women for whom they are accountable before God. Unknowingly, due to their own neglect, they have often employed a young man in whose veins flows the diseased blood of liberalism.

**"And they were scattered because there is no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered"** (Ezekiel 34:5). The shepherds of Israel had no concern for the spiritual welfare of the sheep. Without shepherd, the sheep were no match for the savagery of nature. In like manner manifesting little concern for the spiritual lives of the lambs, such elders commit them to the care of a young wolf in sheep's clothing. They are soon devoured by the wild beast of liberalism and planted on the road to eternal ruin.

Youth ministries frequently exemplify an eldership's misuse of deacons. There are congregations where the work of a deacon amounts to no work at all. They have a title, but no tasks. They wear a designation that connotes service, but they do not serve in any specific way. Some of these men are biblically knowledgeable and extremely capable of effective service, but wander aimlessly under elders who, regarding directive ability, are either derelict or incapable.

Moreover some of these men have grown up with the youth of the church and have their love and respect. There are many good works in which the talents, enthusiasm, and

vigor of youth can be usefully employed. Indisputably, even though parents have the primary responsibility in this regard, there is a time and place for youthful congregational and recreational activities external to parental involvement. What better work for these deacons to perform than to have such youth, work, and activities placed under their oversight. One congregation in particular comes to mind in which deacons have been appointed, under the oversight of the elders, to coordinate the activities of the pre-teens and teens. Among these activities are regular nursing home visits; young people are paired with elderly members of the congregation who become their adopted grandparents; intense study sessions are conducted in order to prepare for an area-wide annual Bible-bowl competition; and regular outings are planned involving wholesome recreational activities. As a result, these young people form a cohesive, close group, well-grounded in biblical truths. The retention rate of these youths has been remarkable.

Most youth ministers are young, single, married with no children, or married with small children. Hence, they are not seasoned in age, marriage, or parenthood. Even when sound in the faith, through no fault of their own, due to their youth, they are deficient in the meat of Bible knowledge, in wisdom, and in life's experiences. They themselves are yet in need of adult guidance. However, they are often employed, furnished good salaries, and given free rein with priceless young souls, with little to no direction from even the elders. Is this sound judgment when in the same congregations are deacons, matured in age, marriage, family, life's experiences, wisdom, and Bible knowledge, who would give freely of their time and talents to the youth of the church?

For every biblically sound youth minister in the church today, there are twenty-five whose minds have been contaminated by the defiling spirit of liberalism. These young men are deficient in understanding some of the most fundamental principles of biblical teaching. **"Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say; nor whereof they affirm"** (I Timothy 1:7). If remunerated for their services, they would be just as content in some denominational church as in the church of the New Testament. They love to talk about grace. Their countenance swells with pride as they pontificate thereon as though they had plumbed the depths of the subject and unlocked all of its mysteries. To hear them speak, one would tend to think they had followed Paul's path into the third heaven and been enlightened on matters not revealed in the Bible. Ignorance and pride are joined at the hip, and they walk lame with both. They have been robotized by those well-matured in liberal thinking and parrot their foolishness in mechanized form. They are a continual blight on the cause for which Jesus died and have made major contributions to the present apostasy of the church.

There are, however a few young men presently serving as youth ministers who are sound in the faith. They love the truth and tread the old paths with ardor and delight. They understand and esteem biblical authority. They possess a trembling reverence for every word of God. The pivot of their labor is spiritual and not a continuous stream of activities that mollify the flesh. They share an attitudinal kin-



ship with the young man who affirmed, "I am a gospel preacher who just happens to work with the youth of the church." However, even these young men should not be allowed free and unfettered access to the minds and lives of young people. Such an arrangement is not in their own best interests, nor that of the young people under their guidance. They themselves would generally prefer the guiding and assisting hand of some older, knowledgeable, spiritual

leader in the church. Even so, it would be far more consistent with the will of God to utilize the zeal and talents of these young men as personal evangelists in the community, with a much smaller portion of time devoted to youth work, while encouraging parents to be the youth ministers of their own children.

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## LARGE ACTIVE YOUTH GROUPS (LAYG' s) A REBUTTLE

Jim Whitmire

*[EDITORIAL NOTE: As you read this article, please keep in mind that we must have Bible authority for all we believe and practice (Colossians 3:17). Also, remember that the Bible authorizes only by its direct statements, examples, and what is implied. Such is the inherent nature of the communicative element of any language—inspired scripture or otherwise. Furthermore, there can be no expedient where there has not first been authorization—for authorization places the obligation on man and the expedient is something that helps discharge the obligation the quickest and best way possible. Moreover, do not forget that God established the home, civil government, and the church. And, while they are to work in harmony with one another (and the Bible teaches us how such is to be accomplished), they are not to usurp one another's place in life or work.*

*Write me and let me know your thinking about this article in general and the following statements from it in particular? I am sure brother Whitmire would enjoy hearing from you too.*

- 1. "The responsibility for a successful Youth Ministry ultimately lies with the elders or male leaders of each congregation."*
- 2. "Without an organized Youth Ministry where and with whom will our children spend their time?"*
- 3. "I do not believe the primary purpose of a Youth Ministry should be to teach Bible doctrine to our children. We have a Bible School Ministry responsible for that function"—DPB]*

The May 2001 issue of *CFTF* contained an article extremely critical of LAYG's. While the writer made several valid points, overall I was disappointed in the context of the discussion. The true origin of any problems with LAYG's and the ultimate solutions to these problems were not addressed.

By the writer's own admission the alternative to LAYG's is church sponsored youth activity that is sporadic and unorganized. What ministry in the church will be successful in accomplishing its stated purpose if it is "sporadic and unorganized"?

The responsibility for a successful Youth Ministry ultimately lies with the elders or male leaders of each congregation. They must be men of vision who shepherd their flock, ensuring that everyone, including the youth, are fed from God's word. They must set the goals to be reached by the Youth Ministry. They must oversee the Youth Minister/Director as he develops and implements the activities that will accomplish these goals. We, as parents, must support the Youth Leaders and our children's participation in all aspects of this ministry, not just the social activities. LAYG's are no more inherently corrupt than are the Senior's Group, Women's Group, Men's Group, Single Adult's Group or Family Life Groups. The failure of any of these groups to promote and develop Christian values/activities such as edification, evangelism, benevolence or a

servant attitude does not lie in the concept of the group itself. It lies with those who are responsible for the oversight, development and implementation of those groups' activities.

Our children are constantly bombarded by worldly values in the TV they watch, the publications they read and most importantly by those with whom they come in contact whether it be at school, work or in social/recreational activities. Due to the nature of today's urban demographics many of us no longer live in close proximity to our church buildings. Our children often do not attend school with their church friends. They will be most influenced by those with whom they spend the most time (I Corinthians 15:33). Without an organized Youth Ministry where and with whom will our children spend their time? Having seen my son and two daughters complete their public school education I have experienced first hand the potential effects of their spending time in secular versus Christian environments.

LAYG's that promote a distorted view of the purpose and function of the church do so because those responsible for the direction of the group have failed to carry out their duties, from the elders down to the parents. As an elder, Youth Group Coordinator, and parent I take personal responsibility for the success or failure of our Youth Group in helping to develop mature Christians who understand

God's purpose for his church. Our Youth Ministry consists of six areas overseen by parents and single adults that are directly responsible for developing and implementing activities in each area. These areas are the Annual Youth Rally, Evangelism, Service Projects, Retreats, Social Activities and Pre-Teens. The social activities are no more or less important than the other areas of this ministry.

I do not believe the primary purpose of a Youth Ministry should be to teach bible doctrine to our children. We have a Bible School Ministry responsible for that function. If we are raising a generation of "milk drinkers" the problem is not our LAYG's, it is again the elders, deacons, ministers

and parents who are responsible for our formal study programs within the congregation and in the homes of our children.

LAYG's that undermine parental training are doing so because they are allowed to do so by those responsible for ensuring that it does not occur, again, the elders, deacons, ministers and parents of our youth.

As with any ministry of the Lord's church, LAYG's are only as successful as those who oversee, develop and implement their activities.

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## Children's Church: "From Heaven OR Men?"

Rob L. Whitacre

In the 60's and 70's, special assemblies for children were introduced in congregations of the Lord's people all over the country. Some called it a "bible hour" while others called it "children's church." These special assemblies were designed to be a place for children to go during the worship service. The intention was honorable—teach kids to behave during "church" while Mom and Dad went to worship without disturbance. The most important question about this service is: is the practice from Heaven or men? This was the question Jesus asked the chief priests and elders about the baptism of John, "... whence was it? from heaven or men?" This age old question is most applicable today.

*First*, I am opposed "children's church" because of the answer I must give to Jesus' question. When I read the New Testament I find not one hint of children's church. There is no direct statement of it. It is not implied. There is no example of it. Paul said, "In whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (Colossians 3:17). Children's church is not from Heaven and thus must be from men.

*Second*, I oppose "children's church" because it is contrary to New Testament teaching on the assembly. The church is always to be together for the worship assembly. Notice these examples: "...they were gathered together..." (Acts 20:7); "For first of all, when ye come together in the church..." (I Corinthians 11:18); "when ye come together therefore into one place..." (I Corinthians 11:20); "wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together..." (I Corinthians 11:33). Every congregation should meet together during the worship assembly so the whole congregation can be edified (I Corinthians 14:26) and elders can feed, shepherd, and protect the flock of God (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17).

*Third*, I am opposed to "children church" because it separates children from their parents, and separates parents from the responsibility of teaching their children to worship properly. Our children have to be taught how to behave and be reverent in the assembly and it is Mom and

Dad's responsibility to do the teaching (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4). Is this an easy task? No one ever said it would be.

*Fourth*, I am opposed to "children's church" because it causes some adults to violate Hebrews 10:25. Someone has to watch the children and, therefore, someone has to forsake the assembly. Do those who care for the children not need edification from the pulpit? How do they fulfill the command to "sing one to another" (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) while separated from the assembly.

I am not opposed to teaching our children how to worship. In fact, this is a real problem today. The answer is not in creating an unauthorized program, but in doing what has worked since the beginning of the church. Notice the following suggestions made by a father, elder, and preacher:

1. Talk to your children (even little ones) about worship, and what it is, and why you go to the church building. They need to hear from you that you want to go and that worship is important to you.
2. Take care not to leave the wrong impression that you go only because you "have to." That kind of impression will linger a long time.
3. Impress upon them the purpose of the assembly, to praise, honor, and worship God, thanking him for his abundant blessings.
4. Make sure they are prepared for Bible class. Talk about the material discussed in their class the previous week. This is valuable time.
5. Make it a point to let them get acquainted with other children their age. When they are old enough, invite their friends over socially.
6. Give them their own Bible to bring to worship service and insist they treat it with respect.
7. Make sure their bathroom trips and drinks of water are attended to before worship begins.
8. When little ones get fussy and are distracting others, take them to the "training room" for instruction. Then bring them back so they will have no motivation to misbehave.

9. Encourage older children to take notes, or list the times the words Bible, God, etc. are used. This provides something by which their attention can be maintained.

10. Make sure that our children do not become involved in outside activities that limit their *ability to worship God*.

The answer to disruptive children is not another new unauthorized program. It resides in parental responsibility.

Let us worship according to the biblical pattern and refrain from adopting the philosophy of the progressive and change movement. The only valid question concerning children's church was asked by our Lord, is it from Heaven or men? Dear friends, that should be enough to stop this departure right in its tracks!

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## CAN ONE PARTICIPATE IN THE "LADS TO LEADERS/LEADERETTES, INC."?

Mark Mosher

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their god, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you (II Corinthians 6:14-17).

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them (Romans 16:17).

I wonder how many verses are needed before some realize they cannot have fellowship with unsound brethren? For a number of years I have been concerned and troubled over a program entitled, "Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes, Inc." There are two terms in the title that gave the first alarm, "Leaderettes" and "incorporated". The term "Leaders/Leaderettes" implies that as boys attain to positions of leadership in the church (Elders/Deacons/Preachers), that girls attain to the same positions. The title does not make a distinction. While this is a concern, I believe that the strongest arguments that should cause one to question his involvement in such a program concerns its organization and its fellowship.

### A LOOK AT THE ORGANIZATION OF THE "LADS TO LEADERS/LEADERETTES, INC."

For the organization to have within the title, "Incorporated" implies that it is a separate institution from the church. This in and of itself is not a sin. Bookstores and businesses owned by brethren are separate organizations from the church. Yet when that organization begins to broadcast its purpose as doing the work of the church, acting as a church and soliciting funds in a cooperative effort from the church, then we have another missionary society again in our midst. Notice the statement made by the *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes Inc.* on their website :

(Under the title, The Goal of Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes.) The goal of the Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes is to provide churches with effective year-round youth (third grade through college) leadership programs that can adapt to your congregation needs. It is a program that can equip young people with the knowledge and skills to become Bible school teachers, personal workers, effective speakers, and church leaders; they can take these talents into communities in need of Christ, even before they graduate from high school. Though many congregations with the Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes programs boast a 90% retention rate of their young people, it is a program that goes beyond helping churches keep their youth faithful to the Lord. It provides a way for churches to train their youth to be leaders for the Lord and his Church. Training our people in the church is an important matter to consider. This is an exciting time for the Lads to Leaders ministry. We are growing in number, and that means the Lord's kingdom is multiplying.

By these statements, it is plain that there is no doubt the corporation is claiming to do the work of the church. The very last statement proclaims that if the *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes, Inc.* is growing then the church is growing. This is a bold claim that cannot be seen as just another business or adjunct of the home. This is a corporation that acts as a church, doing the work of the church, receiving support and cooperation from local churches, yet is set up under a board of directors and not an eldership. Where is the authority for such? One truly cannot support the program of the *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes, Inc.* and please God.

### A LOOK AT THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE "LADS TO LEADERS/LEADERETTES, INC."

If one wishes to see the congregations that are involved in the program one simply needs to look at the *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes, Inc.* web-site (<http://lads-to-leaders.org/>). Click on the caption at the left reading "Convention," then click on either Louisville, Nashville, or Orlando, then click on "Convention Sites: Who goes where?" If you do this for each of the three cities, this will supply you with the names of all of the congregations involved in this program. This past year there were 400 congregations

involved in the program. While some of these congregations are sound, there are many involved who are not sound. This author knows of congregations involved in the program that have fully supported the Billy Graham Crusade. This author knows of congregations involved in *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes, Inc.* that support known false teachers in the church. Can one abide by the Word of God as a sound congregation of the Lord and cooperate with those who are unsound? The English word "fellowship", translated from the Greek word *koinonia* is translated by Thayer as "to come into communion or fellowship, to become a sharer, to be made a partner." Therefore, fellowship involves two or more persons or organizations participating, sharing, or having communion together. As long as unsound brethren participate at the *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes, Inc.* convention a sound congregation cannot participate and remain sound (Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:16-18; I Corinthians 5; II Thessalonians 3:6,14; Titus 3:10; II John 9-11). What verse can one use to say that he can participate in such? The only argument that has been given me that is worthy of discussion is, "for one to withdraw all fellowship one must leave the world" (I

Corinthians 5:9-10). Yet this verse, kept in its context, refers to a Christian's relationship to the world not a Christian's relationship to the church. I must purchase my groceries at an establishment that sells alcohol. Were I to stop that process my family would need to stop eating and leave the world. Yet in the realm of my relationship to my brother in Christ, Paul sets forth clear, distinct acts one must follow.

**But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person ( I Corinthians 5:11-13).**

Acts involving withdrawal of fellowship include: (1) "might be taken away" (I Corinthians 5:2); (2) "to deliver such an one unto Satan" (I Corinthians 5:5); (3) "purge out" (I Corinthians 5:7); (4) "not to company with" (I Corinthians 5:9); (5) "not to keep company" (I Corinthians 5:11); (6) "no not to eat" (I Corinthians 5:11); (7) "put away from among yourselves" (I Corinthians 5:13); (8) "receive him not into your house" (II John 10); (9) "neither bid him Godspeed" (II John 10); (10) "withdraw yourselves" (II Thessalonians 3:14); (11) "have no company with him" (II Thessalonians 3:14); (12) "avoid them" (Romans 16:17); (13) "reject" (Titus 3:10). How clear God is in the scripture concerning our fellowship with unsound brethren. Truly one cannot participate in the program of the *Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes, Inc.* and please God. I pray all will seriously consider this matter.

—1508 Elm Street  
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## CORRUPTING YOUTH MINISTERS

Jim E. Waldron

Many of the current efforts by change agents to capture the young people in the church are rooted in the teaching given young preachers in the last two decades of the Twentieth Century. A concrete example of this was the speech given by **Jeff Walling** at the Campus Ministers Seminar at the Highland Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee in 1995.

This speech has been reviewed in several gospel papers. One of the most comprehensive of these was done by **Don Blackwell** of the Broad St. church in Statesville, NC. In that critique brother Blackwell pointed out the gross errors and common vulgarity used by Walling as he exhorted the youth ministers to carry on their work with teenagers and young adults. It is urgent that elders and parents realize the domino effect that such teaching by Walling and other change agents have on the body of Christ. That is, the

mockery and jokes at the expense of sound brethren in such seminars very quickly show up in the pep talks of youth ministers in their home congregations.

In his review Blackwell says "the bad thing about an article of this type is that you cannot hear the laughter in the auditorium and the silly voices that Walling uses during his presentation." Nor might I add can you realize the man's emphasis on a particular word to produce a rude thought. In fact, to get the full impact of Jeff's assault on the faith once for all delivered to the saints you need a copy of the tape and the manuscript. If you desire a copy of each, send

\$1.50 by check or money order to cover the package and postage of both. Order from Randall Standefer, P.O. Box 123, Dunlap, TN 37327. You may order a half dozen for \$5.

Note: This is a repeat from last year. We actually need many more young men to do the work of evangelists (II Timothy 4:2,4) and to train our youth to love the word and win souls for Christ.

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# LAITY

Jeff Sweeten

Weaknesses in translations are usually self-evident. One justification for frequently retranslating the Bible is the dynamic nature of language. Words change meaning over time, nuances vary, and new words are invented. "Simplicity," in Romans 12:8, no longer means "liberality" or "generously" (*Strong's Dictionary of Greek*) in our language today, but "the state, quality, or an instance of being simple" (Random House *Webster's Dictionary*). To "be simple" in the way you give misses the meaning of the original Greek term, so a re-translation to "generous" or "liberal" is helpful.

However, it is often the case that current religious biases creep into a product, and a translator's prejudices are published. While I believe that the New King James Bible is one of the better translations on the market today, it is not totally free from this malady, as is evident in II Chronicles 35. Verse five states, "And stand in the holy place according to the divisions of the fathers' houses of your brethren the lay people, and according to the division of the father's house of the Levites." The same term is used in verses seven, twelve, and thirteen. This is the only place in this translation where "lay people" is used.

A good translation will indicate in some way that the translators, to enhance our understanding of a Hebrew or Greek term, have supplied an extra word. In the New King James Bible; these additions are in italics. This is a very

helpful translation tool that allows the casual reader to recognize an added word in the text. It is unfortunate that many use Dynamic Equivalent translations (like the NIV, TEV, and others) for their Bible study. The very theory for translating in that way allows the translators to substitute what they think God meant by his words, in lieu of translating God's words themselves, allowing the reader to determine what he meant. Dynamic Equivalent translations are more susceptible to the encroachments of doctrinal errors. You will notice in the NKJB, that "lay" is in italics, meaning the translators were trying to help us understand something about the term "people." But what were they trying to help us understand?

Efforts to distinguish between laity and clergy are historically recent. God did not make such distinctions in the Old Testament. Priests were from the tribe of Levi. If one was not a Levite, one was not a priest (Hebrews 7:13-14). Non-Levites were not priests, but it does not follow that they were "laity," or "members of churches who are not clergy, monks, or nuns" (*The Concise Dictionary of the Christian Tradition*, p. 221). Translating a text retrospectively, and leaving us with the notion that "lay" is a biblically distinctive term, is an encroachment upon the inspired text.

There is denominational baggage in this term, too. For centuries, "clergy" (a term/concept not found in the Bible) has implied a distinction in status, as in the Dark Ages of medieval history where royalty, nobility, and clergy were the upper echelon of human society. This artificial hierarchy also placed laity in a lower spiritual status than the clergy, eventually leading to traditions that abused the notion of sainthood, applying it only to dead, religious heroes (cf. I Corinthians 1:2).

The Bible teaches, that, if you are a Christian, "you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people" (I Peter 2:9). There is no division between a Levitical priesthood and the rest of God's people anymore. And there certainly is not, and never was, a distinction in spiritual status. Whatever translation you use, note its weaknesses as you study, and "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

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# Teaching The Church To Give

Lynn Parker

The new babe in Christ came up from the baptistery and had barely dried off the water when he asked, "Now that I'm a Christian, how much should I give?" Here was a sincere question asked by one truly converted. He wanted to know. He was looking for instruction and guidance. He was eager to please his Lord. What would you tell him? What would the example of the church as a whole teach him? If he knew the incomes of the various families in the church along with the amount the families contribute, he might be awfully surprised and discouraged. So that we can please God, set the proper example, and help the work of the church, let us examine some common errors made in regard to giving.

## SOME ERRORS EXAMINED

**Error #1:** "My money is my business—no one else is to know my finances." Wrong. Certainly we are not to give to receive glory from men. Jesus stated, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 6:1). At the same time, the Bible teaches that the church is to withdraw fellowship from a brother who is covetous and refuses to repent (I Corinthians 5:11). Biblically, the use of one's money might very well be the business of other brethren. From a practical standpoint, someone else does indeed know what you give. Several men pass a collection plate and take up the money. Someone counts the monies contributed. Someone makes the deposits. Are these brethren in sin for seeing the cash or check cast in the plate by the many members of the congregation? Of course not.

**Error #2:** "The amount is not important just as long as I give cheerfully." The amount is important to God. In fact, the proper attitude along with proper teaching will produce a proper amount. Even the dried-up, wrinkled old heart of the miser can force a smile when he drops a mere dollar into the collection plate and all the while could have given a hundred. The Bible teaches that one is to give "as God hath prospered him" (I Corinthians 16:2). In addition to giving proportionately, one must be a liberal giver.

But this I say, "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:6-7).

The faithful saints of a previous dispensation gave no less than (and quite a bit more than) a tenth of what they had. Are we not to learn from these examples (Romans 15:4)? Living under the New Testament is not an excuse to do less.

A family might make \$25,000 a year and yet give only \$25 a week. That is approximately five percent of the yearly income. If a man's yearly income is \$50,000 and he gives \$50 weekly that is still just a hair above 5%. The latter, at \$50,000 yearly, would need to give \$96.15 weekly just to be at ten percent of his income. Someone asked a thought-provoking question on percentages: "Could you survive if God took your contribution, multiplied it by ten, and gave that to you as your total income?"



Remember too, that as income increases, so should your contribution. Bonuses are not exempt. Pay raises need to be taken into account when purposing our giving. And it never hurts when we "up" our giving even without a raise. While we are thinking about it, teach your children to give as they begin to earn money.

**Error #3:** "I do not have much money so I contribute time and talents." This is not an "either/or" choice. God expects the best of us. The best of our talents? Yes. The best of our time? That's right. All are to give—the wealthy and the poor. A poor widow was commended for giving when she cast in two mites because she gave "all that she had" while others gave from their abundance (Mark 12:42-44). There is no Bible authority for substitution in this matter.

**Error #4:** "I would give more if I did not have all these other obligations." Can a child of God ever justify giving God the leftovers? King David refused to offer to God that which cost him nothing (II Samuel 24:24). Malachi rebuked the people for offering to God the blind, lame, or sick animal sacrifice.

And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts (Malachi 1:8).

Our buying habits should take into account, first and foremost, our giving. Errol Flynn, certainly not the picture of a spiritual man, spoke for many church members when he said, "My problem lies in reconciling my gross habits with my net income." Think of the spiritual damage

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one does to self and family when he commits to a large mortgage payment and then robs God to make up the difference. The largest savings account will not afford a bit of comfort when one has drawn his last breath. James wrote:

**Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you,**

**and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days (James 5:1-3).**

Giving is not only an obligation but also a privilege. As a Christian, you are part of the precious blood-bought body of God's Son. Your giving is an indicator of just how important the church is in your life. Your Lord is watching the hand and the heart that contributes this Sunday.

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## MATERIALISM

(Continued From Page 1)

The effect material things have on religion is also seen in the sin of Achan, which is described in Joshua 7. Prior to the capture of Jericho, Israel had been told to keep away from "the accursed thing." However, Achan violated these instructions; his sin affected the whole of Israel and caused Israel to suffer defeat at Ai. He was guilty of the age-old sin of greed. William S. Cline remarked:

By his own mouth, Achan gave the steps which occurred in his committing the sin at Jericho. He said, "When I saw among the spoil a goodly Babylonish mantle, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it."

When Jesus came to Jerusalem and cleansed the temple, religion among the Jews had decayed. Hearts void of materialism would never have tolerated the desecration of God's House. Only a religion infiltrated by materialism would tolerate what the "changers of money" and the "sellers of sheep and oxen and doves" were doing. Plummer says,

Some sins are peculiar to certain ages or countries. But greed is found in all lands and times. It specially thrives in periods of wealth and of prosperity. It creeps in where faults of uglier aspect are denied admission. It flourishes wherever the power of religion has decayed while its profession continues.

The same situation prevailed in the times of Haggai and Malachi. In the former, the people were too busy building homes for their own private use instead of building the


Lord's house (1:4). In the latter, the Jews wanted to be paid for everything they did. God said, "Who is there among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle a fire on mine altar for nought" (1:10). Materialism had eaten the very heart and soul out of their religion. Nothing was left but a shell.

The United States of America is the most affluent nation in the world. From the standpoint of economics, it is in better condition than it has been for a very long time, and this is good, but a great percentage of American citizens have become saturated by the desire for material things and this has caused them to lose sight of spiritual values. The pursuit of the "road to riches" has left a poverty-stricken people in its wake and the church of the Lord has also suffered heavy casualties. Everyone knows that there is no vice in riches and no virtue in poverty, but we can only cure materialism by a proper attitude (cf. Luke 12:13-21; 14:16-24; 1 Timothy 6:10).

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# No Middle Ground Between Truth and Error

Thomas B. Warren

Believing that men can hold contradictory doctrines on matters of faith and still be acceptable to God is not only irrational—it is a rejection of saving truth.

## THE DECLINE OF PROTESTANTISM AND THE CAUSE OF THAT DECLINE

Most astute observers of the contemporary religious scene agree that Protestantism in general is losing most of its ability to greatly influence the lives of any appreciable number of people. The reason for this seems obvious (and this reason is being recognized by an increasing number of Protestants themselves). This reason is:

Protestantism long ago quit really standing for anything. It has been overtaken and now seems about to be submerged by liberalism of various sorts.

Upholding the view that truth is only relative (or that our knowledge of truth can be only relative) long has been a basic activity of liberals. Applying the theory of evolution to the realm of spiritual matters, they concluded that there is no such thing as finality of truth “once for all delivered.” In the view of such liberals, fixity of truth had to give way to flexibility with neither God nor truth being absolute. To contend that truth is absolute (100 per cent right) and that there is no middle ground (“gray”) between truth (“white”) and error (“black”) in the view of liberals is to become guilty of “legalism.” This sort of thinking underlies almost all of modernism. But such thinking is out of harmony with the scriptures. The reader should study such passages as: John 8:32; Galatians 1:6-9; II John 9-11; Revelation 22:18,19; Jude 3; II Timothy 4:1-5; I Timothy 4:1-5.

## LAWS OF HUMAN THOUGHT

While there are other needs, likely there is no greater need among God’s people today than to reaffirm in their thinking the long-known fact that there is no middle ground between truth and error. This is one of the basic laws of human thought. So far as precise propositions are concerned, the three laws of thought are: (1) the Law of Identity: “If a proposition is true, then it is true;” (2) the Law of Excluded Middle: “A proposition such as P is either true or false;” and (3) the Law of Contradiction: “A proposition P cannot be both true and false.” (These laws are as given in the book *Logic, An Introduction* by Professor Lionel Ruby.) All of these laws are important, but special attention will here be given to the Law of Excluded Middle, because this is the one which is most pertinent to the current problem.

## LAW OF EXCLUDED MIDDLE

In setting forth this law, logician Lionel Ruby said, “A proposition is either true or false. There is no middle

ground between truth and falsity” Of the same law, logician W S. Jevons said:

Its meaning may best be explained by saying that it is impossible to mention anything and any quality or circumstance, without allowing that the quality or circumstance either belongs to the thing or does not belong. The name of the law expresses the fact that there is no third or middle course; the answer must be yes or no. Let the thing be rock and the quality hard; then rock must be either hard or not-hard. Gold must be either white or not-white; a line must be either straight or not-straight; and action must be either virtuous or not-virtuous. (*Elementary Lessons in Logic*, p.119)

## CURRENT OPPOSITION TO THE TRUTH OF THIS LAW

Some are contending that when there are opposing views as to whether or not a given proposition is true or not-true, one must be careful not to be legalistic and say that the proposition is either 100 per cent true or 100 per cent false. To illustrate such opposition to the truthfulness of the Law of Excluded Middle, let it be supposed that there is a certain Proposition P. Let it be further supposed that Man A says, “Proposition P is true.” Let it be still further supposed that Man B says, “Proposition P is not true.” And let it be still further supposed that Man C says, “Since Man A and Man B differ in their views, how can I know which one is right? How can they know which one is right? It seems to me that there is good to be said for the views of both Man A and Man B and that either one of them would be somewhat arrogant to say that his own view is 100 per cent right and the view of the other is 100 percent wrong.” (This is basically an agnostic approach to the problem.)

Man C’s position amounts to upholding this view: man cannot really find truth and therefore cannot ever be sure that his own views are right and that opposing views are wrong. The writer of this article believes that such a viewpoint is a false one.

## THE LAW OF EXCLUDED MIDDLE APPLIED TO SOME CONCRETE PROPOSITIONS

In order to help in understanding what the Law of Excluded Middle is and how important it is, the reader is urged to carefully consider the following propositions:

**Proposition No. 1: “The Bible teaches there is one God.”**

Of this proposition, let it be supposed that Man A says, “The proposition is true.” Further, suppose Man B says, “The proposition is not true.” Further, suppose Man C says, “The proposition is neither true or false; there is some good to be said for the view of Man A and the view of Man B.” Further, suppose Man D says, “When there are opposing viewpoints, who can tell which is right? After all, each



one thinks he is right. I say let us be guided by love and agree to disagree. Love is the important thing; it does not matter whether or not we agree on the truthfulness or falsity of this proposition." Reader, what do you think of the statements of Man A, Man B, Man C and Man D?

**Proposition No. 2: "The Bible teaches that the believer in Christ must be baptized in water in order to have his sins washed away by the blood of Christ."**

Of this proposition, let it be supposed that Man A says, "The proposition is true." Further, suppose that Man B says, "The proposition is not true—it is false." Further, suppose that Man C says, "The proposition is neither true nor false; there is some good to be said for the view of Man A and there is some good to be said for view of Man B." Further suppose Man D says, "When there are opposing viewpoints, who can tell who is right? I say let us be guided by love and agree to disagree. Love is the important thing; it does not matter whether or not we agree on the truthfulness or falsity of this proposition. After all, each one thinks he is right."

**Proposition No. 3: "The Bible teaches that Christians are to eat the Lord's Supper on every first day of the week and only on the first day of the week."**

Of this proposition, let it be supposed that Man A says, "The proposition is true." Further, suppose that Man B says, "The proposition is not true—it is false." Still further,

suppose that Man C says, "The proposition is neither true nor false; there is some good to be said for the view of Man A and there is some good to be said for the view of Man B." Still further, suppose Man D says, "When there are opposing viewpoints, who can tell who is right? I say let us be guided by love and, while we agree to disagree, let us extend the hand of fellowship to all. Love is the important thing; it does not matter whether or not we agree on the truthfulness or falsity of this proposition. After all, each one thinks he is right! How can any of us ever know who is right?"

**HOW THIS WRITER EVALUATES THE VIEWS STATED ABOVE**

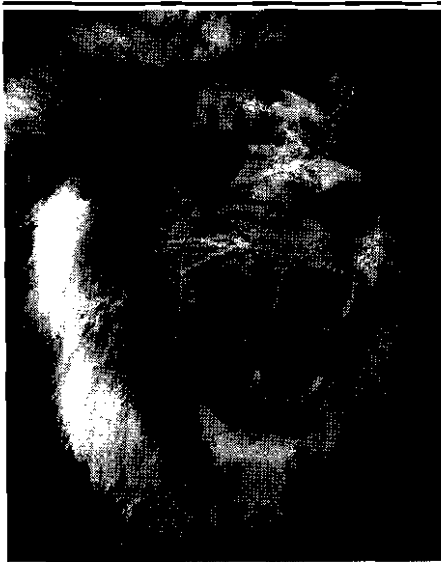
Of the views stated above, this writer says (of the reaction to the three respective propositions): (1) the view of Man A is correct; (2) the view of Man B is wrong; (3) the view of Man C is both wrong and absurd; (4) the view of Man D is both wrong and absurd.

**THE GRAVITY OF THIS QUESTION MUST BE RECOGNIZED**

There is evidence that liberal views are being held by a growing number of members of the Lord's church. If such liberal views were true, then the the Bible would not really be revelation from God to man and therefore would be valueless as a guide to heaven. But, God be thanked that these liberal views are false. Jesus himself said, "Ye shall know

# Christian Courage

"The righteous are bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1)



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- 8:00PM Caution: Proper and Improper Boldness..... Bobby Liddell

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- 9:00AM Words of Courage: Examining the Expressions..... Keith Mosher
- 10:00AM Courage Supplied: The Fountains of Fearlessness..... Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
- 11:00AM Obedience: The Courage of Conviction..... Jerry Martin
- 12:00PM *Lunch provided at the building*
- 1:30PM Standing Alone: Young People Take Courage ..... Eric Lyons
- 2:30PM Confronting False Doctrine: Boldness Required ..... Jerry C. Brewer
- 3:30PM Courage Demonstrated: God's Valient Soldiers ..... Ted J. Clarke

**Sunday, November 4**

- 9:30AM Evangelism: Good Courage and the Great Commission ..... Billy Bland
- 10:30AM Final Things: Confidence at Death and Judgment ..... Tom Bright
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the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). It is possible, therefore, for one to know the truth and to know that he knows it. The Apostle Paul plainly taught that the believing and the following of a false doctrine would damn one's soul (II Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2:10-12).

Doing the will of God (not just any religious teaching) will enable one to enter the kingdom of God (Matthew 7:21-23). Let us then hold on to the following truths: (1)

God has revealed his will, the truth; (2) He has sent that truth into the world with the expectation that it could be understood by man (Mark 16:15, 16); and (3) truth—and only truth, not error—will save men's souls (Romans 1:16; I Peter 1: 2, 23). Preach the truth, brother.

—deceased

## LESSON FOUR. . .

# CHANGE-CHANGE-CHANGE

Wayne Coats

The primacy of reason had eventually supplanted the primacy of Peter among the universities. **Johann Salomo Semler** was a professor in Halle and contributed a tremendous amount to the rationalism which was rife in the university. Among others, Semler has been given credit for being the father of the historical-critical method of study. The devil only knows how many illegitimate babies that this father has had. Semler, as others, contributed so much to the efforts of men in rejecting the Bible. Reason supplanted faith in the works of Semler.

To Semler, who used the historical-critical method, doctrine had to be re-evaluated in keeping with changing culture. This would not allow for the historical Jesus to become a model for anyone in modern times. Jesus might have been satisfactory for those who were a part of Jewish culture several hundred years ago. As culture changes, so must doctrine. Any peculiar or distinct doctrine cannot be extended throughout subsequent years as a pattern to be believed and followed. Doctrine must therefore be relevant to that specific time frame when a doctrine is formulated. As the church needed new doctrines such were conceived and devised. All doctrine therefore had to be contemporary with changing culture. The rationalist forgot to tell us why this would be so.

To Semler goes the credit of coining the expression, "liberal theology." In his wild efforts, Semler turned to demonic mysticism and in the professor we see another rabid rationalist before whom our modernist professors should bow and pray.

Do you grow weary and get sick at hearing liberals whine about the church dying unless it changes? Yes, the church will die, so we are told, unless it conforms to changing culture. Someone should patent a process whereby the church of Christ can be strained through all kinds of cultures. Such is the desire of the modernists among us. Our university bigots should be honest and tell us from whom they copy so much.

Again, we see the complete stupidity of those who theoretically used the historical-critical method as professors. We will ask **Carroll Osburn** who palavers about the

historical-literary methodology in his "Peaceable Kingdom".

1. Was Semler correct, while using the historical-critical method, in asserting that doctrine had to be reevaluated as culture changed?

2. As new doctrines were needed, the church formulated such doctrines?

Of course no modernist would be so bold as to spread such rot all over a blind brotherhood. Such rubbish is reserved behind closed doors inside a classroom.

A steady stream of filth flowed from the pens of German rationalists and having read from practically all of those of note, it seems that each professor tried to outshine the others. They tried to be different for sure, and somewhat like barnacles building upon a ship, the decadent rot provided many layers.

**Gotthold Ephram Lessing** received the credit—or infamy for publishing the works of **Reimarus**. Since rationalism had stripped away everything that was supernatural, there was nothing left but guesswork and foolishness.

Lessing wrote of Christ saying:

I must confess that I regard Him merely as a divinely inspired teacher. The orthodox conceptions of the Godhead are no longer mine, I cannot accept them. As a term of reference, I can only name Spinoza.

Inspiration to Lessing was not to be equated with that kind of inspiration which guided the apostles of our Lord. To Lessing, and other rationalists, inspiration and revelation could not give man anything beyond that which reason could give.

At Wittenberg, Lessing translated much of the material of **Voltaire**. Such was a putrid diet for certain, but in this manner infidelity spread.

Lessing contended that Matthew copied a lot of the material which he put in his gospel. From what source, the professor did not bother to tell us. Moreover, we do not know how Lessing found out about the plagiarism of Matthew. We are also allowed to increase our brilliance by learning that Mark and Luke used material which they cop-

ied from Matthew, but a lot of fresh new material was added.

We have some liberal brethren who would be happy to claim kinship with Lessing. Just imagine a professor sitting before a class of young people and burping forth the subjective lies of rationalism. Then imagine such young creeps going out into the churches and vomiting up such sleaze. Such actions stem from vile and wicked hearts and a desire to impress the ignorant.

Not many centuries are cursed with the likes of **Thomas Paine**. It would not be correct to try to belittle the influence of Paine. **Benjamin Franklin** persuaded Paine to come to America where he entered government service, but he was soon dismissed as a traitor. *His troubles in America* caused Paine to go to France where he soon found himself in prison and **Robespierre** had him marked for execution, but he hid from the guards and was able to escape.

The wicked character returned to America where he was acclaimed as a result of his book, "The Age of Reason." While there were those who praised Paine, there were those who were just as adamantly opposed to Paine's infidelity.

For Tom Paine, his attacks against faith, religion, the church and decency — resulted in his becoming a hero to the deists and atheists of America. His voluptuous and drunken lifestyle caused him to spend a lot of time in prison. **William Corbitt** wrote of Paine:

How Tom gets a living now or what brothel he inhabits, I know not nor does it much signify. He has done all the mischief he can do in this world; and whether his carcass is at last to be suffered to rot on the earth, or to be dried in the air is of very little consequence. Whenever or wherever he breathes his last, he will excite neither sorrow nor compassion. No friendly hand will close his eyes, not a groan will be uttered, not a tear will be shed. Like Judas, he will be remembered by posterity; men will learn to express all that is base, malignant, treacherous, unnatural, and blasphemous by the single monosyllable of Paine.

Men did not sit around and mutter, "What can we do?" A barrage of efforts were exploded against the works of Paine. The enemy was not left to bask in his infamy. One person wrote of Paine:

He is crammed in a dungeon and preaches up Reason, blasphemes the Almighty, lives in filth like a hog, is abandoned in death and interred like a dog.

One New England paper wrote:

What! Invite to the United States that lying, drunken, brutal infidel, who rejoices in the opportunity of basking and wallowing in the confusion, devastation, bloodshed, rapine and murder, in which his soul delights?

Another paper wrote,

How the loathsome Thomas Paine, a drunken atheist and the scavenger of freedom is invited to return in a national ship to America by the first magistrate of a free people, if that rebel rascal should come to preach from his bible to our populace, it would be time for every honest and insulted man of dignity to flee to Zoar as from another Sodom, to shake off the very dust of his feet and abandon America.

Americans did not flee to Zoar, but they knew the enemy of all that was sacred and by their efforts Tom Paine and his "Age of Reason" was brought low. Would that men in the church today had the good sense to recognize and oppose the enemy within and without the church. Silence can be so costly and destructive at times.

Infidelity in all its forms absolutely must be opposed and there is never a time for decent people to be silent. Men like Paine will continually roar in the interest of the devil and we do have a responsibility to quench the devil's darts.

When Paine arrived in America in 1892, a New York paper wrote:

**"Infidels! Hail the arrival of your High Priest."**

Another paper wrote:

Age of Reason! Look at his nose! He drank all the brandy in Baltimore in nine days. What a dirty fellow! Let Jefferson and his blasphemous crony dangle from the same gallows.

After his death, the pundits wrote about Paine as follows:

**"Here lies Thomas Paine - who wrote in liberty's defense—**

**"And in his Age of Reason-lost his common sense."**

Another wrote:

**"One hand was clenched to batter noses—While 'tother scrawled 'gainst Paul and Moses."**

We wonder how such an atheistic profligate could be so vehement against the Bible, but Tom Paine exerted all his energies against the truth. When he died his request to be buried in a Quaker cemetery was denied and instead he was buried on a farm. Later his bones were disinterred, taken to England and whatever happened to them, no one knows or cares.

The reader will probably ask, "Why spend so much time, effort and space relative to such men as Tom Paine?" He gave the world the "Age of Reason" which became the infidel's Bible. In reviewing the situation which obtained with Paine, I believe one of the greatest lessons for us can be seen in the stalwart opposition which infidelity faced when it reared its serpentine head. Who remembers or cares about Tom Paine? Who cherishes the "Age of Reason?" May God help us to have the faith and courage to arise and meet the liberals of our day who continue to be a curse to society.

—705 Hillview

Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27122

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## Presbyterian Debate, "So Help Me God", and Tweens

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

In what may be a significant sign of the times, the Presbyterian Church (USA) recently held a debate to decide whether Jesus Christ is Lord. Delegates at the denomination's General Assembly debated for two hours before giving passage to a resolution affirming that Jesus is the one and only savior. In the end, 369 delegates voted in favor of the resolution which said salvation is found only in confessing Christ and trusting him alone. But 163 delegates, almost one-third, voted to reject it (Agape Press email service, 6/15/01). *[Why be a Presbyterian? Why profess to be a Christian? Why believe anything in the Bible? The silliness of proclaiming a religion while denying the authority of the one you are supposed to follow is mind boggling.—mtm]*

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SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS (R-AL) questioned why some Senate Democratic leaders have dropped the traditional "So help me God" from the oaths they administer to nominees during confirmation hearings. Sessions said he has noticed the practice as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He stated, "I can only conclude that this is another example of the secularization of American public life. There seems to be no end to the obsession by some to eradicate any reference to a higher being from public discourse." Traditional Values Coalition's position is that Democrats apparently are not satisfied with demoting Republicans on Senate Committees. Now they've decided to demote God as well. The practice of ending a sworn oath with "So help me God" is a long-standing American tradition that goes back at least as far as George Washington's Inauguration. Taking an oath is a solemn and serious commitment. And the person who swears to tell the whole truth "So help me God" is making a profound moral statement. He is swearing not only to tell the truth, but to honor God by taking such an oath! It appears that Senator Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and other Democrat Chairmen are instituting this ban on God as well—it is not just Leahy's Judiciary Committee. Our entire legal system is built upon the veracity of those who swear to tell the truth when questioned under oath. By removing the moral foundation of the oath, the Senators are undermining our legal system. Traditional Values Coalition is deeply concerned that this removal of "So help me God" from the oath is simply another example of the prevailing anti-religious bigotry that exists within the Senate. TVC is urging the U.S. Senate to restore "So help me God" back into the oaths they administer to those who are being sworn in by all Senate committees. Senate Rule 3 requires that all Senators be sworn in by using the words "So help me God. If this oath is required for Senators, it should also be administered to those who testify before the Senate. Those who object to the oath can simply affirm that they will tell the truth. TVC is calling on the Senate Democrat Leadership to restore the "So help me God" back into the oath they administer to nominees and those who testify before the Senate (Traditional Values Coalition email service, 8/3/01). *[As stated, this is just another example of God being taken out of a respected role in our government and lives. We need our leaders in every branch of government to look to God for guidance in*

*moral and ethical direction. Continue to pray that these officials will do so. I realize that the vocal pronouncement of the phrase spoken of in the article is not an indication that the pronouncement is genuine but at least it makes them think for a brief moment what they should be thinking.—mtm]*

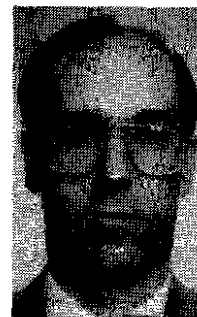
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The murder conviction of a New York man was overturned Monday by a federal judge because the linchpin of the prosecution was statements made by the defendant at Alcoholic Anonymous meetings. A judge granted the habeas corpus petition of Paul Cox, ruling the use of statements made at the AA meetings violated either the state's law protecting religious confessions or religious protections in the U.S. Constitution (Law News Network email service, 8/2/01). *[Interesting decision since most in the church would not even begin to think of AA as a religious organization. This should demonstrate that one should be careful in evaluating any "self help" group before becoming a part. Sometimes when in difficult circumstances one can be convinced that the ends justifies the means. Those addicted to alcohol in the first century did not need any kind of organization separate from the church to overcome their addiction. Neither does anyone today need such.—mtm]*

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A recent Associated Press article indicates that plenty of girls ages 8 through 12—a demographic called "tweens"—want to dress in the same suggestive manner as singers Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera, each of whom, of course, has plenty of tween fans. "Low-rise jeans, tight miniskirts and stretch T-shirts with sexually loaded phrases like 'Wild Thing' are taking center stage in [clothing] departments that serve tweens", writes reporter Anne D'Innocenzo, who quotes one unhappy mother of an eleven-year-old as saying, "Whether you go to Kmart or an expensive department store, all I see are risqué outfits." Another woman says her five-year-old now "loves to wear short skirts and tops where the belly button shows. What happened to my little girl?" And a "New York-based trend consultant" comments, "It will be [a] question of how far can the retailers and how far can the parents go. Who will blink first?" Within a few weeks, schools will become a battleground where this issue is concerned (Parents Television Council email service, 8/9/01). *[Oh come on! A parent who does not tell a five year old what they can and cannot wear?! Is this parent trying to tell us that the five year old goes to the department store and buys her own clothes? And the children would not want to dress like the music stars if the parents did not let them watch said music stars. I realize that it is hard these days to shelter them from such things but a parent has to be diligent to instill proper values. The last statement regarding what the children will be exposed to at school is a telling statement.—mtm]*

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Road  
Pell City, Alabama 35125



# SHADES OF THE PAST

Jodie Boren



It seems that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn anything from history. We do not have to stay in that rut, however, for Paul tells us in Romans 15:4 that the things we read of old are there for a purpose—that we might learn from them. Thus, we can learn a great lesson from I Samuel 8:5-20 where the people of God came to Samuel demanding to have a king over them like the other nations around them. God said in verse seven that in so doing they had rejected him.

Is there a parallel to be found in that and God's people of today wanting to be like the denominations around us? While this desire has not been vocally made, the actions of many brethren speak louder than words. When brethren bring an instrument of music into the worship; when women lead in a public way; when choirs and solos are substituted for congregational singing; when the Lord's supper is taken any day of the week; when baptism is taught as non-essential to salvation; when brethren extend the right hand of fellowship to man-made religions; when denial is made that there is a pattern in the New Testament;

when the "five steps" to the plan of salvation are ridiculed; when the Bible is no longer held up as God's enerrant and verbally inspired word; when some teach that we are saved by grace without any response on man's part; when some teach unity in diversity; when Easter and other special days are observed as religious celebrations; when divorce and remarriage is accepted on grounds other than adultery; when these and other false teachings of the denominations are taught and embraced, there certainly is a parallel! It was a rejection of God in Samuel's day and it is a rejection of God today. Remember, if we are to be judged by the words of the Lord (John 12:48), we must, therefore, abide in those words to truly be his disciples (John 8:31). In II John 9 we learn that if any man transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine (the teachings of Christ) of Christ, he hath not God.

May we never forget that denominations are not of Christ, but of men. Jesus says in Matthew 15:9 that their doctrines are, therefore, in vain. He adds in verse 13 that such unauthorized churches will be rooted up. The Psalmist declared in the long ago in Psalm 127:1, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it..."

There is only one church (Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 4:4, Ephesians 1:22,23). There is only in that one body of Christ (II Timothy 2:10). This salvation is by grace (Ephesians 2:8) but only to those who believe (Hebrews 11:6) and obey (Hebrews 5:9).

May we ever be uncompromising in our defense of the gospel (Philippians 1:17), holding fast the form of sound words (II Timothy 1:13). May we never preach anything but the unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:6-9). Dare we forget that as children of God, we are a royal priesthood an holy nation, and a people belonging to God? (I Peter 2:9) Never! Rather let us show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light by being steadfast and unmoveable (I Corinthians 15:58) just as God is steadfast and unchanging (Malachi 3:6). Since God and the gospel are unchanging, the challenge of Jeremiah is valid today where we are told to stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way (Jeremiah 6:16). We can learn from history.

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601



# WALTER SCOTT: AN UNSELFISH EVANGELIST

Paul Vaughn

Gospel preachers must be men who love studying and preaching God's word. They should be men of integrity and honor, living the message they preach. There is no pulpit designed for the insincere, indifferent, or a self-centered preacher. The preacher whose life dishonors Christ is an enemy of the cross. In the Roman letter Paul rebukes the Jews for their inconsistency. They had God's law and boasted of their relationship with God, yet they were examples of law violators.

**Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written (Romans 2:21-24).**

There is always a need for faithful preachers who anchor themselves to scriptures, men who are brimming over with unselfish evangelistic zeal. **Walter Scott** was a man with an unselfish heart who labored long and hard teaching the gospel of Christ.

## THE EARLY YEARS

Walter Scott was born on October 31, 1796 in Moffat, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. He was the sixth of ten children. His parents were **John** and **Mary Innes Scott**. John was a music professor and his mother was very pious and persuasive religiously as a Scotch Presbyterian. It was Mary's desire that Walter become a preacher.

In 1821 John Scott went to the town of Annan; while on this trip he died. Walter's mother was so desolated by the death of her husband she shortly died and was buried with her husband in the same grave.

## A TENDER- HEARTED MAN

Walter Scott was a very sensitive and tender-hearted man. He was educated at the University of Edinburgh.

During his schooling at about the age of sixteen, Walter went to town and stayed too long. His parents were concerned about him so they sent his older brother, James, to find him. James found Walter "in the midst of a crowd singing the popular Scottish airs, collecting money in this way for a poor blind beggar."<sup>1</sup> Scott kept his tender-heartedness all through his life.

## SCOTT'S MOVE TO AMERICA

After the death of his parents Scott was invited to America by uncle **George Innes**. Scott arrived in his new country in July 1818. It was at this time that he started teaching Latin at a classical academy on Long Island. It did not take

Walter Scott long before he decided to go West. Scott and a friend walked four weeks, over 300 miles, to Pittsburgh.

Once he arrived at Pittsburgh, Walter found a job as a teacher in a boy's school. **George Forrester** was the principal of the school and preached for a small church in the area. Forrester was influenced in religion by **Robert** and **James Haldane**. Thus, Scott was taught to challenge the claims of pedobaptism. After studying with Forrester on the subject of infant baptism, Scott "abandoned it as a defenseless relic of the Papacy; and accordingly, was immersed by his friend Mr. Forrester."<sup>2</sup>

## DESIRE FOR THE TRUTH

The unexpected death of George Forrester put Scott into the leadership of the boy's school and preaching for the church started by Forrester. It was during this time that Scott found a booklet written by **Henry Errett**, a Scotch Baptist in New York, on the subject of baptism. Scott chose to travel to New York to study more on the subject of baptism. Once he arrived at New York he spent three months there and was disappointed. He then returned to Pittsburgh.



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**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1146, 1319 JFH Pkwy (US 41 NW) Cartersville, GA 30120. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: Cartersville-cofc@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —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.

## —Massachusetts—

**Chicopee**—Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive, Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, tel. (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coc.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Richwood**—1600 Brazosport, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30; 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, Evangelist.

## —Wyoming—

**Cheyenne**—High Plains church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Gerald Reynolds, tel. (307) 635-2482.

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It was Scott's desire to seek truth, so he kept studying his Bible. He came to the conclusion that baptism was for the remission of sin. It was during this time that he met **Alexander Campbell** and they became close friends. Campbell had come to the same conclusion about baptism as Scott. Through the influence of Campbell, Scott was chosen as traveling evangelist for the Mahoning Baptist Association on the Western Reserve in Ohio, in 1827. During his evangelist efforts on the Western Reserve thousands of people were baptized for the remission of sin.

In 1850 Scott was hired as the full-time evangelist for the Mayslick Church of Christ, Mayslick, Kentucky. They engaged him for the sum of \$550.00 a year. It was at Mayslick that he met his second and third wife. Walter was married first to **Sarah Whitsett** on January 23, 1823, they had five children. Sarah died on 28<sup>th</sup> of April 1849. One year later he married **Annie B. Allen**, of Mayslick, Kentucky, she died in 1854. After Annie's death he married an affluent widow lady named, **Eliza Sandiage**. This was an unhappy partnership for Scott. Eliza would often drive him

out of their home. He spent many nights looking for a place to stay.

Walter Scott lived a life of an unselfish evangelist. He would travel for miles to preach the gospel or seek out truth in God's word. In his old age he began to drift from the shores he loved so much as a youth, but his willingness to spend and be spent for the gospel of Christ is an excellent example for all to follow. In April, 1861, Scott was diagnosed with typhoid pneumonia, he died on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1861.

## ENDNOTES

1. A.S. Hayden, *History of the Disciples on the Western Reserve*, Chase and Hall, Cincinnati, 1875, p.62.
2. *Ibid.* 62.

—1415 Lincoln Road  
Lewisport, Kentucky 40444

# A LAND THAT IS FAIRER THAN DAY

Eddie Whitten

Nothing pushes the patriotic button in the heart of Americans more than an attack upon our fair land. A level of patriotism unsurpassed emerged when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. It was a thrilling thing to see a common goal arouse the unified determination on the part of the entire nation to defeat the threat of foreign oppression. In the face of the cowardly attack upon our nation on September 11, 2001, that same patriotism that won the victory in 1945 has surfaced again. It has awakened the nation to the threat of oppression and the loss of the cherished freedom that characterizes America. It has also silenced the perennial, constant contentions of the *ACLU*; the big-mouthed, small-hearted *NOW*, and the egotistical, parasitic gloryhound **Jesse Jackson**. It is amazing how those who crow the loudest can crawl into the nearest hole quicker than anybody when our fair land needs a unifying voice.

## THE REAL FAIR LAND

As much as true Americans love our treasured land of the free and the home of the brave, there is a land that is much fairer. It is the land that is "fairer than day." It is the land where there is no night. It is the land where the light is brighter than the sun. It is the land where the tree of life grows and the river of life flows. It is the land in which there is no sorrow, or death, or pain, or tears. It is the land of the living—the living God. It is the land that is available to everyone on the face of the earth. Even the evil forces that perpetrated the dastardly attack upon our fair land can go there if they will submit to the will of Jehovah God (not Allah!). There is a vast difference between Jehovah and Allah in spite of the ignorance that has been demonstrated by well-meaning clerics in recent days.

The land that is fairer than day is called Heaven. Jesus warned that heaven is not going to be the final resting place for all men, as some would have us believe. He said:

**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:21-23).**

To the surprise of so many people, heaven is not going to be the home of everyone who professes to be religious.

We mourn for the loss of thousands of innocent people who arose to what they thought was just another normal day of life. They never thought that it would be their last day on earth. Such a tragedy is heartbreaking to all rational people because it is real, it is visible, it is the physical life of which we are a part. What is far more tragic is the spiritual

condition of many, perhaps all, of those whose lives were snuffed out without warning, in the wink of an eye! Had they obeyed the gospel of Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4)? Had they repented of their sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30)? Had they confessed before men that Jesus is the son of God (Luke 13:3; Romans 10:9-10)? Had they had their past sins washed away by the blood of the Lamb of God (Acts 22:16)? Had they lived faithfully in the service of their Master (Revelation 2:10)? Did they have the promise of everlasting life as a consequence of their obedience to the gospel (Hebrews 5:9)? Of course, it would be our deepest desire that such was the case with every one of those who physically perished.



The land that is fairer than day is eternal. There is no threat of oppression by an evil aggressor in that fair land. Terrorists cannot destroy Heaven. Sin cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. God, Jehovah God, sits upon his throne with Jesus, his son, at his right hand. No physical

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power on this earth can touch the majesty, power and glory of the Heavenly father. The mightiest bomb man can devise is nothing more than a popgun compared to the very breath of God. God, who from eternity spoke the earth into existence with his mouth, is eternal. We know this is true because of the assurance Paul gives us in II Corinthians 5:1, **"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."** Also, Jesus promised that heaven would be our home if we obey his will.

**Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:1-3).**

The eternal nature of heaven is the hope that sustains human life. Without hope of something far better than our earthly life, we would be most miserable (I Corinthians 15:19).

The land that is fairer than day is attainable. We can go to heaven! Without a doubt, we can go to heaven! God, through his immeasurable grace, made it possible for the souls of people to go to the land that is fairer than day. To make such a wonderful thought possible, he sent his only begotten son to the earth to provide for all men an escape from sin (John 3:16). Sin is the ravage of Satan. Jesus overcame the power of Satan when he was resurrected from the grave into which men had consigned his crucified body. Jesus clearly distinguished between the land of the free and the land of the freed. His purpose was to instruct all who would hear his voice how they can go to heaven. He told what men must do. He died to ratify his plan. He left it up to

man to accept his plan or reject it. Those who choose to obey his voice will be saved. Those who choose to reject it will be eternally lost. Paul said, **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Romans 6:23). The emphasis that should be noted is that the land that is fairer than day is attainable to everyone who will listen to the Savior and obey His will. Jesus pleads, **"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"** (Matthew 11:28).

We all love America because it is our cherished nation. It is our earthly home. We love it because of its standards of life, freedom to live comfortably in a modicum of safety, and the privilege to worship God without fear. It is a wonderful privilege and one that is not shared worldwide. Patriotism in the time of stress and threat is a wonderful response. We laud and applaud such a reaction.

Much more important is the spiritual "patriotism" that we should exhibit toward our Savior, his word and his church. Patriotism and the willingness to defend our nation is certainly commendable, but somehow we are not as willing to defend and promote the only kingdom that is lasting and precious beyond mortal comprehension. Faithfulness in the face of spiritual opposition has a far more lasting and eternal reward than physical rejection of tyranny.

It is our hope and prayer that as God allows us time to rectify whatever stands between him and us, we will be diligent to make our calling and election sure. We must submit our wills to his will, do what he says we must do to be saved and abide in his word faithfully until time, for us, is no more.

*—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021*

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## "MARRIED IN GOD'S EYES"

Don Tarbet

Several references are made in the Bible to the "eyes" of God. Sometimes reference is made to the fact that God "sees" all "...**keeping watch upon the evil and the good**" (Proverbs 15:3). Then, some references are to something that is approved in his sight. "**For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil**" (I Peter 3:12). According to this passage, those who do "righteous" things are those that walk according to God's will. Hence, when something is right or scriptural, it can be said to be "in the eyes of God." Some make fun of those who use the expression in connection with certain marriages, simply because they have a hobby to ride regarding divorce and remarriage. Sometimes "marriage" refers to something sanctioned by God (right in his eyes), while sometimes "marriage" refers to something man calls "marriage," but is not sanctioned by God, and hence not right "in his eyes."

### GOD SEES NOT AS MAN SEES

God often sees things differently than we do, though the same terminology may be used to describe these conflicting concepts. When God deals with such matters, he may well use "words" that men use to describe certain things, and then tell us the real definition of such action. Remember, "**Jehovah seeth not as man seeth**" (I Samuel 16:7). God sees something and calls it evil, while man calls the same thing good. Isaiah pronounces a "woe" upon those who call things improperly. Isaiah 5:20, 21 points out that to do something in one's "own eyes" is to do it in his "own sight." Hence, if we do something right in God's sight, we are doing it with his approving eyes.

What man calls "marriage" is not necessarily what God calls it, for it is sometimes called "adultery" by God. God may address an issue where man has erred by using "ac-

commodative" language, that is, by using the language of man, when speaking to man, to point out the error of his ways. What man calls good is "**abomination in the sight of God**" (Luke 16:15). Some "marriages" are highly esteemed among men, but are an abomination in God's "sight," or "eyes." Sometimes we read where some ridicule the use of referring to something "in God's eyes" when it is entirely proper to do so. To use the expression is equivalent to saying something is "scriptural," or "meets his approval," or is "authorized," and is therefore right in God's eyes rather than in man's eyes. What is right in man's eyes is often sinful, as the Israelites sinned in the long ago by doing that which was right in their own eyes (Judges 21:25).

### WHAT DOES GOD CALL IT?

What men call something is often different than that which God calls it. The late **Bobby Duncan** said it well regarding the phrase "**shall be called**" from Romans 7:3:

It is interesting and significant that the phrase "shall be called" is translated from the Greek verb *kreematizo* which is used only nine times in the New Testament. Each time it is used it denotes some communication from God (The passages are: Matthew 2:12,22; Luke 2:26; Acts 10:22; Hebrews 8:5; 11:7; 12:25 and Acts 11:26.)

Thayer defines this Greek word as meaning: "to give a divine command or admonition, to teach from heaven... to be divinely commanded, admonished, instructed...to be the mouthpiece of divine revelations, to promulgate the commands of God." We have argued on this basis, and rightly so, that Acts 11:26 states that the disciples were divinely called Christians first at Antioch.

So it is that Romans 7:3 states that the woman who has a living husband, and yet marries another, shall be divinely called an adulteress. This is the force of the Greek verb the apostle

(Continued On Page 3)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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## Editorial...

# TRAGIC AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT CLAIMS LIFE OF FOUNDER AND SENIOR EDITOR

It was early afternoon Mountain Daylight Savings time on Wednesday, October 10, 2001, a day that will forever be etched in my mind. I was in my last day of a gospel meeting with the Southside congregation in Carlsbad, New Mexico where **Geoff Litke** preaches. Along with the Litkes (Geoff and his wife **Karee** along with their daughters **Laurelei** and **Liliana**) I was returning from a luncheon appointment when via cell phone the shocking and sad news came: **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** had been killed in a collision with the trailer of an "eighteen-wheeler".

The accident took place approximately an hour Northeast of my home in Spring, Texas. Brother Ira had finished preaching a three-day gospel meeting beginning on the previous Sunday at the Shepherd Church of Christ, Shepherd, Texas. It was around daylight on Wednesday morning when the accident happened. His return trip to his home in Memphis, Tennessee had barely begun. He was traveling north on U. S. Highway 59 north of Shepherd when the collision happened. Brother Ira was killed instantly.

## FACING REALITY

After hearing of brother Rice's death, for some time that afternoon I simply gazed out the window of the Litke's home attempting to accept the reality of the death of this great, dedicated, uncompromising, and tenacious soldier of the cross. I scarcely could take it in. At 84 years of age brother Ira was as determined and active in the work of the kingdom as some people 30 years his junior. He was not an "old man" in his attitude and activity regarding the work of the Lord. Lesser men would have "retired" many years earlier—he was truly Ira "Young" Rice. He abounded in the work of the Lord (I Corinthians 15:18).

Brother Ira's funeral was conducted on October 15 at the Forest Hill Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee. Interment was in the Memorial Park Southwood Cemetery in Memphis.

Our heart felt sympathy goes out to, as well as our prayers for, sister **Vada Rice**, Ira's widow, along with their children and grandchildren. Indeed, no man had a more loving and loyal wife than brother Ira had in sister Vada.

## MEMORIAL ISSUE PLANNED

We are planning the January 2002 issue of *Contending for the Faith* as a memorial issue for brother

Rice. More will be said of him and his work in that issue of *CFTF*.

We ask that our readers continue to help us carry on the great work of complying with the inspired Jude's injunction:

**Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that we should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of**

**our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 3, 4).**

Indeed, as we ask our readers to build up the circulation of *CFTF*, our request is best stated in the words of Paul to the Thessalonians. He wrote: **"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith"** (II Thessalonians 3:1, 2).

—David P. Brown, *Editor-in-Chief*

## ...IN GOD'S EYES

(Continued From Page 1)

used in this verse. The Holy Spirit did not select that word by accident. There was a reason for using it instead of the ordinary Greek word *kaleo* (Spiritual Sword Lectures, 1992).

To illustrate how MAN calls something by name is not what God calls it, consider the following points. (1) **SPRINKLING**: Men sprinkle water on the head of "candidates for salvation" and call it "baptism," which is immersion. Now, does calling sprinkling "baptism (immersion)" make it such? (2) **SALVATION**: Men refer to having been "saved" by faith only. They think of themselves as having been "saved." Does God consider it such? (3) **CHURCH**: Men found institutions (better known as denominations) and call them "churches," and even say that Christ built them. (4) **MARRIAGE**: According to men, a woman can divorce her husband and "marry" another, and call it a marriage. It is such by human, legal and civil standards, and God refers to such action as "marriage" when informing us that it is really "adultery" by his standard. Jesus said, **"what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Matthew 19:6). God joins man and woman together when they are eligible to be joined together. Marriage (in God's eye's—a scriptural union) is when two eligible people (in God's eyes—not man's eyes, necessarily) come together as husband and wife according to the customs and laws of the land. God decrees that they two shall be one, or he joins them together for life. These "two" (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians. 5:31) of the opposite sex (man and woman) are thus married "in God's eyes," or have married "scripturally" or with his approval. There is nothing ridiculous or stupid about using the expression "in God's eyes."

### GOD CALLS IT ADULTERY

Jesus said if man puts away his wife and marries another, he REALLY commits "adultery." Man calls such "divorce" and "remarriage" (and it IS in human terms), but Christ said it is "adultery." Now, man would prefer NOT to call it adultery, when it really IS such. Few people will admit that they are guilty of adultery when they have divorced (for reasons other than fornication) and remarried, but "in God's eyes" it IS adultery. Now, the reason it is

adultery is because they are ADDING a mate to a divinely sanctioned union. The English word "adultery" comes from the Latin *adulter*, with the *ad* meaning "to" and *alter* meaning "another" (meaning ad-alter, or alter by adding). Webster states that the word means "to corrupt, debase, or make impure by adding." Hence, the reason an action may be adultery is because one has "added" another to his marital status when he is not free to do so—being joined to his first companion in God's eyes.

When two people scripturally marry, they are bound together as long as they both live (Romans. 7:2, 3). How long is the woman of the passage bound? She is bound to her husband as long as he is bound to her—as long as he lives. This simply means that when God joins two people together in holy wedlock they are bound or joined together as long as both live. When one dies, the other is loosed, but not before then except in the case of fornication, plus being put away for that fornication. Fornication alone does not constitute an end of the marriage, for it may be forgiven and the marriage continued. However, if the innocent chooses, he may terminate the union "in God's eyes" or scripturally.

### MAN'S WILL DOES NOT FORCE GOD TO CHANGE HIS WILL

Now, the woman of Romans 7:2, 3 is bound to her husband in marriage. She may well have obtained a "divorce" in order to "marry" another man (accommodative language), but God said it is really called adultery. Remember, God **"seeth not as man seeth"** (I Samuel 16:7). What man sees as "marriage," God sees as "adultery." **A scriptural marriage does not end with unscriptural actions!**

A woman who unscripturally divorces her husband is not really divorced from him (in God's eyes) for she is still bound to him as long as he lives (Romans. 7:3). This is the marriage bond. If she is not bound, how does she become guilty of adultery, or "adding another"? He is still her husband, and it is God's will that they be reconciled rather than enter an unlawful union. Paul wrote, **"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife"** (I Corinthians. 7:10,11). Note that the man is still called "her husband," even after she has "departed" FROM him. The

Greek word for “departed” is *chorizo* which is the same word Jesus used in Matthew 19:6 in the context of putting away of wives and marrying others. Admittedly, scholars differ as to whether or not *chorizo* is really a divorce (or just a separation), but it does appear to be used in early Greek writings, as well as in some New Testament passages to refer to divorce.

It seems clear that if John and Mary “divorce” (by the human process), they are still “bound” by the Lord (in the divine process). They need to be reconciled. True, they will have to go through another human process of marriage to legalize their union upon earth (An expedient—Romans 13:1ff). To forbid such a reconciliation on the basis that they have been “married before” (even though only to each

other) is to oppose the will of God. We are speaking here of cases where fornication was NOT the cause of the divorce.

Sometimes we hear that the “in God’s eyes” talk is but a loophole to get around God’s marriage regulations, and “outwait” a mate who marries again after a divorce (not for fornication), on the basis that the first one to “marry” again has thus committed adultery, thus freeing the one who waited last to remarry. Such is not the case! There is no such loophole in defining what marriage really IS “in the eyes” of God. A careful study of Matthew 19:9 will show this to be the case.

—215 W. Sears  
Denison, Texas 75021

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## NO “WAITING GAME” HERE

Guy N. Woods

“In the *GOSPEL ADVOCATE*, this question was raised:

“If a man divorced his wife without cause and married another, would the wife, being an innocent party, be free to marry if her former husband and not she obtained the divorce?”

### A GROSS MISAPPREHENSION

I answered “Yes.” A brother wrote:

I disagree with your answer as Matthew 19:9 says, ‘**And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.**’ The above scripture teaches me that the person who marries the woman that was divorced even though she was innocent would commit adultery.

He has grossly misapprehended the teaching of our Lord in this passage. (1) He has ignored the exception which the Lord put into the verse. He strikes out the words, “**except for fornication,**” in order to deny what the Lord, by implication, affirmed. It should read, in his view, “**Whosoever shall put away his wife even in the case of fornication and marries another, commits adultery and he who marries her thus put away commits adultery.**” (2) He disregards the grammar of the passage which makes the exception clause, “**except for fornication,**” modify the entire statement including the final clause. “**He that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.**” (3) He rules out any occasion when an innocent party may properly and scripturally remarry. He is, therefore, in grave error in the conclusion drawn.

### FORBIDDING WHAT THE LORD ALLOWS

To put the matter in proper perspective let us assume the following instance: Jane and John, both single, neither having been previously wedded, marry. John, of weak character, soon tires of Jane and abandons her though she is a good wife, and a faithful Christian woman. As soon as he can conveniently do so, he contracts another marriage. Not

free to remarry, his relationship with the second woman, though legal, is adulterous. Jane, meantime, has remained free of marital relationship, and would have received John back at any time prior to the adulterous marriage into which he entered. Being a Christian woman, she does not recognize the state’s legal grounds for divorce, willing only to accept the Lord’s ground—fornication. By unscripturally contracting marriage with the second woman, John is now guilty of the act constituting the exception clause of Matthew 19. Jane meets Bill, a fine Christian man never before married. May she scripturally marry him? Of course she may. To deny to her this is presumptuously to pass judgment on the validity of the Lord’s edict and take from her what the Lord granted.

Jesus said, “**Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.**” If the objection is raised that Jane did not divorce John but John (the guilty party) divorced Jane, it should be remembered that divorce is a civil, legal action having nothing whatsoever to do with determining the moral and religious principles involved. It is the Lord’s edict, not man’s, that governs. But, it may further be objected, “Jane and John were not living together at the time when the fornication occurred.” Who said they had to be? To inject this condition into the exception clause is to speak where the Lord has not spoken, is to legislate for him! Suppose, for example, that Jane, while married to John, had suffered mental illness and required residence and treatment in a mental hospital for five years. During this interval John cohabited with another woman. Would Jane, because she was not living under the same roof as John, be denied the right to put him away “**for fornication**”? He who so affirms has abandoned reason, revelation and good sense! The implications of scripture touching marriage and divorce are crystal clear. (*Questions and Answers* Volume 2, pages 45, 46).

# WHAT ABOUT THE "WAIT-AND-SEE GAME" DIVORCEES PLAY?

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Maritally unhappy people fall out of love; they fight and fuss constantly; they make each other more than miserable; vows taken at a marriage altar years ago no longer are taken seriously; they wish to write *finis* to their deteriorating marriage. Neither has been guilty of fornication—the capital crime of matrimony. They divorce mutually. Each begins to play a wait-and-see game. Which one will stay single longer? Which one will forego sexual cohabitation longer? When one gives in to fleshly lusts and fornicates or enters into another marriage, then the other is elated and feels perfectly justified in contracting a new marriage and pleads Matthew 19:9 as the very ground for such justification. Such people abuse faith and misuse Matthew 19:9 as much as denominational preachers do faith and baptism passages. Matthew 19:9 allows divorce and remarriage FOR the innocent one UPON the GROUNDS of fornication. But their marital break-up was not “*except it be for fornication.*” The grammatical force of “*except*” here is

“If and only if” it be for fornication may the innocent one put away the guilty party and enter into another eligible marriage. The wait-and-see game is as lethal as it can be. Yet it has many practitioners and as many, if not more, defenders and promoters.

[Robert R. Taylor, *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*, Seventeenth Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship, 1992, page 63. Used by permission.]

—P.O. Box 464  
Ripley, Tennessee 38063

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## “WHAT...GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER”

David P. Brown

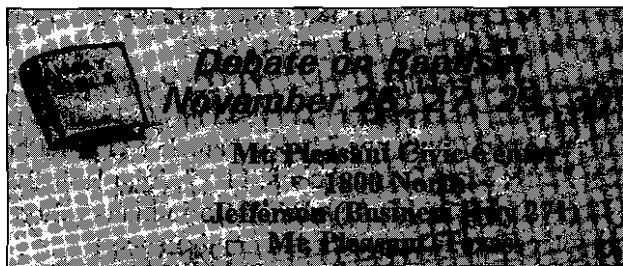
Is it a new thing for some members of the church to teach that only God can truly dissolve a marriage? In commenting on Matthew 19:4-6, J. W. McGarvey wrote:

... from these premises the conclusion follows (verse 6) that what God has thus joined together man shall not put asunder. Of course, God who joined them together may put them asunder by prescribing the conditions of lawful divorce, but man has nothing to do in the case except to obey God’s law. Any act of divorce, therefore, or any legislation by State or Church on the subject, inconsistent with the divine law, is open rebellion against the authority of Christ [*The New Testament Commentary*, Abilene: Chronicle Publishing Co., Inc. (Originally published in 1875), page 164].

Later, in commenting on these same verses he wrote, “that no men or body of men, whether acting in private, civil or ecclesiastical capacity, can dissolve marriage otherwise than according to the decrees of God” [*Fourfold Gospel*, (Cincinnati: Standard Publication Co., n.d.), page 539]. *The Fourfold Gospel* was published in 1905. In the *Gospel Advocate* set of commentaries, H. Leo Boles, writing in 1936, had these comments on Matthew 19:6:

God’s laws by virtue of his creating them male and female take precedence over all human laws. The courts of the land dissolve many unions which God still holds as fundamental and abiding; the laws of the land grant divorces for causes which God does not permit. Man’s laws cannot change the mind of God or the fundamental laws of God; hence man’s laws cannot annul the marriage bonds which God has sanctioned (*The Gospel According to Matthew*, page 387).

—25403 Lancewood  
Spring, Texas 77373



### Propositions for discussion

**November 26-27: Resolved:** *The Bible teaches that baptism follows salvation and is simply a “sign” of that salvation already received at the point of faith.*

Affirm: Bobby Sparks, Greenville, Texas  
Deny: Tom Wacaster, Mt. Pleasant, Texas

**November 29-30: Resolved:** *The Bible teaches that baptism is for and in order to receive forgiveness of sins.*

Affirm: Tom Wacaster  
Deny: Bobby Sparks

**Time:** 7:00 - 9:15 P.M. each evening

Hosted by North Jefferson Church of Christ  
For more details: Phone, 903-572-1136, write at P.O. Box 936, Mt. Pleasant, TX 75456, or email [tswacaster@aol.com](mailto:tswacaster@aol.com)

# HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT DETERS US FROM SIN

Tim Nichols

Certain brethren believe in the personal and direct indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the physical body of the Christian. According to them this personal and direct indwelling is said to be a stronger deterrent to sin in the Christian's life because the Christian is aware of the close proximity of the person of Holy Spirit to their inward man (spirit). The examples given to illustrate this idea is the policeman to a thief, a preacher to a foul-mouthed church member and so on. No doubt the close proximity of a policeman to a thief would be a stronger deterrent to the thief stealing something. However, under closer examination this reasoning regarding the Holy Spirit's close proximity to the Christian serving as a stronger deterrent to him/her sinning does not necessarily follow.

## THE WORD OF GOD— SUFFICIENT DETERRENT TO SIN

Those of us who believe that the Holy Spirit dwells in us by means of the word of God are fully aware of the omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience of God. We understand that he is everywhere it is possible for him to be and that he knows all that is the object of knowledge. This would include our thoughts and actions. We also know that all that is the object of power is inherent in God and that, thus, his power is limited only by his nature and will. The scriptures reveal to us that the knowledge of God's omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience, coupled with his word hidden in our hearts, serve as sufficient deterrents to sin for all of those who would be willing to bend their wills in submission to God. Regarding the sentiments of the previous sentence please notice the following scriptures.

**Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee (Psalm 119:11).**

**I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth (John 17:15-17).**

**Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else. Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children.... (Deuteronomy 4:39, 40).**

**I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved (Psalm 16:8).**

**I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee (Psalm 119:168).**

**O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.**

**For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether (Psalm 139:1-4).**

**Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee (Psalm 139:7-12).**

**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. I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying I have dreamed, I have dreamed (Jeremiah 23:24, 25).**

**And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever (I Chronicles 28: 9).**

(See also I Samuel 2:3; Job 34:21, 22; Psalm 44:20, 21; Proverbs 5:21; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Isaiah 40:28; Jeremiah 17:10; Daniel 2:22; Amos 9:3; Zephaniah 1:12; Matthew 12:25; 22:18; Mark 2:8; Luke 6:8; 11:17; John 1:48; 2:24, 25; 10:14; 16:30; 21:17; Acts 1:24; I Corinthians 3:20 concerning God's omnipresence and omniscience.)

Not only does the general knowledge of God's presence serve as a sufficient deterrent to sin, it gives courage to follow his will when it is difficult to do so. Such information is enabling power from God.

**When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt (Deuteronomy 20:1).**

## "BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM" (MATTHEW 7:20)

The theory that a belief in the personal and direct indwelling of the Holy Spirit results in a greater deterrent to sin (due to closer proximity) than a belief in the indwelling by means of the word could only be proved by conducting research to determine whether or not this presumed cause has led to the expected result. Would those who affirm the personal and direct indwelling be willing to also affirm that this cause and effect relationship exists? Sir Francis Galton, who was a great pioneer in the development of tests to measure individual differences, had a saying: "Whenever you can, count." One could conduct a research study to de-

termine the correlation between a belief in the Holy Spirit's personal and direct indwelling and freedom from sin. One hundred brethren known to have fallen into serious sin (let us use identifiable and certain false teaching for the sake of simplifying the matter) and 100 brethren known to be sound in the faith could be randomly selected from two long lists of each category. They could be surveyed or their writings could be examined to determine what they believe about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. If a belief in the personal and direct indwelling truly produces a greater degree of resistance to sin, then we would expect to see a significant difference between the two groups. Our hypothesis would be, on the basis of this deterrent theory, that the number of those among false teachers who believe in the personal and direct indwelling would be significantly lower than those who believe that the Holy Spirit indwells us by means of the word. We would predict that,

among sound brethren, the belief that the Holy Spirit indwells personally and directly would be significantly more prominent. Although I have not actually conducted this research, I cannot help but suspect that the results would disprove the theory.

The notion that the Holy Spirit directly indwells the Christian apart from means does not place man in any closer proximity to Deity that the notion that God is omnipresent and omniscient coupled with his word hidden in the heart. A belief in the direct personal indwelling provides no greater deterrent to sin. The word that completely furnishes us unto every good work does so, at least in part, by deterring us from sin to the degree that our dispositions and choices will allow.

—Route 1, Box 206a  
Burlington, WV 26710

*[Many have asked about Brother Rice's planned third volume. After visiting with sister Rice about the status of the third volume, she has said that unless Volumes I and II sell there will be no third volume. With that in mind I want to strongly urge our readers to help in selling volumes I or II. Why not help by ordering several for gifts? It is that time of year and these books will make a fine addition to any library.—DPB]*

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# THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Brian Chadwick

The “word of the truth of the gospel” is what produces the godly characteristics referred to in scripture as “the fruit of the spirit” (Colossians 1:5-6; Galatians 5:22). We only produce the fruit of the spirit in our lives when we allow the powerful information that is contained within the gospel words to influence and guide our minds. It is our own personal obedience to the information inherent within the very words themselves which produces this godly fruit (Hebrews 4:12; Psalm 119:9-11,105; Jeremiah 23:29; Luke 8:11,15; James 1:21; I Thessalonians 2:13; Acts 20:32; Ephesians 6:17).

## WITH OR WITHOUT MEANS

It is very important to understand that it is described as “the fruit of the spirit” simply because it is the Holy Spirit who has provided us with the inspired instructions (John 16:13; I Corinthians 2:13). It is not, “the fruit of the spirit” in the sense that the Holy Spirit is directly and mysteriously producing the godly characteristics for and in us. This is the fundamental difference between the word of God and the word of Calvinism; between truth and error (II Peter 3:16).

Please consider the following presentation of this erroneous teaching by Calvinist scholar **Albert Barnes** in his commentary on Galatians 5:22. The fruit of the spirit, he says, is:

...that which the Holy Spirit produces. It is not without design, evidently, that the apostle uses the word “Spirit” here as denoting that these things do not flow from our nature. The vices above enumerated are the proper “works” or results of the operations of the human heart (referring to the works of the flesh in verses 19-21); the virtues which he enumerates are produced by a foreign influence—the agency of the Holy Spirit. Hence Paul does not trace them to our own hearts, even when renewed. He says that they are to be regarded as the proper result of the Spirit’s operation on the soul (Emphasis mine, B.C.).

Notice how the Calvinist describes the Holy Spirit as a “foreign influence” producing the fruit of the Spirit for us by a direct and mysterious “operation” upon the soul of the Christian. This is simply false and very misleading. Albert Barnes is presenting the Holy Spirit himself as the “agency”. By saying “these things do not flow from our na-

ture” and “Paul does not trace them to our own hearts, even when renewed,” Barnes presents the idea that the Holy Spirit bypasses the working of the human mind and produces the godly characteristics for us. This is simply a farce, it takes away human responsibility, and it impeaches upon man’s freedom of choice. How can the godly characteristics which are formed within the human mind, and which proceed from the human mind, be produced without the human mind being involved? How could an intelligent and just God be glorified by such an arrangement?

## AN ABSURD DOCTRINE

**Alexander Campbell**, in his debate with Rice on the influence of the Holy Spirit, page 619, said the following:

The whole system of Calvinism, of Arminianism, is crazy just at this point... The philosophy of mind is converted into a heap of ruins. They have the Spirit of God operating without testimony—without apprehension or comprehension - without sense, susceptibility, or feeling...I, therefore, ex anima, repudiate their whole theory of mystic influence, and metaphysical regeneration, as a vision of visions, a dream of dreams, at war with philosophy, with the philosophy of mind, with the Bible, with reason, with common sense, and with all Christian experience.

Amen, Alexander Campbell! Let us also reject this false, illogical, and absurd doctrine. Let us study and be obedient to the powerful information contained within the words of the God-breathed gospel. Let us, “receive with meekness the implanted word”, for God Almighty says we can; and with “a honest and good heart”, let us, each one, personally, “keep it and bear fruit with patience”. Why would we even need patience to produce righteous fruit if the Holy Spirit is producing the fruit for us? (James 1:21; Luke 8:11, 15). See also: James 3:17-18; Philippians 1:11; and II Corinthians 9:10. All these “fruits” simply refer to the godly characteristics that are produced when a person is obedient to the gospel of Christ. It is ludicrous to suggest that God bypasses our minds and produces these fruits for us. Did God directly and mysteriously produce the righteous fruits in the life of Job, and then have the audacity to present those righteous fruits before Satan as Job’s own achievements? Who could believe such a thing? Satan would have made a mockery out of such an absurd claim, and rightly so (Job 1:8ff).

And finally, this article does not deal with God’s providential care. This article deals specifically with what the Holy Spirit does TO us and HOW he does it. As the late **Guy N. Woods** once said, “There is a vast difference between what the Holy Spirit does TO us, and what he DOES ON BEHALF OF, or FOR us.”

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# MAX LUCADO CONTINUES TO SPREAD HIS FALSE DOCTRINE

Brian Renfroe

On October 5, I was reading the article for *CFTF* that David Brown had penned concerning Lucado's "apology" as published on his website. I was also listening to 94.5 FM to "Rick and Bubba", which is a morning talk radio show that is on the air weekday mornings from 6 until 10. They are located here in Birmingham but are syndicated to other parts of the South, including Nashville, Mobile, as well as parts of Florida and Mississippi. Rick and Bubba are of the Baptist persuasion, with Rick (and maybe Bubba, but I am not sure) attending The Church at Brookwood Hills, "pastored" by Rick Aisley, whom I listed as "Baptist preacher" on my transcription to follow. By the way, "Rick" is Rick Burgess and "Bubba" is actually Bill Bussey, who is called Bill "Bubba" Bussey. They have their own website: [www.rickandbubba.com](http://www.rickandbubba.com). Though theirs is not a "Christian radio show", per se, they do take pride in their "Christianity" and are what they would probably call "unapologetic believers". In truth, they are by far the cleanest morning show to listen to, and they are known by their listeners for their "stand" for Christ. (Ironically, they style themselves as the "Two Sexiest Fat Men Alive", which is said frequently on the show.)

As I was reading brother Brown's article, I heard that Lucado was going to be on the show shortly, so I listened on. Lucado came on and for the most part it was uneventful in the early going, though I found the references to the "Laughing Christ" to be borderline blasphemy. As I was growing tired of the Lucado love-fest, Jonathan from Foley, Alabama phoned in. He said that he was "raised a Baptist", my ears perked up. When he mentioned that he had been attending a church of Christ, I sat up and took notice. When he point blank asked for the truth about baptism, I practically fell off the couch. I was angered, though not surprised, to hear Lucado's wishy washy response to him. What I did not expect, though, was for Lucado to commit such a logical error: saying that "baptism is necessary for obedience" but then implying that is was not necessary for salvation. Lucado even went so far as to say that baptism was a command, albeit an "unnecessary" one, if you hold to his line of thinking.

I grabbed the phone and called Lynn Parker, knowing that he is going to be writing a book on Lucado. I thought he might be interested in what Max had said. He told me to call in to the show and see if I could get a copy of the day's show. Those who listen with any regularity to the show know that people sometimes call for months before actually getting on the air. I got through on my third try. I was expecting to reach some sort of service desk, wherein I could request a copy of the day's show. Instead I heard Rick in the earpiece of my phone, and on the radio. "Ken...is Ken there?" I heard him saying. "I guess all the

names are messed up." Once more he called for Ken, and then basically said something to the effect of "whoever's there, you're on" or "go ahead"; the point is that they were confused. Then I found myself "face-to-face" (if that's possible over the radio) with Lucado. This is where the transcript begins. (By the way, no, the Rick and Bubba show does not give out copies...I had to get up at about 4 am the following Monday morning to record the rebroadcast.) Note the following:

## THE DISCUSSION WITH MAX LUCADO

*Caller: I just have a question for Max...especially in light of everything that's happened recently...I grew up Baptist, as a matter of fact in Birmingham for the majority part of my life and since for about a year now I've been going to a church of Christ here locally where I live and there's a difference in as far as the way they perceive baptism as far as [the] church of Christ believes that you have to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins to be saved and of course being raised as a Baptist that's kind of contradictory. I was wanting to see if he could give me some kind of scripture to look at to kind of help me in my confusion or if there's a book that I could look at or something along those lines.*

*Lucado: Yeah, uh, of course that teaching can vary from church to church, uh, but I'm under the conviction that baptism is necessary for obedience, to do what the Bible says, but none of us are saved by any work that we do. It's not what we do that saves us but what Christ did on the cross that saves us.*

*Radio announcer 1: To me it's obvious that baptism is the symbolism of obedience to God and that you are born again, becoming a new person.*

*Lucado: If somebody hasn't been baptized, they should be. It's a call of scripture, but we don't trust baptism for our salvation. Jesus on the cross said "It is finished", and he finished the work there and that's the beauty of Christianity...really a unique aspect of Christianity compared to any other world religion is that the work is finished, so we trust the finished work instead of trying to finish the work ourselves.*

*Radio Announcer 2: high five*

*Radio Announcer 1: the thief on the cross didn't have a chance to be baptized if I'm not mistaken*

*Baptist preacher: Baptists are just the same way, though...we believe pretty much the same thing because in the Baptist church you have to be baptized in order to be a member of the church and, uh, I personally don't believe that...it's easier to get into heaven than it is a*

Baptist church (laughter) and uh I am so on the page with "It's a finished work, it's a Jesus thing, it's a God thing" and baptism is my first opportunity to say, "I'm obedient. I'm on with it."

Later...

**Brandon:** Hey...how are you doing...

**Announcer 1:** We're great buddy, how about you?

**Brandon:** I'm doing all right...I have a question for Mr. Lucado.

**Announcer 1:** He's on with you, go right ahead.

**Brandon:** Ok...Mr. Lucado, I just heard something that I want you to reconcile for me, ok? I heard you say that baptism is necessary for obedience but not for salvation, is that correct?

**Lucado:** I think what God does with the disobedient is really in his realm...all of us are saved by grace and not by works, and I'm going to trust the finished work of Christ on the cross. Everybody with whom I've ever had the chance to talk to about baptism, I've urged them to do so. There's a lot of examples and reasons why, not the least of which is the fact that Christ himself was baptized.

**Announcer 1:** That's a pretty big one.

**Announcer 2:** That's good enough for me.

**Brandon:** Well, I was reading Hebrews 5:8-9 it says, "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that OBEY him." It seems to me that obedience and salvation are tied hand-in-hand, how can you separate the two?

**Lucado:** I think you're right...I think a fruit of the salvation is obedience.

**Brandon:** Well, I don't want to take up too much of your time, I just wanted to encourage the caller...that you told him incorrectly...that baptism IS for the remission of sins and I just hope, hope that he's still listening. Thank you.

**Announcer 1:** I didn't hear anything in that scripture that went against what you (Max)said.

**Announcer 2:** Yeah, I didn't see any disagreement there...maybe I'm just not smart enough.

**Announcer 1:** I think it's one of the biggest things we have, and this was something that has really, really impacted my life, because I have got caught up in, "Hey, I'm not good enough"...well, none of us are. You can't earn it. But, when Paul was writing to the different churches when he was telling you all of the wonderful things that you should be if you are a Christian, but he's clear that that's the result of salvation, it doesn't earn you salvation. And I think that's where the big confusion happens with our works people versus our...you know, grace is grace...that's what it is.

**Baptist preacher:** Call me simple, but I just believe you don't need Jesus plus anything. It's Jesus, and then that bears forth the fruit all the way through, everything of the scripture calls us to be unto...(garbled)

**Announcer 1:** No doubt about it, if I accept grace then sure, I should be obedient and be baptized...that would be the result of it. But, I can run out there and be baptized all day and if I have not recognized that the only forgiveness of my sins is through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, that water's not doing me any good.

**Announcer 2:** All you're doing's getting a bath.

**Announcer 1:** Now, granted, I'll be cleaner, and I'd like to see some of you bathe more, but I mean...

**Lucado:** The semantics...all of these conversations come out of people who have wonderful hearts...

**Announcer 1:** Oh I know, but I'm going to tell you what...denominations...and just because I was raised a Baptist...I really am not that hung up at predestination versus free will, I'm not hung up in "baptize here," "you accepted Christ, let's get you in the water right now", I'm not hung up...now I'm an immersion guy because I asked my preacher about that and he said Jesus was immersed, so I think we will be too, but maybe there was a water shortage (laughter) maybe somebody was ready and they were out there and somebody said, "I don't have enough water...let me throw something on your head...that'll do it, it's a symbol."

**Announcer 2:** Stop splitting hairs here.

**Announcer 1:** Christianity is not even a religion, it's a relationship with God.

**Lucado:** Exactly right.

**Announcer 1:** The denominations have been one of the most divisive things that Satan has used to have us sit down, staring at the wall, accomplishing nothing...

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# OKLAHOMA STAMPEDE

Jerry C. Brewer

There's a wild stampede taking place in Oklahoma, but it is not cattle. It is a motley herd of apostates who are spooked by biblical truth, and determined to scatter souls to the four winds. Led by young mavericks, and a few old bulls who ought to know better, many Oklahoma churches are in a frantic stampede away from the pristine pattern of New Testament Christianity. Apostasy is in the air, the pulpits, and the pews, and the herd is on the run. Fearing they will be left behind by the heady Lucado-Shelly spirit of compromise and egalitarian ecumenism, congregations in the Sooner State are frantically stumbling over each other to embrace their denominational brethren. Sucking spiritual sewage from brackish cisterns of contemporary religion, they are jostling and jockeying to fellowship anything that can display a "Jesus" bumper sticker.

## LET'S PLAY BALL

A case in point is the Lakehoma Church of Christ in Mustang, Oklahoma which has joined hands with the Free Will Baptists in a softball league. Under the heading of *Church Softball League*, the following appeared in the Lakehoma bulletin:

The Mustang Christian Softball Association, under the oversight of Clear Springs Free Will Baptist Church, has invited Lakehoma to participate in a summer softball league. The objective of this league is to promote fellowship between the churches in the Mustang area. Anyone over 14 years of age, male or female, may be a part of this exiting adventure. If you would like to participate on Lakehoma's team, please sign up on the round table in the church foyer. (*A Newsletter For Lakehoma Family and Friends*, Vol. 25, No. 29, July 18, 2001).

Do Lakehoma elders **Jim Bell, Gary Goodger, Gerald Mullens, Robert Rusher, and Lloyd Walker**, believe the Free Will Baptists are "Christians"? Does the Lakehoma preacher, **Robert L. Gregg**, believe this? If so, why don't they take down their sign and join the Baptists? If not, how do they justify their submission to the "oversight of Clear Springs Free Will Baptist Church" in something explicitly designed to "promote fellowship between the churches in the Mustang area"? I know it's silly to ask because no one bothers with it any more but, "Where is New Testament authority for this foolishness?"

Then there's the Quail Springs Church of Christ's annual "Freedom and Faith Festival," jointly conducted with the Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. Their latest patty-cake with the Baptists was held July 1, 2001, as announced in the *Daily Oklahoman* on June 30. Abilene-trained **Mark Henderson**, is the preacher for the Quail Springs Church of Christ. Spewing his own version of *Mein Kampf* he announced his apostate intentions to the world in a lecture at Abilene Christian University in 1996:

Our commitment to unity must begin with each other. Then, we may begin to extend our reach to those outside our fellow-

ship who share that same common ground with us. As we reach toward them, let's do it with an open hand, inviting peaceful dialogue, not with a finger pointed in accusation or a fist clenched in challenge. As we meet, let's seek to understand before we seek to be understood. Yes, we have some important truths to teach them, but, perhaps, they have understood some truths they could teach us, too. (Mark Henderson, *People Need The Unity-Committed Church*, Abilene Christian University Lectureship, Feb. 19, 1996).

As Adolph Hitler announced his aims in *Mein Kampf* years before he implemented them, so Henderson presented his own *Mein Kampf* five years ago at Abilene and implemented it last year in Oklahoma City. It should come as no surprise that Henderson advocates fellowship with the Baptists.

Down in Norman, Oklahoma, **Dan Bouchelle**, who preached for the Alameda Church of Christ for seven years, proudly announced that he helped Alameda "find itself" during that time.

'I don't want to take the credit. A lot of things have played into it. We have an organizational infrastructure that was not here seven years ago which has helped tremendously,' said Bouchelle. 'They were a church without a clear sense of their identity. Now they know who they are and why they're here (Stefanie Bickman, Staff Writer, "Alameda to bid farewell to Dan Bouchelle, *The Norman Transcript*, Friday, July 27, 2001, page A11).

Anyone who has read his Bible could tell East Alameda in one sentence what it took Bouchelle seven years to help them figure out. "Who they are" is the body of Christ, (Ephesians 1:22-23) and "why they're here" is to preach the gospel, (Mark 16:15-16; II Timothy 2:2). Alameda's elders **Jack Cross, Bill Fisher, Jimmy Givens, Sam Johnson, Glen Jones, James McKenzie, Ken Parker and Mike Parker** ought to be ashamed. Did the shepherds of the church not know who they were or what they were to oversee? An elder who does not know the Biblical identity of the church has no business being an elder and ought to have someone drive him home from worship.

Like his apostates-in-arms, Bouchelle uses a manufactured crisis of the church's "lost identity" so he can sing that tired old verse from Rubel's silly song. That so-called "crisis" was also the focus of an article in the December, 2000 issue of *The Christian Chronicle*—Oklahoma Christian's official organ for disseminating anything but the truth. Introduced by Managing Editor **Scott LaMascus**, the article is an excerpt from a new book by **Jeff W. Childers, Douglas A. Foster, and Jack R. Reese**. From *Crux of The Matter: Crisis, Tradition and the Future of Churches of Christ*, the article pontificates, "The main thrust of our upcoming book can be stated succinctly. Many churches of Christ are experiencing a crisis of identity fueled both by the decline of exclusivism and our growing diversity."

Any church with a "crisis of identity" is not reading the New Testament. The church which Jesus built is clearly revealed therein. By creating this "crisis," apostates like these authors and Dan Bouchelle can justify riding to our rescue with their own brand of religion to help us find our identity in the "Stone-Campbell Movement" instead of the word of God.

Like his colleagues at Mustang, and Quail Springs, "O! Ecumenical Dan Bouchelle" openly embraced religious error. He was a member of the Norman Ministerial Fellowship (NMF), headed by "Father" Joe Ted Miller of St. John's Episcopal Church.

As a professional association, we have shared our profession and our faith. Although our church traditions are different, we are all rooted in God, said Bouchelle. We have been able to share common things like sermons, study and research, counsel; our day-to-day (routine) is very similar. (Brickman).

Bouchelle thinks he's come up with something novel—we have different "church traditions," but "we are all rooted in God." You would think a man working on his doctorate could be more original. He plagiarized that philosophy from a lot of people throughout history. Some of the earliest on record were the heathen who peopled Judea during Israel's return from captivity. "Let us build with you, they urged Zerubbabel, for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither" (Ezra 4:2). But unlike Bouchelle and his ilk, Zerubbabel rejected the notion that the Jews had a "different tradition" than the heathen, but were "all rooted in God."

That we have "different traditions" but are all "rooted in God," was also the cry of apostates in the 19th century. B. B. Tyler sounded a lot like an early day Bouchelle when he said, "The denominations of our time represent the efforts of godly men to return in faith and in life to the religion of Jesus as he gave it to the world in the beginning. The various Protestant denominations represent stages in the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem (Earl Irvin West, *The Search For The Ancient Order*, Religious Book Service, Indianapolis, 1950, Vol.2, page 282).

Bouchelle, Childers, Foster, Reese & Co. need to find something new if they're going to lead us into "renewal." Otherwise, they are only slobbering the same old liberal vomit that enemies of God have always tried to make palatable. The answer to them is in John F. Rowe's answer to Tyler:

So much sophistry in so small a space we have not, in a long time, seen in a sectarian sheet of the deepest dye. Alas, alas, the 'Grand Restoration' is only a 'movement,' and another denomination has been added to a troop of phantasmagoria (West, page 283).

Gregg, Henderson, and Bouchelle ought to be on Rubel Shelly's board of directors. They are dancing to the spirit of his *Core Gospel* which he plagiarized from W. Carl Ketcherside, who stole it from men like Tyler, who could not find a scintilla of authority for it in the New Testament, but preach it anyway.

Faithful brethren will take note of these churches and men and mark them according to Paul's injunction in Romans 16:17-18. But do not hold your breath on that one either. Backbone and spiritual grit are as scarce as hen's teeth around here. Many in our state—especially in Western Oklahoma—will continue to fawn after and fellowship these apostate groups and individuals and, of course, condemn me as mean-spirited. But Paul was also considered "the enemy" because he dared to speak the truth (Galatians 4:16).

Take a deep seat, boys, this stampede ain't over yet.

—308 South Oklahoma  
Elk City, Oklahoma 73644

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## "HIS WATCHMEN ARE BLIND"

Luke Shira

This is a description of the Israelites by the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 56:10). What he is saying as we read further into the passage, is that they are all ignorant, blind and they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, they are sleeping, lying down and loving to slumber. Jesus describes this situation concerning the Jews when he said, "They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matthew 15:14). When people become overly concerned about worldly things, with little insight for the spiritual, you can mark it down that SIN is involved. In Isaiah 59:1-2 the prophet declares "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that he will not hear."

Today's application is quite simple. We hear it said that "Others are doing it, but not us." "It happened to them, not us! Israel is a people of a long time passed. What God said to Israel will not affect us." Read II Corinthians 4:1-5 and make the application to "us" as well as the world. An old-time expression is "None are so blind as those who will not see." Many are walking blind into apostasy. John records that the church at Laodicea was "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked." We are told to watch. Are we blind to God's command?

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# "Why Have Ye Done This?"

Roelf L. Ruffner

**And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? (Judges 2:1, 2).**

It is a sad thing to witness the apostasy of many of our brethren in the United States of America. It seems that each month brings a new revelation of digression. A case in point was in the Summer 2001 issue of the "ICS Report". It is a publication of the *Institute for Christian Studies* in Austin, Texas. They announced that they were changing their name to the "*Austin Graduate School of Theology*" and they would begin enrolling students into a "Master of Divinity" program in the fall of 2003. Yet what caught my attention was this statement:

This step makes the school a rarity among Churches of Christ, effectively becoming one of the first freestanding seminaries for the fellowship according to Dr. Carson Stephens recently appointed president.

## THE HIRELING SCHOOL

Being a middle aged country preacher my eyes caught on the word "seminaries". I turned to my dictionary and read the definition of the word *seminary* "a school or college where priests, ministers, etc. are trained." This is where denominations send their hirelings to be indoctrinated enough to wear the title "Doctor" or "Reverend" before their name and to stand in front of a group of fellow denominationalists wearing a dark suit and a funny white collar. All of these things I have run from all my preaching life like a scalded dog! **"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven"**(Matthew 23:8-9).

The publication goes on to say that they are part of the "Restoration heritage" of the University Avenue Church of Christ which began meeting in the 1850s. The school was originally part of the Bible Chair begun by this church in 1917. In 1975 they established a corporation and changed their name to *Institute for Christian Studies*. In 1991 they began offering a master's degree through *Abilene Christian University* (ACU). But they soon will discontinue this program and in March 2001 they signed an agreement with *Concordia University* to allow undergraduate courses to transfer into a pre-seminary bachelor's degree at Concordia. Students may even live in the dormitory at Concordia. *Concordia University* is affiliated with the Lutheran denomination.

## DISPENSARIES OF LIBERALISM

This seems to be the pattern of many brotherhood schools nowadays. Years ago they were built by men who had fought denominations tooth and nail. They sacrificed

to build schools which based their curriculum on the Bible and whose primary emphasis was to produce preachers of the gospel. Now, years after their founding, the men who run these schools have all been trained at "seminaries" and are trying very hard to make their institutions into dispensaries of liberalism. A case in point is my alma mater, *Abilene Christian University*. About ten years ago they started to offer a "Doctor of Ministry" in their graduate program. In fact, of the four women on the faculty of ACU's College of Bible Studies, two are pursuing the Doctor of Ministry program. I might add that two of these women are teaching New Testament Greek. **"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence"** (I Timothy 2:12).

What will become of the people who pursue degrees at this "want-to-be" seminary? I know of one example. A few years ago I was preaching for the Lord's body in Marlin, Texas. A young man approached us wanting financial support to attend ICS. The men of the congregation decided not to support the man because of ICS's liberal reputation and this man's liberal tendencies. The young man attended ICS anyway and his parents moved their membership to another congregation. I lost track of him but last year I read in the newspaper where he was "ordained" in a Presbyterian church in a nearby town. Some might say this was very unusual and not the norm. So it was with interest I read the "Alumni/ae News and Notes" of the ICS Report. "Judan Serra-Oler (B'89), a native of Spain, lives in Barcelona and was ordained a Catholic priest in January 2000. His annual message to ICS expresses thanksgiving for the **grounding in the scripture** he received while here and a prayerful remembrance of all"(emphasis mine, RLR).

Where are the "scholars and educators" of the seminary leading these young, impressionable minds? Have they forgotten the command of the Apostle Paul almost two thousand years ago? **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also"**(II Timothy 2:2). If Timothy had imitated the religious world around him rather than Paul and the Holy Spirit, in a generation or two the church would have been filled with men like the Athenians who **"spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing"**(Acts 17:21) Today, some of the schools of higher education founded by our brethren more than a hundred years ago no longer believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth of Christ, eternal punishment, sin, the divinity of Jesus, or even in the existence of God. Is the *Austin Graduate School of Theology* taking that same broad way **"that leadeth to destruction"**(Matthew 7:13)?

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# BELONGING TO THE LORD

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

A. Everyone desires a sense of belonging.

1. The trouble is that many try to fulfill their desire for belonging in the wrong places or with the wrong things, or with the wrong people.
2. When this sense of belonging is not fulfilled, we feel isolated, unimportant, and/or depressed.

B. Paul draws attention to a very important truth concerning Christianity in I Corinthians 6:19-20.

1. Do we realize that as Christians we are not our own?
2. It is important for us, if we are going to understand the significance of Christianity, to realize that we have been "bought with a price" and consequently belong to God.



## DISCUSSION

A. WE ARE GOD'S PERSON

1. I Peter 2:9-10.
  - a. Christians are a peculiar or special people.
  - b. We are his children — thus, belonging to God.
2. In Old Testament times, God had a people "after the flesh" (I Corinthians 10:18).
  - a. God made the physical nation of Israel a special treasure to him above all people.
    - 1) Exodus 19:5.
    - 2) Deuteronomy 14:2.
  - b. Israel were a special people to God because He loved them ... Deuteronomy 7:6-8.
3. But even under the Mosaic system there were more important considerations than whether one was physically an Israelite.
  - a. John 8:37-41, 44.
  - b. Romans 2:28-29.
  - c. Under the covenant of Christ, the Christian is by faith a descendant of Abraham, an "Israelite," whether he is racially a Jew or Gentile.
    - 1) Christians are the "Israel of God".
      - a) Galatians 6:16.
      - b) Ephesians 2:11-13.
    - 2) God's relationship with national Israel anticipated his present relationship with the Lord's church..
      - a) Leviticus 26:12.
      - b) This passage is quoted in New Testament application in II Corinthians 6:16.
    - 3) As God "redeemed" the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, he has "redeemed" (bought with a price) Christians from the slavery of sin.
      - a) Titus 2:14.
      - b) I Peter 1:18-19.

d. Christians are the beneficiaries of the blessings to the forefathers of physical Israel.

- 1) Acts 26:6.
- 2) Hebrews 11:39-40.

4. God's special people are described in a rich variety of ways in scripture —notice just a few...

- a. Those who "know" God and "are known" by him (Galatians 4:8-9).
- b. Those who are "of God" (I John 4:4, 6).
- c. Those who "have God" (II John 9).
- d. Those who "are Christ's" (I Corinthians 3:23).
- e. Those who are "espoused" or "betrothed" to Christ (II Corinthians 11:2).
- f. Those who are "friends" of Christ (John 15:14-15).

B. WE ARE GOD'S CHILD

1. Galatians 3:26 ... A Christian has much to gain from an understanding of his place in God's family.

2. The family relationship to God in Christ is described in two basic ways:

a. Sons of children of God.

- 1) I John 3:1-2.
- 2) Galatians 3:26-29 ... not limited to any race, gender, or social status.
- 3) Galatians 4:5 ... the "adoptions as sons".
- 4) Hebrews 2:10-11.
- 5) Romans 8:16-17.

b. Heirs of God.

- 1) Colossians 1:12.
- 2) The inheritance is according to God's promise (Galatians 3:29).
- 3) The inheritance involves every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3).
- 4) The carnal will not be a part of the inheritance (Galatians 5:21).
- 5) Heaven is the object of the Christian's inheritance (Matthew 25:34).

C. WE ARE GOD'S PILGRIM.

I. Belonging to God obviously requires not belonging to self, Satan, or the world.

a. Matthew 12:30.

b. Notice what Jesus said of his disciples ... John 17:16.

c. I John 2:15.

2. The Christian is a "citizen" in God's "kingdom".

a. Colossians 1:13.

b. Ephesians 2:19.

c. Philippians 3:20 (citizenship-ASV)

3. The consequences of belonging to God is that the Christian must ever think and act as a "pilgrim," a "sojourner," or a "stranger".

a. I Peter 1:1, 17.

b. Hebrews 11:13.

c. I Peter 2:11.

## CONCLUSION

A. As God's person, God's child, and God's pilgrim, the Christian needs to constantly contemplate the privilege of being who he is and to strive for a godly character.

1. I Corinthians 6:19-20.

2. II Corinthians 6:16.

B. If we are to belong to the Lord, we must first obey the gospel plan of salvation.

1. Do you belong to God?

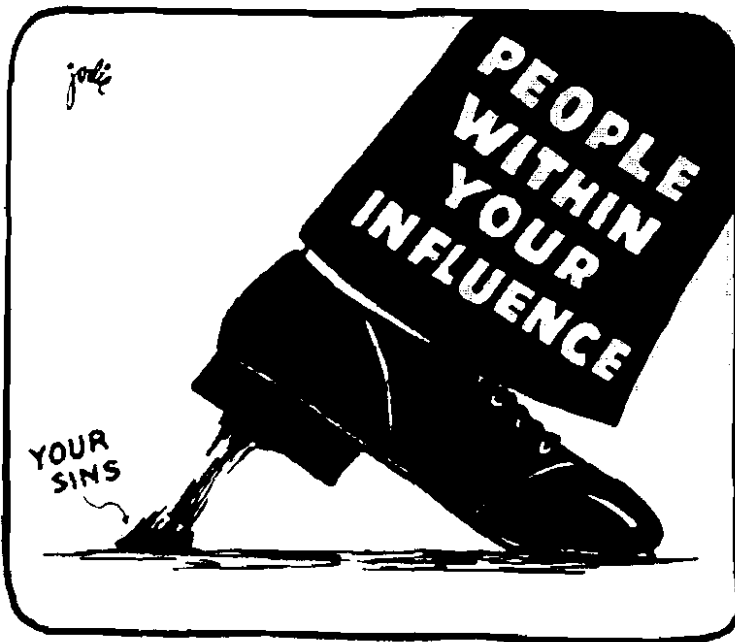
2. Have you obeyed God's plan for saving man?

—24065 Main  
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# THE DANGERS OF SIN

Jodie Boren



Does it not vex you when someone thoughtlessly and inconsiderately spits a wad of gum on the sidewalk and you step on it? When you or anyone sins, it is like spitting gum on the sidewalk. It is going to affect somebody. That is the very nature of sin. It is destructive to the one sinning, for it changes one's thinking and gradually changes his behavior. The wise man wrote, **"But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul"** (Proverbs 8:36). And, it can have a very harmful effect on those within the influence of the one sinning.

## THE INFLUENCE OF A "LITTLE LEAVEN"

There are those who feel that their private, or secret, sins are nobody else's business and that it hurts no one. This reasoning is fallacious because continuing in sin separates one from God (Isaiah 59:1-2) and without the direction of God in one's life (Proverbs 3:5-6), he becomes the servant of sin unto death (Romans 6:16 and John 8:34). Thus, in serving sin (Satan) that individual not only condemns himself to eternal punishment (Romans 6:23), but assists in misleading the unsuspecting and vulnerable souls within his influence to perdition. Because sin is deceitful (Hebrews 3:13) this way of thinking has permeated our whole society. The truth of Paul's statement in I Corinthians 5:6 becomes most evident: "... little leaven (some evil principle) leaveneth the whole lump."

The principle of leaven working in people's lives is seen in the progressiveness of the sins against Jacob. Jacob's name was changed to Israel in Genesis 32:28 and he had twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel. How-

ever, because Joseph was the son of his old age and Rachel, his beloved, he loved him more than all the others (Genesis 37:3). When his brethren saw this, they hated him (verse 3). Joseph had a dream that he would reign over his brethren and they hated him yet the more (verse 5). Joseph had a second dream in which his father and mother and brethren would do obeisance to him (verse 9-10). This caused his brethren to envy him (verse 11). This hate—this envy or jealousy—led to a conspiracy by his brethren to slay Joseph (verse 20). While they did not actually slay him, thanks to the intervention of Reuben, this evil to do so was in their hearts. Sin, as you can see, is progressive and the idea that one can continue in a sin—however private or secret it may be—and it not lead to other sins is blind to the dangers of sin.



## FIRE IN ONE'S BOSOM

The devil would have us believe there is no hazard in sin. Nevertheless, Solomon warned, **"Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?"** (Proverbs 6:27-28)? Jeremiah adds, **"Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart"** (Jeremiah 4:18). Combine this with the words of our Lord in Mark 7:21-23 and you see why sin is so damaging. **"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man."**

May we be reminded of the words of Paul in Galatians 6:7-8a. **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."** We may have sins that are hid from man, but not from God. There is an all seeing eye watching us. **"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do"** (Hebrews 4:13). It boils down to the fact that there are no secret sins. And if you think there are, remember the words of Moses that he spoke to the Reubenites and the Gadites, **"... be sure your sin will find you out"** (Numbers 32:23b). Sin is dangerous!

—2557 Campus Court  
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# Spring Bible Institute Lectures

## "A STUDY AND EXPOSE OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES" February 24-27, 2002

David P. Brown, Lectureship Director

### Sunday, February 24

9:30 A.M.	....."Man-His Nature, and Death".....	Johnie Scaggs
10:30 A.M.	....."Matthew 24—an Exposition".....	David P. Brown
4:00 A.M.	....."The Nature of Christ's Kingdom".....	Billy Bland
5:00 P.M.	....."Why I Cannot be a Jehovah's Witness".....	Danny Box
6:00 P.M.	....."The 144,000 and Eternal Life".....	Eddie Whitten

### Monday, February 25

9:00 A.M.	....."A Review of the Russell-White Debate".....	Roddy Covington
10:00 A.M.	....."Eternal Punishment and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Bruce Stulting
**10:00 A.M.	.....Ladies Class.....	Martha Bently
11:00 A.M.	....."A Review of 'Millions Now Living Will Never Die'".....	David Baker
1:30 P.M.	....."The Holy Spirit and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Gary Grizzell
2:30 P.M.	....."Watchtower' and 'Awake' Magazines".....	Jeff Sweeten
3:30 P.M.	....."Jehovah's Witnesses and Apocalyptic Language".....	Tom Wacaster

#### DINNER BREAK

6:30 P.M. .... CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 P.M. .... "Baptism and Jehovah's Witnesses"..... Michael Hatcher

8:00 P.M. .... "A Review of 'The New World Translation'"..... Tyler Young

### Tuesday, February 26

9:00 A.M.	....."The Terminology of Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Tom Moore
10:00 A.M.	....."Rationalism and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Royce Williamson
**10:00 A.M.	.....Ladies Class.....	Martha Bently
11:00 A.M.	....."The Godhead and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Michael Light
1:30 P.M.	....."Arianism and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Paul Vaughn
2:30 P.M.	....."Jehovah's Witnesses: Blood and Transfusions".....	Randy Mabe
3:30 P.M.	....."Jehovah's Witnesses: Sin and Salvation".....	David B. Jones

#### DINNER BREAK

6:30 P.M. .... CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 P.M. .... "Human Government and Jehovah's Witnesses"..... Terry Hightower

8:00 P.M. .... "Jesus Christ: His Deity, Vir. Birth, Aton., & Res."..... Jerry Murrell

### Wednesday, February 27

9:00 A.M.	....."Charles Taze Russell: Origin of Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Gary Summers
10:00 A.M.	....."A Review of 'Russellism Unveiled'".....	Bob Patterson
11:00 A.M.	....."Does the 'N.W.T.' Uniformly Teach Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Darrell Conley
1:30 P.M.	....."Revelation 20: An Exposition".....	Tommy Hicks
2:30 P.M.	....."New Heavens and New Earth".....	Lester Kamp
3:30 P.M.	....."Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford".....	Kent Bailey

#### DINNER BREAK

6:30 P.M. .... CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 P.M. .... "The Battle of Armageddon' and Jehovah's Witnesses"..... B. J. Clarke

8:00 P.M. .... "A Summary of Jehovah's Witnesses Doctrine"..... Lynn Parker

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# Lordship or Leadership?

Noah Hackworth

While these two words are for the most part used with reference to elders, there is apparently a great deal of confusion over their meaning, with no little amount coming from the dissidents in our brotherhood. There are those who seem to think that leadership is synonymous with lordship, that leadership cannot be exercised or decisions made without "lording it over others," namely the flock. To begin with it ought to be recognized that the apostle Peter distinguishes between the two concepts and shows plainly that leadership can be exercised without lordship (I Peter 5:2). In this passage leadership is unequivocally affirmed while lordship is strongly condemned.

## THE CONTROVERSY

The leadership-lordship controversy, for the most part, comes mainly from small groups of disgruntled brethren who are supported by a breed of preachers who are unwilling to place themselves under the authority of anyone, especially elders, and, in so doing, place themselves in a precarious position because they are fighting against what is authorized by the Holy Spirit (Titus 1:5). The implication of this passage is that every congregation of the Lord's people should desire godly elders to take the lead and exercise the oversight of the Lord's affairs. To do less than this is to fight against God (Acts 5:39).

## WHEN IS IT LORDSHIP?

The idea of lordship always starts in an individual's own mind. A brother who crosses over the line that separates lordship and leadership will usually be a brother who has misunderstood and/or assumed too much regarding the word "authority." This is why some men seem to be on a "power trip" which has caused them to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think (Romans 12:3). This was obviously in the Lord's mind when he said, "...Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you..." (Matthew 20:25-26). This passage cannot be used to negate the fact that elders have authority delegated to them by the Lord with an obligation to use it without "lording it over" anyone. The Greek word *exousia* means "the right to act" (cf., John 1:12). If no follower of the Lord can have *exousia* then Paul did not and could not have *exousia*, but Paul did have *exousia* (II Corinthians 10:8); so did various other New Testament characters. Elders have *exousia* as seen in the fact that they are to feed the church (Acts 20:28) and tend the flock (I Peter 5:2). Lordship occurs when elders never, under any circumstance or condition, seek input from the flock they oversee. Lordship occurs when elders never under any circumstance change their minds. Lordship occurs when elders retain a preacher who is unsound despite member-

ship objections. Lordship occurs when elders refuse to resign even though they have become physically or intellectually incapacitated.

## WHEN IS IT LEADERSHIP?

It is leadership when elders accept their responsibility and perform their God-appointed obligations (I Peter 5:1-5). It is leadership when the flock of God is fed, which involves protection, guidance, guarding, governing, securing it from enemies, and directing its affairs so as to promote its edification and peace (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2). Leadership takes place when elders protect the flock from false teachers (Acts 20:29-30). It is biblical leadership when elders watch and admonish the flock (Acts 20:31; I Thessalonians 5:12). It is leadership when elders direct the spiritual and physical affairs of the church (Acts 11:29-30). It is leadership when elders lead in settling doctrinal disputes (Acts 15:1, 6, 22). Leadership is taking the lead in matters requiring discipline (II Corinthians 4:5; II Thessalonians 3:6).

Elders have the obligation to (1) carry out the generics of the gospel, (2) see that the Lord's will is executed in legislated areas and (3) make decisions in matters of judgment. It is leadership not lordship.



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# Surrogate Mothers, Church Benevolence, Stem-Cell Research, and More

Compiled By Mark McWhorter

A California couple has backed out of a deal with a British surrogate mother they met on the Internet after she refused to abort one of her twin fetuses, according to court documents. Helen Beasley, who is 25 weeks pregnant, said an abortion would be too risky. But that has left the 26-year-old secretary bearing twins that she has no legal right to and that she says she cannot afford to care for. "When they're born, what happens to them? I can't have them. I can't do anything with them. They're not mine," she said. Beasley sued the couple, **Charles H. Wheeler** and **Martha A. Berman**, in San Diego on August 1, claiming breach of contract and fraud. Wheeler, reached at his law office in San Francisco, declined to comment Friday, saying to do so would be a breach of the confidentiality provision of the surrogate contract. Messages left for Berman at her home in Berkeley and office were not returned. Zager said that most surrogate pregnancies occur with no problems. She said that over the years, 20,000 babies have been born through surrogate parents and almost all happen without incident. **Kenneth Goodwin**, director of the bioethics program at the University of Miami, said Friday that this situation could have been avoided if there were clear rules for surrogate parents. (Covenant news internet service, 8/11/01). *[No this could be avoided if everyone would apply Biblical principles. There is no basis for a surrogate mother. Besides, this demonstrates that these parents did not have true love invested in this process. Otherwise, they would be overjoyed to be having twins. The surrogate must have been in it for the money. She is outraged that she will now be stuck with children.—mtm]*

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More than 50 percent of the 29,000 students in the Irving, Texas school district are classified as economically disadvantaged, according to district records. To help those students start the school year on par with their peers, several churches have developed programs to assist thousands of financially strapped families in Irving. Northgate United Methodist Church served about 100 students during its inaugural back-to-school program about 10 years ago. This year, Northgate officials project that about 800 families will line their parking lot to receive school uniforms, socks, shoes and toiletries. The church spends about \$25 per child. Meanwhile, South MacArthur Church of

Christ's congregation contributed more than \$20,000 this year to the church store for school supplies. About four years ago, members learned that teachers and principals in its congregation were spending their own money to buy basic school supplies for students. In response to their concerns, the church opened the South MacArthur School Store. "Last year, we served about 3,500 students," Smith said. "We are expecting to help about the same number again. We will be providing them with pens, pencils, paper, scissors, glue and other basic supplies. This will help the students to start learning without having to worry about where their supplies will come from" (Religion Today email service, 8/11/01). *[I wonder if this is the benevolence God had in mind for the church to do. Or is this more of the social gospel? Are they including tracts or other Bible teaching materials in this good will?—mtm]*



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Liberal Republican **Jim Greenwood** of Pennsylvania protested the religious overtones of the debate regarding using stem cells for cloning. "I would be mightily surprised if when you took a stem cell and put it in a petri dish and it divided, that God would choose that moment to put a soul in it," he said, adding that religious objections to embryo research were "unconstitutional" (World, August 11, 2001, page 9). *[Why is he arguing about the soul if he does not even believe the religious argument is constitutional? His comment regarding the soul is misleading at best. Simply cloning cells would not mean that the soul is involved. However, trying to clone a person would involve the soul. The reason this experimentation should not be done is that it involves killing a human. Even if only already existing stem cells in research are used, it required the killing of a human to get these. To use them on the argument that they would just go to waste is lacking morality. That argument would justify the Nazis in their use of human skin for lampshades, since the skin came from already dead individuals. It is a sad day in our history as a nation when we are told by a Congressman that we cannot object to legislation on the basis of our religion.]*

\*\*\*\*\*

A unanimous California Supreme Court refused Thursday to expand conservators' authority to make life-and-death decisions, saying life support for conscious yet severely disabled individuals could not be terminated without clear and convincing evidence of their desires. **Rose Wendland** had argued that, as her husband's conservator, she had the authority to end life support if she felt it was in his best interests and was based on sound medical advice (Law News Network, 8/10/01). *[These issues are complex at times and have to be evaluated on individual basis. However, if the patient is conscious and can make his own decisions, he is the one who should make such a decision. If he is conscious, he has only one decision, that is to fight for his life.—mtm]*

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**President Bush's** nominee for a top international-aid post has come under fire for his stand on Christianity. **Kent R. Hill**—who left Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Massachusetts, last month after nine years as its president—is being scrutinized by the U.S. Senate for instituting a hiring policy at the school that permitted only “committed Christians,” *The Boston Globe* reported. Last week, Bush picked Hill for the U.S. Agency for International Development, where he would oversee \$1.5 billion in annual aid to Europe. Critics, including a Jewish instructor who claims he was not rehired due to the policy, are urging the Senate not to confirm Hill's nomination because he would favor international religious groups in his new job. “I really take issue with (the policy)—not believing in Jesus as my Savior doesn't disqualify me to teach statistics,” said former Eastern professor **Marc Cohen** in the *Globe*. But no one was fired, according to officials at Eastern, a private college associated with the Church of the Nazarene. After the policy's implementation, Hill wrote to faculty members: “We are increasingly aware that it is unrealistic and unfair for us to expect a non-Christian to further a mission which is based on a belief in the transforming power of Jesus Christ to forgive sins” (Religion Today email service, 8/13/01). *[This is worrisome. The liberals only want those who are declared conservatives with no conviction or liberals. Either way, the only folks to be adamantly opposed are those who have convictions related to Biblical teaching. If you are an adamant atheist, then that is fine. Our own change agents are like that. They publicly proclaim that love is the highest ideal and tolerance is mandated by that love yet get irate if faced with those who believe there is a set rule of law from God.—mtm]*

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(CNSNews.com, 8/13/01)—United Nations agencies working with the U.S. Agency for International Development and local authorities are making abortion drugs and paraphernalia available to victims of earthquakes in El Salvador, in violation of the country's constitution, a Salvadoran pro-life group has alleged. The U.N. Population

Fund (UNFPA) is distributing so-called emergency contraception drugs that work to prevent conception up to 72 hours after sexual intercourse, and manual vacuum aspirators, which are used for early term abortions, said Julia Cardenal, president of “Si A La Vida”. *[The U.S. government should hear from all principled people that this is absolutely wrong. This is not the first time the U.N. has done this. In fact, they are making it a habit to give away sex kits as a first line of action in many of these emergencies. This is just one reason that the U.S. should have nothing to do with the U.N.—mtm]*

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

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## Texas Court Case to Determine State Regulation of Seminaries

Ailie Martin

October 11, 2001, (AgapePress) A Texas appeals court heard arguments yesterday in a case that eventually will determine whether all seminary staff and curriculum in Texas will be regulated by the state.

Two years ago, the Fort Worth-based Tyndale Theological Seminary was fined \$170,000 by the state for issuing theological degrees without a certificate of authority from state officials. Last year, a district court ruled in favor of the state, and now the case is before the Texas appeals court.

**Kelly Shackelford**, chief counsel for the Liberty Legal Institute, which is representing the seminary and other Christian schools, says seminaries should not be controlled by the government.

“The state cannot take over seminaries and put them under their regulation and tell them who their faculty can be and what their curriculum has to be,” Shackelford says. “That's just a clear violation of the Constitution.”

Shackelford says the case will have far-reaching ramifications.

“This is unfortunately a trend ... going in a number of states now that are passing these type of regulations, and this is the first case that we've seen that really is going to put this issue straight on,” he says. “[I]t's really important that we have a victory here for religious freedom.”

Earlier this year, another seminary—Teaching God's Word, Inc., located in Rockdale, Texas—filed a federal lawsuit against the state. The conflict began when the state fined the seminary \$15,000 for handing out theological degrees without approval, and \$3,000 for using the word “seminary.” [Used by Permission, Agape Press]

—via the internet  
[www.agapepress.org](http://www.agapepress.org)

# FORCES THAT LED UP TO THE REFORMATION

Paul Vaughn

In the early history of the church Paul warned about the forthcoming apostasy of God's people. He admonished the elders of Ephesus to stay firm in God's word and to beware of false teachers.

**For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears (Acts 20:29-31).**

Paul told Timothy that in latter times some will depart from the faith.

**Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth (1 Timothy 4:1-3).**

Soon after the death of the apostles perilous currents began to carry many Christians away from the pattern set forth in the New Testament. One of the earliest errors to develop was Ebionism. The Ebionites denied the deity of Jesus. They taught that salvation came through circumcision and the keeping of the Law of Moses. Gnosticism is another heresy that plagued the ancient church. It existed at the time of John because First John refutes this apostasy. Arianism, Montanism and Novatianism were other false teachings that drew Christians away from the well-established order of the church of Christ.

Error continued to erode away at the foundation of the church in the changing of church government and the writing of creeds. All of the forces coming together led God's people into apostasy. But, the scripture definitely teaches that the church Jesus established will be victorious. **"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).**

## PERSECUTIONS FROM THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The Roman empire was a formidable and aggressive force for evil against Christianity during the apostolic age and the first three hundred year histories of the church of Christ. Christians suffered economic and social ostracism. Through the power of the Roman empire many Christians were put to death for their faith in Jesus. About A.D. 111, **Pliny the Younger** was serving as governor in the territories of Pontus in Asia and Bithynia. In dealing with the

growth of Christianity he concluded that if Christians do not reject Christ they should be put to death.

Because of Rome's persecutions **Ignatius**, an elder at Antioch was "thrown to wild beasts in the arena in Rome about 115."<sup>1</sup> **Polycarp**, an elder at Smyria, was put to death at the stake because he would not reject Christ. He

said, **"I have served Him for eighty-six years, and He never did me any wrong: how can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?"**<sup>2</sup> About A.D. 165 **Justin Martyr** was beheaded in Rome for his faithfulness to Christ. The emperor Nero tortured and put vast numbers of Christians to death. One of the methods used to torture Christians was the "troublesome coat." Christians were forced to wear this coat of pain. "It was made of coarse cloth, besmeared with pitch, wax and sulphur. Dressed in this coat, they were hung by their chins from sharp stakes fixed in the ground, and set on fire."<sup>3</sup> Persecution of the Roman empire brought Christians close to Christ through focusing attention on the authority of the New Testament. The blood that was shed became a conquering spring pointing people to Christ.

## PERSECUTIONS FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The torture of Christians by the Roman government was extremely harsh and brutal. But, the persecution of Christians by the Roman Catholic Church was no less monstrous and ruthless! Around A.D. 1200 men began to see the error in the Roman Catholic Church. One of the first to point people to the Bible was **Peter Waldo**. He "was a wealthy merchant of Lyons who about 1160 began to study the Bible."<sup>4</sup> Waldo had the Bible translated so the average person could read God's word. The followers of Waldo were called "Waldenses." They believed in the divinity of Christ and that salvation was only through Jesus Christ. **Pope Innocent III** sent out missionaries to convert the Waldenses to the Roman Catholic view. "When persuasion failed, fire faggot and sword were applied."<sup>5</sup> Innocent III placed **Dominic**, founder of the Dominican preaching friars, in charge of the expedition. They captured a camp where they found 180 persons, who preferred being burned alive to adopting a pious creed."<sup>6</sup>

In 1232 the Inquisition was instituted. It was the official policy the Roman Catholic Church used to eliminate those who chose to follow the Bible. In "Spain some 191,285



# DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES

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**Holly Pond**—Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, (256) 796-6802, (205) 429-2026. Sunday: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

**Somerville**—Union Church of Christ, located on Hwy 36, one mile east of Hwy 67, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tom Larkin, Evangelist, (256) 778-8955, (256) 778-8961.

## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Telephone: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

## —Florida—

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

## —Georgia—

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## —Indiana—

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## —North Carolina—

**Rocky Mount**—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, tel. (919) 977-7556, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engledinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Richwood**—1600 Brazosport, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30; 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, Evangelist.

## —Wyoming—

**Cheyenne**—High Plains church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Gerald Reynolds, tel. (307) 635-2482.

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people died (31,912 of them burned to death). An additional 291,450 suffered imprisonment.”<sup>7</sup>

There were others who became bulwarks pointing to the Bible in the face of tyranny by the Roman Church. **John Wycliffe, John Hus, and Girolamo Savonarola** are a few of the forerunners of the Reformation. Hos was burned at the stake. Savonarola suffered execution under **Pope Alexander VI**.

The forces that led up to the Reformation began with the apostasy of the church during the first three hundred year histories of Christianity. In A.D. 324 the Roman emperor **Constantine** made Christianity a legal religion. Before this time the Roman empire's persecution of the church of Christ was forceful and brutal, but the church grew.

The turbulence of time kept moving people away from the Bible until the development of the Roman Catholic Church. Then it became the catalyst behind the oppression of those who chose to simply follow the Bible. Many people lost their lives so they could read the scriptures in their own language. Thus, the stage was set for the Reformation.

Countless people suffered intensely so we could have the Bible. Let us never forget this lesson from history and read our Bibles daily. Because, like in the “Dark Ages,” someone may try to take it away from us.

## ENDNOTES

1. Howard Vos, *Exploring Church History*, Nelson pub. Nashville, 1994, p.28.
2. Kenneth Connolly, *The Indestructible Book*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 1996, p.32.
3. *Ibid.* P. 36.
4. F.W. Mattox, *The Eternal Kingdom, A History of the Church of Christ*, Gospel Light Pub, Delight, 1955, p.211.
5. Connolly, p.65.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

# CAN THE FAITHFUL REMAIN SILENT?

Eddie Whitten

**“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?” (Galatians 3:1).**

### AN APOSTASY NOTED AND OPPOSED

The apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians with an impassioned concern. He had preached the gospel to them in clear, uncertain terms. There was nothing to which the Galatian brethren could appeal to justify what they were doing. They were departing from the faith. It was undeniable and Paul knew it. He rebuked them sharply. He lamented, **“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ”** (Galatians 1:6-7). The churches of Galatia were being seduced into Judaism by the influence and teaching of the “troublers” to which Paul referred. He reasoned with them on the basis of (1) the inspiration of the scriptures that he preached to them (1:11-12). (2) Their rightful place as Christians (2:11-21). (3) The promise to Abraham that through his seed (Christ) all nations would be blessed and that the Law

of Moses did not displace that promise. The Law of Moses was added because of transgression and was to guide the Jews until Christ came. Then the Law would be taken out of the way and people could be saved through faith (chap. 3). (4) The time came that the promise to Abraham was fulfilled. Jesus came into the world to redeem those who would believe in him and obey his will (4:1-7). He rebukes them for going back into the practice of Judaism and even paganism (4:8-15). He then asked a very penetrating question: **“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”** (4:16). Paul reasoned with the Galatian churches on the basis of the gospel he had preached to them.



### APOSTASY IN THE RECENT PAST

It is heartbreaking to observe the departure of so many of our brethren over the past years into denominational practices and allegiances. In doing so, they have turned their backs upon God who sent his son to redeem man from sin; upon Jesus who died for all who would turn from sin and follow him; upon the Holy Spirit who revealed the truth of the gospel to inspired penmen, and upon all who have faithfully preached that Gospel through the years. Paul gave assurance to the church in Corinth that it was the gospel through which they were saved. Men cannot be saved from sin and enjoy the reward of heaven in any other way than through obedience to the gospel of Christ. Any-one who preaches anything different than the gospel that has been revealed is a false teacher (I John 4:1; Galatians 1:6-9), and they who follow false teachers will be lost (Matthew 7:21-23; 15:13-14). Regardless of the fact that men have decided to follow something else or someone

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else, it is God's word that saved and nothing else (Matthew 15:8-9; John 12:48; Romans 1:16; II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

**CURRENT APOSTASY:  
A TERRIBLE TRAGEDY**

In the August 3, 2001, edition of the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, Northeast Metro section, page 8B, an ad was published issuing an invitation on the part of sixty-four "Pastors and Churches" to be a part of a "Back to School Prayer Rally." It was held at the Birdville ISD Arts/Athletic Complex on Sunday, August 5 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Listed in the ad were the names of the churches and organizations participating in this effort. There were numerous denominational churches and organizations of various "faiths." Among the participants there were, tragically, four area churches of Christ! These churches, Baker Boulevard church of Christ, Mid Cities church of Christ, North Richland Hills church of Christ and Pipeline Road church of Christ are in blatant violation of many Scriptures prohibiting fellowship with error.

Prayer is a blessing indescribable. It is something everyone should do every day. It should be encouraged for children in their early, early years. It is noble, worthy, humbling and effective (James 5:16). Praying for our school children is not our objection in the least. There are other things, however, about which we cannot remain silent!

Prayer is a blessing that is given to Christians by the authority of Jesus enabling them to pray to the father (John 16:23; Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:17).

Mechanical instrumental music is not authorized in worship (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Part of the program for this event was musical presentations by certain individuals and groups.

Any religious group not following the Bible and the authority of the Bible for what it preaches and practices is "**an unfruitful work of darkness.**" It is not in obedience to the word of God. It is teaching for doctrine the commandments of men (Matthew 15:9; Ephesians 5:11).

The many denominational groups listed in this ad use mechanical instruments of music. They teach doctrines contradictory to the Bible and to each other (John 12:48).

They believe and teach the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, once saved always saved, salvation separate and apart from obedience to the gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-4; I Peter 3:21).

**AN APPEAL AND A PLEA**

Paul appealed to the Galatians from a practical viewpoint. He expressed his love for them by the appeal, "**Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?**" We do the same to our erring brethren: Does not love for your souls demand that we not remain silent? Our plea: Please repent and return to your first love! Participation in ecumenical efforts with error may gain favor with men, but it is an abomination in the eyes of God (Ephesians 5:11; II John 9-11)!

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## "YOU JUST CAN'T WARN SOME BRETHREN"

Gary L. Grizzell

I shall ever remember the well known saying for which the late and lamented **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** was noted. When warning of false teaching and false teachers he would say, "You just can't warn some brethren." This was certainly true recently when talking to wayward brother **Joe Dudney**, executive director of the so-called "Churches of Christ" Disaster Relief, Inc. of Nashville, Tennessee.

Having published a tract copyrighted September 2001 entitled, "Seven Reasons The Church and The Christian MUST OPPOSE The So-Called 'Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.,' of Nashville, Tennessee" (Hereafter referred to by CCDR.) I received in the mail material designed to promote the unscriptural CCDR. As a result I wrote an email to the CCDR as follows:

From: Gary L. Grizzell  
To: dsastrlf@aol.com  
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2001  
Subject: Please verify

To whom it may concern:

I received in my mail today a medium size envelope addressed to myself, Gary L. Grizzell, but with no return address on the envelope. Enclosed was: 1) A letter purported to have been written by **Jim Bill McInteer** and on *21st Century Christian's* stationery, dated September 27, 2001, wherein brother McInteer recommended the "Disaster Relief" of "410 Allied Drive, Nashville, TN 37211."

2) Secondly, included in my mail today was a booklet entitled, "Biblical Perspective of Giving for Natural Disasters" purporting to have been written by one "Lynn O. Cook, Director of Development, Churches of Christ Disaster Relief." This is an eight page booklet written for the purpose of establishing New Testament authority for the existence and work of what it calls the "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief,"

a benevolent organization established in order to respond "immediately to every major disaster..."

Please respond by informing me that the letter listed under "1)" above was written by Jim Bill McInteer and also verify that the booklet mentioned above under "2)" above was written by Lynn O. Cook. Also, please answer the question: Who mailed me this information?

Respectfully,  
Gary L. Grizzell  
Adjunct Instructor: Spring Bible Institute,  
<http://www.churchesofchrist.com/sbi/>  
Coordinator for Tracts For The Nations,  
<http://webpages.charter.net/tracts/default.htm>  
Email: [tracts@charter.net](mailto:tracts@charter.net)

Sometime thereafter when returning to my office I was to find a message from Joe Dudney waiting for me on my telephone answering machine. The message stated that he wanted to talk to me. Leaving an 800 number he had requested I call him. The caller had also stated what he desired to discuss: 1) the email I had sent, and 2) the "brochure" (tract) I had recently published criticizing the CCDR. Taking into account all the factors involved, it seemed obvious to me that a heated discussion was destined to take place.

A second recorded message left by the caller stated he wanted to talk to me about the material which he said "our" Lynn Cook had written (the booklet defending the existence of the CCDR, which I had received in the mail) and the copy of a letter which had been penned by Jim Bill McInteer (which letter had commended the CCDR.). Once again, he stated he wanted to talk to me also about the "brochure" I had written and was critical of it's contents.

(Continued On Page 5)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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David P. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher  
*apostles@contending.com*

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.  
Founder and Senior Editor

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Contending for the Faith was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7-17) and bring about (1:11-13). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible teaches (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 will be done by Contending for the Faith. 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 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 magazine in which you desire your advertisement to appear. An ad will be charged for the following month; ads must be placed by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with our advertising policy.

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Editorial . . .

# GOD GAVE THE HOME, THE GOVERNMENT, AND THE CHURCH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Among other things, to be “for” a certain position means that one should be able to precisely state in an affirmative proposition only and exactly what one believes. There can be no middle ground in a precisely stated proposition. Such a statement is either true or false. However, precisely stating a proposition is not the same thing as proving it. And, the Bible demands it must be proved (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

Since we are to do only those things that are authorized by the scriptures (Colossians 3:17), one may, therefore, begin each of the following propositions with, “The scriptures teach”. With that in mind let us examine the following affirmative propositions. Please realize the following quotations are found in the context of the organization of a congregation of God’s people.

Actual quote: “Without an organized Youth Ministry where and with whom will our children spend their time?”

From the previous quote one may derive at least two precisely stated propositions: Proposition “A”: (True or False) “The scriptures teach that without an organized church Youth Ministry children are without a place to spend their time.” Proposition “B”: (True or False) “The scriptures teach without an organized church Youth Ministry children are without proper companionship.”

Are we to understand from the previous quote that, all other things being scripturally equal, parents cannot discharge their God-given duties as Christian parents to their children unless the church has “an organized Youth Ministry”? In other words, it is impossible for parents to do what God obligates them (fathers and mothers) to do in rearing their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord in the home without a church “organized Youth Ministry” (Ephesians 6:1-4). Furthermore, all other things being scripturally equal, are we to understand from this quote that a “Church Youth Ministry” and “Youth Minister” are obligatory works of the church; that a church is not fully restored and scripturally organized unless such a “Ministry”/“Minister” exists? Moreover, are such “Ministries”/“Ministers” coordinate with parents in the rearing of children in a Godly manner? And, thus, (again and for emphasis) are we to conclude that homes and churches cannot discharge their obligations to God without such “Church Ministries” and

“Ministers”? If such is the case, churches and parents sin when the church does not have an organized “Youth Ministry”/ “Youth Minister”.

#### THE GOVERNMENT AND THE HOME

Was **Hillary Clinton** correct when in her book, “It Takes a Village”, she advocated that the home is insufficient to accomplish what it alone was authorized by God to do? Thus, we must conclude that the home must have government direction and intervention in order for it to function properly? I suppose we need to write a treatise advocating, it takes a “Church Youth Ministry” and “Youth Minister” before parents can discharge their God-given responsibility as parents to their children. And, that it takes a “Church Youth Ministry” and “Youth Minister” before a church is truly a faithful congregation of God’s people. I categorically deny the allegation and “charge the ‘allegator’” to find in God’s word a direct statement, example, or implication that authorizes such a view. And, if there is no direct statement, example or implication to authorize the view, we have no authority to believe it (Colossians 3:17; Romans 10:17; II Corinthians 5:7). Indeed, we have only one scriptural alternative—oppose it.

Actual quote: “I do not believe the primary purpose of a Youth Ministry should be to teach Bible doctrine to our children. We have a Bible School Ministry responsible for that function.”

After telling us that it is not the primary purpose of a church “Youth Ministry to teach Bible doctrine to our children” because there is “a Bible School Ministry responsible for that function”, we are informed of some things a church “Youth Ministry” is authorized by the Bible to do. We are then given a list of the programs of which their church “Youth Ministry” consists. They are:

- “The Annual Youth Rally”
- “Evangelism”
- “Service Projects”
- “Retreats”
- “Social Activities”
- “Pre-teens”

Please note:

1. If it is the case that the primary purpose of a church Youth Ministry is something other than teaching the Bible to our children.
2. And, if it is the case that two of the programs of a church Youth Ministry are “the Annual Youth Rally and Evangelism”.
3. Then, it is the case that “the Annual Youth Rally and Evangelism” are programs of a church Youth Ministry whose primary purpose is something other than teaching the Bible to our children.

What proves too much proves nothing. Who would affirm that: “*The scriptures teach that a church youth*

*rally or evangelism program are church programs whose primary purposes are something other than teaching the Bible”?*

#### WALKING BY FAITH

To say that one “believes” thus and so in matters religious is equivalent to saying that the Bible teaches or authorizes whatever it is that one believes (“faith” is the noun form of that which “believe” is the verb form). This is the case because proper faith comes from hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17—and a rightly divided one at that, II Timothy 2:15). Furthermore, according to the doctrine under review, must we not logically and consistently conclude, therefore, that such a “Youth Ministry/Minister’s” “primary function” is something other than teaching Bible doctrine to our children”?

Since Faith comes by hearing the word of God, and we are to “walk by faith and not by sight”, then we must conclude that to walk by faith is to walk as the word of God teaches, authorizes, leads, guides, and directs us—no more or no less (Romans 10:17; II Corinthians 5:7). Therefore, we have the right to expect (indeed we demand) elders, deacons, preachers, and church members to supply us with a direct statement, an example, or implication teaching that “the primary function of a “Youth Ministry” is something other than “to teach Bible doctrine to our children”. Moreover, before God they have the obligation to supply us with the Bible authority for their doctrine (I Peter 3:15; 4:11). Indeed, why continue to beat around the proverbial bush? Go ahead and call church “Youth Ministers”/“Youth Ministries” what in actuality they are—“Youth Recreational Directors”/“Youth Recreational Ministries” or “Youth Social Director”/“Youth Social Services Ministry”.

Since some teach that “the primary purpose of a Youth Ministry is not to teach Bible doctrine to our children”, then why not affirm the following proposition: “*The scriptures teach that ‘the primary purpose of a Youth Ministry is to provide pizza parties, outings, trips to Six Flags, and such like for the youth of the Lord’s church.’*” And, “*The scriptures teach that the Youth Minister’s purpose is to organize and supervise pizza parties, outings, trips to Six Flags, and such like for the youth of the Lord’s church.’*” Furthermore, why not affirm and prove that: “*The scriptures teach that pizza parties for church members and the like are a part of the work of the church”?*

#### WHAT I AM NOT AFFIRMING

No one is against young Christians or, for that matter, older Christians involving themselves in all sorts of wholesome organized social and recreational activities when everything involved therein is carried out according to the scriptures. And, that would involve God’s youth ministers (mama and daddy)

working to provide “social activities” for their children. However, that is a far cry from what some people (some elders, deacons, preachers, young people, and parents) think constitutes a part of the work of the church. I find no Bible authority for a “Youth Minister” and a church “Youth Ministry” whose “primary purpose is not to teach Bible doctrine to our children.” Everything the Lord’s church does is to teach by precept and example the doctrine of Christ to anyone and everyone inside and outside the church.

#### WHAT I AM AFFIRMING

I will gladly affirm: “*The scriptures teach that a part of the primary purpose of a home is to provide pizza parties, outings, trips to Six Flags, and such like.*” And, “*The scriptures teach that a part of Christian parents’ (God’s youth ministers) purpose is to organize and supervise pizza parties, outings, trips to Six Flags, and such like.*” Furthermore, I will affirm, “*The scriptures teach that Christian parents may cooperate with one another in organizing recreational and social programs for their children.*” However, there is nothing in the scriptures that authorizes such activities to be a part of the work of the church.

The work of the church is to save souls through teaching the gospel to the alien sinner, edifying the saints, and benevolence. The church is fundamentally, primarily, and always a teaching institution. And, whatever does not expedite the teaching and defense of the gospel is a detriment to the cause of Christ.

#### IF THEY ONLY HAD THE BENEFITS OF A “YOUTH MINISTER”/“MINISTRY”

The view that some brethren have regarding the work of the church, I am made to wonder how **Guy N. Woods, G. K. Wallace, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., N. B. Hardeman, B. C. Goodpasture, H. Leo Boles, David Lipscomb, J. D. Tant** (especially brother Tant), and a host of lesser known stalwarts of the faith of yesteryear along with the churches of their day ever amounted to a “hill of beans without a “Youth Minister” and “Church Youth Ministry”. Moreover, one would think that with all of the “church programs” available to young people today the church would be producing characters that would make the likes of the previously mentioned men spiritual pygmies. But is such the case? Indeed not, there is more biblical ignorance today in the church than ever before in recent history. And, even among those who like to think they are battling liberalism (doctrines that loose men from what God has bound on them) there is a terrible lack of knowledge of Bible authority and how to ascertain it. The evidence of such ignorance is clearly seen in the quotes that I have examined in this editorial.

#### IF IT IS NOT AUTHORIZED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IT IS SIN

Why did faithful brethren of the 19th century oppose “missionary societies”? Was it because they were opposed to carrying out the great commission? Not at all, they were opposed to an organization (the missionary society) unknown to the Bible doing what only the church (every member of the church) is authorized to do?

Why are we opposed to the view that it is not the primary purpose of a “Youth Ministry” to teach Bible doctrine to our children? Is it because we do not desire the young people of Godly homes to fellowship in wholesome recreational activities with others of like mind? Not at all, we are opposed to that which is not authorized by the Bible—namely that it is the responsibility of the church to provide what the home is authorized to provide. May I say again as forcefully as I know how—elders, deacons, and preachers (whatever variety) as such are not the head of my house. I am going to have the final “say so” when it comes to what goes on in my house. Indeed, that is exactly the attitude every faithful elder, deacon, preacher, and church member will have toward their own homes as well as others. In fact, a man is not qualified to serve as an elder unless he has proven that he “**ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity**” (I Timothy 3:4; Ephesians 5:5). Furthermore, if they desire the whole council of God to be preached they will see that such is preached boldly and practiced routinely by all the church. That is the responsibility of elders to see that such is done. And, it is the responsibility of preachers to preach the same.

The home as the Bible defines it is not the Lord’s church and vice versa. And, while the Godly home and the Lord’s church are inextricably involved with each other, that involvement does not authorize the church to usurp the work that alone belongs to the home or for the Godly home to abdicate its responsibilities to the church. If we can understand that the Godly home is involved in civil government, but must not relinquish its God-given responsibilities to the civil government and vice versa, then why is it so difficult for us to understand that the Godly home should not relinquish the same to the church and vice versa? Where is the person who will affirm the following proposition: “**The scriptures teach that the church of Christ is authorized to do what the Godly home may do**”?

#### ENDNOTES

1. Jim Whitmire, “Large Active Youth Groups (LAYG’s) A Rebuttle” Contending for the Faith (September 2001), pp. 8, 9
2. Ibid.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

# "You Just Can't Warn..."

(Continued From Page 1)

I was able to return his call the next day. Our phone conversation revealed that several had sent him a copy of the tract I had written.

## THE PHONE CONVERSATION WITH JOE DUDNEY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF "CHURCHES OF CHRIST DISASTER RELIEF, INC."

Below is an abbreviated background to this phone conversation:

1) I received a couple of things in the mail defending the CCDR.

2) I emailed the CCDR and asked about this.

3) Joe Dudney of the CCDR of Nashville called twice, leaving messages on my phone answering machine when I was out of the office. He said he wanted to talk to me and that he disagreed with my tract.

4) I emailed the CCDR and said that there would be a conference call coming the next day, but this did not work out.

5) Thus, I returned his call and it was a heated exchange. Below is a record from memory of the content of this phone conversation.

6) Joe Dudney of the CCDR had been out to lunch when I did call him and then he returned my call about 12:45 pm Friday, Oct. 26, 2001 (see report below).

1. He refused to debate on the phone he said, but he proceeded to debate the points HE wanted to debate. None of these points had to do with the Biblical arguments I had set forth but only with quotes from faithful preachers, **Lloyd Gale** and **Jon Gary Williams**. He said both of these men were not reporting the truth. I asked him if he knew Lloyd Gale. He answered, no. I said he was an upright and sound man and that he would have to take up his complaint with him, that I was convinced brother Gale knew the facts. I defended brother Williams as well.

2. I told him I had the courage to put into print in and by my tract the facts, so why would he not put into print his response? He said emphatically he would not do so. I asked repeatedly, "Why not?!" He would only agree for me sitting down with him and his board members in Nashville, Tennessee. I told him that I would not meet in an unfair meeting, but only in a fair meeting. He asked if I was questioning his integrity on this and I in turn asked if he was questioning mine for wanting only a fair meeting. It was okay for him to allow for himself that which he condemned in me. Actually, I was NOT questioning his character or his motives (and told him so), but that a fair meeting with an equal number present was appropriate.

I asked why he did not have the courage to place into print for all to read a response to my tract? He said he would not put anything into print! He said he was a Dudney and therefore he was not afraid of anything, that he was as "stubborn" as they come! To that I did not disagree.

3. He said that Jon Gary Williams was not correct in what I quoted him saying in the tract. I told him to take it up with Jon Gary Williams.

4. He said he (they) had tried repeatedly to set up a meeting with Jon Gary Williams (a critic of the program) and his elders. I asked him why he would not meet with Jon Gary Williams in a fair meeting situation. He said he had tried repeatedly. I told him that is not the way I was told it.

5. He told me

e I was the one who must give an answer in this controversy since I had written and circulated my tract criticizing the CCDR. This accusation reminded me of the words of Ahab in I Kings 18:17, "**Art thou he that troubleth Israel?**" I responded that he was the one who started this controversy by setting up an unscriptural organization, the CCDR. I told him repeatedly that he had no authority from the New Testament for setting up a man made para-church organization. However, he refused to discuss the Biblical points (reasons) I had made in the tract as to why the church and the Christian must oppose the CCDR. It was obvious to me he COULD NOT deal with these arguments based upon the New Testament's teaching. He did not know the Bible and could not give answer as I Peter 3:15 obligated him to do. He was only interested in brow-beating me, which I refused to let him do. Thus, he finally hung up on me. Such rudeness is unacceptable Christian behavior.

6. I told him to encourage the preacher at Spring Hill Church of Christ to accept my offer to have a written debate concerning authority for the existence of the CCDR. He answered he was not going to set up any such thing.

7. He would only agree to me coming to Nashville and sitting before him and the board members of the CCDR. I told him that Cookeville was just as close as Nashville. He hatefully answered, "I don't have time to go chasing after you!" I replied with words to the effect of "Oh, but you think I've got time to go chasing after you." The double standard of a highminded man was observed throughout my conversation with this individual.

8. He asked me what I thought about the letter from Jim Bill McInteer commending the CCDR. I replied that Jim Bill McInteer has a spirit of compromise on the subject of fellowship. Thus, the implication of my comment was that McInteer was not a worthy reference for the CCDR (I did not get the chance to point out at that moment that even credible men do not constitute the standard, but that the Bible is THE standard). Oh, he was shocked that I would say such a thing. I asked him if he had read *Contending For The Faith* and he answered, yes. I asked him if he had read what *CFTF* had to say about Jim Bill McInteer. He said, no. I said, "Well, you are not informed as you should be, are you?" Then he took a swipe at *CFTF*, stating his lack of confidence in it. When witnessing such a closed mind who cannot understand the reason these wayward para-church people cannot be taught God's word!

9. He asked me if I had read the booklet by CCDR's Lynn Cook. I told him I had read it and that brother Cook had proved in the booklet that the church is to do benevolent work, but that Cook had made the psychological connection between the church and the CCDR but that it was not a logical connection. His response? "Oh, is that right?!" Such a response was not and is not an answer.

10. Generally, he wanted me to answer his questions, but he did not want to answer my his questions.

11. I asked him why his website (CCDR website) was down. He said he did not know it was down. I told him that I hoped that the material on the website remained the same (with reference to what I had quoted from the website in my tract).

12. He boasted that he had 4300 who believed in and were supportive of his CCDR. I then asked him repeatedly, do numbers determine truth?! He would not answer, but continued his attempt at browbeating me.

13. He verified that the letter from Jim Bill McInteer and the booklet by Lynn O. Cook, Director of Development (of) Churches of Christ Disaster Relief entitled: "Biblical Perspective of Giving for Natural Disasters" was "out there" in the public and were written by these men.

However, he said he did not know who mailed these two materials to me.

14. He said he was not going to call Lloyd Gale and it was obvious he was not going to try to meet with or contact Jon Gary Williams (he felt he had fairly tried to meet with Jon Gary, but Jon Gary and his elders were not willing to meet). However, this is not the way faithful brother Williams tells his side of the story.

15. I invited him to get anyone among his proponents of the CCDR to try to answer my Biblical points in my tract, which tract listed seven (7) reasons the CCDR must be opposed. He was very haughty in his response, saying that he was not going to get anyone to seek to answer my points in writing. I kept insisting, "Why, not? Why not? What are you afraid of if you have the truth?"

16. Joe Dudney, executive director of the CCDR falsely accused me of violating the copyright by the use of the brief quotes in my tract from the CCDR website. I told him I most certainly did not violate their copyright in that, 1) Their information was on the world wide web (thus in the public domain), and 2) Most importantly: I told him that what I did is covered by the Fair Use Act of the U.S. Copyright Office (allowing for brief quotes for the purpose of criticism or commentary). I really think this answer shocked him in that he gave no answer. It appeared to me I knew the copyright law better than he, yet he was pretending to know all about it.

17. The conversation ended. It is how it ended that is of interest. There was silence. He had hung up without saying goodbye and in my mid-sentence. Is this the behavior of a Christian gentleman?

These statements represent to best of my memory what was said.

Gary L. Grizzell

#### A MAIL-OUT BY THE POWELL GROVE CHURCH OF CHRIST

A congregation near Nashville, Tennessee, the Powell Grove church of Christ (preacher, Lloyd Gale), recently did a mail out consisting of one tract per congregation to 100 churches of Christ in and around Nashville, Tennessee. The tract entitled, "Seven Reasons The Church And The Christian MUST OPPOSE The Disaster Relief, Inc. of Nashville, Tennessee" thus warned these churches of the fact that the CCDR has no New Testament authority for its existence.

The church at Powell Grove had been promised 1) A copy by email of the addresses of these 100 churches, and 2) 100 copies of the tract without charge. They provided the envelopes, postage, and work of love of labeling and mailing out these envelopes containing the tract. This small, faithful congregation of God's people is to be commended for their love of the truth, their zeal and their example. This Lebanon, Tennessee, congregation which is about 30 miles from Nashville, the home of the CCDR and a number of apostate churches, had the courage to speak out. This is what many churches, both small and large, have been unwilling to do for fear of being unpopular with men. Letting their stand for God's truth concerning church organization be known to the congregations in their area, hopefully, will serve to encourage other congregations to stiffen their backbones. "Curse ye Meroz" cannot be said for this church! ("**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).

Below is a copy of the challenge which was sent out over the internet and which challenge the Powell Grove church unhesitatingly met.

Subject: A challenge to stem the tide of apostasy from God's pattern of organization

To faithful brethren:

If you know of any congregation (perhaps the one where you are) who would like to mail one tract to each of 100 churches of Christ in and around Nashville, Tennessee, I will provide free of charge: 100 copies of the tract entitled: *Seven Reasons The Church and The Christian MUST OPPOSE The Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc. of Nashville, Tennessee* by Gary L. Grizzell, Copyrighted Sept. 2001 and the addresses of those churches given in the Yellow Pages from off the net. If there are not 100 addresses available in the Yellow Pages then whatever addresses are given would be emailed to the church interested in doing that work. The church would simply be responsible for purchasing the envelopes and stamps and the work of addressing the envelopes and mailing these out. Each envelope should be addressed: "To the Elders". Let me know you or the church where you are is interested by emailing me privately. Whoever emails me first with your answer of "Yes, we will mail out these tracts to the churches of Christ in and around Nashville, Tennessee," will receive the tracts without charge. Perhaps you as an individual would like to take this project upon yourself. Let us do SOMETHING to alert our brethren in Nashville, Tennessee, of the problems with this unscriptural

Please notify us regarding your  
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organization which without authority from the New Testament claims to represent churches of Christ. What is the so-called "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.?" From the tract this definition is now quoted: "The Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc. is a humanly originated, religious, non-profit organization with an unscriptural name, with an unscriptural organization, unscripturally soliciting the churches of Christ and secular businesses for money in the unauthorized role of leading elderships in doing what God designated those elderships to do through the church" (def. from the author of the tract) Let us unmask this organization for what it is, that which stands in direct contradiction to God's plan stated in stark contrast by Paul who wrote: "Unto him be glory **IN THE CHURCH** by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Ephesians 3:21, caps mine, glg). Paul did not teach here that God receives glory in a humanly devised substitute for the church of Christ. We simply must respect and rightly determine authority (Colossians 3:17). If only one church in the Nashville area reads the tract and repents of their unauthorized support of this unscriptural organization which presumptuously and arrogantly uses the divine expression, "Churches of Christ" it will be well worth the effort. There is no organization larger than the local congregation. Church cooperation in preaching the gospel and in benevolent matters is authorized but a singular eldership must take upon itself this work.

Perhaps our battle cry should be to those who unscripturally set up an organization which competes with the Lord's church: "Either GET it under an eldership or FORGET it."

In the greatest cause,  
Gary L. Grizzell, Coordinator of Tracts for the Nations,  
tracts@charter.net

Next, an email accepting the challenge was received:

From: Marion Gale  
To: tracts@charter.net  
Sent: Monday, October 29, 2001  
Subject: tracts

Dear Gary, Best to you and yours this cold morning. I met with the men of the congregation last evening. It was decided for you to send 100 of the Disaster Relief tracts, and we will send them to 100 congregations. Please send us 25 sets of the Tracts for Nations. May God bless you in these efforts.

Lloyd Gale  
mg

These 100 tracts have now been mailed out and the first response letter to be received by the Powell Grove church was from, you guessed it, the "Family of God at Woodmont Hills" The letter was dated November 2, 2001 and the caption read: "RE: Seven Reasons The Church of Christ and The Christian Must Oppose the "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc." The letter was typed on Woodmont Hills stationery with the letterhead of "Family of God at Woodmont Hills." It was written and signed by one **J. R. Gregory**, "Minister of Caring Services." This brief but sarcastic letter stated:

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to thank you for sending this to us. Because of your letter we are sending an additional \$500 to Disaster Relief! God will do wonderful things through your letter and He will be glorified!"

Sincerely,  
(signed)  
J.R. Gregory  
Minister of Caring Services

Well, so much for loving liberals! As faithful brother Lloyd Gale wrote in an attached handwritten note with this letter he had mailed to me, "This reply provides you with solid proof that Woodmont Hills and Rubel Shelly are in bed with this unscriptural corporation."

#### WRITTEN DEBATE IN THE FUTURE?

As it turns out, brother **Glen Alexander**, is very much willing to debate the CCDR issue. Brother Alexander, having been the first to issue a challenge to debate the issue of authority for the CCDR, brother **Jim Waldron** heard of this challenge and sent word to brother Alexander that he would certainly be willing to engage him in a public oral debate. Brother Alexander replied that he would only debate this in a written discussion. Brother Waldron, not having the time to do the written debate due to his heavy schedule in the work of the Lord, gave me the go-ahead to pursue a written discussion with brother Alexander.

At my request sister **Ginny Green** (wife of **Jim Green**) emailed me brother Alexander's email address. Brother Jim Green, who is well known for his good work of videoing sound lectureships, had informed me that he had left the Spring Hill church due to the elders' insistence on supporting the CCDR. I was informed that brother Glen Alexander, Spring Hill's preacher, had written a bulletin article in it's defense. Hearing of this particular sad situation I decided to publish material (through Tracts for the Nations) dealing with unscriptural organizational structures (para-church organizations). Thus, a booklet was published as penned by faithful brother **Marvin Weir** entitled, "Missionary Society—Scriptural or Unscriptural?" (January 2001), which contained a conversation brother Weir had with brother Joe Dudney. Next, a tract dealing solely and directly with the CCDR was planned. It was published in September 2001.

Brother Alexander was then emailed as follows:

10-25-2001  
TO: Glen Alexander  
Preacher, Spring Hill Church of Christ  
Spring Hill, TN  
email # is: sphillcc@edge.net  
web-site: <http://edge.edge.net/~sphillcc>  
Phone#: (931) 486-2104  
FROM: Gary L. Grizzell  
2128 Crystal Ct.  
Cookeville, TN 38501

Hello brother Alexander,

We have not met but I've heard of you. I was informed that you have said that you would be willing to have a written debate in regard to the "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc." I would be interested in such if I can just figure out how to fit it into my schedule for some time next year (2002). Brother Jim Waldron, a friend of mine, today stated to me that he was willing to debate you orally but you chose the written debate method. Jim also tells me he does not have time for a written debate at this time.

If you would like to correspond with regard to this matter please feel free to email me. I have written a tract entitled, "Seven Reasons The Church and The Christian MUST OPPOSE The So-Called 'Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.' of Nashville, Tennessee." Several have ordered already in that it was published in September 2001.



If you wish to pursue a written discussion (debate) I invite you to begin correspondence by way of email. I would be happy to send you a brief bio if you need to know who I am and would ask that you do the same. This would be conducted, if it can be worked out with our schedules next year, according to the proper rules of debate and as Christian gentlemen. Also, it would be helpful to discuss book publication.

Sincerely, in the interest of truth,  
Gary L. Grizzell  
Adjunct Instructor: Spring Bible Institute,  
<http://www.churchesofchrist.com/sbi/>  
Coordinator for Tracts For The Nations,  
<http://webpages.charter.net/tracts/default.htm>  
Email: [tracts@charter.net](mailto:tracts@charter.net)

Then, brother Glen Alexander kindly responded as follows:

From: Glenn Alexander  
To: Gary L. Grizzell  
Sent: Friday, October 26, 2001  
Subject: Re: Written Debate?

Dear brother Grizzell,  
It may be possible we can come to a meeting of the minds per a written debate on this question. It appears you feel this issue is a matter of doctrine more than opinion? Before we draw battle lines, which I hope we don't have to, I promise that my only aim is to defend the Gospel as found in the pages of the New Testament. I did not leave the Baptist church over 26 years ago to go be limited by opinions or what brother so and so said. It is a matter of Scripture, conscience and consistency with me. The problem I find is that our brotherhood is mostly polarized into two groups, the liberals and the anti's. I strive to avoid falling into either group. I have a lot to learn and always strive to maintain an open mind and I try to keep my compass free from worldly distractions. I don't play the brotherhood political game. I suppose you have already read some of my articles on this question. They are available to you upon request. Likewise I would love to have a copy of your article which you mentioned above. How can I get a copy? I would like for us to agree to ask each other an agreed upon number of relevant questions and will answer each question by giving book, chapter and verse, EACH TIME. Examples must come directly from the New Testament. My primary approach will

be from the Apostles and practices of the early church itself. In other words, if we are the New Testament church — then we better be acting like they did in word and deed. I promise to keep my end very down to earth and will use very simple logic in all expediencies supplementing direct commands. Most critics of Disaster Relief use virtually no scriptures in their complaints, I trust your material will be much more substantive. I expect we will both learn something from our exchange.

Sure is great hearing from you.  
Yours in Christ,  
Glen Alexander

Next, brother Alexander writes in an email dated November 6, 2001:

"While I do not agree to a debate as such, I will discuss and answer questions and invite you to offer answers also. Let's keep this friendly. I may post your letters and my letters on our webpage...He then sent me seven questions he desires me to answer and his discussion of each."

So while brother Alexander desires an informal written discussion as opposed to a formal written debate (he prefers the word "discuss"), brother Alexander is to be commended for his willingness to affirm in written discussion what he believes. Though I strongly disagree with my opponent and consider this a matter of fellowship, I appreciate his willingness to state his sincere convictions. Brethren, as brother Alexander and I seek to work out the details of this written discussion (debate) concerning the matter of whether there is New Testament authority for the existence of the "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc." of Nashville, Tennessee, please pray for both of us that the end result of this effort may be beneficial for the cause of Christ. This issue concerning 1) respect for Bible authority, 2) how to determine Bible authority, and, 3) just how these to subjects relate to the organization and work of the church is just too important to (as my grandfather used to say) "lollygag".

—2128 Crystal Ct.  
Cookeville, Tennessee 38501

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# Are You a Christian or Are You "Church of Christ?"

Steven E. Yeatts

One of the things of which Christians are to be careful is the use of our language. We are exhorted to **"let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man"** (Colossians 4:6). With that profound encouragement in mind, let us consider the way in which we sometimes hear people refer to those who are members of the body of Christ. I have had some Church members at times begin a conversation about someone they know by saying, "He (or she) is "Church of Christ," or perhaps even more unnerving is to hear a Christian refer to another in the body of Christ as a "Church of Christ." Sometimes we all can be guilty of using terminology that is at best on our part questionable and at worst evidences very poor judgment. In the case of referring to one's self or others as "Church of Christ," I believe it is a flagrant misunderstanding and those who use such terminology should choose their words more sensibly.

## UNSCRIPTURAL AND SCRIPTURAL TERMS

To say that someone is "Church of Christ" is as denominational in its application as saying someone is a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, and so on. Such language is unscriptural. If we claim to be a people who will call "Bible things by Bible names," then let us do just that. And, nowhere in the New Testament will we find individuals who were labeled "Church of Christ." The church of Christ is the collective body of believers and indicates a plurality of people. As individuals we are Christians who are members of the Lord's church.

There are many scriptural designations given to define the distinction of New Testament Christianity. Following the conversion of the Gentile Cornelius and his household, the Bible records that **"the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch"** (Acts 11:26). Actually before the term "Christian" was used, Ananias referred to members of the church as **"saints"** (Acts 9:13). The word saint means one who is "set apart, blameless, pure, consecrated, or holy." There are additional terms that are used in the New Testament describing individual Christians: saved, righteous, holy, kings, priests, fellowlabourer, fellowsoldier, yokefellow, obedient children, elect, members, and faithful (this would apply if individuals were indeed faithful) (Revelation 21:24; I Peter 3:12; 4:18; 1:16; Revelation 1:6; I Peter 2:5; Philemon 1-2; Philippians 4:3; I Peter 1:2; Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:2). Nowhere in the New Testament can an individual Christian be found referring to himself or any other member of the body of Christ as "Church of Christ." In fact, Paul when referring to his sister in Christ, Phoebe, wrote that she **"is a servant of the church which is at**

**Cenchrea"** (Romans 16:1). Paul referred to an individual as part of the collective body, not as the collective body! The body is one and has many members (individuals) according to I Corinthians 12:12.

We should thoughtfully consider the designations for the collective body of Christ as well. The church of the New Testament in a universal sense is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23). The Apostle Paul sent greetings to his Roman brethren by stating, **"The churches of Christ salute you"** (Romans 16:16). Paul was issuing a congregational salutation that obviously entailed the greetings of more than one person. The church for which Jesus died is also referred to as the **"church of God"** (Acts 20:28; I Corinthians 1:2; II Corinthians 2:1). The collective body of believers is also known as the **"church of the first-born"**—literally the first born ones (Hebrews 12:23). The church of Christ can be referred to in a scriptural manner also as the **"Israel of God"** (Galatians 6:16). We also understand that the collective body of Christ is sometimes referred to in the New Testament based upon the region or city in which it was located. For example, when Paul wrote to the Galatians, he began his letter by penning, **"unto the churches of Galatia"** (Galatians 1:2). Also, when writing to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote at the start of both letters, **"unto the church of the Thessalonians"** (I Thessalonians 1:2; II Thessalonians 1:1).

## SPEAK AS THE ORACLES OF GOD

I trust that our awareness about our terminology has been heightened and that we will strive to avoid lapsing into denominational indicators when we refer to the glorious, blood-bought institution that is the church of our Saviour (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23-25). The next time somebody says that someone is "Church of Christ," please take the time to kindly and lovingly correct him or her. And if you hear yourself saying it, please catch yourself and reconsider your language. We sometimes have a need to discipline ourselves (our tongue included) so that we change bad habits to good ones (James 3:5). Solomon wrote, **"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips"** (Proverbs 16:23). Certainly we want to better train our mouths to speak properly in a spiritual sense. In fact, **"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..."** (I Peter 4:11). Certainly in keeping with the profundity of that verse we would not want to be so careless as to utter that which is scripturally indefensible in regard to how we refer to individuals members of the body of Christ, as well as the collective body of Christ.

A person who is a Baptist is one who claims allegiance to the Baptist Church, but one who is a New Testament Christian belongs to the church of Christ the only church promised, founded, authorized, and taught in the New Tes-

tament. An individual Christian cannot be “Church of Christ.” Believing in the oneness of the church and having obeyed the true New Testament plan of salvation does not make one “Church of Christ,” it makes him a Christian whom the Lord has added to his church (Acts 2:47).

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## FANNING THE FLAMES

Geoff Litke

One hundred years ago **John William McGarvey** preached at the Broadway Church in Lexington, Kentucky. His tenure there was during a time of great digression among the saints. Churches by the droves were forsaking the ancient pattern for the church in order to entertain themselves with piano and organ music each Sunday in the worship assembly.

Not all churches ran down this path immediately, but in the shadow of such change many elderships became frightened that their flock would run off for “more lively worship”. One instance of this was in the church where McGarvey himself preached. J.W. McGarvey vigorously opposed the instrument in his writing, he did so stating that it was unauthorized by the new testament. After over two decades as an elder and preacher for the Broadway church, the issue of the organ arose. It was not a sudden intrusion that the mechanical instrument made there, but one which brewed for some time.

Some years before it became an issue, it was discussed and a compromise was agreed to: A leader of the music was employed, who organized and trained a chorus. The improved music, however, did not satisfy. It but fed the desire for an organ. (Brother McGarvey, W.C. Morro, Ph.D., page 149).

### MODERN INNOVATIONS

There are in the church today many elders who are convinced that the only way to save the next generation from denominational practices is to be more like those denominational bodies in practice. I do not doubt that there are some elders who sincerely believe they must introduce choirs, praise teams, music ministers, microphoned auditoriums, and imitate instruments with human voices in order to “enhance” worship. Many of these same elders are at the same time uncomfortable with the practices after which they have sought. Many consider these things essential if a church is going to remain “relevant” to society. However, the only thing a church needs to remain relevant in any age is the hope of salvation which they can extend to the world through the gospel (Romans 1:16). This hope is sustained the same way it was two thousand years ago, by continuing steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine (Acts 2:42).

For over thirty years there have been prominent and influential preachers and teachers in the church urging congregations to take measures to “progress” the church. These measures are so often motivated by a desire to be

like the denominations. This desire is reminiscent of ancient Israel who desired a king to be like the other nations (I Samuel 8:5). Their king did not solve their spiritual condition, and this did not satisfy their desire. They were so captivated by what the other nations were doing that they completely forsook God. This captivation was to the point that they were instructing the pagans in wickedness (Jeremiah 2:33). Like Israel of old, capitulating to the cry of the multitudes of unspiritual people who demand entertainment instead of spirituality will only fan the flames of infidelity.

This is seen in the apostasy of Israel, and the apostasy of 19th century. Those of McGarvey’s day who settled for nothing less than the instrument did not stop with improved music, but marched onward away from the doctrine of Christ (II John 9-11). Churches who rejected Bible authority embraced mechanical instruments of music in worship, missionary societies, and plunged headlong into error. Now many members of the Disciples of Christ denomination (one denomination that arose out of that apostasy) openly denies the deity of Christ.

Where will it stop? The answer is it will not. When unspiritual members of the church of Christ clamor to be like the denominations, no compromise will appease them, but will only serve to fan the flames of their desires. Can any good be done with people who openly reject the “old paths” and defiantly cry, “we WILL not walk therein” (Jeremiah 6:16, Emph. G.L.)? The answer was “no” for Israel, and it was no better in McGarvey’s day.

### MCGARVEY’S SAD MISTAKE

J.W. McGarvey believed he could labor among those who opted for the instruments and be a leavening influence. In so doing he horribly compromised his influence and his values. It is reported by **Jesse P. Sewell** that McGarvey lamented his work among the digressives in his later years. Sewell revealed this matter in his lecture at Harding College in 1950. He said,

In January, 1902 or 1903, I was preaching for the Pearl and Bryan Streets Church in Dallas. Brother McGarvey, an old man at the time, was invited to speak at the Central Christian church in Dallas. We had three men in the Pearl and Bryan Streets church who graduated from the College of the Bible in Lexington under Brother McGarvey, and they were great admirers of him. They suggested that we invite Brother McGarvey to preach at Pearl and Bryan that night. We did so. I was

just a boy of 24 or 25 then. I was sitting by the side of this great old man on the front seat, waiting for the service to begin. As we sat there talking, Brother McGarvey said to me: 'Brother Sewell, I want to say something to you, if you'll accept it in the spirit in which I mean it.' I told him I'd appreciate anything he had to say to me. He said about these words, 'You are on the right road, and whatever you do, don't let anybody persuade you that you can successfully combat error by fellowshiping it and going along with it. I have tried. I believed at the start that it was the only way to do it. I've never held membership in a congregation that uses Instrumental music. I have, however, accepted invitations to preach without distinction between churches that use it and churches that didn't. I've gone along with their papers and magazines and things of that sort. During all these years, I have taught the truth as the New Testament teaches it to every young preacher who has passed Through the College of the Bible. Yet, I do not know of more than six of those men who are preaching the truth today.' He said, 'It won't work.'

A man so "mighty in the scriptures" as J.W. McGarvey was in the end forced to admit that it is a futile effort to bow down to the unauthorized whims of "change agents" for unity's sake. Even the seemingly noble cause of trying to make a "difference" among those who reject the authority of the scriptures is a fruitless effort.

So many exalt the "Restoration Fathers" as a source of authority, but they are not. However, McGarvey's experience should shock those trying to do the same thing. Instead Christ is the authority (Matthew 28:18). Sewell, McGarvey, or anyone else could have simply gone to God's word to discover that efforts to compromise are barren. Men must learn what Paul declared in the first century "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Ephesians 5:11) This is our plea in the midst of yet another great apostasy!

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9:00 AM "About The Prophecies of The Church" Dub McClish  
10:00 AM "About the Church The Kingdom" Darrell Conley  
11:00 AM "About The Unity of Believers" Dave Rogers  
12:00 PM Lunch Provided  
1:30 PM "About The Organization Of The Church" H. D. Simmons  
2:30 PM The Open Forum/Questions & Answers Brown and McClish  
3:30 PM "About The Church's Obligation To Me" Ken Ratcliff  
4:30 PM Singing  
5:30 PM Dinner Provided  
7:00 PM "About The Church—The Body Of The Saved" Eddie Whitten

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 19

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9:00 AM "About The Work Of The Church" H. D. Simmons  
10:00 AM "About the Fulfillment Of Prophecies Concerning The Church" Dub McClish  
11:00 AM "About Worship And Service" David Brown  
12:00 PM Lunch Provided  
1:30 PM "About The Limits Of Fellowship" Eddie Whitten  
2:30 PM The Open Forum/Questions & Answers Whitten and Brown  
3:30 PM "About My Obligation To The Church" Ken Ratcliff  
4:30 PM Singing  
5:30 PM Dinner Provided  
7:00 PM "About The Work Of The Holy Spirit In Conviction, Conversion, and Sanctification" Darrell Conley

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 20

- 9:30 AM "About The Purity Of The Church" Dave Rogers  
10:30 AM "About The Church—The Pillar and Ground Of the Truth" Gary Summers  
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# SHALL WE COWER IN THE CORNER?

Preston Silcox

As the pages of Mark 11 are opened, Jesus is found making his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. What might seem to be a happy and glorious time reveals itself to be a rather tense occasion. As Jesus entered the temple he found that things were not as they should have been. What was supposed to be the “house of prayer” had been turned into a “den of thieves,” and those who should have been influences for good and right are hypocrites and sinners of the highest order! With the shadow of the cross looming over him, and the desecration and corruption of things holy before him, this proved to be a rather emotional time in the life of Jesus as he experienced both divine anger and divine sadness (Mark 11:15-16; Matthew 23:37). To add even more to the intensity of the situation, there was the growing hatred and bitterness of Christ’s enemies toward him. Mark 11:18-12:34 reveals these negative attitudes and the actions that come forth from them.

## THE DEFIANCE OF CHRIST’S ENEMIES

What would cause men like the chief priests, scribes, and elders to resist, defy, and hate Jesus so much? For one thing, power and prestige were being taken away from the religious “elite” as the crowds forsook the self-righteous leaders for the meek and lowly son. In addition, Jesus challenged their authority and traditions with words of truth and soberness, humiliating those who thought so highly of themselves. Indeed, Pilate would be correct as he would realize “that for envy they had delivered him” (Matthew 27:18).

As a result of their resentment, Christ’s enemies sought “how they might destroy him” (Mark 11:18). Instead of seeing Jesus as the only begotten son of God, they view him as an archenemy. The least they can do at the present is to discredit him before his followers by catching him in his words (Mark 12:13) and, possibly at the same time, trick him into sedition against the Roman government.

These defiant actions remind followers of Christ that they also shall be resisted and even hated from time to time. Jesus tells his disciples that “if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you” (John 15:18). Thus, “marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you” (I John 3:13).

## THE DEFENSE OF TRUTH

“Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him” (Luke 11:54), Christ’s enemies sent various groups to challenge his doctrine. First, Jesus is questioned by the Herodians about paying tribute to Caesar—is it lawful or not? If he answers “yes,” he would become unpopular with the people who were anti-Rome. If he answers “no,” he could be reported as an enemy of the state. Knowing their hypocrisy and defending the truth, Jesus confounds them with the words, “Render to Caesar the things that are

Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mark 12:17).

Next, the Sadducees questioned Jesus about the resurrection. An elaborate and even bizarre story is made up about a woman who was widowed seven times and finally died, Believing they have him trapped they ask, “In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them?” The Master teacher proceeds to defend the truth by pointing out how they “know not the scriptures, neither the power of God” (Mark 12:24).

Finally, a scribe approached Jesus to question his knowledge of the Law. The truth-defending answer he received from the Christ moved the scribe to sensibly pronounce, “Master, thou hast said the truth” (Mark 12:32). This and previous vindication of truth defeated the enemies so well that no one dared to ask him any more questions (Mark 12:34).

## THE DEMANDS OF DISCIPLESHIP

As the defiance of Christ’s enemies and the boldness of Christ’s defense of truth are considered, certain responsibilities become apparent. First, God demands the Christian to follow the perfect example of Christ. Jesus, himself says, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). Paul points out this same requirement with the words of Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” And in similar fashion, Peter writes, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (I Peter 2:21).

In following the steps of Jesus, God also requires the Christian to defend the truth. This demand is found in passages such as I Peter 3:15 and Jude 3 which tell disciples of Christ to “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you” and “earnestly contend for the faith.” Like Paul, every Christian should follow the savior in being “set for the defense of the gospel” (Philippians 1:17).

And finally, in order to be set for the truth’s defense, and thus follow Christ, the Christian must be a serious student of God’s word. Paul speaks of such diligence in II Timothy 2:15: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” When the Christian hungers and thirsts after righteousness, he will desire the sincere milk of the word, meditate upon it, and boldly defend it (Matthew 5:6; I Peter 2:2; Psalm 1:2).

Even when his emotions raged within him, his cross loomed over him, and his enemies laid in wait before him, Jesus spoke out boldly when the truth was attacked. Though the time might never be convenient nor the circumstances favorable, when following his master the faithful Christian must always be ready, willing, and able

to engage in religious debate. While the weak and spineless might cower in the corner and brave only the opportunity to cry out "unchristian!" to the faithful, may the diligent disciple remember the nobility of "speaking the

truth in love," longing to hear the only words that really matter: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

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## A Review of The Fourth Annual Greater Murfreesboro Area Lectureship "Scriptural Answers to Doctrinal Departures"

Gary L. Grizzell

November of each year sees the coming and going of the annual **Greater Murfreesboro Area Lectureship (GMAL)** and this year has been no exception. This fine lectureship is hosted by the faithful **Bethlehem Church of Christ** located at 2644 Lascassas Pike, Murfreesboro, TN 37130 and directed by her fine preacher, **Steve Yeatts**. The ladies of this good congregation deserve special mention for their work of providing breakfast and lunch during the lectureship. Having had the opportunity to have spoken on all these yearly lectureships (save one) and thus having had the privilege to witness first hand the good done, I for one heartily recommend this lectureship as greatly beneficial to the cause of Christ. This year I was privileged to hear every lecture. Thus, I would like to briefly review the excellent lessons presented.

**B. J. Clarke** superbly exposed the dangers of the "The Promotion of the NIV as a Reliable Version." While emphasizing the need for a word for word standard translation, brother Clarke pointed out that the NIV gives us commentary rather than translation. In certain texts the NIV translators presumptuously mistranslated nouns as verbs and verbs as nouns. The NIV irrationally leaves out words and foolishly mistranslates others.

**David P. Brown** in his lecture entitled, "What About Binding Where The New Testament Has Not Bound?," did a picturesque job showing the inconsistencies of antiism. The most memorable to this writer is concerning the anti-eating-in-the-church-meeting-house fallacy. If you cannot bring food into the church building (to eat as in a fellowship meal), what about the inconsistency of having a bathroom facility? Food in the church building in every form should be condemned by antis if they would be consistent! Preachers among the anti faction who eat their lunch in the church office are inconsistent, it was pointed out. Brother Brown effectively dealt with the overwhelming amount of material available on this subject, giving us information on the background of what we know today as antiism (for example, he pointed out the sinful forbidding-brethren of Galatians chapter two).

**Gary Colley** answered the question, "Is Instrumental Music Authorized In Worship?" That we must have authority from God's Word was clearly and emphatically set forth. Brother Colley made the point that just because a

person likes a thing does not make it scriptural in the worship of God.

**Glenn Colley** spoke on the subject of "The Promotion of the Community Church." One of the points which was made that I will not forget is the difference between hand-clapping and saying amen in response to the preaching which takes place in worship. *Hand-clapping* exalts the speaker, while saying *amen* exalts the preached message.

**Eric Owens** preached on the subject of "Is The Church The Kingdom?" (The Influence of Premillennialism). Making the point that the Colossae brethren were in the kingdom in the first century according to Colossians 1:13, brother Owens showed the kingdom is not future. He exposed the foolishness of the position that the Lord somehow failed in His mission to establish His church.

**Chris Whitaker** answered the question, "Is Denominational Baptism Valid?" Our brother informed us that the New Testament teaches that only the baptism commanded by Christ for the remission of sins is the baptism which is valid today.

**Greg Dismuke** answered the question, "Is The Church Of Christ Merely Another Denominational Option?" with an emphatic "No." The fact that Jesus Christ and not man started the "Church of Christ" was clearly set forth from the New Testament. This talented brother gave us book, chapter and verse for his points.

**Darrell Broking** in his treatment of "What Does The New Testament Teach Regarding Marriage, Divorce And Remarriage?" set forth the one scriptural reason for divorce among living companions is fornication according to Matthew 19:9. Darrell pointed out from the Greek that John the Baptist repeatedly went to adulterous Herod, rebuking him for having his brother, Philip's, wife. Such showed the tenacious, faithful spirit of John the Baptist and the militant attitude we need today. The question was posed, if we condone adulterous marriages today how will we feel on judgment day when we see John the Baptist standing there among the saved?

**James Cossey** did an excellent job with his subject of "Additions to and Violations of Worship." Emphasizing the importance of reverence in worship to our holy God, we were made aware of the reason for we come together in worship. We come to worship God, not entertain our-

selves. Concentration on God and his son is where our minds are to be in worship.

**Stan Stevenson** preached on the question, "Is It Ever Warranted To Speak Publicly Against False Teachers?" A balanced approach to this subject was witnessed by those in the audience. Yes, it was affirmed, the New Testament teaches it IS warranted at times to speak publicly against false teachers.

**Paul Curless'** lecture on "Has Disciplining The Erring Become The Rejected Command?" brought on many "amens," as he demonstrated from the New Testament the need for congregations to discipline as God commands. Though church discipline is the last resort for the apostate and should be done in love and in longsuffering, it still is to be done.

**Dewayne Scott** in his successful treatment of the question, "What Are The Boundaries Of scriptural Fellowship?," exegeted from II John 9-11. An excellent illustration used was that of the invisible fence used by some today to keep their dogs within the proper boundaries. White flags are placed around the appropriate borders. The dog wears a collar which provides a shock when he goes beyond the borders. Then, even when the flags are taken down, the dog remembers the pain of going beyond the proper boundaries.

**Jeff Archey** spoke to us concerning "How Has The Christian Lifestyle Changed?" In his excellent treatment of this subject we were taken by this talented speaker to Revelation chapters two and three and warned against falling into the same apostate traps characterized by certain churches in the first century. We were effectively warned against falling into lukewarmness by what was described as "Robot Christianity" (having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof).

**Mike Weeks** dealt effectively with "What About Loosing Where The New Testament Has Not Loosed?" Having "been there and done that" in his own life this brother humbly exposed from the New Testament the arrogant disposi-

tion of the modern-day liberal. The liberal was characterized as one who has a lack of respect for God's holy word.

**James Boyd** answered the question, "What Effect Are Christian Colleges Having Upon The Lord's Church?" This subject was treated in a mature, unbiased, scriptural and scholarly manner. That much research had been done was evident. False doctrines (for which the speaker had documentation) were named which are found in so-called "Christian" colleges today. The warning was given, that if a parent wishes to send his child to one of these colleges today, to forewarn that child about what to expect so as not to be swept away by apostate teachers and doctrines of men.

In the lecture entitled, "Is The Direct Operation Of The Holy Spirit For Today?," **Gary L. Grizzell** sadly discussed the error of brother **Mac Deaver**. It was pointed out that the direct operation of the Holy Spirit is not for today. While prayer, providence and persons (brethren) who encourage us is not the Bible, it is the Bible which teaches of prayer, providence and is that which spiritually strengthens those persons (brethren) who encourage us. Philippians 1:12-14 was used to show this latter point.

The cassette tapes may be ordered by calling the Bethlehem church at (615) 893-2297. If there's no answer, leave your order on the answering machine. What are *you* doing next year on the dates of November 1-3, 2002? Next year's lectureship will be entitled, "*Lessons From The Lives Of The Kings*" (*Saul, David, Solomon and The Kings of Judah*). Only sound gospel preachers will be invited to speak. You may call the church office to learn of hotels in the area. Visit Bethlehem's website at [www.bethlehem-churchofchrist.org](http://www.bethlehem-churchofchrist.org). Let's get behind the effort of these good brethren who are standing firm for the gospel of Christ. These brethren are but a stone's throw from Nashville, Tennessee, where much apostasy has taken place.

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# Lessons From the Battle of Pea Ridge

Kevin Cauley

Recently, I had the privilege of walking upon the Pea Ridge battlefield in Northern Arkansas. The battle fought here determined control of the state of Missouri, which was crucial for the Union because they planned to use the Mississippi river to split the forces of the south. The union was defending Missouri at the time of the battle. Under command of Major General **Earl Van Dorn**, 16,000 confederate troops would march on the smaller force of 10,250 union soldiers of Brigadier General **Samuel R. Curtis**. Van Dorn chose to march around the lines of Curtis to surprise attack from the rear. With this superior force and tactics, General Van Dorn could have easily defeated General Curtis. However, General Van Dorn made a crucial mistake that led to his defeat. Van Dorn, not wanting the enemy to discover his position, quickly marched his troops leaving ammunition supplies behind so as not to slow his movements. On the first day of the battle, March 7th, 1862, Van Dorn's troops gained on the union soldiers. However, on the second day, Van Dorn's ammunition supplies ran out and he had to retreat. This resulted in permanent control of Missouri by the union.

## A FATAL MISTAKE

Van Dorn's fatal mistake is one that is imitated by many Christians today. When we allow our ammunition to run low, Satan attacks and prevails. In order for us to fight the good fight of the faith, we must make sure that our ammunition supplies are in high quantity at all times. God's word is our primary weapon in the Christian arsenal today (Ephesians 6:17) and we must make sure that our stock is high! How do we ensure that our stock remains high?

*First*, we must take stock of our ammunition daily. We read in Acts 17:11 of a group of Christians who did this. **"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."** Each day, we should "stock up" on Christian "ammunition." This ensures that we never run low and are always ready when the attack comes. Many fail to take stock of their ammunition daily and as a result, they run out and fall to the enemy. The Christian soldier always seeks to ensure adequate supplies of the word of God are at his disposal whenever and wherever he needs it.

*Second*, we must carry enough ammunition in that stock to defend ourselves against temptation. The Psalmist writes in Psalm 119:11 **"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."** As a result of our daily study of God's word, we increase the amount of God's word that is in our mind. This is ammunition that we

can use to defend ourselves against sin and Satan. The opportunity for Satan to tempt us occurs every day. We stay ready to defend ourselves against this temptation by hiding God's word in our heart and using it when temptation occurs.

We must also carry enough ammunition to defend ourselves from external threats. Peter writes in 1 Peter 3:15 **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."** These questions could come at any time of the day or night. We must ensure therefore that we have prepared ourselves to give answer when those questions may unexpectedly come. Being caught unprepared means sudden death for a soldier; it could mean sudden death for a soul on the battlefield of truth.

*Third*, we must carry enough ammunition to launch a regular and sustained offensive against the enemy. In Acts 8:4 we read, **"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."** These, who were under persecution, took God's word to other areas where they went. They did not passively wait for people to contact them, but used the ammunition that God had given them and waged an offensive against sin and Satan. They went to Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. The result was that the word of God grew and prevailed (Acts 12:24; 19:20). The offensive succeeded. God's word conquered the hearts of the good and honest.

## CHRISTIANS MUST REMAINED ARMED

General Van Dorn's mistake proved fatal to him, his troops, and ultimately to the army in which he served. If we make the same mistake that he made in the Christian fight, it will prove fatal to us as well. Let us determine never to leave our ammunition behind, but to take stock daily, carry enough to mount a good defense and to launch a regular and sustained offensive. By taking stock in God's word, we can gain the faith that will give us the victory to overcome the world (Romans 10:17; I John 5:4)!

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# Spring Bible Institute Lectures

## "A STUDY AND EXPOSE OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES" February 24-27, 2002

David P. Brown, Lectureship Director

### Sunday, February 24

9:30 A.M.	....."Man-His Nature, and Death".....	Johnie Scaggs
10:30 A.M.	....."Matthew 24—an Exposition".....	David P. Brown
4:00 A.M.	....."The Nature of Christ's Kingdom".....	Billy Bland
5:00 P.M.	....."Why I Cannot be a Jehovah's Witness".....	Danny Box
6:00 P.M.	....."The 144,000 and Eternal Life".....	Eddie Whitten

### Monday, February 25

9:00 A.M.	...."A Review of the Russell-White Debate".....	Roddy Covington
10:00 A.M.	...."Eternal Punishment and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Bruce Stulting
**10:00 A.M.	.....Ladies Class.....	Martha Bently
11:00 A.M.	...."A Review of 'Millions Now Living Will Never Die'".....	David Baker
1:30 P.M.	...."The Holy Spirit and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Gary Grizzell
2:30 P.M.	...."Watchtower' and 'Awake' Magazines".....	Jeff Sweeten
3:30 P.M.	...."Jehovah's Witnesses and Apocalyptic Language".....	Tom Wacaster
<b>DINNER BREAK</b>		
6:30 P.M.	.....CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.....	
7:00 P.M.	...."Baptism and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Michael Hatcher
8:00 P.M.	...."A Review of 'The New World Translation'".....	Tyler Young

### Tuesday, February 26

9:00 A.M.	...."The Terminology of Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Tom Moore
10:00 A.M.	...."Rationalism and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Royce Williamson
**10:00 A.M.	.....Ladies Class.....	Martha Bently
11:00 A.M.	...."The Godhead and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Michael Light
1:30 P.M.	...."Arianism and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Paul Vaughn
2:30 P.M.	...."Jehovah's Witnesses: Blood and Transfusions".....	Randy Mabe
3:30 P.M.	...."Jehovah's Witnesses: Sin and Salvation".....	David B. Jones
<b>DINNER BREAK</b>		
6:30 P.M.	.....CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.....	
7:00 P.M.	...."Human Government and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Terry Hightower
8:00 P.M.	...."Jesus Christ: His Deity, Vir. Birth, Aton., & Res.".....	Jerry Murrell

### Wednesday, February 27

9:00 A.M.	...."Charles Taze Russell: Origin of Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Gary Summers
10:00 A.M.	...."A Review of 'Russellism Unveiled'".....	Bob Patterson
11:00 A.M.	...."Does the 'N.W.T.' Uniformly Teach Jehovah's Witnesses".....	Darrell Conley
1:30 P.M.	...."Revelation 20: An Exposition".....	Tommy Hicks
2:30 P.M.	...."New Heavens and New Earth".....	Lester Kamp
3:30 P.M.	...."Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford".....	Kent Bailey
<b>DINNER BREAK</b>		
6:30 P.M.	.....CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.....	
7:00 P.M.	...."The Battle of Armageddon' and Jehovah's Witnesses".....	B. J. Clarke
8:00 P.M.	...."A Summary of Jehovah's Witnesses Doctrine".....	Lynn Parker

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Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# FLIRTING WITH DANGER

Jodie Boren

Pamplona, Spain is the capital of the Navarre Province in northern Spain about 25 miles below the French border. Each year in July they have the 'Running of the Bulls'. The AP reported that "thousands of people test their bravery (the word 'stupidity' seems more appropriate-JLB) and agility by running alongside six fighting bulls and a handful of accompanying steers along a 825 yard narrow route from the corral to the city's bullring. Since they started keeping records in 1924, some 200 people have been injured and 13 killed."



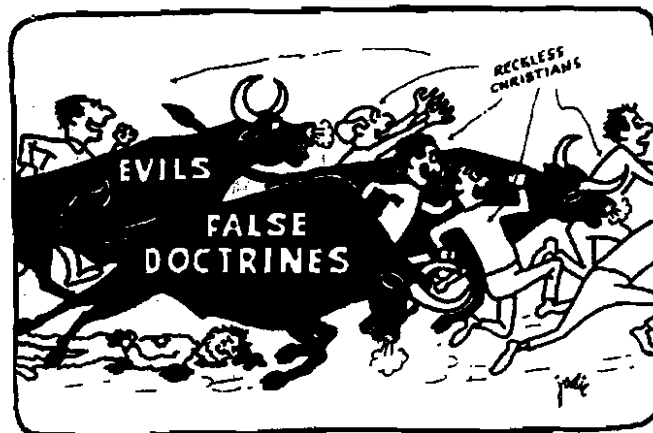
This running with the bulls—this flirting with danger—is not limited to the physical realm. Many who profess to be Christians are running with the bulls of false teachers and the evils of this world. Our souls are too precious to flirt with the wiles of the devil and chance spending eternity in hell.

## OUR ENEMY THE DEVIL

As we think of flirting with danger, let us consider first of all our enemy the devil. The devil is alive and active and a powerful adversary (I Peter 5:8). Jesus speaks of the power of Satan (Acts 26:18). In John 12:31, Jesus refers to Satan as the prince of this world. In the Greek, the word 'prince' in this verse means: one first in power—one with authority—ruler.

This power is seen in the arsenal of weapons Satan has to use against us. Paul recognizes this in II Corinthians 2:11. One of the fiery darts he uses so effectively is that of deceit. In Revelations 12:9 Satan is described as the deceiver of this world. Truly he is the greatest con artist that has ever existed! A con artist is successful because he is able to deceive. Satan sometimes deceives by transforming himself to appear as an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14). Think of all the charlatans on the TV and radio who are making millions of dollars while appearing as 'men of God'. Satan is a liar and the father of liars and there's no truth in him (John 8:44).

Because Satan is as a roaring lion walking about trying to devour us, God has warned us against flirting with evil. Paul exhorts us to "**abstain from the very appearance of evil**" (I Thessalonians 5:22). How can any one misunderstand God's plain language in Proverbs 6:27-28 where he says, "**Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?**" We are reminded in I Corinthians 15:33 to not be deceived, that "**evil companionships corrupt**



good morals." Paul declares in no uncertain terms, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11).

Not only are we warned against evil in general, but we are warned against false teachers and their false doctrines. Jesus alerts us with "**Beware of false prophets**" (Matthew 7:15). Paul cautions us that grievous wolves will enter in among us not sparing the flock and that even some elders would speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them (Acts 20:29-31). These false teachers cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of Christ and should be marked (Romans 16:17).

## SATAN'S HENCHMAN

One congregation in San Antonio gives a 12 page explanation of baptism to those who want to place membership with them. One excerpt from this, on page 11, sums it up. "Is it possible for an unbaptized believer to be saved? Yes, definitely." Brethren, that is false teaching!

One preacher in the Abilene area recently said to the congregation that we sing accapella because of tradition. He did not mention that accapella was the only kind of music authorized by God. Think about the following statement. "Every group of people who sincerely seeks to be what God has called them to be in the world is the church that belongs to Christ." Sincerity is a must but it must be based upon the truth of God's word. This comes from a pulpit in the Abilene area. Is this not the same as saying that anyone who calls God "Father" is my brother? Both are false. At one of our big lectureships a couple of years ago, the speaker exhorted the church to be more inclusive in its fellowshiping of others. Fellowship with God and others is only in Christ! We see congregations observing Easter and Christmas as religious days. On and on we could go, but surely this is enough to make us stop and think of the foolishness and the terrible consequences of running with the bulls of false teachers and false doctrines. Peter said it best. "... **beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness**" (II Peter 3:17).

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

# GOD'S INK

Annette B. Cates

Recently, a poem circulating by e-mail came to me bearing the above title. The gist of the poem was that of all the things we do, very few are of any real consequence. It was typical of much that is passed around; perhaps you have also received a copy. Since much of the poem was erroneous, I simply deleted it right away, but later began to think on some lessons that could be gleaned from it.

## "DANGEROUS DAILIES"

The poem told of an angel recording the actions of those of us "down here" on earth. As the angel wrote, most of the words disappeared immediately. In the end, only a scattering of words remained on the page, representing our good deeds. This point is well-taken: most of us are too involved with material pursuits, finding a kind of surface happiness in career success, personal savings accounts, investments, and the worldly possessions our money can buy. Many years ago I heard Mary Oler state in a ladies class that it is the "dailies" that get us down. We are so wrapped up in secular activities that we do not take the time to attend to spiritual growth and service. We forget Jesus' promise that is found in Matthew 6:33, **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."**

Nowhere did this poem mention what becomes of our evil deeds. Are we to suppose that the wrong we do just goes off into oblivion? This is how our "feel good" society and most of our denominational friends would see it. Of course, we know that we shall be judged for whatever sins we have committed, but have not repented of, as well as for the good we have done. God is the judge of the unjust, as well as of the just (Acts 24:15).

## CHEATED UNTO GOOD WORKS

We could ask the question, "What is God's ink?" The answer is found in his word. According to Ephesians 2:10, **"We [Christians] are His workmanship...."** The verse goes on to tell us that this is by our walking in good works. There is a children's song and finger play that includes the words, "God has no hands, but our hands [and] no lips, but our lips, etc." All too often the only sermon people hear is the one that is preached by a Christian's manner of life. Peter's admonition to wives of non-Christian husbands, **"...if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation (behavior) of the wives"** (I Peter 3:1) applies to all of us in our associations with the world.

We are God's ink when we demonstrate the joy and peace of mind that comes from the assurance that we belong to him (I John 1:7). No, life for the Christian is not a frolic through wonderland. Nor, are we no longer subject

to the trials that life can bring. The difference is in our approach to life's negatives. We know that regardless of what the future may bring, God is there to see us through whatever the trouble may be (I Peter 5:7). The joy and peace of the Christian life is beyond our understanding, guarding our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7). Life is uncertain.

What greater peace can we have than to know that even in the face of death, He is with us (Psalm 23:4)? What greater joy can we have than to know that a heavenly home awaits us (Revelation 2:10)? Yes, our response to life shows that we are God's ink.

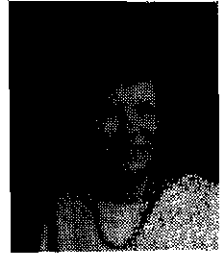
We are God's ink when we demonstrate righteous living (Romans 12:17). The Christian should always live by a standard that is higher than that of the world (Matthew 5:13-16). We do so through the way we think (Philippians 4:8; Proverbs 23:7). We do so by the way we speak (Matthew 12:34; Ephesians 4:29). We do so through purity of action (II Corinthians 7:2; I Timothy 5:22; James 1:27). We do so through the homes that we nurture. The principle for the home as God designed it is found in I Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:22-24. We know that marriage is "until death do us part." We know that unborn children are not blobs of protoplasm that invade a woman's body until birth (Job 31:15; Jeremiah 1:5). We demonstrate righteous living when we turn the other cheek, give the cloak as well as the coat, and go the extra mile (Matthew 5:39-41). Yes, the way we live shows us to be God's ink.

We are God's ink when we demonstrate compassion for others (Matthew 25:34-40). We know that while the first commandment is to love God with all the heart, the second is to love our neighbor (Mark 12:28-31). Our lives are to be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1). The service we give to others is service to the Lord, and our labor is not in vain (I Corinthians 15:58). Just as Jesus served through teaching others, showing compassion for physical and emotional suffering, meeting the physical needs of others, and loving the children, so should we. Yes, the way we treat others shows us to be God's ink.

## THE CROWN AND THE BOOK

There is a book of life that is in preparation at this time. There is a crown awaiting those whose names are found therein. The crown of life will adorn the Christian who has overcome the world and its allurements. It will be for those whose lives have been God's ink.

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
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# What are Some of the "Hard Sayings" of Jesus?

Noah A. Hackworth

The Bible, contrary to what some think, is not a book of "mush." It does indeed have material in it that requires some time to digest. There are things in God's word which simply cannot be understood if one falls asleep while reading about them. Not all the teaching of Jesus is smooth and gentle on the mind. This was the apostle Peter's observation concerning the writing of Paul: **"...Our beloved brother Paul, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood..."** (II Peter 3:15-16). The reason why some of the teaching of Jesus seems so hard to accept is due to the fact that people are carnal rather than spiritual; they consequently have to be fed with milk, not with meat (I Corinthians 2:1-2), but this is only when one first begins. The "meat" of God's word has to be included in the diet if one intends to grow in the grace and knowledge of the truth (II Peter 3:18), thus becoming mature, full-grown children of God who have been molded into the image of Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:5-7).

### CONTEXTUAL OBSERVATIONS

In John 6:1-52, Jesus made several tremendously important remarks to his audience. He mentioned that (1) the "fathers" were fed manna from heaven as they sojourned in the wilderness; (2) the Jews of his day were fed the "living bread" from heaven; (3) the fathers who ate the manna in the wilderness were all dead; (4) those who had eaten the "living bread" would never die; (5) **"...Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves."** When many of Jesus' disciples heard this, they said, **"This is a hard saying; who can hear it."** The word "hard" translates the term *skieros* which means "dried, rough, hard." As I said before, the words of Jesus do not always "go down easy." In this treatise we shall examine some of the "hard sayings of Jesus."

### IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE WHAT YOU BELIEVE

This statement is really "hard to swallow" for some people. Why? Because they obviously make up their minds before they determine the facts. Naaman the Leper made the same mistake (II Kings 5). What difference did it make into which river he plunged himself? Why the Jordan? He was so frustrated that he went away in a rage, but it was not until Naaman accepted God's word that his leprosy was removed. It made a difference what was believed then, and it makes a difference what is believed now. Does it make a difference what we believe about Jesus Christ? It does indeed! The Lord himself said, **"...For except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins"** (John 8:24). This may be a "hard saying" to some, but it is nevertheless true.

### THERE IS ONLY ONE CHURCH

When we teach this important truth we may seem like religious bigots to some, but there is only one church. Paul the apostle said, **"There is one body"** (Ephesians 4:4). The body is the church (1:22-23). Therefore, there is one church. Is this correct reasoning? Is the major premise true? Is the minor premise true? If both premises are true, the conclusion is true. But in spite of correct reasoning, this truth becomes a "hard saying" to millions. In fact, they do not believe it, but their unbelief does not negate the truth.



### CHRISTIANS ONLY AND THE ONLY CHRISTIANS

It is rather disappointing to hear people say, "We are Christians only, but not the only Christians." This statement troubles me because there is a great deal wrong with it. The "roots" of the phrase "Christians only" go all the way back to the restoration movement of the eighteenth century when men were trying to distinguish between New Testament Christianity and the denominational movements of the day. Great efforts were put forth to show that (1) denominational slogans were unnecessary; (2) the Name Christian was all that was needed; (3) it did not need to be prefixed by unauthorized titles such as Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., because they denote something not essential to a Christian. To prefix the name Christian is to divide rather than unite. Regardless, however, of when the phrase "Christians only" was adopted or by whom, it is true. We are Christians only, and the truth of the matter is that the only Christians are those who have been baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26-27).

For New Testament Christians to say, "We are not the only Christians," is a matter of great concern to many of us. It is really saying, "There are Christians in other churches," and for this there is not an ounce of proof. In the absolute, before this could possibly be true it would have to be shown that other "churches" have a right to exist and this cannot be done. When a person obeys from the heart the gospel of Christ (Romans 6:17), he becomes a Christian and a member of the church for which Christ died (Acts 2:47; 20:28). Subsequently, he can become unfaithful to Christ, fall away and consequently unite with some denomination. You have a child of God in a human institution, but you do not have a true follower of Christ, and if this is the case the only true, safe, thing to do is what Paul taught in II Corinthians 6:17: **"...Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord..."**

—4525 W. Caldwell Ave.  
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# WHY THE REFORMATION FAILED

Paul Vaughn

During the Middle Ages the power of the papacy began to decline. Until the Renaissance, the Roman Catholic Church kept people in the darkness and oppression of ignorance. The priests did not know how to preach God's word because they looked to the papacy and not to the Bible for direction. They took all of their instruction from the papacy and the corruption of the pope took them in many outrageous directions.

The enforcement of celibacy and the "absence of any proper ethical principles, led to an appalling increase in immorality."<sup>1</sup> Papal government was extremely weak and contemptible, because it was nothing more than an creature of ambition. "The shameless immorality of the papal court destroyed respect for the hierarchy and caused a general demand for reform."<sup>2</sup>

The selling of Indulgences was perhaps the straw that broke the camel's back. Indulgences are the providing for the remission of punishment on someone guilty of a specific sin. They were first given to those who went on crusades, but developed into a financial conquest for the Roman Catholic Church. One could even purchase an indulgence in the name of a departed family member or friend "It was commonly stated by indulgence salesmen that 'as soon as a coin in the coffer rings, another soul from purgatory springs."<sup>3</sup>

## MARTIN LUTHER THE BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION

"When the pope needed more money, he sold indulgences. Absolute power had corrupted absolutely."<sup>4</sup> The selling of indulgences became the catalyst that ignited the fervor for Reformation. The first to take up the banner was a German reformer, Martin Luther. He was born on November 10, 1483 in the village of Eisbeben. Luther received his education at the University of Erfurt. In 1511 he entered a monastery at Wittenberg where he received a Doctor of Theology degree.

"In 1517 John Tetzel was making a public nuisance of himself in Wittenberg by selling papal indulgences in order to raise money for the rebuilding of St. Peter's Church in Rome."<sup>5</sup> That year, Martin Luther wrote Ninety-Five Theses in opposition to the Catholic Church and their selling of indulgences. He nailed them to the doors of the Wittenberg Church. From this instrumental inception emerged the Lutheran Church.

## HULDREICH ZWINGLI

One of the most powerful supports of reform was **Huldreich Zwingli**. In 1519 he was the priest in the cathedral of Zurich. Zwingli rejected the teaching of the Pope on celibacy. He soon wrote Sixty-seven articles affirming that all religious instruction should be based on the Bible alone.

In October 1531 during the Second Kappel War, Huldreich Zwingli lost his life. An enemy soldier found him on the battlefield dying. The soldier asked Zwingli if he needed a priest. He did nothing but folded his hands in prayer. After he died the enemy quartered his body and burned it. While it was burning they throw the entrails of a pig into the fire, mixing it with Zwingli's body to show contempt for him. The followers of Zwingli slowly emerged with Calvinism.



## FAILURE OF THE REFORMATION

Once the seeds of reform springs forth it multiplies. **John Calvin, Guillaume Farel, Theodore Beza, and John Knox**, are a few of those who came after Luther and Zwingli. First the courage of the Reformers was exceptional, they were willing to suffer lost of property and life to take their stand against the Roman Catholic Church. But, their efforts failed because all that the Reformation brought was denominationalism. Both the Roman Catholic Church and denominationalism are unacceptable in the eyes of God. Jesus prayed that his followers be one, united. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all

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

## —Massachusetts—

**Chicopee**—Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive, Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, tel. (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

## —Michigan—

**Garden City**—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. <http://www.garden-city-coc.org> 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. 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, Mark McDonald, 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. David Dalton, 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) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## —Texas—

**Beeville**—Adams Street Church of Christ, 1701 N. Adams St., (POB 1148) Beeville, TX 78104. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:20 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m. Tel. (361) 358-4428 or Jesse Whitlock, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sunday 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.; (979) 822-1539; Calvin Engeldinger, 2109 Pebblebrook, Bryan, TX 77807 Email: CALENG@TCA.net.

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February.

**Huntsville**—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (409) 438-8202.

**Hurst**—Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Eddie Whitten, Evangelist., tel. (817) 282-3239.

**Lubbock**—Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00 a.m., 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (361) 643-6571, Sun: 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Michael Wyatt, Evangelist. Email: portlandcofc@juno.com.

**Richwood**—1600 Brazosport, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30; 6 p.m.; Wed. 7 p.m.

**Schertz**—Church of Christ, 501 Sehertz Pkwy., (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff, Evangelist.

## —Wyoming—

**Cheyenne**—High Plains church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Gerald Reynolds, tel. (307) 635-2482.

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may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (John 17:20-22). Paul encouraged the church at Corinth to speak the same thing, be united. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

The Reformation did not bring the desired result of simply returning to the scriptures. Therefore, they failed and the denominational world today is its fruit of that failure.

Though the efforts of the Reformers brought religious division, we should be thankful for their courage in the face of emanating danger. They encouraged people to study God's word and many championed the Bible as all that is needed to please God. The Roman Catholic Church has never in their history took such a stand. The Reformers began to write creeds, just as the apostate church did at the

time of Constantine. Creeds glamorize the opinions of men and bring error and division. That is all creeds are good for and nothing else.

By the early 1800's the denominations of men had splintered into a maze of inaccuracy leading people away from the simplicities of the New Testament church. Denominationalism became the spark that ignited the flames of Restoration. Men from different denominations began to speak boldly for a return to the authority of the New Testament. Success can only be attained as long as men desire to follow the Bible and the Bible alone!

## ENDNOTES

1. Albert Henry Newman, *A Manual of Church History*, Vol I Ancient and Mediaeval Church History (To A.D. 1517), American Baptist Pub., Philadelphia, 1899, p.520.
2. Ibid. 523.
3. F. W. Mattox, *The Eternal Kingdom*, A History of the Church of Christ, Gospel Light Pub., Delight, 1955, p. 220.
4. Kenneth Connolly, *The Indestructible Book*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 1996, p. 94.
5. Ibid. p. 96.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

# MISSIONARY SOCIETY MENTALITY

Eddie Whitten

The camel is getting his nose under the tent and it will not be long before the tent will be the clothing of the camel and be carried about wherever the camel wants to go. That is the process of the liberal element in the church that wants to make the church a denomination like all other denominations. The change agents, in this case, are the camels! One of the methods of changing the church into another denomination is to adopt the practices of the denominations. A very subtle and surreptitious practice that is invading the church of our Lord is the Missionary Society mentality. Some may ask, "What is this?" Let's talk about it.

## THE AMERICAN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The American Christian Missionary Society was established in Cincinnati, Ohio on October 31, 1849. It was the first step toward the camel getting his nose under the tent of truth. Alexander Campbell was elected as its President, an office he held until his death. The idea of "Societies" was not new to Campbell. There had been other societies in which his father and his grandfather had been involved. These were efforts to accomplish a goal that would be otherwise difficult, if not impossible, to attain without a cooperative effort on the part of several individual people or congregations as the case may be. The construct of a Missionary Society was simply that a central organization be established separate from the church to accomplish the work that the Bible designates as a work of the church. Periodic meetings were to be held to which member congregations would send delegates to represent them. Moneys would be funneled into the organization from the various member churches to finance the Society's work. The Society would not be a church, or a part of any specific church.

The American Christian Missionary Society created a rift among the members of the infant Restoration Movement in America. The matter of Bible authority was under attack. The Society was challenged for its authority to exist. This innovation coupled with the later introduction of

the mechanical instrument of music in the worship at Midway, Kentucky in 1860, served to fuel a division in the church over the matter of Bible authority. That division culminated in 1906 with the recognition of the two separate churches, the church of Christ, that advocated Bible authority for what it preached and practiced, and the Christian church that advocated that what the Bible did not prohibit it was free to do. It might be noted at this point that from the inception of the first innovation until the full division of the brotherhood constituted a period of fifty-seven years!



## CURRENT SOCIETIES IN THE CHURCH

As innocent and as seemingly commendable in their purpose, there are several current societies operating within the church of our Lord. This is alarming in its very nature! It must be asked, "How can this be so?" Does not the church know that it is a violation of the authority of the Bible to have organizations separate from the church doing the work of the church? The answer to this perplexing question is, "Evidently not!" After all, do not the denominational bodies around us employ these methods to accomplish their work? As surprising as it may seem, we do have some efforts being conducted in the exact same way, with a few variations of insignificant consequence, as the Society that split the Lord's church a hundred years ago.

## THE HERALD OF TRUTH

The Herald of Truth, of Abilene, Texas, was once a valuable and valiant effort to spread the word of God via the medium of radio and television. It is now nothing more than an organization separate from the church doing the work of the church. It is now under a board of directors instead of an eldership. It depends upon financing from individuals and congregations. It has its own officers and directors. It is a Missionary Society.

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Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.	Bible Study	7:30 p.m.



### CROSSVIEW

Crossview is based in West Monroe, Louisiana, and was intended from the beginning to operate separate from the church. Its mission is to broadcast via radio into the Caribbean and into the reaches of the southern Hemisphere. Tragically, the preachers used in their broadcasts include some who are not members of the Lord's church.

### CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING COMPANY

Operating out of Anchor Point, Alaska the station broadcasts its messages into the areas of Russia, China, Korea and other parts of the northern part of the world. Many have obeyed the gospel because of the efforts of this station. The problem? It is a separate organization under the oversight of no congregation or elders, but by delegates of various churches and financed by individuals and congregations over the country. Incidentally, their broadcasts are not limited to preaching the gospel, but also include variations of musical programming.

### DISASTER RELIEF ORGANIZATION

Organized in Nashville, TN for a tremendously needed and commendable work, it is separate and apart from any congregation or eldership oversight. There is nothing wrong at all in doing benevolent work, or tending to the needs of those suffering the ravages of disaster. Individual Christians and congregations of the Lord's body need to be involved in benevolent work. The Disaster Relief Organization is not to be compared to the church, but to benevolent organizations such as the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and other organizations separate from the church.

**Continent of Great Cities.** Most are probably not aware of this one. Their website says, "*Continent of Great Cities is located in Abilene, Texas and is sponsored by the Central Church of Christ in Amarillo, Texas. Continent of Great Cities is structured as a nonprofit organization served by a Board of Trustees. Six fulltime staff plus several part time workers serve the ministry in the Abilene Office.*" Jerry Brewer, faithful gospel preacher in Elk City, Oklahoma, reflects on this organization, "The website conveniently provides for donations to this society via bank-draft, mail, or credit card. The money goes directly to the society in Abilene without having to filter through anything like elders who oversee and monitor what is taught and practiced."

### A FEARFUL LEGACY

It is obvious that these "para-church organizations" are the camels that will soon have the benefit of the whole tent unless brethren become better informed and fortified against the same kind of innovations that split the church in the 19th century. It is a fearful legacy to leave our children if the faithful of the 21st century do not rise up and defend first century Christianity. That is the plea of the church that we go back to the Bible for our rule of faith and practice. *We will fail miserably unless we become aware of the unauthorized and unwelcome camel of the Missionary Society mentality.*

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