

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

**Volume XXXIII, 2002**

January/2002  
Volume XXXIII, No. 1  
\$14 Per Year; 2 Years \$24

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS



**Ira Y. Rice, Jr.**  
**August 3, 1917 - October 10, 2001**

*"It is becoming increasingly clear, day by day, that those heretics who have arisen among us, variously styled as "liberals" or "modernists," are a brotherhood-wide conspiracy to take over and "restructure" the entire body, not after the New Testament, but after their own image!"*

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr.  
*Contending for the Faith, Volume 1,  
Number 2, February, 1970, page 1.*

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXXIII, No. 1

January/2002

David P. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher  
dpbrown9@swbell.net

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by *Contending for the Faith* and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## 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 needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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, \$30.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr. Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

Editorial...

## “NEVER GIVE IN, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER”

In this first edition of a new year I am dedicating *Contending for the Faith* to the memory of her creator—Ira Y. Rice, Jr. In everything he did he gave his all and was resolute in the doing of it. Nothing moved him from his chosen courses in life—spreading the gospel to as many places on the earth as possible, a tenacious defense of the gospel, and the church of Christ as that term is defined and used in the New Testament (Mark 16:15; Philipians 1:7, 17; Jude 3; Ephesians 5:25-27). Thus, he was a true friend to those who loved the truth and an unrelenting enemy of all those who sought to pervert the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr. was truly a man ready unto every good work to which many now living can attest (Titus 3:1). Wearing the armor of God and boldly declaring they shall not pass, he died standing in the gap (Ephesians 6:10-19; Revelation 2:10).

## A PARALLEL OF CHARACTERS

As I think of brother Rice my memory takes me to my study of secular history. When the lights of liberty were extinguished on the continent of Europe in the very early days of WWII, only Britain remained as a bastion of freedom. During those days of “fear and trembling” there arose a British Lion to lead the way. His name was **Winston Churchill**.

Almost alone during most of the 1930’s and from the backbenches of Parliament, Churchill warned of the “gathering storm” in Germany. However, he was “a voice crying in the wilderness” and ignored and ridiculed by many of his own people. A good example of such mockery is in the following quote from *The Winston Churchill Home Page*, [winstonchurchill.org](http://winstonchurchill.org). Of the Munich Agreement Churchill declared: “We have sustained a total and unmitigated defeat, and France has suffered even more than we have.” This is a quotation from a speech Churchill made during debate on the Munich Agreement in the House of Commons, October 5, 1938. **Nancy Astor** heckled him by calling out “Nonsense.”

The Munich Agreement was an effort at appeasing Germany by allowing Hitler to take the area of Czechoslovakia known as the Sudeten lands. Not unlike the “appeasers” of our time in the church, Prime Minister **Neville Chamberlain** of Great Britain returned home from Munich holding the agreement in the air and declaring that it brought “peace in our time.” However, history has borne out the fact that one cannot expect Satan’s henchmen (political or otherwise, in the church or out) to be appeased by compromise.

Brother Rice and those standing where he stood have undergone routine ridicule of like nature and worse from the “Lady Astors” within the church. In various and sundry ways they have cried out “Absurd” regarding his warnings concerning the rise of grievous wolves in the church. However, when Hitler’s Panzers blitzkrieged across Europe who, then, was found to be absurd and much worse? Moreover, now that the apostates have

captured much of the church only the devil's crowd would cry "Absurd" regarding brother Rice's warnings recorded in over thirty-five years of his publications.

#### AXE ON THE ROOT

Read again (and for some it will be the first time) brother Rice's writings in *Axe on the Root I, II, and III*, warning the church of Satan's crowd. What is there of that which he chronicled that was not true? Were his warnings regarding apostasy in the church of Christ "absurd?" Indeed, the Nancy Astor's of the last 35 years are standing with "egg on their faces" in view of the terrible inroads error has made in the Lord's church. But many of them had rather wear the "egg on their faces" than wash it off, admit their error, and advance to the forefront of the battle against apostasy and for the truth of the gospel. And, why is this the case? Paul gave us the answer when in his first letter to Timothy he wrote "**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**" (1 Timothy 4:1, 2). Brother Rice knew these things and acted accordingly.

#### REGARDLESS OF THE COST HE SAID WHAT OTHERS REFUSED TO SAY

In matters spiritual brother Rice in the latter third of the Twentieth Century stood up and said things that others for whatever reason would not say. In that and other ways he was comparable to Churchill—or maybe in view of the importance of that for which each stood it is better said that Churchill was comparable to him.

In his publications brother Rice reported the facts. And, because facts do not lie, those who love darkness rather than light hated him. From the appeasers as well as the outright apostates in the church he was rewarded with the "slings and arrows of life's outrageous fortune." These appeasers were and are "cowardly lions." And, no doubt, they are so enamored with themselves they think they do God service in their persecution of the faithful. May the Lord reward them accordingly. However, they never stilled brother Rice's voice. With these things in mind please consider these thoughts from another of Winston Churchill's great speeches and please make the necessary spiritual applications.

#### "OUR FREEDOM TO DEFEND, SIR!"

When Prime Minister Winston Churchill visited Harrow, his old school, on October 29, 1941 to hear the traditional songs again, he discovered that an additional verse had been added to one of them. It ran:

*Not less we praise in darker days  
The leader of our nation,  
And Churchill's name shall win acclaim*

*From each new generation.  
For you have power in danger's hour  
Our freedom to defend, Sir!  
Though long the fight we know that right  
Will triumph in the end, Sir!*

Churchill then delivered his speech in which he stated the lesson that should be learned from Britain when she alone stood against the Nazi menace. That lesson serves as the title of this editorial. The lesson:

*...never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never  
— in nothing, great or small, large or petty — never give  
in except to convictions of honour and good sense.  
Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently over-  
whelming might of the enemy. We stood all alone a year  
ago, and to many countries it seemed that our account  
was closed, we were finished.*

Later in the speech the Prime Minister informed his audience:

You sang here a verse of a School Song: you sang that extra verse written in my honour, which I was very greatly complimented by and which you have repeated today. But there is one word in it I want to alter — I wanted to do so last year, but I did not venture to. It is the line: "Not less we praise in darker days."

I have obtained the Head Master's permission to alter *darker* to *sterner*. "Not less we praise in sterner days."

Do not let us speak of darker days: let us speak rather of sterner days. These are not dark days; these are great days — the greatest days our country has ever lived; and we must all thank God that we have been allowed, each of us according to our stations, to play a part in making these days memorable in the history of our race.

With the "fight of faith" in mind and in particular brother Rice's part in the fray, with Churchill we say again, "...these are great days...we must all thank God that we have been allowed, each of us according to our stations, to play a part in making these days memorable in the history of our race." And in our case, we "play a part in making these days memorable in the history of" God's people.

One has only to look at the fruit borne out in brother Rice's life to realize his place "in the history of our race", his unfair and envious detractors notwithstanding. With such in mind I take the liberty to amend the song altered by Churchill to read:

*Not less we praise in sterner days  
a gospel preacher of our nation,  
And Rice's name shall win acclaim  
From each new generation.  
For you had power in danger's hour  
Our freedom to defend, Sir!  
Though long the fight we know that right  
Will triumph in the end, Sir!*

#### OF OPEN DOORS AND MANY ADVERSARIES

The apostle Paul wrote: "**For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many ad-**



**versaries**" (I Corinthians 16:9). I have no doubt that with every "great" and "effectual" "opened door," accompanying them will be "many adversaries." However, I think we miss something in this passage that tells us much about Paul's (and brother Rice's) view of adversaries—they *afford an excellent opportunity to propagate the gospel*. How far does one read in the Bible before adversaries of God and his people appear? To ask that question is to answer it—Genesis chapter three. And, as pertaining to Paul, our introduction to him is in a controversial and adversarial setting. Though he believed and obeyed the gospel—it would be so with him for the rest of his life (Acts 7:58; II Timothy 4:7). Such characterized Ira Rice as well.

Though we read Paul's statement to Timothy which statement echoed our Lord's sentiment, "**...all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution**" (II Timothy 3:12; Matthew 5:10-12), many of us do not venture through the "great" and "effectual" "opened" "doors" because of the "many adversaries" that accompany them. This is especially the case with some when their adversaries come from their own family and friends. I believe brother Rice understood these matters very well, but he entered through those doors of opportunity just the same. In so doing he left a great many of the "talkers" and "planners" behind as he did what they only "talked." And, why did he and others of his metal do so? The answer is found in Churchill's old school song: "*Though long the fight we know that right will triumph in the end, Sir!*" (Romans 8:24; II Timothy 4:6-8; Matthew 25:24ff).

#### HOW FAR CERTAIN WICKED MEN WILL GO TO HURT OTHERS

Time and space fail me as I think of all the good accomplished by Ira Rice. However, some will say (And, we have the "Somesays" with us always) that I have chosen to ignore brother Rice's frailties. (Just here I must say of such persons, that they either do not have any frailties or they must want us to ignore them.) My answer to the "Somesays" is found in the following account of a lengthy visit I had with brother Rice several years ago.

It was late in the evening at my home in Spring, Texas. Brother Rice had come at my request to hear a tape recording of several phone conversations of men accusing him of several things. Though the tape had been circulating for several years he was unaware of it until I told him about it.

The tape was a series of interviews conducted by a preacher over the telephone with various persons who, over the years, had occasion to be associated with brother Rice. The incidents they related to the caller spanned approximately fifty years. After each

person offered his criticism of him brother Rice had me pause the tape. Then he gave his explanation of the matter. I could and cannot help but wonder, if someone really wanted to be honest, fair, open, and above board with brother Rice (the Christian thing to be and do), while determined to produce such a tape, why not allow (yea, demand) brother Rice's explanations to be recorded after each accusation?

Regardless of why people do what they do, during his answers to his taped accusers, to me one thing stood out about brother Rice that reveals much about his character. After hearing one of the accusations that pertained to matters that happened approximately fifty years ago he very soberly looked at me and said, "*David, I don't want you to think that I have always been what I should have been, but as the Bible has instructed me I have done what I should to correct what was amiss. I don't know what else or more I could have done.*" He then gave the details of what he did to correct the matter mentioned on the tape.

Indeed, King David and the apostle Peter, could have made statements of like sentiment as brother Rice's. Of a truth, only our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ could speak as one who knew no sin (Hebrews 4:15; Romans 3:23; I John 2:1-6).

How many times have people failed to admit their errors because of old stubborn pride? However, for some people taking care of matters as God prescribed is not enough. I must say that after almost thirty-seven years of preaching and from the testimony of others now living as well as those gone before me, I have no problem believing that though God forgave King David and Peter of their sins, some of my brethren would never have accepted David or Peter's repentance, in which case those brethren would be guilty of sin (Matthew 6:12-15; Luke 17: 3; Colossians 3:13). But this never seems to bother such characters as produced the previously mentioned tape.

Could brother Rice be grumpy and short tempered? (Could and have you?) Did he ever become angry? (Have you?) Did he make mistakes in judgment? (Have you?) At times did he become frustrated? (Have you?) Did he feel betrayed at times? (Have you?) Was he ever lonely? (What about you?) Was he as human as we are? The answer to these questions is "Yes." Not a preacher who is "worth his salt," or with "enough grit in his craw" to stand for the truth and against error (sometimes in face to face confrontations) has not to one extent or another experienced the same as brother Rice. And, if you say you have not, under certain circumstances you would lie about most anything else as well. The truth of the matter is this—there are more cowards and hypocrites in the church (in her pulpits and elderships) than we want to admit.

I am most happy to have known brother Rice when he was happy and we laughed together. Never have I seen a person who could be happier than he. Fond are the memories of those glad days.

But I also knew him when he cried. I will never forget his sorrow at the graveside of the late **Bill Jackson**. His lamentation was great and his tears flowed like a river. Indeed, he was a friend to all those that preached and defended the faith.

#### HIS LOVELY WIFE VADA

Some men would have been great no matter what, but because of their wives they are made even greater. I am convinced that such is the case with brother Rice and sister Vada. To know her is to know a Christian lady, a loyal wife, a good mother, a great homemaker, an alto par excellent, a Bible scholar, and a true laborer in the kingdom of heaven. She is the epitome of the worthy woman of Proverbs 31. In quietness she does her work and with patience waits for the fruits thereof. Ruth's statement to Naomi, "Where ever thou goest, I will go" was her sentiment towards brother Ira and his work. She is a shining example of standing by and supporting her husband. Young women would do well to seek her out for counsel and to value it highly. To her I say, may the God of all glory continue to bless you and may his countenance always shine upon you and give you peace until your last step will be taken into the realms of glory and sweet rest. Thank you for being there over all those years for brother Ira. And, while I really never have known their children, I am certain that they will be there in the coming years for their beloved mother.

#### WHERE IS THE "ACTIVE INGREDIENT" OF THE CHURCH?

In one of brother Rice's visits to our home he requested a glass of milk. When asked if 2% milk would do he declined it saying, "I don't like it because it re-

*minds me too much of the brethren—all the active ingredient has been taken out."*

And, what is that "active ingredient?" It is "faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6). As far as I am concerned Galatians 5:6 coupled with "it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing" (Galatians 4:18) was the sum and substance of Ira Y. Rice, Jr. As James put it, so it may be said of brother Rice, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18).

No, these are not "darker days," but "sterner days" for the church. These are the days of "great," "effectual," and "opened doors" accompanied by "many adversaries." These days demand more Ira Y. Rice's, who along with the apostle Paul, because of a great hope, "use great plainness of speech" (II Corinthians 3:12). These "sterner days" demand not just some but the entire "active ingredient" that no "effectual" and "great" "opened door" is left un-entered regardless of the "many adversaries" accompanying them.

#### "HOPING EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT ANYWAY"

Brother Rice inscribed our personal copy of the first volume of his autobiography with:

*To David and Jody  
—fully realizing what you  
have let yourselves in for  
but hoping everything will  
work out anyway!  
God bless you both!  
Ira and Vada  
January 7, 1999  
Spring, Texas.*

To which I now respond: It worked out for you and sister Vada along with countless other faithful brethren, and by the grace of the living God, it will for us (I Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10).

#### "EACH STEP I TAKE"

I will never again sing "Each Step I Take" without thinking of and seeing brother Rice lead that great song. At this time I continue to have difficulty singing it without "choking up." For in the mind's eye I con-



tinue to hear his bass voice with much feeling booming out those wonderful words. I see him with outstretched arms; a songbook in one hand, while directing with the other, his head tilted backward just a little, and his eyes turned upward singing...

*Each step I take my Saviour goes before me,  
And with His loving hand He leads the way.  
And with each breath I whisper "I adore Thee:"  
Oh, what joy to walk with Him each day.*

*At times I feel my faith begin to waver,  
When up ahead I see a chasm wide,  
It's then I turn and look up to my Saviour,  
I am strong when He is by my side.*

*I trust in God, no matter come what may,  
For life eternal is in His hand,  
He holds the key that opens up the way,  
That will lead me to the promised land.*

*Each step I take I know that He will guide me;  
To higher ground He ever leads me on.  
Until some day the last step will be taken,  
Each step I take just leads me closer home.*

*W. Elmo Mercer*

Brother Rice has taken his last step and we know not when our last step will be—but it will come providing the Lord does not return first. But the good God who loved us and gave his son to die for our sins will continue to provide for his children until all of God's singers get home.

#### TO THE WORK!

Now we must turn to the work at hand. While we remain in the flesh there is a great work to be done and a

continual battle to be fought. We dare not become slack (Romans 16:13). We must be vigilant, examining all things in the light of God's infallible word. For the time being, we say "So long" to Ira Y. Rice, Jr.—brother in Christ, friend, mentor, fellow worker in the kingdom, and a gospel preacher who did his best to be true to our Lord's great commission. Indeed, "We Can Evangelize the World" and "Contend for the Faith!" We will best honor brother Rice's memory by serving Jesus Christ with all we are and all that we have. Then, when life's little day is over and it is our turn to walk down the valley where the mournful cypress grows, the "**Sun of righteousness ... with healing in his wings**" will give us that sweet and eternal rest (Malachi 4:2). Indeed, I can be with my daddy, brother Rice, and all that great "**crowd of witnesses**" who have faithfully served our heavenly father in the here and now and, thus, we shall be parted no more in the there and then (Hebrew 12:1).

**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (I Thessalonians 4:18).**

*"...never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never — in nothing, great or small, large or petty — never give in..."*

*—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief*

## IRA Y. RICE, JR. "QUINTESSENTIAL" CHRISTIAN JOURNALIST

J. E. Choate

Ira Y. Rice Jr., joins that great crowd of witnesses, who though being dead, yet speaks to this generation and will continue to speak to generations unborn. Ira Rice's journal is the only reliable source providing an accurate year by year recording of the history of the biblical churches of Christ since the 1960s. Ira Rice believed that the biblical churches of Christ were bought with the blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary. On the other hand, "our scholars," who can (?) write books at the "cutting edge of scholarship," are feeding at the troughs of neo-modern liberalism, e.g., the Jesus Seminar, and

the theology of the wild dogs described by **John Dominic Crossan** digging up and devouring the corpse of the slain Jesus says it all. The purpose is to strip Jesus of his divine nature. These "Church of Christ" predators believe with **Rudolf Bultmann** and Crossan that the crucifixion and resurrection accounts in the four books of the gospel are *myths* created from both the fabric of history and folk tales.

Brother Rice believed that the "gates of hell" did not stop Christ from building his church on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ. He believed that the churches

of Christ today will not be brought down at the hands of puerile *change agents*. I listened to and read the contrived words of **Richard Hughes** and **Douglas Foster** as they labored to put a fix on Restoration history that the traditional churches of Christ trace their roots to an early 19th Century Stone-Campbell Restoration exclusivistic sect. It was expected of Hughes and Foster to make their case before the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Nashville, but assuredly not on sacred Lipscomb land in the presence and with the approval of **Steve Flatt**. **Richard Hughes** was the guest

speaker for the annual **Forrest F. Reed Lectures** sponsored by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. For two evenings, Hughes argued that the churches of Christ form a denomination much like the Christian Church and the Disciples of Christ. The occasion was one of the planned special events leading up the installation of Steve Flatt to the Lipscomb presidency.

#### MATTERS PERSONAL

It is a fair assessment that in two hundred years of the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement no editors in their age were any better qualified to record church history than was Ira Rice in his time. The personal family church of Christ background of Ira Rice is impeccable. His father was one of the best known preachers of his day. Ira Jr., was a graduate of the School of Journalism in the prestigious University of Oklahoma. Ira Rice possessed the perceptive intelligence and the natural instinct of a born journalist. No editor of churches of Christ papers today surpassed him in journalistic ability. He was as handy with a camera as with a typewriter in recording church history. Ira Rice did not gloss over the unpleasant facts attached to high positioned brethren who were doing injury to churches of Christ. He was branded the editor of a scandal mongering religious tabloid. These brethren have been most effective in the short haul of history, but time will catch up with them and paint them in yellow.

**Lynn Anderson** has provided us with a name for our neo-modern liberal brethren. He did so unwittingly in his book *Navigating the Winds of Change* by laying out the strategy for Church of Christ *change agents* to seize control of local churches by wresting, without a moral conscience, the authority from its duly appointed elders. We are indebted to **William Woodson** for coining the tag "change agents" to label these "ego driven" brethren. The Digressives of the 19th century had their "monkey paws" among gullible brethren as so do today's new breed of post modern "change agents." A major base of their operations is our schools.

Ira Rice was not the only person to recognize the new foes in churches of

Christ. They were mostly gifted young men being educated in prestigious liberal theological seminaries. They became enamored with the theological rage of the 1950s labeled **neo-orthodoxy** which was identified with **Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, and Rudolf Bultmann**. The "change agents" today influenced by the theologians of the Jesus Seminar would have us believe that Jesus never came alive in a resurrected form from Joseph's tomb. They lack the personal integrity and *gumption* to say so.

I was enrolled in the Vanderbilt Divinity School in the 1950s along with **Batsell Barrett Baxter, Howard Horton, Wayne Coats, Cliett Goodpasture**, and others. We recognized that the new theology would be the next battleground of the neo-modern age. Informed church historians know the running battle which the conservative Southern Baptists are waging with their liberal brethren. They have been for years weeding them out of their schools and churches. Sadly this is not the case in churches of Christ and in schools founded by **David Lipscomb** and **James A. Harding**.

What about the boast that we now have brethren who can write books on the "cutting edge of scholarship." Look for them on the staff of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, namely **Douglas Foster** and **Richard Hughes**; and on the roster of the *Digressive College Press* in Joplin, Missouri. Our scholars write their New Testament commentaries. **Michael Moss** and **Gary Holloway**, who hold the two highest Bible positions in Lipscomb University, are included in the Joplin stable of writers. They are also openly teaching neo-modern theology in their Bible classes. This is a free country. We pray they would exercise this freedom and join the Digressives with whom they feel so honored to be identified.

It will forever be to the credit of Ira Rice that he early on understood the threat of neo-liberalism facing churches of Christ framed in the theology of *Neo-orthodoxy*. He wrote three volumes titled *Axe on the Root*. He was the first to identify the new modern theology in its early stages already coiled up in the bosom of biblical

churches of Christ. Then he began publishing *Contending for the Faith* to alert the churches that they were being stalked daily by a formidable foe far more dangerous than the Digressives, the premillennial crowd, and the militant **antis** in the first half of the 20th century.

And, to a select number of our brethren who parrot the propaganda that Ira Rice was the editor of a *yellow scandal sheet*, the fact is that he worked for years among informed brethren who lacked the personal courage to expose neo-liberal theology infiltrating churches of Christ. And to my overly pious brethren who, with their papers, boast of always being positive and never negative, look at the tragic wreckage of the Madison church of Christ brought down by foes from within who are the likes of you. I, too, have been scolded by brethren full of "sweetness and light" because I write for Ira's paper. I am never at ease in the land of the Lilliputians inhabited by petty little people. **A.M. Burton** and **B. C. Goodpasture** were never failing supporters and patrons of Ira Rice to the end of their days.

#### TO BE OR NOT TO BE A PREACHER

Ira Rice told me the story that after finishing his formal studies in the University of Oklahoma he had a good job as a cub reporter on a Texas newspaper. The editor recognized that he was an especially gifted young reporter. He called Ira in his office to tell him that though his work ended each day that breaking stories and other duties would demand his time after hours. He said to Ira that he knew that he went after hours to work with a church in a nearby city. He advised Ira to make up his mind if he wanted to be a preacher or a reporter. He gave him one week to come back with his answer. He had brother Rice's check ready at the end of the week knowing beforehand his answer. From that day until his passing in a single blinding moment, Ira Y. Rice, Jr., never looked back.

#### HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE

An ancient rabbinic saying is that a man without a wife is only half a man. It was said of **Tolbert Fanning** that he would have been a great man without **Charlotte Fanning**, his wife, but that



he was a greater man because of her. **Vada Rice** filled the life of her husband with grace and honor. She is intelligent with a knowledge of scripture equal to that of her late husband. Vada Rice was the unofficial editor and balance wheel of Ira's writings. Make no mistake about it, they both felt the pain inflicted on them by over zealous critics. They had the faith, character, and resolve to walk above the storm. They were focused in life, and they won life's victory with honor and dignity. Brother Rice never cringed under the relentless attacks of his personal critics. *I do not stand trepidant in the presence of quisling brethren who are so sweetly disposed that they only criticize those who criticize.*

#### MATTERS PERSONAL

Brother Rice once said to me that though I had taught forty years in David Lipscomb College, written numerous articles, and books published by the Gospel Advocate, Freed-Hardeman College and other publishers that the articles which I have written in the 1990s are today having a greater impact and influence among

the churches than all my previous work combined, and especially in these times of crisis for biblical churches of Christ. Brother Rice published my articles when traditional brethren apologetically declined to publish them for fear of ruffling feathers.

This article is not intended to be a eulogy, but an *apologia* designed to defend and to honor the life's work of Ira Rice. All future church historians must need go to Ira Rice's journal for factual documented events of another time, e.g., campus evangelism, the *Herald of Truth* controversy, (1973), Crossroads, neo-liberalism, and the roles that high profiled brethren, e.g., **Harold Hazelip** and **Rubel Shelly** are now playing in the unfolding saga. Then there are the secondary *change agents*, and I would place **F. LaGard Smith** first in the vanguard. Here is a brother on the Lipscomb Bible faculty who has worshiped six months out of the year with a denominational organ church. The wording of the Lipscomb land deed and the original school charter make this practice of LaGard Smith

unlawful in a common court of law. Surely **Miles Ezell, Jr.**, Lipscomb board chairman, is aware of the fact. We would that he explain this violation of the NBS charter, the Lipscomb farm deed, and more than a hundred years of school and church traditions.

#### POSTSCRIPT

I am not yet finished with the Ira Rice story. I wrote an introduction for the last volume of the Rice biography which is left unfinished. It is my purpose to recreate the information in an article to help insure that the critics will not be able to do to Ira Rice in his death what they failed to do in his life. Ira Y. Rice Jr., never halted between two options. He did not speak half the language of the Jews, and half the language of Ashdod. He would not join the liberal crowd who have rushed out of Jerusalem, gone past Jericho, and are now already in the outskirts of Babylon.

—37141/2 Belmont Blvd.  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

## EVANGELISM AND IRA Y. RICE, JR.

Fred Stancliff For The Bellview Elders

World evangelism is every Christian's responsibility. This is clearly taught in such passages as Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-16. Many Christians teach about world evangelism, but Ira Y. Rice, Jr. was a Christian who not only taught others the importance of world evangelism, but he practiced it in every walk of his daily life. It was very evident in his writings, his preaching and teaching, in his encouragement of others to preach the gospel in countries which they had never seen, and in his daily contact with others as he lived from day to day.

#### WORLD EVANGELISM IN HIS WRITINGS

Evidence of his desire for world evangelism is readily seen in the writings of Ira Y. Rice, Jr. Consider his 27-lesson "Basic Bible Course," which at this time has been translated into 16 languages. Who knows the number of individuals that have been converted from the thousands who have taken this course. For example, it is currently reported that over 300,000 active students are taking this course in India.

Brother Rice saw the need to convince others that evangelism of the world could be accomplished. To fulfill this need, he wrote *We Can Evangelize The World*.

In order to encourage the interest of brethren who wanted to see the world evangelized, brother Rice edited the *Far East/World Evangelism Newsletter* during the period of time that he worked under the sponsorship of the Bellview elders. This publication, with its many pictures and interesting accounts of evangelistic work, has done much to encourage many to go throughout the world as well as to encourage those who could not go to help support those who could.

In recent years it was brother Rice's desire to write his autobiography which could serve as a historical record of his efforts since his youth to spread the gospel. Therefore, in 1998 he published *Pressing Toward The Mark, Volume I*. As brother Rice stated in that volume, it was his intent to devote it mostly to the formative years of his preaching life in the United States. In the year 2001, Volume II was published. Volume II basically covered his missionary work from 1955 to 1965. At the time of his death, brother Rice had accumulated much of the information which he had intended to include in Volume III. He had intended that volume to cover his missionary work and defense of the gospel from 1966 onward. As the Bellview elders met with

brother Rice periodically, they would kid him as to who would write the last chapter of his autobiography. Perhaps in the future someone can do that and publish Volume III. If it cannot be done, one can review the many issues of *Contending For The Faith* and *The Far/East World Evangelism Newsletter* to gain knowledge of the efforts of brother Rice to evangelize the world since the period covered by Volume II.

#### **WORLD EVANGELISM IN HIS PREACHING AND TEACHING**

As brother Rice preached in gospel meetings and taught Bible classes throughout the world, his emphasis on world evangelism could be noted. This was so evident that some who were trying to decide what subjects to assign speakers for a lectureship would say that they might as well assign some subject related to world evangelism to Ira Y. Rice, Jr. They were sure that he would work that into his assignment somewhere.

As brother Rice would teach classes and preach sermons, many of his illustrations were taken from his years of experience in evangelizing the world. It created an interest in those who heard him that few speakers were able to attain.

#### **WORLD EVANGELISM IN HIS ENCOURAGEMENT OF OTHERS TO PREACH TO THE WORLD**

Many individuals have given credit to brother Rice as the one who encouraged them to make the decision to go to foreign countries to preach the gospel. Countries such as China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Russia, Taiwan, Thailand, and others owe much to him for his efforts to persuade others to preach the gospel to the millions in those countries. Many of the congregations in those countries have been started by brother Rice, or by those he influenced to go.

The effect of his influence upon the Bellview elders is seen by their continued sponsorship of his missionary work. For many years they received funds from interested individuals and congregations and distributed them to works in various parts of the world. Also, two of the elders, brother Paul Brantley and brother Fred Stancliff, have

made several evangelistic trips to teach and to preach. Brother Brantley's trips have been to Russia while brother Stancliff and his wife have gone to the Far East countries of India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Tasmania, Thailand, and the Philippines.

#### **WORLD EVANGELISM IN HIS DAILY CONTACT WITH OTHERS**

In his daily contact with various individuals, it appeared that Ira Y. Rice, Jr. was always concerned about the salvation of their souls. It did not matter what country the individual was in. Racial differences, political status, financial status, and the like also made no difference. Brother Rice had the ability and the desire to begin a conversation with the individual and soon the conversation would involve a discussion of religion. Two of our elders, Paul Brantley and Fred Stancliff, have had the privilege of traveling with brother Rice to foreign countries and have watched this take place.

Brother Rice's ability to meet and talk to strangers also was a valuable asset as he went throughout the United States raising funds for world evangelism. His friendly convincing conversations caused many to want to be a part of the work that was being discussed. Few missionaries have raised funds for world evangelism, for their own support, and for the support of other missionaries to the extent that brother Rice did.

The Bellview elders, which currently include brethren Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, and Fred Stancliff, have worked closely with brother Rice as his sponsors from 1978 to 2001, a period of nearly 23 years. During that time, they grew to love and appreciate him for his work for the cause of Christ. They benefited by seeing how brother Rice not only taught world evangelism, but practiced it daily. In his writings, his preaching and teaching, in his encouragement of others to preach the gospel to the whole world, and in his daily contact with others, Ira Y. Rice, Jr. truly was a world evangelist.

—5235 N. Blue Angel Pkwy.  
Pensacola, Florida 32526-8006

## **BLACK STRAP MOLASSES AND THEY SAID WHAT?**

Harrell Davidson

There are so many events in my mind as I remember brother Rice it is difficult to say what is needed under the restrictions of printing this issue of *Contending For The Faith*. I remember like yesterday when he began the paper and even wrote an article in some of the earlier issues when they

were sometimes printed on colored paper. Maybe someone else will recall those days saying the proper things that need saying.

In writing an introduction to his autobiography, I mentioned that my home congregation had a small part in the purchasing of the first property in Singapore. Every congregation with

which I have worked has supported brother Rice in one way or another.

In the mid-sixties he began to come by our home in Arkansas to pay us a visit and catch us up on the work. One day when he had graced us with his presence, my Carrie asked if he would like a cup of coffee. He replied, "Would I ever!" She made a fresh pot



This photo is of the men who make up our Saturday group. Starting at the left, Ira Rice, Kenneth Gossett, Curtis Cates, Harrell Davidson, Toney Smith, Garland Elkins, and Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

of coffee, and before handing Ira a cup of coffee she asked, "What do you like in your coffee?" He said, "I prefer blackstrap molasses, but of course you would not have any of that." You should have seen his face when Carrie reached up in her cabinets and asked him, "How much?" "You mean to tell me you have blackstrap molasses?" he asked. Sure enough, for the rest of his life when he visited our home he wanted his coffee with blackstrap in it. He never forgot, nor did we, that great event in our lives together. In fact, as we purchased five copies of Volume II of *Pressing Toward The Mark* we asked him to inscribe a note to each of our four children and their mates. The fifth and last volume was for Carrie and me. Here is that inscription: "To Harrell and Carrie in memory of all that Blackstrap you put in my coffee, Ira Y. Rice, Jr. March 26, 2001."

Over 40 years and many cups of coffee we laughed and cried together. He would tell mostly of struggles and took no credit for the many great things that were taking place in his work. He

would switch (only a very few times) from one sponsoring congregation to another and we switched with him.

Several years ago he phoned to see if I would be home that day? I told him I would and he said that he was coming for a visit. When he arrived his coffee with blackstrap was waiting on him. He began asking me several questions about things I remembered, and things in which we had been involved in Singapore. I did not know exactly what he was "driving at." Later he presented certain papers from the government of Singapore and asked that I sign them so that they might be registered in Singapore just in case I was ever needed in some legal way. He went on to explain why this step was necessary. We never discussed it again as this was his wish and there was no need for more discussion.

#### THE "WEST TENNESSEE MAFIA"

Sometime within the past 20 or 50 years, several of us who preach in this area of West Tennessee begin to gather monthly at one of our homes, rotating from one home to the next. The origi-

nal group consisted of Ira and Vada Rice, Garland and Corrine Elkins, Curtis and Annette Cates, Alan and Sandra Highers, Robert and Irene Taylor, and Carrie and me. Oh, how we enjoyed being with one another. The month could not pass soon enough for all of us. Ira prepared a new chapter for both Volume I and Volume II of his autobiography for each get-together. He said that was one of the things that pushed and prodded him further in getting those volumes done. Those monthly meetings were so special.

After several years had passed, a brother from this area went to a hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, for surgery. His surgery was successful and he has recovered. However, it was when he came back home from Nashville that he shared with me that a Nashville preacher had told him, "I could have West Tennessee if it were not for..." and the preacher began mentioning all of our names, starting in extreme Northwest Tennessee where we live and going on down to Memphis. We were called, of all things, the "West Tennessee Mafia." Just after receiving the brother's report we had one of our monthly meetings. I related this story to all. Ira spoke up in his usual excited way, "He said WHAT?" Of course, the moniker was not so but the name stuck.

#### PRECIOUS MEMORIES

What an enormous pleasure to have such friends over the years, especially Ira and Vada. He gave us more to laugh about than we could ever recall. On the other hand, we have bowed our heads together and prayed for our vast brotherhood that the tide of liberalism that has ensconced us be stayed. We will still pray that prayer. We will continue to miss our monthly readings from the inimitable Ira Rice. A true friend and fellow soldier of the cross has gone across the great divide. We have great memories that we will cherish. Every time we sing, pray, or just chat, Ira will be in our memories. I do not know that I have ever seen a person who loved souls any more than he did.

"When criticisms are made that are valid, we must **admit** their validity—and try to **correct** those short-comings. But when the solutions suggested lead to **compromise**, they **cannot be received**. Acceptable solutions must lead to the **correction**—rather than the **destruction**—of the church."

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

[*Axe on Root*, Vol. II, last paragraph, p. 200]

—P. O. Box 358  
Obion, Tennessee 38240

# IRA Y. RICE, JR.— GREAT FRIEND AND SUPPORTER OF THE MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

Curtis Cates

One of the greatest encouragers of the Memphis School of Preaching and its work was brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr., outstanding “world evangelist,” Christian of great integrity, faith, and courage, and dear friend. His death in an automobile accident at approximately 7:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 10, 2001, left the School and the Forest Hill congregation in shock, as it did his beloved family and as it did countless faithful brethren world-wide.

His like may never be seen again. Even at age eighty-four, brother Ira had only recently returned from an evangelistic trip to Russia, where he helped preach the pure gospel for the first time in Kamchatka and plant the Lord’s church as well as returning to Murmansk to preach, teach, and encourage the brethren he loved so much. He was getting ready to return to Singapore and environs this December. How many among us have preached in over seventy countries or have crossed the Pacific Ocean more than eighty times carrying the precious gospel to those who need it so desperately?

I was privileged to meet brother Rice at the *World Missions Clinic* of Pinellas Park, Florida. I was a freshman in Alabama Christian College. That was almost forty-two years ago. At that time I could not imagine that this outstanding man of God and I would become fast friends. I could not foresee that we would make two trips to the Far East and one trip to Russia together. How could I know that this veteran missionary would encourage our work so much through the coming years? Especially is this the case regarding his tremendous effort put forth in raising funds for the Memphis School of Preaching.

*First, brother Rice had a profound effect upon the School’s emphasis on world evangelism.* One could not be around him without thinking about souls and thinking about the great commission. Always having stressed the value of souls, the School has courses on both personal evangelism and world evangelism. The students also go on regular campaigns to numerous states each year, in which these preachers receive valuable experience in door knocking, setting up and teaching home Bible studies, and enrolling persons in Bible correspondence courses. At times, the students have opportunities to preach and teach in foreign lands.

Brother Ira would speak in chapel. He would often speak to the classes in world evangelism, giving great urgency to the charge of our Lord to “**preach the gospel to every creature**” (Mark 16:15). He would give copies of his superb book *We Can Evangelize the World* to each student. That fact he made very real to hearers and stirred their hearts to meet the challenge.

Many graduates of the Memphis School of Preaching are now in numerous foreign countries, to a great extent because of the influence of brother Rice. A number of them have started preacher schools and colleges in those lands, much like brother Rice. Brother Ira would often work to raise support for these graduates (and for countless others) and make regular, yearly trips to bolster and encourage those efforts. Indeed, his passing has brought grief to many, many brethren throughout the world.

*Second, brother Rice recruited students for the School, both foreign and domestic.* Those would always be quality students. He often would raise funds for their living expenses while in the School and his encouragement would continue after they returned to their homelands. He appreciated the strong biblical instruction they would receive. And the Forest Hill elders and the administration and faculty of the School appreciated that confidence more than words can express. He gave the same type of encouragement to all others who stand for the truth. He is held in very high esteem by those faithful whose education in the word he helped make possible.

*Third, brother Rice was responsible for much financial support for the School.* When the School was located at Knight Arnold Road, brother and sister Rice gave liberally toward a needed addition to the school building, and he made pictures at the ground-breaking. Some ten years later when the elders saw the urgency of moving to the new location, brother Rice again helped tremendously.

Needing to raise \$900,000 for the building which now houses the Memphis School of Preaching, the School was greatly assisted by brother Rice. On a number of evenings, brother Rice and I talked by telephone to his long-time beloved friends and supporters of Far East World Evangelism work. I will never forget the excitement of those who were called, as they rejoiced to get to talk to brother Rice, whom they had helped to evangelize the world and defend sound doctrine in the “heat of the day.” Among other things, brother Ira would ask, “How old are you now?” Some would answer, “I’m seventy-five,” or “I’m seventy-eight,” or some such. Brother Rice would respond, “That’s a good start!” As a result of those calls and of the hundreds upon hundreds of letters brother Rice wrote on the School’s behalf, because of their profound respect for brother Rice, a good estimate is that over \$150,000 was donated. In fact, the largest single donation received was from a congregation with great confidence in and love for brother Rice, a gift of \$50,000.

When the School was challenged by the granddaughter of brother N. B. Hardeman to build a library building to the glory of God, in honor of her illustrious grandfather, to-



ward which she and her children would give half the construction costs, there was brother Rice to help encourage the needed project and help raise the school's half of the cost!

In addition, when the city of Germantown annexed the property which houses the Forest Hill church and the school and when the property had to be re-zoned in order to erect student housing, there was brother Rice! Brother Ira's speech before the Germantown mayor and aldermen at the second reading (before which meeting the alderman had pre-determined that they would reject the re-zoning) was the climax of eight speeches on the School's behalf. It was so powerful that it "brought the house down" and changed the minds of the aldermen. Without him, the great likelihood is that the long planned student housing would not reach fruition.

I have been blessed to see brother and sister Rice honored with special dinners in Singapore and Malaysia, honored with a dinner at the Memphis School of Preaching,

and elsewhere. They have been honored in countless other countries as well as in this country, as in the appreciation dinner at the Bellview church in Pensacola, who had his oversight for many years. "Honor to whom honor is due." And yet, this humble, unselfish servant of the Lord never sought such honor and recognition. He just wanted to serve the Lord. Brother Ira's passing leaves a great void in the Lord's work; however, his spirit, faith, and courage lives on in very many of us who were impacted by his noble life of service and so in the Memphis School of Preaching and other like schools as we seek to train more and more evangelists to go throughout the world.

The Ira Y. Rice, Jr. Scholarship Fund has been established at the Memphis School of Preaching in honor of brother Rice to which contributions are appreciated and acknowledged.

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

## IRA Y. RICE, JR.— A LEGEND IN HIS OWN TIME

Garland Elkins

It was my privilege to be a friend of brother Ira Rice for many years. I do not believe that he could have chosen a better wife than Vada. They and their children honored me by inviting me to speak on the occasion of their fortieth wedding anniversary and again on their fiftieth wedding anniversary. At the time of brother Rice's death, they had been married fifty-four years. They were blessed with four daughters and one son.

Brother Rice was a great gospel preacher. He was both faithful and able. He loved the truth, and he loved to preach it. He was the best known

and the most widely traveled missionary of our day, having preached the gospel for some seventy years and in seventy countries. He traveled all the way around the world eight times and half-way around the world seventy-nine times in evangelistic efforts. He crossed the Atlantic Ocean many times, and he crossed the Pacific Ocean eighty-one times.

He was a great defender of the truth. Few men have ever been more outspoken in the defence of the truth. He was also an outstanding editor and journalist. Brother **Batsell Barrett Baxter** once told him, "You write in technicolor." Like Paul he was "set for the defence of the gospel" (Philippians 1:16), and like Paul he did not give place "for an hour" (Galatians 2:5) to error. His three volumes of *The Axe on the Root* constitute a classic col-

lection and not only serve as a great defence of the truth, but they also contain a vast amount of wealth of the history of the church in his generation. His latest literary efforts resulted in two marvelous volumes entitled *Pressing Toward the Mark: Volumes I and II*. These books are, "An Autobiography by Ira Y. Rice, Jr." They should be in the library of every Christian, read and reread. Brethren **Archie W. Luper** and **Dalton P. Ellis** wrote the introductions to volume I, and brethren **Curtis A. Cates** and **Harrell Davidson** wrote the introductions to volume II. He was planning his third and last volume, and he was considering entitling it *Two Sides of the Same Coin*. He had asked brother **J. E. Choate** and me to write the introductions for that proposed volume. I had planned to entitle my introduction *Ira Y. Rice Jr.: A Legend In His Own Time*. I now refer to him as: *Ira Y. Rice Jr.: A Legend in Life and Death*.

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

---

*"... This book truly strikes at the root of a present day trend. I appreciate your courage in doing so, and I am grateful for the manner in which it is done. I am glad you had the courage to name the people of whom you were speaking. . . The warning for all of us is in order."*

—Comments by the late H.A. Dixon President of Freed Hardeman College regarding *Axe on the Root I*

# IRA Y. RICE, JR.

## 1917-2001

Barry M. Grider

Paul the apostle wrote, **“But continue in the things thou hast learned and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus”** (II Timothy 2:14-15). Brother Rice often mentioned how we should not pass over quickly the words “the things.” Commenting on his own childhood rearing, brother Rice appreciated the fact he had been surrounded by things that pertained to his soul’s salvation. I, too, am grateful to have been reared in a similar environment. However, as I stated at the funeral service, the Rice family will probably never know how much influence they exerted over me in my formative years.

### HIS INFLUENCE OVER ME

I could listen and sing for hours the songs found on the four albums of the Rice family singers, especially the album, “Beyond the Sunset.” Even as a boy I understood there was a home beyond these realms below, and it has always been a joy to sing about its glory and beauty. I can faintly recall the veteran missionary from Southeast Asia visiting our congregation and telling us about his near death experiences at the hands of communists in Singapore.

Throughout my teenage years my family received the monthly periodical, *Contending For The Faith*. Through its pages, the editor warned concerned brethren as to what was happening in churches of Christ brotherhood wide, especially with regards to the Crossroads movement and the Boston movement. This information served me well later on when I enrolled at the University of Alabama and started attending the University Church of Christ in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. I knew almost from the outset that its campus ministry was rooted in Crossroads philosophy. Today that same congregation is one of the most rank in our brotherhood.

So, when I entered the Memphis School of Preaching in August 1990, Ira Y. Rice, Jr., and his work was very much appreciated by this young preacher in training. In fact, since I had never met him, he was really a larger than life figure to me. Imagine, then, my amazement when he and sister Rice seated themselves across the aisle from me, at the old Knight Arnold building, one Sunday night shortly after I had enrolled in school. After the service, I quickly made my way over to introduce myself to a man I considered to be a spiritual giant. Neither of us realized on that particular evening, that despite the forty-seven year difference in our ages, a friendship would blossom over the next decade that I believe was similar to that of the apostle Paul

and Timothy. Indeed, brother Rice became my leading mentor and a father in the faith.

### WE TRAVEL TOGETHER

Over the last eight years, I have traveled with him to preach the gospel in a host of countries, including Singapore, the Philippines, Taiwan, Pakistan, Hong Kong, China, Cambodia, Malaysia, India, and Thailand. I was privileged to see first hand the work he began in Singapore and to tour the beautiful facilities of Four Seas Bible College, which he established and which continues to train preachers to this day.

Perhaps in recent years he was most pleased with the success of the gospel in India. He often recalled how he persuaded the 58 year old Canadian **J. C. Bailey** to go do extensive missionary work in that large country of almost a billion souls. When brother Bailey complained he was too old to go, brother Rice responded, “Life begins at 58.” I have seen tears roll down the face of brother Rice when told that there are over one million converts to Christ now in India. His missionary efforts took him into dangerous places as well. He would often say, *“the Lord did not tell us just go to safe and comfortable places to preach, but to the world.”* My faith and courage have been strengthened because I traveled with him into some of those places, such as

**MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING**

- Two year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966

Applications now being accepted  
Call or write for application

**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3960 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38126-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
Fax (901) 751-8098

Communist China, Islamic Pakistan, and the war torn country of Cambodia. His greatest joy was to see souls respond to the Lord's invitation, and thousands did so under his influence and the influence of those he converted.

#### HIS ENEMIES

However, the life of Ira Y. Rice, Jr., will not be celebrated by many among churches of Christ. In fact, some will no doubt breathe a sigh of relief that he is gone. The reason is because of the year 1966, when brother Rice published his first volume of *Axe on the Root*, which exposed some of the liberalism that was already taking place in our brotherhood. Two more volumes soon followed. It then became apparent to brother Rice that a monthly periodical was needed if our brotherhood was going to be adequately warned about what was taking place, especially among our Christian colleges.

When brother Rice exposed **Athens Clay Pullias**, then president of David Lipscomb College, in my hometown of Bridgeport, Alabama, the brethren just about ran him out of town. It was not that the congregation was liberal, nor is it so now, but as brother Rice often stated, "*some brethren just will not be warned.*" However, HE WAS RIGHT! Pullias even died in a denomination. Lipscomb University has long since left the way of truth.

I have always found it perplexing that while many preach the pure gospel, they will not contend earnestly for it. In fact, some of these brethren will defend the liberals over those who stand in opposition to them. Since brother Rice stood opposed to every form of liberalism and radicalism, he was therefore hated by many in the brotherhood. As a result, he never received the credit he deserved from our brethren. I can attest to this fact, however, having the approval of men mattered very little to brother Rice.

#### HIS PASSION FOR LOST SOULS

When I think of brother Rice I shall always reflect upon his passion for soul saving and defense of the pure gospel. His life reminds me of another, who, two thousand years ago, traveled the known world to make the message of salvation known, and who at the same time was unafraid to "**mark them which cause division and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned**" (Romans 16:17). There was a remarkable similarity between the apostle Paul and brother Rice. Had you really known him, you would have seen the likeness. In fact, brother **Keith Mosher** stated, "*I believe had brother Rice been alive during the first century, he might have been chosen to write the book of Acts.*"

#### THAT "LAST STEP OF THE WAY"

At the time of his death, brother Rice had just completed a gospel meeting with the Shepherd, Texas congregation. While there, of course, he sold and autographed copies of volumes 1 and 2 of his autobiography, *Pressing Toward the Mark*. Not only are these two books an immense pleasure to read, they are a must for any Bible student interested in the history of churches of Christ during the twentieth century and for all who are committed to worldwide evangelism. In the early morning of October 10, 2001, he said goodbye to brother **Ed Lee**, host evangelist of the gospel meeting, and headed north on Highway 59 en route to Memphis. However, just a few miles up the road he collided with a semi truck, which was stretched across the north bound lanes of the highway, and as a result he was swept out into eternity. He would not arrive at his earthly home that day, but he did arrive at his spiritual home. Upon hearing the news, **Celicia** and I quickly made our way to the Rice home so that we could be close to sister **Vada**. What a remarkable Christian woman she is. Her faith and courage have helped to carry all of us through this ordeal.

The two hour funeral service for brother Rice was conducted at the Forest Hill building, Monday, October 15. As the many friends and loved ones entered the auditorium, tapes of the Rice Family Singers could be heard playing in the background. During the service the congregation sang seven of brother Rice's favorite hymns. Also, the following brethren delivered eulogies: **Garland Elkins, Dub McClish, Paul Brantley, Gideon Rodriguez, David Brown, and Curtis Cates**. This writer delivered a brief message near the close of the service. Interment followed at Memorial Park South Woods cemetery, just a few miles from the church building. Brother Rice is survived by his wife, **Vada**; daughters, **Ramona, Lynette, Renee, and Rochelle**; a son, **Ira III**. Please pray for all of them.

With the passing of brother Rice, there closes another chapter in my own life, also. I will never be the same for having known him. During times when I am discouraged and feel like giving up, I will remember him and keep pressing on toward the mark. So, old friend, with tear stained eyes and a breaking heart, I bid you farewell. Yet, for the rest of my days I shall look forward to that time when we are reunited, just "beyond the sunset."

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

## Rejoice And Weep

A unique 320 page book filled with wedding ceremonies and funeral outlines by faithful authors. Includes 30 pages of wedding and funeral helps. \$13.25\* each

— Other books available —

**Sermon Outlines** by *Roy J. Hearn*. 136 full outlines with 30 pages of tributes from family, faculty, students, & friends of brother Hearn. \$6.25\* each.

**Seeing the Invisible** by *William S. Cline*. 13 outlines with discussion questions. Great for Bible classes, sermons, and personal study. \$6.25\* each.

\* prices include shipping

Make checks payable to : M.S.O.P. Alumni Association  
648 Rosebud Ln., Winder, GA 30680  
770-867-9643 / SozoZoe@aol.com

# IRA Y. RICE, JR.— SOME THINGS I BELIEVE ABOUT HIM

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

The sudden and tragic death of my brother and friend Ira Y. Rice, Jr., certainly was as big a shock as any other I have experienced in life. Knowing that he died in a wrecked vehicle also caused me to recall an incident from his autobiography, *Pressing Toward the Mark Volume I*, of which brother Rice related that:

Earlier — in the year 1929 just before the Great Depression struck that October — Mother bought our first family car. Neither she nor my father knew how to drive. Dad was just sure he knew how. In fact, he told Mother, "I'll show you how to drive this car." He did — approximately ten feet straight into a telephone pole. I had just turned 12. Even though it was illegal to drive under 16 years of age, necessity prevailed. One of our neighbors showed me how. By stacking cushions four deep under me behind the wheel, hopefully I looked tall enough for 16, even though I just barely could reach the pedals. (Page 87).

## TRAVELING FOR THE GOSPEL

Brother Rice drove his first car at age twelve and his last at age eighty-four. How many miles he traveled preaching, raising funds for missions and missionary work, raising funds for other missionaries, editing his paper (*Contending for the Faith*), speaking on lectureships, and driving to and from airports so that he could board a plane to go overseas to do more mission work only the Lord knows. It seems that brother Rice never was **not** traveling. Every time I saw him at services it seems as if I was welcoming him back from some trip. I miss that most of all when I realize that never again can anyone welcome him back home after some extended travel nor be inspired and encouraged, by his efforts, to do more oneself. Brother Rice was as committed to spending his life reaching the lost as any other Christian I have known. Because of his singular focus on missions, there are three things I believe about him.

I believe that members of churches of Christ owe a huge "thank-you" to sister **Vada Rice** and the entire family. The Rices were married for fifty-four years, but because he traveled so much they were not together for more than about one-half of those decades. Sister Vada, in fact, said when told of brother Rice's death that she had thought something could happen because he was gone so much. The sacrifices Vada and the family have made deserve the gratitude of all their brothers and sisters in Christ. In fact, brother Rice evidently knew all too well what was sacrificed by his family, for he dedicated volume one of his autobiography mentioned above to Vada, "*who traveled with me through 35 countries and*

*around the world trying to fulfill the Great Commission*" (page 4).

## A WRITER

A second thing I believe about brother Rice is that had he been a first-century Christian, he was of such talent that God might have chosen him to write the book of "Acts"! I asked brother Rice (who in his lifetime edited two papers, wrote several books, and developed huge amounts of study material for a twenty-seven lesson Bible course) on one occasion what makes a good writer. He told me that good journalistic effort requires a "fact and a feeling." Having read his earlier *Axe on the Root* volumes, all of his *Contending for the Faith* periodicals, and both volumes of his autobiography, I know that he was as interesting an author as any other I have read. In fact, I read volume one of *Pressing Toward the Mark* straight through by staying up one whole night to do so.

## "RICE HERE!"

In the third place I believe that when brother Rice came to the gates of paradise (if there be "gates") and someone asked "Who is there," he replied, "Rice here!" It was his habit to answer the phone in that fashion, and the two words spoke volumes about his personality. Brother Rice always to the point, never given to ostentatiousness, and even brief in his prayers. It seemed when he prayed that you were listening to one who was in constant communication with God anyway and that he was just adding a few more words to the continuous prayer.

May God bless Vada and the family for sharing this most unique life with all of us, and may all of us be inspired by brother Rice's life to be more focused on souls. Truly a most unforgettable, talented, and caring character has departed, and I for one do mourn his death, but I believe he is with the Master.

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

Please Contact Us Regarding Your  
CHANGE OF ADDRESS  
Each returned address costs  
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH  
55¢



# IRA Y. RICE, JR.— GREAT STEWARD OF TIME

Bobby Liddell

Ira Y. Rice, Jr. more efficiently and consistently made good use of time than any other man I have ever known. His contemporaries note with wonder the magnitude and multitude of his accomplishments. History shall record his life's work as that which two or three men could claim as their combined output with due satisfaction. Such a devoted approach to wringing from every day the maximum amount of useful moments stands as a great memorial to his commitment and as a worthy example to all who would do their best for the Lord (I Corinthians 4:2). What motivated him to strain the bounds of every hour to fill each day with efforts diligently set forth to further the cause of Christ?

*Love* motivated brother Rice to use every possible moment in the savior's service—love for the Lord (Romans 5:8-9; Ephesians 1:7), for those for whom the Lord died (John 1:29; I John 2:2), and for the church which Jesus purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28). He loved his faithful preaching brethren. His love was genuine, joyful and giving, and manifested itself readily.

*Urgency* motivated brother Rice to work. Hesitation and procrastination, which are plagues upon our brotherhood, were not welcomed to make their abode in his life, nor were they even allowed to visit. Whereas too many plan in the present to work in the future, he planned for the future by working in the present, and did so with an intensity so uncommon it scared some people and was resented

by others. One did not have to be around him long to see and hear the urgency he had for his work.

*Dedication* motivated brother Rice to race the fleeting hands of time's unceasing advance. No distance was too far to go to tell people the good news of Christ. He preached going and coming as well as while there. No task was too difficult when souls were at stake. He would figure a way to accomplish it. No expense was too great in obeying the Master's command to: "**Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature**" (Mark 16:15). Brother Rice would come up with the money to do it. If one door closed, he would pry open another. He never lost his focus and never flagged in his determination.

*Optimism* motivated brother Rice to search eagerly for and hold to the many opportunities presented him. He was a man of boundless optimism which was not misguided or naive, but was firmly grounded in his deep faith. He believed the church really could accomplish what God set for its work and purpose. He kept on believing even when many did not share his hopeful foresight and when some opposed him. He even convinced many of his pessimistic brethren!

The *greatness* of the task motivated brother Rice to pack his years with work which glorified God. For decades, he preached across the United States and around the world, traveling almost without stop. He wrote prolifically and corresponded with thousands of friends and supporters constantly. He took every opportunity to encourage men to preach, and established and supported schools to train men. He knew the world is a big place and time is short, and that the greatness of the task was magnified by the swiftly moving sands of time.

Brother Rice had planned to live longer, but time ran out. He had hoped to live to the age of Joshua (110), and had plans for another twenty plus years of work. Though he left unfinished work, he left no unused time. His godly life and tremendous example blessed us, and we trust, because of his faithful stewardship, he has gained an eternity of rest from his labors (Revelation 14:13).

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

## Reminder!

If your address label has the date  
01/01/2002

**IT IS TIME TO RENEW!**

Send your renewal to:  
**Contending For The Faith**  
P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383

# IRA Y. RICE, JR.— DEDICATED, OPTIMISTIC EVANGELIST

Billy Bland

Although I do not recall the first time I met brother Ira Rice, one thing is for sure, I will never forget him. While brother Rice was known to many for his efforts in contending for the faith, he was also a very highly effective and active world evangelist. He exemplified the same mentality as Paul—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Brother Rice was one who believed "*We can evangelize the world.*"

## "HE SAID GO"

Back in September of 1993, it was my duty to arrange a mission trip for thirteen of us to Murmansk, Russia. Brother Rice was one of the thirteen. Included in my duties was to arrange visas and airlines tickets for the group. A few weeks before our departure I received word from Russia that Moscow had issued a statement that Russia would no longer allow evangelists into their country. Entering into Russia was new to most of us (I had only been there twice previously), and I was not sure what to do. Knowing brother Rice's experience as a missionary, I phoned him and asked his opinion. I informed him that I was troubled about purchasing thirteen airline tickets and thirteen visas and then losing the money. Brother Rice's reply was; "I don't understand some people. The Lord said go and preach the Gospel to every creature. I don't know about you but I expect to see thirteen people on board the plane." I knew exactly to whom brother Rice was referring when he said "some people." My reply to brother Rice was, "That is exactly my feeling." We boarded the plane, and thirteen people went to Murmansk, Russia! This is typical of the dedication and commitment that brother Rice possessed in mission work.

## "WE ONLY NEED ONE CAR"

On another occasion, brother Rice was aware that one of the foreign students was bringing his family and coming to Memphis School of Preaching and was in need of transportation while attending school. Brother Rice called me with the following request; "Brother Bland, where you preach Sunday, would you announce that we are in need of someone to donate a car for this family?" I was somewhat taken back by this statement because I never thought about asking anyone to donate a car! My reply to brother Rice was, "Brother Rice, where I am preaching Sunday there are only about thirty people." His quick reply was; "That's OK, we only need one car." Although no one where I preached donated a car, brother Rice did receive two offers from elsewhere. Brother Rice was one who knew "we can" accomplish things with the Lord's blessing. The above two personal instances have taught me a great lesson! I have learned that God's people can do a lot more than we are doing.

Brother Rice would go anywhere, with anyone (as long as he was sound in the faith), at anytime to preach the Gospel. That commitment would take him around the world. He and his good wife Vada would travel to Singapore, India, Philippines, Russia, etc., etc., preaching and teaching God's word. Not only would he go to these places, but his works there would be highly successful. Because of his efforts, there is a "Four Seas Bible College" in Singapore. Also, there would be many converted by his Basic Bible Course in India, as well as elsewhere. Brother and sister Rice's influence literally reaches around the world. Below is an excerpt from a letter that sister Vada recently received from Ullas Nair, a member of the Lord's church in Singapore.

It was with the great shock that we heard of the passing of brother Rice. We in Jurong and Lim Ah Pin COC had hoped to see him again in December this year for the Annual Asian Bible Lectureship. Both churches combined to hold a memorial service on 14 Oct at Jurong at 7.30 pm at which I was Mcee.... It lasted 3 hours, with exhortations from brother Eddy EE, David Chew and Kwan Tai Choom. They reflected on brother Rice's life, his selfless contribution to the Cause of Christ in the Far East, esp in S'pore and four Seas College. The church was filled with members from both churches.... We miss brother Rice as our pioneer for the Lord's work in S'pore: his grandfatherly smile, complete faith in God, his encouragement to the brethren here, his love for durians, his recollections of S'pore in the 50's.

Below is an excerpt from a letter to sister Rice from the Kabiati and Joshua Gootams in Kakinada, India:

We held a memorial service for him here in Kakinada on 19th, Friday. It so happened our state run buses went on strike from the day before. It is still going on. But we were pleasantly surprised to see more than 400 preachers in attendance, representing about 800 congregations in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Ira became a symbol of strength and love to all of them the last few years of his service in India. They especially remember his untiring efforts to take relief by hand to many remote villages when a huge hurricane hit them in 1996. And his Basic Bible Course made him a household name in millions of homes all over this state and Orissa and rest of the country. It is because of his efforts we were able to place 12,000 Bibles per year in that many homes, most of them Hindu... This past week alone saw 17 people obey the gospel due to BBC.

It was a genuine pleasure to have had the privilege of associating with brother Rice. He autographed my copy of his book: *We Can Evangelize The World*, with these words; "We can so let's do."

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

# IRA Y. RICE, JR.— BROTHER AND FRIEND

Bruce R. Curd

My heart is deeply saddened at the tragic automobile accident that took the life of our beloved brother and friend. The same has been said of countless others before him, but “truly a giant has fallen in Israel.”

## MAN PROPOSES, BUT GOD DISPOSES

Brother Rice left this world, I am sure, as he would have wanted, still on his own two feet, and having just concluded a gospel meeting but a few hours before. Some days prior to this his good wife, Vada, informed me that upon his return, they would journey to Lubbock for the upcoming lectureship program; and that early in December, he would leave for Singapore for further mission work and to see how the church in that area was doing.

Such was not to be. Man proposes, but God disposes in his own good way. But here was one brother that refused to “rust” out; he chose rather to “wear” out. Though more than four years past the fourscore mark, and though he ate a “handful” of pills daily, his “eye was not dim, nor his natural strength abated” (Deuteronomy 34:7).

## THE “WORDSMITH”

Ira was both loved and hated by some in our great brotherhood; loved by countless scores, and hated by a few who could not move him from his unflinching stand for truth. He was always in the heat of battle, and on the front lines for truth. Gentle as a lamb in his demeanor, yet when the truth was assailed his voice could be heard as the roar of a lion across the land. Being a professional journalist in his early years, Ira wielded a mighty pen. Someone once said that he “wrote in technicolor.” Brilliant is perhaps the best way to describe his ability with the pen. His Herculean sentences must have fallen with thunderous reverberations upon the heads and hearts of all perverters and compromisers of truth. His diction, his sentence structure and his word choices were always perfect for the occasion. He wrote with clarity and distinctiveness, and one did not have to guess about what was meant in anything he wrote. Choice nouns must have crowded at the portals of his fertile brain as they clamored to be next used. Colorful adjectives and meaningful verbs marched in tuneful cadence across the lines of his manuscript knowing that each would be placed at the precise place and in the proper order where they would be most useful and meaningful. Truly all of the seven parts of the King’s English must have joined in singing the Hallelujah Chorus at the very thought of helping to convey the mind of this master penman. And write he did! His notable series on *AXE ON THE ROOT* were all superbly done and were true to the book. Then for nearly three decades he edited the great magazine *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH*, which contains some of the best editorial work ever written by man, as well as many other

fine articles written by able brethren. Lastly, his proposed trio of works on his own life that he titled, *PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK*, fell short of completion by his untimely passing. The second of these masterful works has only recently been presented to the brotherhood, with the third most assuredly in the works. It is to be hoped that some able brother, or Vada, his capable and worthy companion, will complete this threesome in due time.

## ONE OF THE BEST OF THE RACE

Brother Ira was in my home on a number of occasions. Once in North Georgia when he held a meeting. He was a delightful and most welcomed guest in our home. My first wife, now deceased, was also a Rice. When we told him this, he remarked, “Bruce, you sure have good taste.” More recently he visited the two small congregations where I now preach along with Gideon Rodriguez, director of the school of preaching in Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines, where they were seeking funds for that good work. He at that time again visited in our home now in Marion, North Carolina. It was a genuine pleasure to have them come our way.

Brother Rice has left us all a legacy. He loved the truth. He stood for the truth. He wrote the truth and he preached the truth until his dying day. He was also, along with his entire family, a master of song. Some of all of his good works are left for generations yet unborn to hear and enjoy.

Thank God that brother Ira had the vision and the foresight to leave his greatest work, *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH*, to continue under the capable editorship of brother David P. Brown. In my judgment no better successor could have been chosen. Brother Brown also wields a powerful pen as the editorials in *CFTF* and other articles clearly show. His ability on the polemic platform is likewise well known and commends him highly to faithful brethren. The judgment and foresight of brother Rice is powerfully demonstrated in his selection of brother Brown. My prayer is that David will continue to “stand in the gap” and hold the banner high for many years to come as editor and publisher of *CFTF*.

May God continue to bless Vada, Ira’s dear wife of many years, with all of their children.

Ira now belongs to the ages, but he will long live in the hearts and lives of those who really knew him and knew what a big heart he possessed.

In closing I quote the words of brother Thomas W. Phillips, who, in his book, *The Church of Christ*, refers to himself simply as A Layman, and then makes application.

Of Solomon and Paul he wrote, “Solomon at the close of his life said, ‘How dieth the wise man? As a fool....I hated all my labor...seeing I must leave it’ to another man; ‘and

# 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 Hateher, 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 Forcst 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, Bary Grider, Evangelist.

**Rockwood**—Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun: 10, 11 a.m., Wed: 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

### —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.

*DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. Mail All Advertisements to: Contending For the Faith, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383.*

who knoweth whether he will be a wise man or a fool.” But Paul’s last words have come ringing down the ages, and will go on and on until they die away on the shores of eternity: ‘I have fought a good fight,...I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown.’ Rest, Paul, in peace in the stormless beyond—in the land of the fadeless and deathless—the wisest, greatest, and best of the race—the apostle, prophet, and martyr of God.

A portion of Phillips’ tribute to Paul might also be applied to Ira thusly, he “fought a good fight...he kept the

faith...henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of life.” Rest, now, Ira, in peace in the stormless beyond—in the land of the fadeless and deathless—one of the best of the race: a preacher, writer, singer, missionary extraordinary, a husband, father, friend and brother, indeed!

—64 Caraway Dr.  
Marion, North Carolina 28752



# I REMEMBER IRA RICE

Darrell Conley

I remember my friend Ira Rice. It is difficult to think that I shall not see him again here in this life.

I first met Ira at the Freed-Hardeman Lectures in the early 1970s. I remember standing behind him while he conducted an *ad lib* debate with **Ralph Sweet**, opposing his plain, but incipient liberalism. I remember putting my two cents worth in to back up Ira (as if he needed it), since I had sung in a quartet with Ralph in the early 1960s and knew then where he and his publishing house were headed.

I remember Ira inviting me to speak in a lectureship at the congregation he preached for in San Francisco (one of the first lectureships I was ever invited to participate in). I remember the Monday I flew to San Francisco as one of the longest days I ever spent. Getting up in Atlanta at 5:00 a.m. (Eastern Time), I flew to San Francisco, arriving there at 11:00 a.m. (Pacific Time). The lectures were first-rate, as one would expect of lectures directed by Ira Rice. They dealt with the many problems of liberalism that the church was beginning to face. In the evening there were not two, but three lectures with no time limit. As a result we did not dismiss until about 10:30 p.m. That would have been 1:30 a.m. in Atlanta.

After the lectures that night, brother **Bill Coss** wanted to see Telegraph Hill. So **sister Coss** and **sister Rice** got in the back seat of Ira's mid-size car, and Bill and Ira got in the front seat. I was to spend the night with Ira, so I went with them. I rode in the front seat between Ira and Bill, neither of whom were small men. I was larger than both. At the time I weighed about 350 pounds. As a result I sat "scrunched up" trying not to spread out onto Ira and Bill for the hour and thirty minutes it took us to go up on Telegraph Hill, look around, take brother and sister Coss back downtown to their hotel, and then drive back out to the suburbs to the Rice's home. By the time I got in bed I had been up almost 24 hours! That is just one of the minor reasons I remember Ira Rice.

The next morning on the way to the church building, we picked up two passengers. One was a brother whose name I do not remember. He sat in the back seat. I sat in the front seat with Ira. Our second stop was to pick up **Bill Cline**. I have mentioned how much I weighed. Brother Cline probably outweighed even me! He got in the back seat. Ira made jokes about the situation all the way to the building. At lectures on numerous occasions through the years, Ira would get up at the end of one of my lectures and tell of this car ride. The details changed with every telling! Soon he had Bill Cline and me riding in the back seat of the car, and tipping the rear end of the car down so far, Ira said he could hardly see over the steering wheel! I'm sure he remembered it like this. In fact, he told this so often, now I question my memory of it.

I remember and appreciated the invitation that Ira extended for me to be on the editorial staff of this paper. Although, as far as I am concerned, it has been mostly an honorary position, since I have contributed only a few articles to it. But I am proud to have my name appear in it each month and to have had it associated with the name of Ira Rice.

## THE APOSTASY

The church today is not the church in which I grew up; the church I began preaching for 47 years ago; the church my father began preaching for in 1932. It has changed and the greater part of it has gone into apostasy. But how much greater this apostasy might have been had it not been for Ira Rice and his warnings and documentation of the current falling away. We will never know in this life just how influential his contending for the faith has been.

I owe Ira a great debt of gratitude for allowing me to be associated in many of his projects. But I am grateful most of all for being allowed to know Ira Rice.

—5307 Vista Court  
San Antonio, TX 78247

---

## THE SOLDIER

*In Memory of Ira Y. Rice, Jr.*

*A soldier's life  
Was mixed with pain.  
Each day the trials  
Seemed to rain.*

*His faith was shown  
Through all the years.  
His love was shown  
Through all the tears.*

*The fight for right  
Kept him strong.  
On he toiled  
Amidst the wrong.*

*His final fight  
Was on the field.  
Still late in life  
He did not yield.*

*He went to war  
From day to day.  
His life he gave  
To win the fray.*

*He gave it all  
For Christ above.  
He showed us all  
Just how to love.*

*He cared not what  
The world did think.  
With each battle  
Came more strength.*

*The soldier now rests  
His battles are o'er  
His soul is at peace  
To fight no more.*

—Corey Barnette  
(2nd year student Mem-  
phis School of Preaching)

16<sup>TH</sup> Annual  
**Shenandoah Lectures**  
 February 15-18, 2002

# Introducing the Prophets and Their Message (2)

Feb. 15, 2002 Friday	Feb. 16, 2002 Saturday	Feb. 17, 2002 Sunday	Feb. 18, 2002 Monday
9:00 AM What Doth The Lord Require Of Thee? <i>H. D. Simmons</i>	9:00 AM Rend Your Hearts, Not Your Garments <i>Trevor Parker</i>	9:30 AM Amos <i>Johnny Ramsey</i>	9:00 AM Self Destruction - A Lack Of Knowledge <i>Matt Gibson</i>
10:00 AM Hate The Evil - Love The Good <i>John Moore</i>	10:00 AM The Company Of The Concerned <i>Dan Flournoy</i>	10:30 AM A Spiritual Famine In The Land <i>Johnny Ramsey</i>	10:00 AM Obadiah <i>Dave Rogers</i>
11:00 AM Redemption As Seen In The Prophets <i>Jerry Moffitt</i>	11:00 AM Jonah <i>Carl McCann</i>	12:00 PM Lunch Break	11:00 AM Hosea <i>Carl Garner</i>
12:00 PM Lunch Break	12:00 PM Lunch Break	1:30 PM Jehovah's Fountain Provided <i>Richard Melson</i>	12:00 PM Lunch Break
1:30 PM God's Concern For The Nations <i>Brian Gochenour</i>	1:30 PM Zephaniah <i>Michael Wyatt</i>	2:30 PM Nahum <i>Allen Weakland</i>	1:30 PM God's Great Compassion <i>Darrell Conley</i>
2:30 PM Robbing God - Stealing From Self <i>Richard Massey</i>	2:30 PM God's Providence And The Prophets <i>Robert Johnson</i>	3:30 PM Haggai <i>Ben Moseley</i>	2:30 PM The Minor Prophets On The Messiah <i>Kenneth Ratcliff</i>
3:30 PM Zechariah <i>Steve Lloyd</i>	3:30 PM Habakkuk <i>Kevin Rhodes</i>	3:30 PM - FOR LADIES ONLY - Fellowhelpers To The Truth <i>Iris Ramsey</i>	3:30 PM Jehovah's Concern For Social Justice <i>Tim Kidwell</i>
4:30 PM Dinner Break	3:30 PM - FOR LADIES ONLY - Heart Matters <i>Cherie Vestal</i>	4:30 PM Dinner Break	4:30 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM The Just Shall Live By Faith <i>Robert R. Taylor, Jr.</i>	4:30 PM Dinner Break	7:00 PM The Demand For Personal Inventory <i>Ken Hope</i>	7:00 PM Micah <i>Dub McClish</i>
8:00 PM Prepare To Meet Your God <i>B. J. Clarke</i>	7:00 PM Loving God - Disturbing Men <i>Bill Burke</i>	8:00 PM The Day Of The Lord <i>Don Walker</i>	8:00 PM Malachi <i>Mike Vestal</i>
	8:00 PM Joel <i>George Reed</i>		

*Shenandoah Church of Christ*

11026 Wurzbach • San Antonio, TX 78230

210.696.5532 • Fax: 210.696.5560 • E-mail: shenandoahchurch@juno.com

# IRA Y. RICE, Jr.—REFLECTIONS

Eddie Whitten

**MISSIONARY:** The definition of the word, “Missionary,” was personified in the life of Ira Rice and his faithful wife, Vada. Many critics of Ira Rice railed on him because of his writings and unwavering defense of the Gospel of Christ. It is easy to sit in our chairs of ease and criticize those who are busy doing what needs to be done. They are called “arm chair quarterbacks.” They are the ones who sit on the sidelines and boo the efforts of those who are doing what they could not or would not do in a hundred years. Ira did what needed to be done in spite of, rather than because of, his adversaries.

Much of the world has heard of the Christ because of the work of Ira Rice. Some courageous and faithful servants had done much service in taking the gospel to foreign lands before Ira came on the scene. Men such as **George S. Benson** and **J. M. McCaleb** and a few others had preceded brother Rice into China and Japan. Their works do follow them. They are to be so highly commended for their dedication especially in the early times when foreign evangelism was just beginning to explore the foreboding reaches of the Far East. Ira felt the challenge of taking the gospel to the world. He and Vada and children went to Singapore. He established congregations of the Lord’s church on that island nation. Two of those congregations remain strong and vibrant in the proclamation of the gospel today. Located in one of the congregations is the *Four Seas College* established by brother Rice. From this college many trained students are now preaching in a wide area of South-east Asia.

Ira was responsible for the legendary work of brother **J. C. Bailey** in the nation of India. Recognizing the desperate need for evangelism among the teeming millions of lost souls in that great country, and knowing that an American could not gain a work visa, Ira contacted brother Bailey, a Canadian, who agreed to come to India to work toward getting the church established. Brother Bailey obliged and the results are staggering. Estimates range from one to three million Christians now in India due to the vision of Ira and the untiring work of brother Bailey.

Ira was one of the first of American missionaries to go into the former Soviet Union when it became possible to do so. The work in Riga, Latvia and in Murmansk, Russia; in the Ukraine and just recently in the far eastern reaches beyond Siberia, are all the beneficiaries of the persistent dedication of this faithful servant. He made many trips into Communist China in the effort to spread the word of the kingdom, as well. Space does not allow for reflecting on the hardships, obstacles, challenges and victories Ira experienced in his relentless pursuit of his goal of evangelizing all nations.

**GOSPEL PREACHER:** Brother Rice was nearing his 70th year of preaching the gospel of Christ. Influenced heavily by his father and pioneer preachers of the early

20th century, Ira began his service to the Master. Preaching in various places, under varying degrees of opposition, some rather hostile, Ira nevertheless persisted in preaching the truth of God’s word while opposing religious error. These circumstances occasionally resulted in his quick exit under the protection of faithful brethren to escape the threat of bodily harm. His preaching was to the point, unmistakable, uncompromising and biblical. Those who heard him either accepted his preaching with gratitude for his candid delivery of the saving message of Jesus, or rejected his preaching without grounds for response.

Ira’s preaching was not appreciated by all who heard him. His dedication to truth transcended friendship or kinship. The word of God, to him, was the only basis for the promise he or anyone else had for salvation, and he wanted everyone to hear it, believe it and obey it. Ira was one of the best known of all of our faithful preachers for his untiring determination to give every person the opportunity of hearing God’s saving message. Because of his dismay at the apostasy of many and the rejection of his efforts to restore them to the truth, one of his sad, but true, comments was, “You just can’t warn some people!”

**WRITER:** Along with Ira’s and Vada’s inestimable contribution to the spread of the gospel all over the world, and his wonderful influence through his faithful proclamation of God’s word throughout America, one of his greatest contributions to our generation was accomplished through his prolific writing. Trained in journalism, he put his talents to great use in preserving so much of his conviction to the printed page. Convinced of the ravages of liberalism and anti-ism upon the church, he put his pen to the clouds of war he saw approaching. Uncanny in his observations and perceptions, he warned and warned and warned the brotherhood of impending threats growing against the church. Though his cautions and warnings went largely unheeded, history attests to the truthfulness of his observations. Much of what the church is fighting today was exposed by brother Rice years before, but which, for the most part, was ignored.

Warned by his wife, a wonderfully perceptive trooper in the Lord’s service, that hard times awaited his writing, and with her undivided support, Ira began his long and unrelenting expose of error and those who propagated it. Three volumes of *Axe On The Root* presaged the beginning and thirty-two year continual publication of this periodical, *Contending for the Faith*. Many doubted his compassion in his exposure of the proponents of compromise. He wrote so that everyone could understand without doubt the error that was being propagated and the danger it posed for the church. Many rejected forthrightly Ira’s warnings, but many, many more were fortified for the struggle to come against the departures he detected. His writings will influence multitudes for many years to come. We are indebted

greatly for his contribution to the brotherhood through his prolific pen. His two volumes of his unfinished three-volume autobiography should grace the shelves of every Christian library.

*FRIEND:* As much as Ira was disliked by his antagonists, he was just as much loved by those who counted him as a friend. Those who were privileged to know him closely knew the generosity and compassion of a true friend. His presence was such that when he walked into the room, a feeling of confidence and soothing assurance seemed to permeate the air. Ira is here! Everything is going to be all right! His commanding presence gave a pleasurable feeling of genuine friendship—a brother to a brother. Always with a gentle and grateful smile, sometimes with

deep, genuine laughter, Ira exuded evidence of true brotherhood. Dependability characterized his word.

The brotherhood has lost the service and companionship of a great soldier. For those who held him in disdain, be reminded of forty-five years of sacrificial mission efforts that few, indeed, if any, can come close to in the execution of the great commission. I count it a high and cherished honor to have had the privilege of knowing, loving, and being loved by such a stalwart servant as Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

## Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s Life Cut Short at 84

Preston Silcox

One of the first things that came to my mind upon hearing of Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s death on October 10, 2001, was a story he related to the Eastside Church of Christ in July of this year. In 1965, brother Rice was holding a Gospel Meeting in Toronto, Canada and Warren Lewis, a neighboring preacher, was asked to lead the prayer. In that prayer, Lewis petitioned God to allow brother Rice to live to be 120 years old. Remembering Joshua, Rice told Lewis that he felt 110 years should be sufficient. When our dear brother Rice departed this life, many wished that he would have been granted those 26 additional years.

Of course, brother Rice lived more in his 84 years than most men could live in ten lifetimes. As a world missionary, Christian journalist, and defender of the faith, brother Rice was steadfast, unmovable, and always abounded in the work he did for the Lord. J. E. Choate's following estimations of brother Rice's efforts are well worth noting:

When church historians after 2000 A.D., look back on the history of the churches of Christ, the name of Ira Y. Rice, Jr., will loom large in the last quarter of the 20th century. As David Lipscomb, H. Leo Boles, Foy Wallace, Jr., B. C. Goodpasture, Guy N. Woods faced down in their time the "Goliaths" of modernism, so has Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

And to Ira Y. Rice, Jr., goes the accolade for being the most consistent, longest sounding, and trustworthy "voice crying out in the wilderness" of postmodern liberalism. As the campaign of destruction continues to be waged against the Biblical churches of Christ, Ira Rice is there on the "cutting edge" separating the sheep from the goats knowing well what it is all about. I choose to be with him in his crusade for Biblical truth.<sup>1</sup>

While numerous souls are indebted directly to brother Rice's evangelistic and apologetic works, I am personally indebted to his great example and good encouragement. Before leaving the Bellview congregation in Pensacola, Florida for studies at the Memphis School of Preaching, brother Rice often reminded me, by way of his regular mission reports, of the great responsibility of preaching the whole gospel to the whole world. In addition, while at Memphis, along with other students, I was encouraged by brother Rice to consider a field of study that has been neglected too often by preachers: *Journalism*. Though still not completed, I began that course of study at the University of Tennessee at Martin shortly after graduating the Memphis School of Preaching. He would often ask me how my studies were going. Needless to say, now more than ever I feel compelled to finish what I started.

Right at three years ago, brother Rice was holding a Gospel Meeting for the Bethel Church of Christ in Martin, Tennessee where I was preaching at the time. The Sunday morning of that Meeting, Tanya and I announced that we were expecting our first child. Looking back, it was quite fitting for brother Rice to be present for that message. On May 26, 1999, Rice Silcox "put in his first appearance" (as brother Rice might say). Named in honor of both brother and sister Rice, we believe our little boy has quite a name to live up to!

In view of the good still to be done, the earthly fellowship to be enjoyed, and the 26 additional years believed to be "sufficient," 84 years does not seem long enough; it really does seem that Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s life was cut short. Of course, the influence that lives on, the memories that will be cherished, and the hope of reunion in heaven all help to put things in perspective. Even though it might have been more needful for us to have brother Rice abide in the flesh, we all realize that being with Christ is far better for him (Philippians 1:23-24).

1. J. E. Choate, "A Christian Journalist: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.," in *Yokefellow Vol. 25, No. 4*.

—2141 Kingston  
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403

# Personal Remembrances of Brother Ira Y. Rice Jr.

Lee Davis

Brother Ira Y. Rice Jr. was one of the greatest men that I have ever known. I first met brother Rice in the summer of 1983. He accompanied us (the student body of the Memphis School of Preaching) to a debate in Grenada, Mississippi. He spoke in chapel while I was in school and I was able to get to know him more during my time there. I lost touch with him for a year or so after I graduated. But he preached a meeting where I was preaching in 1986. It was then that he turned my thinking to mission work. He visited my home and discussed my obligation to go to the entire world with the gospel. Thus started our long and close association.

## HE ENCOURAGED ME

In 1987 he asked me to consider coming to Singapore and teach at the *Four Seas College*. So, I made plans to go. In 1989 I received a phone call from him and brother **Bill Cline**. He invited me to come to Singapore, Hong Kong, and Manila. This was an opportunity for me to look at the work there first hand, while I considered the work. This was the first time I would go with brother Rice overseas. It was while we were in Singapore when the Chinese Army killed hundreds in Tiananmen Square in China. It was wonderful to see the love and gratitude that brethren in Southeast Asia exhibited toward brother Rice. Many of these brethren would not have been Christians had it not been for his and sister Rice's efforts.

When I left my work at Woody in 1990, I went to a church in Louisiana. I was there for only 5 months and left because of my unwillingness to compromise the truth on a marriage, divorce, and remarriage situation in the congregation. I left that Saturday and was able to get to Memphis. I worshiped with the Knight Arnold church that morning. When I walked in, there were brother and sister Rice. I broke down emotionally. Brother Rice had a way about him. He told me, "Lee, the first 25 years of preaching that I did, I moved 26 times". This was his way of saying get over it and keep on standing for the Truth. He and sister Rice took me out to lunch and continued encouraging me to keep on keeping on. I will never forget that.

I was able to see brother Rice every year at the *MSOP* lectureship and it was a wonderful time of fellowship. In 1987, we started a tradition that lasted for some 13 years. We (brother and sister Rice, brother and sister **Curtis Cates** and myself) would go out to eat together on one of the nights of the lectureship. This grew into a tradition where several, many times over 30, of us would get together for fellowship and food. This last year, 2000, a large dinner for the *Gospel Journal* was given and we all completely enjoyed supporting this wonderful work. So, in reality, the tradition continues.

## FISH LIPS AND DURIAN

While I was in Montgomery, Alabama preaching for the Grandview Pines church, brother Rice would drop by and

visit with me and brother **Steven Wiggins**, who was at the Panama Street church at that time. Brother Rice so loved Pineapple Pizza. We would eat that "delicacy" every time we could. Brother Rice could eat about anything. One of his favorite dishes was "Fishhead Curry." I never tried that one. He often told the story about his having enough money, when he was low on such, to afford two hundred fish lips and a block of rice. This was when he was in Hong Kong in the 1950's. One of the last memories that I have of brother Rice was his convincing me to eat durian. This is a fruit in Southeast Asia that has a frightful smell but a relatively good taste. Someone said that eating durian was like "eating ice cream while standing in a sewer." Well, that is not far from the truth. The grimace that my face made when I first ate the fruit caused brother Rice to laugh out loud.

It was while we were in Thailand on this last trip, that brother Rice got the biggest laugh on me yet. We were visiting an elephant farm. I had bought some bananas and some sugarcane to feed the enormous beasts. I had brought my video camera and had it in a bag on my side. I was in the process of feeding one of these beasts when I looked away from the elephant and down to some more bananas. I felt a huge "arm" (I thought it was **Barry Grider** or one of my other friends trying to scare me) wrap around me. I soon found out that it was the elephant checking out my video camera. He let loose of me when he saw the sugarcane. I then heard a cackling of laughter behind me. It was **Barry Grider**, **Kevin Beard**, **Dorsey Traw**, and the one laughing the hardest, Ira Rice. Yes, brother Rice had a great sense of humor.

Brother Rice came by my office at times when I preached in Sharon. We would talk about the work and the enormous task that lay ahead of us. It was my privilege to have him come to the church there at Sharon to give a two day presentation on his life long mission work. It was grand to watch him preach and see him so excited about the work of the Lord in the world. This rubbed off on me and everyone else who came in contact with him.

I cannot imagine brother Rice's voice being silenced. But, "he being dead, yet speaketh". Brother Rice was able to finish two of his three volume autobiography. Some of the most enriching time I have spent was reading those wonderful books. I will cherish mine for as long as I live. Brother Rice was the most single minded person that I have ever met. His focus was on taking the gospel to the whole world and nothing was going to prevent his efforts in doing this. His death has brought sadness for his friends and loved ones, but me thinks I see brother Rice "safe in the arms of Jesus" in Abraham's bosom.

—P. O. Box 365  
Wartburg, Tennessee 37887



# 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

\*\*Ladies' Only

LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION EACH DAY AT NOON

Hardback Book Of Lecture Available\*\*R.V. Hook-Ups\*\*Video and Audio Tapes\*\*Approved Displays

Elders: **Kenneth D. Cohn** and **Buddy Roth**

FOR MORE INFO. RE. R. V. RESERVATIONS OR DISPLAY REQUESTS, CONTACT CHURCH OFFICE

Phone: (281) 353-2707; Fax: (281) 288-3676; E-mail: [springbibleinstitute@swbell.net](mailto:springbibleinstitute@swbell.net)

[www.churchesofchrist.com](http://www.churchesofchrist.com)

# THE PASSING OF IRA Y. RICE, JR.

Tim Nichols

I believe that brother Ira Rice was one of the most misunderstood men among us. Some who did not like his "tone" and claimed to not appreciate his efforts to draw attention to various strange sounds, doctrines, and movements that were developing among us—benefited from his work far more that they knew (or yet know). Some who even today take pride in being among the last to accept that one is a false teacher seem to be unaware that men like brother Rice had to be among the first in order to give them the privilege of being the last. They often became informed by Ira Rice or by someone who had been informed by someone who had been informed by Ira Rice before they could finally see the dangers and take action and warn the brethren. By being "among the last" they acknowledge that those who were among the first were correct in pointing

matters out—whether or not they ever (even today) can openly admit this. I do not claim to have checked out every possible detail and every fact that brother Rice presented to brethren, but, in every case where I was in a position to know the facts, they were accurate. He was direct. He was clear and unambiguous. And he was offensive to those who did not like to have their teachings and practices challenged and to those who did not like to see such things challenged. Jesus was also direct and offensive to those in similar categories. I, for one, grew to love Ira Rice. Contrary to what many brethren might expect, he was extremely encouraging to young preachers. He was certainly encouraging to this one. When he was in the audience he listened. He would comment favorably on some point that might have been missed by the majority of hearers. He was an encourager of world evangelism. He worked hard to convert the lost and to keep the converted faithful to right principles. He spoke of his own hope of heaven. He often led the song, "The Last Mile of the Way" at various lectureships, in a restaurant, and in small gatherings. The song has a number of "if" statements by which we might take a measure of his life.



## EAST TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF PREACHING

**"Soundness—Balance—Integrity"**

Tuition Free • Housing Available • Two-year Program • College Level • Personal Attention • Limited Financial Aid • Excellent Library • Preaching Opportunities • Experienced Faculty • VA Benefits • Classes For Wives • Under Oversight of Karna Elders since 1971.

**James L. Meadows, Director**  
6608 Beaver Ridge Road  
Knoxville, TN 37931

(423) 691-7444 - FAX (423) 691-9692

*If I walk in the pathway of duty,  
If I work till the close of the day,  
I shall see the great King in his beauty,  
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

*If for Christ I proclaim the glad story,  
If I seek for the sheep gone astray,  
I am sure He will show me His glory,  
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

*Here the dearest of ties we must sever,  
Tears of sorrow are seen every day,  
But no sickness, no sighing forever,  
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

*And if here I have earnestly striven,  
And have tried all his will to obey,  
'Twill enhance all the rapture of heaven,  
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

The chorus speaks of the joys that await those who have gone the last mile of the way. Did he walk in the pathway of duty, work till the close of the day, proclaim the glad story, seek for sheep gone astray, and earnestly strive to obey the will of God? It certainly appears that he lived his life in view of the hopes expressed in the song he loved. When I sing this song in the future I expect to think of him and to take a measure of my own life. I am grateful to have known Ira Rice.

—Route 1, Box 206A  
Burlington, West Virginia 26710

# MORE THAN A BROTHER

Eddie Ee

As I sprinkled a little corn flour on the sliced meat before adding it to the marinade, a little voice inside me said, "Don't forget the sesame oil." It is an essential ingredient in Eastern cuisine. Also add some baking flour, for it makes the toughest meat taste like the finest fillet... a strange way to begin writing about my friend and brother, but food has always been one of Ira Y. Rice Jr.'s loves. His favorite Islamic restaurant would always be one of his stops when he visited Singapore.

## FRIEND, BROTHER, ENCOURAGER

Brother Rice was more than just a brother. He was a friend, a very strong and faithful encourager to me. In fact, we in this part of the world owe our salvation to this man—for his love and zeal to preach the gospel to the uttermost parts of the world.

I was a young man when I met brother Rice. Educated in a Presbyterian Boy's School, I developed an interest in Christianity. By the time I completed secondary education, I had come to Christ, believed in him and had already thought of becoming a Christian. A friend of mine introduced a "Bible Correspondence Course" to me and I enrolled as a student. Not long afterwards brethren Rice and **Tan Keng Koon** paid me a visit. What started as an acquaintance between brother Rice grew into a bond of friendship and he became "my father" in the gospel. He taught me the truth and I was baptized in 1964. Thereafter, he sent me to Korea Christian College. He made all the arrangements for my tickets and scholarship, and even my pocket money. My family and I have not thanked him enough for all that he has done for me. After I returned from Korea, he did not cease to guide me in the ways of preaching the truth.

On his 84th birthday, my wife and I sent him a tie and the last time we heard from him was a letter of appreciation

and about his mission trip to Russia. Being 84 or 48 years old made no difference to his drive and spirit of evangelism. This man of great vision and faith had the relentless zeal to proclaim the gospel in all 50 of the United States, and in many other parts of the world. He came to Singapore and Malaysia and established congregations where he baptized some of the former leaders who have since gone from this life, leaving a few brethren like brother **David Chew**, President of Four Seas College, sister "**Baby**" **Tan**, brother **Kim Fok** and his wife in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and me.

## HIS GENEROSITY

Brother Rice was a truly a giant among gospel preachers. Many gospel preachers and missionaries are indebted to his generosity and his efforts to raise funds for the needy churches all over the world. The Jurong Church of Christ where I have preached for many years is greatly indebted to him, for he played a significant role in our building extension project.

In 1997, brother Rice did not hesitate to help us when we approached him for assistance. He asked the church in Jurong to send me to the States where brother Rice accompanied me on visits to different congregations. In raising these funds we would rise at dawn to travel hundreds of miles to visit various congregations. It was really tough to drive through those hours with little sleep in between. However, he was with me through thick and thin, paying for every cent of my expenses during my three-month stay. Together we managed to

raise more than US \$100,000.00. To further assist in our needs, Four Seas College loaned us an additional US \$200,000 for our project without interest. (Of course the establishment of the Four Seas College was another landmark added to his life. Over the years it has trained many to proclaim Christ throughout Asia.)



Ira Y. Rice, Jr. baptizing Eddie Ee in 1964

### A COMPASSION FOR LOST SOULS

Brother Rice had a great love for the Lord and endless compassion for lost souls. He preached the gospel in any foreign lands and encouraged foreign missionaries like the **Dorsey Traws** in Thailand and many others in Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Pakistan, India, Taiwan, China, Cambodia and through out the world to continue. He said, "I cannot recall when I did not want to be a missionary. It all began with my first learning to read. The Bible was my first primer." His faith and example have greatly encouraged many of us. Those who stand for the truth admire and love him. No task was too difficult for him.

When challenged, we saw the most ferocious defender of the truth. He has been hated for his zeal for the truth and his attack on false doctrine and false teachers. Yet, he was so mild-mannered and had the qualities of a true patriarch among those who loved God, his gospel, and the church of Christ.

### A LEGACY

The news we received on Thursday, October 11, 2001 was not good news. Brother Rice was dead. However, he left us a legacy of the love of the Lord and the importance of evangelizing the world. We need to pray that all his efforts are not wasted, and that each of us can continue to do our best to serve the Lord. May his great example leave a footprint in our minds and motivate us to do more for the Lord's kingdom.

### A WORD OF COMFORT

He had done all that he could. He "put out to sea" and "crossed the bar"—stepping into eternity." To sister Vada, the wife of our beloved brother we say...

*Don't grieve for me, for I am free.  
I'm following the path God laid for me.  
I took His hand when I heard Him call,  
I turned my back and left it all.  
I could not stay another day  
to laugh, to love, to work or play.  
Tasks left undone must stay that way.  
I found that place at the close of my day.*

*If my parting has left a void,  
then fill it with remembered joy.*

*A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss.  
Ah yes, these things, I too will miss.*

*Be not burdened with times of sorrow.  
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.*

*My life's been full. I savored much.  
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.*

*Perhaps my time seemed all too brief.  
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.*

*Lift up your hearts and share with me.  
God wants me now.  
He set me free.*

—Jurong West

P. O. Box 1176

Republic of Singapore 916436

---

*...In my opinion, one of the most significant books to appear in the last ten years—and it ought to be read by EVERY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH!—was written by Ira Rice; and the title of it is *Axe on the Root*. (A chorus of *Amens* from all over the auditorium.) That is a marvelous book. In fact, it is actually what the title suggests. He is saying things there that ought to be said; and that everybody ought to know about. And if we don't recognize it and do something about it, the cause we love and the Lord's work, as we know it, will not exist in the next generation. . . ."*

—Comments from the late Guy N. Woods  
regarding *Axe on the Root*, Vol. II.

---

## MEMORIAL SERVICE VIDEO AVAILABLE

The video tape of the funeral service of brother Rice at the Forest Hill Church of Christ, October 15, 2001 is now available. Those preaching at the service were Garland Elkins, Dub McClish, Paul Brantley, Gideon Rodriguez, David Brown, Curtis A. Cates, and Barry Grider. Prayers were led by Billy Bland and Keith Mosher. Congregational singing was led by brethren Joe Baxter, Harrell Davidson, and Glen Wilson. The service at Forest Hill was two hours in length. Also on the video are four sermons preached by brother Rice.

Order the tape from James Green, 2711 Spring Meade Blvd., Columbia, TN 38401•  
931-486-1364• jamesgreen@charter.net. \$10.00 (includes postage and shipping)

# IRA Y. RICE JR.— A MISSIONARY WHO LOVED SOULS

Alex Daniel

I was a student in 1985 at Four Seas College in Singapore when I first met brother Rice. He came to Singapore to teach and preach the gospel. I well remember that he taught us that we must have a great faith in order to do mission work. To illustrate this great faith he referred us to the account of Peter walking on the water. He acted like Peter when he tried to walk on the water. The way he did it was so funny that the whole class laughed so very hard.

## THE VOICE OF SATAN

On one occasion he taught the singing class at Four Seas College. As the students practiced singing brother Rice heard a strange sound coming from one of the students. It really did disturb the singing. Brother Rice began to walk around behind of the students. He was trying to find out what student had such a disturbing voice. When he found the student making the unpleasant noise, with his finger he pointed to that student saying, "You are the one who has a voice like the voice of Satan." His remark caused all of the students to burst out laughing so hard we had to stop singing.

## A VISION OF LOST SOULS IN NEED OF THE GOSPEL

We always enjoyed our class with brother Rice. He was so rich in experiences as a gospel preacher as well as a missionary. For the students in Four Seas Bible College the experiences he shared with us were very helpful. After my graduation from Four Seas brother Rice continued to be an example to me regarding the work of a gospel preacher. Part of his example was that we needed to have a vision pertaining to carrying the gospel to the lost people in the world.

As he traveled all over the world he saw not only a great number of people, but souls who needed a savior. He loved souls and that is why without fear he at times risked his life (such as in Cambodia) in order to preach the gospel to them.

## TO BE FOREWARNED IS TO BE FOREARMED

When false teachers came to South East Asia, he warned us about the danger of their false teaching and helped us to fight against such. He helped us stand firm in the truth only. Through *Contending for the Faith* we learned a lot about what is going on among our brethren in America and we were able to warn the brethren in South East Asia. This is especially the case in my own country of Indonesia.

## CONTINUING THE PROCESS

When we first started the Southern Sumatra Bible College (Now Academy. In Indonesia an academy is one step

higher than a college. —Editor) in 1989 brother Rice came to teach at our college. He was so proud to see the graduates of Four Seas teaching at this new Bible school. He taught the books of I and II Timothy and Titus and I translated into the Indonesian language for him. All of our students will never forget that great time that they had with brother Rice. Incidentally, also while in Indonesia he had the opportunity to practice his Chinese with my mother-in-law who is Chinese.

## IF WE NEVER MEET AGAIN THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN

In July of 2001 I came to do graduate studies at Spring Bible Institute, Spring, Texas. In October of this year it had been about two years since I had seen brother Rice. Being close to the Cedar Bayou Church of Christ, Baytown, Texas at the time of their annual lectures some of us attended and there was brother Rice in attendance as well. He was to begin a gospel meeting in Shepherd, Texas on the next Sunday. We were so glad to visit each other again. We talked about the work in Indonesia and South East Asia. We discussed the possibility of me translating his Bible correspondence course into the Indonesian language.

Early the next week some of us traveled about an hour north east of Spring to hear him preach in what would be his last gospel meeting and I heard him preach his next-to-last gospel sermon. I am so thankful to God to have had the opportunity to meet, study with, and listen to this great missionary soldier of Christ—Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

—BTN III Blok TC II no. 9  
Way Halim Permai  
Bandar Lampung 35135  
Indonesia.  
Alex@indo.net.id

When in Lubbock, please visit

**SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
8501 Quaker Avenue • Lubbock, Texas  
(806) 794-5008  
Tommy J. Hicks, Preacher

<b>Sunday</b>		<b>Tuesday</b>
Bible Study 9:00 a.m.		Ladies' Bible Class 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 9:55 a.m.		<b>Wednesday</b>
Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.		Bible Study 7:30 p.m.



# A TRIBUTE TO A FINE CHRISTIAN MAN... IRA Y. RICE, JR.

Colin Graham

I first met brother Ira back in the late 1970's or early 1980's. He came to Bangor as a part of a campaign to Northern Ireland. As the years went by I heard people talking about "fiery Ira" and "That paper—*Contending For The Faith*". Over the years, "that paper" set many a searching mind on the path of "Sound Doctrine" and held many a false teacher to the standard of truth by the "Sword of the Spirit"

## IRA RICE HELPED ME

When my family and I started raising funds for this work in Northern Ireland, I called **David Brown** in Spring, Texas. David had taught me and was a close friend of brother Rice. At David's invitation we traveled to Spring for their lectureship. We met many people who represented personal and congregational interest in mission work (including **David and Janice McCain** from Mabank, Texas). The Elders at Spring (**Kenneth Cohn** and **Buddy Roth**) allowed me to speak to those gathered about the

work in Ireland. Later, at brother and sister Cohn's house, David said to Ira, "Let's send this man to Ireland." Ira's reply was, "Okay, let's do that!" Ira was to show that he was serious in what he had said.

After a few weeks, and several telephone conversations with Ira, I received a letter that many of you also received a few days later. It concerned the Irish work and our need for support to go do it. Ira prepared and mailed this letter (If I remember correctly) at his own expense. He must have mailed out several thousand letters to people who were interested in the vast mission work that he did. The response to it was overwhelming. As a matter fact, if it had not been for Ira's influence and his willingness to help this work, it could have taken much longer to arrive here and get on with the work! But, we did get here in time to encourage a fallen-away member back to faithfulness before she died suddenly (**Helen Martin**)! And, there are so many more, in many places around the world, that owe this great and Godly man a debt of gratitude.

## SHE STOOD BY HIS SIDE

Let us keep brother Ira's wife, Vada, and their family in our prayers. As is the case with any married evangelist, if one has the support (in every respect) of a loving wife and family, the work that the Lord has given them to do is so much easier to accomplish. Obviously, Ira had the very best support any gospel preacher could have hoped for. May our great God bless them all!

I thank God for Ira Y. Rice, Jr. and the impact he had on so many people all over the world. I shall never forget him.

—cvgraham@genie.co.uk  
Bangor, Northern Ireland

*Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II*

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**  
(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)

Order from:  
**VADA RICE**  
3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461

**Seek Ye First...**  
A Free Quarterly Publication

<b>Business Office:</b> Post Office Box 158 Bangs, Texas 76823-0158	<b>Publication Office:</b> 500 N. Pearl Comanche, Texas 75644
---	---

# MY TRIBUTE TO IRA Y. RICE, JR.

Dorsey Traw

What a feeling of loss and shock when I was awakened by a phone call on the morning of October 11, at 3:20 a.m. in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The call was from Curtis Cates and Bobby Liddell of the Memphis School of Preaching. It was 3:20 p.m. Memphis, Tennessee time on the 10th. These brethren informed me of brother Rice's fatal auto accident.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr. was truly a great soldier of the cross. He was one of four or five missionaries in the late 1950's that impressed me with the need to go afield internationally with the gospel. It was Ira whom I called in Singapore from Birmingham, Michigan late in 1959 to ask for suggestions as to where to begin work—he responded immediately with Iran, Burma, or Indonesia.

It was Ira's book *We Can Evangelize The World* of which I purchased 75 copies and used in our fundraising efforts to come to Thailand in 1961. Throughout the 40 years of our work in Thailand our paths have crossed many times here in South East Asia and he has been more than

generous in covering our work among the Thai people on the pages of his *Far East News Letter*. Many will attest to the fact that Ira was not only a strong example of doing foreign mission work but also a great encourager and supporter of others to go abroad.

It was not uncommon to hear from the crowd of his acquaintances you either hated Ira or you loved him. Perhaps, that was the line between those who understood and shared his love for the truth and his desire to take it to every person he could.

I am thankful for his life, influence, and encouragement—the basis of our long term stay here in Asia. Many saints among the nations will sorely miss Brother Rice. May the Lord be kind, good, and gracious to Vada, his beloved and loyal wife.

—P. O. Box 94  
Chiang Mai, Thailand 50000

## Ira Y. Rice Jr. – A True Soldier Of Christ In The 20th Century

Kwan Tai Choom

The news of the sudden departure of our most respected and beloved brother Rice came as a shock to the brethren in Singapore. For the next few days, I tried to recollect the past associations with him and over the past decades his good influence for the cause of Christ in the Far East. I can say that brother Rice was truly a great soldier of Christ.

He was truly a soldier of VISION. I remember brother Rice telling that back in the 1960's he asked a congregation in Singapore if any one would volunteer to prepare themselves to preach the gospel in Communist China. He told me that at that time two sisters raised their hands. From that day forward his prayers and plans to carry the gospel into China with a present day population of 1.4 billion people were never shelved. His vision was the vision of our Lord Jesus Christ

when he commissioned his disciples to **“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature”** (Mark 16:15).

Brother Rice was not only concerned about the many lost souls in China, but also the people in India, Pakistan, South East Asia, Russia and the world. And to help his vision materialize, he founded the *Four Seas College of Bible and Missions* (Formerly known as the *Malaya Bible College*). Through his influence and motivation, a number of brethren in the States moved to other countries to serve as missionaries. A few of them continue to faithfully serve the native people.

Brother Rice was a soldier who fiercely fought and defended the TRUTH. Those who truly knew him over the years appreciated his fight and exposure of false teachers. Such fighting is right and necessary in order to

keep the church pure. I know that two instructors at the *Four Seas College* were dismissed for teaching false doctrine to the students. Even though he was a close friend of some who began to teach false doctrine, brother Rice would place the TRUTH above personal friendship. He has often reminded us to **“earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”** (Jude 3). The enemies of brother Rice hated him and accused him of being unloving and unkind. They labeled him with all kinds of bad names. Yet I have only found the characteristics of a true soldier in him.

—Apt. blk. 891  
Tamtines Avenue 8  
#06-80  
Republic of Singapore 520891

# Spring Bible Institute

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO BOX 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-  
DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR  
SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (RESIDENCE).
- ASSISTANCE RAISING SUPPORT.
- BALANCED BIBLE APPROACH.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE “OLD PATHS.”
- OVERSEEN BY BOLD, GODLY ELDERS.
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, “HANDS-ON” TRAINING
- TRAINING FOR PREACHERS, ELDERS, TEACHERS
- DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM (BY INTERNET)

### CONTACT US TODAY!

ON THE WEB: [WWW.CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM](http://WWW.CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM)

EMAIL: [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)

(281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN \* ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

**“My time at SBI was instrumental in preparing me to preach the Gospel. The faculty is knowledgeable, helpful, and concerned about sound doctrine. I would recommend it to anyone who desires a good Bible-based education.”**

***Geoff Litke, SBI Graduate  
Carlsbad, New Mexico***

**NEW!**

**DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM (DLP)**  
TAKE BIBLE COURSES BY INTERNET. VIEW  
CLASSES AT YOUR CONVENIENCE. SEND  
ASSIGNMENTS BY E-MAIL. NO TUITION CHARGED

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith™**  
Post Office Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSRT STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT# 1863

February/2002  
Volume XXXIII, No. 2  
\$14 Per Year; 2 Years \$24

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## THE DECLARATION OF DECEIT

Preston Silcox

While thumbing through back issues of *Contending For The Faith*, I came across an article by the former editor that began with three passages: Proverbs 20:17; Jeremiah 8:5; and Isaiah 30:8-10. **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** noted from these texts that "many— perhaps the majority—would rather be deceived than to know the truth" (Vol. IV, No.4, page 1). What was true in June of 1973, and what was true in the times of those Old Testament writers, remains true to this very hour. Most who do their best to preach the word and warn the world know that it is frustrating beyond description to deal with folks who refuse to see the obvious. Whether brethren dabbling in worldliness, congregations compromising with false teachers, or sinners stumbling in spiritual darkness be considered, too few care to face the facts and change their actions.

### THE TASTE OF DECEIT IS SWEET

It seems that some prefer deceit over truth because, to them, deceit is more palatable. For example, think about those congregations that hold hands with false teachers. I am not necessarily speaking of those churches that rally behind and vocally defend such men; rather, I have in mind those congregations that slip up and ignorantly invite a marked brother to preach in a meeting, speak on a lecture-ship, or hold a workshop. When some informed and concerned Christian lets the congregation know of the brother's error, the hosting congregation gets angry with the informer. Instead of being appreciative of the vital information, the church is upset because now they are put on the spot and are forced to make a decision between confronting the false teacher and ignoring the obvious truth. You see, it was much easier being deceived about the matter, believing that everything was fine and that all things were going to run smoothly. It does not take long for one to

figure out on which side such folks would have stood when the Old Testament prophets delivered their cutting messages or when Paul confronted Peter to the face!

### THE SOUND OF TRUTH IS ROUGH

I am baffled by those individuals who refuse to see that warning people about genuine soul-threatening issues and pointing out God's way of escape are done out of deep love and genuine concern for eternity-bound men. It is usually the case that when people are living in opposition to God's will that those same people accuse messengers of truth of being mean-spirited, unloving, and judgmental. Interestingly, and thankfully, souls that honestly seek God's approval welcome truth - even its reproof. These individuals might admit that sometimes the truth hurts, but they also know that the way of the transgressor is hard. They understand that the truth is rough only when one is living against the grain of truth. The fact is, to many, repentance simply is not very appealing. Few want to admit guilt or confess wrong. When one sticks his head in the sands of deceit, he can fool himself into thinking that everything and everyone is all right, including himself.

Deception is obviously big business. So long as the world stands, the blind shall continue to lead the blind and both shall continue to plead for the preaching of smooth things. While those who love the word of God and the souls of men might be tempted to grow weary as a result of such, may every concerned Christian take heart and remember that there are still plenty of good and honest hearts who long to know and obey the truth (John 4:35-36).

—2141 Kingston  
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXXII, No. 2

February 2002

David P. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher  
dpbrown@swbell.net

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## 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 needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

Editorial...

## “ANTI-ISM”

As part of my September 2001 editorial I printed verbatim a statement from **Brian A. Yeager**. Therein Yeager announced his conversion to the “anti” cooperation, “anti” orphan home, “anti” helping non-saints out of the church treasury, and “anti” kitchen in the church building brethren. I also pointed out that in Yeager’s acceptance of the “anti” propositions he should be prepared to accept the positions implied by the “anti” propositions he and certain others are so anxious to debate. I then listed some of the implications. This was written to remind people (as was stated in that editorial) that truth never implies error. Thus, if a proposition is true whatever it implies is also true.

The foregoing does not mean those affirming a certain proposition to be true are going to accept the implications (consequences) of their doctrine—in many if not most cases they will not. However, whether they accept the implications of their doctrine or not does not change the fact that their proposition implies certain things, which things are as true as the proposition they are affirming.

## YOU CANNOT HAVE IT BOTH WAYS

Regarding the implications I printed in my September 2001 editorial one wrote in part: “...implications do not give biblical authorization.” However, in the very next sentence he said: “Only statements, commands, approved examples and necessary implication give us authority from God.” This fellow cannot have it both ways. Either “...implications do not give biblical authorization” or “...implications give us authority from God.”<sup>1</sup> Now which is it? Moreover, as some have done, they repudiate logic by calling syllogisms “sillygisms”. Indeed, people do not repudiate logic until logic turns against them. If absurdities and sophistry were the measure of a good debater some people would get an “A+”.

Moreover, the same person did not state correctly how the Bible authorizes. Again I quote him: “Only statements, commands, approved examples and necessary implication give us authority from God.” He should know that the Bible authorizes in only three ways. They are: (1) Direct Statements of which “command” is only one kind. Indeed, he separates “statements” from “commands”. If a command is not a kind of statement, will some one please tell us what it is? (2) Examples—patterns that must or may be followed. And, (3) Implication—the very nature of which means it is necessary. Thus, it is redundant to write “necessary implication”. But after all these years (for he is no “Johnny come lately” to his “anti” views), why should these principles of ascertaining Bible authority (“rightly dividing the Word of Truth”—II Timothy 2:15) concern him when he cannot make up his mind whether “...implications do not give biblical authorization” or “...implications give us authority from God”?



I must emphasize that every thing the Bible teaches, it does so explicitly or implicitly. It is, therefore, man's responsibility to infer only what God in his word has implied. Any one who is accountable to God can do this if he/she "wills" to do so because we are rational creatures capable of deductive reasoning and endowed with free will or self-determination. Proof of this is abundant in the scriptures. Speaking on behalf of God Isaiah stated, "Come let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). And, the apostle Paul "reasoned in the synagogue" and "persuaded the Jews and Greeks" (Acts 18:4; Regarding free will or self determination see Joshua 24:15 and Revelation 22:17).

The material on the "anti" issues that, the Lord willing, we shall study has been available and abundant for half a century. Who knows how many debates, various kinds of discussions, articles, books, sermons, lectures, and tracts have been printed on these matters—not to mention the oral presentations not printed or recorded? Some of these continue to be in print while others are available on audiotapes.

Regardless of what is or is not available on these subjects, for approximately two years several brethren have requested an examination of these divisive doctrines on the pages of *CFTF*. Thus, as already stated, if the Lord wills, in the coming months I shall do just that.

#### SOME THINGS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

This investigation of the "anti" doctrines mentioned heretofore will entail to a certain extent a study of God's three institutions—the home, civil government, and the church. Since we must have scriptural authority for every thing we believe and practice we will also investigate how we ascertain Bible authority (Colossians 3:17). Of course, this study will involve the difference in generic and specific authority and how one determines what is obligatory and what is optional. Therefore, the investigation of the "anti" issues (as well as others) demands a correct understanding of expedients—the options available to us from which we may chose to discharge our obligations to God in the quickest and best way possible.

Regarding expedients, suffice it to say that when an act is authorized the option chosen to expedite the act is also authorized. For example, we are authorized to sing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16, etc.). Out of the other kinds of music "singing" is the only kind of music the scriptures specify by which we are to worship God. Any other kind of music we would employ in such worship is sin. Why is such the case? The answer: Because the New Testament does not authorize any other kind of music in the worship of God.

Anything that helps or aids or expedites our singing (one of the obligations God has ordained that we discharge in our worship of him) is also authorized. Thus, all other things being scripturally equal songbooks, notes, pitch pipes, tuning forks, and song leaders are aids because they help us do *only* what we are authorized to do—in this case sing. Therefore, songbooks, notes, pitch pipes, tuning forks, and song leaders are optional helps and not obligatory. The singing is obligatory.

## In This Issue...

<b>The Declaration of Deceit</b> Preston Silcox	1
<b>Editorial</b> "Anti-ism"	2
<b>"I Didn't Do It"</b> Jerry Murrell	4
<b>Bidding God Speed to Error</b> Victor M. Eskew	6
<b>Skirting the Issue</b> Jerry C. Brewer	8
<b>Biblical Questions...</b> <b>Did Peter and Paul Preach Different Gospels?</b> Noah A. Hackworth	9
<b>Why Tarry in Jerusalem?</b> Marlin Kilpatrick	10
<b>Modernism Marches Onward</b> Wayne Coats	12
<b>One Woman's Perspective...</b> <b>Dangerous Waters</b> Annette B. Cates	14
<b>Sermon Outline...</b> <b>Saved to Serve</b> Tom Moore	15
<b>Restoration Reflections...</b> Adron Doran Paul Vaughn	16
<b>Current Events That Concern Christians...</b> <b>Intolerance, Therapeutic Classrooms, Women's Rights in Public Ministry, and More</b> Mark McWhorter	7
<b>Studies from the Biblical Text...</b> <b>Does Baptism Require a Verbal Formula?</b> Daniel Denham	19
<b>Congregational Development...</b> <b>We Will Listen to These Advisors</b> Lynn Parker	21
<b>The Last Word...</b> <b>The Blessings of Repentance</b> Eddie Whitten	22

Songbooks, notes and the rest of the preceding list are coordinate with singing as a “hearing aid” is coordinate with hearing. The “hearing aid” helps one hear. However, mechanical instruments of music, whistling, humming, and imitating with the human voice a mechanical instrument of music is not an aid to singing. Why is such the case? Answer: Because these things are not coordinate with singing; even as a hearing aid is not coordinate with eye sight and thus does not aid, or help, or expedite one’s singing. Any other kind of music is excluded from the worship of God because it is not authorized.

#### GOOD ADVICE

I will forever be grateful that the late brethren **Guy N. Woods**, **G. K. Wallace** and others of like ability and experience (living and dead) for their seasoned advice regarding how to consider and choose the option(s) that will best expose error and uphold the truth at any one point in time. At certain times what the most advantageous option for dealing with “antis” (as well as other false teachers) may not be the most expedient at another time. Moreover, there may be a need at certain times to use a plurality of options because all of them used together may best expedite the teaching of the truth and the exposure of error. Whatever the case, options fall into the area of human judgment as to what option(s) will best expedite the particular obligation.

Over the last 50 to 100 or more years all sorts of options (and I do not condone unscriptural conduct in efforts to discharge one’s obligations to God—Romans 3:8) of which brethren can think has been employed in the study and exposure of the various and sundry “anti” doctrines. However, with every generation there is the need to teach the truth on these matters; for what has “gone around usually comes around”. And,

in our battle against “liberalism” (doctrines that loose us from what God in the Bible has bound on us) there is the tendency for some to over react and run to the other extreme of “anti-ism” (binding where God in his word has loosed). *Let it clearly be understood that “anti-ism” is not God’s answer to “liberalism” and “liberalism is not the answer to “anti-ism.”*

I am very sure that the option (for the time being) I have chosen whereby I will deal with these “anti” doctrines will not make some people very happy—especially some “anti” debaters and would be debaters. However, since there are different options from which to choose to “skin a cat”, for the time being I will skin the thing as it suits me—but I seriously doubt the cat will like it. Be that as it may, my obligation is to “skin the cat”. However, if others think there is a more expeditious option for “skinning cats”, let them choose it and get on with their own “cat skinning”. I say again, the important thing is to discharge the obligation in the quickest and best way available to us (1 Peter 3:15; Titus 1:9-13; Jude 3). If people do not understand that fact, they are apt to miss a great many other matters in the area of obligations and options as well—and usually they do. Thus, I am convinced the church will always have some form of “anti-ism” and “liberalism” troubling her to one extent or another. For our own spiritual well-being as well as the spiritual well-being of others, all would do well to accept that fact, prepare for it, and deal scripturally with the problems when they come—for they will come (1 Corinthians 11:19).

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

#### ENDNOTES

1. J. T. Smith, *Gospel Truths*, Volume 12, Number 11, November 2001, page 4.

## “I DIDN’T DO IT”

Jerry Murrell

We live in an age where men try to avoid responsibility. In one sense this is not new. All the way back in the Garden of Eden humans began to seek to avoid responsibility. When Adam had eaten the forbidden fruit, God asked him about his sin. Adam tried to blame his wife and implicitly God, for his own decision. He said **“The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she**

**gave me of the tree, and I did eat”** (Genesis 3:12). When God asked Eve what she had done she blamed Satan. She said, **“The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat”** (Genesis 3:13). The serpent had no one left to blame. That is how blame is placed in our society; it is passed around until it rests squarely on the shoulders of the person who has no one left to blame.

However, we live in the time when it seems that the one who plays the “blame game” best advances to the top of the ladder. As I write this article, a young American named **John Walker** has been captured after working with the Al Qaida. One can read just about anyone blamed for his journey into militant Islam except for John Walker. Some say it was his parents, some say

it was the town in which he grew up, one columnist even said it was the hip-hop culture which created in him a desire to be black. No one seems to want to put the blame on John Walker.

The Bible teaches personal responsibility for sin as clearly as it teaches any doctrine. Jeremiah dealt with people that said Judah was undergoing problems that their generation was not responsible for causing. They even had a slogan that would have made a good title for Oprah's book of the month club. They said, "**The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge**" (Jeremiah 31:29). Jeremiah would not let this pass. He responded by saying "**But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge**" (Jeremiah 31:30). Then he went directly into a prophecy about the new covenant under which we live today (Jeremiah 31:31ff). Unfortunately some have ignored this very teaching under the new covenant. In the book *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis envisions hell as an awful town where people live. They can build houses whenever they want to, but the people there are so disagreeable that everyone keeps moving farther and farther away. One person in hell who wanted to see somebody famous, but all the famous sinners had moved hundreds of miles away from anyone else. So, this person found out where Napoleon lived and spent months traveling there. When he got there, he found a huge mansion filled with light. And when he peeped in the window, he saw Napoleon marching up and down the halls muttering, "It was Josephine's fault. It was Wellington's fault. It was Lafayette's fault..." I recently saw a political cartoon that summarized the current American view of personal responsibility. The cartoon had a young **Bill Clinton**, with pie all over his face, being confronted by his mother. The young man looked up and said "Mistakes were made." This represents a common dodge in our culture. It allows people to admit something that was done was wrong with admitting that they were to blame for it.

The Bible also teaches that we all have a personal responsibility to do good. James said: "**Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin**" (James 4:17). According to a recent Barna Report, less than half of those who attend church describe evangelism as an important activity. Though his poll sample did not embrace only members of churches of Christ, it is doubtful that our numbers are higher than the denominations around us. We all live in the same culture and many of us suffer from being conformed to that culture (Romans 12:1-2).

Two great sources of this problem in our culture are Calvinism and Atheism. Calvinism teaches that each person is born hereditarily totally depraved because of Adam's sin. This doctrine lays the framework for a failure to take personal responsibility. According to Calvinism the only way to overcome this problem with sin is to wait on the Holy Spirit to operate on your heart. It is his job to take away your desire to sin. Man plays a passive role in both conversion and sanctification. According to this system, if I sin, the blame falls on Adam, God, and the Holy Spirit but not on me.

Atheism implies that there is no universal code of ethics. To paraphrase **Dostoevsky** in *The Brothers Karamazov*, "without God, everything is permitted." The end result of this philosophy is that we are not accountable to anyone and, therefore, not personally responsible for our actions. The atheist **Nietzsche** put it this way in his book *Twilight of the Gods*, "We deny God; in denying God, we deny responsibility." Our Post-modern society is reaping the consequences of this philosophy.

After people learn that their sin is "not their fault," we can expect sin to increase. If stealing is part of some psychological disorder, then the thief cannot be expected to stop stealing. If he is not expected to stop stealing, he will continue stealing.

We are a nation that was founded by people who valued freedom highly. **Patrick Henry** shouted, "Give me liberty or give me death." However we must remember that personal freedom goes hand in hand with personal re-

sponsibility.

One problem in the Lord's church is that few want to take personal responsibility for the welfare of the church (II Corinthians 11:28). Have you ever heard someone go to the elders or preacher and say, "Somebody needs to..."? Would it not be better if this person would instead go to the elders and say, "I would like to take the lead in..." We are all equally obligated to build up God's kingdom. Unfortunately getting everyone to equally carry out this task often is a problem. One man said, "If it is everybody's job it will be done by nobody." If **Neemiah** had not decided that it was his job to visit the king and ask to be sent to rebuild Jerusalem, this job would not have been done. This is why Paul uses the concept of the church as a body to call on all Christians to find their role and fill it (I Corinthians 12).

Three parables that Jesus told about the judgment dealt with the problem of personal responsibility. In the parable of the foolish virgins there were five virgins who bought their oil and there were five virgins who failed to purchase their oil (Matthew 25:1-13). The foolish virgins wanted to be like some in the church today who would rely on others, the wise virgins, to take care of their needs (Matthew 25:8-9). Jesus then told a parable about three men who were given various numbers of talents (Matthew 25:14-30). The one talent man refused to take the responsibility to increase what he was entrusted with and was lost for this failure. The third parable concerned people who failed to take responsibility to help people that they knew were in need (Matthew 25:31-46). Those who failed in this responsibility were lost. They did not even attempt to argue like some today might, "Well when I saw them, I wondered why the church did not do something to help them." If they had, they would have discovered an important truth. Fellow Christian, "the church" is not a personal pronoun that takes the place of your real meaning, "the preacher" or "the elders," "the church" is you.

—4340 Lylewood Rd.  
Indian Mound, Tennessee 37079

# BIDDING GOD SPEED TO ERROR

Victor M. Eskew

The New Testament clearly proclaims that false teachers exist. In his second epistle, Peter warned, saying: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (II Peter 2:1). The apostle John also reveals that many false prophets are in operation. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

The reaction of the faithful toward these false teachers is also plainly set forth by the apostles. Mark, and avoid, were Paul's instructions to the saints at Rome: "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). To his brethren at Ephesus, he wrote informing them to have no fellowship with such, but rather reprove them, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). Timothy was told, "...from such turn away" (II Timothy 3:1-5). And Titus was commanded to reject a heretick after the first and second admonition (Titus 3:10-11).

Sadly, many will not follow the apostolic admonitions. Peter foretold that such would be the case. "And man shall follow their pernicious ways; by whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (II Peter 2:2). Many of those who fellowship false teachers justify their actions because they do not necessarily believe the doctrines of the false teacher. The scriptures are clear, however. A failure to mark, avoid, withdraw from, and rebuke constitutes bidding God speed to the false teacher. When we bid God speed to him, we become partaker of his evil deeds. Give heed to John's words on this matter in 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, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

John insists that fellowship with those who do not hold to the doctrine of Christ makes one just as guilty as the false teacher himself. We become partaker in his evil labors. When those who choose to fellowship error stand before God in judgment, he will not hold them guiltless. They, too, will be viewed as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Presently, we are living in an extremely divided brotherhood. One group within the church desires the plain, simple preaching of the gospel. The traditional ways of expediting the commands of God do not hinder their worship. They realize that truth is important. They also believe that sincerity comes from within. They do not believe that outward expression alone indicates what is coming from the heart.

Another group within the church is much opposite from the previous one. "Proof-text" preaching is not relevant to them. They do not feel that this really meets their emotional needs. They also see the traditional ways of carrying out God's commands, especially in worship, as being extremely boring and monotonous. They are looking for the new and exciting. Sound doctrine is not as important as the way one feels. Getting one's needs met is more important than meeting the requirements of the Almighty God.

Due to the reversed priorities of man's needs over God's commands, may false teachers have been allowed to enter into the second group. Many false doctrines issue forth from their lips. Some hold to the doctrine of theistic evolu-

**Sixth Annual  
Madisonville Church of Christ Lectures  
April 26-28, 2002**

**JESUS CHRIST:  
The Hope Of Every Home**

**April 26, Friday**

6:30 PM Congregational Singing Led by Tim Childs  
7 PM "What Does the Bible Say About Marriage?" Glenn Colley  
8 PM "What Does the Bible Say About Divorce?" Steven Yeatts

**April 27, Saturday**

9 AM "The Role of Men in Christian Homes" Todd Chopard  
10 AM "The Role of Women in Christian Homes" Chad Ramsey  
11 AM "The Role of Children in Christian Homes" Virgil Hale  
12 PM Lunch Break  
1:30 PM Open Forum Panel of Speakers  
2:30 PM "God's Role in Christian Homes" Jerry Marell  
3:30 PM "Model Homes" Keith Masner

**April 28, Sunday**

9:30 AM "Forces Which Can Destroy Our Homes" Michael C. Shepherd  
10:30 AM "Faith Which Can Heal Hurting Homes" Jerry Joseph

audio and video tapes available  
attended nursery • display space available

**MADISONVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
1035 N. Main St.  
Madisonville, Kentucky 42431  
(270) 821-3844

tion. They are extremely lax with the gospel plan of salvation. Seldom is it ever proclaimed to the lost. They will fellowship those in denominations as their brothers in Christ. God's laws on marriage, divorce and remarriage are rejected. The worship of God has been turned into a pep rally for the worshipers instead of the humble redeemed standing before the majestic presence of Jehovah God. God's laws about a woman's role in the church have been loosed. We are told that the instructions found in the New Testament on this matter are nothing but cultural regulations. This list of deviations from the word of God could continue for many more sentences.

Congregations who have gone this way are "growing" by leaps and bounds. Many members of the church who used to be greatly concerned about the doctrine of Christ are joining their ranks. In groves, our young people are aligning themselves with these "progressive" churches. They attend the pep rally worship services. They listen to the contemporary preaching of the false teacher. They applaud him as being dynamic, relevant, charming, and appealing. They give their money to support the works of the church. In essence, they are bidding God speed to error. If not, why not?

Many who have joined this progressive movement know that error is being taught. They have heard it. They say they do not agree with it. Yet, they continue to fellowship it. It appears that they are more concerned with their needs than with the faith. They need to give ear to John's

words over and over again: "**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). Why would anyone reject a divine injunction that carries such eternal consequences? Brethren, this is a serious matter!

We plead with those who are in the midst of error to come out. The church at Corinth was guilty of this sin. False teachers had been accepted; Paul had been rejected. His apostolic admonition was:

**Be 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* (II Corinthians 6:14-18, emp. mine, vme).**

—9664 Highway 49B  
Brookland, Arkansas 72417

## HERMENEUTICS CONTROVERSY— The Spirit Verses the Letter of the Law

Brock Hartwigsen

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 framed 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.

—12521 Holly Springs New Hill Rd.  
Apex, North Carolina 27502



# SKIRTING THE ISSUE

## (Or, "Tiptoeing Through The Tulip Patch Of Politically Correct, Obfuscated Generalities")

Jerry C. Brewer

A diluted gospel is an abomination to God. It may not promote error, but if it does not plainly spell out man's lost condition and what he must do to be saved, it is worthless. Worshipping at the shrine of "political correctness," many churches have diluted the Bible message and now prefer to "spin" instead of preach the word. Using the Madison Avenue marketing approach to religion, they now preach a diluted gospel designed to please without giving offense. Their message carefully tiptoes through the tulip patch of politically correct, obfuscated generalities, and really teaches nothing, like this article which appeared in our local paper:

So very often, Church of Christ members are accused of believing that they can decide who goes to Heaven and who goes to Hell. The Second and Adams Church of Christ claims no such authority. They believe that anyone who is obedient to God will be saved and anyone who is disobedient to God will be lost. They hold no special power in deciding who is a part of the Lord's church. They believe that only the Lord can add to the church those who are being saved (Acts 2:47). (Supplement to *The Elk City Daily News*, Elk City, OK, June 27, 2001, p.5).

This certainly could not be confused with the "great plainness of speech" employed by the apostle Paul (II Corinthians 3:12). Three points particularly stand out in it.

1. While denominations often accuse Christians of believing "they are the only ones going to heaven," I have never heard the accusation that "Church of Christ members" believe "they can decide who goes to Heaven and who goes to Hell." This is a pseudo-issue, manufactured to avoid plain Bible teaching on the distinctive nature of the church. No one would argue with the statement that they claim no authority to "decide who goes to Heaven and who goes to Hell," and I am not aware of anyone who would make such an absurd claim. Neither have I ever heard that charge made against members of churches of Christ. But the Bible teaches that Christ will save only the church (Ephesians 5:23-27) and root up those planted by men (Matthew 15:13). Preaching such is not deciding "who goes to Heaven and who goes to Hell." That is simply preaching the truth in love. The church of Christ did not write that. God wrote it, and anyone who will not plainly preach it cannot truthfully claim to love the souls of men. Denominations, with their doctrines of egalitarian grace wherein hell is eliminated and heaven is opened to everyone, are sending people to perdition daily. The Lord will save his church and only his church (Ephesians 5:23), but he will not save a single denomination.

2. The generality that "They believe that anyone who is obedient to God will be saved and anyone who is disobedi-

ent to God will be lost," avoids Biblical teaching on *how* one becomes obedient to Christ. Neither does it prove anything about salvation. Believing something doesn't necessarily make it so. Belief must have Bible authority behind it to be valid in God's sight (Romans 10:17). Upon what basis do "they believe that anyone who is obedient to God will be saved...?"

Such obfuscation may secure the good will of business associates, friends, and neighbors, but it avoids the plain truth that baptism is necessary to salvation (Mark 16:16), and certainly will not teach anyone how to be saved. But when Peter was asked what to do to be saved, he did not tiptoe around, saying, "obey God." He waded plainly and boldly into the issue and said, "**Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins**" (Acts 2:38).

3. While it is true that no man holds any "special power in deciding who is a part of the Lord's church, and that "only the Lord can add to the church those who are being saved (Acts 2:47)," this statement leaves unanswered the question of *how* one becomes a part of the Lord's church and at what point. One may object that it says, "those who are being saved," but that still leaves the *how* of salvation unanswered. Those who obeyed Peter's command in Acts 2:38 were not only saved, but were added to the church of Christ by the Lord (Acts 2:47). Acts 2 tells the *how* of salvation and the same thing that saves also adds one to the church—the *one* Jesus promised to save (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23).

Those who did not obey the gospel in Acts 2 were not saved, nor were they added to the church. How difficult is that to understand and plainly preach? Christians ought to be ashamed of being ashamed to proclaim the gospel which reveals salvation in the church for which Christ gave his own precious blood (Romans 1:16-17; Acts 20:28). If preaching the *one* body for which Christ died (Ephesians 4:4) brings the false accusation that "You think you are the only ones who will be saved," then so be it. But it's height of spineless, fawning compromise to dilute the truth which saves because someone may be offended. Men were offended at Jesus' preaching, but he was true to the message he preached (Matthew 15:12; John 8:41-47; 12:50).

John the Baptist would have had a longer life if he had just tiptoed around in politically correct generalities and said, "everybody's marriage should be approved by God." But he plainly told Herod "it is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matthew 14:4), and lost his life because he dared to speak God's truth. God has left no doubt about the vital

matters of salvation, worship, or how we are to live, and any church which shrinks from declaring all the counsel of God on those matters is not worthy of the name of Christ.

There are multitudes of preachers and elders across the land who will not preach blatant error. But they aid and abet it by failing to boldly declare all the counsel of God

that presents the clear distinction between Christ's blood-bought church and denominations of men. We have plenty of those out here in Western Oklahoma and I am sure there is no dearth of them where most of you live.

—308 South Oklahoma  
Elk City, Oklahoma 73644

## Biblical Questions...

# Did Peter and Paul Preach Different Gospels?

Noah A. Hackworth

**F. C. Baur**, founder of the Tubingen school of criticism, promulgated the theory that the writings of the Galatian epistle were the surviving echoes of partisan strife between Judaistic and Gentile Christians (Terney). He obviously based his assumption upon his interpretation of Galatians 2 7-9:

But contrariwise, when they say that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; [For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles;] And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Do these passages mean, or in any way imply, that these two apostles preached different gospels? The people to whom the gospel was preached were different. The gospel was the same. The choice of who was to preach to whom was not made by Peter and Paul, but by the Lord. Both apostles, however, preached to both groups (*cf.*, Acts 15:7, 22:14, 26:16-17; Galatians 1:15-16). Circumcision and uncircumcision of course refer to the Jews and Gentiles. With reference to the book of Galatians, **Merrill C. Tenney** stated:

When the modern critical approach to the Bible was initiated at the turn of the nineteenth-century, this book was rec-

ognized as a primary document in the discussion of all matters pertaining to the history of the Christian movement. F. C. Baur, founder of the Tubingen school of criticism which opened the rationalistic attack on the orthodox attitude to the New Testament, promulgated the theory that its writings were the surviving echoes of partisan strife between Judaistic and Gentile Christians as championed respectively by Peter and Paul.

In denial of Baur's affirmation, the scholarly **Peter Lang** commented:

That we here are not to suppose two gospels different in character, the gospel of the Uncircumcision, and the Gospel of the Circumcision, of which the latter maintained the necessity of the circumcision, while the former let it drop [Baur], but only two different circles of hearers of the same gospel, may be regarded as self-evident to the unprejudiced reader.

In Galatians 2:7, the word "committed" translates *pepisteumai* which scholars say is in the perfect tense, implying a permanent commission. The sense would then be "I have been, I am still entrusted with it" (M. B. Riddle). The gospel of the circumcision and the gospel of the uncircumcision denote a distinction in the sphere in which the gospel was to be preached, not a difference in the type of gospel (Lightfoot). Professor **Ernest DeWitt Burton** states:

That Paul regarded the distinction between the gospel of the uncircumcision

entrusted to him and that of the circumcision entrusted to Peter as fundamentally not one of content but of the persons to whom it was addressed is plain from that which the verse implies and the next verse distinctly affirms, that the same God commissioned both Paul and Peter each for his own work.

Burton furthermore stated that circumcision and uncircumcision are genitives of connection showing to whom the gospel is to be given.

### NOTHING HAS CHANGED

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are often referred to as the "four gospels." Since Matthew wrote for the Jews, Mark for the Romans, Luke for the Greeks, and John for everybody, "The Gospel According To Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or John" cannot mean much more than "conformity to a type." There is still only one gospel. It does not vary in content. Paul preached it (I Corinthians 15:1-3), Peter preached it (Acts 15:7), and we must preach it (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16). Anything that comes out of any "pulpit" today that sounds different than what the apostles preached, ought to be "looked into" (Galatians 1:7-9).

—4525 W. Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, California 93277



# Why Tarry in Jerusalem?

Marlin Kilpatrick

The city of Jerusalem is world-famous. Very few people have never heard of Jerusalem. Historically, Jerusalem has played a significant role both in biblical literature and secular affairs. The current daily news almost always has something which involves this Palestinian city. No serious student of the Bible will fail to comprehend the place the city of Jerusalem occupies in God's word.

Jesus instructed his apostles "...but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49b). Here is a good illustration of how a biblical command may not apply to people living today. Just because "it's in the Bible" does not necessarily mean it applies to you and me. God told Noah to build an ark (Genesis 6:14), but I am not in the ark-building business! If we please God, must we all be about the business of building arks? No. Why? Simply because God's command to Noah was given to him and to no one else. This is also true of Christ's final instructions which he gave to his apostles prior to his ascension, among which was their waiting in Jerusalem until they be "endued with power from on high," i.e., until they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

It is not uncommon to hear some denominational preacher encouraging his audience to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

It is often claimed by these "preachers" that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all believers. The scripture texts which reveal Jesus' promise of the baptism of the Holy

Spirit to his apostles (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:12-13) are often cited for such "proof."

This is not only a case of faulty exegesis, but also a failure to rightly divide the scriptures!

Jesus told his apostles to "tarry in Jerusalem" because it was here the fulfillment of several Old Testament prophecies would occur. The events of Pentecost were predicted by several Old Testament prophets, among which were Isaiah, Joel and Micah (cf. Isaiah 2:1-4; Joel 2:28-32; Micah 4:1-2). It was also in the city of Jerusalem where many faithful Jews and proselytes would be gathered for the feast of Pentecost, which occurred fifty days following the Passover feast.

The apostles' "tarrying in Jerusalem" is directly associated with the establishment of the Lord's church. It is obvious that Jesus had a plan for establishing his church, after all he had promised to build it (Matthew 16:18-19). The wisdom of God, demonstrated by the use of his divine providence, in taking advantage of the occasion (Pentecost) and the gathering of such a people as the Jews who had come to Jerusalem and would be returning to their respective home-lands following Pentecost, was a major factor in the establishment of the church of Christ. The church which began in Jerusalem (Acts 2) also began to spread throughout the Roman World, as these new converts to Christianity returned to their respective native lands. Therefore, the apostles' compliance with our Lord's command to "tarry in Jerusalem," set the stage for the beginning of the most important institution mankind will ever be privileged to enter. The church of Christ is where the saved are (Acts 2:47). One can only enter this church by obedience to "the faith," which is the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:5, 16-17). The city of Jerusalem has a rich history. Since the time of David, Israel's second king, she was biblical Israel's capital. The faithful church of Christ is now spiritual Israel, "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16). As a members of this "heavenly Jerusalem," (Hebrews 12:22-23), we should be thankful the apostles did "tarry in Jerusalem" until they received the "power from on high". Their reception of that "power" became the occasion for all who will obey the gospel to be saved from their sins, added by the Lord to his church, and henceforth enjoy all spiritual blessings that pertain to our salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:3).

Today, members of churches of Christ do not need to "tarry in Jerusalem." We need to go forth into all the world preaching the gospel as did that select group of men, the apostles of Christ. These men did as they were instructed. It is now up to you and me to do likewise. Think about it.

—1336 Spring Lake Rd.  
Fruitland Park, Florida 34731

*Pressing Toward the  
Mark, Vol. I & II*

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**

**(plus \$2.50 postage and  
packaging)**

Order from:

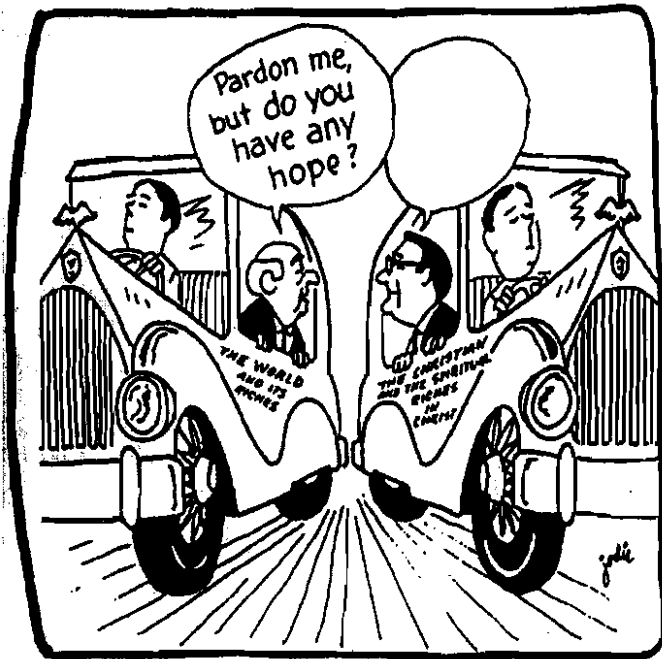
**VADA RICE**

**3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE**

**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461**

# How Would You Answer

Jodie Boren



pians 4:13 and II Corinthians 1:3-4). Therefore, Christians can overcome all the troubles the world can give us, through our faith in God (I John 5:4).

The great apostle Paul experienced the hostilities of Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen so that he wrote in II Corinthians 1:8 that **“we despaired even of life.”** But now, look at verse 10! Paul set their hope on God and through their faith were delivered from this terrible onslaught.

So, the hope we have in Christ is not just heavenly, but, as we see from Paul’s experience, is for the here and now as well God promises us, **“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”** (Hebrews 13:5). Consider also, Peter’s comforting statement in I Peter 5:7 where he admonishes us to cast all our cares upon him, **“for he careth for you.”**

Our hope as Christians in this life is but a building block for the hope of glory we have in Christ. When I think of heaven and the hope of glory, I am reminded of the great truth of what Bovee once said, **“Hope is the best part of our riches. What sufficeth is that we have the wealth of the Indies in our pockets, if we have not the hope of heaven in our souls.”** Perhaps he was thinking of Jesus’ statement in Matthew 16:26 when he wrote that. Remember, Jesus said there, **“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”** As Christians we are indeed rich—spiritually speaking—when we have the hope of heaven which is laid up for us (Colossians 1:5). We must understand that Jesus Christ is our hope (I Timothy 1:1) and he offers this hope to us through the gospel. And it can be ours if we continue in the faith—the teachings of Christ (Colossians 1:23 and John 8:31). Paul says we should rejoice in hope (Romans 5:2). And rejoice we should when we think of heaven, that sweet home of the soul. There will be no more tears, no more death, no more sorrow, no more pain (Revelation 21:4). Heaven is pictured as a great and glorious city in verses 10-27 and there shall be no night there! No wonder John prayed, **“Come Lord Jesus.”**

We have only touched the hem of the garment, as it were, as we have briefly talked of home. But remember, Peter said, **“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). How would you answer?



Mountford wrote: **“Eternity is the divine treasure house, and hope is the window, by means of which mortals are permitted to see, as through a glass darkly, the things which God is preparing.”** What a marvelous thing hope is! It allows us to desire with expectation the fulfillment of that heavenly home Jesus is preparing for us (John 14:2).

It is hope that sustains and helps us through the very difficult times of life. None of us are immune to the adversities that come to all—whether it be a debilitating disease, a crippling accident, financial failures, or the despair that comes with the loss of a loved one. It is the hope, the desire, or the wishing that most all men possess, that gives strength to overcome these troubles. This hope comes from self, friends, and loved ones but is seldom sufficient. The Christian’s hope, however, is not dependent upon the frailties of human strength but is built upon faith in the living God who is the source of all strength and comfort (Philip-

Please Contact Us Regarding Your  
CHANGE OF ADDRESS  
Back returned address costs  
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH  
55¢

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

# MODERNISM MARCHES ONWARD

Wayne Coats

A study of German Rationalism would not be complete without stopping for a brief glimpse at **Johann Gottfried Eichorn** who was a professor at Gottingen and who did his work after the fashion of **Astruc**. In using the historical-critical method, which was extremely popular among the German infidels, Eichorn published five volumes in which he explained away every trace of inspiration with a substitution of rationalism. In his studies relative to the documentary hypothesis, Eichorn is credited with referring to his work as "higher criticism." A more valid term would be "destructive criticism." Again, we see the destructive work of another German professor who used the historical-critical method. Someone who sits in a professor's chair should try to be honest enough to tell us why modernistic, rationalistic infidels like to brag about the value of the literary-historical-critical method of Biblical studies. It appears to be nothing more than a system of infidelity used by infidels in order to perpetuate infidelity.

Contemporary with Eichorn was **Heinrich Eberhard Gottlob Paulus**. Young Paulus studied at Tubingen, Jena and Wurzburg where he became saturated in all the radicalism of the rationalistic school. As a university professor, the extreme atheistic views of Paulus were so obnoxious that the Protestant students boycotted his classes. Special efforts were made to enlist Catholic students to sit in his classes, but such was a complete failure.

It is difficult to believe that a professor of theology could be so bizarre and radical as to be opposed by another rancid modernist such as **Strauss**. Such did occur and serves as an index of the type of professors who were teaching the youth of Germany. A colleague of Paulus described him as, "A man who thinks he believes and who believes that he thinks." Is that not true of every modernist?

Paulus decided that Jesus was only a mere man who became a teacher. To Paulus, the peasants who followed Jesus thought they could see strange events and hear all sorts of phenomena. These obscure sights and sounds were described as miracles. He knew exactly how to explain the feeding of the five thousand by the miracle worker called Jesus. There was a multitude of people who needed to be fed. There seemed to be no food available for the masses. Eventually, Jesus removed his lunch from beneath his cloak and began to divide it with those who were hungry. This caused a mass reaction upon the part of many more who had been hiding their lunch boxes. They likewise began to open their boxes and presto—the multitude's guts were filled.

On another occasion when a crowd had gathered and mealtime arrived, there was no food. Jesus inquired of the supplies available and only one small lad offered his loaves and fishes. The liberal spirit demonstrated by the little boy

made all the others who had food to feel ashamed. They began, with great embarrassment, to share their victuals. It defies good sense for one to try to understand how normal people can invent such stories, but such is typical of the modernistic mirages. When one learned all about the rationalistic explanations, then one was thought to be qualified as a university professor and able to brainwash gullible students.

Joining with other German professors in molding the young minds of his day was **Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleimacher**. Schleimacher taught at Berlin and Halle. He had been an avid student of **Kant**, **Spinoza** and **Leibnitz**. The professor placed Christianity on the same level with other great religions. Revelation could be claimed with any number of religions. The gospels as we know them were developed in piecemeal fashion by different clans and tribes. Matthew came to be a collection of apothegms, tales and legends.

The special work of Schleimacher was in the area of "Christ-ocentric theology." The modernistic infidels in some of our schools like to strut around and blurt about their Christocentrism. Ah, but they like to center everything around, "the Man and not the plan." Christ is the focal point. "We preach Christ, not baptism" so say the copycats. "It is Christ for the remission of sins," so the liberals babble. It is not difficult to discern who the spiritual father of the liberals might be. **Paul Tillich** said that Schleimacher was, "the father of modern protestant theology." The old infidel has a lot of illegitimate sons swaggering around and some of them are to be found in universities where they are helping to destroy the faith of young Christians.

In a series of lectures at the Chicago Divinity School, Paul Tillich attempted to explain the theology of Schleimacher. When Tillich finished, one knew no more than before he started. **Richard Niebuhr** said, "We must concede the nineteenth century to Schleimacher." It is a fact that the theology of Schleimacher admitted of no supernaturalism. The Supreme Being, immortality, eternal life; all was rejected by the old modernist. He said, "Eternal life is now." Since there is no personal, absolute, omnipotent, eternal God, then every man can be his own god. **Carroll D. Osburn** of Abilene describes the god of Schleimacher as "the ultimate reality." There is no place for "The mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus Christ." Sin did not exist in the theology of the professor. I frankly state that it amazes me how any brother with any common sense at all can sink down into the depths of German rationalism and prattle about "Christocentrism" in an effort to show off. To my mind such is sinking extremely low.

When we read about the Tübingen School of Theology, we will of necessity learn about **Ferdinand Christian Baur**. It was in Tübingen and with Baur that the historical-critical methodology was brought into greater prominence. It had been used by several modernists before, but it was able to gain wide acceptance as a result of the combined efforts in Tübingen. In his amazing brilliance Baur decided that so much of the New Testament was produced bit-by-bit, and mere scraps at a time, and at a very late date. The church decided that certain points needed to be established and in order to assure the existence of such points, the church agreed for them to be put in writing; thus the church developed scripture when it was needed.

When Baur studied the life of Paul, he used the historical-critical method and dismissed all the Pauline letters as spurious except Galatians, Romans and the two Corinthian letters.

The old apostles, because of infirmities, forgot so much of the things which Jesus had taught. Such ideas passed away and new thoughts emerged. Occasionally, some zealot such as Stephen would try to lead a revival of the old stuff and the people showed their rejection by putting the old preachers down.

By some sort of hocus-pocus, Paul was able to join the cult of the old apostles. Along the way he had picked up some good ideas about the aged. Paul was held aloof for some time, but he was finally allowed to take a church among the Gentile dogs.

The new saints refused to accept the old traditional ways and were always clamoring for change. The positive pieces were probably written by the pious ones who wanted to change things, whereas the combat pieces were probably written by Paul. This idea would eliminate the materials as being written by a rejected Paul when such materials did not have a combat flavor.

Eventually the old church members died and a divided church needed to be united. A series of scraps which dwelt upon the matter of unity were brought into existence.

When and how Baur became so brilliant as to arrive at all the aforementioned conclusions, we will never know. In his application of the historical-critical method, none of the gospels were authentic or original sources. Mark was probably a much later work. **Rubel Shelly** displayed his modernism when he tried to spit out a bit of source-theory theology. He informs us that we do not know what source Mark used. Baur told us that Luke showed only a few differences in Matthew and Mark and would therefore be a very late copy.

As long as Baur loomed as the titular head in Tübingen, the historical-critical method was utilized. When the young agents took over, they modified the theories of Baur and they began to use the literary-historical method which the modernists still munch on. The new agents decided to accept parts of the Roman letter as Pauline and other parts as spurious. The book of Acts was a hodge-podge of scraps put together a number of years after the apostles were gone.

The more we learn about the old modernists, the more we are able to see their contradictions and destructive teachings. We are able to understand how the old cesspool was able to seep along and eventually find a place among some of our present day professors.

—705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27120

## Reminder!

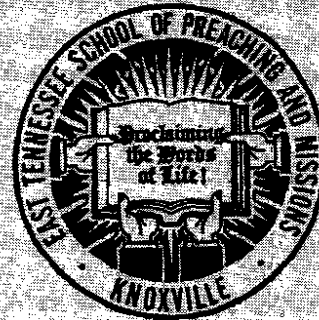
**If your address label has the date:**

**02/2002**

**IT IS TIME TO RENEW!**

**Send your renewal to:**

**Contending For The Faith  
P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, Texas 77383**



### **EAST TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF PREACHING**

**"Soundness—Balance—Integrity"**

Tuition Free • Housing Available • Two-year Program • College Level • Personal Attention • Limited Financial Aid • Excellent Library • Preaching Opportunities • Experienced Faculty • VA Benefits • Classes For Wives • Under Oversight of Kars Elders since 1971.

**James L. Meadows, Director  
6608 Beaver Ridge Road  
Knoxville, TN 37931**

**(423) 691-7444 • FAX (423) 691-9692**



## DANGEROUS WATERS

Annette B. Cates

There is a sign that appears on the down-river side of TVA dams: "Dangerous waters. Violent surges may occur at any time without warning." Invariably, there will be a dozen or more small johnboats with fishermen taking advantage of the good angling in the area as close to the dam as possible, oblivious to the danger into which they have placed themselves. Each boat is a tragedy waiting to happen. Have they not noticed the warning? More likely, they have seen and even read the sign but have chosen to ignore it.

They demonstrate the attitude that the warning sign does not apply to them. In others areas of behavior, this mentality will lead them to try testing the limits without getting caught, or without suffering serious injury or death. They think, "It cannot happen to me." Spiritually, some seem to try to see how close to sin they can come without negative consequences. The warnings are there; they simply go unheeded.

**We can get into dangerous waters in the relationships we choose.** Often young people, in their desire to be accepted, will try to hang with the wrong crowd. They justify their friendships with, "I am a good influence on them," or, "I just go along; I don't participate." They ignore Psalm 1:1, "**Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.**" They forget that following the multitude can lead one to do evil (Exodus 23:2), that "**evil companionships corrupt good morals**" (I Corinthians 15:33). Another relationship that is dangerous for the Christian is in dating a non-Christian. Again, the thinking is that the non-Christian will not pull the Christian down, that the Christian's influence will be stronger. Possibly this is true, but more than likely the Christian is the one who will be weakened by the relationship. Older Christians are not influenced to the temptation to go along with the crowd, with the same reasoning and the same flirtation with danger. If one's friends participate in social drinking and/or other worldly activities, it becomes easier to justify doing so, too. "**Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?**" (II Corinthians 6:14). The warning? Anytime, at any age, when one puts relationships before obedience to God, he is in turbulent, dangerous waters.

**We can get into dangerous waters in the activities we choose.** The warnings to be heeded are, "**Be not conformed to this world**" (Romans 12:2) and remain untainted by the world (James 1:27). But, how many judge

their activities by these guidelines? When we find ourselves trying to excuse our behavior, we had best take a close look at the activity involved. Is it something that would bring harm physically to ourselves or to others? Do the things in which we engage destroy our influence? People do notice our actions and our attitudes and judge the church accordingly. We are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-14). Do we think that we can view X- and R-rated television and movies and not bear in our thinking the imprint of the sin contained therein? We may say, "I can quit [or change] anytime." The fishermen bobbing around below the dam think that they can get out of the danger at any time. The reality is that escape is not so easy as one might think. Sin has a way of leading one deeper into sin. Conversely, if we walk in the light as He is in the light (I John 1:7), we will be clear of the turbulence that would destroy our lives and our souls.

**We can get into dangerous waters when we allow ourselves to become weak spiritually.** When we neglect daily prayer and Bible study and when we neglect regularly participating in worship services, we are vulnerable to sin. Whether the excuse is that we are too tired, or too busy, the cause is the same, a lack of interest in things spiritual. The world grows in importance, and God's will fades from the forefront of our lives. Unfaithfulness creeps in slowly, insidiously. Rarely does one simply decide that he is no longer going to live the Christian life. It begins as a day of missed prayer, then another of no Bible study. One service is missed, then two. He soon "drifts away" from the Christian life (Hebrews 2:1-3). No longer is seeking the kingdom of God a priority (Matthew 6:33). In only a short while, one has tumbled into turbulent water and it is hard, so hard, to return!

Just as the warning that the water can become swept by violent surges is there for the fishermen on the river, God's word is available to direct us on our journey through life, to keep us safe from the harm that would destroy us spiritually. "**Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths**" (Proverbs 3:5-6).



—9194 Lakeside Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

## SAVED TO SERVE

Tom Moore

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. In Christianity:

1. Every right implies a responsibility.
2. Every opportunity implies an obligation.
3. Every possession implies a duty.

#### B. Enjoying a Christian relationship with God involves accepting the responsibilities inherent in that relationship.

1. Duty without doctrine is like a tree without roots.
2. But doctrine without duty is like a tree without fruit.

#### C. A Christian is a person called to God's service.

1. I Thessalonians 1:9
2. We are obligated to fulfill our individual service.
3. Colossians 4:17

#### D. Let us now explore how we are saved to serve.

### DISCUSSION

#### A. THE KINGDOM IS A REALM OF ACTIVITY

1. This fact is seen in the various designations used to describe Christians:

- a. "Branch" (John 15:1-8) that bears fruit.
- b. "Farmer" (II Corinthians 9:6) that plants.
- c. "Soldier" (II Timothy 2:3-4) that wars.
- d. "Athlete" (I Corinthians 9:24-27) that runs.
- e. "Member" (Romans 12:3-8) that uses his talents.

2. As Christians we are to be:

- a. "Fruitful" (Matthew 13:1-9) Colossians 1:10.
- b. "Useful" (II Timothy 2:20-21)
- c. "Profitable" (II Timothy 4:11)
- d. In all this we should see that Christians are a part of a kingdom of activity.

3. A Christian's aim should be to do God's will.

- a. Notice Jesus' attitude ... John 6:38—*is this true of us?*
- b. Doing God's will pleases God (II Corinthians 5:9).
- c. A non-active puts his soul in jeopardy (Matthew 25:31-46).
- d. The spiritual "freeloader" who is "just along for the ride" will be sadly disappointed (Matthew 7:21).
- e. Unused abilities/opportunities will eventually be withdrawn (Isaiah 5:1-7).
- f. We are responsible for doing what we can (Mark 14:8).

#### B. CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE WORKERS

1. Christians are identified as:

- a. "Workers"
  - 1) I Thessalonians 1:3
  - 2) II Timothy 2:15
- b. "Laborers"
  - 1) Matthew 9:37-38



2) John 6:27

2. A Christian's activity must consist of:

- a. "Work for the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

- b. "Good works"

- 1) Matthew 5:16

- 2) I Peter 2:12

- 3) Jesus went about "doing good" (Acts 10:38)

- 4) God is able to make you perfect in. . . (Hebrews 13:21).

3. We need to be honest with ourselves, and ask questions concerning our abilities and opportunities.

4. We need to develop certain attitudes concerning our Christian work:

- a. *Gratitude* for the privilege (I Timothy 1:12).

- b. *Initiative*, willing to work without having to be prodded (I Timothy 4:12).

- c. *Be positive* (Philippians 2:14).

- d. *Enthusiasm*, as an example note (II Corinthians 9:7).

- e. *A mind to work* (Nehemiah 4:6).

- f. *Persistent* (Galatians 6:9).

#### C. CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE SERVANTS

1. There are five different Greek words used in the New Testament that emphasize this fact:

- a. *mimetes* (follower) (Ephesians 5:1).

- b. *mathetes* (disciple) (John 8:31).

- c. *oikonomos* (steward) (I Peter 4:10).

- d. *diakonos* (minister) (Romans 16:1).

- e. *doulos* (servant) (Luke 17:10).

2. What does being a servant mean?

- a. Servanthood is *an outward evidence of a shift in focus away from self*—it is seen in action (Matthew 22:37-40).

- b. Being a servant is to be *a way of life*—not just an occasional good deed.

- 1) It is to be a vocation.

- 2) Involves an entire frame of mind (Philippians 2:4-7).

- c. Being a servant is *an investment in people*, rather than things

- d. Servanthood is *a sacrifice*—it costs.

- 1) Inconvenience is nearly always a part of the cost (II Corinthians 8:1-4).

- 2) Yet, yielding one's rights is the very essence of servanthood (I Corinthians 9:19).

- e. Servanthood is *a privilege*.

- 1) Helping others must never be a burden to us

- 2) We need the attitude of Paul as we serve (I Corinthians 15:9-10).

3. Hindrances to Servanthood

- a. Serving the wrong master (Matthew 6:24).

- b. Limiting when and who we serve.

- c. Negligence (Hebrews 6:11-12).

- d. Pride and self-centeredness.

4. The greatness of servanthood.

- a. Is seen in the action of Jesus (Matthew 20:28).

- b. True greatness consist in serving others (Matthew 20:25-27).

- c. Servanthood is rewarded.

- 1) Acts 20:35

- 2) Opens doors for the gospel (II Corinthians 4:5).

### CONCLUSION

- A. The Christian is to be at God's disposal.

B. The Christian's service is a part of the joy of being in Christ (Proverbs 11:24-25).

C. As servants we must:

1. *Plan*, set goals for our work and service
2. *Prepare* (Ecclesiastes 10:10).
3. *Engage* ourselves in activity.
4. *Finish* what we start.

D. Judgment will involve an accounting of our use of *potential*.

E. We must influence one another to want to be active (Hebrews 10:24-25).

—24065 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

## Restoration Reflections...

# ADRON DORAN: EDUCATOR, LEGISLATOR, PREACHER, HISTORIAN, FAITHFUL HUSBAND

Paul Vaughn

I first heard of Adron Doran when I was in high school at Maysville, Kentucky. He was President of Morehead State University and the local newspaper would feature articles about the University and the many changes taking place during that time. It was during this period that Maysville re-established a football program and our equipment was donated by football program at Morehead. The first time I met brother Doran was at the Cane Ridge Lectureship held by North Lexington Church of Christ in Lexington, Kentucky. It was at this time I became very interested in the study of Restoration history.

Adron Doran stepped into eternity on November 22, 2001 at Lexington, Kentucky. He will be greatly missed in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, but the foremost loss will be felt by his wife of seventy years, Mignon.

He was born on September 1, 1909 to Edward Conway and Mary Elizabeth (Clemons) Doran in Graves County, Kentucky. Doran graduated from Cuba High School in Graves County and entered Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee earning an Associate of Arts degree. He entered Murray State University in western Kentucky earning a Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts degrees. Brother Doran received his Doctor of Education degree from the University of Kentucky.

### EDUCATOR, LEGISLATOR, HISTORIAN

Doran had a career that spanned forty-five years in education. He was a high school teacher, principal, coach, bef-

ore becoming president of Morehead State University where he served for twenty-three years (1954-77). He served as president of the Kentucky Education Association and was appointed by

President

Lyndon B. Johnson to

the National Advisory Council on Education Professions Development.

In 1943, Doran was elected to the Kentucky House of Representatives. He served as speaker of the House during the 1950 session.

Dr. Doran was a student of Restoration history. He co-authored a biography of Hall Laurie Calhoun with J.E. Choate, called *The Christian Scholar*. In 1997, he wrote *Restoring New Testament Christianity*. Doran wrote numerous articles on the Restoration Movement. His work will aid many students of Restoration history for many years.

### GOSPEL PREACHER

The world could view the educational and political efforts of Adron Doran as the most important events in his life. This is not the case because he was a faithful

preacher of the Gospel for over seventy years. From a mission point of view he was very eager to help the church grow. In 1976 the church of Christ was re-established in Mason County, Kentucky. In 1984, Clark Elkins, the



preacher for the congregation invited brother Doran to speak in a gospel meeting. Elkins had been trying to get a local radio program for months, but the managers of the radio station refused to let him have the radio time. When Doran was speaking in the meeting he met the manager, whose son attended Morehead University. From this encounter the church was allowed time for a daily program.

In October 1986, my wife and I moved to Brown County, Ohio to re-establish a congregation in that county. There were four Christian Churches, which wore the name "Church of Christ," in the county; they did not appreciate our moving in the area. They tried to close the door on many of our efforts to preach the gospel. We asked brother Doran to speak in a meeting for the congregation. His presence helped to open many doors of opportunity for the work. When Ricki and I moved to Jackson, Kentucky in 1991 to help in the establishment of the church, one of the first preachers to be invited for a meeting was Adron Doran. Again he was able to use his talents to help in a mission work. There were many who attended the meeting because they met brother Doran while he was President at Morehead University.

In February 2000, Ricki and I moved to Hancock County, Kentucky to establish the church of Christ there. One of the first to be invited to speak was Adron Doran. Sadly, his health kept him from speaking in this new work. During the two years, before his death, brother and sister Doran helped the work in many other ways.

## FAITHFUL HUSBAND

The greatness of an individual is often measured by how much property he owns or the career moves in his life. Brother Doran had accomplished many endeavors in life. One could not have met him without recognizing that he viewed his marriage to Mignon as second only to his service to God. Doran married **Mignon Lousie McClain** on August 23, 1931.

I will relate one story to show to you the love this couple had for each other. As stated before, we invited brother Doran to speak in a gospel meeting for the Jackson Church of Christ, Jackson, Kentucky. Just before the meeting was to start, sister Doran became ill. He did not want to leave her behind, and she did not want to send him off alone. Neither wanted the gospel meeting canceled, so sister Doran came along with her husband staying in the motel room while he preached. The members of the church sent meals to her. As soon as each service was over, he would go quickly to see how she was doing.

Adron Doran accomplished many things in his life. Although I did not know him as well as others did, he gave me the impression that he would want to be remembered for his faithful service to Lord and His church and for his enduring love for his Mignon.

He will be greatly missed.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewistown, Kentucky 42351

## Current Events that Concern Christians...

### Intolerance, Therapeutic Classrooms, Women's Rights in Public Ministry, and More

Compiled By Mark McWhorter

"Life is a work-in-progress. ... I've had therapy, I've hugged trees, I've chanted. I've done all that. What that does is it helps you control your responses to situations, but I don't think you can ever change who you are." — Boy George to *London's Gay Times*, October issue (Planet out news, 10/29/01). [What Mr. George needs is the Word of God. We must be able to change who we are if we are to go from sinning to righteousness. Only the power of the gospel is able to create such a change.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

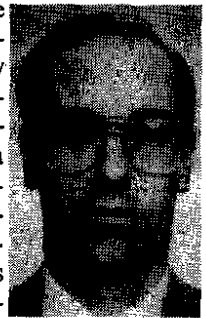
Sometimes the people who cry the loudest for "tolerance" can be the least tolerant of all. For the latest example, look no farther than Denver. The Denver Employees' Combined Campaign, an organization allowing city workers to donate to charities through their payroll deductions,

voted to force all 325 listed non-profit organizations it supports to abide by the city's anti-discrimination law. This law prohibits discrimination against sexual orientation, one of the nation's most contentious social issues (*Covenant News*, 12/15/01). [It is amazing that they can force private organizations to allow homosexuals to work for them. This is the direction our country is headed. Tolerance is good unless, of course, you are not tolerant of sin. Then you are not tolerated.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

The latest issue of *World Christian* put out by the World Convention of Church of Christ/Christian/Disciples of Christ has a listing of their U.S. Ambassadors. Doug Foster of Abilene Texas is listed. According to them: "World Convention Ambassadors are members and leaders of our

churches who are willing to be advocates for the ministry of World Convention. Being an ambassador is not so much a further job as it is a dimension to responsibilities those who become ambassadors already carry. Ambassadors seek to increase our sense of family and common purpose both globally and across any lines of family division that exist in their areas." Their website is [www.worldconvention.org](http://www.worldconvention.org). So Doug Foster is taking another step to demonstrate that he is a world change agent. He is vowing to make sure that all Christians in the Abilene and Texas (and one would presume the whole U.S. A.) area fellowship denominations. —Mark



\*\*\*\*\*

Star Bible has published a book by a Mr. Pribble entitled *Theology Simplified*. This book supposedly "explains in laymen's terms the non-Trinitarian relationship existing between God, his son, and his spirit. As we who are made in his image, the one God has both a son and a Spirit, and does not need to be a triune being composed of three persons in order to be so. Such provides a more reasonable and more biblical explanation, and keeps Christ from being a son of a supposed 'Third Person of the Trinity,' the Holy Spirit, as per Matthew 1:18-20" (*Christian Chronicle*, October, 2001, p. 9 advertisement). [It is sad that Star Bible would publish a book denying there are three persons in the Godhead. One wonders how he explains the Father speaking to His Son at his baptism. Since there are not three persons there must be three personalities, thus making our great God a God of split personalities.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

I know there were many congregations who sent funds for the twin tower's victims through the Manhattan Church of Christ. Below is an excerpt from *El Expositor Espiritual*, p. 9, August, 2001 by Lionel Cortez. "Some weeks ago three elders with their wives, Marta, my wife, and I went to New York. Sunday morning we looked for the closest congregation. We went to the Manhattan Church of Christ. All of a sudden a chorus appears singing in front of the congregation, and although some sang along with them, not all of us did. Then, the time came to partake of the Lord's Supper and three men and two women go to the front to serve. At that point, all eight of us got up and left the auditorium; at the door, there was a Latin brother who told us in English, "Don't slam the door." How rude! It seems like they are used to people leaving their services. Behind us other visitors from Texas also left."

\*\*\*\*\*

Teachers and day-care workers can refer 3-5 year old children to the Therapeutic Classroom at Cook Elementary School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, run by CenterPoint Human Services, for a variety of behavioral problems. Some children throw chairs at their teachers, fight with their classmates or have frequent temper tantrums. Others can't sit still and do not listen to directions. The children are so little that their behaviors hardly seem threatening, but the program tries to deal with the problems before the children grow

older and the problems become more serious. The program started as the Preschool Enrichment Program about 20 years ago, but since then it has focused more on behavioral therapy. Now, it works to identify children's problems in an effort to improve their behavior. The program also offers education and counseling to the children and their parents. The program doubled its capacity two years ago, with money from a federal grant administered by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, and it now serves 32 children. The program offers two morning sessions and two afternoon sessions for eight students each. Two teachers and an assistant work in each class because so many of the children need highly individual attention (Dawn Ziegenbalg "Special class works wonders setting kids on the right track" *The Charlotte Observer*, December 31, 2001, 2B (<http://www.charlotte.com>). [Perhaps a few lessons from a paddle would decrease the bad behavior. But of course, we should not expect that to happen because it would hurt the child's "self-esteem." They can try all the psycho babble and counseling they want, but until they use God's way, all will be useless.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

The words below should send a chill down the back of anyone who stands for biblical truth. I find it quite revealing that the amount of money these women can make is an issue. Later in the published interview, Mrs. Reese bemoans the fact that in her opinion the majority of churches will not add women to serve in public ministry for a long time. It would appear that she is working hard to make it happen as soon as possible. And Abilene Christian is completely behind her. How dare them still contend that they stand for the old paths or for what the founders of the school stood for.—Mark McWhorter

*Conversation with Jeanene Reese, director of the Center for Women Ministry at Abilene Christian University. (Mrs. Reese's husband is Jack Reese, Dean of the College of Biblical Studies at ACU) (Christian Chronicle, Dialogue interview by Lindy Adams, January, 2002, p. 20)*

Adams: What's out there for young women looking for positions? Is the pay on par with men's salaries?

Reese: I believe that if we do not define ministry too narrowly, we could come up with a pretty extensive list. Women serve on the payroll at churches as children's

and youth ministers, administrate child-care, coordinate after school programs and work on counseling staffs. They coordinate adult education, serve in pastoral care, work with the elderly, minister as chaplains and function as administrative staff and church secretaries. Women are active in outreach, benevolence and inner-city programs across the United States. They are involved in worship ministries, theater ministries, and engage the arts to the glory of God. Besides these many roles connected with churches, they serve in vastly varied para-church ministries and as volunteers everywhere. But inequities certainly still exist. Women's professional salaries in churches are still lower than comparable men's salaries and often benefits are non-existent or insubstantial. We often are excited to have a women[sic] serve in our churches in various intern positions, but fail to create the professional ones that would naturally grow out of them.

Also, many churches have not thought through what it means to add a woman to what has mostly functioned for a long time as a male domain.

Adams: How do you explain the resistance or even hostility to women entering ministry that comes from some quarters?

Reese: I think we would be naive not to expect resistance or hostility toward women entering ministry. Opinions on the subject vary widely, and it has historically been a hot topic in the church. I think the key to working through the resistance or hostility is for all of us as Christians to grow in learning how to extend grace to those who are different from us and even those with whom we disagree. Part of the value of the Center for Women in Christian Service is that it serves as a buffer zone for both individuals and churches struggling with these issues. My task is not to settle the issue for churches on how they deal with women in ministry, but to provide resources and support for whatever decisions they make.

Adams: Now, as women have acquired formal credentials, has that resistance lessened any?

Reese: In some ways, yes. Truthfully, I think the greatest barrier breaker has been the growing up of our competent, godly, spiritual young women — our daughters and granddaughters. I think we all want good things for those whom we love the most. I hope this trend continues.

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

# DOES BAPTISM REQUIRE A VERBAL FORMULA?

Daniel Denham

There are those in the religious world who hold that a particular verbal formula must be said over the candidate in the act of baptism in order for the baptism to be valid and thus effectual in the sight of God. This is a doctrine especially popular among Oneness Pentecostal groups, like the United Pentecostals and the Jesus Only churches. Noted UPC preacher Ray Vaughn affirmed in his debate with G.K. Wallace, "Resolved: That there is only one person in the Godhead and that Baptism is only in the name of the Lord Jesus." By this latter clause Vaughn clearly meant that the name of Jesus had to be verbally expressed over the candidate in the act of baptizing by the administrator of the baptism.

But such views are not exclusive to Oneness Pentecostalism. It has been my experience on occasion to meet brethren who earnestly believed that some sort of verbal formula was essential to the cleansing efficacy of baptism. What does the Bible teach on the matter? Is there some mystical power to be ascribed to saying a formula containing the specific name "Jesus" over the candidate, the absence of which would invalidate the obedience of the candidate?

### THE ONENESS ASSUMPTION

We must first realize that the doctrine of a verbal formula arose among many out of the false assumption that Jesus is the only Person in the Godhead. Oneness teaching, which has its roots in ancient Sabellianism, holds that Jesus is actually the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are but distinct manifestations or differing modes of existence of the one Person.

However, the Bible clearly shows that there are three distinct Persons in the Godhead and these expressions describe some essential aspect of each in relation to the others, as Wallace effectively and forcefully demonstrated in his classic debate with Vaughn. The notion of a verbal formula arising from the name of "Jesus" is based upon a false concept of the Godhead at the outset. The Oneness position holds that "in the name of Jesus Christ" in Acts 2:38 demands that the name of Jesus be pronounced over the candidate. If it were not for the false assumption on the nature of the Godhead, it is likely that most of those holding to a verbal formula involving that name would not press for it.

### PROBLEMS POSED BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF ACTS 2:38

The verse reads, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy

Spirit." This passage poses a couple of problems for the formula folk.

First, the passage does not teach anything about what is to be said over the candidate. Rather it tells what is to be done! Peter was telling the Jews what to do, not what to say. Verse 38 is a direct response to the query, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (v. 37, emphasis mine). Any exegesis that ignores that direct relationship is errant at the start. No instruction is given anywhere in the text—nor in its context—as to what *must* be said over the candidate. No such passage exists in the Bible.

Second, the text clearly couples repentance and baptism together. In the construction in the original language the purpose of the repenting is the same as the purpose of the being baptized! Furthermore, the two obligatory actions enjoined by Peter are modified by the compound phrase "in the name of Jesus Christ." If baptism requires a verbal formula, then so would repentance. This verbal formula would have to precede the baptism as it does in the text as to order of operation. Thus, there would have to be at least two expressions of the formula in conjunction with the baptismal act—one immediately preceding and tied directly to repentance in some fashion and the other simultaneous with the act of baptism itself. In all of my years of preaching (not to mention that I have a number of family members who are or have been Oneness Pentecostals), I have never heard of nor observed such a practice, but consistency in argument would demand a verbal formula for repentance as well as baptism!

Third, the text specifically reads "in the name of Jesus Christ." The Oneness doctrine emphasizes the name "Jesus" but ignores the force of "Christ." Why would not the



When in Lubbock, please visit

**SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
 8501 Quaker Avenue • Lubbock, Texas  
 (806) 794-5008  
 Tommy J. Hicks, Preacher

<i>Sunday</i>		<i>Tuesday</i>
Bible Study	9:00 a.m.	Ladies Bible Class
Morning Worship	9:55 a.m.	<i>Wednesday</i>
Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.	Bible Study
		7:30 p.m.



passage demand that both names be expressed audibly? If one can ignore the word "Christ" then why must he express "Jesus"? Why not express the former but ignore the latter? Sometimes the Oneness appeal to Acts 4:10-12 to justify their use of the name "Jesus," but that text poses even more problems. It too uses the name "Christ" in direct conjunction with "Jesus" and then adds the qualifying modifying phrase "of Nazareth." Must the whole name given in Acts 4 be used. If not, why not? If one quibbles that these other expressions are "titles" but not names, he needs to examine the definition of the word "title" in a comprehensive dictionary and read Isaiah 9:6!

#### MORE PROBLEMS FOR THE FORMULA THEORY

Other problems beset the theory. 1) The phrase "**in the name of**" simply means "by the authority of," even as Acts 4:10-12 helps to indicate. The Sanhedrin had been interrogating Peter and John as to the authority behind their action *in healing the lame man from Acts 3. They pressed the matter by asking "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?"* (Acts 4:7). It is clear that the name equals the power (authority) in the inquiry, and it is in addressing this inquiry that Peter said it was done "**by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth**" (v. 10). To do something in someone's name was to do it by his authority, as Thayer and every other lexicon I am familiar with bear out. We have no problem understanding such use in our common parlance, "Open up in the name of the law." Why build a theological theory on a misuse of such a phrase otherwise easily understood in our native tongue?

2) There are clearly variations existent in other texts dealing with baptism. Compare the following: Acts 2:38, "**in the name of Jesus Christ;**" Acts 8:16, "**in the name of the Lord Jesus;**" Acts 10:48, "**in the name of the Lord;**" and Acts 19:5, "**in the name of the Lord Jesus.**" The difference is even more striking in Greek where different prepositions are found. Acts 2:38 reads "epi"; Acts 8:16, "eis"; Acts 10:48, "en"; and Acts 19:5, "eis." In Acts 2:38 the definite article is lacking *in front of Jesus*, elsewhere it is used in the original. The expression "in the name of Jesus only" or "only in the name of Jesus" is nowhere to be found in any biblical text! The Oneness commit the same sin as the Devil (Genesis 3:4) in adding to God's word.

3) If Acts 2:38 establishes a formula for baptism, then what about Mark 9: 40-41 where Jesus said that the apostles were to do miracles "**in My name.**" Did they have to repeat audibly the name of the Lord over every miracle that they performed? Where is the record that they did so? When Peter raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36ff) did he use a verbal formula to effect the miracle? If so, then where is the evidence for it? Mark 9:42 also talks about giving a cup of cold water "**in my name**" (in the name of the Lord). Does that passage now bind a verbal formula for the validity of acts of benevolence? If not, why not? Colossians 3:17 applies the phrase "**in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**" to everything we say or do. When one arises from a chair or reads his newspaper or brushes his teeth, must he audibly say that he is doing the specific act "**in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**"? Some years ago during

the **Charles Dixon-George Morrow** debate in Florida, I was confronted by several Oneness Pentecostal people, including some of their preachers, who wanted to press the matter of the formula on the floor during intermission, perhaps because their man (*Morrow*) was getting a "royal hiding" on the matter by brother Dixon at the podium. I pressed the matter back upon the Oneness folk by pointing out that as far as I knew none of them had said "I am getting up out of my seat in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," and that they evidently did not believe that the phrase constituted a verbal formula any more than I did! Colossians 3:17 also shows that there is more than one person in the Godhead.


Acts 2:38 tells men what to do in order to have their sins remitted. It tells them that such is by the authority of the son of God himself. What is to be done by the candidate is the important thing. He must "**obey from the heart**" (Romans 6:3-17).

While there is no specific formula given as to what must be said over the candidate in baptism, it is most expedient that he who does the baptizing inform both the candidate and those observing the act just what is taking place—that one is being baptized by the authority of Christ to have his sins forgiven or washed away. I will often add that the candidate is being baptized "**into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit**" (Matthew 28:19), which in turn evidences a new relationship of the candidate with the Godhead. There is presented an opportunity to instruct in the course of carrying out the act. It reminds the candidate of the importance of his action and impresses upon the mind of those observing the act with its solemnity and significance.

—117 Owens Ave.  
Rutherford, Tennessee 38369

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

- Two-year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966
- Applications now being accepted
- Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9984  
Fax (901) 751-8098

## We Will Listen To These Advisors

Lynn Parker

In the life of any congregation are crossroads where crucial decisions must be made. These decisions may involve the selection of a preacher, implementation of a work program, the process of selecting elders, care of the widows and benevolent works, the curriculum for the Bible classes, supporting a missionary, and literally scores of other matters. From time to time, input is sought from the members of the congregation. When some folks talk, others readily listen. On the other hand, quite frankly, there are some suggestions that do not carry much weight in a congregation because of the person behind the input. There are some counselors we respect. By and large, there are those sound, wise, mature brethren who ought to be heeded. We want to hear advice from these voices. We treasure their input. In matters of expediency, their thoughts are given weight in business meetings. They have similar characteristics. Consider them briefly.

**1. We want counsel from one who is faithful in attendance (Hebrew 10:24-25).** Ironic, is it not, how some brethren are careless about attendance at Bible class and worship assemblies but always seem to be present at every business meeting to contribute their "two cents." That is about what their advice is worth to the congregation, too! It might be helpful to have business meetings after Bible class on Wednesday evenings to root out some of the slackers. If you are not faithful in attendance, do not get your feathers ruffled when people discount your thoughts on the important congregational decisions.

**2. We want counsel from one who is abounding in the Lord's work (I Corinthians 15:58).** Lazy people can sure talk up a good fight against the devil. The problem is that they are AWOL when the fighting takes place. Your advice is respected when you lead by example. Move to the forefront in hard work and brethren will perk up when you talk.

**3. We want counsel from one who is an exhorter and builder.** Barnabas was such a man. He was sent by the brethren at Jerusalem with an important task: "who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord: for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23-24).

It takes little effort to criticize but it becomes a real challenge to build. "Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do" (I Thessalonians 5:11). Wisdom balances a person so that while they tear down the wrong and they are careful to build up the right. A fulltime critic makes a lot of noise but his advice is not respected. Murmuring (grumbling, complaining) is sin and murmurers are sources of conflict in the congregation. We do not care to hear advice from troublemakers.

**4. We want counsel from one who is humble.** The apostle commanded, "doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Philippians 2:3-4). Humble men can be corrected. Prideful men are unapproachable when it comes



to their own mistakes. "When pride cometh, then cometh shame; But with the lowly is wisdom" (Proverbs 11:2). "A man's pride shall bring him low; But he that is of a lowly spirit shall obtain honor" (Proverbs 29:23).

**5. We want counsel from one who is knowledgeable in the Bible.** The work of the church is set forth in the Bible. A preacher's work is set forth in the Bible. The work of both elders and deacons is described in the Bible. So if you are Biblically ignorant, pardon the rest of us who do not give a hoot when you are critical of the preacher or the elders. If you do not know the Biblically defined work of the church, then you are ill equipped to advise the church on its important plans for the future. If you know the Bible and can apply its principles, good brethren will give you an attentive ear. Learn the Bible and *then* give us advice. "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

**6. We want counsel from one who will take a stand for truth.** It is easy for Monday morning quarterbacks to tell why the home team lost. Some preachers and elderships sit on the sideline and criticize those who on the forefront, saying, "You're doing it all wrong!" We can only hope that they will venture forth from the shadows and show us how it is to be done. Likewise, it is easy to speak up after the business meeting and tell some truly brave soul, "You were exactly right in there tonight. I was behind you all the way." In more than one business meeting truth has come under attack and brethren have sat silently by while others did the talking. Some have tried to settle doctrinal matters by votes around a table. Brethren do not respect cowards. Neither does God. Faithful brethren will listen to men who have strength of conviction and who stand for truth. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (I Corinthians 16:13).

Here then we have considered the attributes of a good counselor. When sound brethren see evidence of spiritual maturity in someone they will listen carefully to his advice. The advice of an unqualified counselor is worth about what is paid for it.

—P.O. Box 39  
Spring, Texas 77383

# The Blessings Of Repentance

Eddie Whitten

## THE FACT OF SIN

The scars of sin mar the souls of every person. To set the record straight, the apostle John stated, **"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us"** (I John 1:8, 10). Therefore, it does us no good to claim to be sinless. If we do, we become sinful in that we have lied. Sin not only scars the soul, but it leaves a crimson stain. Isaiah said, **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool"** (Isaiah 12:18). The promise of Isaiah gives assurance that the stain of sin can be removed. Notice that the Lord did not say, **"If you have sinned, your sins are as scarlet"** He said they **"be (are) as scarlet."** It is not a question of "if," but "since," we have sin in our lives. Paul also stated that **"all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Romans 3:23). That fact being established, the process of the cleansing of the scarlet, or the crimson, stain can begin.



## THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

It is a hopeless fantasy to think that man can effect his own forgiveness of sin. That is out of the question. According to the writer of Hebrews, **"and without shedding of blood is no remission"** (Hebrews 9:22). Hebrews also tells us, **"it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins"** (Hebrews 10:4). No animal sacrifice was sufficient to take away the sins of men. It would take a special sacrifice, one far beyond the capability of man to provide, to remove from the souls of men the crimson stain of sin. It would take the blood of the son of God.

Jesus came into the world to redeem the world from sin (Galatians 4:4-7). He was tempted like as we are yet He did no sin (Hebrews 4:15). Because Jesus, the son of God, lived as a man (John 1:1-3, 14), without sin, he became the sufficient sacrifice to take away the sins of men.

The mere fact that Jesus became the sacrifice that would make it possible for men to be saved did not bring about salvation for all men. It would take more than the provision for salvation; it would also take the application of the provision. Food can be brought to an individual but unless he eats the food no benefit will be realized. Titus said, **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men"** (Titus 2:11). God's grace has made it possible for all men to be saved, but all men will not be saved be-

cause all men will not partake of God's saving grace. The same is true with regard to the sacrifice Jesus made so that all men can be saved. Only those who avail themselves of his sacrifice will enjoy the benefit of it.

## REPENTANCE BRINGS FORGIVENESS

Having noted that sins can be forgiven by the grace of God through the sacrifice of his son, we now ask, "How can forgiveness be brought about? How can we be forgiven?" Is forgiveness automatic without our participation in it? According to some in the church, "we have not one whit to do with our salvation!" Sadly, that statement is going to cause some, perhaps many, to miss the blessings of repentance. God, in his unfathomable love and wisdom, has provided a way that man can be forgiven of his sins. It is conditional. It must emanate from the pangs of the guilt of sin within man and the overwhelming desire to change one's manner of life.

To begin with, the alien sinner must be convinced that unless he changes the course of his life, he is going to be lost eternally. That means he will be separated from the presence of God for all time, never to hear or see anything good and helpful ever again. He will be associated only with all the murderers, hypocrites, cheats, drunkards and liars that ever lived. He will never see anything that will lift his spirit in laughter ever again. What a terrible consequence of a rebellious life. When he is convinced of the loss he faces and the prospect that he can be delivered from such, then he is willing to repent. Repentance leads to obedience to God's command to be baptized. His life takes on a new direction.

A Christian, a child of God, becoming weak and falling into sin, realizes he is on the road to perdition, also becomes convicted of his sinful condition. He knows that if he continues in that direction, he will be lost. He comes to his senses and repents for the sins he has committed. Repentance has taken place in both instances noted. Then we see the blessings of repentance.

Repentance having taken place in the heart of either the alien or the fallen sinner and the proper action subsequent, the resultant blessings are enjoyed. For the alien sinner, all his past sins are washed away in the blood of the Lamb as he submits to baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; I Peter 3:21). He arises from his immersion a new creature free from the crimson stain of sin. The scars of sin may remain, but the stain is gone.

For the fallen sinner, repentance produces a contrite heart which expresses itself unto God in the form of sincere, heartfelt prayer. The one who prays sincerely and contritely for God to forgive him of sin has the divine promise of forgiveness (II Corinthians 7:10).

Another blessing brought about by repentance is that all the sins that have been forgiven as a consequence will never be held against the penitent ever again by God, and should not be by man.

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

# 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—

**Cambridge**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## —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.

**Rockwood**—Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun: 10, 11 a.m., Wed: 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## —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 Bob Patterson, 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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.

## Classifieds...

**FULL-TIME EXPERIENCED** preacher wanted for small (25+) congregation in Louisville, MS. Providing partial support would be helpful. Will consider those interested in part-time work. Please send resume to P.O. Box 427, Louisville, MS 39339, or call Ray: 609.677.3878.

**FULL TIME MINISTER** needed for Central Church of Christ, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. If you are interested or know someone who may like to come and work with us, please call 540.896.1417 or write: Central Church of Christ, 822 Country Club Rd., Harrisonburg, VA 22802, Att: Warren L. Good.

**CLASSIFIED ADS**—\$2.00 per line per month. For a complete listing of ad sizes and rates see Advertising Policy and Rates on page 2.

# Spring Bible Institute

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO Box 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-  
DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR  
SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (RESIDENCE).
- ASSISTANCE RAISING SUPPORT.
- BALANCED BIBLE APPROACH.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- OVERSEEN BY BOLD, GODLY ELDERS.
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, "HANDS-ON" TRAINING
- TRAINING FOR PREACHERS, ELDERS, TEACHERS
- DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM (BY INTERNET)

### **CONTACT US TODAY!**

ON THE WEB: [WWW.CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM](http://WWW.CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM)

EMAIL: [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)

(281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN \* ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

**"My time at SBI was instrumental in preparing me to preach the Gospel. The faculty is knowledgeable, helpful, and concerned about sound doctrine. I would recommend it to anyone who desires a good Bible-based education."**

***Geoff Litke, SBI Graduate  
Carlsbad, New Mexico***

**NEW!**

**DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM (DLP)**  
TAKE BIBLE COURSES BY INTERNET. VIEW  
CLASSES AT YOUR CONVENIENCE. SEND  
ASSIGNMENTS BY E-MAIL. NO TUITION CHARGED

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith™**  
Post Office Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT# 1863

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## "THE LARGER COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS"

Gary McDade

The belief that the church of which one is a member is a part of "the larger community of believers" would be expected among people who think of the church as sectarian or denominational. But, when it appears in a college catalogue from a graduate school preparing men for pulpits in churches of Christ, it should signal the need to take corrective action. Beneath the heading on "Identity" the context in which this phrase appears states: "... We encourage the open and honest pursuit of truth through past and present resources in the context of historic Christian faith.

Within the context of these commitments that are shared with the larger community of believers, the Graduate School is particularly committed to providing integrated training for ministry among churches of Christ. These churches embrace the concept of restoration as a theological principle.<sup>1</sup>

### H.U.G.R. AND ITS DEAN EVERTT HUFFARD LEAD IN APOSTASY

"Harding University Graduate School of Religion is a branch school of Harding University in Searcy, Ark."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Everett W. Huffard is Dean/Executive Director.<sup>3</sup> The campus is located at 1000 Cherry Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38117.

The President of Harding University is **Dr. David B. Burks**. The position taken in the 2001-2002 General Catalogue of the graduate school over which he serves as President stands contrasted against what he wrote in January of 2000. He wrote:

Christ's church is distinctive. The new century may bring more questions than answers concerning the identity of the

church. But we are the bride of Christ, and as such we have an obligation to know who we are and whose we are: We are the one church Paul speaks of in Ephesians 4:4. This strong sense of identity spurs us to truthfully proclaim all aspects of Christ's church, including acappella music in worship, the autonomy of the local congregation, the weekly observance of the Lord's supper, and the role of men and women in and out of the worship assembly.<sup>4</sup>

Lamentably, the "branch school" in Memphis does not share the view of its president.

Dean Huffard has played a leadership role in the formation and furtherance of the five Community Church Movement-type churches in the Memphis area.<sup>5</sup> Chameleon-like the organization and administration of these churches variously is referenced as MCPM (Memphis Church Planting Ministry, cf. *Mission Memphis*, Spring 1998, vol. 2, pp. 1-2), MUM (Memphis Urban Ministry, *The Acts of Highland Street*, 20:49, Dec. 21, 2000, pages 185, 188) and City Missions (*Server*, 48:13, March 28, 2001, page 2). The graduate school website says Dean Huffard served as the "Chairman of Steering Committee (1991-1997)" for MUM [ugsr.edu/CVs/cv\\_huff.htm](http://ugsr.edu/CVs/cv_huff.htm). The *Harding* magazine reported Dean Huffard was "the impetus behind the forming" of the Downtown Church and stated, "He has spent the last two years directly involved with the church's planting. . ." The so-called contemporary worship consisting of the use of a praise team, hand clapping, testimonials, and the use of religious art in worship (a 25-foot mural of Jesus Christ on the cross) are all presented in the *Harding* magazine article. The source from which

(Continued on Page 13)



David P. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher  
dpbrown9@swbell.net

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## 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 needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major charges 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

Editorial...

# CHURCH COOPERATION, ORPHAN HOMES AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS

David P. Brown

The church of Christ (as that term is defined and used in the New Testament) is charged by the Lord to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15; II Timothy 2:2). Our Lord's commission involves the church (each member according to their several abilities and opportunities) going into every nation in the world, every city in every nation, and every person in each city. In the very nature of the case (discharging the obligation set out in the great commission), cooperation between and among Christians is implied. How is this the case? In answer to the question please consider the fact that when a preacher goes to a certain city to preach the gospel, his going to the city does not necessarily allow him to preach to every creature in that city. However, the great commission demands that the gospel be preached to every creature.

It is a New Testament fact that the church of the first century carried the gospel to every creature under heaven (Colossians 1:23). Such was accomplished in about 30 years because those brethren cooperated with each other in making the gospel available to every person accountable to God at that time.

## TYPES OF COOPERATION FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Let us examine some of the cooperative efforts of the first century church as they are revealed on the pages of the New Testament.

1. Paul cooperated with those who assisted him (II Timothy 4:9-12).
  2. Phoebe is said to have "succored many" (Romans 16:1, 2).
  3. The household of Stephanas had "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" (I Corinthians 16:15). This is an example of a Christian family cooperating with persons in need.
  4. The disciples determined according to each person's ability to send "relief" to the brethren in Judaea. This they did. Through Barnabas and Paul the brethren sent their "relief" to the elders in Judea (Acts 11:27-30).
  5. The churches of Macedonia, Achaia, Corinth, and Galatia cooperated in the collection recorded in Second Corinthians eight and nine.
  6. In the matter of the letter that was sent out by the church at Jerusalem other churches cooperated (Acts 15:19-31).
  7. Aquila and Priscilla (husband and wife) cooperated in teaching Apollos (Acts 18:26).
- What are some of the lessons we may deduce from these seven New Testament accounts of cooperation among and between the brethren of the first century?

1. There was cooperation between individuals (II Timothy 4:9).
2. One individual and several other individuals cooperated (Romans 16:1, 2).
3. A Christian family cooperated with needy individuals (I Corinthians 16:15).
4. Churches and needy saints in Jerusalem cooperated (II Corinthians 8, 9).
5. Different churches cooperated with one another (Acts 15:1-32).
6. A husband and wife cooperated with each other to teach another person the gospel (Acts 18:26).

**QUESTION:** Which one of the previously enumerated types of cooperation is the "exclusive pattern" for cooperation between and among Christians? **ANSWER:** None of them. *In-deed, no exclusive pattern of church cooperation is found in the Bible, the anti-cooperation brethren notwithstanding.*

Although more may be written in a later article on the false "exclusive pattern" idea, suffice it to say here that God's law of inclusion is this—if it is authorized it is included. His law of exclusion is this—if it is not authorized or if it is forbidden it is excluded. Please remember the Bible authorizes by direct statements, examples, and implication *only*. There is no other way language communicates or authorizes because such is the nature of the communicative element of language.

**ACTS 11:27-30 AND II CORINTHIANS 8 AND 9**

Acts 11:27-30 is an account of the disciples of Antioch of Syria determining to send relief to the people of Judea. This they did. And, they sent it to the hands of the elders. We have therein an account of one congregation of God's people sending money to another congregation. For what purpose was the money sent? It was to help meet a *physical need*. However, we do no violence to the scriptures when we note that in this passage is also authority for one church to send funds to the elders (as some demand) of another church to help in a *spiritual need* such as preaching the gospel. If it is right to do such in order to meet a *physical need* (benevolence) then it is right to do the same in meeting a *spiritual need*—preaching the gospel.

The churches of Christ in Macedonia, Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea sent money to Jerusalem to satisfy a need that was beyond the Jerusalem church's ability to meet. Nothing stood between these churches and the brethren at Jerusalem—no benevolent society of human origin. The previously mentioned churches did not seek to or in actuality take control of those churches. There was no centralized agency.

**RECENT HISTORICAL FACT**

In Houston, Texas during the winter of 1944 and 1945 the Adventists put forth a great effort to spread their doctrine. In an effort to refute Adventists' doctrine the Norhill congregation of Houston determined to follow the Adventists with appropriate Bible teaching. In time it was decided to utilize the Music Hall in down town Houston to accommodate the crowds. The late **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** was selected to preach the sermons. Following the meeting the sermons were printed

*In This Issue...*

<b>The Larger Community of Believers</b>	
Gary McDade	1
<i>Editorial</i>	
<b>Church Cooperation, Orphan Homes, and Other Related Matters</b>	2
<b>Disaster Relief Question and Answers</b>	
Glenn Alexander	8
<b>A Critique of "Disaster Relief Questions and Answers"</b>	
David P. Brown	10
<b>Restoration Reflections...</b>	
<b>The Church at Poole</b>	
Paul Vaughn	14
<b>Studies From the Biblical Text...</b>	
<b>The God Who Heareth Prayers</b>	
Daniel Denham	16
<b>Seeing It Helps Saying It...</b>	
<b>"...Busy Here and There..."</b>	
Jodie Boren	18
<b>The Stream of Pollution Continues</b>	
Wayne Coats	19
<b>One Woman's Perspective...</b>	
<b>Out-Laws, In-Laws, In-Loves</b>	
Annette B. Gates	20
<b>Biblical Questions...</b>	
<b>What is The Value of Prayer?</b>	
Noah Hackworth	21
<b>Sermon Outline...</b>	
<b>The Descriptive Word of God</b>	
Tom Moore	22

Please Contact Us Regarding Your  
**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Back return address costs  
**CONTENDING**  
**FOR THE FAITH**

55¢

in a book titled *God's Prophetic Word*. A man who helped father and who became one of the chief leaders of the anti-cooperation, anti-orphan's home, and so on faction wrote the introduction to the original publication of Wallace's book. This man was none other than the late **Roy E. Cogdill**. Several years later in order to stay consistent with his heresy; Cogdill repudiated the cooperative effort among the churches that produced the Music Hall Meeting. In the original introduction to *God's Prophetic Word* he wrote:

In order that the meeting might be carried out on a scriptural basis, and without provoking criticism, the Norhill congregation decided to sponsor the meeting, guaranteeing all expenses incurred, and simply extending an invitation to the other churches of Christ to have whatever part in the meeting, financially and otherwise, that they wanted to have.

Later in the same introduction Cogdill also wrote:

Never has an effort of this magnitude been carried to completion with any better cooperation, finer spirit of unity or less friction than this one. That was an outstanding feature of the meeting. Twenty churches worked together as one through the effort, and the churches of Christ of Houston demonstrated the practical side of Christian unity and above all the sufficiency of the Lord's church in the accomplishment of its work without interference of human organizations. **All the funds were handled through the treasury of the Norhill church, and all bills incurred paid out of that treasury with a complete report furnished each congregation assisting** (emphasis mine—editor).

What is the difference in other churches sending money to the Norhill church in Houston for the express purpose of discharging the obligation incumbent on all Christians—to teach the truth, and the churches of Corinth, Achaia, and Macedonia sending money to the elders at Jerusalem to discharge their duty to God in physical matters? The only way it could be wrong would be that another organization stood between the senders and the receivers. But, what was the *only* organization to which the money was sent? In the first century A. D. the money from the previously noted churches contributed for the relief of the saints was sent to the Jerusalem church. In the twentieth century the money for the Wallace Music Hall Meeting was sent to the Norhill congregation that sponsored the Wallace Meeting. In either of the previous cases, *the only organization to which money was sent was that organization known as the church of Christ*.

#### WHAT HAS BEEN ASCERTAINED FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT THUS FAR?

1. The obligation to preach the gospel to every creature has been ascertained (Mark 16:15).
2. The pattern of such cooperation is an element of Acts 11:27-30—one church sending money to another church for the purpose of supplying their need.

3. Congregations A, B, C, and D may send money to congregation H, to satisfy a need that was beyond congregation H's ability to meet.

4. The New Testament authorizes a cooperative effort, such as the Houston Music Hall meeting in Houston, Texas.

5. Over 55 years ago churches followed the teaching of the New Testament regarding cooperation, which cooperation and its New Testament authorization some brethren later rejected to the unauthorized division of the blood bought body of Christ.

#### OF NATURAL HOMES, ORPHAN HOMES, AND CHURCH COOPERATION

There are only three God ordained institutions on this earth—the *home*, *civil government*, and the *church*. It must be understood that the *home* has no authority to replace civil government or the church; that *civil government* has no God-given authority to make null and void the home or the church; the *church* has no Bible authority to exercise dominion over the civil government or the home. Thus, in the divine scheme of things, not one of the preceding God-ordained institutions may replace the others or the responsibilities and works pertaining thereto and peculiarly characteristic of each one. However, as a part of practicing "**pure and undefiled religion**" the church is obligated to "**visit**" (supply the needs of) "**orphans and widows**" (James 1:27). The church is expected in the general course of things to abide by the laws of the land (Romans 13). Thus, all other matters being scripturally equal, these God-originated institutions may (indeed must) cooperate with one another without any of them usurping the place and work of the others. This, therefore, is the case regarding cooperation between and among churches of Christ.

#### LEGAL NATURAL AND LEGAL RESTORED HOMES

Many times those hobby riding brethren who oppose church cooperation, orphan homes, helping non-saints out of the church treasury, and kitchens in church buildings to the point of dividing churches pose the following question to us. It is, "*Would you accept the same arrangement in evangelism as you do in the support of orphaned children?*" And, my answer is a frank and candid—*no*. The reason is this: in the case of evangelism we have God's divine institution, the church, for the purpose of evangelism. The "missionary society" (as it existed in the apostasy of the nineteenth century which apostasy turned into the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ) takes the place of the church. When the "missionary society" does its work the church has no evangelism left to do. *However, the home is a God-ordained institution created by God to do things the church of Christ does not have authority from God to do.*

(Just here I need to emphasize that I am not herein defending any erroneous conduct or false teaching done by anyone in any of the three God ordained institutions previously listed. I am defending their scriptural right to exist and function as God intended them to exist and function.)

Marriage and the home did not originate with man, but with God for the good of man. When children are orphaned (bereft of parents) the natural home is destroyed. Since the church is not authorized to be a home, and elders (acting in their capacity as elders over congregations of God's people) are not authorized to be the heads of homes, then there is of necessity, the need for an "orphan home"—in the place of the natural parents, and, therefore, said home is in the place of the natural home—a legal home. Hence, there are two kinds of homes that are acceptable to God on this earth—natural homes and legal homes. The natural home has parents over it. The legal home has men who stand in the place of parents—*en loco parentis*—to the children.

Because Romans thirteen obligates us to obey the laws of the land when those laws do not contradict God's law (Acts 5:29), we therefore, must comply with the civil law regarding orphan homes. Hence, in order to comply with civil law, the legal home may need to be incorporated, have a board of directors, administration, house parents, social workers and the like. If people can understand that the state has a right to require a marriage license and possibly other requirements in order for a natural home to be legal, they ought to be able to understand that an orphan home has the responsibility before God to comply with civil law as such laws pertain to child care agencies (orphan homes).

Since the church has the responsibility to take care of orphans, it contributes toward the support of legal homes without attempting to absorb the home into the church. And, that is exactly what it would do if a natural home were in need. The orphan home is no more a humanly devised institution because it complies with the laws of the land pertaining to its existence, organization, and conduct, than the natural home is a humanly devised institution because it must obey civil laws in the process of coming into existence and functioning as a natural home.

#### THE CHURCH IS NOT A HOME

What person who knows the Bible properly believes that the church is an orphan home or, for that matter, that it is a natural home? When the orphan home does its work, the church has as much work left to do as it ever did. That cannot be said of the "missionary society" and the church. Now who is it that desires to affirm the following proposition: "The

scriptures teach that the church is its own home as the church is its own missionary society"? Before anyone jumps to affirm such a proposition it will be as the fellow stated who got his words confused, "The swallows will have to come back to 'pastrami' before that happens."

#### COMPARABLE TO THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

What kind of an organization would it take to have something comparable to a missionary society in the area of benevolence regarding orphan homes? It must be an organization independent of the legal homes (orphan homes) and the churches that support them. Said benevolent institution would receive funds from the churches and dispense them to the orphan homes of its choice. This is an unauthorized human benevolent institution. Such an institution I palpably reject as foreign to the Bible.

It may be that brethren, for whatever reason, who do not know or practice the truth of the New Testament on these matters, may establish a benevolent organization as I have in the previous paragraph described. They may attempt to defend it on the basis of biblical church cooperation and the church supporting orphan homes. However, when they do they are twisting, wresting, or torturing the scriptures that authorize Christians cooperating with one another and church supported orphan homes to their own destruction.

#### AN ILLUSTRATION

Regarding the thoughts in the preceding paragraph, please consider the following illustration of individual Christians cooperating to help the church. Is it

**MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING**

- Full year program
- Eighty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- Dedicated faculty
- Qualified facility
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966

Applications now being accepted  
Call or write for application

Curtis A. Caine, Director  
3960 Forest Hill Lane Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38126-2142  
School (901) 751-2242, Bookstore (901) 751-3966  
Fax (901) 751-8994

scriptural for five Christians to agree among themselves to start a food business and contribute the profits of that business to the church? Assuredly they could. We have already noted that there was cooperation between individuals in the early church for the purpose of benefiting the church (II Timothy 4:9; Romans 16:1, 2). Also, as Peter reminded Ananias regarding his money, “**Whiles it (their land—editor) remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold was it not in thine on power**” (Acts 5:4). Thus, all other things being scripturally equal the five Christians of our illustration may do with their money, as they will. (It is too bad that more brethren do not think this way regarding business matters benefiting the Lord’s church.) Another question—because the five persons of my illustration are Christians, and they have decided to contribute the profits of their company to the church, do they have biblical authority to call the company ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART? *They most certainly do not!* Why is this the case? Because the term “church of Christ” as it is defined and used in the scriptures (along with other New Testament terms of like nature) is only applicable to designate the institution of the saved—that organization and that organization alone. Therefore to refer to such an institution as “ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART” is to violate “**If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God**” (I Peter 4:11). There simply is no New Testament authority to call a food store operated by Christians with the profits going to the church “ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART” (Colossians 3:17).

The paper you are now reading is privately owned and published as a part of the owners’ work as Christians in teaching and defending Bible truth. However, it has *no* biblical authority to label itself “THE CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH CHURCH OF CHRIST JOURNAL”. As in my illustration of the “ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART” such would be an abuse and misuse of the descriptive term “church of Christ”. There is not a direct statement, example, or implication in the New Testament that authorizes the term “church of Christ” to be used in the way it is used in the two preceding sentences.

#### **THAT CHURCH OF CHRIST THING-A-MA-BOB**

There is no such thing as a Church of Christ Family, in a Church of Christ House, on a Church of Christ Farm, running a Church of Christ Dairy, milking Church of Christ Cows, fed with Church of Christ grain, and Church of Christ grass, from Church of Christ Pastures and Fields, fenced with Church of Christ Wire, drinking Church of Christ Water from Church of Christ Ponds and Church of Christ Streams, giving Church of Christ Milk, to make Church of

Christ Butter, to put on Church of Christ Bread, along with Church of Christ Jelly, to feed the Church of Christ Children (Orphans in a Church of Christ Legal Home) as they drink their Church of Christ Milk, and eat their Church of Christ eggs, from Church of Christ Hens and Church of Christ Bacon from Church of Christ Pigs fed and fattened on Church of Christ Slop.

The previous paragraph graphically illustrates what happens when people are ignorant of Bible information, do not know or do not care how to ascertain Bible authority, or they just do not believe and/or respect what the divine volume says. Indeed, we have all such characters in the church today. Thus, anything and everything may flow from such members of the Lord’s church.

Explicitly (in just so many words) the “anti” orphan home brethren say that the church is not a home. However, *they will argue against the church contributing money to an orphan home on the false premise that the orphan home is a human institution that is doing the work the church is to do. And, therefore they attempt to parallel an orphan home with a “missionary society”.* With these thoughts in mind, please consider the following biblical facts.

1. In Genesis 2:24 God ordained that man should have a home.

2. From James 1:27 we learn that a part “**pure and undefiled religion**” is “**visiting**” (supplying) the needs of orphans and widows.

3. In I Timothy 5:16 the Lord assigned the care for “**widows indeed**” to the church.

With these three points before us please note the following argumentation:

1. If it is the case that every child is entitled to have a home.

2. And, if it is the case that in the natural home the child is to receive the support peculiar to such a home.

3. And, if it is the case that the church can aid the needy natural home.

4. And, if it is the case through no fault of the child the natural home is destroyed (the child is bereft of parents).

5. And, if it is the case that the natural home may be replaced—an orphan (legal) home.

6. Then, it is the case that in the replaced, legal orphan home the child is entitled to support from the church (James 1:27; Galatians 4:1, 2).

#### **It is the case that:**

1. Every child is entitled to have a home (Genesis 2:24).

2. In the natural home the child is to receive the support peculiar to such a home (Ephesians 6:1-3).

3. The church may aid the needy natural home.



4. Through no fault of the children, the home can be destroyed (the children are bereft of parents).

5. The natural home may be replaced with a legal home to provide for the children that of which they are bereft.

6. In the replaced, legal, orphan home the child is entitled to support from the church (James 1:17; Galatians 4:1, 2).

#### WHO HAS THE OBLIGATION?

*Question number one: Who has an obligation to supply the needs or to support the children in the legal, orphan home?* In answering the previous question I cite James 1:27. On the basis of the information in James 1:27 I ask *question number two: Can the church practice "pure and undefiled religion", a part of which is to supply the needs of orphans and widows?* It certainly can and must. Thus, the answer to question number one is, *the church*. Why? Because the church is obligated to practice "**pure and undefiled religion**", a part of which is "**to visit the widows and orphans in their afflictions**". Thus, the answer to question number two is, *yes*. Who will affirm that the church of Christ is incapable of practicing "**pure and undefiled religion**"? And, if the church is incapable of doing it, what or who is capable of doing it?

*Question:* When the church supports the original home, is the church giving up its right to act when it

supplies money for that home? *Answer:* Of course not. Why is this the case? *Answer:* because the home is a separate institution from the church. *Question:* When the natural home is lost and has been replaced, does the replaced or legal home continue to be a separate institution from the church? *Answer:* Yes, the two institutions are separated one from the other just as the natural home and the church are separated from one another. I uphold and defend these two God ordained institutions—the home (natural and legal) and the church. And, oppose all efforts to create a "Church of Christ home." The Bible does not authorize either one of these institutions to supplant the other. It takes both institutions to do what God intended. The church of Christ has never been sufficient to act as a home or the home to act as the church.

#### SUMMARY

As we have studied from God's word in this article we have learned that:

1. The church is authorized to cooperate with other churches.
2. There is no "exclusive pattern" for church cooperation.
3. Churches may cooperate in satisfying *physical* as well as *spiritual* needs.
4. The cooperation among churches such as was done in the Music Hall Meeting in Houston, Texas over 55 years ago is scriptural.
5. The three God-ordained institutions on earth are the home, civil government, and the church.
6. All other things being scripturally equal, none of these institutions may exercise dominion over or usurp the place and work of the others.
7. The church is authorized by the New Testament to contribute to the natural and legal—*en loco parentis*—homes, because it is a part of the practice of "**pure and undefiled religion**" (James 1:27).
8. The church may (must) contribute to the needs of the home (natural or legal) without one institution attempting to become the other.
9. Church support of orphan homes (one God-ordained institution [the church] contributing to another God-ordained institution [the legal home]) is not authority for cooperative efforts among churches for evangelism or other benevolence needs.
10. The descriptive term "church of Christ" refers only to the Lord's institution of the saved.
11. To apply "church of Christ" to any other organization is to do so without biblical authority (I Peter 4:11; Colossians 3:17).

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

**Now Available**

**SPRING BIBLE  
INSTITUTE  
2002 Lectures Book**

**THE JEHOVAH'S  
WITNESSES**

**ONLY \$16.00**  
(plus \$2.00 s/h TX residents add \$1.16 tax)

**FOR THE Faith  
Contending**  
P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77383  
fax: 281.288.0549



[Appearing on the front page of the December 2001 issue of *CFTF* is an article entitled “You Just Can’t Warn Some Brethren” by Gary L. Grizzell. The article is opposed to “*Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.*” (Hereafter referred to as *CCDR*). Earlier Grizzell had distributed a tract he had written in opposition to *CCDR*. Correspondence between Grizzell and Glen Alexander the preacher for the Spring Hill, Tennessee congregation transpired wherein Alexander took exception to Grizzell’s opposition to *CCDR* in his (Grizzell’s) tract. Thus, some of that correspondence was included in Grizzell’s *CFTF* article.

Following the publication of Grizzell’s article in December, 2001 Alexander phoned me to request space in *CFTF* to respond to Grizzell’s attack on *CCDR*. He referred me to two of his articles on the Spring Hill Church’s Home Page on the Internet and requested that I consider them for publication. I told him I would be glad to consider the articles for possible publication. However, I did not guarantee that I would print them. I also told him that for many months I had been asked by a number of people to study the “anti” doctrines and that I was going to do that. I informed Grizzell of my conversation with Alexander and for the time being he decided to let me deal with these matters on the pages of *CFTF*. Alexander was contacted by Grizzell and informed of his (Grizzell’s) decision.

It should also be noted that in the same December issue of *CFTF* in which Grizzell’s article opposing *CCDR* appeared, Eddie Whitten had an article entitled “Missionary Society Mentality”. In that article Whitten opposed several organizations operated by members of the church, one of them being *CCDR*. Whitten and Grizzell wrote their respective articles without each other knowing the other was writing on basically the same subject.

As previously stated in this article and elsewhere, I have had many requests and questions over the last two years regarding matters of cooperation, orphan homes, and so on. With those requests and questions in mind along with the past division over “anti-ism” and the present continuing “liberal” apostasy, it seemed good to begin a study that would include past problems as well as present issues over “anti-ism” and “liberalism”. With the discussion over *CCDR*, a further indication for the need of this study, I have decided to print one of Alexander’s articles and with it my critique of it. To print both articles would be redundant and since space is lacking, the following article is sufficient to set out Alexander’s position. Alexander’s articles in defense of *CCDR* may be found on the Spring Hill Church of Christ Web site: <http://personalweb.edge.net/~sphilcc/>. DPB, Editor]

# Disaster Relief Questions And Answers

Glenn Alexander

**1. Where Is The Authority For Disaster Relief Effort?** The answer is found in the established fact that God would not give us commands without granting us authority to carry out those commands. It’s very clear that God’s people, both privately and collectively, have Biblical examples of cooperative efforts to give relief to the needy. Two extremes are found in our brotherhood. 1) Those who limit benevolence to individual Christians and rule out congregational help to all men (Galatians 6:10). 2) The other side seeks to limit efforts of individual Christians to cooperate together in benevolence outside local congregational oversight. The answer to these two positions is that God has authorized both individuals and the collective body of Christ to do the same work together or apart depending on the circumstances (Titus 3:14). For proof of this, notice that Christians are personally commanded to evangelize the world (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 8:4). Also the church is commanded to do the same collectively (I Corinthians 1:8-28). Note: “all the churches” (11:28). Christians are personally commanded to edify one another (Romans 14:19). The church congregationally is also commanded to edify the local body (I Corinthians 14:12). Christians individually are directed by Christ to be benevolent (I John 3:17). The body of Christ locally and universally is commanded also not to ignore the needy (II Corinthians 9:12, 13). It is clear we must refuse to excuse any opportunity to do good works whether it presents itself personally, congregationally, or both.

**2. Who Gets the Glory?** This question is very easy. We are all parts and members of the same body (I Corinthians 12:13-27). What one member does or what we all do together glorifies the Head of the body, Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23). Why there is a spirit of jealousy over good works is amazing to me (Matthew 5:16). The wonderful thing about the Disaster Relief Effort is that the goods are delivered directly to the local church of Christ on the scene, and their elders disperse supplies exactly according to the divine pattern (Acts 11:29,30). This guarantees that the local body of Christ meets local needs and allows them to establish direct contact with souls in need of salvation. We never find Paul or Apollos arguing over who gets the glory for souls saved. “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (I Corinthians 3:6). Likewise, let’s be thankful if we have a small part in helping the needy—for it’s all to God’s great glory.

**3. What about the name “Churches of Christ Disaster Relief”?** If we claim to be a “church of Christ” (Romans 16:16), then we must commit to the same works the early church did. No one congregation is expected to carry the Gospel (Mark 16:15, 16) over the whole world or take benevolence to all the world (I Corinthians 16:1-4). Each congregation is commanded to join hands to help (Acts 11:27-30) in the same way any of us are called to obey the Gospel (Acts 2:28-47, Matthew 11:28-30). Any congregation refusing to help reach needs in the brotherhood where the Lord’s people ask for help just may not be a church of Christ after all. The name “churches of Christ” tells the

world who we are and who is sending the aid (Colossians 3:17). Just as the name "Agape" simply describes the work of some of our brethren taking care of children. Our brethren providing this wonderful service do not claim to hold copyrights on God's love! The Red Cross (a non-Christian work) often leaves disaster sites early telling the people local "churches of Christ" will give you further assistance. Who else do we want needy people to come to (Matthew 25:31-46)?

**4. Is Disaster Relief Effort's Incorporation Scriptural?** Since it is entirely scriptural and legal for congregations to be classified as "non-profit corporations," if they so desire—it is also proper for individual Christians dedicated to good works to do the same. This is expedient for tax and/or insurance purposes. Elders of local congregations sometimes decide to be listed as trustees for legal reasons such as in borrowing money or in the purchase of real estate. This insures that they avoid any personal benefit or liability. In this day and age of rampant lawsuits and scandals, this is totally prudent. Paul made it clear that he could also personally do such things the law allows to better serve God (I Corinthians 6:12). Individual Christians of Disaster Relief Effort should also be afforded the same benefits and protections under the law as any of the rest of us personally or collectively. Brotherhood colleges, schools, and children's homes have done so without dispute.

**5. Should We Do Good Works Only Directly and Not Through Other Christians?** This would mean we must stop supporting missionaries and go directly ourselves. It's not wrong to ask for help or to give it indirectly. Who faults the eunuch for asking for help in understanding the will of God or criticizes Philip for guiding him (Acts 8:31)? Also, imagine how anyone would deny God's will by the church sending Paul and Silas to heed the Spirit's call "come over into Macedonia and help us" (Acts 15:40, 41 & 16:8-10). Imagine that some brethren are condemning Campaigns for Christ saying local congregations should be doing this work alone. These, too, are wonderful opportunities for brethren to show the Spirit of Christ regardless of what some brethren say about them (Galatians 1:9-11). This is the same old complaint of those opposing children's homes in alleging we must take children into our own homes yet they rarely do so themselves. Certainly, we are free to aid the needy by paying their restaurant or motel bill. Is this not hospitality? If it is not, then maybe the Good Samaritan was not so good after all (Luke 10:33-35). Why waste the Lord's money on UPS packages when our brethren will take it faster and free of postage charges?

**6. Must Disaster Relief Effort Be Under An Eldership?** First of all, an eldership is not a scriptural requirement before a congregation can do good works. If not, then smaller congregations (and some larger) could not function without elders at all. Secondly, while a main supporting congregation is a good expediency, more often than not, no leading congregation is listed in cooperative efforts among Christians. Rather we find cooperating congregations standing equally on the same ground under Christ, their common head (Ephesians 5:23-25). For example,

Paul gathered support from among many congregations, namely "...them of Macedonia and Achaia..." (Romans 15:26; II Corinthians 9:2). Also, Paul beseeches the church at Corinth to join the "churches of Galatia" in this great cooperative effort (I Corinthians 16:1,2). In Romans 15:24 Paul asks the saints at Rome to assist him on his journeys, but none of these contributing congregations are what we would call a "main supporting congregation." Notice that congregations receiving help, on the other hand, are always named (Acts 11:30; Romans 15:25, 26). This is where the leadership of an eldership is more needful. Please be reminded it is improper for one congregation to supervise one or more other congregations in their affairs. It's clear that everyone, personally or collectively, received credit for the help they gave as seen in the fact that Paul "sealed" the fruit of those supplying relief (Romans 15:29).

**7. Is Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort a Missionary Society?** No. The church of Christ is the only missionary society accepted by Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-47; Mark 16:15,16). Disaster Relief Effort is simply Christians and congregations cooperating to do the work of Christ by assisting local congregations in supplying the needy. It is not an overseeing or dictating body. No dues or cooperation is demanded. No supervision of the local congregation on a disaster scene is extended or orders given in any way. Once the supply trucks are unloaded at local church buildings on the disaster scene, they leave immediately. Only when elders ask for help in coordinating dispersment and follow-up is help extended and only then under the oversight of local elders. These individuals delivering help and assisting have NO authority over these congregations whatsoever. This is the main difference between the old missionary society. However brethren, we must remember what **John T. Walsh** said back in 1867: "The church of Christ is the Lord's missionary society. He is its Head, and every member of it, male and female, young and old, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, black and white, is a LIFE-MEMBER AND DIRECTOR!" *Search For The Ancient Order*, Vol. 2, page 61. **Guy N. Woods** said the Lord's church is a "divine missionary society." *Questions and Answers*, Vol. 1, page 310. The Disaster Relief Effort is just one of many unlimited ways Christians can unite under the direction of Christ to take care of His business. Elders everywhere have this choice and many others they are free to avail themselves of, or they can even come up with better ways to carry out our Lord's commands. Brother, are we personally and collectively looking for opportunities to do good works or are we hiding from them? (Titus 3:14; Matthew 25:31-46). Remember, we shall not hide from the Lord on judgment day!

—P. O. Box 696  
Springhill, Tennessee 37174

# A CRITIQUE OF "DISASTER RELIEF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS"

David P. Brown

## WHAT IS AND WHAT IS NOT THE ISSUE

All other things being scripturally equal, Christians are authorized by the New Testament to privately associate and cooperate in benevolence and evangelism. However, that is not the question under consideration. All other things being scripturally equal, the issue has nothing to do with Christians incorporating because civil law requires it. Such would be in complete harmony with Romans chapter thirteen for Christians to do. Neither is it a question of having a board of directors because a board of directors or trustees may be required by civil law. However, such New Testament authorization for Christians to privately associate for evangelistic and/or benevolent purposes *does not* constitute New Testament authority for anyone to apply "church of Christ" to any group of well-meaning Christians that comes down the pike.

Following this paragraph, I am inserting part of my editorial appearing earlier in this issue of *CFTF*. In that editorial I point out how the "antis" think that the church (a God ordained institution) must become a home (another and different God ordained institution from the church) in order for Christians to scripturally provide for the needs of orphans. Thus, one would have a "Church of Christ Home"—an institution not found on the pages of the Bible. A scriptural home is found in the Bible; a "Church of Christ Home" is not found therein.

## THAT CHURCH OF CHRIST THING-A-MA-BOB

There is no such thing as a Church of Christ Family, in a Church of Christ House, on a Church of Christ Farm, running a Church of Christ Dairy, milking Church of Christ Cows, fed with Church of Christ grain, and Church of Christ grass, from Church of Christ Pastures and Fields, fenced with Church of Christ Wire, drinking Church of Christ Water from Church of Christ Ponds and Church of Christ Streams, giving Church of Christ Milk, to make Church of Christ Butter, to put on Church of Christ Bread, along with Church of Christ Jelly, to feed to Church of Christ Children (Orphans in a Church of Christ Legal Home) as they drink their Church of Christ Milk, and eat their Church of Christ eggs, from Church of Christ Hens and Church of Christ Bacon from Church of Christ Pigs fed and fattened on Church of Christ Slop.

The previous paragraph graphically illustrates what happens when people are ignorant of Bible information, do not know or do not care how to ascertain Bible authority, or they just do not believe and/or respect what the divine volume says. Indeed, we have all such characters in the church today. Thus, anything and everything may flow from such members of the Lord's church.

It should be noted that the "antis" start with two God ordained institutions—the home and the church. Their er-

ror is thinking that the church may not contribute to the support of a legal home. Alexander begins with the church (a God ordained institution); he rightly concludes that Christians may associate with one another for evangelistic and benevolent purposes, incorporate, and have a board of trustees and/or directors to achieve legally non-profit organization status. But, then he defends labeling the organization with a term the New Testament allows *only* to be applied to the institution of the saved. Now why do that, when such is totally uncalled for and is without New Testament precedent? It is as foreign to the New Testament as Church of Christ Slop for Church of Christ Pigs. It is a misuse and abuse of a scriptural term. And, since such terms are meant to describe the organizations to which they are applied, I ask, where on the pages of the New Testament is such an organization as *Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.* of Nashville, Tennessee found? Answer: It is found in the same scriptures that mention "Church of Christ Pigs".

The term "church of Christ" is a scriptural term showing the proper relationship of the church to her Head and Savior Jesus Christ and vice versa. It is *obligatory* on us to "speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11) or do all things by the authority of Christ (Colossians 3:17). Nowhere do "the oracles of God" apply "church of Christ" to any other institution than the blood bought body of Christ, the family and kingdom of God. Yet the "antis" want "Church of Christ Homes" and now Alexander contends for "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc." The people who designated their association of individual Christians as "*Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.*" are, for whatever reason, ignorant and/or disrespectful of the fundamental hermeneutical principles necessary for ascertaining Bible authority that designates what institution is authorized by the New Testament to wear the descriptive term "church of Christ".

## COOPERATIVE EFFORTS FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Again, the following material is from this month's editorial, but it finds application in this critique of Alexander's defense of "*Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.*"

Let us examine some of the cooperative efforts of the first century church as they are revealed on the pages of the New Testament.

1. Paul cooperated with those who assisted him (II Timothy 4:9-12).
2. Phoebe is said to have "succoured many" (Romans 16:1, 2).
3. The household of Stephanas had "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" (I Corinthians 16:15). This is an

example of a Christian family cooperating with persons in need.

4. The disciples determined according to each person's ability to send "relief" to the brethren in Judea. This they did. Through Barnabas and Paul, the brethren sent their "relief" to the elders in Judea (Acts 11:27-30).

5. The churches of Macedonia, Achaia, Corinth, and Galatia cooperated in the collection recorded in Second Corinthians eight and nine.

6. In the matter of the letter that was sent out by the church at Jerusalem, other churches cooperated (Acts 15:19-31).

7. Aquila and Priscilla (husband and wife) cooperated in teaching Apollos (Acts 18:26).

What are some of the lessons we may deduce from these seven New Testament accounts of cooperation among and between the brethren of the first century?

1. There was cooperation between individuals (II Timothy 4:9).

2. One individual and several other individuals cooperated (Romans 16:1, 2).

3. A Christian family cooperated with needy individuals (I Corinthians 16:15).

4. Churches and needy saints in Jerusalem cooperated (II Corinthians 8, 9).

5. Different churches cooperated with one another (Acts 15:1-32).

6. A husband and wife cooperated with each other to teach another person the gospel (Acts 18:26).

**QUESTION:** *Where is the direct statement, example, or implication in the New Testament revealing that any of these cooperative efforts revealed on the pages of the New Testament were labeled "Church of Christ 'Whatevers'"?* Now we are down to where the "rubber meets the road". Here is the real issue—simply because I find New Testament authorization for cooperation between and among Christians does not mean I have found authorization to stick "church of Christ" or "churches of Christ" on such cooperative efforts. Imagine labeling the benevolent work of Paul and Barnabas with other Christians as "*Gentile Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Fund For Judea*". Or, how about this one—"*Phoebe's Church of Christ Succouring Ministry*"? If the two preceding "ministries" will not do, what about the name "*Church of Christ Team Ministry of Aquila and Priscilla*"? *What is the difference in CCDDR and these so-called "Church of Christ Ministries of the first century"?* If the great thinkers, shakers, and movers in Nashville (or anywhere else) who came up with CCDDR had been in the first century A.D. church, that is exactly the kind of labeling they would have done. You say, how do you know they would? Because that is exactly what they are doing, and they would have conducted themselves in the same way if they had lived then—that is until Paul caught up with them and applied his rod of correction.

#### IS "CCDDR" THE LORD'S CHURCH?

Again, Christians (individually or collectively) may deliver goods or money to the elders of churches or to churches without elders that such may be distributed to re-

lieve those suffering from various disasters (natural or otherwise). Who is it among the brethren that opposes such, "antis" in general notwithstanding? But where is the New Testament authority for a group of Christians calling themselves "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief fund, Inc."?

Alexander intends for his point four to prove that a group of Christians may call themselves "*Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.*". However, all he has done is prove that God has certain descriptive terms found on the pages of the Bible, which terms are to be applied *only* to the Lord's institution of the saved and no other organization. Surely, Alexander does not think that CCDDR is the Lord's church. Is it comprised of Christians (as the New Testament defines and uses "Christian")? As far as I know, CCDDR is comprised of Christians. Because it is made up of Christians, is it the church? Alexander knows (or he should know) that it is not necessarily the case. Is he or anyone else willing to say that all organizations composed of Christians constitute the church (What about a home where all family members are Christians—is it the church)? Alexander is operating from the false premise that the scriptures teach that organizations composed of Christians are authorized by the New Testament to call themselves a "Church of Christ Something or Other". Remember those "Church of Christ Chickens".

If CCDDR is the church, whether organized or not organized, where does it get its New Testament authority to call itself "*Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.*"? We are told that CCDDR identifies their benevolent work with the churches of Christ. And, I ask who authorized CCDDR to represent the churches of Christ and by what authority did they act? Again, I will quote from my editorial in this issue of CFTF.

...Is it scriptural for five Christians to agree among themselves to start a food business and contribute the profits of that business to the church? Assuredly they could. We have already noted that there was cooperation between individuals in the early church for the purpose of benefiting the church (II Timothy 4:9; Romans 16:1, 2). Also, as Peter reminded Ananias regarding his money, "Whiles it (their land—editor) remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold was it not in thine on power" (Acts 5:4). Thus, all other things being scripturally equal the five Christians of our illustration may do with their money, as they will. (It is too bad that more brethren do not think this way regarding business matters benefiting the Lord's church.) Another question—because the five persons of my illustration are Christians and they have decided to contribute the profits of their company to the church, do they have biblical authority to call the company ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART? *They most certainly do not!* Why is this the case? Because the term "church of Christ" as it is defined and used in the scriptures (along with other New Testament terms of like nature) is only applicable to designate the institution of the saved—that organization and that organization alone. Therefore to refer to such an institution as "ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART" is to violate "**If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God**" (I Peter 4:11). There simply is no New Testament authority to call a food store operated by Christians with the profits going to the church "ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART".

The paper you are now reading is privately owned and published as a part of the owners' work as Christians in teaching and defending Bible truth. However, it has *no* biblical authority to label itself "THE CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH CHURCH OF CHRIST JOURNAL". As in my illustration of the "ACME CHURCH OF CHRIST FOOD MART" such would be an abuse and misuse of the descriptive term "church of Christ". There is not a direct statement, example, or implication in the New Testament that authorizes the term "church of Christ" to be used in the way it is used in the two preceding sentences.

#### THE FALSE PREMISE FROM WHICH THEY REASON

Please mark the following statements "true" or "false".

1. True or False—**Any organization composed only of Christians existing for the purpose of practicing benevolence is authorized by the New Testament to have as a part of its name "church of Christ."**

2. True or False—**CCDR is an organization composed only of Christians existing for the purpose of practicing benevolence.**

3. True or False—(Therefore), **CCDR is authorized by the New Testament to have as a part of its name "church of Christ."**

This is the reasoning that Alexander and others must do to conclude that they have New Testament authority for designating their benevolent organization CCDR. However, the first sentence (major premise) of the three sentences (syllogism) is false. There is not a direct statement, example, or implication in the New Testament giving us such authority. Thus, sentence three (Conclusion) is false.

Now watch the previous reasoning "go to seed".

**Major Premise: Any organization composed only of Christians existing for the purpose of serving God is authorized by the New Testament to have as a part of its name "church of Christ".**

**Minor Premise: The David P. Brown home is composed only of Christians existing for the purpose of serving God.**

**Conclusion: Therefore, the David P. Brown home is authorized by the New Testament to have as a part of its name "church of Christ" (David P. Brown Church of Christ Home).**

Remember, those "Church of Christ Cows". Such terminology comes from the same lame thinking and biblical ignorance that causes sectarians in and out of the church to speak of "Church of Christ Churches". We might as well have "Church of Christ Cows" and "Church of Christ Churches" as "Church of Christ Relief 'Whatevers'"—one has as much New Testament usage and authorization as the others—and that is none!

#### AGAIN WHAT WE ARE NOT SAYING

No one is saying that a church of Christ must have elders and deacons before it can engage in benevolent and evangelistic activities. But the church is the only institution that the New Testament authorizes to wear the descriptive term "church of Christ".

It is not a matter of who gets the glory. Christians know that God gets the glory, but it is only when things are done his way and labeled as he labels them. Remember the plea

of the restorers—"Calling Bible things by Bible names and doing Bible things in Bible ways".

Again Alexander misses the issue when he attempts to parallel "Agape" with "CCDR". For "Agape" and "CCDR" to be parallel in name, "Agape" would have to be "Agape Churches of Christ Child Care, Inc." This, unlike "CCDR", "Agape" did not do. Alexander wasted space in his defense of "CCDR" when he wrote of incorporation and working directly or through other Christians. *Such is not the issue.*

If CCDR were under the oversight of a certain eldership, or it was the work of a certain congregation, they could easily and scripturally be known as "Disaster Relief Fund—a work of the ABC Church of Christ and supported by churches of Christ and interested Christians". That arrangement is scriptural, and everyone who is properly educated in the New Testament's teaching on such matters knows it is. However, those who started and organized CCDR chose to do their work as a group of Christians. They chose not to be a work of a particular congregation of God's people. Indeed, as far as I know with all other things being scripturally equal (and I am assuming everything else about them is in harmony with the scriptures), they cooperate as individual Christians in the work of benevolence just as this gospel paper is a work of individual Christians to propagate and defend the gospel. But, *CFTF* is not a "Church of Christ Paper" any more than Tipton Orphan Home is "Tipton Church of Christ Orphan Home" or Freed-Hardeman University is "Freed-Hardeman Church of Christ University", or "Tracts for the Nation" of which Gary Grizzell is a part is "Church of Christ Tracts for the Nations". Everyone of these organizations must meet certain civil laws that pertain to such organizations and as already proved, such conduct is simply a matter of expediency or necessity as in the case of complying with the teaching of Romans chapter thirteen. What is so difficult to comprehend about the Bible's teaching on these matters?

#### WE ARE NOT TEACHING WHAT MUST BE TAUGHT

With all due respect, somebody has not studied the issues herein set out and discussed, as they should have studied them. Indeed, preacher training schools had better stop running from controversial matters and expose their students to these and other matters for the purpose of showing the students how to think through a matter and refute that which is false. If such is omitted from the curriculums of preaching training schools, they will go the way of the universities operated by the brethren. Thus, as some of these schools have already done, they will be a hindrance rather than a help to the cause of Christ.

The material presented many years ago in debate with the "antis" by **Guy N. Woods, E. R. Harper, Thomas B. Warren**, and a host of others as well as their articles, tracts, and books along with private conversations with many of these men is the reason I am quite sure, that brother Alexander did not learn from any one who taught him in the *Memphis School of Preaching* that any group of Christians united for benevolent purposes has New Testament authority to apply scriptural terms that belong only to the

church to such a group. In reading both of Alexander's articles found on the Spring Hill Church of Christ web page, it is obvious that Alexander needs to rethink the material obtained from his teachers at MSOP and apply it correctly. I would be very, very surprised (in fact amazed) if **Richard Curry**, and the late **Frank Young** (Gus Nichols' son-in-law) who knew exactly the "anti" doctrines as well as "liberal" doctrines would have supported calling any group of Christians organized to gather and distribute clothing and the like to needy people, "Churches of Christ Helping Hands Relief Society, or Institution, or Association, or Organization". And, if they or anyone else did advocate the

use of the descriptive term "church of Christ" in that way, they would be wrong for reasons I have amply given in this article.

Good reasoning with God's revelation can only help the cause of Christ and the unity for which all faithful members of the church of Christ long for and labor to obtain. However, though not the only things, bad reasoning and/or ignorance of the Bible will always destroy efforts for the unity for which Christ prayed and Paul commanded (John 17: 20, 21; I Corinthians 1:10).

—P. O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383

## “BELIEVERS....”

(Continued from page 1)

such contemptible practices originated is now well known, the Willow Creek Community Church. In his installment address September 30, 1999, the new Dean said:

Over the past six years, we have been blessed to see the growth of an urban ministry apprenticeship in Memphis that has helped start five churches in the city, mostly in poorer neighborhoods. I would like to see this apprenticeship expand to involve our older established churches and the suburban churches...

Frayser Mission Church reported, "Two ministry apprenticeships are created and filled by students at Harding Graduate School."<sup>8</sup> Dean Huffard's continuing involvement is confirmed from the White Station church bulletin where he is an elder. **Leon Sanderson** wrote that once each quarter Dean Huffard serves City Missions, which supports MUM and the Downtown Church, as one of the "Executive Consultants."<sup>9</sup> All of these sources linking Dean Huffard to these five Community Church Movement-type churches are unprejudiced and share a common interest in their advancement.

Dean Huffard is well aware that **Dr. John Mark Hicks**, a faculty member at HUGSR and minister of education at Woodmont Hills Family of God in Nashville with **Rubel Shelly**, planted "The Cordova Community Church, a church of Christ" April 12, 1998. He co-authored "A Theological and Strategic Statement for a New Church

Planting" dated October 5, 1997, which was drafted right from **Rick Warren's Purpose Driven Church**. On pages 5-6 he wrote that God may act through miracles today and instrumental music in worship is not a salvation issue.

Further, February 7, 2002, in concert with the Student Association, Dean Huffard brought **Dr. Jeff W. Childers** to Memphis to lecture on *The Crux of the Matter*. He, too, supports the view of a "larger community of believers" than is represented by the churches of Christ. *The Crux*, page 151 reads:

By getting rid of the notion that we have to be the best or the only Christians to be legitimate Christians, we will be free to reexamine ourselves and our teachings seriously without the nagging fear that we might end up losing our identity. Without the burden of believing ourselves to be the only true Christians, we will be able to participate in and contribute substantially to the larger conversation among all followers of Christ and learn some things from it without feelings of betrayal.<sup>10</sup>

### THE TRUE CHURCH

The "community of believers" cannot be larger than the churches of Christ, and here is why. Believers are "added to the Lord" (Acts 5:14). Only the ones obeying the gospel as Peter preached on Pentecost, "... Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall re-

ceive the gift of the Holy Ghost," were added to the church (Acts 2:38, 47). Those added to the church were believers. Therefore, while some outside the church may believe certain aspects of gospel truth, by biblical demonstration they are not considered believers until they have been added to the church by the Lord. There is no "larger community of believers."

### ENDNOTES

1. HUGSR General Catalogue 2001-2002, p.8.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.1.
4. Dr. David B. Burks, "From the President," *Harding* magazine, 8:1 (winter 2000), p. 2.
5. Since he recently has denied involvement in some places he has visited as guest speaker and to the author at the W.B. West, Jr. Lectures on the campus of the graduate school February 7, 2002, a review of some of the primary sources exposing him is in order (Romans 16:17-18).
6. Scott Morris, "The Church in the Hood," *Harding* magazine, 3:3 (summer 1995), p. 19. Some of those mentioned in this article have written a book titled *Embracing the Poor*, and in the "acknowledgments" they recognize Dean Huffard as their "mentor" in urban missions.
7. Dr. Everett W. Huffard, "Meeting the Challenge of Ministry in the 21st Century," *The Bridge*, 40:6 (November 1999), p. 1.
8. Ron Cook, "Frayser Mission Church Turns Two," *The Acts of Highland Street*, 20:20 (May 18, 2001), p.79.
9. *Server*, 48:13 (March 28, 2001), p.2.
10. Jeff W. Childers, Douglas A. Foster, and Jack R. Reese, *The Crux of the Matter* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2001), p.151. The Quince Road Church of Christ where Dean Huffard served as an Associate minister (1988-1995) currently is using this book as a class book on Sunday morning *Family Matters*, January 2002, p. 3).

—1511 Getwell Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38111-7299



# THE CHURCH AT POOLE

Paul Vaughn

The Restoration Movement in Kentucky traces its roots to **Barton W. Stone**, and the work he and many others did that started at Cane Ridge in Bourbon County. During this time in history the nation began to move west settling into western Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas. As the pioneers moved westward, they established congregations seeking the purity of New Testament Christianity.

Webster County is located in the western coal fields regions of Kentucky. It was 109<sup>th</sup> county in order of establishment in the Commonwealth. The county was created on July 1, 1860, from portions of Union, Hopkins, and

Henderson counties. **William Jenkins** was the first settler who came to the area in 1794. Jenkins was a Revolutionary War veteran. Some of the communities in the county are Dixon, Sebree, Providence, and Poole.



## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH AT POOLE

The church was established at Poole in July 1872. Poole was first known as Poole Mill, Kentucky. The congregation was known at that time as the Christian church. The church first met at the Columbia schoolhouse, a grade school about two miles West of Poole. Brother **Jesse A. Tapp** and his wife moved to Webster County from North Carolina. Tapp obeyed the gospel in 1861. The Tapps were the only members of the church for a number of years. It is important to note that when Christians move to an area where there is no church some fall away. They use the excuse that there is no church so they do not do anything, and there are others that even attend a denomination. Tapp is an example for many Christians to follow today. If you move in area where there is no church, establish one.

The time was hard and finding a faithful preacher in the wilderness of Kentucky was challenging. The church at Poole enlisted **Harry Davis** to preach a series of meetings for them. The meetings were held in the Columbia schoolhouse. The attendance was sparse, only eight came to hear the proclaiming of the gospel. It was a beginning and frontier men and women were not weak or willing to give up. The attendance was small and the pay for the preacher was meager. Davis was given twenty-five cents to one dollar per member to help support his efforts to preach the gospel. This was inconsequential and immaterial as long as the gospel was being preached.

The first to respond to the preaching of God's word was **James Liles**. **William C. Dimmitt** was doing the preaching when Liles put Christ on in baptism. The will to keep on proclaiming the gospel produced more fruit for the kingdom. The next to obey were **Dennis Mulkihy**, **Jane Liles**, her sister **Bettis Liles**, their aunt **Martha Liles**, and Martha's daughter **Annie Liles Eblin**.

The fledgling congregation continued to have their worship services at the schoolhouse, under arbors in the summer time. As the church grew, they prepared to build a building. Their efforts were rewarded on the second Lord's Day in May 1883 when their building was dedicated. The first gospel meeting in the building was held in August 1885 which continued for two weeks. During the protracted meeting eighteen souls were added to the church. **J. F. Story** did the preaching.

**Sixth Annual  
Madisonville Church of Christ Lectures  
April 26-28, 2002**

**JESUS CHRIST:  
The Hope Of Every Home**

**April 26, Friday**  
6:30 PM Congregational Singing *Led by Tim Childs*  
7 PM "What Does the Bible Say About Marriage?" *Glenn Colley*  
8 PM "What Does the Bible Say About Divorce?" *Steven Yaalis*

**April 27, Saturday**  
9 AM "The Role of Men in Christian Homes" *Todd Clippard*  
10 AM "The Role of Women in Christian Homes" *Chad Ramsey*  
11 AM "The Role of Children in Christian Homes" *Virgil Hale*  
12 PM Lunch Break  
1:30 PM Open Forum *Panel of Speakers*  
2:30 PM "God's Role in Christian Homes" *Jerry Murrell*  
3:30 PM "Model Homes" *Keith Mosher*

**April 28, Sunday**  
9:30 AM "Forces Which Can Destroy Our Homes" *Michael C. Shepherd*  
10:30 AM "Faith Which Can Heal Hurting Homes" *Jerry Joseph*

audio and video tapes available  
attended nursery • display space available

**MADISONVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
1036 N. Main St.  
Madisonville, Kentucky 42431  
(270) 821-3544



### NAME CHANGE

In 1942 the United States government declared eminent domain buying 35,887 acres of ground in Henderson, Webster, and Union counties in western Kentucky to form Camp Breckinridge military installation. This was used as a training center in 1942, but by 1943 it developed into a prisoners of war camp. It housed German and Italian soldiers. In the acreage of Camp Breckinridge was the Liberty and Kennedy Churches of Christ. The brethren were forced to move to other areas to live and worship. **George L. Puryear** and his wife **Ruby Whitledge** chose to worship with the Poole congregation.

**George Puryear** and **Curtis Posey**, their preacher at that time, worked to change the name of the congregation to church of Christ. The name was changed on the deed in 1945.

### GROWTH OF THE CONGREGATION

The Poole congregation continued to grow until they reached a membership of 140. Some of the preachers to serve the church from 1943 to the present were **Curtis Posey**, **Garvin Brundige**, **Ed Casteel**, **Layton Hall**, **Joseph Meador**, **Owen Solomon**, **Neal Noey**, and their present preacher is **Rob Whitacre**.

The congregation is very evangelistic holding a number of gospel meetings yearly. A few of the preachers who have spoke in meetings with them are **Foy Wallace**, **Guy N. Woods**, **Garland Elkins**, **James Meadows**, **Steven Rogers**, **Gary** and **Darrell Puryear** (grandsons of **George Puryear**).

### ELDERSHIP

The congregation that is growing in number and in the knowledge of God's word has a strong and effective eldership. The Poole Church of Christ was blessed with a faithful eldership. The first men to serve as elders were **Jesse A. Tapp** (he helped to establish the church), **R. A. Sugg**, and **Thomas K. Sutton**. In 1896

**Milton Tapp** (grandson of **Jesse A.**) was appointed an elder. Other men to serve in the eldership were **John Liles**, **Harry Melton**, **Willie Dixon**, **Finis Berry**, **Ira Whitledge**, **Auburn Puryear**, **William Parker**, and **Herman Pinkston**. Today the church has two elders, **Mahlon Cottingham** (appointed elder 1967) and **Jesse A. Tapp** (Milton's son, was appointed an elder in 1975).

The Poole Church of Christ keeps busy doing the Lord's work. There are about 75 members in the congregation. They publish a bi-monthly paper, mailing it to every household in the community to teach the gospel. The church has helped in the establishment of five other congregations in western Kentucky. **Rob Whitacre**, the present preacher is involved in the community looking for the opportunities to teach the gospel.

During the early history of the church some men of contrary nature tried to introduce mechanical instruments of music in the worship service. They failed because of the faithful leadership over the years.

The Poole Church of Christ, like many in our great brotherhood, you may not have heard much about over the years. Yet, they stayed the course helping each other faithfully serve God while waiting for that magnificent and wonderful home in Heaven.

—1415 Lincoln Road  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

Spring  
Bible  
Institute

**SEIZE THE  
OPPORTUNITY!**

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO Box 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

**OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR  
SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.**

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (IN RESIDENCE).
- STUDY BY INTERNET (DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM)
- ASSISTANCE IN RAISING SUPPORT.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, "HANDS-ON" TRAINING.

"I am so thankful I was steered in the direction of Spring Bible Institute and have been allowed to take this course. It has already had an impact on my life..."  
—Distance Learning Student, August, 2001

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

ON THE WEB: [CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM](http://CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM) EMAIL: [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)  
PHONE: (281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN

ASST. DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

# "THE GOD WHO HEARETH PRAYERS"

Daniel Denham

The Psalmist in Psalm 65:1-2 declares to God, "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Sion; and unto Thee shall the vow be performed. O Thou who hearest prayers, unto Thee shall all flesh come." The text indicates that Jehovah God is the God "who hearest prayers." He is inclined to hear and grant the petitions of men. He is of tender mercy and loving kindness and, thus, he earnestly desires their prayers, and is disposed to grant them. He is the great benefactor of the human race, as well as its creator. Hebrews 11:6 reminds us that "He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him."

There are some things that we must be mindful of relative to this disposition on the part of God regarding prayer. God is not a giant bell-hop. Nor is he an "over-indulgent grandfather" as some view him. He is indeed God, Deity. He transcends the Universe which he created, even though he has revealed and manifested himself in time and space. He is not personally, intrinsically subject to the limitations of these things. While a God who has acted in history, he is still the "I Am" of eternity! Let us then consider some matters bearing on the theme before us.

## THE GOD WHO HEARS PRAYERS IS NOTHING LIKE THE GODS OF HUMAN ORIGIN

The fact that God hears and answers prayers sets him apart from every other being or thing that is worshipped by men as a god.

*Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II*

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**

**(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)**

*Order from:*

**VADA RICE**

**3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461**



But if any man love God, the same is known of Him. As concerning therefore the eating of those things sacrificed unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be those that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and the one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things are and we by Him (I Corinthians 8:3-6).

Idolatry is vain and fruitless, an exercise in metaphysical futility. It offers no real and lasting hope and can provide no genuine comfort in the face of the harsh realities of life and the fact of the eternity that lies beyond it.

God by way of Isaiah said of the idols that Judah served, "Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing; their molten images are wind and confusion" (Isaiah 41:29). Again, God chidingly proclaimed to the nation through that prophet:

To whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that we may be like? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship it. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not move: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble (Isaiah 46:5-7).

Elsewhere God reminded the people of the absurdity of cutting down a tree to use some of its wood to fashion an idol while using the rest to cook their food, et.al. The absurdity of bowing down to a thing that they have thus fashioned and saying to it, "Thou hast made me"! They are made of lifeless stone, precious metal, or hewn wood. These idols cannot see, or hear, or know! How then could they grant the petitions of their devotees?

Islam claims that Allah and Jehovah are one in the same, but despite Islam's monotheism, it proffers a false god, one who is contradictory in nature, cruel in intentions, and self-defeating in purpose. One essential characteristic of deity by definition must be omni-benevolence, but Allah is not all loving. In fact, what is taught in the Qu'ran about his "love" is that it is reserved only for those who love him. Every action toward others is motivated by something other than his love. Even those who come to love him are despised deeply before they do so! The Allah of Mohammed is not the Jehovah of the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets, who before the foundation of the world out of his immense love set in motion the scheme of redemption that would lead to Calvary, Pentecost of Acts 2, and eternity!

Allah is finite, according to the implications of Islamic teaching, in at least one attribute—love! Allah therefore is not God. He is a false god. A being that does not exist hence cannot hear anything. Islam’s “God” is then logically incoherent. Only the God who has revealed himself in nature and in the Bible, his super-naturally inspired word, is the God who hears prayers. He meets the necessary requirements implicit in the very definition of deity—he is absolute in all of his attributes. There are other areas in which the God of Islam does not match up with the God revealed in the Bible. The latter is logically coherent, the former is not.

#### THE GOD WHO HEARS PRAYERS DOES NOT RESPECT CERTAIN KINDS OF PRAYERS

*First*, he will not hear the prayers of a sinner—whether he be one who has never been previously cleansed or one who has been, but has since fallen away and refuses to turn back. Their prayers are null and void. They have no right to expect anything of the Lord. The dictum **“God heareth not a sinners prayer”** (John 9:31), while spoken by uninspired people in its immediate context—though the record of it is inspired, nonetheless reflects a scriptural principle of God’s dealings with man. Psalm 66:18 declares, **“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”** Proverbs 15:8 states clearly, **“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is His delight.”** Isaiah 1:15 warns certain, **“And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.”** The prophet then urges the people to cleanse themselves of their evil and serve God faithfully. I Peter 3:12 reminds us, **“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.”**

An alien sinner stands in no position to approach God as his father and make his petitions to him on any such basis (Galatians 4:6). The alien sinner has yet to be “born again” into the Kingdom of God (John 3:3-5; Acts 2:37-47). Some would appeal to the case of Cornelius in Acts 10, but the circumstances surrounding his relationship to God in prayer are quite unique and vastly different from that which we possess today. He was coming out of one divinely appointed system—Patriarchy—into another divinely appointed system—Christianity. No such relationships exist today. Further, at the most, Cornelius’ example to us would serve to show that an alien may possibly pray to learn the truth but nothing more than this. By God’s providence the means may then be made available for the sincere seeker of God to learn his will. James still reminds us that it is **“the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man”** that **“availeth much”** (James 5:16). It is by the cleansing blood of Christ that faithful children of God can have **“boldness to enter into the holiest”** as they approach the throne of the Most High in prayer (Hebrews 10:19).

*Second*, God will not countenance prayers that are amiss in nature. He will not grant or do what he has not promised. Prayer must coincide with his will (I John 5:14-

15). He will not grant that which is contrary to his nature. He is not a self-contradictory being. To pray for something that violates the very essence of deity is sheer blasphemy. He will not grant that which is designed to be self-centered and/or consumed on unlawful desires. James 4:2-3 reads, **“Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your own lusts.”**

He will not grant that which is not in our best interests, if we sincerely desire to do good and not evil. He knows what we need. He knows what is in our best interests. The essence of love guides his dealings with us. He will not grant that which is hypocritical in nature. For us to pray for “daily bread” and expect God to **“rain biscuits from heaven”** without our cooperation in working is foolish (II Thessalonians 3:10). He will not grant a petition that is borne in doubt, but requires that we ask **“in faith, nothing wavering”** (James 1:5-7). We must have genuine trust that God will take care of our needs as we serve him (Matthew 6:24-34).

#### THE GOD WHO HEARS PRAYERS HEARS THE PRAYERS OF THE RIGHTEOUS

As seen earlier, God hears the prayers of the righteous (I Peter 3:12). The Psalmist says, **“But know that the Lord hath set him apart that is godly for Himself: the Lord will bear when I call unto Him.”** The Lord delineates between people on the basis of their spiritual standing with him. While he is one who “has no respect of persons” relative to the opportunity to be saved, he does discriminate when it comes to many of his blessings. Some blessings—particularly those that are part of **“all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ”**—pertain only to Christians (Ephesians 1:3). God has always drawn a dividing line as to his relationships with man. If you obey him, he blesses. If you rebel against him or disobey, he ultimately will punish (cf., Psalm 34:14-19).

It is up to us as to what kind of relationship exists between ourselves and deity. We have the power to choose to serve or not to serve God (Joshua 24:15). We have the power by responding to his gracious plan of salvation **“to save”** ourselves **“from this untoward generation”** (Acts 2:40). By doing so, our relationship to God changes and we pass from the objects of wrath to objects of blessing. By doing righteousness, we become righteous in his sight (I John 3:7). He is more than willing to bless (Hebrews 11:6; James 1:5). By being faithful we maintain our fellowship with God and keep open the avenues of blessing from on high (I John 1:7).

Let us strive to make our prayer life biblical in nature. Let us be mindful that we serve **“the true and the living God.”** God hears prayers and seeks to do good to men, if they will humble themselves and serve him. Let us also grasp not only the awesome beauty of God’s loving kindness to his people, but our responsibility to offer prayers according to his revealed will.

—117 Owens Avenue  
Rutherford, Tennessee 38369

# "... BUSY HERE AND THERE ..."

Jodie Boren



There is a most intriguing incident in the life of Ahab, the king of Israel, during the time of the great prophet Elijah. Ahab, with the help of God, prevailed over Benhadad, the king of Syria. Benhadad pleaded for his life and Ahab let him go (I Kings 20:1-34). God sent a prophet to pass judgment on Ahab because of his irresponsibility. The prophet told Ahab about one who had been given charge to keep a prisoner, and that if by any means he be missing, then shall his life be for the prisoner's life. This servant, entrusted with this responsibility, *got busy here and there* and the man escaped. So, the prophet made the application to Ahab. "Thus saith the Lord, because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall got for his life" (verse 42). This occurrence is reminiscent of Nathan's confrontation with David in II Samuel 12:1-7; and, like that event, has a great lesson for us.

Elders have the awesome responsibility of feeding the church of our Lord (Acts 20:28) the whole truth of God's word to prevent false teachers from escaping into the flock. Preachers, likewise, share this responsibility. Paul's charge to Timothy shows the depth of this labor of love. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2). Paul set a good example as he spoke to the elders of Ephesus, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

Again to the brethren at Rome he said, "so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (Romans 15:19b).

The point is that many elders are failing to see to it that their flock is fed the whole counsel of God. Many preachers and Bible teachers seem to purposely avoid fully teaching the gospel of Christ. They are perhaps fearful of offending someone or to put it another way, they do not want to rock the boat.

No one knows for sure, but one thing we do know, the whole truth in many congregations is not being proclaimed. In neglecting to feed the church the gospel in its entirety, could it be said they were "busy here and there" and because of their laxness, false teachers are free to destroy the flock with their false teachings?

In other words, he was distracted by the affairs of this life from doing his duty. Paul exhorted Timothy that as a good soldier of Jesus Christ he should not get entangled with the affairs of this life (II Timothy 2:3-4). Do not be distracted from your duty.

The failure to preach the whole counsel of God and thus, failing to warn the flock of false doctrines, is just as dangerous as allowing false teachers into the congregation. Note carefully the words of Ezekiel:

**So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt die; if thou doest not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul (Ezekiel 33:7-9).**

When the full gospel is preached to good and honest hearts, the people will have a love for the truth and stand therein. If, however, we who have the responsibility of preaching the whole counsel of God, are "busy here and there," then the wolves can enter in. What an awesome responsibility to be a teacher of God's word. James warns that teachers will be judged more strictly than others (James 3:1). But what a wonderful privilege to teach the gospel to others. May we do it boldly and in love.

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601



# THE STREAM CONTINUES WITH POLLUTION

Wayne Coats

The nineteenth century was captivated with the modernism and rationalism which flowed forth from German universities. **David Friedrich Strauss** was a devoted student of **Hegel** and a contemporary of **Baur** for forty-two years. Also, Strauss was greatly influenced by **Schliermacher** and **Schelling**. We do not need to guess about the radical views of Strauss. As a professor at Tübingen, his writings were so radical that he was dismissed from the university. He went to Zurich but was refused a teaching position. I find it strange that an infidel-modernist could be so radical as to be dismissed from Tübingen, however such was the experience of Strauss.

## A FALSE VIEW OF CHRIST

In his book, *The Life of Jesus*, Strauss contended that the stories about Jesus were myths. He rejected the gospel of John because as he said, "It differed in content and style from Matthew, Mark and Luke." These three accounts of the gospel consisted mostly of myths. All the miracles were invented by the disciples of Jesus. Strauss tried to use the historical-critical method, and he found out that the church actually developed the kind of Jesus which was needed and which would encourage followers.

The son of God did not exist as a person, but was, "humanity as a species." The New Testament to Strauss was "a tissue of hypothesis." I repeat, my modernist brethren in the universities would do well to make a golden calf in honor of those old infidels. My brethren who are so positive, sweet and kind need to check their integrity and conviction regarding the ancient order of things.

## EVOLUTION—"A BASELESS THEORY"

A line or two needs to be said with respect to **Charles Robert Darwin**. In 1859 Darwin published his book, *Origin Of Species By Means Of Natural Selection*. For many years I have had a copy of Darwin's book and all anyone can say is that Darwin presented his views as a mere theory. Evolution has a place as a baseless theory, but as an established fact, no man has ever gone that far.

If we are nothing more than apes, how can there be any absolute standard of morals? Do dogs have morals?

Evolution was highly successful among the protestant clergy who had no real conviction. In their quest to be progressive, the protestant clergymen jumped on the evolutionary cart with their brand of theistic evolution. Some preachers will swallow almost anything in order to be popular with pagans.

The theistic evolutionists were determined to restructure religion into a progressive, changing, developing, evolving process. We have a new breed of two-legged apes who are running around babbling and chattering that the church must change as culture changes. Everything animate must be evolving and if not, such will become extinct. As man progresses, he will need a progressive New Age Church which will be known for its contemporaneity.

If Jesus had conformed to the culture of his day, the church would not have been established and the wood for the old rugged cross could have been used to construct an animal trough to be used in a sheep-cote.

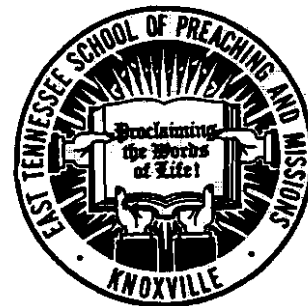
## OF LIBERAL PROFESSORS AND "JUMPING BEANS"

Some of our liberal professors remind me of those jumping-beans which I saw a number of years ago. If you desire to see a crew of jumping, hopping, skipping, leaping men, then you need to watch those who admire **SOREN AABY KIERKEGAARD**. Kierkegaard did not want to be known as the author of what he wrote, so he used two pseudonyms. His writings dealt with the gospel of suffering and when an aged bishop died, Kierkegaard wrote a paper titled, "Was Bishop Mynster A Witness of Truth, A Faithful Witness of Truth, Is This Truth?" The enemies of Kierkegaard accused him of "Dancing on the tomb of heroes."

To Kierkegaard, man made progress by leaping from one sphere to another. Life consists of leaps, thus by the leap of faith, man is able to move onward and upward. The theory of Kierkegaard was nothing more than subjective existentialism, however, some of our professors need someone from whom to copy and any far-out modernist will suffice.

—706 Hillview

Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27122



## EAST TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF PREACHING

"Soundness—Balance—Integrity"

Tuition Free • Housing Available • Two-year Program • College Level • Personal Attention • Limited Financial Aid • Excellent Library • Preaching Opportunities • Experienced Faculty • VA Benefits • Classes For Wives • Under Oversight of Kams Elders since 1971.

James L. Meadows, Director  
6608 Beaver Ridge Road  
Knoxville, TN 37931  
(423) 691-7444 - FAX (423) 691-9692



# OUT-LAWS, IN-LAWS, IN-LOVES

Annette B. Cates

Recently, I was asked how I refer to the young women who are married to our sons, "as 'daughters,' or as 'daughters-in-law'?" I did not have to give my answer a second thought. They are our daughters-in-love. The love our sons had for them preceded the law that bound them together as husband and wife. Our attitude has been that **Michelle** and **Shelly** would be no different in our sight than **Andy** and **Dan**.

## A DESTROYER OF MARRIAGES

The in-law relationship is one of the most maligned in families. In-law jokes, especially those referring to the mother-in-law, have been fodder for the comedians' mill for eons of time. This should never be! In-law problems have destroyed many marriages. It ranks as one of the top three reasons for marital unhappiness, the other two being money and sex. Admittedly, there are those who will NOT work with one another to make it a good relationship and are virtually impossible to get along with. Nevertheless, we should do all we can in order to get along and to encourage strong ties within the family while respecting, not controlling, the individuals involved.

In far too many families the relationship has been one of outlaws, enemies, or trouble-makers who disturb the peace that should exist. When an in-law is treated as an "out-law," or acts like an outlaw, a barrier goes up. This is true whether one is the "parent" in-law or the "adult child" in-law. Either side can be guilty and either can be innocent, or both can be wrong. There are those parents who simply cannot let go of the "child," seeing the chosen mate as an intruder. There are those individuals whose jealousy will not allow the mate to maintain close and loving ties with his/her parents, seeing them as interlopers. These are the types of situations where "out-laws" develop, and the marriage can be in jeopardy. The out-law remains on the outside and is never welcomed into the family. Estrangement develops, and grandchildren lack the closeness with grand-

parents that can mean so much in the development of a child.

## "IN LAWS" VS. "IN-LOVES"

Then, there are those who are simply in-laws, no more and no less. There is no hostility, but there is no warmth and acceptance of one another either. Family members simply tolerate one another. While this type of interaction may not be as destructive to a marriage as the out-law situation is, neither is it conducive to strengthening a couple as they build their own home.

The third category of in-law relationships is that of in-love. There is a sense of welcome that brings the young mate into the family circle. On the other hand, the young will treat the "new parents" as warmly as their own. Time and holidays are shared as equally as possible. Birthdays are remembered. Grandchildren are taught to love both sets of grandparents. Both sides are included in the traditions that go into making a house a home. Each side should recognize that love for one another is not diminished by embracing new family members. I have always believed that true love multiplies and never divides.

There may be more responsibility on the parents to set the tone for the relationship. After all, they should be the ones with more maturity. They are the ones who have experienced more of life's ups and downs. They have met with difficulties and should have learned from their own parents and in-laws what works and what does not work when dealing with adult children and grandchildren. Parents must remember that when their off-spring become adults and leave home, they are where we reared them to be. We strive to teach our children to make wise choices in life, to be strong Christians, to be independent, and to become responsible, productive citizens. When they reach adulthood, we have to trust that the teaching we have done will have a positive impact on their lives. When they choose mates, we must honor that choice, unless there is a scriptural reason not to do so. We cannot interfere in that new home. **"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Matthew 19:6).

The young family has a role in this relationship, also. After all, the in-laws were the ones who reared the mate. They gave life, kissed bruises, cheered successes, shed tears over broken hearts, and worried when their child was not home on time. They laid the foundation. Yes, families do things differently. In time, a couple will blend past traditions and bring in new ones, forming their own ways and their own home life. Becoming part of a new family does



When in Lubbock, please visit

### **SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

8501 Quaker Avenue • Lubbock, Texas

(806) 794-5008

Tommy J. Hicks, Preacher

#### **Sunday**

Bible Study 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship 9:55 a.m.

Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

#### **Tuesday**

Ladies' Bible Class 10:00 a.m.

#### **Wednesday**

Bible Study 7:30 p.m.

not diminish the love for the family in which one was reared. Again, love multiplies and does not divide.

In-law relationships will be much smoother if each side has love and respect for the other. Both sides should refrain from criticizing the other family members. Sincere compliments are always welcome and build confidence in one another. Advice from either side should be given only when it is asked for, and then no obligation should be attached that it must be followed, or feelings will be injured. The children belong to their parents, not to the grandparents, and are the parents' responsibility, except under unusual circumstances. Grandparents can be a strong and

necessary influence in a family. They do this by outright teaching, by example, and by making precious memories with the grandchildren that they will never forget (I Peter 3:1-4).

Out-laws, in-laws, or in-loves? It has been said that the home is the vestibule of heaven. By building a loving in-law relationship, the out-laws will be gone, marriages will be stronger, and the in-loves will be preparing for an eternity in heaven.

—9194 Lakeside Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

## Biblical Questions...

# WHAT IS THE VALUE OF PRAYER?

Noah Hackworth

**Dr. Robert Colin**, a noted psychiatrist, says prayer has therapeutic value (*50 Plus Magazine*, December, 1987, p.44.). No reflection on the good doctor, but God's people have known this for quite some time, even though they may not have always demonstrated it to the Lord's satisfaction. In a book titled *The Old Ones of New Mexico*, Dr. Colin says, "(O)lder people are closer to the end of life, and for that reason they are often inclined to stop and reflect, to pray or meditate." The Bible is filled with examples, implications, and direct statements which teach us to pray. We **"pray without ceasing"** (I Thessalonians 5:17); **"praying always with all prayer and supplication"** (I Thessalonians 5:25); **"I will therefore that men pray everywhere..."** (I Timothy 2:8).

Since therapeutic means having healing or curative powers, it follows that prayer has a therapeutic value. Prayer is one of God's ways for his children to rid themselves of cares. The Bible declares, **"casting all your cares upon him, for he careth for you"** (I Peter 5:7). The Greek term for the word casting is *epirripsantes* which is aorist tense (Moulton), point action (Robertson), and is to be understood as "a once-for-all action by which one rids himself forevermore of all anxious care by depositing it with

the Lord" (Woods). The very best thing to be done with cares and anxieties is to leave them with the Lord. The cares of this life can be so devastating to us that we would perish were it not for prayer.

God has given us this wonderful privilege and outlet through which we make known our requests unto him (Philippians 4:6). It behooves each of us to turn our cares over to the Lord and allow him to handle them. When we realize that God will supply all our needs (Matthew 6:33; Philippians 4:16) there will be a distinct difference in the way we live. We will have more peace and less stress, and will be closer to that perfect love that casteth out all fear (I John 4: 18). What we will eat and what we will wear will be less of a problem when we manifest a dependence upon the Lord through prayer.

The Messianic prophet pictures Christ as one who hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrow (Isaiah 53:4). While I am fully aware of the context of this beautiful passage, I nevertheless am fully persuaded that Messiah continues to receive our requests, and that he continues to make intercession to the father in our behalf.

Entering into our understanding of the value of prayer and our willingness to confide in God is knowing that we have a high priest who can be touched

with the feeling of our infirmities, In fact, this is what the writer of the Hebrew epistle confidently declares: **"For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"** (4:15).



The word touched translates the word *sunpatheo*. *Patheo* comes from *pascho* which means to suffer. The prefix *sun* means with. Hence *sunpatheo* or *sumpathesal* means to suffer with another person. Our High Priest knows about our infirmities. He enters into our suffering with us. He intercedes in our behalf knowing this, how could a Christian be remiss in exercising the great privilege of prayer? Life's burdens will eventually get too heavy for us to bear without help. What do we do? We pray for help, we receive it, we press on.

—4525 Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, California 93277

# THE DESCRIPTIVE WORD OF GOD

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

- A. "Born in the east and clothed in oriental form and imagery, the Bible walks all the world with familiar feet and enters land after land to find its own everywhere. It has learned to speak in hundreds of languages to the heart of man. Children listen to its stories with wonder and delight, and wise men ponder them as parables of life. The wicked and the proud tremble at its warnings, but to the wounded and the penitent it has a mother's voice. It has woven itself into our dearest dreams; so that love, friendship, sympathy, devotion, memory, and hope, put on the beautiful garments of its treasured speech. No man is poor or desolate who has this treasure for his own."
- B. Many men have described the Bible very beautifully in their writings, but no description of the Bible can be found anywhere that is more beautiful than the one found in Psalm 19:7-14.
1. This beautiful psalm speaks of the Bible as being able to:
    - a. Convert our soul
    - b. Make us wise
    - c. Enlighten us
  2. The Psalmist describes God's word as being:
    - a. Right and sure
    - b. More precious than gold
    - c. A warning devise
- C. With all this in mind I want us to look to the Bible, and let us examine some of the descriptive terms that the Bible uses to describe itself, and in doing so we will understand the nature and content of this great book—THE BIBLE.
1. The Bible describes itself in two ways:
    - a. Literally
    - b. Symbolically
  2. Let us begin by looking at the literal descriptions of the Bible.

## DISCUSSION

- A. Literal Terms Describing the Bible
1. The word of God
    - a. 1 Thessalonians 2:13
    - b. Ephesians 6:17
    - c. Hebrews 4:12
  - d. We do not have the word of men, BUT THE WORD OF GOD!
    - 1) How powerful is God's word?
    - 2) Through his word the world was created ..... (Genesis 1).
    - 3) Romans 1:16
2. The Bible
- a. Hebrews 10:7
  - b. Notice that it is called "THE BOOK" there is—no other book that can come close to comparing to it
  - c. For example:
    - 1) It is the best selling book of all times
    - 2) The Bible out sells the best seller 200 to 1
    - 3) 2 million Bibles are sold every year
    - 4) In 1929 there were 32 million Bibles sold
3. The scriptures

- a. John 5:39
  - b. 11 Timothy 3:16-17
  - c. These inspired scriptures are all we need .... 11 Peter 1:3
4. The Oracles of God
- a. Romans 3:2
  - b. Hebrews 5:12
  - c. 1 Peter 4:11
  - d. "Oracles" comes from a Greek word denoting a divine response or utterance.
- B. Symbolic Terms Describing the Bible Lamp and Light.
- a. Psalm 119:105
  - b. Proverbs 6:23
  - c. We need God's word to direct our paths.
  - d. When we are not directed by God's word, we are in darkness.
  - e. God's light is able to deliver us out of the power of darkness ..... Colossians 1:13.
2. Mirror
- a. 11 Corinthians 3:18
  - b. James 1:23-25
  - c. The as a mirror reveals our faults.
  - d. We look into the mirror to correct our blemishes.
3. Fire.
- a. "Is not my word like fire, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 23:29)
  - b. 1 Peter 1:22
  - c. Jeremiah 20:9
4. Hammer
- a. "God's word is like a hammer that breaketh the rock into pieces" (Jeremiah 23:29).
  - b. Sometimes we have to use God's word like a hammer to soften the hearts of men.
5. Sword
- a. "The sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17).
  - b. Hebrews 4:12
  - c. A sword is a symbol of warfare.
  - d. We must use the sword of the Spirit to war against unbelievers.
  - e. God's word is sharp and able to pierce the hearts of men.
    - 1) Acts 2:37
    - 2) Acts 7:54
6. Seed
- a. Luke 8:11
  - b. Hosea 10:12
  - c. When the seed of God is planted in good hearts, a harvest is produced.



## CONCLUSION

- A. Notice that the word of God is constantly depicted as an instrument.
- B. Instruments are useless if they are not used.
- C. We MUST use the instrument that God has given us.

—64065 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas

# 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—

**Cambridge**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## —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, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. 770-382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@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.

**Rockwood**—Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun: 10, 11 a.m., Wed: 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore. (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## —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 Bob Patterson, 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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.

# Reminder!

If your address label  
has the date: 03/02

## IT IS TIME TO RENEW!

Send your renewal to:  
Contending For The Faith  
P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, Texas 77383

10th Annual

# Gulf Coast Lectures

## "SEEKING THE TRUTH"

Friday, May 3 - Sunday, May 5, 2002

### Friday

6:30 pm Congregational Singing

7:00 pm "The All-Sufficiency of the Scriptures" ..... Richard Massey, Rising Star, TX

8:00 pm "Sin" ..... Joshua Wyatt, Rosemark, TN

### Saturday

9:00 am "Once Saved Always Saved" ..... David Baker, Emory, TX

10:00 am "Woman's Role in the Church" ..... Don D'Herde, Aransas Pass, TX

11:00 am "Modern Day Miracles" ..... Floyd Johnson, Shreveport, LA

LUNCH—PROVIDED

1:30 pm "Modern Day Tongue Speaking" ..... Jason Rollo, Italy, TX

2:30 pm "Premillennialism" ..... Don Boyd, Justin, TX

3:30 pm "The Thief On the Cross" ..... Doug Young, Bryan, TX

6:30 pm Congregational Singing

7:00 pm "Instrumental Music In Worship" ..... Dave Rogers, Victoria, TX

8:00 pm "Christian Living" ..... Shan Jackson, Port Lavaca, TX

### Sunday

9:00 am "The Sabbath" ..... George Pledger, Corpus Christi, TX

10:00 am "What Must I Do To Be Saved?" ..... Lynn Matheny, Nashville, AR

LUNCH PROVIDED

2:00 pm "Total Depravity" ..... Jason Browning, Mathis, TX

3:00 pm "Worship (Contemporary/Traditional)" ..... Patrick Hammack, Odem, TX

6:00 pm Congregational Singing

6:30 pm "Denominationalism" ..... Bob Patterson, Beeville, TX

7:30 pm "The True Identity of the Church" ..... H. D. Simons, Corpus Christi, TX

All lectures, audio and video, taped by Tullstar—For more info call 361.643.6571  
Portland Church of Christ, P.O. Box 11275, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374  
email address: portlandcofc@juno.com

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith™**  
Post Office Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT# 1863

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## HE SHRUGGED HIS SHOULDERS

Brandon Renfroe

A quip, a story, a laugh, and an anecdote—thus began the Bible class. As the hour wore on, it became more and more obvious that there would not be much “Bible” in the Bible study on this particular Sunday morning. I listened patiently as the visiting brother, **Billy Moore** from Faulkner University, gave a financial report and made a subsequent sales pitch for his beloved university. While breaking of the bread of life never really occurred, a “dough” of sorts was perhaps the topic of the day. Nevertheless, I sat patiently and listened as best I could. Without interruption brother Moore moved into a discussion of the Bible Department at Faulkner University. I freely admit that I gave the “more earnest heed.” Brother Moore spoke of some in the brotherhood who sought to “define Faulkner,” and countered by declaring that they “refused to be defined.” He insisted that Faulkner is a “Christian” university without rival, unequaled, and second-to-none in terms of the quality of Bible education imparted by her instructors.

### QUESTIONABLE DECISIONS

I am not a graduate of Faulkner University. In fact, I am not a graduate of any of the “Christian” schools in our brotherhood. I graduated from a “secular” school, Jacksonville State University, in Jacksonville, Alabama. I say this to emphasize that I am neither inordinately biased for or against one school over another. The quality of secular education received at such universities is certainly not the question. I doubt not that Faulkner is the last bastion of education that brother Moore made her out to be, and that wisdom will die with her (Job 12:2). I am sure that Faulkner does not lie one whit behind any secular school solely in terms of the education received there. This, however, is not the question. What is of interest, though, is the matter of the Bible Department at Faulkner University and some questionable decisions made thereby.

### DOES FAULKNER UNIVERSITY BELIEVE THAT “ALL OF LIFE IS WORSHIP”, EXCEPT FOR THE SIN IN A CHRISTIAN’S LIFE?

It was at this point that I raised my hand and asked our brother the following question. I asked Moore:

At Faulkner’s recent lectureship, H. A. ‘Buster’ Dobbs conducted the Open Forum. Given brother Dobbs’ teaching of the false doctrine concerning ‘all of life is worship,’ was this a wise decision by Faulkner? Further, is brother Dobbs’ position indicative, then, of Faulkner’s position on the matter?

Moore shrugged his shoulders.

When he did try to make a defense, he said that Dobbs taught no such thing—I had been unduly influenced by others and was going solely by “hearsay.” When asked if he would like to see documentation of just such teaching on previous occasions from brother Dobbs, he was not quite as bold. He responded by telling me that Faulkner had issued a sort of “Mission Statement” documenting their goals and doctrinal positions. Perhaps I should read that, he said, before asking any other questions. I must confess that I was not interested in any “Mission Statement”—certainly not in the light of II John 9-11, which I then read to Moore. 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.**

Moore’s reply: He shrugged his shoulders.

### “FAULKNER AGREES WITH DOBBS ON 97% OF WHAT HE TEACHES”<sup>1</sup>

He eventually replied by suggesting that if Faulkner had indeed bid him God speed, then perhaps I would have a point. (I guess that inviting someone to speak on a lecture-



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXXIII, No. 4

April 2002

David P. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher  
dpbrown@swbell.net

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

Editorial...

## DO THE SCRIPTURES AUTHORIZE THE CHURCH TO CONTRIBUTE TO ANYTHING IT CANNOT "OVERSEE"?

Those members of the church of Christ who are "anti" (against) church supported orphan homes to the point of unscripturally dividing the body of Christ, *must* believe that the legal home ("*in loco parentis*"—in the place of parents) is a human institution. These hobby riders attempt to make a legal home (orphan home) comparable to the missionary societies of the apostasy of the nineteenth century. If they admit that the legal or replaced home is a home approved of by God as is true of the natural home, they cannot sustain their doctrine.

(At this point in our study it needs to be stated we are not discussing another false view advocated by these same factious brethren, namely, that only members of the Lord's church may be helped out of the church treasury—the "Saints Only" doctrine. Of course, to them, no matter if they believed an orphan home to be authorized by the New Testament, they would not support it out of the church treasury *if any children occupying such a home were not members of the Lord's church*. The Lord willing, we shall discuss the "Saints Only" false doctrine later.)

## SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER

As we study this issue please consider the following questions. If elders superintend (are over) a home in their official capacity as elders of the Lord's church, would they not be "over" any non-members who may be in that home. May elders of the church exercise scriptural oversight of those who are not members of the church? Whose work is discharged when the church makes a contribution to a needy family—the church, the home, both of them, or neither of them? What kind of religion is the church authorized to practice? May the church do the work of the state, which work is peculiar to the state? May the home do the work of the church, which work is peculiar to the church? May the church do the work of the home, which work is peculiar to the home? All other things being scripturally equal, must Christians be obedient to the laws of the land? All other things being scripturally equal, does a Godly natural home become a human institution solely on the basis of complying with civil law, which compliance is demanded by Romans 13?

For over half a century through a multiplicity of avenues the "anti" orphan home brethren have taught and do teach that if a home is chartered by the state, regulated by civil law, and controlled by a board of directors, of *necessity* it constitutes a human institution. Thus, they refer to us as "institutional" brethren. These brethren have alleged that the orphan home then takes over to do the work of the church. Hence, they say that we teach that a human institution or organization may take over the work of the church.

**WHAT I AM AND AM NOT DEFENDING**

Let it be made crystal clear that I am *not* defending *human* institutions. *I am defending divine* institutions—the home, civil government, and the church. There is no Bible authority for any one of these institutions to take over the work of the others. Of course, all other things being scripturally equal, these institutions may support and cooperate with each other.

Yes, in some instances these institutions have overlapping obligations. However, their duties are distinct in the following areas:

1. The *state* exercises *civil authority*.
2. The *home* functions in the area of *domestic activity*.
3. The *church* works to save souls; accomplishing such through *evangelism, edification* (spiritual education), and *benevolence*.

**WHAT IS A HOME?**

According to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, a home is "one's place of residence: Domicile: b: house. 2: the social unit formed by a family living together." Hence, whether natural or legal, a home or family is a unit of society that involves a family relationship.

(It is a dodge on the part of the "antis" for them to say that since the "board" of an orphan home does not live in such an institution that it, therefore, is not a home. That would mean that every time a preacher was in another town, state, or country in an effort to preach the gospel and thus, not living with his family for a period of time, he would not have a home. Furthermore, according to this line of lame thinking soldiers separated from their families in another part of the world for months and sometimes years at a time have no home to which they may return.)

**NEEDS OF ORPHANS  
(THOSE BEREFT OF PARENTS)**

The needs of orphans are shelter, food, clothing, education, supervision, medical care, entertainment, and recreation. God has delegated to the home the responsibility for such care. However, the church of Christ is obligated by authorization from the Bible in general and the New Testament in particular to provide means for the needy (Psalms 68:4-6; Mark 14:7; Acts 11: 27-30; 20:35; Romans 15:26, 30-31; I Corinthians 16:1-4; II Corinthians 8:1,10; Galatians 6:10; 2:9; I Timothy 5:16; James 1:27). I do not hesitate, therefore, to affirm that a child must have or be a part of a home—natural or legal—in order to have its needs met. The Lord's church is not authorized by God to meet those needs, by which I mean that God never authorized the church to be a home.

Is the church obligated to provide means for those in need, which needy people would include orphans? Assuredly such is the case. However, when the church provides funds to take care of orphans, the care must be provided by the home—the divine institution created by God to take care of such matters. But, orphans are bereft of parents—they have no natural home. And, the church is not authorized to become a home in order to comply with James 1:27. What, then, is the church to

*In This Issue...*

<b>He Struggled His Shoulders</b> Brandon Renfro	1
<b>Editorial</b> <b>Do the Scriptures Authorize the Church to Contribute to Anything It Cannot Oversee?</b>	2
<b>99.9%</b> Tom Moore	5
<b>Sermon Outlines</b> <b>Obedience to the Truth</b> Tom Moore	6
<b>A Post-modern Problem—The Relationship of Bias and Truth</b> Jerry Murrell	7
<b>The Argument Against The Doctrine of Original Sin</b> Kevin Cauley	8
<b>Biblical Questions...</b> <b>With Liberty and Justice For All?</b> Noah Hackworth	9
<b>Soap, Soap and Social Problems</b> Wagna Coats	10
<b>Witnessing and Testifying</b> Danny La Box	11
<b>Restoration Reflections...</b> <b>The Importance of the Gospel Meeting in Restoration History</b> Paul Vaughn	13
<b>Seeing It Helps Saying It...</b> <b>The Year's Feast—but YOU GOTTA PRIME THE PUMP</b> Jodie Boren	15
<b>Studies From the Biblical Text...</b> <b>The Commission of Joshua</b> Daniel Derham	16
<b>Current Events that Concern Christians...</b> <b>Rabel, Shelly and Mission Work, Boy Scout Policies, Homosexual Pastors, and Prayer Concerts</b> Mark McWhorter	18
<b>Our Woman's Perspective...</b> <b>Don't Mess With My Heart</b> Annette B. Cates	20
<b>The Last Word...</b> <b>My Responsibility</b> Eddie Whitten	21

do? In the place of parents Christians are authorized to form and run a legal home in which the needs of orphans are met and to which the church may contribute in support thereof. If we can understand how the church may contribute toward the support of a needy natural home without becoming a home or running the same, we should be able to understand how that the church may do the same regarding an orphan (legal or replaced) home.

What is so difficult in coming to understand that elders in their official capacity as elders of the Lord's church are not authorized by the New Testament to be the head of a home? However, elders are responsible for seeing that the church does what the New Testament has authorized it to do in the quickest and best way possible. One of those obligatory matters the church must discharge, as a part of doing the Lord's will (practicing "pure and undefiled religion"—James 1:27), is providing for orphans. And, that implies they will be cared for in the basic unit of society in which God intended that care to be supplied—the home, not the church. *Thus, when the church has done what God intended regarding orphans, the work peculiar to the home is yet to be done.*

The church of Christ is authorized to raise money (means) to provide for orphans (I Corinthians 16:1, 2). This money is to be turned over to the home. Notice that the church in Jerusalem did that (Acts 4:32-35). The homes having received the funds (means) then used the means given to them by the church to do the work peculiar to the home.

#### CIVIL GOVERNMENT AND THE HOME

Certainly the state takes note of the home and has enacted laws regulating the establishment thereof. This is true regarding natural as well as legal (replaced) homes. Thus, all other things being scripturally equal, both natural and legal homes comply with the civil law(s) relating thereto (Romans 13).

Who will affirm: "*The scriptures teach that the home is to exercise civil authority*"; or, "*The scriptures teach it is the responsibility of civil government to practice domestic activity*"; or "*The scriptures teach it is the responsibility of the Lord's church to function in the area of domestic activity*"; or "*The scriptures teach that in order for the church of Christ to practice that part of pure and undefiled religion pertaining to the care of orphans, it (the church) must function in the area of domestic activity (become a home)*", etc.?

My point in this study is this: the church of Christ has no Bible authority to function as a home no more than the home has Bible authority to function as the church of Christ. *The Lord's church is fully adequate or sufficient to do all the work God has obligated it to*

*do without the help of any outside institution of any kind—divine or human. However, it is not the work of the church to be a home.* Again, who is silly enough to affirm that the scriptures teach that it is a part of the work of the church to be a home? Indeed, God obligated the home to care for children. And, the church of Christ has a God-given responsibility to provide support for the fatherless in their afflictions (James 1:27). Therefore, the church provides support to that God-ordained institution authorized by him to care for the fatherless in their afflictions—the home. Indeed, how can a destitute child be taken care of scripturally without a home—natural or legal (replaced)?

#### PLEASE REMEMBER

I am not arguing for a separate organization to do the work that God ordained only the church to do. I am defending all three of God's divine institutions and the work that is peculiar to each of them which work is not the responsibility of the others to do. I have made it abundantly clear (as so many faithful preachers have argued for half a century) that God intended the home to function as a protector and provider of care for children bereft of their parents—not the church of Christ. I am arguing that it is the responsibility of the church of Christ in complying with James 1:27 to provide that singular divine institution (the home), the institution which God has ordained or authorized to take care of children who are bereft of parents (See I Timothy 5:16; Genesis 2:24). I am opposing the false idea that the church is to become a home in order to take care of orphans just as I oppose the idea that church is to become a civil government in order for that divine institution to function as God intended it.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

**Why Not Help  
Contending <sup>FOR THE</sup> Faith  
Grow?**

**GIVE A GIFT  
SUBSCRIPTION!**

SEND SUBSCRIPTIONS TO:  
P.O. BOX 2357  
SPRING, TX 77383-2357

# “He Shrugged His Shoulders”

(Continued from page 1)

ship and even conduct or participate in the Open Forum and then advertising said Open Forum by said brother is not the ringing endorsement that I supposed it to be.) To wit, he further asserted that Faulkner (at least the Bible Department) is in agreement with brother Dobbs on 97% of the things that he teaches. (How he arrived at this percentage, I do not know, but I am sure that it was via only the most scientific of means.) Perhaps it is true that brother Dobbs teaches the truth on “97%” of things. However, I was not questioning “97%” of things, I was questioning one teaching, one doctrine, in particular.

## “FOLLOW THE POPE AS THE POPE FOLLOWS CHRIST”?

I pointed out to brother Moore that we might invite the pope to speak to us concerning abortion and reasonably expect the truth to be taught, at least on that one subject—would this be a wise course of action? He apparently had no problem with such a scenario. When asked if he considered the pope to be a faithful brother, Moore replied, “He is my brother in Adam.” Of course I was not referring to such a loose kinship shared by every living soul; rather, I was referring to the kinship shared by those of “like precious faith” (II Peter 1:1), hence I had included the word “faithful.” I pointed out to my Faulkner Bible Department-intoxicated friend that Paul admonished us to be followers of him, but only as he followed Christ (I Corinthians 11:1). Brother Moore responded by saying that he followed the pope as the pope followed Christ! Does the pope follow Christ? Is this indicative of the “superior Bible education” that our young Christian men and women are receiving at Faulkner? I certainly hope that it is not. Is the Bible Department at Faulkner aware that this is what their representatives are teaching as they traverse our brotherhood?

## ASK NOAH IF

### THE MAJORITY DETERMINES THE TRUTH

When pressed to respond to II John 9-11—as much as he did not want to—he finally replied, “Well, if you feel that way, you should not support Faulkner.” Is our brother saying that if I believe the Bible, I cannot support Faulkner University? I did not ask. He sharply told me that the brotherhood, from left to right, top to bottom, supports Faulkner. He asked again if I would like to take a gander at the expansive list of brethren who support Faulkner. Since when have right and wrong been determined by a head count, or a “who’s who” of the brotherhood? When has “might” made “right” when it comes to obeying the commands of our Lord? Of Israel of old Moses wrote:

For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people (Deuteronomy 7:6-7).

It matters little to me if the entire world signed his “threatening” piece of paper. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31). If aiding and abetting a false teacher is wrong, and if brother Dobbs has taught a false doctrine and refuses to recant, then how can anyone, in good faith, support such?

He later asked me, “Where’re you from? Memphis?” No, brother Moore, I am not from Memphis. I am simply a concerned Christian who wants to speak only “as the oracles of God.” Can the same be said for Faulkner?

Moore shrugged his shoulders.

## ENDNOTES

1. See the following article 99.0% from Tom Moore.

—5030 Crowne Chase Parkway  
Birmingham, Alabama 35244

## 99.9%

from Tom Moore

If 99.9% is good enough, then....

- \$761,900 will be spent in the next 12 months on tapes and compact disks that won’t play.
- \$9,690 will be spent each day and into the future on unsafe sporting equipment.
- 1,314 phone calls will be misplaced by telecommunications services every minute.
- 103,260 income tax returns will be processed incorrectly this year.
- 107 incorrect medical procedures will be performed today.
- 114,500 mismatched pairs of shoes will be shipped this year.
- 12 babies will be given to the wrong parents every day.
- 14,208 defective personal computers will be shipped this year.
- 18,322 pieces of mail will be mishandled in the next hour.
- 2 million documents will be lost by the IRS this year.
- 2,488,200 books will be shipped in the next 12 months with the wrong cover.
- 20,000 incorrect drug prescriptions will be written in the next 12 months.
- 22,000 checks will be deducted from the wrong bank accounts in the next 60 minutes.
- 268,500 defective tires will be shipped this year.
- 291 pacemaker operations will be performed incorrectly this year.
- 3,056 copies of tomorrow’s Wall Street Journal will be missing one of three sections.
- 5,517,200 cases of soft drinks will be shipped flat this year.
- 55 malfunctioning automatic teller machines will be installed in the next year.
- 811,000 faulty rolls of 35mm film will be loaded this year.
- 880,000 credit cards will be produced with incorrect magnetic strips.

What about our spiritual life? Should we not strive for perfection? Should we be satisfied with 99.9%? Yes, I know that we all sin and come short of God’s glory (Romans 3:23), but should we be satisfied with that? Of course not! Jesus said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

—823 North Main Street  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

# OBEDIENCE TO THE TRUTH

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

### A. John 8:29

1. How did Jesus do those things that pleased his father? It was through his obedience.
    - a. John 4:34
    - b. John 6:38
    - c. John 17:4
    - d. John 19:30
  2. Notice that in John 8:29 Jesus said that he "always" pleased the father.
    - a. Jesus was perfect in obedience.
    - b. This is why Jesus is our perfect example.
    - c. I Peter 2:21-25
- B. We need to be obedient to be pleasing to God.
1. If Jesus pleased God through obedience, then for us to please God we, too, must be obedient.
  2. To please Jesus we must be obedient
    - a. John 14:15, 21, 23
    - b. John 15:10, 14
    - c. I John 5:3
    - d. Remember, John 5:19, 30 ... in pleasing Jesus we please the father, for Jesus speaks for the father.

## DISCUSSION

### A. OBEDIENCE PROVIDES SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. I Peter 1:22.
  - a. We do not have maturity of soul if we do not obey the truth.
  - b. No matter how much we know, or think we know, we are not growing if we do not obey the truth.
2. The word of God, being sustenance for the soul (Matthew 4:4), consists symbolically of milk (that which can be understood by the spiritually immature) and meat (that which is understood by those mature in the faith) ... I Peter 3:18.

### B. OBEDIENCE HELPS US TO RECEIVE THE MEAT OF GOD'S WORD

1. I Corinthians 3:1-3
  - a. Being carnal makes one a babe.
  - b. One cannot partake of the meat of the word when they are carnal.
2. Hebrews 5:11-14
  - a. Carnal mindedness keeps one from growing.
  - b. Worldliness keeps one in a vulnerable state.
  - c. Ungodly living can destroy all desire for growth, and ungodliness is a result of disobedience.
  - d. When one is eating the devil's bread he cares little for the "bread of life".
3. To please God we must be eating meat—and obedience is required.

### C. OBEDIENCE KEEPS US FROM DRIFTING

1. Hebrews 2:1-3
  - a. It is a sobering thought to realize that when we neglect giving heed to the things we have received from our Bible study—to "drift away from them"—we are actually neglecting eternal salvation—that "so great a salvation".
  - b. Again, obedience is the key.

2. Thus, it behooves every Christian to approach Bible study with the sincere intent of putting one's knowledge into practice ... James 1:21-25.
3. The primary reason Jesus was able to overcome the temptation of the devil was his knowledge of the word (Matthew 4:1-10).



### D. OBEDIENCE PRODUCES SAVING FAITH

1. Hebrews 11:6
    - a. Faith is a must.
    - b. But, faith only is not enough.
  2. James 2:14-26
    - a. Faith without works is dead.
    - b. Devils believe, but that is not enough.
    - c. We are not saved by faith only.
  3. John 5:28-29 ... "doing good"
  4. Hebrews 5:8-9.
    - a. Obedience is required for salvation.
    - b. Jesus is our perfect example of obedience.
  5. 2 Peter 1:10-11
    - a. "IF ye do ...."
- B. Faith only does not please God, but an obedient faith does.

### E. PRAYER AND OBEDIENCE ARE ASSOCIATED

1. Prayer, as in all things, plays a part in our obedience to the truth.
2. Philippians 1:9-11
  - a. "Discernment" is a practical application of knowledge.
  - b. Prayer is important in this process—Paul prayed for others in this regard.
3. Colossians 1:9-11
  - a. "Walking worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing."
  - b. Again, prayer is involved—unceasing prayer.
4. Prayer is important in obedience and in being pleasing to God.

### F. THE OBEDIENT WILL TEACH OTHERS

1. Being obedient, and thus pleasing to God—we will teach others.
2. Ephesians 4:15
3. Colossians 4:6
4. II Timothy 2:24-26
5. I Peter 3:15
6. Hebrews 3:13
7. II Timothy 2:2

## CONCLUSION

- A. Jesus was pleasing to his heavenly father because he was obedient.
- B. We are pleasing to the heavenly father when we are obedient.

—24065 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104



# A Post-modern Problem— The Relationship of Bias to Truth

Jerry Murrell

If one ventures very far into the present-day educational system, he will encounter Post-modernism. One of the cardinal principles of Post-modernism is that all humans are biased to the point that truth cannot be known by any human. This assumption has been imbibed and accepted by most of the younger Bible faculty members at “our Christian Colleges.” This is the source of many problems.

## THIS POST-MODERN ASSUMPTION

This post-modern assumption that all humans are biased and therefore cannot know truth is particularly dangerous when it is applied to the teachings of the Bible. This is one of the rationales for the ambiguity that is coming from many pulpits in our day. It has led to doctrinal compromise on the part of many. If we are too biased to know truth, we cannot know that we are right in our teaching on any doctrine. All positions must be held in flux until something better comes along. If this is the case, we also cannot know that any doctrine that contradicts what we believe (and know) to be true is false. This leads to confusion. Even many who teach the truth on many matters have an almost apologetic attitude concerning the truths that they teach.

One professor among us felt that he was being misunderstood concerning his view of truth. The cause of the misunderstanding was the weak stand he was taking, but he was not willing to stand any firmer on God’s word than he had been in the previous lectures. Instead he said, “Don’t get me wrong, I believe in absolute truth, I just don’t believe we can know it absolutely.” In subsequent discussion it became clear that what he really meant was we cannot even claim to know one fact to be absolutely true. His reason was we all enter into our search for truth with certain presuppositions that make us biased. This bias means that we cannot know truth.

## “I KNOW THAT WE CANNOT KNOW”

The problem with this man’s position is it is self-contradictory. Is it true that absolute truth exists? How did he perceive the one truth that absolute truth does indeed exist? His position actually was, “I know that it is absolutely true that we cannot know absolute truth even though I know that absolute truth exists.”

This same view was taken by **Randy Mayeux** in a speech to a group of “youth ministers” at Lubbock “Christian” University. He said “whoever wrote this tract, ‘Can We All Understand The Bible Alike?’, the answer is, of course, we can. Forgive me, that’s just an ignorant view. It’s just ignorant.” Unfortunately for Mayeux this is the view that the apostle Paul preached to the church at Corinth (I Corinthians 1:10). If a church as divided as the one at Corinth was expected to “understand the Bible alike,” surely we can expect no less of people today. This was also what **Jesus** expected of the Jews of his day. He often would

ask them of they had even read where the Bible said thus and so (for example Matthew 22:31). He said this because he expected that they had read and therefore they should have reached the proper conclusion about what the Bible taught. Surely the Savior expects no less of people in our day.

## THE “BIAS” PROBLEM

All post-modernists do not share the belief that absolute truth exists. The position that they all share concerning bias and its implications for humans knowing truth can also be answered. First, the proposition that all men are biased and therefore cannot know truth is also self-refuting. The person who asserts that all men are biased and cannot know truth is admitting his own bias, which would affect his view of: (1) whether or not all humans are biased; (2) whether or not this bias can affect another person’s knowledge of truth.

To say that there is no universal problem of bias that implies that truth cannot be known is not to say that bias is not a problem. We all study the Bible with various presuppositions. We have a duty to ask ourselves if our presuppositions are true or false (I Thessalonians 5:21). For example, when I study the Bible I begin with the presupposition that God exists and that the Bible is his word. These are presuppositions based on evidence (Hebrews 11:1) that warrants these conclusions. If one studies his Bible with correct presuppositions, he can reach true conclusions. If one studies his Bible with false presuppositions, he will reach false conclusions. We must all strive to make sure that our presuppositions are true and do not get in the way of our search for truth.

One biblical example of people studying their Bibles with presuppositions that prevented them from reaching truth is the Jews of the first century. In II Corinthians 3, Paul uses the veil that was placed over Moses’ face after he descended from Mount Sinai to illustrate the problem which some of the Jews had with a bias that kept them from seeing **Jesus** for who he really is. As the Jews would read the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah, they missed their import because of this veil (II Corinthians 3:14). However, Paul tells them that the veil could be taken away “**in Christ**” (II Corinthians 3:14). This is exactly what happened to Paul himself. No doubt he was biased against the idea that **Jesus** of Nazareth fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. However, the veil was taken away from his eyes one day on the road to **Damascus** (Acts 9). In spite of his bias, Paul came to see that **Jesus** was the Messiah and the Son of God. He would later be able to write, “**I know whom I have believed**” (II Timothy 1:12 emphasis mine J.M.). I can know what Paul



knows because he has written it in a way that I can understand his knowledge of the mystery (Ephesians 3:3-4).

#### A MOST TERRIBLE BIAS

Bias can be a problem in Biblical studies. One of the worst problems that a man can have is to believe that he cannot know truth because he cannot overcome his own bias. This is a dangerous bias. This creates a situation where a man, despite his degrees, is “**Ever learning, and**

**never able to come to a knowledge of the truth”** (II Timothy 3:7). When men are like this they begin to “**resist the truth”** (I Timothy 3:8). It is my goal that these men who are trying to restructure the church shall “**proceed no further,**” we must all endeavor that “**their folly shall be made manifest to all men”** (II Timothy 3:9).

—4340 Lylewood Road  
Indian Mound, Tennessee 37079

## THE ARGUMENT AGAINST The Doctrine of Original Sin

Kevin Cauley

There is no greater threat to practicing true Christianity than the doctrine of original sin (also known as the doctrine of total hereditary depravity). Briefly, this is the teaching that all people born inherit the sinful state into which Adam and Eve passed due to their sin within the Garden of Eden. As a result of being born in sin, all humans are depraved and have a corrupted nature. There are only two possible ways that one can say one inherits depravity from Adam. Either the spiritual soul is depraved at birth as a consequence of heredity, or the physical body is depraved at birth. I will argue in this article that it is false to say that either is the case, and therefore that the doctrine must be false.

#### FALSE POSITIONS ANSWERED

Can one who affirms this doctrine say that it is the newly created human soul (a spiritual entity) that is plagued with the problem of sin? There are only four possible ways that they could say this occurs: (1) That God creates the soul in a sinful state upon conception thereby forcing Adam's sinful state upon man; (2) That the soul inherits sin from Adam through heredity; (3) That the soul develops a condition of sin by being in proximity to another sinful soul; or (4) That the soul is corrupted by coming into contact with a sinful body. I submit to you that they cannot affirm any of these things for the following reasons: (1) God directly creates the soul of man (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Isaiah 42:5; Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews

12:9). Can God create anything that is inherently sinful? Of course not (Psalm 5:4; Habakkuk 1:13). In fact, God can only create that which is good and perfect (James 1:17). Therefore, the soul cannot be created evil. (2) It is ridiculous to say that the soul can inherit, through heredity, sinfulness from Adam. The soul is an autonomous spiritual thing created by God and would not be subject to anything that would come physically as a result of being descended from Adam. In other words, we do not inherit part of Adam's soul, but his physical body—his DNA. The question of whether sin is contained within the physical body will be examined in the next section. (3) Perhaps, the soul of the child is affected by the soul of the mother during the pregnancy process? So that in essence, one sinful soul by its proximity can deprave another soul that has not already been depraved. However, we read in the scriptures that the soul is autonomous; it independently corrupts itself through sin. James writes:

**But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death** (James 1:14-15).

The autonomy of the soul is affirmed in many other passages of scripture (Ezekiel 18:4-20; Deuteronomy 24:16; Jeremiah 31:30; and Galatians 6:7). (4) The body cannot corrupt the soul

merely because the soul is placed within it. Jesus says that sin does not originate from outside the soul, but from within (Mark 7:14-23). There is no possible way that those who affirm the doctrine of total hereditary depravity can say that the newly created human soul is plagued with the problem of sin and be scriptural.

This leaves the proponents of this doctrine with only the possibility of the physical body plagued with the problem of original sin, i.e., those who affirm the doctrine of original sin MUST, in fact, believe that it is the physical body of man that is inherently depraved. However, it is impossible that sin could be transferred through genetic material. What genetic marker are we going to point to and say, “Aha! There is the sin gene?” Genetic material can only produce physical qualities. Sin is not a physical quality. Sin is a spiritual quality; it cannot be physically passed from one human to another as a disease or as one's eye color can be passed from one human to another. Who can look at another person's body and point out something and say, “There, that part of your body is sin”? To even suggest such would be the height of folly. Sin (a spiritual choice) corrupts the soul (a spiritual entity) and separates man from God (a spiritual relationship). Sin itself, is not physical, but spiritual in nature (Isaiah 59:2). Sinful acts may be physical, but the sin itself is a spiritual choice made

in the mind (Mark 7:14-23) and, as such, is not subject to physical traits or attributes such as would be found in genetics.

I will now summarize the argument and put it into a more logical form.

1. If a person is born inherently depraved, then that depravity must either be the result of depravity of the spiritual soul at birth or depravity of the physical body at birth. (There are no other alternatives.)

1.1 If the spiritual soul is inherently depraved at birth, then it must be that way either by 1) creation, 2) heredity, 3) proximity to another soul, or 4) corruption from the physical body. (There are no other alternatives.)

1.1.1 It is not the case that the soul is created depraved.

1.1.2 It is not the case that the soul can hereditarily inherit depravity.

1.1.3 It is not the case that the soul can be corrupted by proximity.

1.1.4 It is not that case that the physical body (intrinsically) can corrupt the soul.

1.2 Therefore, it is not the case that the spiritual soul can be inherently depraved at birth. (This negates the first half of the proposition in line 1.)

1.3 If the physical body is inherently depraved at birth, then it must be that way either by 1) receiving depravity from the mother's DNA or 2) receiving depravity from the father's DNA.

1.3.1 It is not the case that depravity is received through the mother's DNA.

1.3.2 It is not the case that depravity is received through the father's DNA.

1.4 It is not the case that the physical body could be inherently depraved at birth.

2. Therefore, it is not the case that a person is born inherently depraved.

As was mentioned earlier in this article, the doctrine of original sin lies at the heart of almost every false doctrine in the "Christian" religious world today. The Bible does NOT teach this false doctrine. Reason will not support this false doctrine. Genetic science will not prove this false doctrine. God will not tolerate this false doctrine! It and its implications must be abandoned.

—909 West Trimble  
Berryville, Arkansas 72616

## Biblical Questions...

# WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL?

Noah A. Hackworth

Class during my grammar school days always began with the pledge to the flag. Placing my right hand over my heart, along with my classmates, I said, "*I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*"

We have come a long way since the 1940's. Both morals and law have degenerated in society to the point that we sometimes wonder if they truly exist anymore. Morals and laws are not the invention of society, they have come from a higher source (cf., Romans 13; I Corinthians 15:33). Laws are meant to provide restraint. Morals exist to regulate behavior.

Americans, Christians and non-Christians alike, who believe that true liberty and justice still exist are in the minority. Where morals and law exist, humanity is elevated to a higher plane. The Bible teaches that law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and the sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for man slayers, for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for men stealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine (I Timothy 1:9). It might be a good thing for society if our lawmakers were obligated to memorize this passage before they attempted to administer justice. Perhaps some of them would be less lenient to lawbreakers and more conscious of the rights of those who obey the law. And Christians do attempt to live in harmony with civil law!

According to an article in a prominent Journal, "(O)nce a crime has been committed, muggers and murderers have more rights than their innocent victim." According to this article, criminals have the right to (1) be informed of their rights when arrested; (2) be represented by counsel, free of charge if they cannot afford to pay; (3) free food, clothing and medical care when in custody; (4) psychological counseling; (5) plea-bargain to a lesser charge in exchange for a guilty charge; (6) a speedy trial, though they ask for postponements; (7) be present at proceedings and confront their accusers in court; (8) appeal to a higher court to overturn a ruling or lighten a sentence. By way of contrast, victims (1) are given no warning before being selected as victims; (2) are represented as "The people" in a case, not as individuals; (3) may face financial ruin due to medical costs, and time lost from work; (4) are counseled free only when limited state funds are available; (5) have no legal power to object to victimizers' plea bargains; (6) are subject to delays in court proceedings, sometimes as long as several years; (7) may be excluded from trial and can confront their victimizers only if called as witnesses; (8) cannot appeal the acquittal of the victimizers. What a shame! Is this really justice for all? If we did not know better, we might subscribe to the doctrine of Total Hereditary Depravity.

—4525 W. Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, California 93277



# SOUP, SOAP AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Wayne Coats

## GODFATHERS OF MODERNIST PREACHERS IN THE CHURCH

One of the noted disciples of Baur was **Albrecht Ritschl** who was a professor at Bonn. To Ritschl, inspiration was not necessary and the sounds which issued forth from the professor was but a continuation of the lessons he learned from his instructors at Halle and Heidelberg. We know that as another German modernist professor, Ritschl was able to increase the flowing tide of modernism among those who studied with him. To set forth the views of Ritschl would be to duplicate the foolishness of other infidel Rationalists whose efforts resulted in destroying faith in the word of God.

For a number of years I have had a copy of, "What Is Christianity?", by **Adolph Harnack**, but the bo

ok is worse than useless. Harnack made a name for himself as a professor at Berlin. His appointment was opposed by many, but Bismarck and Emperor William II overruled and Harnack was added to the Berlin faculty.

Harnack used the historical-critical method and sought to discover what is essential. He concluded that Christianity was a developing process influenced by Greek philosophy. Jesus did some talking about the kingdom, but He did not understand the exact nature of the kingdom. Jesus depended on developing traditions in Judaism and added

whatever He wanted to add. Do you wonder how Harnack became so brilliant?

Harnack emphasized that, "The kingdom of God is the rule of God in the hearts of individuals." This same expression can be found in the lessons given by **Rubel Shelly** and **Steve Flatt**. Not in a million years would these fellows copy from Harnack and other infidels. Perish the thought. Any kind of doctrine must not be considered as absolute. It must "be purified by history." Harnack had **Karl Barth** as a student and to all of our liberal professors, I strongly urge that they should publicly acknowledge their godfathers.

## THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

As a student at Berlin University, **Walter Rauschenbusch** studied the radical-critical views relative to the Old Testament. When he arrived in New York as a preacher, he settled in an area known as Hell's Kitchen. The poverty, starvation, degradation and disease could not be helped by the historical-critical assumptions which the preacher had studied in Germany. The bloated belly of a child or the gasps of a dying parent did not relate to what Rauschenbusch had learned. He went back to Germany where he studied the views of Schleiermacher, Ritschl and Harnack. While in Germany, Rauschenbusch had some kind of new revelation about the kingdom of God. He said he perceived about the "ideal kingdom, not imperfect kingdom, but the great ideal."

The blind, groping march of humanity needed relief from the wicked industrial system. The oppressive political structure needed many reforms and also to submit to the reign of God. All of the horrible social problems could be solved if men would follow a few simple rules.

In his "Christianity and The Social Crises", Rauschenbusch attacked the blighted conditions of society. He concluded that German theology had nothing to offer the social ills of humanity.

In 1912 Rauschenbusch published his, "Christianizing The Social Order". In the book it was pointed out that the ideal kingdom needed to relate to the economic affairs of man.

Another volume was published by Rauschenbusch which he titled, "A Theology For The Social Gospel". By use of the historical-critical approach to study, Rauschenbusch determined that the church had veered away from the kingdom ideal and had lost all social concerns. The kingdom is always coming. The kingdom must be the purpose for which the church exists. The church is subordinate to the kingdom and there must be some radical changes before the kingdom can be realized.

Rauschenbusch labored hard in order to develop his social welfare system. His Social Gospel became very popular with those who followed for the loaves and fishes. It is interesting to read where Rauschenbusch stated that after his studies in Germany, he "had nothing to offer the people."

**SPRING BIBLE  
INSTITUTE  
2002 Lectures Book**

**THE JEHOVAH'S  
WITNESSES**

**ONLY \$16.00**

(plus \$2.00 s/h TX residents add \$1.16 tax)

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith**

**P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77383  
fax: 281.288.0549**

*Now Available*

## "LOOK AT THE GOOD WE ARE DOING"

It is a fact which should not be denied. Our liberal-modernist brethren are peddling the Social Gospel and pushing it to the hilt. When preachers become bloated with modernism, they turn to the Social Gospel chatter. Soup and soap take precedence over salvation. Another minister is added, a new group is formed, larger facilities are built in order to help run the system. The only justification for such operations is the clatter, "Look at all the good which is being done." This is the plea of the Salvation Army as they jingle their little bells. We have not heard very much about the plans of the army to begin evangelizing their faith only system.

After World War I, the Social Gospel of Rauschenbusch faded away until recently, when another generation of quack clergymen arose who had nothing to give the

masses. Stew in the pot is a sorry substitute for brains in the pulpit, but as I write, the half has never yet been told.

There can be no substitute for the gospel plan of salvation. There must not be any plan or program which takes precedence over the matter of saving souls. It is a fact that more and more brethren are setting up all kinds of benevolent organizations to do what the local church should be doing. The advertising with pictures of all the great and good works being done gets the attention of the masses. It is a shame that brethren will not stop to investigate all of these helping-hands programs. The Social Gospel is a powerful force for weak minds. Who would dare ask, "Is there authority for such?"

—705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27120

# "WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING"

Danny L. Box

As we look all across the brotherhood, we see example after example of brethren who "follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2). Preachers and congregations who were once sound in the faith are now involved in some of the very things that they use to condemn in days gone by. The slogan which has for years been the trademark of a popular hamburger chain, "Have it your way," is the way many people today want their religion. Many practices, doctrines, and ideas which have been common for years among the denominational world are now being adopted by members and congregations of the Lord's church. Adopting these practices results in congregations being divided, the truth no longer being taught, and God not being glorified. "Witnessing" and "testifying" as practiced by the religious world constitutes two things which have found their way into the church of today.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS:

The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* defines the word "witness" as, "one who can give *firsthand* account of something seen, heard or experienced; one who furnishes *firsthand* evidence." The same source defines "testify" as, "to make a statement based on *personal knowledge* in support of an asserted fact; to bear witness; to make a declaration of truth or fact." *Black's Law Dictionary* defines "witness" as "one who, being present, *personally* sees, hears or perceives a thing; a beholder, spectator, or eyewitness; one who testifies to what he sees or otherwise observed." Therefore, by the given definition, one must have been present, having been an eyewitness when a certain event took place and then be able to tell about what was seen, heard, or perceived, to be a true "witness."

## "WITNESSING" AND "TESTIFYING" AS PRACTICED BY THE WORLD

When the religious world addresses the issue of "witnessing" and "testifying," they are usually talking about some miraculous event that has happened in their life that enables them to tell others about the Lord. Many in the denominational world believe that "witnessing" is Spirit-directed testimony about what the Lord has done directly to change their life, causing them to turn their life around, and by "testifying" of this to others, they also might accept Christ as their personal Savior. Others believe that the Holy Spirit directly opens the hearts of men, and they are just waiting for someone to come and "witness" to them about Jesus Christ and lead them to salvation. But if the Holy Spirit directly opens the hearts of men, why do they need someone to "witness" to them? Why don't they know what needs to be done if the Spirit has already opened up their hearts?

Some in the denominational world view "witnessing" as a spiritual gift, and that all "Christians" do not have this spiritual gift bestowed upon them. However, if "witnessing" is telling some one about the truth of the Lord, is not witnessing really just evangelizing, and is not evangelizing, teaching, and are not all Christians to be teachers of the word (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16)?

We also read of some in the religious world who advocate that they are able to "witness" for the Lord, and "testify" about his works because the Spirit speaks to them directly, and tells them what to say to others about the Lord. Now I firmly believe that the Spirit does speak to us today and gives us a knowledge of the truth, and with that knowledge we can teach the world about the Lord. But, I hasten to add that the Spirit speaks to us ONLY through the word, and not directly, as many in the religious world (and

some in the church) advocate, and it is through a knowledge of the word that we have the ability to teach others about the Lord. I would like to ask those who advocate that they can be a “witness”, if the Spirit is speaking to man and telling him what to say, why is there so much religious confusion and division in the world? Why would the Spirit of God tell the Baptist to “testify” one thing, and the Nazarenes another, and the Pentecostals even still another? We know that God is not the “**author of confusion**” (I Corinthians 14:33), and he wants “**all things done decently and in order**” (I Corinthians 14:40). We also know that God hates division and wants us to “**be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment**” (I Corinthians 1:10; II Corinthians 13:11; I Peter 3:8). So why do we see people today claiming to be “witnesses” who are “testifying” about everything in the world except the truth of God’s word?

#### CAN WE “WITNESS” TODAY?

Based on our definition of “witness” as given at the start of this study, the answer to the question, “Can we “witness” today?” is an emphatic NO! Remember now, we said that a “witness” is one who can give firsthand account of something seen, heard, or experienced. There is no one alive today who actually walked with the Lord, saw him performing those powerful miracles, nor heard his wonderful proclamation of the gospel. Our joy and wonder of such blessings today is had only through studying, believing, and accepting the INSPIRED RECORD of such things.

The late brother **Joe Gilmore**, in a lecture delivered at the Bellview Lectures in 1995, answers the question, “Can anyone “witness” today?” far better than I can. He stated at that time:

A witness is one who has seen and can testify of something. There are no witnesses today! One must hear and see Jesus after his resurrection to qualify as a witness. The apostles were chosen by the Lord to be his witnesses (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8). Men today are not witnesses. Christians preach the testimony of the witnesses. The apostles were the witnesses. We today preach the faith that was once delivered to the saints (Jude 3).<sup>1</sup>

**Robert Taylor**, in a tract he wrote on “Witnessing” gives further proof that we cannot be “witnesses” today:

Are we witnesses today? The writer of this tract is not and neither are you, the reader! Can we tell the world that we have seen and heard the Lord with our own eyes and ears? NO! God has not made us into inspired witnesses incapable of erring, when we teach his will. What then can we do? We can teach people what those real witnesses wrote in the Bible and the absolute testimony they gave. We can teach people the Bible answer to the question “What must I do to be saved?” We can turn people’s attention to the great cases of conversion that are spelled out in such beauty and simplicity within the book of Acts.<sup>2</sup>

As prescribed by Holy Writ, to be a “witness” one must have been with the Lord from his baptism by John in the Jordan, and must have seen him after his resurrection from the dead (Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:22). As the apostles, the true witnesses of the Lord, went everywhere giving “wit-

ness of the resurrection of the Lord” (Acts 4:33), multitudes believed their “testimony” and were baptized (Acts 5:14).

#### WHAT CAN WE DO TODAY?

Even though, in the literal sense, we cannot “witness” to the world, Christians have a very serious responsibility. It is our responsibility, as a “**chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people**” (I Peter 2:9), to deliver the saving gospel to the lost and dying of this world. We can do this in the following ways:

1. We can warn the wicked of his wicked ways (Ezekiel 3:18-19).
2. We can go and teach all nations (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15).
3. We are to be ready to give an answer to every man (I Peter 3:15).
4. We are to preach the word, and the word only (II Timothy 4:2; Galatians 1:6-9).
5. We are to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with the word (II Timothy 4:2).
6. We are to earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3).
7. We are to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:17).
8. We are to be gentle, patient, and meek while teaching (II Timothy 2:24-26).
9. We are to speak as the oracles of God and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God (I Peter 4:11; Acts 20:27).
10. We are to use seasoned speech (Galatians 4:5-6).
11. We must be an example of the believers (I Timothy 4:12-19).
12. We must keep the faith (II Timothy 4:7; Revelation 2:10).
13. We must live soberly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:12).
14. We must not conform to the world (Romans 12:2; I John 2:15-17).
15. We must be ready to communicate the gospel to others (I Timothy 6:18-20).

If we “**take heed unto**” ourselves and do all these things that we have listed, and all of those things commanded by God, then we will both save ourselves and those that hear us (I Timothy 4:16).

The consequences of what we do may determine the eternal destiny of our family, friends, or acquaintances. Jesus was not ashamed to suffer and die for us, let us not be ashamed to share his soul-saving message to the lost. Let us boldly stand up and proclaim the “testimony” that we have received from those faithful “witnesses” of the Lord, letting the world know that Jesus Christ is LORD of LORDS and KING of KINGS, and will save all those who obey him!

#### ENDNOTES

1. Joe Gilmore, “Jehovah’s Witnesses Versus Christ’s Doctrine” in *The Doctrine of Christ Versus the Doctrines of Men*, Michael Hatcher, ed. (Pensacola, FL; Austin McGary and Co., 1995) pg. 262.
2. Robert Taylor, Jr., “What About Witnessing for the Lord?” (Saltville, MS. Yokefellow Publications).

—10985 Country Haven  
Cottondale, Alabama 35453

# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GOSPEL MEETING IN RESTORATION HISTORY

Paul Vaughn

Preaching of the gospel is the authorized means to convert sinners from their lives in wickedness to the joys of living in Christ. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Paul said, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:1-2). There are different ways the word of God can be preached. The written page is a powerful means to teach the good news to a world lost in sin. Radio and television are a most effective means to carry out the "Great Commission." But from very beginning of the restoration of New Testament

Christianity, the gospel meeting was a powerful tool in converting the lost and strengthening the church of Christ.

Barton W. Stone addressed the need for faithful preachers to travel to different locations to preach the word in an article in the *Christian Messenger*. He said, "We are grieved to see preachers among us, who are capable of edifying the churches, generally confined at home; and those of very limited knowledge, capacity, and influence, traveling abroad. A course opposite to this is certainly correct, and ought to be pursued by us."<sup>1</sup> Stone's desires were soon realized as faithful preachers began to travel to different locations to preach the gospel message.



The pattern of meeting together for a period of time to preach the gospel is given in the scriptures. Paul traveled to different locations to establish churches of Christ. The first missionary journey has Paul and Barnabus traveling to Salamis, Paphos, Perga in Pamphylia, and Antioch of Pisidia. Their commission was to go and preach, establish churches and appoint elders. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23).

## REVIVALS

When Barton W. Stone became the preacher at Cane Ridge in 1796, camp meeting style revivals began in Logan County, Kentucky under the preaching of a Presbyterian preacher named James McGready in 1797. Stone saw the effects of the revivals and organized one at Cane Ridge in August of 1801. These revivals set the stage for the return to New Testament Christi-

**S**pring  
**B**ible  
**I**nstitute

**SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY!**

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO Box 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

**OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.**

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (IN RESIDENCE).
- STUDY BY INTERNET (DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM)
- ASSISTANCE IN RAISING SUPPORT.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, "HANDS-ON" TRAINING.

---

"I am so thankful I was steered in the direction of Spring Bible Institute and have been allowed to take this course. It has already had an impact on my life..."  
—Distance Learning Student, August, 2001

---

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

ON THE WEB: CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM    EMAIL: [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)  
PHONE: (281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN                      ASST. DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

Please Contact Us Regarding Your  
**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**  
Each returned address costs  
**CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**  
55¢



anity. Granted, Stone and others were just beginning to grasp correctly the word of God. They believed and taught many things conflicting with the New Testament, but their passion was to follow the Bible. So they began to grow in knowledge of God's word and patterned the church after it.

For the first few years of the Restoration Movement men would go out for the purpose of establishing churches and strengthening established churches by pointing them to the scriptures. In January 1827, Stone received a letter describing a religious revival in Fayette County, Kentucky. The church of Christ was established there three years earlier with six members. The writer goes on to say that from November, 1826 to January 3, 1827 twenty-two people obeyed the gospel. He said "Those who have recently been added to our church, have simply, as the book requires, professed the one faith, and under its influence received the one baptism, and are now rejoicing on their way."<sup>2</sup> The letter encouraged other churches to write Stone to inform the brotherhood of the conversions in their area. It is also interesting to note how he signed the letter. He did not sign his name, but signed "A Member of the Church of Christ"<sup>3</sup> From this letter one can easily see that a great amount of spiritual growth had taken place from the Cane Ridge Revival in 1801 to January 1827.

Throughout the *Christian Messenger*, letters were published about the successes of revivals and meetings. **John Rogers** wrote a newsletter to Stone that appeared in the December 1827 issue of the paper. He talked about a "Three day's meeting, which commenced on the Saturday before the third Lord's day of September."<sup>4</sup> During this meeting seven or eight people embraced the Lord and were added to the church. One can note that in the paper Stone had the letter listed under "revivals," but Rogers used the term "meetings." I do not know, at this time, when the term revival was dropped for meetings, but on checking the additional references in the *Christian Messenger* in 1828 an extract of a letter written by **J. McDaniel** reports that he had been in three meetings from May to July. This was listed in the index under revivals.<sup>5</sup> By 1832 the term "revivals" for listing meetings and baptisms had been changed to "Religious Intelligence." The *Christian Messenger* was listing the results of meetings under the caption "Religious News" by 1840.

#### PROTRACTED MEETINGS

The protracted meeting was a valuable tool in the hands of the early restorers. They would go into an area and start a meeting preaching the "Ancient Order of Things" and people responded. There is a wonderful account of the work of **John Smith** listed in the *Christian Baptist*.

Bishop John Smith, of Montgomery county (sic), Ky., who labors abundantly in the proclamation of the ancient gospel, has immersed since the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, till the third Lord's day in July, 294 persons. Thus, in a little more than 5 months, brother Smith has immersed 603 persons 'into the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins.'<sup>6</sup>

September 14, 1838, **J.H. Dunn** reported of a meeting in Adamsville, McNairy County Tennessee. Brother **J. Jones** "commenced a meeting on the last Friday, which continued five nights. The results was ten persons (including two of my children) confessed and were immersed for the remission of sins."<sup>7</sup>

The success of protracted meeting was immense because the early preachers believed in the power of the gospel. There were occasions when hundreds responded to the gospel message and at times less than a dozen, but the church grew because they did the preaching and let God do the adding. We can be successful today using the same principle, preach the truth of the gospel and let God do the adding. Sadly many congregations have forgotten the importance of gospel meetings. They have shorted them to two-three days when they have a meeting and a number of churches have not had a gospel meeting in years. Does that say something about our faith in the power of the gospel? The church in the 1800's grew when the gospel was proclaimed boldly and often. The church of Christ will grow today doing the same thing!

#### ENDNOTES

1. Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger*, Vol 1, 1826, p.81.
2. Ibid. p.64.
3. Ibid.
4. Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger*, Vol. 2, 1827, p.41.
5. Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger*, Vol. 3, 1828, p.19.
6. Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptist*, Vol VI, 1828, Gospel Advocate, Nashville, 1956, p.51.
7. Alexander Campbell, *Millennial Harbinger*, Vol. III, Number III. , Bethany, 1839, p.95.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

## REMINDER!

If your address label has the date  
4/01/2002

### IT IS TIME TO RENEW!

Send your renewal to:  
**Contending For The Faith**  
P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, Texas 77383

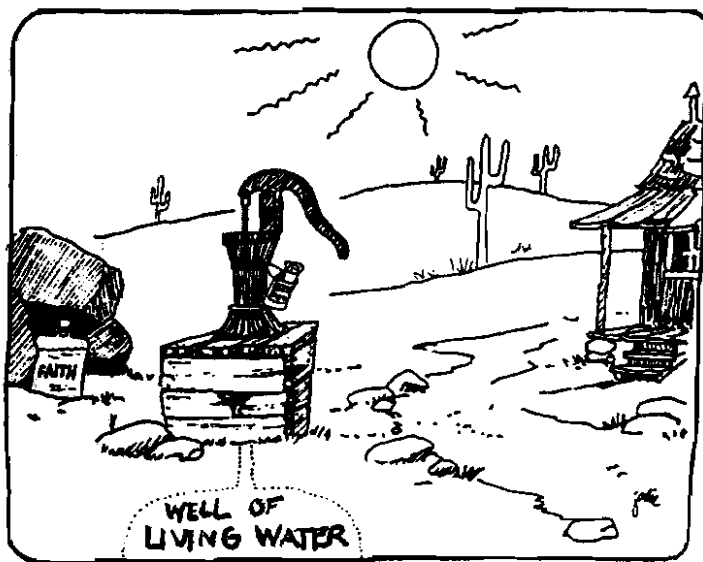
**Seek Ye First...**  
A Free Quarterly Publication

**Business Office:**  
Post Office Box 138  
Bangs, Texas 76823-0138

**Publication Office:**  
500 N. Pearl  
Comanche, Texas 73644

# The Water's Free—but YOU GOTTA PRIME THE PUMP

Jodie Boren



Some years ago, near a seldom used trail in the Amargosa Desert in California, there stood a rundown hut. Nearby was a well, the *only source* of water for miles around. Attached to the pump was a tin baking powder can with a message inside, written in pencil on a sheet of brown wrapping paper. This was the message: "This pump is all right as of June, 1932. I put a new sucker washer into it and it ought to last five years. But the washer dries out and the pump has got to be primed. Under the white rock I buried a bottle of water, out of the sun and cork end up. There is enough water in it to prime this pump, but not if you drink some first. Pour in about 1/4 and let her soak to wet the leather. Then pour in the rest medium fast and pump real fast. You'll git water. The well never has run dry. Have faith. When you git watered up, fill the bottle and put it back like you found it for the next feller." Signed: Desert Pete.

This story reminds me that the living water that springs up into everlasting life (John 4:10, 13-14) is a gift from God (verse 10 and Romans 6:23b). Notice carefully that Jesus is the *only source* of this living water. He said in verse 14 that it was he that gave the water that quenches the soul (see also John 14:6). Since it is a gift, that means it is free, but we have a choice. We can accept this gift of life or reject it. If we choose to accept it—we've gotta prime the pump!

To prime the pump means that God offers us the way to become *his* sons and that way begins with belief (John 1:12) for without faith it is impossible to please him (Hebrews 11:6). Believing that Jesus is the only begotten son of God, the promised messiah, the saviour of the world,

and the hope of glory is only the beginning of "priming the pump" to everlasting life.

Paul states in Galatians 5:6 that what counts in Christ Jesus is our faith which worketh through love. When this scripture is considered along with John 14:15, 23 where Jesus says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" and "If a



man love me, he will keep my words..." then we can see that obedience is a vital part of "priming the pump." Therefore to imbibe in the living waters is to believe in Jesus and to do his will. Did Jesus not say on one occasion, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). To call Jesus, Lord, is to recognize his authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). We cannot hope to enter into the kingdom of heaven unless we yield to that authority and do his will (Matthew 7:21). We must enthrone him as king upon our hearts "for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's?" (Romans 14:8).

As Desert Pete closed his note, he appealed to the traveler to be considerate of others in leaving the priming water bottle full. In a like manner, the Holy Spirit through Paul reminds us that we also have a great responsibility to our fellow sojourners that they might be able to drink of that living water unto everlasting life. In II Timothy 2:2 Paul writes: "And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Desert Pete had faith that the well would never run dry. Physical water wells, however, do run dry, but Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending (Revelation 1:8) and is "from everlasting to everlasting" (Psalms 41:13). Because this spiritual well of living water will never run dry, our blessed Lord stands at the door of every heart. He said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelations 3:20). God would "have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). All man has to do is "prime the pump."

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

# THE COMMISSION OF JOSHUA

Daniel Denham

[Note: Some of the key ideas in this lesson are borrowed from a similar study from several years back by the late Winfred Clark, a great and faithful gospel preacher. Winfred liked to say that "Originality is forgetting where you stole it from," when it came to a particular sermon. But I am much indebted to his work as a fervent evangelist and first-class expositor.]

Joshua 1:1-9 records God's charge to Joshua to lead the people into Canaan. Moses was dead at the time of this commission. He had but recently passed from this vale of tears on the summit of Nebo. Leadership was now thrust upon the son of Nun. There were "big shoes" that he would have to fill over the coming years. Deuteronomy 34:10 says, "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." The daunting task to lead the nation in the quest to subdue the land must have been well nigh overpowering to the mind of Joshua as he stood on the banks of the Jordan and pondered the loss of the great man Moses. Despite the change in leadership, however, Joshua had a commission to carry out. Though he was overshadowed by the life and works of Moses, he was nonetheless equal to the task at hand and was faithful in following God. He was, as is in keeping with the providential workings of God, the right man for the job. God's message in this text undoubtedly helped to steel his resolve and to prepare him for the challenges ahead.

"The Commission of Joshua" presents several important lessons. Let us grasp some of these that are immediately pressed upon our minds by the text, and be mindful of the Great Commission that God has given to his church in the Gospel Age (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).



## A CHARGE TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S POWER AND PROMISES

The text bears a specific charge to Joshua to trust God's power and promises (cf. verses 2-5). God had promised both Joshua and Israel (1) to fight for them, (2) to give them the land of Canaan, (3) to drive out their enemies from before them, and 4) to be with them and not forsake them as they served him. No one could stand against Joshua and the people as long as Jehovah was with them, and he would be with them as long as they were with him. Surely, the God who made the Universe had the power to keep what he had promised!

The message to Joshua was to reassure him of that great and awesome might. As a result, Joshua could go into battle with confidence in the final outcome, as long as Israel was faithful to the Lord. The one battle where they would falter, the initial battle for Ai in Joshua 7, coming so soon on the heels of the great victory over Jericho in chapter 6, would later serve to reinforce this charge.

Christians should be people who have confidence in God's promises and in his power to fulfill them. Paul's stirring doxology in Ephesians 3:20 reminds us, "Now unto Him {God} who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." Likewise Romans 16:25 says of God, "Now to Him who is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ...." Earlier in Romans 8:31 proclaims, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

We need greater faith in the Godhead—the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. We need greater faith in the gospel of Christ. We need greater faith in the exceedingly precious promises of God. Greater faith in God's providence, mercy, grace, and loving kindness. We need greater faith in the blood of Christ and in the redemption that is in Christ. We need greater faith in the plan of salvation. We need greater faith in God's goodness, holiness, righteousness, and justice. Greater faith in Heaven and in Hell. As the precious, old hymn reminds:

*"Living below in this old sinful world,  
Hardly a comfort can afford;  
Striving alone to face temptation sore,  
Where could I go, but to the Lord?"*

## Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**

**\$35.00 if ordered as set**

*(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)*

*Order from:*

**VADA RICE**

**3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE**

**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461**

**Marshall Keeble**, I understand, frequently said that if God told him to jump through the wall and I will take care of you, then it would be “up to Keeble to jump and leave it to God to make the hole.” This is the kind of disposition God desires in his people. We need to be “stand upon the promises of God,” instead of just “sitting on the premises.”

#### A COMMAND TO HAVE COURAGE IN FULFILLING THE COMMISSION

In Joshua 1:6 God commands, “**Be strong and of a good courage,**” and promises that, “**as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.**” Verse 7 states that Joshua was to be “very courageous” in obeying God. He was to be a man of conviction. Verse 8 warns that the book of the law was not to depart out of Joshua’s mouth, but was to be meditated upon “**day and night**” and observed faithfully. In verse 9 God reminds Joshua, “**Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.**” Now observe what we find here and in other passages bearing on these verses: (1) God had given many great promises to Joshua and Israel. (2) He also had confirmed those by his mighty works that he had performed by the hand of Moses. Indeed he had been with him. (3) He would also be with Joshua, who would have been well familiar as an eyewitness to many of the events surrounding the Exodus and the Wilderness Wanderings. (4) Joshua could then have confidence that God would be with him and the people in the conquest of Canaan, as God had promised. (5) Joshua’s courage would then flow from his confidence in God! God had commanded—“nough said!” Later the appearance of “**the captain of the Lord of hosts,**” who would either have been a very high ranking angel or the pre-incarnate Christ himself, shortly before the battle of Jericho (Joshua 5:13-15) served to confirm God’s presence with and care for his people. In the face of the imposing walls and impressive defenses of this ancient city, Joshua and Israel might well have needed a reminder that the same God who had defeated their enemies up until that time had not deserted them, but was ready for the coming battle.

Faith in God will produce fortitude in facing problems, obstacles, and enemies. It will undergird our hope (Hebrews 11:1). Psalm 27:14, “**Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart....**” We need trust in the Lord’s promise, “**Lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the world**” (Matthew 28:20). God’s people are to be “**valiant for the truth**” (Jeremiah 9:3)!

#### A CALL TO COMMITMENT TO THE WORD OF GOD

Joshua’s courage, drawn from his confidence in God, was to be directed toward a thorough commitment to God’s word. The importance of faithfulness and fidelity to God’s law is stressed throughout the text, and especially in verses 7-9. One of the first lessons that a leader must learn is to be a faithful follower himself of the Lord. This re-

quires a heartfelt allegiance to the missives from Headquarters that comprise the Bible!

Note that Joshua’s commitment to the word of God was to be (1) complete. He was to “**observe to do according to all the law.**” (2) It was to be careful. He was to “**turn not from it to the right hand or to the left.**” (3) It involved communication of the word. It was not to “**depart out of**” his mouth. He was to teach it to others. (4) He was to contemplate its message day and night. He was to study and think about it daily so that he could observe to do it. (5) It would thus be constructive. He would prosper in whatever he did and wherever he went (v. 7). “**Then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success**” (v. 8). A commitment like that of Joshua applied to the gospel of Christ will enable us to be “**more than conquerors**” through Christ (Romans 8:37).

Joshua’s fulfillment to his commission required confidence (faith in God), courage (fortitude in facing the trials ahead), and commitment (fidelity to God’s word in every respect). Joshua met the task and was equal to the challenge because of them. These same traits are needed today as we carry out the Great Commission.

May God grant us more leaders like Joshua the son of Nun who, like his friend and comrade Caleb, “**wholly followed the Lord.**”

—117 Owens Avenue  
Rutherford, Tennessee 38369

Contending  
FOR THE Faith



2001  
Bound Volume

• Only \$8.00  
plus \$2.00 S&H

ORDER TODAY!

• P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357  
fax: 281-288-0549

# Rubel Shelly and Mission Work, Boy Scouts Policies, Homosexual Pastors, and Prayer Concerts

Compiled By Mark McWhorter

“Bless the folks who live in anything but privilege,” said guest speaker **Rubel Shelly**, minister of the Woodmont Hills church, Nashville, Tennessee. “I believe one of the ways to look like Jesus (is to) try to get to the souls of people by serving their medical needs.” Shelly saluted the missionaries for doing a job that he wished he had the faith, courage and stamina to do. He also stressed the need of those going into the field to adjust their thinking to the cultural “coin of the realm,” realizing that the goal of mission work is not to make people into American-style Christians. **Dr. John Bailey**, a dentist from Dallas, said he’s encountered mission workers who consider salvation as based on whether or not mission churches clap during services. “If you’ve got some kind of agenda... don’t do mission work,” he said. (from an article about the 20th Annual Medical Missions Seminar, January 5 in Dallas, TX in *The Christian Chronicle*, February, 2002, p.6) *[It should say something about the theological stance of those attending if they are willing to fellowship Rubel Shelly. Bailey needs to study the scriptures. What we do in worship is not dictated by culture. And if trying to be Biblical in all things is “having an agenda,” then I will have an agenda. It is true that we are not there to make them Americans. But we are not there to preach a watered down gospel either.—mtm]*

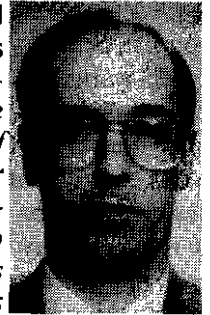
\*\*\*\*\*

Washington state Governor **Gary Locke** recently had a “Fireside Chat” with the managing editor of the “Seattle Gay News.” In his chat, Locke expressed his anger over the Boy Scouts of America’s policy on homosexuality. According to Locke, “The Boy Scouts of America is doing a great disservice to young people. These young men are feeling isolated, ostracized and they’re looking for companionship and leadership. These young men should be embraced by the Boy Scouts, but they’re not and it’s absolutely wrong.” (*Traditional Values Coalition*, 2/1/02) *[Instead of pandering to these folks, why not tell them they are living in sin? The Governor is the one doing a disservice to young people.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

(The following are excerpts from “A Conversation with Abraham Malherbe” by *Lindy Adams*, *Christian Chronicle*, February, 2002, p.20.) Yet, in the mid-20th century Malherbe’s name became synonymous with “modernist”—the term used in churches of Christ to describe scholars thought to be rejecting their heritage and involvement in it.

Colleagues say Malherbe is considered the first biblical scholar from churches of Christ to be recognized internationally. *[comments—The colleagues are obviously poorly versed in history of the church. They ignore Alexander Campbell and J.W. McGarvey. Perhaps they do not consider those two men to be “scholars.” A modernist is one who denies the scriptures. It has nothing to do with some man-made “heritage.”—mtm]*



\*\*\*\*\*

“How do you assess current theological scholarship in our fellowship? Until recently, such fields as theology and ethics have not exerted an attraction, but they are attracting bright young people who are launching into areas in which they had not received substantial preparation in Christian colleges. I am impressed by the work in Restoration history done by **Richard Hughes**, **Douglas Foster** and of course, **David Edwin Harrell**. And then, **Tom Olbricht**, who is always ready to prod and stimulate.” *[comments—So theological scholarship is different than Bible training?? And notice that all of those he is impressed with are change agents who do not believe that the church of Christ is the true and only church of our Lord.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

“What trends do you detect in theological scholarship in our fellowship? This is an impossibly broad question, but let me take a stab at it. I have the impression that scholars who teach in our Christian institutions are more directly applying their energy to what they perceive to be the needs of the church than was done previously. Our fellowship is recognized to embrace a diversity unimaginable to earlier generations. In fact, what the borders of the fellowship are or should be seems to be up for grabs. So far, I have been impressed by the descriptive power of my friends engaged in this enterprise, but I await suggestions about what norms should apply when conceiving of the church and its practices.” *[comment—I think it quite arrogant to say that past generations of teachers in higher institutions were unattached to the needs of the church. Are not the needs of the church what the scriptures have to offer? If one is teaching the scriptures appropriately, is one not teaching to the needs of those listening? The norm?? He wants a norm??]*

Later in his answer he states that we have moved from approved example, necessary inference, and approved example. But he says nothing has replaced those and we need something to replace them. The scriptures are our norms. This type of thinking is exactly why the church is in trouble. So-called scholars believe that they need to discover truths that past generations just could not decipher. I suggest that evolution is intricately woven into this. The past theology was fine for past generations. But man must have progress. Truth evolves as man evolves. Most of the change agent scholars do not believe in a literal first three chapters of Genesis.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

“Extreme Discipleship, complete with generation-X-savvy logo, was the theme of the conference, sponsored by the campus ministry of the Highland Street church. The group of about 120 who attended...were encouraged to pray big prayers.” “We pray too puny,” said Rick Atchley, preaching minister of the Richland Hills church, Fort Worth, Texas. “Through unified, harmonized prayer, we can take on the gates of hell in our campus communities.” “The students put those words into practice twice during the conference, huddling in small groups to pray for their campus ministries in what Highland Street campus minister Tim Stafford called a “prayer concert.” (*The Christian Chronicle*, February, 2002, p. 22). [This college student conference is another activity designed to continue the change movement mentality. I wonder why we never heard of prayer concerts in the New Testament? —mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

...Drug users have taken advantage of London’s newly relaxed marijuana laws by openly buying, selling, and smoking pot in front of police officers. And British Home Secretary David Blunkett wants to downgrade marijuana from a class “B” drug to a class “C” drug. Fred Broughton, chairman of the 126,000-member Police Federation of England and Wales, says not only is the newly relaxed attitude toward cannabis sending the wrong message to children, it is also encouraging users and sellers of harder drugs to become more visible and more active. Broughton also says more and more people are flocking to South London to take advantage of the pilot scheme, despite pretty conclusive evidence that marijuana is a major problem (*Agape Press*, 1/31/02). [Will Americans pay attention to the disaster of such legislation overseas and refuse to have such here?—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

When a Denver United Church of Christ pastor Scott Landis announced he was leaving his wife and three children to pursue a homosexual lifestyle, the congregation gave him a standing ovation, according to a recent report in the *Denver Post*. In 1999, the church voted to approve same-sex union ceremonies in the church. Landis is not the first openly homosexual pastor to preach at this church. In 1999, the church hired openly homosexual pastor Rev. O. Elaine Hinnant to serve. The United Church of Christ allows openly homosexual pastors to preach. (*Traditional*

*Values Coalition*, 1/25/02) [When one decides to leave the scriptures on one point, why would we be surprised that they would applaud evil. Since Rubel Shelly believes that all sincere “believers” and “seekers” are saved, would he tell us whether he believes the folks of this “church” are saved? Max Lucado believes that we are too restrictive in our fellowship. Wonder if he would draw lines for the folks above?—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

“In the United States Senate, one of the things I observed in the early days—and it’s still used—and that is that you take someone’s argument and then you misrepresent it and misstate and disagree with it. And it’s very effective. I’ve done it myself a number of times. But eventually, eventually people catch on.” —Teddy Kennedy (D-Taxachusetts!) on the need to raise taxes. (*The Federalist*, 1/25/02) [For anyone with morals and ethics, this is outrageous. For anyone familiar with Ted Kennedy it is no surprise. What is equally outrageous, is that people will still vote for Mr. Kennedy in spite of his “honesty” regarding dishonesty. America deserves whatever she gets if she continues to vote such low lifes to office.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

“Prayer time at our supper table is an adventure most evenings. With two teenage daughters and a four-year-old son, you can guess who gets asked to pray most frequently. If we were doing it for training purposes only, our hearts would be clean. The truth is we appreciate the comic relief.” (in article “The tears of Jesus help us when we cry” by Chris Smith, *Christian Chronicle*, November, 2001, p. 30) [I find this almost unbelievable. Smith is pulpit minister for the Harpeth Hills church of Christ in Brentwood, Tennessee. How can he be instilling a reverence for God in his children with such an attitude? In the article he gives examples of off-the-wall statements in his four year-old’s prayers. He does not tell us whether he tries to instruct his son not to pray things that are not true. Perhaps he does, but the tenor of the article leaves one thinking that instead, they look forward to the next off-the-wall statements. Perhaps this is not what he intended to portray. But as a writer and preacher, he should learn to avoid such poor language in his presentations. —mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

Children murdered through abortions in Russia now exceed live births (10/1 CN). Women in China, South Korea, and wealthy parts of India increasingly abort female fetuses. Over 40 million babies have been aborted in the U.S. since 1973. A mother’s womb has become the most dangerous place on earth. (*Calvary Contender*, 10/12/01) [Yet most of those who perform and back such slaughter raised voices of horror at the bombings of the World Trade Center. They decried the killing of innocent individuals. They are guilty of more horror than bin Laden.—mtm]

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Road  
Pell City, Alabama 35125



# "Don't Mess With My Heart"

Annette B. Cates

The discussion turned to religious matters. The twenty-something year-old, bright, college student frowned, saying to her companions, "Stay off religion. It messes with my heart." What a sad statement! It speaks volumes about her, about her generation, about today's society, and about the religious community in general. Had she grown up in a home where she had attended Sunday school and church services, and even participated in youth activities as a teenager? Was she in rebellion to her up-bringing? Were the secular environment and sorority life in which she found herself overwhelming? Were the professors, even in the required "religion" classes, so smooth in their presentation of a godless world where everything, including societal progress, evolved from nothingness, that she had no answers? Had she no religious background at all? Was she sensitive that there were others who did, thus they had something she lacked? Obvious to me, if not to her, was the fact that her life is in shambles. Her conscience is in its death throes, searing as with a hot iron (I Timothy 4:2). The only way for her to cope was not to think about it and was to close out all reminders. "Don't mess with my heart."

## GOD EXISTS

"Don't mess with my heart" when it comes to reminders that there is an all-powerful, all-knowing God, creator of all things. To admit that there is a God in heaven requires acknowledging that there will be an ultimate judgment, a day when one must give an account for one's actions while here on this earth. It is far easier to ridicule those few who do speak up with evidences for the existence of God than it is to be a part of the few. It is easier to dismiss the Sunday school classes of childhood as consisting of whimsical fables and cute little "feel-good" stories than it is to admit that parents, Bible class teachers, and preachers were right all along,

and that college life and new-found adulthood with its independence may not be so "enlightening" after all. "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Psalm 14:1; see also Romans 1:21-22; I Corinthians 1:18-27). A young student can go into the classroom and be surrounded by others who are as innocent as he/she is, but who may be outspoken and wanting to curry the favor of the professor. These classmates join in with the diatribe against religion in general and conservative Christianity in particular, as being just a panacea for the ignorant. Of course, it is easy to put the folks back home into that category and to wish to dissociate oneself with such perceived "backwardness." If such a student does not have a strong background, a secure home life, and a circle of like-minded friends with whom to associate, strengthening one another, then the road will be a hard one to travel. The time will soon come when the conscience is soothed over by denying God's very existence.

## ONE CHURCH

"Don't mess with my heart" with reminders that Christianity is the one true religion. There is a current zeal for promoting the world religions. Part of this may result from the New Age movement, with its fascination with the eastern religions, especially Buddhism. It may be a fruit of the ecumenical thrust of the past thirty or forty years. Many colleges offer, even require, courses that put Christianity on the same level as Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism. We are being force-fed by many in the media, especially since the attacks of September 11, the idea that Islam is a peaceful religion. We hear that the ones involved in those assaults were just loose-cannon extremists, not really a part of Islam, and certainly no different from those who claim to be Christian but are also thought to be radical. There are many denominational churches falling right in line

with this thinking. The truth is, however, that there is one God, one faith, and one way in which to be obedient to God (Ephesians 4:4-6). There is one word of God, the Bible (John 8:32). The Bible acknowledges that there will always be false religions and false gods (I Corinthians 8:5-6; 10:20). This is not to say that we should be unaware of other religions and their tenets. We must know how to answer the critics of Christianity. We must also KNOW that there is no other religion that is on a par with Christianity, no god equal to the God of heaven, no Saviour like unto Jesus Christ, and no book other than the Bible that can save our souls. The way that world religions are being taught today will destroy faith and ruin the heart of many a person.

## MORAL LIVING

"Don't mess with my heart" by reminding one that a moral life is a better quality existence. After all, we are supposed to take on life with all the gusto we can get. Fun is all that matters. So what if today's sexual freedom leads to disease and to pregnancy? Abortion is promoted as a woman's right; after all, it is her body and the being within is not a baby, but some tissue that has invaded her space. Alcohol, tobacco, and drugs are thought to smooth over the edges and make it easier to socialize. Never mind that one cannot remember the next day what happened the night before. Never mind the physical harm that results from such activities. Forget the thousands killed as a result of drinking or drugging, and driving. At least, that is the thinking of those who do not want religion to mess with the heart. Abortion IS murder. That blob of tissue is a human baby who feels pain, sometime eats too fast



and gets the hiccups, kicks and twists and stretches, as well as recognizes its mother's voice. From the moment of conception, we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:13-14; see also Job 31:15; Isaiah 44:2, 24; Jeremiah 1:5). Each unborn child even has his or her own personal DNA. Not only is it wrong to consume alcoholic beverages, to use tobacco products, and to participate in illegal drug use,

these are destructive to the body (I Corinthians 6:19-20). It is easier to harden one's heart than it is to forgo the "fun."

Matthew 19:16-22 tells of the rich young ruler who did not want Jesus to mess with his heart; "...he went away sorrowful." Most of us do what we want to do when it comes to religion. Some of us want no reminders; others do not want to make the necessary sac-

rifices; still others simply cannot humble themselves before God in obedience. Fortunately, there are those who are receptive to the gospel, obey it, and try to reach others. They are the ones whose hearts do not ache in sorrow when they hear of things spiritual.

—9194 Lakeside Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

## The Last Word...

# MY RESPONSIBILITY

Eddie Whitten

**"Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"** (Matthew 18:7).

Stop and think for a minute of all those we know that were once faithful to the Lord, but who have been led astray by teachers of false doctrines. It will stagger your minds! Entire congregations, by the hundreds, have embrace false doctrines and have been led into apostasy by glib-tongued orators. If we are honest, we can think of many of our acquaintances and friends who are now following religious error because of the influence of men.

Jesus was teaching his disciples a very valuable lesson in the context of our text (above) in which he emphasizes personal responsibility. Human pride had prompted his disciples to ask who would be the greatest in the kingdom. His answer was clear as he used the visual aid of a little child. The innocence, and dependence, of a child is used to stress the attitude of those who shall be saved. Humility is the key word to describe greatness. Arrogance, bigotry and pride are diametrically opposed to the attitude of humility. Yet, there is the necessity of individuality and moral strength associated with humility. Jesus went on to say that **"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire"** (v. 8). This just means that one is to have the ability to know the difference between that which is right and that which is wrong and have the scriptural knowledge and the moral courage to reject whatever would prevent him from going to heaven.

The glaring lessons from this passage are two-fold: (1) There are false teachers who can and will offend (lead astray) unsuspecting and uninformed members of the church, and (2) the personal, individual responsibility of

every member to reject and repel every effort on the part of false teachers to lead them astray.

### FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Peer pressure of friends and family has taken many souls out of the church and into perdition. It is extremely hard for one so devoted to parents, siblings or close compatriots to go against what they have believed and practiced for perhaps generations. Such personal and emotionally charged considerations demonstrate the tremendous responsibility incumbent upon the one who must make the choice; do I follow my family and friends, or do I follow the Lord of life? There is an old adage that says **"blood is thicker than water."** This meant that family members are so closely related that they will remain true to each other in spite of pressures from outside the family. With regard to obeying the gospel, someone has said that the attitude must prevail that **"water is thicker than blood."** This just means that being baptized in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4) must be more important than following the traditions of family. Water, of course, does not save a person, but, as Peter stated it, **"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"** (I Peter 3:21). Family and friends cannot save anyone, but only by doing the will of the father which is in heaven (Matthew 7:21). Obeying the gospel is my responsibility, no one else's!

### LIBERALS AND CHANGE AGENTS

Much has been said about liberalism and change agents leading children of God away from the church. We will not belabor the evil of men who think so little of the blood-bought church of our Lord. In our text of Matthew 18:7, Je-



sus gives the plight of those who teach false doctrine: They will receive the "woes" he pronounced. It is a sad observation to make that there will be those who will suffer the condemnation of our Lord (John 5:28-29). There is a hell awaiting every opponent of the God of heaven and his son, Jesus, the Christ.

The victims of the teaching of liberals and change agents are the focus of our appeal. Lack of knowledge is what destroys God's people (Hosea 4:6). Too many members of the Lord's church rely upon someone else to tell them what Christians are and what they are to do. Anyone who depends on the preacher, or other influential member, puts himself in jeopardy of following the man rather than the Bible. We learn from each other and we edify one another when we come together to worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). We gain information and assurance of our salvation when we have close, precious fellowship with fellow saints. We grow in spiritual stature in our association with one another and as we are exhorted, rebuked and reproved by the preaching of the truth. It is essential that we gain by faithful attendance to every worship service provided to us. That is what makes us strong enough spiritually to rebuff every false teaching.

In spite of all the encouragement and spiritual growth we receive at the hands of faithful preachers and teachers, it is still my personal responsibility to do that which is right in the sight of God. It is God's word, the gospel, that has the power of salvation (Romans 1:16), and it is our personal obedience to that gospel that will save us, not the teaching of men (I Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 5:9).

#### THE MAJORITY

It is tempting to be swayed by the thinking of the world. It is so very true that the majority of mankind rejects the concept of a universal standard of religion. History confirms the individual independence of human thought. What man does not understand or does not accept is rejected. The alternative is whatever pleases man. Sadly, the vast majority has rejected Christ and his authority. That the majority of men reject God, Jesus, the Bible and the provisions God has made for man's salvation does not alter the truth. Two quick examples to show the folly of following the majority is submitted as evidence: (1) The people of Noah's time rejected the preaching of Noah to their demise. Only Noah and his family of eight souls were saved. The majority (the entirety of men of that day) perished in

the waters of the universal flood about which God had warned would come. (2) The Israelites in the wilderness were told by God, through Moses, that he "had given" them the land of Canaan (Numbers 33:53). However, they refused to heed the word of God and decided they could not take the land. Twelve princes were sent to spy out the land to see if they could take it. The majority, ten of the spies, said it could not be done. Two, Joshua and Caleb, said it could. The majority was wrong and as a result, they were consigned to wander in the wilderness until that entire generation above the age of twenty years perished.

Jesus warned, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14). The majority reflects the thinking of men rather than the simple commands of God. My responsibility is to follow the commands of God rather than the thoughts of men.

It is a "fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31). Regardless of what the circumstances may be in this life, one day life will end. It is to that hour that we must focus our thoughts. What will be our lot when that time comes for us? It will matter not what family or friends may have said; it will not matter what some preacher or change agent may teach; it will not be of any consequence what the majority believes or practices, it will depend entirely upon what the Lord has said. My responsibility is not to conform to popularity or acceptance with men but to do what my Savior and Redeemer has told me to do.

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

When in Lubbock, please visit

**SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
8501 Quaker Avenue • Lubbock, Texas  
(806) 794-5008

Tommy J. Hicks, Preacher

<b>Sunday</b>		<b>Tuesday</b>	
Bible Study	9:00 a.m.	Ladies' Bible Class	10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship	9:55 a.m.	<b>Wednesday</b>	
Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.	Bible Study	7:30 p.m.

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

Two-year program  
Fifty-four courses  
2,760 clock hours  
No tuition  
Qualified faculty  
Limited Scholarships  
Strong Bible emphasis  
Established 1966  
Applications now being accepted  
Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Gates, Director**

3950 Forest Hill-Irmae Road

Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242

School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964

Fax (901) 751-8098

# 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—

**Cambridge**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## —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, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. 770-382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@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.

**Rockwood**—Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun: 10, 11 a.m., Wed: 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## —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 Bob Patterson, 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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.

## Classifieds...

**FULL TIME MINISTER** needed for Central Church of Christ, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. If you are interested or know someone who may like to come and work with us, please call 540.896.1417 or write: Central Church of Christ, 822 Country Club Rd., Harrisonburg, VA 22802, Att: Warren L. Good.

**CLASSIFIED ADS**—\$2.00 per line per month. For a complete listing of ad sizes and rates see Advertising Policy and Rates on page 2.

10th Annual

# Gulf Coast Lectures

## "SEEKING THE TRUTH"

Friday, May 3 - Sunday, May 5, 2002

### Friday

6:30 pm Congregational Singing

7:00 pm "The All-Sufficiency of the Scriptures" ..... Richard Massey, Rising Star, TX

8:00 pm "Sin" ..... Joshua Wyatt, Rosemark, TN

### Saturday

9:00 am "Once Saved Always Saved" ..... David Baker, Emory, TX

10:00 am "Woman's Role in the Church" ..... Don D'Herde, Aransas Pass, TX

11:00 am "Modern Day Miracles" ..... Floyd Johnson, Shreveport, LA

LUNCH—PROVIDED

1:30 pm "Modern Day Tongue Speaking" ..... Jason Rollo, Italy, TX

2:30 pm "Premillennialism" ..... Don Boyd, Justin, TX

3:30 pm "The Thief On the Cross" ..... Doug Young, Bryan, TX

6:30 pm Congregational Singing

7:00 pm "Instrumental Music In Worship" ..... Dave Rogers, Victoria, TX

8:00 pm "Christian Living" ..... Shan Jackson, Port Lavaca, TX

### Sunday

9:00 am "The Sabbath" ..... George Pledger, Corpus Christi, TX

10:00 am "What Must I Do To Be Saved?" ..... Lynn Matheny, Nashville, AR

LUNCH PROVIDED

2:00 pm "Total Depravity" ..... Jason Browning, Mathis, TX

3:00 pm "Worship (Contemporary/Traditional)" ..... Patrick Hammack, Odem, TX

6:00 pm Congregational Singing

6:30 pm "Denominationalism" ..... Bob Patterson, Beeville, TX

7:30 pm "The True Identity of the Church" ..... H. D. Simmons, Corpus Christi, TX

All lectures, audio and video, taped by Tullstar—For more info call 361.643.6571  
Portland Church of Christ, P.O. Box 11275, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374  
email address: portlandcofc@juno.com

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith**™  
Post Office Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT# 1863

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## WHAT HAPPENED AT THE MADISON CHURCH OF CHRIST

Wayne Coats

The above caption is the title of a book which details the sorry, sordid, shameful debacle which transpired at the Madison Congregation. This review is simply a warning to brethren who care to be warned. The Bible among other things is a book of warning to people who desire to be warned. Jesus and the apostles spent time attempting to warn the multitudes.

### ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

A brother from Madison called me some months ago and desired some help with reference to spreading the news about what was happening in the Madison congregation. Without doubt the church was heading into the throes of a Community Church outfit. There were some "Concerned members at Madison" who desired to rise up in opposition to the neo-pentecostal, liberal Community Church, Entertainment system of worship.

The matters contained in this article have been garnered from over 100 pages of the materials produced by the concerned members and which became available through the web page. I will try to the best of my ability to relate just exactly what happened at Madison.

One of the brethren called me and related that the Madison Members were in the dark as to what was happening in the congregation. He said, "We have been asleep and waited too late." That is exactly what happened during the last century and even today, when the devil moved in and conquered.

### WARNING "REFUSED"

In an effort to inform the Madison members, brother **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** secured a list of the Madison church members and attempted to send each member a special edition of the "Contending for the Faith" magazine. **Steve Flatt** did not

like the effort so he advised the members to write "refused" on the paper and return it. He pontificated that such would cost money for the sender. Irrespective, I received a constant flow of unsolicited letters from Flatt and company begging for money to help with the Madison projects. I do not think many will be brazen enough to say it but I think a great part of the Madison mess can be laid at the feet of Flatt.

### A PLANNED COVERT ACTION

According to the concerned brethren at sometime in the last ten years there was a deliberate plan by a majority of the elders to take the Madison Church of Christ into a more worldly realm. They used secrecy, covert planning, and outside sources to scheme and to change the format and directions of the Madison Church of Christ. The elders knew that the membership would never approve such a plan. Using tools of the Community Church Movement (consultant, books, seminars, meetings, planters, seeders) they slowly started initiating change so the members never noticed until it was too late.

"Contemporary Holy Entertainment methods developed by the "Community Church movement" were put into effect. It had to be secret!

I do not understand the depths of duplicity to which some lordly bishops allow themselves to plunge, once they are given a badge, maybe one they made for themselves. Such profligate behavior is demonstrated. In its worst form when a few of these pontiffs design to run a secret service outfit. One would be led to think that such big-minded folks consider themselves to be receptacles of a wisdom than which there can be no greater. You dare not deny this.

Our blessed Lord very pointedly declared, **"I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and**

(Continued on Page 6)



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXXIII, No. 5

May/2002

David P. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher  
dpbrown9@swbell.net

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

Editorial...

## THE "SAINTS ONLY" DOCTRINE

This study is not concerned directly with the action of individual Christians. However, of necessity the action of individual Christians must be considered. The study question is this: *Does the New Testament authorize the church to use her assets (liquid and/or solid) to help the needy non-saint (a non-Christian)?*

What do the anti-brethren mean by the "saints only" doctrine? They mean funds from the church treasury may be used only to help needy saints. In other words it is sin (the transgression of God's law—I John 3:4) to help a needy non-saint out of the church treasury. And, if those guilty of such a sin do not repent they will go to hell. This view, of course, means that none of the church's assets—not one penny from the church treasury or any asset of the church that was purchased with money from the treasury may be used to help a starving baby though the child belongs to Christians. It would mean that where the husband is not a Christian and the wife is, the husband could not be helped out of the church's assets but the wife could be. It would mean if there were twins, one a Christian and the other not, the Christian twin could be helped with assets of the church, but the non-Christian twin could not. It would mean that if the church owned a house that was empty and a non-saint's house was destroyed by fire, the church would sin if it allowed such a destitute family to live in the house for any amount of time. It would mean that if a family where the parents are Christians and their children are not were to lose their house in a fire the parents could live in the house but their children could not. The usual "anti" response to the preceding comments is that the members would not let a starving baby, husband, twin, etc. suffer. *However, what if the members themselves are suffering right along with the baby, the husband, or the twin, etc., but there is money in the church treasury?* Or, as could be the case, there are food and clothing items in a food and clothing "treasury" (bank) in the church building. These items are there because some are all the members gave them on the first day of the week for their weekly contribution. They had no money to give, but they could give food and clothing.

In yesteryear a preacher sometimes was paid for his services with chickens or some other food item. That being the case brethren certainly could contribute chickens, etc. to the Lord as their first day of the week contribution into the church treasury. If the "saints only" faction had been around in those days when such from time to time was done, they would have "saints only" chickens and non-saints chickens. The farmer could give a chicken into the chicken treasury (a Church of Christ chicken yard) to be devoured by the saints only and from his same flock of chickens he individually could contribute chickens to the non-saints. And, guess what—in the poorer parts of the world

even today some Christians make contributions of food items because they do not possess their nation's currency. Thus, to be consistent with their "saints only" belief and practice in this country, they must apply it to food items, etc. in other countries when church members in those countries contribute such items on the first day of the week according to I Corinthians 16:1, 2.

Again, how do "antis" propose that needy non-saints be helped? As stated earlier, by individual contributions *only*. This is the reason I wrote in an earlier editorial regarding orphan homes that if they believed orphan homes (as I have defined and used the term) are authorized by the scriptures, they would allow *only* Christian orphan children in such homes.

#### LIQUID AND SOLID ASSETS

Some years ago I asked an elder in an "anti" congregation in Texas if money could exist in liquid form (money in one's pocket or in the bank) as well as in solid assets (land, houses, etc.). He readily agreed that such could be and was the case. I then ask him if the land and church building on and in which we were standing was purchased with money out of the church treasury. He assured me that such was the case. I then proposed the following scenario to him. Suppose a tornado struck the surrounding area. It destroyed the buildings around the church building. However, the church building sustained no serious damage. Would it be okay for rescue workers to utilize the facilities of their church building and grounds to treat injured people (most if not all consisting of non-saints)? He readily agreed they would gladly allow the use of their building for such a benevolent activity. Moreover, he hastened to tell me that it would not take such a catastrophic event as I described before they would allow the use the building for the purposes I noted. He went on to say that if an automobile accident were to happen in front of the building and for some reason the paramedics needed to utilize their grounds and/or building to take care of the injured people he would not object. I then said to this elder that he did not believe in the "saints only doctrine". With a puzzled look on his face he asked why I thought that. I reminded him that he had already admitted that money could exist in solid as well as liquid form. I further reminded him that he had also stated that the land and building was purchased with funds out of the church treasury. I then pointed out that while the funds from the church treasury had changed forms (from liquid to solid) they never the less were funds out of the church treasury, and he had declared that such could be used in his own illustration as well as mine to help non-saints. With a blank look on his face, the elder stood for a moment saying nothing. Then, with that same blank stare, he turned his eyes to the ceiling and said, "I'll have to think about that for a while." Thus, ended the discussion. Mind you, this conversation took place a little over ten years ago. At that time this issue had help divide churches all over the country for forty years. Now here was an elder of an "anti" church who said he would have to take "a while" to think about it. As noted, it has been over ten years since he started thinking about it and I suppose there is "a while" yet to go.

## In This Issue . . .

What Happened at the Madison Church of Christ?  
Wayne Coats 1

*Editorial*  
The "Saints Only" Doctrine  
David P. Brown 2

Explaining "Change Agents" and "Change Agency"  
J. E. Choate 8

*Biblical Questions*  
What is the Valley of Dry Bones?  
Noah Hackworth 12

*Sermon Outlines*  
Repentance  
Tom Moore 13

*Restoration Reflections*  
John Allen Chase Chase God Over Family  
Paul Vaughn 14

*Scripture Illustrations*  
Satan Uses Them On Mankind  
Jodie Boren 15

*Studies From the Biblical Text*  
Excurses On Free Will  
Daniel Denham 16

*Current Events That Concern Christians*  
Rorie O'Donnell, Government Research, and Tim Woodroofs' Advice  
Compiled by Mark McWhorter 19

*One Woman's Perspective*  
Levin's  
Annette B. Cates 20

*The Last Word*  
The Cycle of History  
Eddie Whitten 21

For the most part, the “anti” elder’s reasoning (?) is typical of the kind of “thinking”(?) done by those who continually advocate and defend “anti” doctrines. These fellows are as inconsistent as one can be and seemingly they rejoice in their inconsistency. I could have told the previously mentioned “anti” elder but did not, that his position really was this: he believed it was a sin to use liquid assets to help non-saints out of the church treasury, but not a sin to help non-saints with solid assets out of the church treasury. However, knowing how some of these fellows jump to embrace the false implications of their false doctrines it was probably better that I did not do so.

**PERTINENT SCRIPTURES**

James wrote, “**Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world**” (James 1:27). According to Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon “to visit” translates a Greek word meaning, “To look upon or after, to inspect, examine with the eyes; in order to see how he is, that is to visit, go to see one... the poor and afflicted (James 1:27); the sick (Matthew 25:36, 43). Thus, the “visit” of James 1:27 pertains to providing for the needs of widows and orphans. Yes, James is discussing the individual when he speaks of visiting the fatherless and widows. However, please

notice that Paul precisely mentions that the Lord’s church is to relieve widows (I Timothy 5:16). Thus, the Lord’s church is not removed from the responsibility of relieving widows. Widows and orphans are in the same verse (James 1:27). Therefore, if the church is authorized to help the one it is authorized to help the other. Again, one must take the totality of what the Bible says before the conclusion is drawn—that is if a person desires to reach the correct conclusion on any given matter. It should also be clear that the church is not prohibited from helping non-saints in its service. Notice what Paul said on this matter. He tells the Corinthians that the liberal distribution of which they were a part was not to brethren only, but also “**unto all men**” (II Corinthians 9:13). As Paul wrote, “**As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith**” (Galatians 6:10). Please realize that this is addressed to the “**churches of Galatia**” (Galatians 1:2). Paul had written to the Corinthians saying that he had given “**order to the churches of Galatia**” (I Corinthians 16:1, 2). Galatians 6:10 contains some of those orders. And, this was not to individuals only. If such were the case concerning doing good to “all men”, then the remainder of the verse teaches only individuals can do good unto “**the household of faith**”. Therefore, the church could not practice such good works to any degree. Indeed, the church could not

## Attention School Teachers!

There are a number of school teacher openings available with the Beeville Independent School District. If you, or any brethren you know, are looking for a school teaching position opening or have been planning to relocate but have been concerned about being able to attend and work with a faithful congregation of the Lord’s church, we hope that you will consider the school teaching opportunities available in Beeville, Texas. Information concerning job openings with the Beeville Independent School District can be viewed online at:

BISD Home page Address: [www.beevilleisd.esc2.net](http://www.beevilleisd.esc2.net)

BISD E-MAIL: [webmaster2@beevilleisd.esc2.net](mailto:webmaster2@beevilleisd.esc2.net)



If we can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Church of Christ at 1701 N. Adams Street, Beeville, Texas, by phone at (361) 358-4428 or Bob Patterson at (361) 358-5760, Fax: (361) 358-3743, or at our website: [www.churchofChristBeeville.org](http://www.churchofChristBeeville.org)

practice “**pure and undefiled religion**”. Moreover, from the same context we learn that individuals are to support preachers (Galatians 6:6, 10). But, does this mean that the church is excluded from supporting preachers? Question: *Is it solely the responsibility of individual members, and not the church to support preachers?* To ask the question is to answer it.

Jesus asked, “**And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so**”(Matthew 5:47)? Indeed, how our “anti” brethren can be content to operate on the level of the publicans I know not, but seemingly that level suits them. However, we are authorized “especially” to do good to “**the household of faith,**” and as the same verse declares we must also do the same “**unto all men**” (Galatians 6:10).

**TO WHOM DO THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES APPLY?**

Scripture	Church Only?	Individual Only?	Both?
Colossians 3:17			
II Timothy 3:16, 17			
II John 9			
Jude 3			

*The truth is all scriptures relating to religious matters peculiar to Christian living apply equally to the church as well as to the individual Christian.*

**TO WHOM DO THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES APPLY—EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CHURCH, EXCLUSIVELY TO THE INDIVIDUAL, OR EQUALLY TO THE CHURCH AND THE INDIVIDUAL?**

Scripture	Church Only?	Individual Only?	Both?
Matthew 28:19			
Acts 20:42			
Acts 20:7			
I Corinthians 16:1, 2			
Galatians 6:10			
Ephesians 5:19			
James 1:27			

Again, the truth of the matter is: *All scriptures authorizing the individual to discharge religious obligations that are peculiar to being a Christian are scriptures that authorize the church to discharge the same obligations.*

**Ye have that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate ye, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**

1. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches that God is benevolent.
2. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches that God is benevolent *only* to the just.
3. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches that God is benevolent *only* to the unjust.
4. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches that God is benevolent to the just and the unjust.
5. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches individual Christians to be benevolent toward the just and unjust.
6. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches the church to be benevolent toward the just *only*.
7. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches the church to be benevolent toward the just and the unjust.
8. **True or False** Matthew 5:43-48 teaches the church to be like God.

How is it possible that Christians can think they can benefit the soul of the alien sinner by the preaching of the gospel of Christ to him/her by a preacher supported with church assets, but they cannot do one thing with church assets as herein defined and used to benefit his/her physical body? According to this false “saints-only” doctrine the Good Samaritan who helped a needy man who was not of his own faith and practice is a pattern for individual Christians *only* and not for the church collectively. The Samaritan did this because he followed the golden rule. But, if the “saints only” doctrine is true that means that the golden rule applies *only* to the individual Christian and not to the church and her assets whether they are liquid or solid—including chickens that might be in a church livestock treasury reserved for the tables of the needy “saints only”.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

## “...Madison Church of Christ”

(Continued from page 1)

in the temple, whether the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing” (Matthew 18:20). Jesus did not have all expertise in dealing with secret matters which some of our little lords have in today’s church. I state very plainly that there is not anything more ungodly, abominable, reprehensible, detestable, and ruthless than a few men attempting to turn the church of Christ into a secret Service affair.

The concerned brethren of Madison have charged the Bishops with covert and secret activities in order to turn the Madison Congregation into a Community Church. Please Note:

We understand that the elders are now in secret meetings to make a decision on how the Madison Church is going to be run... We don’t think God’s work needs to be carried out in secret. Can you say that you have been fully informed by the elders of the true nature of the conflict at the Madison Church of Christ? No I have not been truly informed by the elders, reported 85.94% of the respondents.

*It appears that some of the shepherds are not exactly being honest with their flock. The takeover of the Madison Church of Christ appears to have been going on secretly and covertly for at least 7 or 8 years.*

Other comments could be added to the above but these are sufficient to show how the devil operates. Beware of false apostles who come to you in sheep’s clothing (Matthew 7:15).

The concerned membership becoming disgusted with the covert actions of the elders decided to ask those considered to be culprits to resign. Notice:

Deacons had a special meeting with an attendance of over 100 concerned members and deacons. Petitions were given out to collect signatures, to dismiss the elders that have split the Madison Church of Christ. The Deacons headed by **Ben Jones**, nicely and in a very godly way asked the leaders to step down and let the Church elect new leadership.

### DO THEY CONTINUE TO STUDY “THIS MATTER”?

I have no doubt that some Madison elders are the most studious, seeking, searching creatures on the top-side of God’s earth. A series of questions were presented to them:

Q: With this digression that women talk in the church—teach—what’s the next thing?

A: We are currently studying this matter.

Q: What do women add to the worship?

A: We are currently studying this matter.

Q: If women and men in the front pew help the worship with their mikes, why not give a mike to everybody in the audience?

A: We are currently studying this matter.

Q: Have these new worship changes spawned peace and unity or has it caused division?

A: We are currently studying this matter.

Q: Since clapping is used in the Bible mainly for derision, should we use that in service?

A: We are currently studying this matter.

Q: Have the changes in worship brought a reproach or a blessing to this church?

A: We are currently studying this matter.

There were other questions submitted to the elders, but I give these to show the evasive, contemptible, attitude as anyone with half sense can see. Are Bishops above being questioned, are they some cult of Holy men, not subject to anyone? God forbid!

### A SORDID SITUATION

In a poll sent to the Madison members regarding the matter of whether the church should continue to be changed or revert to its original type of worship:

The members voted overwhelmingly to return this vessel (Madison Church of Christ) to a historical scripture based worship service. Only six votes wanted to employ a hip and entertaining or contemporary worship format.

If this small group has used the tools furnished to them by Saddleback to subvert the will of most members by bringing on a Community Church program covertly.

Is this small group of people trying to change the Madison Church of Christ congregation into something of this own worldly design succeeds, they will have stolen something from you that’s dearer than bricks and mortar.

So much of the sordid situation developed when **Keith Lancaster** was hired as the “Worship Coordinator” and introduced his repulsive, absurd clown acts into the worship program. Keith removed a number of the older members from the front seats and replaced them with some eighteen dupes who held mikes in their hands. With the circus leader before the dupes and the mikes turned up to the limit, a din and roar resounded throughout the auditorium. Why? Such was entertaining to saw-dust heads and also the frolic would result in causing the objectors to leave—which was part of the scheme. One very educated member who witnessed the disgraceful affair stated to me, “The man is crazy.” That must have been the thinking of several hundred who left Madison weeping and heart-broken.

It is reported that, “Praise teams, hand clapping, and raised hands during prayer have been introduced at the second service.” It is interesting that a few years ago while Steve Flatt was the number one guru at Madison, the practice of clapping after a baptism was reportedly led by the Flatt family. I have written a small booklet opposing the matter. **Cecil N. Wright** (now deceased) attempted to justify the silly practice. A good brother said to Wright, “At least he got your attention.” The goof-off practice has spread all over the country along with many other Holy Roller practices.

**Tom Haddon** is listed as a leader of a “Homebuilders Class” at Madison. If what was presented in seven pages of recorded material from Haddons class is representative of teachers in the Sunday School Program at Madison, then there is the answer to silly situation which has developed at Madison.

No doubt Tom thought he was acting smart as he related to his class of 2-25-01.

There’s a song Keith sings that I absolutely love. My life in you (Tom claps and people clap) My life (clap) is (clap) in

you (clap) Lord (clap) my strength (clap) is in (clap) you (clap) lord.

I mean such is a great display of brilliance for people who are able to run around loose by themselves.

Even such skull duggery is carried down into the children's classes as noted:

You ask your children if their Sunday School has changed? Their reply, "yeah!" You ask, "What has changed?" They say, "We mostly sing; my teacher said, Things needed to be made more entertaining!"

You think, "Entertainment?" Since when do families go to church services to be entertained?

Entertainment is the name of the circus. A goodly number of clowns are needed to affect such programs. In the class of Tom Haddon as referenced above we will notice a few gems of brilliance about entertainment.

Last week we talked about Entertainment...As soon as I say holy Entertainment, there would be some who would go, "ouu."

Here comes the bread (clap). Now take a bite. Now there's the juice and wash it down now (much laughter from the audience).

Is it going to happen overnight? No! It didn't happen in here overnight. We sang with a jukebox for seven months before we ever got a song leader...

Children's Sunday School class has been changed from Bible based to more entertainment and singing.

#### ELDER DOZIER SADDLEBACK APOSTLE

One of the respected members of the Madison Congregation who got a stomach full of the innovations was brother **Bill Ruhl**. He left rather than support the sectarian practices. On the following Sunday morning when Elder **Buck Dozier** went into brother Ruhl's classroom, not one word was uttered as to why Bill Ruhl was gone. Tis sad that stupidity is it not painful.

It has been known for years that the greatest road to fame (infamy) is the ability to be a super-duper copy-cat. When the cauldron pot began to boil over, bishop Buck Dozier began, "playing around" with his, "Covenant of membership." "Concerned members received a rough draft of "covenant membership" that was supposedly written by Elder Buck Dozier. Dozier admitted "playing around" with one when contacted."

The concern about a covenant of membership is that it's one of the a hallmark signs of a community church like Saddleback. They are written in such a way to assure that the membership can't take over the "Community Church" like they took over your church.

I would absolutely be ashamed to pose as a Bishop and feel so inferior, deficient, empty and ill-prepared to extent that I would feel the need to copy from a full-fledged cultic outfit in order to try to get the church members to kow-tow, bow and scrape before me.

When hordes of Madison members had already left, the elders invited **Larry Sullivan** of the Pepperdine Strauss Institute to help resolve the split. An elder from Madison had worked with Sullivan in a dispute-resolution class.

It developed that Larry Sullivan was not exactly a good mediator.

It appears that Sullivan is a change expert, not an unbiased mediator. The headline of the web page is, 'Leading congregational Change', which ironically is also the title of the book Sullivan promotes at one of his web sites.

**Rick Warren** of Saddleback Community Church recommends that church leaders read, 'Leading Congregational Change.' Are the elders being honest with their members about Larry Sullivan? No! They have not been honest about Larry Sullivan.

It does not take a Junior Solomon to discern the unholy, unscriptural, wayward and inane plans of someone at Madison to align the church with the Saddleback Community Church and turn the Madison Church of Christ into another denominational cult.

We have made reference to a class directed by Tom Haddon which is absolutely destitute of the word of God. We notice:

Tom Haddon is instructing his 'Homebuilder,' class on how to transition the church members over to the ways of the Saddleback Community Church and that of, 'Holy Entertainment.' He talks about the well hid plans that only a few know about.

There was the announcement made on Thursday, October 25, 2001, of a, "Saddleback planters meeting tonight." Did the elders need to study the matter?

"Cruising to Saddleback." The destination of this vessel (The Madison Church of Christ) is a "new Madison Church aligned with Saddleback Community Church of California."

There is a small cluster of members in the 'Homebuilders' class that have embraced and taught Saddleback materials. On February 25, 2001, the class was told that "entertainment" should not be an uncomfortable word for the church. One or more of the "Homebuilders" class members, as well as one or more of the Ministry staff have visited Saddleback, or Saddleback seminars.

Now, I wonder how many elders have been to Saddleback?

And now we have a paid consultant, which we are told is a mediator, who really participates in causing the changes to come about. Not only that, but he promotes Saddleback's book, "Leading Congregational Change", on his website.

Did Sullivan reveal this while in Madison? Did the elders explain this? "This small group has used the tools furnished to them by Saddleback to subvert the will of most members by bringing in a Community Church program, covertly."

Tom Haddon said:

Being a church on purpose. I wanted to tell you a lot about that —uh—Saddleback Church that I told you about. I'm only gonna tell you about one area that I saw when I got there.

The Madison elders have sent **Frank Scott** to Saddleback to learn from them. Tom Haddon has been to Saddleback and has taught the "Homebuilders" class about their methods.

Larry Sullivan who was brought to Madison by Buck Dozier and the Elders promotes a book, "Leading Congregational Change."



The above book promoted by Larry Sullivan is reviewed by Rick Warren (Saddleback Valley Community Church founder) at the Straus Institute website.

The elders have turned away from sound doctrine. They have turned to the doctrine of men: teaching and following the pattern of Saddleback Valley Community church.

Larry Sullivan has direct ties to the Saddleback organization.

#### WILL THEY EVER LEARN?

Now that we have tried to warn people who care to be warned, it is our fervent prayer that brethren will not waver before the onslaughts of the devil. I hesitate not to say that most all of the large congregations have sold out to the devil. One may wonder why and how the Madison Congre-

gation could plunge so deep down into Satan's grasp. The answer is given in the inspired word. When men cease to love the truth, they will be given a strong delusion permitting them to believe a lie and be damned (II Thessalonians 2:11-12). This is the problem at Madison, but is it not likely that the bishops will admit it. It is a sad, sad day when so-called elders choose to pattern after and follow the foolishness of a former Baptist preacher, turned cultic. The Bible still teaches: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify one another" (Romans 14:19).

—705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27120

## EXPLAINING "CHANGE AGENTS" AND "CHANGE AGENCY"

J. E. Choate

A coterie of our brethren who are self-acclaimed scholars and who can write books on the "cutting edge" of neo-modern scholarship would move "heaven and earth" to convince us that the the traditional churches of Christ have metamorphosed into a full fledged neo-modern denomination. Richard Hughes and Douglas A. Foster are promoting the concept through their books—*Reviving the Ancient Faith*, and *Will the Cycle Be unbroken*. The editors of the *Christian Chronicle* obviously approve as witnessed by the amount of space given to the story. Richard Hughes argued the case on the farm of David Lipscomb for two evenings in the presence of Steve Flatt during the *Forrest F. Reed Lectureship* which was one of the featured events leading up to the elevation of Steve Flatt to the Lipscomb presidency. The Lipscomb president goes about the coun-

try telling thousands of people that the university remains loyal to the principles of its founders. This is not even close to being a true statement. We think that Steve Flatt wants to believe his own words and would have us do the same. If you want to know the position of Steve Flatt on a biblical doctrine, or a school matter, talk to the last person with whom he discussed a particular subject. Steve Flatt, Gary Holloway, Robert Hooper, Douglas A. Foster, Richard C. Goode, and Steve Flatt participated in the Forrest F. Reed Lectureship sponsored by the the Disciples of Christ Historical Society which was hosted by Lipscomb University. Robert E. Hooper is fully aware of the historical significance of the occasion. I do not think that Dr. Flatt understood the historical implications of the occasions. Steve Flatt has serious problems because of his liberal Bible faculty which he inherited from Harold Hazelip.

#### MURFREESBORO CHURCHES REJECT LIPSCOMB LIBERALS

The elders of the leading churches in Murfreesboro and Rutherford County, Tennessee, served notice indirectly on the president that we do not want your Chief Executive Vice President, Carl McKelvey, the Director of the Lipscomb Bible Graduate division, Gary Holloway, and Chairman of the Lipscomb undergraduate Bible department, Michael Moss to conduct an elders's seminar to spread their brand of neo-liberalism in Rutherford County, Tennessee.

David Lipscomb wrote in the April 1908 *Gospel Advocate* that divisions had come to the churches popularly known as the Christian Church. Before 1907, there was no clear lines separating the Independent Christian church, and the biblical churches of Christ. After the turn of the 20th century century, the Christian Churches were being labeled "Digressive" for two primary reasons—use of the organ in worship, and the societies and conventions whose officers were wresting control from the elders over local churches.

### Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**  
**\$35.00 if ordered as set**

(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)

Order from:

VADA RICE

3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461

## DAVID LIPSCOMB AND DIVISION

Lipscomb said verbatim:

The division is here. I and those who stand by the word of God have done nothing to excite or to foster it except to stand by the word of God and, incidentally, on the grounds the fathers of the Reformation occupied.

Lipscomb said that church divisions will come, but he advised when it happens to let division come along Bible lines. Who would dispute today that biblical churches of Christ, and the "Church of Christ" denomination being promoted as such by the *Christian Chronicle* are going their separate ways.

In 1906 the Federal Religious Census printed the declaration that where one Stone-Campbell Restoration church had existed within the Restoration Movement that now there were two. The churches were named in the federal census as the Christian Church (Digressive), and the traditional churches of Christ. This was done on the initiative of **S. D. N. North**, Director of the Federal Religious Census. He wrote a personal letter to Lipscomb in 1907 soliciting David Lipscomb's judgment on his decision. Lipscomb wrote back that indeed two such churches did exist where once there had been just one. The best we can do to name the two separated churches today is by a choice of words, and use of lower and higher case letters, e.- g., the (traditional/biblical) churches of Christ versus the (neo-modern) Church of Christ denomination.

### MARKING THOSE WHO DIVIDE CHURCHES

My purpose in this article is to name the high profiled provocateurs who are doing this, and to trace the causes and events which have led to division in the churches of Christ. The divisions really began in the 1950s when a number of our preachers became dissatisfied with the churches of Christ. My mathematical methodology is quite simple. It is to set up as rows of digits in parallel and vertical columns and to do a simple problem of adding up the digits to get the sum total of the related parts. I regard the neo-modern "Church of Christ" today as I do the "digressive Independent Christian Church, and the neo-liberal Disciples of Christ as self-admitted denominations. Early on there were the indicators that change was in the air regarding the traditional churches of Christ. The *Mission Magazine* was started to make the churches of Christ acceptable to the denominational world. My arrangement of historical facts tallies with **Lynn Anderson's** scheme detailed in *Navigating the Winds of Change* on techniques of "church-takeovers." Dr. Anderson advises that there are occasions when the "change agents" may need to use unethical (amoral?) means to achieve devious and deceptive ends. We are indebted to **William Woodson** for coining the phrase "change agent" to single out, to mark, and to individualize this new breed of church troublemakers.

Who are these "change agents"? They are all over the place. My first move is to name those whom I consider to be the two main chief "change agents" within the churches of Christ. My first choices would be **Harold Hazelip** and **Rubel Shelly** without question.

In their earlier years their voices were the most strident voices in defense of the "faith once and for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). The young **Hazelip** early on became the militant champion of the "antis". The still younger **Shelly**, who started preaching in knee pants, was the shrillest voice championing the conservative churches of Christ.

**Rubel** said in his early and naive moments that to pat one's foot during the song service keeping time was the same as singing with an organ. True or false! This is the distance from Middleton, Tennessee, to Nashville, and from Freed-Hardeman College to the Vanderbilt Philosophy Department.

### THE "ANTI" CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIBERAL MOVEMENT

Many a person is alive who remembers the bitter conflict between high profiled preachers over the support of orphan homes, Christian schools, and the *Herald of Truth* with money from the church treasury. The "bone of contention" was phased in the charge that the churches of Christ (kingdom of God) could not scripturally support Christian related institutions with church money. There were a number of debates in that time of conflict. The names of **Guy N. Woods** and **Roy Cogdill** stand out especially in this connection. Who could forget, who were present, the debate between the young "anti" **Leroy Garrett**, and **George DeHoff** in Nashville, Tennessee.

# Spring Bible Institute



SEIZE THE  
OPPORTUNITY!

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO Box 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR  
SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (IN RESIDENCE).
- STUDY BY INTERNET (DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM)
- ASSISTANCE IN RAISING SUPPORT.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, "HANDS-ON" TRAINING.

---

"I am so thankful I was steered in the direction of Spring Bible Institute and have been allowed to take this course. It has already had an impact on my life..."  
—Distance Learning Student, August, 2001

---

CONTACT US TODAY!

ON THE WEB: CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM    EMAIL: sbi@churchesofchrist.com  
PHONE: (281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN                      ASST. DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

This frenzy of church fighting subsided after awhile. The categories were hardened. Much of the bitter memory never died away. However, there is a strange and peculiar dichotomy in the mixture of persons once identified with the "antis", but who left the ranks of the "antis" for different reasons. They share in one common denominator which today unites this diverse group into one camp. This is their "detestation of the traditional churches of Christ." They tell us with piety how they treasure their conservative up bringing. They also remember the pulpits they filled, and the money they were paid to fund their education in liberal prestigious schools of religion in order to prepare to be "church predators." The brighter and more ambitious of these "ex-antis" chose post modern liberal theology as the way to go. They saw no future for themselves in the brown-ing of the "anti" fields. They found promises of greener pastures in the liberal seminaries of prestigious divinity schools controlled by the generation of neo-orthodox theo-logians, e.g., Barth and Bultmann. And they came out of the liberal seminaries as "hard core" neo-theological liberals. Their animosity toward the traditional churches of Christ grew with their fascination with neo-liberal theo-logy. And they have proved themselves to have become the most strident and powerful voices of the foes of the (bibli-cal) churches of Christ. High profiled leaders in this group of "ex-antis" are named and profiled because of their pres-ent and past influences among churches of Christ.

#### A FIRE BRAND "ANTI"

**Leroy Garrett**, turned liberal, is first named because he has been longer engaged in baiting traditional churches of Christ than any other. He has been used by the Digressive to compromise the churches of the Christ who have pub-lished his books and articles. This was done with the stud-ied calculation to bring down the churches of Christ. We do need to keep in mind that Rubel Shelly brought in this "an-cient foe" of the churches of Christ as a featured speaker during the "requiem mass" of the last Jubilee. Harold Haz-elpip, the superlative "ex-anti", has done and continues to do incalculable harm to the biblical churches of Christ, more so than any combination of "change agents." Much of the damage has been done under the very eyes of breth-eren who earlier trusted him as a faithful member of the churches of Christ. Dr. Hazelpip became an early fire brand "anti". He was preaching for the thriving Taylor Boulevard Church in Louisville when he turned "anti". Dr. Hazelpip moved away from the "antis" and became their implacable foe. He fought a losing battle to keep control of the Taylor Boulevard church of Christ. But the "antis" won and drove him out.

After his Louisville humiliation, Dr. Hazelpip went to the University of Iowa to earn his doctorate in the university's liberal divinity school. It was here he saw a thousand points of light which lit the way for him to accept the tenets of neo-liberal theology. He is next found as the Dean of the Harding Graduate School, and preaching under the protec-tive umbrella of the *Herald of Truth*. He had become over night the "fair haired" brother of great promise. Among the critical mistakes **Batsell Barrett Baxter** made in manag-ing the *Herald of Truth*, was his endorsement of Harold Hazelpip. Dr. Hazelpip had now found greener fields in post

modern neo-theology. He would keep well this secret close to his bosom until he left the Harding Graduate School and came to the presidency of David Lipscomb College. Then Dr. Hazelpip completely crawled out of his ultra conserva-tive skin, and embarked upon an eleven year campaign to strip David Lipscomb University of all of its time honored traditions and principles set forth in the original school charter and the Lipscomb land deed.

#### "O BROTHER WHERE ART THOU?"

The next "ex-anti" brother to be named is **F. LaGard Smith**. He came out of a family headed by a much beloved and respected father. (His father was committed to the "anti" cause. Dr. Smith tells that story himself). Dr. Smith was educated right out of the "anti" camp and away from the traditional churches of Christ. Dr. Smith was caught up in the cross currents of his thinking. He cannot claim to be a member of the biblical churches of Christ. But, neverthe-less, he poses a major problem for churches of Christ. He wants to be recognized as a faithful member of the non-denominational Church of Christ. Dr. Smith then creates a number of questions about his beliefs which are still hang-ing fire. Brother Smith cannot tell us and identify our brother in Christ. Dr. Smith compares the unbaptized Christian who says he is a Christian to a common law part-ner in a marriage where the marriage is legally recognized before the issuing of the legal license. *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* Dr. Smith is now a member of the Lipscomb Bi-ble faculty, and teaches every day in legal violation of the wording of the Lipscomb land deed which forbids a faculty presence on his land who worships with an organ church six months out of the year, or just for one day.

#### A FLORIDA COLLEGE "ANTI"

The next "anti" brother to be addressed is **Mac Lynn** who sits high at the banquet tables of the traditional churches of Christ with his standard church direc-tory—*Where the Saints Meet*. Dr. Lynn earned his bache-lor's degree at Morehead State University when **Adron Doran** was president. Brother Doran brought in faculty and students from churches of Christ at every opportunity. Mac Lynn was one of them. Mac Lynn came in as a totally committed "Florida College" type "anti". Adron Doran would go out and preach for churches of Christ where Lynn would not go because of his "anti-ism" posture, and brother Doran would give Lynn the money for his living support. True or False, Dr. Lynn?

Harold Hazelpip appointed Mac Lynn chairman of the Lipscomb Bible department where once David Lipscomb and **H. Leo. Boles** sat. Personal comparisons are odious, and this one is so designed. There is one picture which stands out above all others. Harold Hazelpip strode into the assembly of the Nashville School of Preaching then meet-ing on the Lipscomb campus with **Mac Lynn** in tow. Presi-dent Hazelpip announced that Mac Lynn was the person in charge of the Bible teaching program of Lipscomb Univer-sity which included the Nashville Bible School of Preach-ing. This was one sly way of getting the Nashville Bible School of Preaching off campus. Harold Hazelpip, the man in authority, was an expert in humiliating Lipscomb fac-

ulty and staff who incurred his wrath. He seemed to take great delight in a firing spree when darkness had set in over the Lipscomb campus and the school was closed down. Dr. Hazelip pictures himself a great distinguished scholar, but he has not written a single book so recognized in scholarly circles. Harold Hazelip's major scholarly *forte* in teaching the Bible, and his chief claim to scholarship are his endless quotes of a whole array of famous persons in no way remotely identified with the Bible and churches of Christ.

**A SUMMARY CONCLUSION**

However, the coterie of the leading "change agents" are all found huddling together in what we will call the contemporary "Church of Christ" denomination. A number of these brethren went as neo-liberals straight from our colleges and universities by way of prestigious liberal seminaries, e. g., Princeton and Harvard. They are the neo-liberals who fed at the troughs of Barth, Bultmann, and Tillich. Today they know all about the Westmar Institute and the Jesus Seminar, which they do not discuss, for fear of being correctly endorsing their theology which in a round-about way they do. They do not mount attacks against neo-orthodoxy; however, they quote much from Barth, Bultmann and Tillich. They never mention the Westmar Institute and the Jesus Seminar, this latest outrage of postmodern liberal theology. The mixture of these brethren is both strange and odd. Their individual stories are different. Their commitment to neo-liberal theology, however, is a common tie especially among those who have attended liberal theological seminaries. To name outstanding leaders in this neo-modern change agency is an easy task. Each came to his position of theological liberalism in his own way and in his own time. One of these brother needs special attention. He is **Dr. Robert Hopper**,

a Peabody Ph. D. in history—no theologian here—who is *atypical* of the garden variety of generic "change agents". He got his recognition by writing his biography on the life and times of David Lipscomb. He was promoted to his niche in Restoration history by brethren who believed that he was a faithful brother. Dr. Hooper misses no opportunity to show his contempt for these brethren today by calling them "Church of Christists." He borrowed this slur from **David Edwin Harrell** who first used the expression. Dr. Harrell is indeed a highly recognized Restoration historian mainly within the Christian Church and Disciples of Christ. Dr. Harrell was the first recognized anti-Church of Christ Restoration historian to contend that the "Churches of Christ" now constitute a denomination with their roots sunk deep in an early 19th century exclusivistic Restoration sect. Dr. Hooper has an "Achilles heel." He not only wants to write Restoration history; he would rewrite Restoration history. He is prone to change the meaning of facts to make them say what he wants them to say. He says one of the reasons why Lipscomb opposed instrumental music in worship was because he was tone deaf. Never before or since have I heard such absurd nonsense. For example, he lashes out at **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** as a racist, and he probably was. And so were many others who are now ashamed of the fact. Dr. Hooper describes **Marshall Keeble** as a pawn in the hands of Foy E. Wallace, Jr., who used Keeble as a compliant Uncle Tom. This is an scurrilous and fatuous attack against Marshall Keeble. Dr. Hooper is an elder in Dr. Shelly's church. Does he not know the dictum: "Thou shall not speak ill of the dead!"

Lipscomb said in 1908 that division in the churches is here. It took the next twenty years for the Digressives to accept the fact that they had lost great numbers of churches of Christ. Well, division is here again today. The "change agents" are now out in force, using the devious strategies, and the theologies incubated by such neo-orthox theologians as **Rudolph Bultmann**, **John Dominic Crossan** of the Jesus Seminar, **C. Peter Wagner's** "Third Wave", and **Bill Hybel's** Willow Creek Community church paradigm. **Lynn Anderson** tells the change agent how to move into the churches of Christ by stealth and steal them from brethren who built them. But one of these days they will run out of "Churches of Christ" from which "to cut and gather fodder" to stock their denomination. Will then the Methodists, Baptists et al. invite them in to make havoc of their churches? And what sensible people would want to join them when they have *bona fide* churches to join like the Pentecostal, Nazarene, and Baptists. They built their churches without a cannibalistic devouring of their own kind by their renegade preachers. Will your church be the next one that the Hazelip-Shelly type of "change agents" take over? *The change agents are creating an unholy and unsavory mess as they plunge blindly ahead to drive the Madison church of Christ into oblivion much like what happened to the long dead Taylor Boulevard Church of Christ. Which church of Christ is now in the late stages of toppling?*

—37141/2 Belmont Blvd.  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

**SPRING BIBLE  
INSTITUTE  
2002 Lectures Book  
THE JEHOVAH'S  
WITNESSES  
ONLY \$16.00**  
(plus \$2.00 s/h TX residents add \$1.16 tax)

**Contending FOR THE Faith**

**P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77383  
fax: 281.288.0549**

# WHAT IS THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES?

Noah Hackworth

Ezekiel was an outstanding Old Testament prophet. He was taken captive to Babylon with king Jehoiachin about 597 B.C. The captivity lasted 70 years, from about 606 to 536 B.C. It appears that Ezekiel was in Babylon from 597 to about 570 B. C. **Henry H. Halley** comments:

Ezekiel's mission seems to have been to explain the action of God in causing or permitting Israel's captivity. It was because of the unspeakable abominations of which they had been guilty; abominations for which other nations had been blotted out. But for Israel it was punitive. By their punishment they would come to KNOW THAT GOD IS GOD. They did. The Babylonian Captivity CURED the Jews of Idolatry. Up to that time they just would be idolaters. From that day to this, whatever other sins the Jews have been guilty of; they have not been idolaters (Halley's Bible Handbook).

## THE PROPHECY SET FORTH

In Ezekiel 37:1-14, an amazing vision is revealed to the prophet. He is (1) taken out in the Spirit of the Lord and set down in the midst of a valley full of bones; (2) caused to inspect them which he did by encircling them; (3) caused to see that the bones were very dry; (4) asked by the Lord if the bones could live; (5) told to prophesy over the bones; (6) told that "breath" would enter into the bones and they would live, stand upright as an exceeding great army, and finally (7) told the bones, which were the whole house of Israel, dried up with no hope, would come up out of their graves, live, and be placed in their own land. **Cecil B. DeMille** would have lost his mind trying to film this scene.

## AN ERRONEOUS VIEW

We sometimes get closer to the real meaning of a chapter by realizing what it does not mean. This is such an instance. This chapter is not "a plain forecast of the Conversion of the Jews to Christ; as Paul also foretold in Romans 11:15, 2-26" (Halley). Hosea, another Old Testament prophet, give us the correct insight into the passage.

---

## REMINDER!

If your address label has the date

4/01/2002

## IT IS TIME TO RENEW!

Send your renewal to:

*Contending For The Faith*

P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, Texas 77383

---

He says:

O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help. I will be thy king; where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? And thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath (Hosea 13:9-11).



Among other things, this passage proves conclusively that Israel will no more have a temporal king.

## THE PROPHECY EXPLAINED

The explanation of Ezekiel 37 is relatively simple. The chapter itself will tell us what the vision means. It has to do with the restoration of Israel to their own land subsequent to Babylonian Captivity. It is unfortunate that the prophecy is a "sugar stick" for the Mormons, who think it is a prophecy of Joseph Smith, and the premillennialists who think it is a prophecy of the restoration of national Israel. However, verses 15-25 give the correct meaning of the whole vision: "It is evident that this whole prophecy is the pictorial representation of the oneness of Israel and Judah after the return from the captivity" (Wallace).

## LESSONS FOR LEARNING

Ezekiel 37 stands written for our learning (Romans 15:40), suggesting perhaps, several important things God's people today need to restore or recover. They are, spiritual and physical purity followed by doctrinal purity, a spirit of sacrifice, respect for biblical authority, evangelistic zeal, love for one another, prayerful lives, trust in God, worship in spirit and in truth, a love for the Lord's day, and a strong desire to go to heaven (cf., II Corinthians 7:1, Titus 2:1; John 13:34; John 14:1-6; 5:22; 4:24; II John 9).

Though Ezekiel 37 has no literal application today, it does remind us of many things God's people once had, but now need to be recovered; and much of this kind of work is constant because we tend to forget. It is as the apostle Peter said:

Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the truth which is with you. And I think it right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance (II Peter 1:12-13).

Great lessons must be remembered.

—4525 W. Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, California 93277

# REPENTANCE

By Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

A. The difficulty that some will have in entering into heaven is like the experience of the boy who got his hand caught inside an expensive vase. His upset parents applied soapsuds and cooking oil, without success. When they seemed ready to break the vase as the only way to release the boy's hand, the frightened boy cried, "Would it help if I let loose of the penny I am holding?" All too often, people today are unwilling to let loose of the things that are hindering them from entering heaven. They are refusing to RE-PENT.



B. Noah's message from the door of the ark was not, "Something good is going to happen to you today!" Amos was not confronted by the high priest of Israel for proclaiming, "Confession is possession!" Jeremiah was not thrown into a pit for preaching, "I'm OK, you're OK!" Daniel was not thrown into the lion's den for telling the people "positive thinking will move mountains!" John the Baptist was not beheaded for preaching, "Smile God loves you!" Instead, what was the message of all these men of God? A simple one: "REPENT!"

## DISCUSSION

- A. God wants and demands that all repent.
1. Luke 24:46-47
  2. Acts 17:302
  3. 2 Peter 3:9
  4. Revelation 2:5, 16
- B. What will happen if we refuse to repent?
1. Luke 13:3, 5 ... in case we didn't get the message, Jesus repeats it.
  2. Leviticus 26:23-24
  3. Proverbs 1:24-29
  4. Jeremiah 7:13-15
  5. The conclusion: If we refuse to repent we will spend eternity in a devil's hell!
- C. What is repentance?
1. Repentance comes from a Greek word and literally means "to receive afterwards", thus, meaning to perceive and change one's mind or purpose.
    - a. In the N. T. it is always used in a "change for the better."
    - b. It is a change of mind that results in a change of life; forsaking evil and following righteousness.
  2. Matthew 21:28-29 ... here is a change for the better.
  3. Acts 26:20
    - a. Turn to God.
    - b. Do works showing or proving you have repented (Matthew 3:8).
  4. II Corinthians 7:9-10
  5. Repentance is not:
    - a. Sorrow alone— having been caught doing wrong.
    - b. Just quitting the sin—confession of guilt is needed.

- c. Just beginning a new—things must be made right
6. Repentance involves:
- a. Regret
  - b. Resolution
  - c. Reformation
  - d. Restoration
  - e. Restitution
- D. Who should repent?
1. Any one who has sinned.
    - a. I John 3:4
    - b. Romans 3:23
  2. Sins against God.
  3. Sins against our Brethren.
  4. Sins against our fellow man.
  5. Sins of commission or omission.
  6. I believe that sin should be confessed as publicly as it was committed.
    - a. I John 1:9 ... God will graciously forgive and receives to himself every erring child who has genuinely repented and has acknowledged his sin.
    - b. James 5:16 ... public confession of sins is required, for the purpose of:
      - 1) Forgiveness
      - 2) Prayers
    - c. A person should confess publicly when he has committed public sin or when he need the prayers of the church.
    - d. I John 5:16-17 ... We are not to pray for the Lord to forgive the sins of one who will not repent.
      - 1) Sin repented of is a sin not unto death.
      - 2) Sin NOT repented of is a sin unto death.
- E. Why do some refuse to repent?
1. Because some despise correction.
    - a. Jeremiah 5:3
    - b. Hebrews 12:5 ... they had forgotten because they despised correction.
  2. Because of a hardened heart.
    - a. Psalm 95:8-11
    - b. Proverbs 29:1
    - c. Hebrews 3:13
  3. Because some are past feeling.
    - a. Isaiah 42:25
    - b. Ephesians 4:19
    - c. I Timothy 4:2
    - d. Thus, we see the danger of not repenting quickly—our hearts become hardened and soon they go past feeling.
- F. God makes a promise to those who will repent.
1. II Chronicles 7:14
    - a. Prayers heard
    - b. Forgiveness
  2. Isaiah 55:7 ... pardon for sin.
  3. Ezekiel 18:21 ... shall have life.
  4. Matthew 5:4
    - a. Those who mourn over sin so as to repent.
    - b. They will be comforted
  5. In light of these promises, why would anyone refuse to repent, especially in light of the consequences.

## CONCLUSION

- A. Remember, if we refuse to repent we will spend an eternity in a burning hell.
- B. Remember also that we must repent as the Lord has taught.

—24065 Main St.  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104



## JOHN ALLEN GANO CHOSE GOD OVER FAMILY

Paul Vaughn

The study of the Restoration Movement in Kentucky is a panorama of triumph and tragedy. There were hundreds of Kentuckians who choose to seek the simple paradigm in scriptures over the barren and worthless creeds of man. Some chose to forsake all, suffering the criticism and rejection of family and friends to wear the name "Christian."

**John Allen Gano** was one of those stouthearted men of faith to take his stand with God. Among the pioneers to proclaim the Restoration Plea, Gano stood tall in affirming the return to the New Testament. Yet, there are many Christians who have never heard of him, or they have only a passing interest of this courageous soldier of the cross.

John Allen Gano was born in Georgetown, Kentucky on July 8, 1805, just one year after **Barton W. Stone**, **Robert Marshall**, **John Dunlavy**, **Richard M'Nemar**, and **John Thompson** signed the Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery. His parents were **Richard M. Gano** and **Elizabeth Ewing Gano**. Richard was a general in the War of 1812. "His grandparents were Chaplain **John Gano**, and Sarah, his wife, formerly **Sarah Stiles**. Chaplain Gano, a Baptist minister, immersed General **George Washington** during the Revolution."<sup>1</sup>

### EDUCATION

Gano was educated in Bourbon county and Georgetown, Kentucky. In 1816 Barton W. Stone became the principal of the Ritten House Academy in Georgetown. Some of the young men to attend the Academy were **John Rogers**, **Leonard I. Fleming**, and John Allen Gano.

Gano's interests turned to law so he began to prepare for that profession. He obtained a license to practice law from Judge Warren, a prominent jurist in Georgetown. After getting his license to practice law he planned to go to Texas to establish his law office. He was twenty-one years old at that time. While on his trip to Texas, he became extremely sick with hemorrhage of the lung. He was left on the shores of the Ohio River by a steamboat captain to die. During his sickness, Gano made a vow to God that if his life was spared he would become a Christian and commit the rest of his life to preaching the gospel.

### CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY

John Allen Gano grew up in a prominent Baptist family. His grandfather and an uncle were prestigious Baptist preachers. Gano wrote in his *Biographical Notebook* in 1831 about the strong pull his family had on his religious beliefs and how he overcame them to become a Christian. He said: "I had been chatechised (sic) and schooled into Baptists, had been chatechised (sic) and schooled into Baptist sentiments and opinions, my prejudices, my self interest, and my friendships were with them."<sup>2</sup> Gano did not consider his family and friends as the anchor of his soul, so he gave up family and friends to follow the Bible.

To the Bible I looked as the polar Star to direct me; common sense and all the Scripture with which I was acquainted taught me to join, where I could read, think, believe and obey the Truth for myself, untrammelled by creed, confession of faith, church rules, or any other Book or System merely of human invention...I determined therefore God being my helper, to follow no man or men, I would base my faith only on the Word of God.<sup>3</sup>



The Bible was read to Gano as a child. As he grew he began to study for himself, he determined "that immersion was the proper and only method authorized of God."<sup>4</sup> During the summer of 1827, Gano heard the preaching of the gospel by Barton W. Stone, **F.R. Palmer**, and **T. M. Allen**. On July 10<sup>th</sup> he was immersed by T.M. Allen, at Georgetown, Kentucky.

### GANO'S FAMILY DISTRESSED

After his immersion by T. M. Allen, the family of John Allen became very disturbed and upset over his actions. They sent for **Jacob Creath Sr.**, a Baptist minister to convince John to return to the religion of their family. Creath road seventy miles on horseback to encourage him to retrace his steps. Creath appealed to him by the love of his grandfather, Chaplain John Gano, to return to the Baptists.

John Allen Gano laid his hand on the New Testament and said, 'Elder Creath, if you will show me in this book where it says, 'deny yourself, take up your cross and follow your grandfather, I will follow mine through life. But I read it, follow Christ, and I am determined to follow Him until death if it separates me from all the kindred I have on earth.'<sup>5</sup>

What a sterling and honorable example of faith in God! He chose God over family.

John Allen Gano grew up in a very strong denominational family. He was indoctrinated from a boy into the religion of his father, yet he chose to be honest with the word of God. He gave up family and friends to become just a Christian. Why is it that there are so many today who are willing to give up Christianity to gain friendship with the world? Do you think it is the lack of love for God and his word?

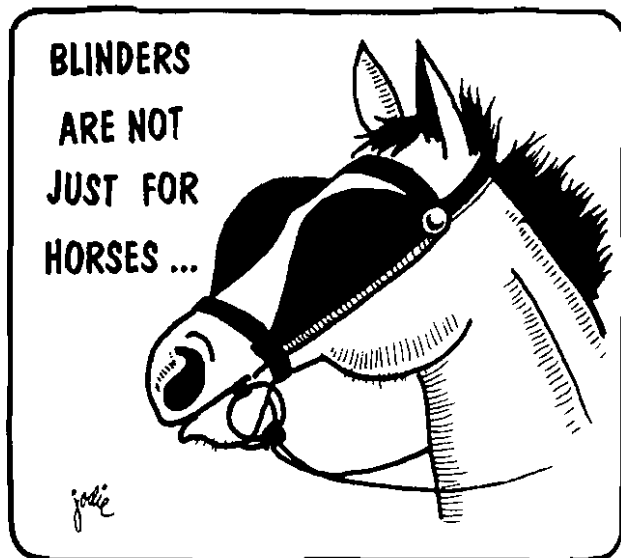
### ENDNOTES

1. Richard M. Gano, John Allen Gano, *Lexington Theological Quarterly*, Volume 17, No. 1, January, 1982, p.34.
2. John Allen Gano, John Allen Gano's *Biographical Notebook*, December, 1831, *Lexington Theological Quarterly*, Volume 17, No. 1, January, 1982, p. 10.
3. Ibid. p.12.
4. Ibid. p.11.
5. Richard Gano, p. 34.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

# Satan Uses Them On Mankind

Jodie Boren



When a farmer hitches a team up to a wagon, a part of the harness he uses is the bridle. There is a flap on the bridle called a “blinder.” This serves to obstruct sideways vision so that the horses will stay focused straight ahead and not be distracted.

Satan uses “blindners” most effectively these days to enslave people to sin. For example, Peter writes of those whose “...eyes are full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin” (II Peter 2:14). They have said in their hearts there is no God (Psalm 53:1). Worldliness blinds them to the spiritual blessings found only in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), wherein is the true cause for rejoicing (Philippians 4:4). We must “...set our affection on things above, not on things of this world” (Colossians 3:2). We are warned in I John 2:15 to “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

The “blindners” of prejudice keep millions in the bonds of denominational error. They, therefore, believe and teach a gospel other than that which the apostles preached and will thus be accursed (Galatians 1:6-9). Today, in so many cases, this perverted gospel is followed not because of searching the scriptures, but because it is what their parents and their parents et al. have believed and practiced. So their pride acts as “blindners” to the truth. Like the song, “That Old Time Religion,” they sing, “It was good for my mother, it was good for my father, and it is good enough for me.” But Jesus says, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me...” (Matthew 10:37).

Multitudes serve Satan unwittingly. We would not want to doubt their sincerity, but they remind us of the Israel of Pauls day. “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to

God for Israel is that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge” (Romans 10:1-2). The blinders of ignorance are inexcusable! God has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). Knowing and following these great truths and commandments of God will set us free from Satan and the bondage of sin (John 8:32). Yet, it is pathetic, and to their shame, that so many people are not able to give an answer to anyone asking them the reason for the hope that they have (I Peter 3:15).



Christians are not free from Satan’s “blindners.” Great numbers of those who profess the name of Christ have no peripheral vision and are unable to see the subtle and damnable teachings of false brethren that are tearing so many congregations apart. These brethren are at ease in Zion! They do not want anyone to “rock the boat.” Yet Paul teaches in I Corinthians 16:13 that we are to be watchful—looking in every direction—and to stand fast in Christ’s teachings and to be strong like men. John said to “...try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (I John 4:1). We must be set for the defense of the gospel (Philippians 1:17) and we cannot do that if we are oblivious to the false doctrine that is so boldly being taught today. Complacency can cause the demise of a congregation.

There is a sense in which all Christians need “blindners”—“blindners” of great faith—so that we may stay focused on Christ who is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2). How can we walk in his steps (I Peter 2:21), if we do not keep our eyes on him? Think also on II Timothy 2:3-4, where Paul pictures a Christian as a good soldier of Jesus Christ who is not distracted from his mission with the affairs of this life. May we be reminded that we serve the same great God that Joshua in the long ago served. God told Joshua to observe to do all that he had commanded Moses and “...turn not from it to the right hand or the left, that thou mayest prosper withersoever thou goes” (Joshua 1:7).

May we remember the words of Peter. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:...” (I Peter 5:8). We must be ever alert “...lest Satan should get an advantage of us...” (II Corinthians 2:11) with his tricks of which “blindners” are some of his best weapons.

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

# EXCURSUS ON FREE WILL

Daniel Denham

The question of human free will is a crucial one, as it impacts all other doctrines pertaining to the nature of man, the nature of God, and the salvation of man. False doctrine on any one of these will lead invariably to false doctrine on the others. Whether men have the power to choose to obey God or not is of especially paramount importance relative to the relationship of these three areas of thought to each other. Several perspectives need to be kept in focus on the matter of free moral agency.

## THE NATURALISTIC PHILOSOPHIES AND HUMAN FREEDOM

The naturalistic philosopher, be he an atheist or an agnostic, posits that man is simply matter in motion, his moral choices – like the brain which makes them – are actually the result of the random and chance combinations of atoms and molecules in keeping with a supposed biological and chemical imperative hiding somewhere in the evolutionary process. What this implies is that under naturalistic man is not really free. He is the product of his genetics (and, some would add, environment). He is not really autonomous in reason and will. His freedom is an illusion. Evolution is said to guide every development not only physically, but psychologically, intellectually, and socially as well.

The fundamental problems with this view are threefold. First, it presumes the fact of evolution and, in turn, the presence of some mechanism that drives it to some inevitable outcome. Neither has been or can be established to exist.

*Second*, it implies a totally amoral state. If choices, including “moral” choices, are predetermined by blind chance, then no real evil can exist. It is morally neutral or totally “unmoral” in nature. Under such a system it would make no difference whether one “murders” another person or not. In fact, by definition, “murder” would not exist. The concept would be a mere “social construct,” or an arbitrary perception, and nothing more.

*Third*, it reduces all thought to random impulses. This concept cannot account for man’s innate sense of moral “oughtness,” the phenomenon of altruism in thought and action, the existence of changes in thought from one position (or view) to another, and for thought itself. Thought appears to come, at least in large part, from a higher source (namely the mind) than simply the mechanistic functioning of the brain. This latter problem involves the brain/mind problem that evolutionary thinking cannot address. Consciousness is more than the functioning of the physical brain. There is an entity – metaphysical in nature though it may be – which actually drives thought. It is an embarrassment to naturalistic philosophy when one who once strongly professed belief in the evolutionary impera-

tive somehow manages to buck the tide of “progress” and regress to belief in supernatural creation! This should be an impossibility, but it does happen and quite frequently. The evolution model does not work. Humans demonstrate the fact of genuine freedom constantly by the process of simply changing their minds about things, beliefs, etc. everyday. If it were never possible to change one’s mind by force of one’s own will and if thought were simply the result of the random action of chemical processes in the brain, then any attempt at reason discussion and persuasion on a matter is doomed to failure from the beginning. When the atheist or agnostic agrees to debate, he invariably implies that his position is false!



## CALVINISM AND HUMAN FREEDOM

The Calvinist admits to the existence of God, but so overdraws the concept of divine sovereignty as to preclude true human freedom. God minutely controls the Universe, including man’s decision making. The only real “free will” is on God’s part. Recently, I heard a Calvinist make that very claim in a radio address. He boasted that he did believe in free will, despite what others accused him of believing. He then said that it was God’s free will that was involved in salvation, not man’s. This, of course, ignores the issue. Some Calvinists contend that God goes so far as to predetermine not only the overt actions, but the very thoughts that precede those actions. Thus, as one has expressed it, “God fore-ordained not only the drunkard’s drinking the drink, but the desire for the drink.” God then punishes the drunkard for drinking the drink!

Some Calvinists hold that God in some mysterious fashion makes the unconditionally elected sinner “willing to believe” after having first regenerated him by direct a operation of the Spirit on his heart. God then justifies the sinner on the basis of his faith, which the sinner has “freely” come to possess by this self-same operation on the otherwise morally dead and totally depraved heart! At the very instance the first impulse of faith stirs within the heart, the sinner is then saved completely, unconditionally, and eternally. In reality, the faith that he has was given arbitrarily and directly by God and involved no cooperation on the part of the sinner. There is, subsequently, no real operation of will on the part of the sinner, though the Calvinist calls it “free will.” The entire position posits a sham that offers the appearance of free will without true freedom. God plays a trick on the human intellect, which turns out fortuitous for the sinner. The heavenly trickery, however, is not exercised on all, as the rest of mankind is arbitrarily – without

real cause or condition – consigned to eternity in Hell. This is the doctrine of double predestination or preterition, which Calvinists are loathe to mention but which is nonetheless an implication of Calvin’s teaching on free will and predestination.

Calvinists even have the temerity to chide those who would point out the arbitrary nature of the entire procedure on God’s part, given Calvinism, for “ignoring” the fact that God chose some to be liberated from bondage or enslavement to sin. Calvinists state that their critics should rather focus on the liberation of the few that God has so chosen and “rejoice” in God’s mercy. They, however, ignore the millions and even billions that God had the power to save through the same procedure but “without cause or condition” chose not to save! They ignore the implication of their doctrine that God is the author of sin and unjust in the punishment of the sinner.

The entire system of Calvinism makes God cruel and arbitrary – a God who forces man to behave in a certain way and then sovereignly punishes them for it! It also makes God the author of sin and respecter of persons, despite Bible teaching (Acts 10:34-35; Col. 3:25). The preaching of God’s word is rendered useless. One who is of the unconditionally elected cannot help but be saved and those not thus elected cannot help but be lost. The condition of both was set from eternity according to Calvin. The preaching of the word of God will not make any difference one way or the other. Some Calvinists quibble on the point that their preaching permits the elect to come to know that they are

the elect. However, this does not militate against the fact that Calvinism implies that the elect, as they conceive the doctrine of election, are in fact already saved and could theoretically be led to realize their state without the gospel. Faith, according to Calvinism, is given to man by direct operation of the Spirit without the intermediary of the word of God, though the word teaches otherwise (cf. Romans 10:17; Acts 18:8). The preaching of the gospel to the lost and the efficacy ascribed to it in divine revelation necessitate the fact of human free will. Like the naturalistic philosopher, the Calvinist refutes his own position on human freedom when he agrees to debate the issue with his opponents. If man cannot change his own will without direct, over-powering of his faculties by the Holy Spirit, then reasoned discourse is useless to him!

#### ARMINIANISM AND HUMAN FREEDOM

The Arminian view of free will does not fair much better than Calvinism’s. It posits a limited and severely crippled freedom that effectively is powerless to make any sort of difference relative to salvation. Arminians, when pressed on the matter, will resort to the standard defenses of Calvinism. Arminianism still requires an arbitrary and unconditional operation of God upon the human heart to effect conversion. This supposedly occurs through Holy Spirit baptism.

According to Arminians, the handicapped will of man, shackled by total depravity, just cannot “get over the hump” so as to be able to respond freely to God’s offer of salvation. It needs a direct jolt from the Spirit to compel belief. The word itself needs “illuminating” to be understood. This illumination is said to take place in the mind of the sinner so that he can come to faith and then instantly be saved. Any view that espouses such aid is necessary for salvation implies that man is really not free in his moral faculties. The Arminian, despite his protests against Calvinism’s excesses, ends up in the same logical quagmire by espousing a view that indicts the justice and goodness of God and makes robots of men.

#### PROVISIONAL VERSUS FUNCTIONAL FREEDOM

Some preachers and theologians postulate other versions of limited free will. They try to skirt the problems of Calvinism and Arminianism, while holding to some form of them, by asserting that man is free, but not so free as to be able to “counter” or “contrary.” The idea is that man is provisionally free, but not functionally free. They hold, basically, that man possesses real freedom, but this freedom is functionally impaired by virtue of God’s fore-knowledge. They reason that if God fore-knows that an act will occur, then that act cannot help but to occur. The will of the agent is then set on doing the act, even in eternity, in the mind of God. The agent cannot then at a later date so alter his choice or choices pertaining to or impacting that act so as to “counter” or act “contrary” to what God fore-knew he would do. He is free and yet not free at the same time and virtually in the same relationships.

The problem with this view is that it suffers from a severe misapprehension of the nature of fore-knowledge and its relationship to human freedom that ultimately leads to

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith**

2001  
Bound Volume

• Only \$8.00  
plus \$2.00 S&H

• P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357  
fax: 281-288-0549

an implicit violation of the law of non-contradiction. Man cannot be both free and not free in the same sense and in the same relationships at the same time. The word "fore-knowledge" is accommodative and really refers to God's omniscience, his all-knowing of everything knowable. He is not limited by time and space, but is essentially transcendent. He sees past, present, and future then as one. He simply knows everything absolutely. While fore-ordination is dependent upon God's fore-knowledge and governed by it, it does not follow that everything God fore-knows he causes to happen. Further, the knowledge of it does not necessitate it happening. Relative to the example cited earlier pertaining to a particular act that God fore-knows will happen. It will happen, but why? Because God fore-knows it will? No. The knowledge of it and its happening are independent of one another as to action. It is thus because the human agent freely chose to make it happen that it happens. God, possessing the capacity of omniscience, saw what the agent freely chooses to do. The foreknowledge of God, incidentally, does not view things contingently as some aver (e.g. the notion of "middle knowledge," which holds that God "knows" all the options or antecedent choices that are available and their consequences), but absolutely. He has, from our time perspective, already seen and thus knows what precisely will occur. The question of "countering" or acting in a "contrary" fashion on the part of the human agent is not really a coherent factor given these parameters. God already knows what the agent will freely do. An individual may change his mind or actions in a variety of ways before carrying out the act in view, but God through his omniscience has already been aware of all such choices and actions and their impact or lack thereof upon the specific act. He still simply knows that the act will occur. He also would know beforehand just as well that all of the various changes preceding it would occur as well. To reason that genuine free will involves an open-ended view relative to divine fore-knowledge is not demanded by the premises.

#### JESUS AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

It was fore-known and even predetermined by God that Jesus Christ would die on Calvary for the sins of the world (Acts 2:23). Yet he was a free moral agent, who possessed the power to refuse to die (Matthew 26:53; John 10:17-18). He was a free moral agent, in the full and proper sense of that term, and yet was fore-ordained to die. God fore-knew that he would die, and Jesus, being not only human but also divine and possessing a unique perspective on the matter, was fully cognizant both of the fact of God's fore-knowledge and fore-ordination and also of his own freedom! He could have exercised his power of choice at any time. He had the power to "counter," but he knew what effect that would have on humanity and of the conflict with the will of the father that such would produce. The result is a wonderful paradox concerning God's son. He had to die for the sins of the world, but he did have a free choice in doing so. Mere humans do not possess this peculiar perspective, though they too are free moral agents. The Bible clearly affirms: A) God fore-knows absolutely what will occur and B) man is a free moral agent. It is incumbent

upon those espousing this view to show that there is some self-contradiction between these two propositions.


#### THE DOCTRINE THAT GOD LIMITS FORE-KNOWLEDGE AND HUMAN FREEDOM

Those who, in trying to defend free will, espouse the idea that God limits his "fore-knowledge" against moral choices so that he does not know some things resort to a position that again misapprehends the relationship between fore-knowledge (omniscience) and human freedom. The view suffers on several points not the least of which are: A) it implies that God must somehow know how not to know; B) it implies that God must know what he is not to know in order that he not know it; and C) it implies therefore that God must have self-imposed amnesia. For God not to know a certain moral choice or act, then he must know what that act is – whether or not it is a moral choice or act in order that he might choose not to know it! God must then impose amnesia on himself in order that he not know that act! (I recommend that one reads the lectures by me on "Omniscience" and by Dub McClish on "Fore-knowledge" in the Power Lectureship book titled *The Godhead*, edited by B.J. Clarke, for fuller discussions of this subject.)

Some have gone so far with this doctrine that they have postulated the notion that God does not with certainty know what will happen, but is "playing dice" with his creation. *The theory holds that God is himself "growing" or "progressing" and that this "process" of growth is seen in the doctrine of fore-knowledge and the tension existing between it and the doctrine of human freedom.* This is the so-called "open" view of God. Process theology then foolishly sacrifices absolute fore-knowledge for human freedom, which sacrifice is as faulty and wrong-headed as that of Calvinism's sacrifice of the latter for the former. Aside from the logical impossibilities of the concept (such as the

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

- Two-year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966
- Applications now being accepted
- Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
Fax (901) 751-8098

fact that God must by definition be absolute in his attributes and thus cannot be in the process of growth in any meaningful sense), a God who is “growing” may in actuality not be up to the task. The result is that he may just lose or be stalemated in his ultimate purposes. It then becomes a matter of probability of out come for deciding whether one will serve or not serve, do good or do evil, worship Him or even worship Satan! It would all depend on one’s perception as to who is winning this game of chance. No certitude at all could attach itself to an outcome. One role of the dice by such a God might come up “snake eyes” and the contest be decided in the favor of some other alternative.

Others, in trying to defend the idea of limited fore-knowledge in the face of prophecies that fore-tell of the outcome of specific moral choice, have devised the notion *that human freedom is real, except when and where prophecy was involved*. This view holds that all moral choices are genuinely free, except those choices that were prophesied of beforehand by God. Thus, the agents in carrying out the prophecy were not free in any real or meaningful sense. They had no choice but to do what they did. This view says that Cyrus the Great, for example, had no choice but to issue his decree and permit the Jews to return to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem (Isa. 45:1ff.). Apply this thinking to the case of Judas Iscariot, whom Jesus knew beforehand would betray Him. If God could require an individual to commit an evil act and then punish him for it, then why would not God be unjust in so doing? In other words, if God would be unjust requiring such of one who was not involved in the fulfilling of a specific prophecy, then why would he not likewise be unjust in requiring if of one involved in the fulfilling of a specific prophecy? If he is not unjust in the latter case, then why would he be unjust in the former? If he can do so for a few, why not then for most or even all? Brethren who espouse this particular view need to address this matter. The view has a definite tinge of Calvinism in it, though the idea of limited fore-knowledge, which it attempts to defend, is intended to counter the advance of Calvinism into the church! In this noble aim it fails by letting it in through the backdoor.

#### THE “BASIC ASSUMPTION”

The basic assumption in the position is that fore-ordination, which is said to inhere in prophecy, necessarily precludes human freedom. However, fore-ordination (or predestination, which is another translation of the same Greek word in the Bible) is governed by and operates with God’s fore-knowledge, which takes into account all that men will freely choose to do. This lends to the conclusion that in some fashion God in his infinite wisdom and by virtue of his omniscience (fore-knowledge) is able to so arrange things (fore-ordination) so as to take all these matters into account and, thus, not violate man’s free will. The position also ignores the fact that the fulfillment of a prophecy sometimes was conditioned upon the reaction of certain to an implied message of pardon on the basis of repentance (e.g. the Book of Jonah and the message that Nineveh would be “overthrown” in forty days) or conditioned upon some other eventuality. If prophecy precludes free will, then such cases are reduced to absurdities. The conditions would be virtually impossible to meet. Nineveh’s repentance would have been impossible or, at best, ineffectual. God is fully capable of doing what he says he would do and of fulfilling his prophecies while not violating the freedom of the human agents that may be involved. He who keeps count of the very number of the hairs on the head of every person who ever lives is surely able to do far beyond what we mortals have ever dared conceive in thought!

The battle over free will is a crucial one. It is one that we must be careful to wage diligently and prayerfully. It is a battle for the minds and souls of men. It will impact the teaching that we do on the nature of God and salvation.

Let us not be afraid to affirm the fore-knowledge of God and the free moral agency of man. Joshua 24:15 commands, “...Choose you this day whom ye will serve...” The free moral agency of man is crucial and establishes key distinctions between the Christian system and the doctrines of men on the nature of man.

—117 Owens Avenue  
Rutherford, Tennessee 38369

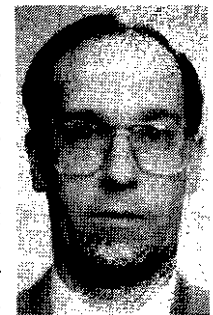
## Current Events that Concern Christians...

### Rosie O’Donnell, Government Research, and Tim Woodroofs’ Advice

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

On Gay Adoption, Everything’s Coming Up “Rosie” For years, celebrities have tried to sell us on everything from dish detergent to automobiles. While Rosie O’Donnell has America’s attention, she plans to sell us on the virtues of gay parenting. Her “coming out” party, celebrated by liberals and homosexual activists, is nothing less than an attempt to legitimize the gay movement and its impetus for same-sex marriage. Yet research has consistently shown the superiority of children being raised by their own mother and father who are married to one another.

Couple that with research on the gay lifestyle in general, and a number of pathologies plague homes with same-sex parents, including higher rates of promiscuity, physical disease, mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence. A recent overseas publication, Children Australia, points out that children of gay parents suffer academic deficits as well. For the liberals





who cry discrimination, this isn't about prejudice, merely putting the child's best interest first. Homosexual parenting trivializes the contributions of a mother or father by intentionally depriving children of one or both parents. To evoke sympathy, Rosie claims that "half a million kids are in foster care" across the country. While the National Adoptive Information Clearinghouse confirms the statistic, they note that of those, only 110,000 children are eligible for adoption. The others have not had their parental rights terminated—nor is it the goal to do so. Instead, they're in temporary foster care to either protect them from an abusive home or as part of a community-based corrections program. If Americans are truly concerned about the lack of prospective parents, they should fight to eliminate the bureaucratic red tape, which makes it difficult for heterosexual families to adopt, not lower the standards of suitability (Family Research Council, 3/14/02).

\*\*\*\*\*

In 1995, government researchers asked teens over age 15 whether they'd had sexual intercourse by age 14; 19 percent of girls and 21 percent of boys said yes. In 1988, the numbers were 11 percent for girls and the same 21 percent for boys, according to the Washington, D.C.—based research group Child Trends. Data for 2002 are just being collected. Another study, using different methods, followed 12-14 year old students between 1997 and 1999 and found 16 percent of girls and 20 percent of boys reported sex at 14 or younger, according to Child Trends researcher Jennifer Manlove. As for oral sex, a 2000 study from the Alan Guttmacher Institute in New York caused a firestorm by suggesting that more young teens were engaging in that activity — possibly as a way of remaining technical virgins in the age of abstinence education. That study was based on scattered, anecdotal reports of increased oral herpes and gonorrhea of the throat. No nationwide, scientific study has actually asked young teens, or older teens for that matter, whether they have oral sex. But many educators and parents have heard the alarms and are acting now. Krystal McKinney directs a program that offers sex education and life-skills training to middle-school girls in the Washington, D.C., area. Since the 2000 Guttmacher oral sex report, she and her staff have redoubled efforts to make sure that girls

understand the risks. Kim Painter "The sexual revolution hits junior high" USA Today, March 16, 2002, 1A (<http://www.usa-today.com>). (as reported in Ed. Net Briefs, 3/16/02) (Unfortunately, the answer according to the article is more sex education. This is one of the reasons the problem is increasing. The children must be taught that sex outside of marriage is wrong. Only a foundation in proper morality will stop such. —mtm)

\*\*\*\*\*

Tim Woodroof is interviewed in the March 2002 issue of the Christian Chronicle. He did have some interesting things to say, but the following is of concern. When asked why members do not know the Bible like they should he answers, "We trot out all the usual excuses. We're busier these days. TV is undermining literacy in general. We are becoming a nation of watchers rather than readers. Attention spans have atrophied. And we trot out one point that is less excuse than indictment. Our forefathers may have known their Bibles better. At least they could list the minor prophets. But did it help them love each other better? How come they didn't get grace? Why did they spend so much time arguing over Acts when the Gospels were there begging for attention? I think we've concluded that the ability to list facts about the Bible doesn't mean that you know which facts really matter" (page 20). (Mr. Woodroof seems to think that if you know and understand the Bible that everyone will just always get along. But that is not reality. Satan will always manage to convince some to go against God's word. And when that happens, debate and discipline must occur. Grace does not negate proper discipline when needed. I do not ever remember preachers forgetting and ignoring the Gospels in preaching when I was growing up. Mr. Woodroof throws up a smoke screen with his last statement. No one would argue with it. Denominationalists have had this problem since they formed their "churches." But this statement has nothing to do with his "take" on past generations' preachers. If anyone is ignoring some of scripture for other parts of scripture it is those who deny that we live under law today. It is those who teach that we live under a love letter instead of a pattern. —mtm)

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

## One Woman's Perspective...

### LOVIN'S

Annette B. Cates

I confess. I forgot to have a prayer with my three year old grandson when I tucked him into bed recently. It is not often that I get to do so, and I am not familiar with our grandchildren's bedtime rituals, but that is no excuse. I really should have thought to put Trey to bed with a prayer.

I had given Trey a hug and a kiss after having rocked and read to him. He seemed so sleepy that I thought he would be sound asleep in mere moments. A few minutes later, however, I heard him call out, "Nonnie, you forgot my lovin's." I thought, "This one time I'll indulge him with an extra hug and kiss," but I really did not want to start a problem. I entered the room and gave him another hug and kiss. Then he said it,



"You didn't forget the hugging and kissing lovin'. You forgot the praying lovin'."

We learn from little children. "...and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6). What sweeter way can there be to express the special time of bedtime devotional and prayer? Several thoughts came to my mind. On a personal level, it reminds me that our sons and daughters-in-love are doing their best to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We can ask for no greater blessing for our grandchildren. No matter where life takes him, Trey will never forget his "lovin's"—his family time with God. But, to apply this to all of us, how many of us think of prayer as a time of loving?

When we love someone, we want to be with him/her as much as possible. We want to talk together, spend time together, and learn all we can about that person. If we love God, we will want to talk with him through the avenue of prayer, worship him at every opportunity, and study his word. God should be the focus of our lives. All too often, just as we tend to take our mates and other family members for granted, we neglect to include God in our everyday activities.

We should begin every day with a prayer, and close it the same way. We should not sit down to a meal without an open recognition of the source of our blessings. As we go about our daily activities, we should do so with a prayer in the heart. **“Pray without ceasing”** (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Prayer should come as easily to us as talking with our closest friend, for that is what it really is. Prayer makes us aware of God’s blessings, of his power, and of our relationship to him. See how right Trey is—prayer is loving.

Often, we use prayer exclusively as a forum for asking for favors from God. Many of us forget to pray until we are in trouble, or tragedy has struck or is about to do so. Sometimes our requests are as petty as asking for a close-up parking space at the grocery store. Or, our requests are selfishly asking for material goods. When this type of prayer is all that we pray to God, there is a tendency to write God off when we do not get the answer we expected.

God always answers prayer. His answers are “yes,” “no,” and “maybe later.” Answers are not always obvious. The years may go by and in retrospect we see how God really did answer. In 1 Samuel 1, we read of Hannah’s prayers for a son. She had prayed fervently for years. In time, he answered her prayer. Had she given up on God? She had a better understanding of prayer than many of us.

Prayer is much, much more than asking God for what we think we need at the time we want it. Prayer is our opportunity to praise God. In fact, every prayer should open and close with praise for God. Praise includes our gratitude for the many blessings God has bestowed upon us.

## **The Last Word...**

# **THE CYCLE OF HISTORY**

Eddie Whitten

History reveals a sobering fact. It is a fact that God’s people have a fickle relationship with him. At times people are faithful and enjoy the blessings of God’s favor. That alone should be incentive enough to remain faithful. It is frightening enough to live in a world of hate, violence and inhumanity even with the blessings that come with faithfulness. It is unimaginable for those who claim to be faithful, to contemplate having to live without hope of a better time and place. All one should need to tremble at such a prospect is to observe the plight of the many godless societies scattered throughout the world. Squalor beyond description; suffering that should not be experienced by anyone; void of shelter, food, clothing, hygiene, health care and dignity all attest to life without hope, and without God. Yet, in the face of all of this, God’s people do not seem to learn about the cycle of history.

### **THE CYCLE IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES**

The classic example of the cycle of history is found in the book of Judges. The period covered is about 336 years from the death of Joshua to the selection of Saul as the first king of Israel. It was during this time that the cycle is repeated over and over again. The people are faithful to God

Through praise we acknowledge his mighty works and power. In the model prayer of Matthew 6:9-13, we observe that this is the way that Jesus opened and closed his prayer when teaching the disciples how to pray. Only after having praised God, do we ask for our needs (verse 11). Further, prayer is the way we confess our sins to the father, and ask for his forgiveness (verse 12). Then, we ask for God’s protection, spiritually as well as physically (verse 13). Prayer is loving, and it will bring us closer to God. It is up to us to use this avenue of approach to the throne of God.

Prayer is a time for serious contemplation of God and of our relationship to him. It is a time for showing reverence toward an awesome God, by whom all things were created and in whom rests all power. We live in an age of flippancy where things spiritual seem to have lost their significance. Once, I heard a preacher state that he was so thankful he could call God “daddy.” This was not the attitude shown toward God by the Psalmist, **“O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker”** (Psalm 95:6). Even the heathen approach their idols with reverence. Can we do less?

**“Lord, teach us to pray”** was the request made of Jesus by the disciples in Luke 11:1. This should be our attitude. God teaches us how to pray through his word. If a three year old recognizes the love involved in prayer, do we? Yes, Trey was right—prayer is lovin’.

—9194 Lakeside Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

for a time, and then a departure occurs. The change is slow but deliberate. Certain influences come in that are soft and subtle but they are effective. If at first disruptive suggestions are not accepted, they are not pressed until later. The time will come when they will not seem to be so disruptive any more (the precise modus operandi of the present day “change agents”). After so long a time, sometimes many years, the departure became complete and God’s people were pressed into servitude. It was during those times that the people suffered tragically and unnecessarily at the hands of godless powers.

When oppression became practically intolerable, some began to come to their senses and cried out for help. It was only when they realized that no man could help them that they turned to God for deliverance. God, in his longsuffering and compassion, always sent a Judge to deliver his people. Thus the cycle was complete. From faithfulness to departure, to oppression to repentance, to deliverance again back to faithfulness.



The people of old did not learn from the cycle of history and all through the days of the kings and prophets followed the same path to destruction. The Northern kingdom of Israel came to an end at the hand of the Assyrians in 722 B.C. The Southern kingdom of Judah was taken into Babylonian captivity finally in 586 B.C. For both kingdoms, their intimate relationship with God was destroyed. In spite of all of God's warnings and pleadings, the people never learned.

#### THE CYCLE IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

Jesus purchased the New Testament church with his blood (Acts 20:28) by his sacrifice on the cross. His church is pure. It was God's means of providing sinful man the means of returning to him in penitence with salvation as its reward. The perfect relationship was now available to all men everywhere, Jew or Gentile. All one had to do was to follow the divine directions to heaven. God had done his part. Now it was up to man to do his part. The Bible tells us that God's commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:3). It would seem that mankind should be able to make the proper judgment.

The apostle Paul knew that the cycle of history would repeat itself. He told the Ephesian elders, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). It would not be too long before what Paul said would come true. There was a great apostasy in the latter part of the first century which continued for many, many years. When the people became oppressed to the point of helplessness, they again turned to God for help. The church was restored and became active and functional. For many years, the church grew into a viable entity and flourished. It could be said that the cycle of history could now show that God's people were faithful to him again.

#### THE CYCLE CONTINUES

Again, it would seem that people could learn from history, but that is sadly not the case. As it has happened so many times in the past, apostasy has struck once more. Many of the people of God have opted to depart from the faith and go chasing after false gods (denominationalism, humanism, materialism, modernism, etc.). **Charles Darwin**, in the 1840's, gave hope for an alternative to those who refused to believe in God. His godless theory of evolution drew millions into apostasy. Since the poison pen of **Benjamin Spock** in the 1960's promised deliverance from authority of any kind, millions more have departed from "the establishment."

It is sad that so many who were touted as scholars in the Holy scriptures have closed their eyes to what is written to one, or more, of the kingdoms of this world. It would require too much time and space to name, even if we could, all the individual elements of apostasy that has lured so many people away from God. We can sum all the causes into three categories: (1) The lust of the flesh, (2) the lust of the eyes, or (3) the pride (vainglory) of life, all of which are sin.

#### THE CYCLE NEEDS TO BE BROKEN

The end result is that the glorious church of our Lord has lost uncounted thousands who, if they do not repent before they die, will be lost in eternal condemnation. The cycle of history needs to be broken, and quickly. It can be if members of the church can come to the understanding that God is still the supreme authority and power of our life. The time will come (it always has) that the lure of the world will turn into the pig pen of Luke 15. Then will those that departed who are left come to themselves and seek the way back to God through repentance. It is our firm and sincere hope that it will not be too late. The cycle of history needs to be broken!

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

## "It's Not My Fault"

[The following brief article comes from Tom Moore. Tom sends a multiplicity of articles via e-mail to various people. This particular article centers in on a subject that is as hurtful to the church and society as the various "anti" and "liberal" doctrines that have and are besieging the church of our Lord. Facing up to reality and who really is the blame for a problem is something some folks refuse to do. —Editor]

Man is inclined, when he is wrong, to lay the blame on someone else. He is like the small boy who was standing on the cat's tail. The mother, hearing the terrible outburst from the cat, called from the next room, "Tommy, stop pulling the cat's tail!" Tommy yelled back, "I'm not pulling the cat's tail - I'm standing on it. He's doing the pulling."

Is this not what Adam and Eve did in the garden of

Eden in Genesis 3:12-13. Adam blamed the woman for his sin, and Eve blamed the serpent for her transgression.

Many in the Lord's church have the "it's not my fault" mentality. They either make excuses or blame someone else for their sins, short comings, or failures to do good. It is time to take an honest look at ourselves.

When in Lubbock, please visit

**SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
8501 Quaker Avenue • Lubbock, Texas  
(806) 794-5008  
Tommy J. Hicks, Preacher

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>
Bible Study 9:00 a.m.	Ladies' Bible Class 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 9:55 a.m.	<b>Wednesday</b>
Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study 7:30 p.m.

# 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—

**Cambridge**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun: 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); [www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org](http://www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org). Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; [www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org](http://www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org) and [www.Myth-and-Mystery.org](http://www.Myth-and-Mystery.org).

## —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, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. 770-382-6775. E-mail: [bdgayton@juno.com](mailto:bdgayton@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.

**Rockwood**—Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun: 10, 11 a.m., Wed: 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## —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 Bob Patterson, 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](mailto: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. [www.churchesofchrist.com](http://www.churchesofchrist.com)

**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: [portlandcoc@juno.com](mailto:portlandcoc@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.

## Classifieds...

**FULL TIME MINISTER** needed for Central Church of Christ, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. If you are interested or know someone who may like to come and work with us, please call 540.896.1417 or write: Central Church of Christ, 822 Country Club Rd., Harrisonburg, VA 22802, Att: Warren L. Good.

**CLASSIFIED ADS**—\$2.00 per line per month. For a complete listing of ad sizes and rates see Advertising Policy and Rates on page 2.

# What Is Happening To The Church?

- WHY ARE CHURCHES OF CHRIST NO LONGER GROWING AS FAST AS THEY ONCE DID?
- WHY DO WE HEAR FREQUENTLY OF CHURCHES DIVIDING, ELDERS RESIGNING, AND PREACHERS QUITTING?
- WHATEVER HAPPENED TO DISTINCTIVE, CHRIST-CENTERED, "BOOK, CHAPTER, AND VERSE" PREACHING?
- IS THE CHURCH CHANGING DOCTRINALLY?
- WHY DO SOME FELLOWSHIP DENOMINATIONS AND TEACH THE LORD'S CHURCH IS JUST ANOTHER DENOMINATION?
- WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DANGERS FACING THE LORD'S CHURCH TODAY?

*These and related questions are discussed in a twenty-five page booklet, on an audio cassette and videotape, and are available upon request.*

Contact us today for your free copy  
DULUTH CHURCH OF CHRIST  
3239 HIGHWAY 120 • DULUTH, GA 30096  
Telephone: 770-476-2159 • Email: [duluthcofc@duluthcofc.org](mailto:duluthcofc@duluthcofc.org)

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith™**  
Post Office Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT# 1863



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## DANNY LESTER BOX— A GOOD MAN GONE HOME

On April 22, 2002 at 11 a.m. family and a great host of friends gathered at the East Pointe Church of Christ building, Cottondale, Alabama in memory of Danny Box. Danny had stepped into eternity on April 19 after undergoing treatment for heart arrhythmia and complications arising during it. Not far from where Danny preached his mortal remains repose beneath the sacred mound in Memory Hill Gardens. Mortality waits there for the last trump and with it the resurrection of just men to life eternal. What a day of rejoicing that will be!

Survivors include his wife **Patricia Howton Box** and their children **Annie Elizabeth Box** and **Joseph Daniel Box**; his parents, brother and sister **C. H. Box**; a brother **Tom Box** of Wichita Falls, Texas; a sister **Kathy Rutkowski** of Gardendale, Alabama; Patricia's parents, brother and sister **Bob Howton**.

Those participating in the funeral and grave side service were **Keith Mosher, Michael Hatcher, Andy Cates, Dale Hubbert, Joel Wheeler, Lynn Parker, and Carl Porter**. Pall Bearers were: **Matthew Oliver, Jon Hamilton, Bradley Howton, Roth Feltman, Bill Webb, Richard Rice, Ken Dean, Gary Box, Carl Porter, John Fitzpatrick, and Greg Dixon**.

### LIFE IS FILLED WITH SWIFT TRANSITION

Over thirty years ago my wife, **Joann**, was in school with Danny in Freed-Hardeman College. However, it was when Danny came to the Bellview Lectures in Pensacola,



JUNE 1, 1951-APRIL 19, 2002

Florida several years ago that I met him. He was the kind of person you were glad to meet and count as a friend. He wanted to do right as the Bible defines the right and he spent his life accordingly.

Danny contributed several articles to *Contending for the Faith* as well as other gospel papers. I have one of his articles now and in the month of his death one ran in *CFTF*. He also spoke on several lectureships each year. The last time I saw Danny at this year's *Memphis School of Preaching Lectures* Danny gave me two of his articles. He had spoken twice on the *Spring Bible Institute Lectures* and had agreed to do adjunct teaching in SBI.

As a friend Danny will be missed. Indeed, my mind has not yet come to grips with the reality of his demise. But as a faithful child of God and gospel preacher he will be greatly and sorely missed. How the kingdom of our Lord needs more preachers of the caliber of Danny Box.

Danny earned his living working in the nursing profession. But, he also preached for the church in Cottondale, Alabama. Indeed, for some time he did so without receiving remuneration for his work. He loved the Lord, the church, along with preaching and defending the gospel. He was not a backbiter, talebearer, or a gossip. He was a good man—as good is defined in the divine volume. Thus, he went about doing “good.” He loved people and he certainly loved their souls. He was God's man.

(Continued on Page 5)



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXXIII, No. 6

June/2002

David P. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief and Publisher  
jbrow@charter.net

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383; Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

## Editorial...

# IS IT A SIN TO EAT IN THE CHURCH BUILDING?

I have worded the question serving as the title of this article in the way it is most often asked. It is, therefore, not as precise as it ought to be. It is herein worded accordingly because those who ask it see things in the traditional way we in the U. S. understand the place(s) where the church meets. Later in this study I will word the question more precisely and examine it more closely.

## EXPEDIENTS

In answering this question we must understand that we are working in the area of expediency (the discharging of a Bible obligation in the quickest and best way possible). The direct statements, examples, and implications of the Bible in general and the New Testament in particular place biblical obligations upon us.

Man did not invent the manner in which words communicate. Thus, this is not a man-made approach to the study of the Bible. It is taking note of the nature of language and how it communicates. Indeed, the communicable element of any language is found in words (signs of ideas or vehicles of thought) and their relationship with one another in direct statements, examples and what they imply.

The following scriptures pertain to expediency. Paul wrote: **"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any"** (I Corinthians 6:12). Later in the same epistle Paul wrote: **"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not"** (I Corinthians 10: 23). Paul also wrote, **"Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful"** (I Corinthians 7:25). Later in the same context he penned, **"But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God"** (I Corinthians 7:40).

With every biblical obligation there are options whereby and through which the obligation may be discharged. This is the premise from which Paul is working in the remarks to the Corinthian brethren in the preceding quotes. We determine which option(s) to use on the basis of the advantage it has over the other options. Moreover, what expedites the discharging of a certain obligation today may not be expeditious five years from now. Thus, with certain obligations that which was expeditious in discharging them in the first century church may not be expeditious today. Or, what is expeditious in the U. S. may not be expeditious in New Guinea. Circumstances alter cases. However, *obligations remain the same regardless of time, culture, society, government and the like.*

## IF NO OBLIGATION, THEN NO EXPEDIENT

There is no expediency if there is no inherent advantage in the option. Again, this is exactly the thesis of Paul's reasoning in the preceding quoted verses. Thus, unless there is an obligation there can be no expediency. And, if there is no Bible authority for a practice there is no obligation. Moreover, Paul made it clear in I Corinthians 6:12 that an action may be authorized, but not expedient or advantageous to Christian living. That is the case because all authorized things may not have the element of advantage found therein. A correct understanding of these fundamental principles of hermeneutics is fundamental and essential in arriving at a correct answer to the question of which this article is concerned.

Buildings, etc. fall into the realm of expedients. Thus, they help discharge some of the obligations placed on Christians by God's authoritative word. Buildings and land, therefore, are comparable to song leaders, song books, public address systems, power point presentations, over head projectors, chalk and marker boards, baptisteries, lights, heating, air conditioning, fans, the shade of a tree, concordances in the Bible, communion trays, and so on.

With the preceding matters in mind imagine someone in the first century putting the question serving as the title of this editorial to the apostles. The apostles could have answered the question with another question. It could have been, "What do you mean by 'church building'?" Understanding that many times the early church met in houses wherein members made their homes, it would be ridiculous for a first century Christian to ask whether it is sin to eat in the houses where Christians lived.

In the New Testament there is authority for the church to own, rent, borrow, or as a gift receive land and/or buildings wherein the church may meet to discharge the obligations laid upon her by the authority of the scriptures (Colossians 3:17). The place to meet is not obligatory. It is the assembly and what is done in the assembly that is obligatory. However, there is not a direct statement, example, or implication in the New Testament that indicates that any congregation of God's saints mentioned therein owned land and buildings as most churches of Christ in the United States do today.

The divine record reveals by direct statement that the early church met in the temple (Acts 2:46), houses wherein members made their homes (Romans 16:5; I Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 2), and the third floor of a building (Acts 20:8, 9). It is important to note that not one or all of these accounts together constitute an "exclusive pattern" for where the church is to meet, thus excluding any other places the church may meet or use in helping to discharge its obligations to God. (In fact it would be interesting to hear how those who teach the false "exclusive pattern" doctrine in other areas attempt to justify themselves in ignoring it in the area of what is scriptural regarding church buildings and grounds.)

There was an "assembling" that was common to those addressed in the Hebrews epistle (Hebrews 10:25). However,

## In This Issue . . .

Danny Lester Box— A Good Man Gone Home David P. Brown	1
<i>Editorial...</i> Is It a Sin to Eat in the Church Building David P. Brown	2
Grace and Works Kevin D. Beard	6
Religions are Retooling to Keep Face With Fast-Changing World! Marvin L. Weir	8
"I'm Not His Judge" Brock Hartwigsen	9
Teach No Other Doctrine Gary McDade	10
You "Ben-Had" Jeff Sweeten	11
Avoiding and Evading the Most Obvious Truth Bruce R. Curd	12
"They Believe Others More Than Those Things Which Were Spoken By Paul" Steven D. Cline	15
Bultmann and Demythology Wayne Coats	17
Recommended Reading: "Jehovah's Witnessess" Gary W. Summers	18
<i>Current Events That Concern Christians...</i> Ecumenical News, the Intent of Rock Music and Lesbian Scout Leaders Mark McWhorter	20
<i>Biblical Questions...</i> What if There is No Church of Christ in Your Area? Noah Hackworth	21
<i>Sermon Outline...</i> The Valley of the Dry Bones Tom Moore	22
Expediencies and Hobbyism Proven Bill Jackson	24

the scriptures are silent as to the place they assembled. Furthermore, the biblical fact that the church assembled implies a place for the church to assemble. If that is not the case, then let someone demonstrate how the church may assemble without a place to assemble. If a person is of the mind to attempt to show how a church can assemble without a place to assemble, I have nothing to offer that can help that mentality.

In this given case of the church assembling, one guiding question for then and now that needed consideration to determine the most expedient place to assemble was/is, "Will it be a place conducive for the discharging of the obligations incumbent on such an assembly of Christians".

#### IT IS A QUESTION OF OPTIONS

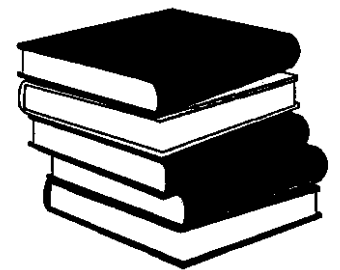
Notice again, it is not a question of obligation, but it is a question of what options are available from which to choose to best expedite the obligation. Thus, an expedient action (the option with the most advantage for carrying out the action) is subordinate to the action it is expediting. An authorized action (the thing we are obligated to do) may be done in different ways, possibly different times, by different people in different places. However, the action to be performed (the obligation authorized for man to discharge) must not be changed or altered in any way.

Let us analyze the question, "Is it a sin to eat in a church building?" The question asks, "Is it a sin..." to engage in a certain action? Since sin is the "transgression of the law" (I John 3:4), the question is asking if the performance of a certain action constitutes "the transgression of the law". The person wants to know if it is a transgression of the law to eat (consume food) in a certain place (the church building). What is the meaning of "church building"? As far as I know it is a building or structure wherein the church may do some of the things God has obligated the church to do. It is an aid or an expedient that helps the church discharge some of her obligations to God. In actuality the question is seeking to know if it is a transgression of God's law to consume food in a structure that expedites some of the actions the church by Biblical authority is obligated to perform.

That structure may be a tent, a brush arbor, a tree under the boughs of which the church may meet, various kinds of open sided pavilions, someone's house, a barn, public or private auditoriums, a gymnasium, a courtroom, a conference room, a school room, a cafeteria, upper room, basement, and so on. Now let us go back to the question under consideration and substitute some of these specific edifices for the word "structure" or "building."

## Attention School Teachers!

There are a number of school teacher openings available with the Beeville Independent School District. If you, or any brethren you know, are looking for a school teaching position opening or have been planning to relocate but have been concerned about being able to attend and work with a faithful congregation of the Lord's church, we hope that you will consider the school teaching opportunities available in Beeville, Texas. Information concerning job openings with the Beeville Independent School District can be viewed online at:  
BISD Home page Address: [www.beevilleisd.esc2.net](http://www.beevilleisd.esc2.net)  
BISD E-MAIL: [webmaster2@beevilleisd.esc2.net](mailto:webmaster2@beevilleisd.esc2.net)



If we can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Church of Christ at 1701 N. Adams Street, Beeville, Texas, by phone at (361) 358-4428 or Bob Patterson at (361) 358-5760, Fax: (361) 358-3743, or at our website: [www.churchofChristBeeville.org](http://www.churchofChristBeeville.org)

1. Is it a transgression of the law to consume food under the boughs of a tree where the church customarily meets to worship and conduct Bible studies?

2. Is it a transgression of the law to consume food in a cafeteria in which the church worships and conducts Bible studies?

3. Is it a transgression of the law to consume food in a house belonging to one of the member's of the church in which the church meets to worship and conduct Bible studies?

#### PERVERTING THE LORD'S SUPPER

While you are thinking about these questions and the matters of expediency previously discussed, consider the following verse that is often used in an effort to prohibit eating in an edifice in which the church meets for worship and Bible study. It reads, **"What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not"** (I Corinthians 11:22). If we ignore the environment or context of this verse and think of it as an order without criterion, then the only place one could consume food or drink would be in his/her home. With this kind of lame thinking and exegesis consistently applied homeless people would starve. We would have no authority to eat in restaurants, go on picnics, or eat in the school cafeteria. Only in one's own home could one eat. And, if the church met in your home you could not eat in it. What a dilemma—the only place the Lord permits you to eat is in your own house where you reside, but the church meets in your own house and, since it is a sin to eat in the church building, you cannot even eat in your own house. Well, so much for harmonizing scriptures.

## Danny Box

(Continued From Page 1)

Danny had the wonderful habit of getting his wife, Patricia, to prepare cakes for some of us. And, jokingly I told him as long as he was willing to bring one of her cakes with him he could be on our SBI lectures. I miss the friendly banter in which we engaged. Danny was a ray of sunshine in an otherwise dark world.

#### SWEET ARE THE PROMISES

I, along with many others, were made happier and better because we knew and were friends with our brother in the Lord, Danny Box. To Patricia, Elizabeth, Daniel and all of Danny's family we continue to extend our sympathy to and

What about water fountains in the church building? What about the "anti" preacher eating his lunch in the building while preaching against "eating in the building"? What about mothers nursing their babies in the church building? What about bottle-feeding babies in the church building? What about feeding Cheerios to the kids in the classrooms or in the auditorium of the church buildings? What about ole grandpa Smith routinely handing out candy that kids readily eat in the church building? What about toilets (I suppose it is scriptural for food in the church building to move one way but not the other)? Just think, we get upset over the Baptist who cannot understand Acts 2:38!

In many instances the church owns the house and grounds where the preacher lives. May the preacher's family eat in the house where they make their home? Again, what if the church is meeting in that house, does that mean the preacher and his family cannot eat where they sleep, take baths, and so on? Where is the consistency in this matter when the preacher who lives in a church owned house preaches against eating in another church owned house, but he and his family consistently eat in the church owned house in which they live. O consistency, thou art a jewel!

Surely such sad reasoning as noted in the previous paragraph will cause one to rethink what I Corinthians 11:22 actually teaches. What were the Corinthians doing that Paul by the Holy Spirit condemned? They were combining a common meal with the Lord's Supper. Thus, the Lord's Supper is perverted. It is the assembling of the church to worship God as he has authorized that is the obligatory action, not where the church happens to be able to assemble. Please think on these things.

—David P. Brown, *Editor-in-Chief*

offer our prayers as you labor to adjust to this untimely loss. Always remember to look **"unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith"** and God will see you through all difficulties (Hebrews 12:2). Let us all be faithful to the Lord that we may in that eternal day walk the streets of gold in the city foursquare (I Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10).

Of her father Elizabeth wrote,

Let all who knew my Daddy, seek comfort in the fact that he is in paradise waiting for us. He is my Daddy; My Hero; My Preacher; My Protector; My best Friend! May we never forget him, and his one desire, to take as many souls with him to Heaven as possible.

—David P. Brown, *Editor-in-Chief*

# GRACE AND WORKS

Kevin D. Beard

For many years the religious world in general has seen some kind of problem in the coexistence of grace and works in man's salvation. Not being able to differentiate between the different types of works the Bible discusses, they have opted for the false idea that man is saved completely by God's grace apart from any works that man may do. This has manifested itself in different ways. **John Calvin** taught that when man is born, he inherits the sin of Adam, and is wholly inclined to evil. Thus the extending of God's grace is left completely to God. Calvin taught that God has chosen those to whom he would give his grace and that number cannot be altered. Others teach that God will give his grace to those who merely believe that Jesus died for their sins, and who "accept Christ as their personal savior." This doctrine is sometimes called "salvation by faith only." But these people also downplay the role of man's obedience in salvation. Some in the church have begun to teach a doctrine of salvation by grace only, ridiculing the importance of obedience. One brother said many years ago that man does not contribute "one whit" to his salvation. But the root of these false doctrines is the same: a basic misunderstanding of the Bible doctrine of grace.

That salvation cannot be by grace alone should be obvious. This is not to say that man earns his salvation by what he does; certainly that is not in harmony with the Bible. But to teach that man has **nothing** to do with his salvation is wrong, too. If salvation were by God's grace alone, without any action on man's part, then that would create contradiction within the Bible. Jesus said very plainly that more people would be lost than would be saved (Matthew 7:13-14). But if salvation comes by grace only, then why are some saved and others lost? Certainly it is not because some believed and others did not, for belief would be something man did to acquire grace. Certainly it would not be because some desired to be saved and others did not, for desire would be something man did to acquire grace. The fact is, if salvation is by grace alone, then it is completely up to God as to who is saved and who is lost. Since Jesus taught that not all will be saved, that would make God a respecter of persons. But, God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35). God gives his grace to those who meet the conditions he has placed upon receiving his grace.

## GOD'S CONDITIONAL PROMISES

One of the most significant words in all the Bible is the word "if." Though it is a small word, it is tremendously important. Those who believe that salvation is by grace alone, without any action on man's part, ought to remind themselves of the place that the word "if" has played in God's blessing his people. He promised many things to his people

throughout the ages, but most of the time his promises were conditional in nature.

The very first occurrence of the word "if" in the Bible sets the precedent for God's dealings with man. He told Cain, "**If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?**" (Genesis 4:7). How could anyone deny the fact that God's acceptance of man depends upon whether or not man does well by obeying God's commands? Abraham made intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah and God promised to spare the cities upon the following condition: "**I will not do it, if I find thirty [righteous people] there**" (Genesis 18:30). God's covenant with Israel also was conditional upon their obedience: "**Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to do these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers**" (Deuteronomy 7:12). All these and many others are conditional promises of God to his people. If the blessings promised were received via the people's obedience, would anyone believe that these blessings had been earned? Certainly not! They simply did what God told them to do in order to receive the blessings.

Salvation from sin is no different. God has promised salvation to those who meet the conditions placed upon it. The writer of Hebrews said that Jesus is the "**author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him**" (Hebrews 5:9). Obedience is essential to salvation. One must believe (John 8:24); repent (Acts 17:30); confess faith in Christ (Romans 10:9-10); and be baptized (Mark 16:16). When one obeys, he places himself in the position of receiving God's grace. But that in no way means that he has earned that salvation.

## DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORKS

A study of what the Bible teaches regarding the relationship between grace and works would not be complete without studying the different kinds of works the Bible discusses. Many passages shed light on the topic, but please consider these three: James 2:14-26; Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 4:1-25.

James discusses the connection between faith and works, not grace and works in particular, but this is a key passage, because he discusses the kind of faith that will save. He asks, "**What doth it profit my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?**" (James 2:14). His question deals not with faith in general, but of the specific kind of faith that has been stripped of its works. Can *that kind of faith* save? The implied answer is obviously "no." He continues his discussion showing the kind of faith that will save: one that expresses itself through works. He cites the example of

Abraham. **“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar”** (James 2:21)? Abraham was saved by his works because he believed God enough to obey the command to offer Isaac (James 2:21-24). If Abraham’s faith had been stripped of its obedience, no one would ever have known of it. But because Abraham obeyed, he was blessed. James’ conclusion is that the kind of faith that will cause one to be saved is the kind of faith that works to obey God.

Paul also used Abraham as an example. However, Paul said, **“For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God”** (Romans 4:2). Why did James say that Abraham was saved by works, and Paul that Abraham was not saved by works? Do they contradict one another? Martin Luther believed so, saying that the epistle of James was **“a right strawy epistle.”** At least he was consistent with his doctrine. But who is willing to cast aside one of the books of the New Testament as Luther was willing to do? Upon closer scrutiny, it is obvious that Paul was concerned with a different kind of works than those with which James was concerned. Paul stressed that salvation comes through the gospel, not through obedience to the Law of Moses. The force of his argument is seen in verse 10, Abraham was counted righteous before the Law of Moses was given. His justification (and thus, the justification of all of his descendants) was not the result of the works of the Law of Moses.

Notice Ephesians 2:8-9: **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”** Here again there is the emphasis that salvation is not the result of works. However, what kind of works did Paul have in mind? Notice that Paul stressed that the means by which salvation comes is faith. And it has been established by James that the kind of faith that God accepts is one that works in obedience to God’s commands. So then, what are the works that do not bring salvation? Those of which man could boast. One could point boastfully to those kinds of works as having earned his salvation. This has as much to do with man’s attitude toward his works as with anything else. If one’s confidence is in his ability to do good, then regardless of the works he does, those works are worthless in bringing salvation. This does not include works of faithful obedience. In this passage, Paul stresses that salvation is by grace.

Salvation is by grace. Grace is received by means of faith. God accepts the kind of faith that obeys his commands. So how do grace and works relate? God extends his grace to those whose faith works to obey his commands.

#### THE MEANS OF SALVATION VS. THE TERMS OF SALVATION

It is futile to argue that the Bible says salvation is by faith only, that it is by grace only, or that it is by works only. It plainly teaches that all are involved in salvation. But to understand the concept correctly, one must understand that when the Bible talks about salvation by grace, it is considering the means of salvation. God accomplishes the salva-

tion of man by means of his grace. And when the Bible talks about works and salvation, it is considering the terms of salvation. Upon what terms will God extend his saving grace to man? Upon the terms of man’s obedience to God’s will.

The means by which man is saved is God’s grace (Ephesians 2:8). Nothing else can account for the fact that some people will enjoy eternity in heaven with God. Justice demands punishment for sin. Since all have sinned (Romans 3:23), all deserve to be lost eternally. However, some will be saved. This is because of grace. Grace caused God to bring about the plan which ultimately resulted in Jesus’ death on the cross. And this death was for every man (Hebrews 2:9). No one would dispute the fact that without God’s grace, man would have absolutely no hope. To live a perfect, sinless life is impossible (1 John 1:8, 10). Thus, on his own, man cannot be saved. God’s grace is indeed the means of salvation.

When the discussion turns to man’s works, it turns from the means of salvation to the terms of salvation. God’s promise to save man is conditional. He demands that man must meet his terms in order to receive his grace. Paul said that salvation is by grace **“through faith”** (Ephesians 2:8). This clearly points out that there are two different aspects to salvation. Some have accurately described it as **“God’s part and man’s part.”** God’s part is grace; man’s part is faith. When man meets God’s conditions, then God extends to him the benefits of grace.

So is there any disharmony between grace and works? Certainly not. By doing the things that God has commanded (namely, belief repentance, confession, and baptism), man meets the terms of salvation which God himself set. Does this in any way imply that man contributes to the means of his salvation? Certainly not! How could anyone think that he deserves salvation merely by meeting God’s terms?

God saves man by his grace. In another sense it can be said that man saves himself when he meets God’s terms of salvation (compare Acts 2:40). Both grace and works are necessary for man to be saved.

—P. O. Box 24  
Fayette, Alabama 35555

Please Contact Us Regarding Your  
CHANGE OF ADDRESS  
Each returned address costs  
CONTENDING FOR THE  
FAITH  
55¢



# RELIGIONS ARE RETOOLING TO KEEP PACE WITH FAST-CHANGING WORLD!

Marvin L. Weir

The teaching of I John 2:15-17 has been conveniently forgotten by most folks. So many today will make whatever sacrifices that are necessary in order to climb aboard the world's bandwagon. The scripture that many purposely choose to forget says:

**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (I John 2:15-17).**

## CLAMOR FOR CHANGE

The sound coming from most pulpits today declares that "churches must change to keep pace with a modern world." Where does the Bible even remotely suggest that the Lord's church must adapt to an ever-changing world? The humanist agenda is surely alive and well and working.

The Saturday, June 19, 1999 *Dallas Morning News* reported that the Southern Baptists show signs of retooling their image. The report says in part:

They're still for biblical inerrancy, for example, and against homosexuality. But there are signs that the most conservative of main-stream denominations wants to retool itself to keep up with a fast-changing world... Delegates called messengers, approved a motion appointing a committee to study the convention's 35-year old Baptism Faith and Message, a confession of faith, and report at next year's gathering what changes need to be made for the first time since 1926, membership in

Southern Baptist churches decreased last year, by about 162,000... Still, they have to reaffirm their heritage because their identity is what is holding people with them, said Dr. Leonard... That identity is deep in people who still pay the bills, the generation over 50. The generation under 40, though, can take or leave that identity. They have to prepare for that generation for whom that identity is negligible or negotiable.

It is the sign of the times. The attendance slips from what it has been in the past and the contribution is on a downward spiral. There is only one thing to do—retool the image, change the creed, and placate those who have absolutely no respect for things sacred. [The Sacred Baptist Church in Houston, Texas now has a McDonald's franchise.—Editor]

Why are so many willing to toss aside and trample underfoot the Holy scriptures? It is because the well-rooted humanist agenda has produced a harvest that seeks to destroy the moral fibers that held this country together for so many years. Political correctness is eating away at our nation like a cancer, and most religious groups are not willing to do battle in this arena. The majority has decided to turn completely loose of God's word as they conform to human wisdom and worldly pressures.

There are many more folks today who would rather please man than God. They have absolutely no trouble professing to love God while denying the Holy scriptures. They will seek to convince you they are God's children while refusing to "walk in the light" (I John 1:7).

## "RETOOLING THE CHURCH"

The Lord's church was not designed to compete with the world. The church is unique and Christians are as different from worldly folks as light and dark. But congregation after congregation of the Lord's people are following denominations in "retooling" so they can appeal to the masses.

The word of God does not change from generation to generation. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). Men are never at liberty to vote on that which has been "settled in Heaven" (Psalms 119:89).

One who sits idly by while the Lord's body is swept into apostasy is a traitor and coward. We must love God more than man and heaven more than this world. May we prove such by choosing to be the "salt of the earth" and "light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-16) as we gladly serve as soldiers of the cross.

—5810 Liberty Grove  
Rowlett, Texas 75088

## Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**

**\$35.00 if ordered as set**

*(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)*

*Order from:*

**VADA RICE**

**3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE**

**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461**

# I'M NOT HIS JUDGE

Brock Hartwigsen

When some brethren are asked if a “thing” is a sin and if a brother does that “thing” is he a sinner?, they are answered with: “I can’t answer that. I’m not his judge” How true. Jesus is the judge and he will judge us by his words, **“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). But, when it comes to these types of issues, all we have to do is look to Judge Jesus. If Jesus has addressed the situation, then all we have to do is see how he has said he will judge the action or the person involved. Let us look at a few common situations and see how Jesus will judge.

## IF GUILTY OF SIN THEN LOST

A man divorces his wife for a reason other than fornication and remarries. Is he and his new wife living in sin? Jesus has told us his verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, **“Yes”** Jesus said, **“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).

A Buddhist, or a Hindu, or a Jew or any non-believer in Jesus dies. Is that person lost? Jesus has told us his verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, **“Yes!”** Jesus said that he was **“the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”** (John 14:6).

“Mother” Teresa, the late Catholic nun, did many good works and sacrificed for the poor and needy of the world. Is she in Abraham’s bosom with Lazarus or in torment with the rich man? Jesus has told us his verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, **“in torment.”** “Mother” Teresa for all her good works was not obedient to the will of God but to the traditions and customs of man, i.e. the Roman Catholic Church. Jesus said:

**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 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).

Will a believer in Jesus be lost if he dies without being baptized? Jesus has gave us his verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, **“Yes.”** Jesus in the great commission said, **“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”** (Mark 16:16). He also told Nicodemus, **“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”** (John 3:5).

The words of Jesus that we can use to answer questions of judgment correctly are not limited to the actual words said by Jesus while he was here on the earth and recorded in the four gospel accounts. Jesus told the apostles that when he died the Holy Spirit would guide them and deliver additional teachings from him.

**I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come** (John 16:12-13).

These additional words of Jesus brought through the Holy Spirit, i.e. all of the New Testament, are just as binding and will be used to judge mankind as the actual recorded words of Jesus in the four gospel accounts.

In the New Testament we have Jesus’ judgmental condemnation of many things which people today refuse to address an opinion on or try to condone. The following are but just a few; denominationalism—it is sinful (I Corinthians 1:10-13); extending the hand of fellowship to members of denominations or member of the Lord’s church who go beyond the teaching of Christ—it is sinful (II John 9-11); women preachers—it is sinful (I Corinthians 14:34-35; I Timothy 2:11-14); homosexuality—it is sinful (Romans 1:26-28).

## JUDGING THAT JESUS’ WORDS ARE NOT CORRECT

When a person is confronted with a situation addressed by Jesus and asked whether it is right or wrong (sinful or righteous), no matter what he does he makes a judgment. It cannot be avoided. He either humbly judges that Jesus is the judge and submits to the words of Jesus by using them as the guideline to address the situation, or he elevates himself to the role of judge and ignores, alters, adds to or takes away from Jesus’ words. If he responds “I can’t answer that. I’m not his judge,” then he is, in fact elevating himself to the position of judge. He is judging that Jesus’ words are not the correct answer. He is judging that, whereas Jesus expressed a judgment, he knows better and he has judged that a judgment cannot be made.

When a person refuses to share Jesus’ condemnation of actions with the lame excuse “I’m not a judge,” then he is guilty of one of two things. He is either guilty of being ignorant and Paul told the gathering on Mars Hill that God no longer condones ignorance (Acts 17:30) or he is guilty of rejecting Jesus as the judge by rejecting his judgment concerning the action in question.

What about you and me? Are we humble servants of Christ willing to call a sin a sin and a sinner a sinner? Or, are we ignorant servants of Christ who do not know a sin or a sinner when confronted with it because we do not know the Bible? Or, are we arrogant believers in Christ who think we know better than Christ? Anyone who refuses to take a stand on an issue that Jesus has expressed judgment on is either an ignorant or arrogant servant. A humble servant will not shy away from endorsing Jesus’ verdict no matter what the cost.

—12521 Holly Springs New Hills Road  
Apex, North Carolina 27502  
apexcofc@mindspring.com

# TEACH NO OTHER DOCTRINE

Gary McDade

Among the instructions from an inspired apostle to a young evangelist are these remarks:

Charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm (1 Timothy 1:3-7).

## CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE PRODUCES COMMUNITY CHURCHES?

In a vicious vituperation ostensibly on "The Function of Christian Doctrine" **John Mark Hicks**, a professor who teaches at two Christian schools, Lipscomb and Harding University Graduate School of Religion, blasts preaching that presents doctrine, polemical exchanges, and distinctive preaching such as distinguishing the church of the Bible from the Baptist or Methodist Churches. He affirms, "The function of Christian doctrine is practical to build a community which images God" (*The Bridge*, **Evertt Huf-fard**, ed., July 2000, 41:5, p.1). Since Jesus Christ taught that a tree is known by its fruit (Matthew 7:15-20), observe that the professor has built a Community Church called the *Cordova Community Church* in a suburb of Memphis, Tennessee. And, depending to whom he is speaking or with whom he is associated he may reference it as either

"Cordova Community Church" or "Cordova Community Church, a church of Christ" (Two *Commercial Appeal* articles on his church reference it in a similar manner. The earlier reference mentions "loosely affiliated with the churches of Christ;" a later article does not even mention the church of Christ"

An online syllabus for the professor's class on "Systematic Christian Doctrine" shows that Harding University promotes the Community Church in its classrooms. A requirement for the course is a "theological application paper" which Hicks describes as "an exercise in deliberative reflection on ministry in the light of theological principles." For example, "what is the theological rationale (or function) for implementing a small group ministry in your congregation?" "...Or, what is the theological rationale for a specific worship activity (worship team, drama, amount of time given to preaching)?" ([www.hugsr.edu/540a.htm](http://www.hugsr.edu/540a.htm), p. 4). Small group ministry, worship teams, and drama are all building blocks for the Community Church (See: *The Spiritual Sword*, **Alan E. Highers**, ed., Oct. 2000, 32:1).

Further, the syllabus says, "The value that you discuss and apply must be rooted in something that pertains to this class" (ibid.). Imagine trying to get a passing grade out of this professor. You either agree with his restructuring of the church into a Community Church or you participate in a "polemical exchange" with him which he has stated opposes Christian doctrine. In order to graduate from *HUGSR* with a master of divinity degree with a concentration in doctrine this course must be taken (See the catalogue for 1999-2000).

## THE APOSTASY TEAM

The professor cast his lot with **Rubel Shelly** and the Woodmont Hills Family of God in Nashville by placing his membership there in September of this year (See: *Love-lines*, the church bulletin for Woodmont Hills for September). The full meaning of his chiding of distinctive preaching which was mentioned earlier is realized by recalling the union of Woodmont Hills with the Billy Graham Crusade held in June in Nashville.


In 1991, **Randy Mayeux** left the church of Christ and September 12, 1992, started the *Hope Community Church* in Dallas, Texas. The web site says:

The church was founded by our current pastor, Randy Mayeux, and his wife, Jeannie. After more than twenty years of ministry in the Church of Christ, Mayeux resigned his pastorate at Preston Road Church of Christ and opened this church to present meaningful life-related truths of the Christian faith to all people.

How the presidents and boards of directors for two Christian schools that claim to be more than "loosely affiliated with the churches of Christ" can continue to enable Hicks to promote, build, and proclaim Community Churches is a

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL of PREACHING

Two-year program  
Fifty-four courses  
2,760 clock hours  
No tuition  
Qualified faculty  
Limited Scholarships  
Strong Bible emphasis  
Established 1966  
Applications now being accepted  
Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
Fax (901) 751-8098

matter a discerning brotherhood should address. Mayeux left the church of Christ; Hicks remains "affiliated" as it suits his purposes. Not only will men preparing to preach continue to be influenced by Hicks, but now that he is at Lipscomb young boys and girls right out of high school and newly away from the security of the family environment will receive instruction from him. What a betrayal of the spiritual leadership of the home to send beloved youths off to be drawn far and away from the sacred serenity of the Savior's side. What a sadness. What a shame.

Clearly, mixed signals and contradictions characterize Hicks' colleagues at HUGSR such as may be illustrated by an article written by **Dave Bland** which claims, "Listeners and preachers alike are called on to remain committed to scripture, allowing scripture to set the agenda for what is heard and preached" (*The Bridge*, Evertt Huffard, ed., May 2000, 41:3, p. 1). Here Bland contradicts Hicks. Yet, later in the same article he opened the door for the direct opera-

tion of the Holy Spirit when he said, "Both commitment and sensitivity require a life of study, devotion to prayer, and openness to the work of God's Spirit in our lives" (ibid.). Can not those who believe the Bible to be the sole source of spiritual enlightenment today see the need to cease to support men and institutions who cannot clearly state the sameness of that conviction?

The need to put into practice the precept of Paul stated at the outset is plain: "Charge some that they teach no other doctrine." The doctrine is God's doctrine (Titus 2:10), Christ's doctrine (II John 9), the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42), good doctrine (I Timothy 4:6), the doctrine which is according to godliness (I Timothy 6:3), and sound doctrine (I Timothy 1:10; II Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9, 2:1). Those who truly love God will **"teach no other doctrine."**

—1511 Getwell Rd.  
Memphis, Tennessee 38111-7245

## You "Ben-Had?"

Jeff Sweeten

Ben-Hadad, the bad-boy king of a loose confederation of Syrian city-states, was spoiling for a fight with conquered Israel (I Kings 20). He had already demanded outrageous tribute, which King Ahab had no option but to pay. To further demean God's people, he sent messengers with the following demand:

**Thus speaks Ben-Hadad, saying, 'Indeed I have sent to you,' saying, 'You shall deliver to me your silver and your gold, your wives and your children; but I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants. And it shall be, that whatever is pleasant in your eyes, they will put it in their hands and take it.'** (I Kings 20:5-6).

This was over the edge.

Ahab was no stellar king, but even the evil turn to deity when life serves up despair. At the order of a prophet of God, Ahab declined Ben-Hadad's invitation, mustered several young leaders in the provinces, and assembled an army of seven thousand to defeat a drunken Ben-Hadad in a surprising slaughter. Once again, God delivered his people.

One of the interesting comments associated with this exchange was an un-

characteristic pearl of wisdom from the king of Israel. Ahab declined Ben-Hadad's invitation to surrender his wives and children, and Ben-Hadad was furious. He threatened, **"The gods do so to me, and more also, if enough dust is left of Samaria for a handful for each of the people who follow me"** (I Kings 20:10). Ahab's response was, **"Tell him, 'Let not the one who puts on his armor boast like the one who takes it off.'"**

There is a popular activity promoted by media, sports, and peers that God's people should not be involved in. It is commonly called "talking trash." We see it abound in our sporting events, that verbal banter that occurs before and during a game, usually consisting of fragmented expletives carrying veiled threats. From sitcoms and soaps to the silver screen, Hollywood and friends glamorize this pompous posturing, assigning it to its best and wittiest actors. If you are in the "in" crowd, you own a dictionary of "The World's Greatest Put-downs."

The Bible teaches us differently. In a society that finds denigration fashionable, God's word tells us, **"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each**

**one"** (Colossians 4:6). **"And a fool's voice is known by multitude of words"** (Ecclesiastes 5:3). And, **"grievous words stir up anger"** (Proverbs 15:1). **"Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him"** (Proverbs 29:20). And finally, **"The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools"** (Ecclesiastes 9:17). The assumed psychological advantage in the game, the supposition of superiority in shaming others, and the sinfulness of a sharp tongue are a far cry from the Christian calling. **"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones"** (Proverbs 16:24).

If you think to be a winner you need to "talk trash," you "Ben-Had!" A Christian is **"a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you"** (Titus 2:7-8).

—500 North Pearl Street  
Comanche, Texas 76442-2436

# AVOIDING AND EVADING THE MOST OBVIOUS TRUTH

Bruce R. Curd

**William MacDonald**, author of *The Believer's Commentary*, published by Nelson, and on the best-seller's list, used three full columns to explain away baptism as a condition of salvation when such is explicitly taught in Acts 2:38. Similar treatment is given to Mark 16:16. We shall give extended attention to his comments on these precious passages.

In his comments on Acts 2:38 he admits, "At first glance, this verse seems to teach salvation by baptism, and many people insist that this is precisely what it does teach."

This scribe does not know of even one person who teaches that salvation is by baptism alone. If there is any one who does so, he is wrong. Many good folk do teach, however, that baptism is one of the conditions our Lord has given to obtain salvation. It is the blood of Christ that saves us (Ephesians 1:7), but faith, repentance, confession and baptism are conditions with which we must comply in order to be saved by the blood.

MacDonald then says, "Such an interpretation is impossible for the following reasons." He then submits four objection which we consider.

1. In dozens of NT passages, salvation is said to be by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 6:47; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9, for example. No verse or two could conceivably contradict such overwhelming testimony.

*Response:* In his comments on Mark 16:16 he says there are approximately 150 such passages. But a careful reading of the six passages he lists shows that not one of them teaches faith alone. That makes all of the rest suspect. Any honest Bible student knows that such is not taught anywhere in the New Testament. Yes, they all teach that one is saved by faith, but none by faith alone. He, like many others before him, adds the word "alone" thus changing the teaching of the word of God. Moreover, even if one passage teaches that baptism is a condition of salvation, that would be enough. Just how often does our Lord have to say anything to make it essential? When MacDonald, or anyone else, presents the passage that says salvation is by "faith alone" we will believe it. However the New Testament affirms the very opposite in James 2:24-26.

2. The thief on the cross had the assurance of salvation apart from baptism (Luke 23:43).

*Response:* The thief did not ask to be saved. All he asked was, "**Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom**" (Luke 23:42). And our Lord merely told him, "**Today shalt thou be with me in paradise,**" which, very likely meant, today you will be with me in the death state. Again, the close followers of our Lord did not know the true nature of Jesus' kingdom. Could the thief have had more insight into its nature than they? Moreover, the thief lived and died before Jesus commanded anyone to be baptized for the remission of sins. He most likely was a Jew

who was in covenant relationship with the Lord under the Law of Moses. Baptism was not a requirement under that law, hence the thief did not have to be baptized. Nor could he have believed in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ which had not yet taken place. All who have lived since those grand events must believe them in order to be saved. And so also baptism is a requirement for us.

3. The Savior is not stated to have baptized anyone, a strange omission if baptism is essential to salvation.

*Response:* Yes, such is true, that our Lord did not personally baptize anyone. But he did command his disciples and John the Baptist to baptize. And what they did by his authority, he was doing himself. The Great Commission has given to man and was to be carried out by men. Jesus asked Saul of Tarsus, "**Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?**" (Acts 9:4) Yet Saul did not personally persecute our Lord in his own person. He persecuted the Lord's people, but in doing so he was persecuting the Lord. The reason such is true is because the Lord put himself in the place of his disciples. Even so, when the disciples of the Lord baptized people at the Lord's command, the Lord was baptizing them. Thus this statement has no merit at all.

4. The Apostle Paul was thankful that he baptized only a few of the Corinthians—a strange cause for thankfulness if baptism has saving merit (1 Corinthians 1:14-16).

*Response:* It has been seen already that baptism has no saving merit in and of itself. It, like faith, is a **condition** of salvation. The blood of Christ is the **cause**. MacDonald seems to be implying that since Paul baptized just a few of the Corinthians that makes baptism nonessential to salvation. Well, if the apostle had baptized all of them would that have made baptism essential to their salvation? That is not the point anyway. Paul gives the reason why he was thankful that he had personally baptized so few of the Corinthians. Not because he did not think it necessary to their salvation, but, "**Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name**" (1 Corinthians 1:15). The apostle was not seeking to build up a party around himself. Thus he let others do the baptizing in this particular instance.

MacDonald, in commenting on Mark 16:16, gives a fifth reason for objecting to baptism for remission of sins. He wrote, "The Gentiles in Caesarea were baptized after they were saved" (Acts 10:44-48).

*Response:* If the Gentiles were saved before baptism, they were also saved before they believed. Is MacDonald ready for this? In Acts 10:1-4, the inspired historian wrote, "**While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.**" When the apostle later related the same event he said, "**And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them...**" (Acts 11:15). In Romans 10:17 Paul wrote, "**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**" Now what

do we have? The great preacher had said but few words before the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and his household. And since faith comes by hearing, these Gentiles could not have believed at this time. Hence if they were saved when the Holy Ghost fell on them, they were saved without faith. So what proves too much, proves nothing. MacDonald's argument boomerangs in his face. The fact of the matter is that the coming of the Holy Ghost upon these Gentiles was not for their benefit in any manner whatsoever. It was for the purpose of convincing the six Jewish brethren (Acts 11:12) who came with Peter that salvation was for the Gentiles as well as the Jews (Acts 10:47). Hence Peter asked: **"Can any man (meaning the six Jews) forbid water, that these (Gentiles) should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord"** (Vs. 48). The falling of the Holy Spirit upon these folks was not to save them, nor was it ever for this purpose. Its sole purpose was for the benefit of the Jews who were the unbelievers in this case (cf. I Corinthians 14:22).

Next, MacDonald wrote:

It is important to notice that only Jews were ever told to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (See Acts 22:16). In this fact, we believe, is the secret to the understanding of this passage. The nation of Israel had crucified the Lord of glory. The Jewish people had cried out, 'His blood be on us and on our children' (Matthew 27:25). The guilt of the Messiah's death was thus claimed by the people of Israel.

*Response:* At this point MacDonald appears to be teaching that at least in the case of the Jews at Pentecost baptism was for the remission of sins. He says as much when he wrote, "only Jews were ever told to be baptized for the remission of sins." If that does not mean they were to be baptized to be saved, then what does it mean? The man is totally confused. For in the next paragraph he will write, "But baptism did not save them," perhaps meaning that baptism is not a condition for salvation. When any man attempts to evade the truth of God's word on any subject he will argue in circles a MacDonald surely does.

In the next paragraph he avers that the entire Jewish nation blamed themselves for the death of Christ and quotes Matthew 27:25 as proof. But it was largely the chief priests, elders and other Jewish leaders who led in the opposition against the Christ as the context of chapter 27 will show. So he is wrong on this count.

In obvious contradiction to what the inspired Peter taught on Pentecost, MacDonald said:

Now, some of these Jews had come to realize their mistake. By repentance they acknowledged their sin to God. By trusting the Lord Jesus as their Savior they were regenerated and received eternal forgiveness of sins. By public water baptism they dissociated themselves from the nation that crucified the Lord and identified themselves with him. Baptism thus became the outward sign that their sin in connection with the rejection of Christ (as well as all their sins) had been washed away. It took them off Jewish ground and placed them on Christian ground. But baptism did not save them. Only faith in Christ could do that. To teach otherwise is to teach another gospel and thus be accursed (Galatians 1:8, 9).

*Response:* It is amazing that a statement could be so radically different from the inspired account that he attempts to explain. This averment does not resemble in the least what the inspired Peter said in Acts 2:38. Peter simply said, **"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. . ."** MacDonald says some of these Jews now realized their mistake. They repented thus acknowledging their sin to God. All of this is true. He then comments, "By trusting the Lord Jesus as their Savior they were regenerated and received eternal forgiveness. At this point the Pentecostians had not trusted the Lord nor were they forgiven. Peter had said that this happened when they had repented and after they had been baptized. Notice that MacDonald has slyly inserted the word "eternal" forgiveness in his text. Such is manipulating the text to suit his own purpose. He teaches the doctrine of eternal security elsewhere in his commentary, and he has to get it in at this place. (See his comments on Galatians 5:4). He next asserts that baptism disassociates the Jews from the nation, and that it is a mere sign that their sins have been washed away. Every word of this last statement is patently false. Of course they dissociated themselves from the evil leadership of their nation but they remained a part of the Jewish nation as much as before. This is simply an artful dodge to disparage baptism as a condition of salvation for all who would be saved. And to say that baptism is a mere sign that salvation has already been received beforehand is ludicrous in the face of Peter's proclamation. Such statements are designed to make unbelievers and to keep people in their sins. A lengthy quote from Charles C. Ryrie is now given in an effort to explain away baptism for the remission of sins:

This does not mean in order that sins might be remitted, for everywhere in the New Testament sins are forgiven as a result of faith in Christ, not as a result of baptism. It means be baptized because of the remission of sins. The Greek preposition *eis* for, has this meaning "because of" not only here but also in such a passage as Matthew 12:41 where the meaning can only be "they repented because of (not in order to) the preaching of Jonah." Repentance brought the remission of sins for this Pentecostal crowd, and because of the remission of sins they were asked to be baptized.

*Response:* Ryrie does not help MacDonald's cause one iota. Rather, he shows himself to be a perverter of scripture and of the Greek language as well. MacDonald would have best let him be. He first asserts that in every place sins are forgiven as a result of faith in Christ. Yes, but never by faith only. In every single example of conversion in the book of Acts, baptism is explicitly mentioned as being essential to salvation. (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:12, 26-40; 10:48; 16:14, 15, 30-33; 18:8; 19:1-5). The Greek word "eis" never means "because of" anywhere in the New Testament. The word is always progressive (looks forward to something), hence "in order to" "unto" (as in ASV) et al. The word is never retrogressive (it never looks back to anything already accomplished) as claimed by Ryrie. Thayer says of the word, "a Prep governing the Accusative, and denoting entrance into, or direction and limit: into, to, towards, for, among." Under section 1 Thayer continues, "motion towards a destination; 3. of motion into the vicinity of a



place; where it may be rendered, to near, towards." The idea of "because of" is never given as a meaning of the word "eis." Had Peter meant "because of" in Acts 2:38, he would have used the preposition "dia" instead of "eis" The latter means on account of, because of, for the sake of, with a view to, et al." The man does not live who can prove Ryrie's assertion. Faith only advocates such as MacDonald and Ryrie, when faced with Acts 2:38 and the word "eis" will always run to Matthew 12:41 in an effort to sustain their position. But they have no refuge there. Ryrie says the meaning of Matthew 12:41 can only be "they repented because of (not in order to) the preaching of Jonah." He is wrong again, Thayer, on page 185 of his lexicon of Greek words says on Matthew 12:41 and the word "eis" of the consideration influencing one to do anything: at the preaching of one, i.e. out of regard to the substance of his preaching. In this text the Greek preposition "eis" is rendered as "at." In keeping with it's progressive meaning Thayer says that the Ninevites repented in order to benefit from the preaching of Jonah.

Finally, MacDonald comments:

Peter assured them that if they repented and were baptized they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. To insist that this order applies to us today is to misunderstand God's administrative dealings in the early days of the church.

*Response:* Peter thought this order not only applied to the Jews on Pentecost, but also "to those who are afar off,

even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). That statement seems to include everyone, both then and now, who would heed the call. In his remaining statements MacDonald quotes from an **H. P. Barker** to the effect that there are four communities of believers in the book of Acts, and the order of events in connection with the reception of the Holy Spirit is different in each case. Let us consider each in turn and see if such be true. His orders of events are as follows:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Jewish Christians<br>Acts 8:14-17           | 2. The Samaritans Acts 2:38                                     |
| 1. Repentance                                  | 1. They believed  |
| 2. Water baptism                               | 2. They were baptized in water                                  |
| 3. Reception of the Holy Spirit                | 3. The apostles prayed for them                                 |
|  | 4. The apostles laid their hands on them                        |
|  | 5. They received the Holy Spirit                                |
| 3. Conversion of the Gentiles<br>Acts 10:44-48 | 4. Disciples of John the Baptist<br>after Pentecost Acts 19:1-7 |
| 1. Faith                                       | 1. They believed  |
| 2. Reception of the Holy Spirit                | 2. They were rebaptized   |
| 3. Water baptism                               | 3. Paul laid his hands on them                                  |
|  | 4. They received the Holy Spirit                                |

MacDonald affirms that these constitute four orders of events, or ways to obtain salvation in the book of Acts, but in reality there is but one. Yes, the incidentals were different and varied greatly, but the essentials were always the same.

In Acts 2 the actual order was (1) repentance, (2) baptism, (3) remission of sins, (4) gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed by the apostles.

In Acts 8 the order was (1) belief in Christ, (2) baptized in water, (3,4,5) all incidentals—limited to the occasion.

In Acts 10 the order is (1) reception of the Holy Spirit, (2) faith implied, (3) water baptism. Note: We have seen already that faith was not yet possible in this case, because Peter had only begun to speak when the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles. (Acts 10:44; 11:15.) And since faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17), the apostle must present his lesson before the people could believe. Therefore if the Gentiles were saying before baptism, they were saved without faith.

In Acts 19 the sequence was (1) They believed, (2) they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, (3, 4) incidentals—again limited to the occasion. Note: These having been baptized by someone (possibly Apollos) who knew only the baptism of John, this amounted to no baptism at all. Thus being baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus" is never referred to as a rebaptism.

Having considered all of these examples, what have we found? The answer is very easy by omitting the incidentals while retaining the essentials. Hence the order for all of these cases as well as for us is, (1) faith in Christ (Acts 2:36; Romans 10:17,

Spring  
Bible  
Institute

**SEIZE THE  
OPPORTUNITY!**

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO Box 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

**OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR  
SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.**

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (IN RESIDENCE).
- STUDY BY INTERNET (DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM)
- ASSISTANCE IN RAISING SUPPORT.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, "HANDS-ON" TRAINING.

"I am so thankful I was steered in the direction of Spring Bible Institute and have been allowed to take this course. It has already had an impact on my life..."  
—Distance Learning Student, August, 2001

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

ON THE WEB: CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM EMAIL: sbi@churchesofchrist.com  
PHONE: (281) 353-2707  
DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN ASST. DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

and examples), (2) repentance (Acts 2:38, 3:19), (3) baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins (cf. all examples of conversion in the book of Acts), (4) blessings of the Holy Spirit as he guides us through the word of God. There is, therefore, not four different orders of events as pertaining to the essentials of salvation, but only one. Peter said, "**Repent and be baptized every one of you. . .**" (Acts 2:38). since Peter announced the conditions of salvation on the

Pentecost of Acts 2, the day the church had its beginning, it is most logical to conclude that this is the plan of salvation for all time to come and for all people. No later recorded example of conversion varied from this inspired model. And such it is!

—340 Caraway Drive  
Marion, North Carolina 28752

## "They Believe Others More Than Those Things Which Were Spoken by Paul"

Steven D. Cline

While reading in Acts 27 of one of the shipwrecks Paul experienced, I was impressed that Paul had given a warning in verses 9 and 10, telling those upon the ship that the voyage would be dangerous and that much damage would be to the cargo. However, the centurion believed the master and owner of the ship more than the things which were spoken by Paul. In verse 17 on to the end of the chapter we see the ship being tossed to and fro by the howling wind, reeling and rocking in the briny, dark deep, the mighty waves smashing against the wooden hull and crashing down upon the slippery deck, the angry dark clouds dumping a driving, blinding and stinging torrential downpour upon the sailors as they, drenched to the bone with rain and salty sea water scurry in panic over the deck, trying to lighten the ship or even to escape as peals of thunder boom overhead. In verse 21 Paul said "**Sirs, ye should have harkened unto me.**" He had told them so, he had warned them, but they had not listened.

### REFUSING TO LISTEN

Other times in Paul's life, people either would not listen, or believed others more than those things which were spoken by Paul. In Acts 28 when Paul preached Jesus in the teeming city of Rome, verse 24 tells us, "**And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.**" In Acts 13, some Jews stirred up men and women against Paul and Barnabas, the result being that these two men were driven from the area. These men and women believed others more than those things which were spoken by Paul. Moreover, Paul was maligned and misrepresented oft times during his ministry. In II Corinthians (possibly Paul's most personal, open and heart-felt letter) the great apostle states how others had accused him of not having proper authority and Paul had to answer such false allegations as seen in chapters 10 through 12. Little has changed down through the corridors of time for there are still those who belittle Paul and would rather listen to others than to him. For example, the Hindu teacher, **Mahandas Gandhi** one time stated, "Paul was not a Jew, he was a Greek, he had an oratorical mind, a dialectical mind, and he distorted Jesus."<sup>1</sup> First, Gandhi said Paul was not a Jew, but Paul himself stated that he indeed was in Acts 21:39. Second, Gandhi said that Paul "distorted" Jesus, an assertion that

no faithful Christian can accept or tolerate. Then, **Hugh J. Schonfield** wrote, "In many matter [SIC] Paulism was in conflict with native Christianity."<sup>2</sup> Schonfield continues, "Pauline heresy served as the basis for Christian authority and the legitimate Church was outlawed as heretical."<sup>3</sup> In other words, Paul's teaching, a heresy when compared to Jesus' teaching, is what caused the church to be outlawed.

**John Lennon** was well-known for his rash, off-the-wall comments. Lennon, who heavily influenced my (1960's) generation once remarked, "Jesus was all right but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It's them twisting it that ruins it for me."<sup>4</sup> One would assume that one of these "thick and ordinary" disciples "twisting it" would include Paul. If so, Lennon was saying the same thing Gandhi and Schonfield said, only in different words. Another foolish and absurd charge leveled against Paul is, "There is no proof that Paul believed in a personal Christ; to him Christ was a principal, 'dwelling in the light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen or can see' (Epistle to Timothy)."<sup>5</sup> Paul did not believe in a personal Christ? I would suspect that Paul's actually seeing Jesus on the Damascus highway and talking to him literally, not *only* on that famous road, but *other* times as well (Acts 19:9, 10; Acts 22:18, 21; Acts 23:11; II Corinthians 12:9) would lead us to believe that Paul's relationship to Jesus was *indeed* personal and not only in principal or abstract. Again, how many will listen to others rather than to the things spoken of by Paul?

Then, **Dr. Salah El Dareer**, a Muslim, stated in his debate with brother **Hiram O. Hutto**, concerning the false teachers Jesus had warned of:

In view of what we know about Paul and his role in transforming Jesus and his teaching to something drastically different and unreal but more adoptable to the prevailing pagan and hellenistic views of the Gentile, I would like to ask brother Hutto: Has it ever occurred to you that Jesus was referring to Paul and those who subscribe to his views as the ones to beware of?<sup>6</sup>

Paul has even, in spite of his words to the contrary, been accused of **not** believing in the diety of Jesus. Back to Schonfield, "He [Paul-SDC] did not actually ascribe diety to Christ. As a Jew he could not go as far as that."<sup>7</sup> How many will believe Dr. Schonfield more than those things which were spoken by Paul? For Paul did indeed believe in

the diety of Christ as seen in Colossians 2:9: **"For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"** [i.e., in bodily form]. See also Phillipians 2:6 which states that Christ, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.. words from Paul's own quill.

Not only is Paul as a person misrepresented, his teachings are shamefully twisted and flagrantly denied. Concerning baptism, the well-known Southern Baptist evangelist **John R. Rice** said:

In the Bible, we find it clear that people believed first and then were baptized. According to this statement from God's word, they were already saved before they were baptized and any other man who trusts in Christ is saved that second, before he could possibly get to the baptismal waters. It does not take baptism to save one.<sup>8</sup>

Yet Paul, in his own words, told the multitude of his conversion in which reiterated what Ananias had told him: **"And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord"** (Acts 22:17). Even some "Bibles" will take Paul's words and completely change them. As an example the Living Bible Paraphrased has Abraham finding "favor with God by faith alone" in Romans 4:12.<sup>9</sup> I fear good people believe others more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

#### PERVERTED MORALS

I have known unrepentant fornicating adulterers who "go to church." They go to put up appearances and yet cast Paul's words in Titus 1:16 behind their backs. The verse says **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."** In the second Corinthian letter, Paul realized that there were still some unrepentant fornicators in that congregation (II Corinthians 12:21). So are there some today. Apparently there are those who deceive Christians with vain words into thinking that one can fornicate, and "going to church" clears them in God's eyes (Ephesians 5:3-6). Furthermore, such souls who heed other's deception rather than Paul's words of holy inspiration need to read, believe and apply advice, like **"Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord"** (I Corinthians 6:13); **"Flee fornication"** (I Corinthians 6:18); **"Neither let us commit fornication"** (I Corinthians 10:8); **"But fornication...let it not once be named among you as becometh saints"** (Ephesians 5:3); **"...that ye should abstain from fornication"** (I Thessalonians 4:3). If Paul wrote the Hebrew letter, as many think, he said in 13:4, **"...but whoremongers [pornous, the Greek work for fornicators] and adulterers God will judge."** In this connection the apostle states in Galatians 5:19-21 that fornicators and adulterers will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Then there are the perverted people who clamor that "gay is good" and picket for "gay rights." Many follow their pernicious ways for they had rather believe others than the things which were spoken by Paul. To find what Paul says about such deplorable behavior, please read Romans 1:24-27 and I Corinthians 6:9.

There are those in Catholicism, certain cults, Islam and Hinduism that believe, teach and preach that salvation is based on our own goodness and/or meritorious works. Multitudes so accept this rather than listening to Paul who did not believe that salvation can be earned. Read his comforting words in Ephesians 2:4-10 and Titus 3:4-6.

Concerning grace, the Calvinist says that one cannot fall from it, and hosts of people had rather listen to such a doctrine from Hell's hallways than to Paul who said in Galatians 5:4 that indeed one can fall from grace under certain circumstances. Many denominationalists (and some in the church) will advise "attend the church of your choice; there is one destination but many paths; thank God for all the different faiths from which we may choose." Naturally minions of millions embrace these utterances more than those things spoken by Paul who said in Ephesians 4:4-5 that there is but one body (the body being the church, Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18, 23) and one faith.

Well, lest the reader wax weary of perusing this article, I will soon lay down my pen, but not before posing a question. Are we going to be like the centurion and believe the master and owner of the ship more than the things which were spoken by Paul? That is to say, are we going to give heed to the doctrines and opinions of deluded men and women and ignore what Paul says? Paul's words are final and decisive for he spoke by divine inspiration (II Timothy 3:16) and his words are just as authoritative as the other New Testament writers or even as the words of the Savior himself. If we choose to be like the centurion and ignore the words of Paul we are in for a shipwreck as well...a shipwrecked faith (I Timothy 1:19). Remember, in the coming day of Judgment **"...the books were opened: and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works"** (Revelation 20:12). Surely "the books" include the New Testament writings of Paul. Paul told the rain-soaked sailors during the stormy tempest, **"Sirs, ye should have harkened unto me."** Who is to say that Paul will not say the same thing to the disobedient on the Final Day? May we pay him and the other Bible writers heed and continue in the doctrine, for by so doing we shall both save ourselves and those who hear us (I Timothy 4:6).

—P.O. Box 140614  
Donelson, Tennessee 37214

#### ENDNOTES

1. Fischer, Louis, *Gandhi. His Life and Message for the World*. (Mentor Books, New York, 1954), p.131.
2. Schonfield, Hugh J., *Those Incredible Christians?* (Bantam Books, New York, 1969), p.98.
3. *Ibid*.
4. Coleman, Ray, *Lennon*, (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1984), p. 312.
5. Graham, Lloyd M., *Deceptions and Myths of the Bible*. (Bell Publishing Co., New York, 1979), p.409.
6. Hutto, Hiram O. and Dr. Salah El Dareer, *The Hutto-El Dareer Debate*, (Hiram O. Hutto, publisher, Athens, Alabama, 1978), p.71.
7. Schonfield, p.98.
8. Rice, John R., *Bible Baptism*, (Sword of the Lord Publishers, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 1943, 1971), p.30.
9. Taylor, Kenneth, *The Living Bible Paraphrased*, (Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1973), p. 900.

# BULTMANN AND DEMYTHOLOGY

Wayne Coats

It would seem that the Devil had caused enough trouble through all the false teachers we have studied over the past months, but there were many who would yet enlist in his army. One such fellow was **Rudolph Bultmann**. He served as a professor at Marburg where he taught for thirty years. To Bultmann, the gospel narratives could be separated into various units which were developed by the early church as needs would arise. After the passing of time, these units were patched and pasted together to form "the gospels." Bultmann said that,

We can now know almost nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus. The historical person of Jesus was very soon turned into a myth in primitive Christianity. What we find in the New Testament about Jesus is the result of so many stories being changed and eventually the final tales were only myths when they were recorded. Men needed some sort of medicine-man to take care of their ills. All those miracles, demons, voices and tales were woven into a mythological fabric.

Bultmann is remembered mostly because of his work in demythologizing the miraculous. If a miracle could not be explained by reason, Bultmann would relegate it to the

realm of myths. He was most influential in destroying faith in the supernatural, inspired word of God.

**H. R. Mackintosh** said of **Karl Barth**, "We have uncontestedly the greatest figure in Christian theology that has appeared for decades." That is the opinion of one liberal relative to another. Barth studied under the notorious Harnack at Berlin and he relates that when he stood forth to preach he had nothing but dry hulls to present.

When **Hitler** came to power in Germany, Barth would not ride on the Hitler cart. As a slave to work, wherever he went, Barth took his secretary along. For this he received much criticism. His wife remained at home, had babies and cared for them.

After a day's work, Barth would take a drink and smoke his pipe. He kept busy writing theological bunk which some of our professors are copying. Barth would scarcely be known if he had not opposed the radical rationalism which was so prevalent.

To Barth, the Jesus of history is, "a little commonplace in comparison with the founders of other religions." In discussing the church, Barth thought of the church as "a sort of pilgrim church." When **Rubel Shelly** was chirping about the "pilgrim church" we should never think that he copied from Barth et al., but such was original with Shelly. Who can believe it?

In his work on Dogmatics, Barth wrote, "The Bible is God's word so far as God lets it be his word." "The evangelical churches are on a path which will lead to a general abandonment of biblical authority and Christian commitment." In reading Barth one must be aware of the usage of old terms with new meanings attached to them.

Barth has been criticized for being soft on communism. **Emil Brunner** asked Barth, "How come you were outspoken against Hitler, but soft on communism?" Barth wrote, "It would be quite absurd to mention in the same breath the philosophy of Marxism and the ideology of the Third Reich—to mention a man of the stature of Joseph Stalin in the same breath as such charlatans as Hitler, Goring, Hess, Gobbels, Himmler, Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, Streicher, etc."

Barth would have been strung by the neck if he had not hightailed over to Switzerland. When one reads the works of Barth one sees modernism displayed over and over. Barth tried to play both sides of the street with a Bible in one hand and a Reformed Calvinistic Creed in the other. It is the truth and so sad that some of our professors try to strut around like bantam roosters crowing, "I'm a Barthian theologian."

—706 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27122

**Contending FOR THE Faith**

2001 Bound Volume

• Only \$8.00 plus \$2.00 S&H

**ORDER TODAY!**

• P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357  
fax: 281-288-0549

# RECOMMENDED READING: "JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES"

Gary W. Summers

Despite the fact that most people cringe when they see them coming, Jehovah's Witnesses continue to be successful in winning converts year after year. This newest lectureship book from *Spring Bible Institute* (February, 2002) provides all the information that homeowners and apartment-dwellers need to greet them when they come knocking.

## THE DEITY OF CHRIST

There are several historical sections, beginning with the controversy involving Arius and Athanasius back in the fourth century, which was the first time that the Deity of Christ was challenged by asserting that the Logos (the word) was finite and not part of the Godhead. Gnosticism had denied that Christ could have had a physical body, which was also heresy, but Arius' theology made Christ a created being. This chapter covers the Nicene Council and the formation of the Nicene Creed (5-18).

This false doctrine was, for all practical purposes, dead (but not annihilated) for several centuries, and though others began to adopt it in the 1800s, Jehovah's Witnesses are now the most avid supporters of it. This view absolutely undermines Christianity. The Deity of Jesus is the rock upon which Christianity rests (Matthew 16:13-18); therefore, when one refutes the Divine nature of Christ, he destroys the very foundation of Christianity. One entire chapter examines the Godhead (42-53). As always, the teachings and history of the Jehovah's Witnesses are fully documented. Most chapters have more than a dozen footnotes, but at least a half dozen have more than 40, and two of these contain more than 70.

## RUSSELL AND RUTHERFORD

Other sections dealing with history include "Charles Taze Russell: Origin of the Jehovah's Witnesses" (92-114) and "Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford" (133-49). The first of these deals with the man that founded what is now called Jehovah's Witnesses, although that phrase was not used until 1931. Some attention is paid to his marriage, the "Miracle Wheat" scandal, the basis of his beliefs

(100-103), and his tremendous ego. Russell *was*, for all practical purposes, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society until his death. He exercised total control over it (both editorially and financially). Most of this material will not be found in current Jehovah's Witnesses' publications. They rarely refer to him today and would disagree with several of his views.

Not just anyone could muster up an ego gigantic enough to match Russell's, but Judge Rutherford managed. Russell had claimed that reading his works provided more light than just reading the Bible (104-105); under Rutherford the Watch Tower became "the only source of truth on earth today" (145).

## WATCHTOWER, AWAKE AND THE NEW WORLD TRANSLATION

One chapter describes *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* publications. Russell founded the former; the latter began in 1940. The chart containing *Awake!*'s purpose says all that the reader will need to know about the JW's prophetic ability (337). To cover some of these errors, the JW hierarchy could set speed records for backpedaling. They could easily win an Olympic contest for this event (if there were one). In their April 15, 1928 publication they even went so far as to accuse the word of God of being as inaccurate as they are, insisting that "there are mistakes in the Bible" (330).

Also reviewed is their *New World Translation*, published in 1961, with revisions following in 1970 and 1971 (the New Testament had been published by itself in 1950) (184). When asked who translated it, they will say the translators wanted to remain anonymous in order that God should get all the glory. They need not have worried, since it fails to glorify Jesus Christ as the son of God and therefore dishonors the father, also. The real reason for this egregious omission was "their lack of credentials" (186). Footnote number three identifies some of the translators, none of whom had formal training in Hebrew (217). Most JW's do not even know who the translators were; such is their complete trust in this cult's leaders. Several passages are noted, in which their doctrine was put into the biblical text (John 1:1; John 8:58; Colossians 1:16-17; Philippians 2:5-7; Luke 23:43; Hebrews 12:28; and others). Also noted is their placing the name of Jehovah into the New Testament. That Hebrew name for God was not used in the Greek language.

Despite the liberties taken with the Hebrew and Greek, however, there are numerous verses that were not altered, which disprove JW theology, and their inconsistencies are pointed out (506-23). Of special interest is the court testimony of Fred Franz that Jehovah God is the editor of *The Watchtower* (the egomania continues) and that what they write is the word of God (511).

## REMINDER!

If your address label has the date

6/01/2002

## IT IS TIME TO RENEW!

Send your renewal to:

Contending For The Faith

P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, Texas 77383

**"MILLIONS NOW LIVING..."  
AND RUSSELLISM UNVEILED**

Another review concerns Judge Rutherford's book, *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. According to this book, which Jehovah's Witnesses now ignore *en masse*, there was to be a partial resurrection in 1925 (the book was written in 1920), and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were to return to earth, along with others (157). False prophecies do not seem to be a deterrent for the members of this cult.

Yet another book review focuses not on their material but of that written by brother O. C. Lambert: *Russellism Unveiled* (342-60). The first chapter of that landmark book took issue with the predictions set forth by both Russell and Rutherford, the latter of whom had emphasized that in 1925 the dead would be raised and the old would find a fountain of youth, which would restore lost limbs, missing teeth, and a full set of hair to those follicly challenged. Lambert was shocked to see that Rutherford in 1933 (eight years after the "fulfillment") "was still bald-headed!" (344). Successive chapters in Lambert's book discuss Rutherford's view that government is the tool of Satan, inaccurate prophecies, the nature of man, immortality, the nature of the church, and contradictions between the Bible and Jehovah's Witness' doctrine. Carl Sagan might have taken notes from Rutherford's tactics. Both the judge and the evolutionist issued debate challenges and then ignored anyone who answered them (358-59). For that reason Lambert wrote his book.

**THE RUSSELL-WHITE DEBATE**

Also of great interest is the review of *The Russell-White Debate*, which took place in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1908. Many have likewise followed Russell's tactics since that time. Primarily, he read prepared speeches and did not bother to answer any of brother L. S. White's arguments. The first proposition was: "The Scriptures clearly teach that all hope of salvation, today, is dependent upon accepting the gospel of Christ as revealed in the scriptures, and that such acceptance is confined to this present life." White presented 18 arguments to establish the proposition, which are well worth studying (275-83). Other propositions dealt with the conscious state of the dead, eternal punishment, the doctrine of a second chance of salvation for sinners, the purpose for baptism, and the "millennial reign."

**VARIOUS SUBJECTS DISCUSSED**

Certain chapters focus on various Biblical doctrines, such as "The Nature of Christ's Kingdom," "The '144,000' and Eternal Life," "Baptism and the Jehovah's Witnesses," "Sin and Salvation," "Human Government," "New Heavens and a New Earth," the "Holy Spirit," the "Battle of Armageddon," "Man—His Nature in Death," "The Jehovah's Witnesses' Doctrine of Eternal Punishment," "An Analysis of Matthew 24," and a study of Revelation 20:1-3. Another doctrinal chapter centers on Jesus: "His Deity, Virgin, Birth, Atonement, and Resurrection." All of these portions are scripturally rich.

Besides these important doctrinal chapters, some treat special subjects, such as the elements of "Apocalyptic Language" (19-41). Another considers "Rationalism and the Jehovah's Witnesses" (77-91). One section examines the "Terminology" that this cult uses (493-505). Two chapters present a wide variety of subject matter: "Why I Cannot Be a Member of the Jehovah's Witnesses" (54-76) and "Jehovah's Witnesses: A Summary" (361-76), which contains a chart that presents the majority of their main teachings and the scriptures upon which they base them.

One of the most peculiar positions of any religious group is held by Jehovah's Witnesses: they refuse to be the recipients of a blood transfusion, a doctrine which they erroneously credit to Leviticus 17:10-14. The material in this book not only shows the error of their interpretation, but it also reveals the inconsistency they have had maintaining this doctrine. Conflicting dictums from their own publications are found on pages 242-45, and a technical chart of what may or may not be received is on pages 252-54.

All in all, the 603 pages within the covers of this book are well worth the \$16 it costs. Such barely covers the cost of a steak dinner any more, the benefits of which soon disappear. Yet this resource volume may be used time and again, and we highly recommend it.

—312 Pearl Street  
Denton, Texas 76201

**SPRING BIBLE  
INSTITUTE  
2002 Lectures Book**

**THE JEHOVAH'S  
WITNESSES**

**ONLY \$16.00**  
(plus \$2.00 s/h TX residents add \$1.16 tax)

**Contending FOR THE Faith**

**P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77383  
fax: 281.288.0549**



# Ecumenical News, the Intent of Rock Music, and Lesbian Scout Leaders

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

Ecumenical News International reports that senior leaders of Europe's Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths have set up an inter-religious council. Apparently the aim of this new group is to work for peace and promote collaboration among religious communities. According to the ENI story, the European Religious Leaders Council intends to cooperate with political decision-makers on a continent that is becoming increasingly multi-religious and multi-cultural. A British-based member of the Council's executive committee put it this way: "We aim to build a harmonious, cohesive Europe and to ensure that all faiths exert an appropriate influence." (Agape Press, 4/3/02) *[The ecumenical movement has up to this time been primarily involved in unifying groups proclaiming christianity. But there is an increasing movement to unify all religions. This is the logical conclusion when one ignores Biblical basis for unity.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

In an apparent attempt to put a religious gloss over their otherwise barbaric push for abortion, Planned Parenthood has appointed a "chaplain" for its Washington state chapters. According to the Seattle Times, the Reverend Monica Corsaro will provide "pastoral counseling" to women seeking abortions, as well as act as a "liaison" with the religious community in lobbying for abortion. Her attempt — and Planned Parenthood's at large — to justify the destruction of innocent babies by spiritualizing the debate is ironic. Why would religious counseling be necessary at all, except to assuage the guilt and pricks of conscience faced by thousands of troubled women who have been duped into abortion? (Family Research Council, 4/2/02) *[When one decides that the Bible is not the inspired word of God, then anything goes. It matters not that one claims to be religious and to follow God if one does not believe that God can communicate with man. The devil is laughing his head off on this one.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

Consider the following quotes regarding the intent and influence of music. Rock music is a way to "hypnotize people to where they go right back to their natural state. And when you get people at their weakest point, you can preach into the subconscious what we want to say." (Jimi Hendrix quoted in *The New American*, April 8, 2002, p.16) "The song 'Imagine' is virtually a communist manifesto.... You see, 'Imagine' was exactly the same message, but sugar-coated. Now, 'Imagine' is a big hit almost everywhere—anti-religious, anti-nationalistic, anti-conventional, anti-capitalistic song, but because it is sugar-coated it is accepted." (John Lennon as quoted in *The New American*, April 8, 2002, p. 15) *[Parents*

*must always be on guard for what their children are listening to. While it is true that some musicians are simply entertaining, it is also true that many have an agenda. Music is a way to communicate messages that otherwise would either not be listened to or would be rejected. But with catchy and smooth tunes, most anything can be communicated. These same musicians will fall back on the mantra that it is the parents who are responsible for what their children listen to. That is true but it is also true that they will answer to God for what they communicate. Parents will fall back on the mantra that it is just entertainment and their children can discern the good from the bad. Listen to bad long enough and you begin to like it.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

"Karen Gotzler, who spent four years as an administrator in a Midwest GSUSA (Girl Scouts of United States of America) council, told Harper that most of the women who serve in lower positions as Girl Scout troop leaders or local volunteers are straight. But 'if you're talking about the professional staff, the percentage of lesbians is much higher,' she said, estimating the number as 'at least 30%.' In fact, Gotzler said, 'there are some councils where nearly all the professional staff are lesbians.' Harper cited a number of Girl Scout staffers who agreed with Gotzler's estimates of 30%, including one woman who had worked on the 500 member staff of the GSUSA national headquarters office in New York." (AFA Journal, Nov-Dec, 2001, p. 22) *[Parents had better double check before allowing their girls to participate in this once family-friendly organization. If you go to their web site you will find links to pro-gay sites.—mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

The editor of the *Calgary Sun* (Canada) remarked in a column recently, that in what is being described as an "unprecedented move, the Canadian military is directing its chaplains to avoid all specific references to Christianity during public services. The policy change, which came down from the chaplain general in Ottawa on July 24, has left Canadian Forces' chaplains unable to use such phrases like 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit,' the name of Christ, and even the Lord's Prayer. (Religion Today, 11/23/01) *[What common sense reasoning would say that you are to have religious services but not mention the God who you worship??—mtm]*

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125



# What If There is No Church of Christ Where You Live?

Noah A. Hackworth

This was a great gospel preacher's advice to some people many years ago. I agreed with it then, and I agree with it now. We are unquestionably a brotherhood of "movers," i.e., our people are constantly on the move because of retirement, job change, health, or personal preference. Many people have through the years moved to places where either the church did not exist, or it was too progressive for people who respect biblical authority (Colossians 3:17; II John 9). In case this kind of situation should happen, what would be the most expedient thing for a Christian to do? Would it be scriptural to meet and "worship" with the most conservative denomination available? Would it be in our best spiritual interests to affiliate with a church of Christ that has "gone liberal?" All is not bleak; there are biblical answers to these questions. Consider these points.

## THERE IS NO SCRIPTURAL JUSTIFICATION FOR ANY NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN TO SACRIFICE THE PRINCIPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY

Denominationalism is not New Testament Christianity (NTC). The former is not synonymous with the latter. The latter is based on authority; the former is not. The former is a product of the years subsequent to the apostolic era. NTC is an authoritative system; it had its beginning in the first century Paul declared, "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17). There is absolutely no excuse for the existence of denominationalism; it has no "right" to exist. It exists because men usurped the authority that belongs only to the Lord and went "beyond" the things which are written, and they did so without God's approval (Matthew 28:18; Luke 6:46; I Corinthians 4:6; II John 9). Pure NTC will either be a "force" or a "farce." It is up to us to decide which we want it to be, but one thing should be clear: What NTC is, as presented in the New Testament, will no doubt become just another benevolent "man-made system" if we sell our birthright for a mess of denominational pottage. Poor Esau never recovered from his mistake (cf. Genesis 25:27-34). In fact, his actions subsequently caused him to despise his own birthright (34).

## JESUS CHRIST WAS THE ONLY PERSON EVER AUTHORIZED TO BUILD A CHURCH

We really do not hear enough sermons on the church Christ established, which came into existence on the day of Pentecost (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:38-47). It is the beautiful bride of Christ; he gave his life for it, and we must not treat it indifferently or with disrespect (Ephesians 5:23-

25). On the Mount of Transfiguration, a voice out of a cloud, said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5), but we are not listening! The Lord said, "...Every plant (planting) which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up," but we are not listening! What denomination did the Lord "plant?" Which one did he shed his blood for? Jesus Christ did not shed his blood, not even one drop, for a denominational church. Every New Testament Christian ought to know this (Acts 20:28; I Peter 1:18-19). Do they?



## DENOMINATIONS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO SET THE LORD'S TABLE

If a denomination has no scriptural right to exist, it would have no scriptural right to eat the Lord's Supper. This may sound "harsh" to one who does not understand and love the truth, but it really isn't. A denomination cannot, in a true biblical sense, "set" or "observe" the Lord's Supper, not even one time. Jesus said, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom..." (Luke 22:29). The Lord's table is in the Lord's kingdom, so one has to be in the kingdom in order to "observe" the Lord's Supper. One who has not obeyed the gospel of Christ is not in the kingdom, and therefore cannot "observe" the Lord's Supper. Mechanically eat it! Obviously. "Observe it" Never! A New Testament Christian who understands the significance of the Lord's Supper will not sacrifice it for a denominational substitute, not even once.

—4525 W. Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, California 93277

# Seek Ye First...

**A Free Quarterly Publication**

**Business Office:**  
Post Office Box 158  
Bangs, Texas 76821-0158

**Publication Office:**  
500 N. Pearl  
Comanche, Texas 75644

# THE VALLEY OF THE DRY BONES

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

- A. One of the truly great prophets of the Old Testament was Ezekiel.
- B. Throughout the Old Testament it was prophesied that Israel would go into captivity if they didn't return unto the Lord.
  1. For example — **Jeremiah 6:16-17**
  2. As a result — **Isaiah 5:13**
    - a. Israel, though, *doubted the truth of these prophecies*, and proclaimed boldly that they would not come to pass.
    - b. At the time that Ezekiel was writing this prophetic book Israel *was in captivity*.
  3. There were also prophecies that Israel would return from captivity.
    - a. But Israel was just as doubtful about these predictions as they were about the others.
    - b. Thus, we have the reason behind the writing of Ezekiel 37:1-14 — *To show Israel their doubts were unfounded.*



## DISCUSSION

### A. THE VISION

1. **Ezekiel 37:1-10**
2. God's *action* is first set forth (vs. 1-2).
  - a. God takes up Ezekiel in a vision.
  - b. Ezekiel sees a valley full of dry bones.
  - c. These bones are very dry – no skin, no moisture, and far removed from life.
3. God then *posed question* for Ezekiel.
  - a. **"Son of man, can these bones live?"** (v. 3a)
  - b. Ezekiel's reply, **"O Lord God, thou knowest"** (v. 3b).
4. *God then follows with two commands:*
  - a. The first command was to **"prophesy"** over the **"bones."**
    - 1) He was to *speak the word of the Lord* to the bones (v. 4).
    - 2) The bones were to *hear the word of the Lord* (v. 4).
    - 3) *Through these words*, the bones were given the *promise of life* — **Ezekiel 37:5.**
    - 4) As a result, the bones would *know* the power of God.
      - a) **Ezekiel 37:6**
      - b) From this we conclude that they had not truly known the Lord up to this point.
  - b. The second command was to **"prophecy unto the wind"** (v. 9).
    - 1) Ezekiel had already prophesied over the bones, as God commanded him.

- a) Look in your mind's eye, and envision a valley full of the bones of several thousand soldiers coming together all at once!
- b) Ezekiel could hear the great noise and with astonishment see the bones assembling together.

2) **Ezekiel 37:8**—The bones were now in need of a spirit within them.

3) **Ezekiel 37:10**

### B. THE MEANING OF THE VISION

1. **Ezekiel 37:11-14**
2. The bones represented hopeless Israel in bondage (v. 11).
  - a. **Psalm 37**
  - b. Israel is here described in their great sorrow, and longing for her past glory.
3. This vision of Ezekiel gave *encouragement, through the promise of life.*
  - a. At this time, Ezekiel prophesied to fallen Israel
  - b. The prophecy was *a promise of life!*
    - 1) This "life" that was promised was the return to the homeland of Israel (v. 12).
    - 2) As a result of the return, they would give glory to God (vs. 13-14).
4. The Lord had given Israel hope when they thought they were without hope.

### C. VALUABLE LESSONS GLEANED

1. *The promise of Israel returning to their homeland has nothing to do with physical Israel today.*
  - a. Israel had received the land of Canaan as God had promised.
  - b. But notice what happened **δ Jeremiah 32:21-23.**
  - c. Israel had lost the promise land to Babylon, but were allowed to return—that is what this vision is all about.
    - 1) Cyrus allowed the Jews to return and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:2-3).
    - 2) Darius allowed even more Jews to return by removing further hindrances (Ezra 4:23-24).
    - 3) Artaxerxes commissioned Nehemiah to return and oversee the rebuilding of the walls around Jerusalem, as recorded in the book of Nehemiah.
  - d. Israel, as a physical nation, has no more recognition from God than does any other nation—they are no longer a favored nation as they once were.
2. *Those in captivity to sin today must also hear the word of the Lord to live.*
  - a. **Romans 10:17**
  - b. **Matthew 7:24-27**
  - c. But remember, **"Take heed how ye hear"** (Luke 8:18).
  - d. The word of God has *a message to the lost: Romans 10:8-10; Acts 17:30; Mark 16:51-16.*
  - e. The word of God has *a message to the faithful: I Corinthians 15:58; II Peter 3:14.*
  - f. The word of God has *a message to the unfaithful: Acts 8:22; II Corinthians 7:9-10.*
  - g. As Israel had to hear and obey the word of God to live, so must we do the same.
3. *There will be a general resurrection of the dead at the last day.*

- a. In that day the graves will be opened.  
 1) **John 5:28-29**  
 2) The good and the bad will be resurrected.
- b. In that day, the bodies will be resurrected to live.  
 1) **I Corinthians 15:42-44**  
 2) **Acts 26:8**
- c. If God could put flesh, bones and souls together in the valley – He can do the same in the last day.
- d. *In that day man will know the power and glory of God!*

## CONCLUSION

- A. If you want to live spiritually today, you must hear the word of the Lord.  
 1. **James 1:22**  
 2. **Romans 2:13**
- B. May the *Valley of the Dry Bones* remind us of the hope we have when we hear and obey the word of the Lord.

—24065 Main  
 Malvern, Arkansas 72104

# 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. Sun. 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, Sun. 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—

**Cambridge**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); [www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org](http://www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org). Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; [www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org](http://www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org) and [www.Myth-and-Mystery.org](http://www.Myth-and-Mystery.org).

## —Florida—

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## —Georgia—

**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. Tel. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —Indiana—

**Evansville**—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 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. [www.garden-city-coc.org](http://www.garden-city-coc.org) Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sun. 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, 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.

## —Oklahoma—

**Porum**—Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, Evangelist, email: lawson@starnetok.net.

## —Tennessee—

**Crossville**—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 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.

**Rockwood**—Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## —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 Bob Patterson, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sun. 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. Sun. 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. [www.churchesofchrist.com](http://www.churchesofchrist.com)

**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, 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 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.

**Roanoke**—Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262, Tel. (817) 491-2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm.

**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.

# EXPEDIENCES- AND HOBBYISM PROVEN!

Bill Jackson

Because God has not specifically detailed every aspect of the Christian's life, and has not specifically detailed each aspect of the methods in a congregation's work, much of what is done is in the realm of expediency. Basic to any such study is the understanding that an unlawful thing, a sinful thing, can never be an expedient. If a thing is sinful in itself, there can be no circumstances where the sinful thing is permissible in the sight of God.

We have known, certainly, that the church building is an expedient. Over more than a year I have had steady correspondence with a brother in a northern state who stands on the "anti" side of the cooperation and benevolence issues. Finally, our exchange centered on the church building, and whether or not a meal, and then down to a single sandwich, can be eaten in the building. And, whether 200 people can take some food in the building, and then down to one man eating a sandwich therein. We certainly proved the case of hobbyism against that man when he was able to, "as with a very sharp knife," tell me exactly where the sin line is found: Right if one eats a bite, wrong if 200 do; right if it is an incidental eating, wrong if it becomes a thing of consistency, et al. Laws made, mind you, determining "sin" and "no sin" in the use of an expediency!

As for Acts 2, circumcision could not be a matter of law any longer; it had to rest in the area of expediency (Galatians 5:6). Men sinned, and proved themselves the hobbyists of that day, when they tried to make laws regarding the expediency (Acts 15:1). It is highly presumptuous for any man to see that something is in the realm of expediency and judgment, and then to set himself forward "in the place of God" and declare to others the "sin" and "no sin" use thereof! Hobbyism proven!

—Deceased



Why Not Help  
Contending FOR THE Faith  
Grow?  
GIVE A GIFT  
SUBSCRIPTION!  
SEND SUBSCRIPTIONS TO:  
P.O. BOX 2357  
SPRING, TX 77383-2357

Contending FOR THE Faith™  
Post Office Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT# 1863

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Post Office Box 2557, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

*Studies from the Biblical Text...*

## DOES ACTS 2:41 PROVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT PERSONALLY AND DIRECTLY INDWELLS THE CHRISTIAN?

Daniel Denham

The question of the mode of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian has always been a source of discussion and some measure of controversy, though for the most part, faithful brethren have not permitted it to become a cause for division. There are those who believe and teach that the Spirit indwells through the "word only", which view has sometimes been called the representative view, and there are those who believe and teach that the indwelling is personal and direct in nature. Through the years faithful brethren holding to these two views have rejected the notion that the Spirit does anything to the spirit of the Christian separate and apart from the influence of the word of God in the realm of moral influence. They have rejected, appropriately so, any miraculous element in the indwelling. The two groups have maintained fellowship with one another, despite their differences on the nature of the indwelling, provided that one did not begin to assert some special work of the Spirit on the human spirit relative to moral influence that by its nature must needs be miraculous.

### ACTS 2:41 AND THE PERSONAL INDWELLING VIEW

One key verse that is often used to defend the personal indwelling view is Acts 2:41. In more recent years some, who espouse the personal view, have asserted that it actually settles the matter by showing that the "word only" view is impossible. They seem to be determined to compel brethren to surrender the field of study to them on the matter by virtue of this text. The current study then is designed to address the specific question posed in the title. Does

Acts 2:41 prove that the Spirit indwells personally and directly in the child of God?

*The design of this article is not to try to establish the case for "the word" only position, nor should its material be taken as endorsing the one position over the other.* It is merely for the sake of spurring further study on the matter as pertains to this specific text. It always behooves us to be careful in our exegesis of any text. The law of rationality holds that we ought to justify our conclusions by *adequate* evidence. Does Acts 2:41 really settle the matter once and for all? Or does the case for either view require argumentation drawn from other passages?

### AN INESCAPABLE DILEMMA?

The verse reads in the KJV as follows: **"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."** The ASV reads: **"They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls."**

Some advocates of the personal indwelling view make the argument that Acts 2:41 establishes the doctrine by means of refuting the "word only" view on the indwelling. The argument involves the use of the strong disjunctive and thus a "process of elimination" approach. It is reasoned that there are only two alternatives that can be reasonably considered as to the means or mode of indwelling. If one is false, then the other of necessity must be true. Acts





# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXXIII, No. 7

July/2002

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher

jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by *Contending for the Faith* and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001



MICHAEL LIGHT

*Editorial...*

## MICHAEL LIGHT TO SERVE AS ASSISTANT EDITOR OF CFTF

Michael Light is a native Texan. He is married to the former Carrie Brown. They have three children **Shelby Elizabeth, Michaela Ashley and Dawson Michael**. Michael is a 1991 graduate of the *Southwest School of Bible Studies* and holds a B.A. (History and English) and a M.A. (History) from *Southwest Texas State University*. For five years he preached for the *Northside* congregation, New Braunfels, Texas. Michael is in his seventh year working as the evangelist for the church in Bangs, Texas. As a part of his work with the Bangs congregation he conducts a thirty minute weekly radio program. He has preached in gospel meetings and lectureships throughout the United States and in England, Jamaica, Tobago, and Russia. He is the director of the *Bangs Christian Camp* sessions at Lake Cisco, Texas and has published several tracts as well as editing one sermon outline book. Michael serves on the faculty of *Spring Bible Institute*. He is the founding editor of the quarterly religious journal, *Seek Ye First*.

I was directing the *Southwest School of Bible Studies* and was one of Michael's teachers when he was a student in the school. He was and is a good student of God's word. Michael knows how to study and think rationally through material. While Michael was a student in *SWSBS* we not only emphasized the importance of knowing the scripture text but also offered studies in logic. In the logic class as in every class at that time emphasis was given to the actual application of the rules of correct inference as well as the other hermeneutical principles necessary for ascertaining Bible authority for what we believe and practice. These principles were learned and the students drilled in them by applying them to the various past and present doctrines whether the doctrines were true or false. The students conducted

mock debates and time was spent studying the important debates of yesteryear and the present. For some time now Michael has had the opportunity to prove himself as a preacher, writer, and one who knows the difference in optional and obligatory matters. Moreover, he is no stranger to controversy.

Over the years we have spent much time discussing various and sundry matters regarding difficult passages of scripture as well as the issues of today and yesterday in the church, nation and the world. He has a good "handle" on the brotherhood and his grip on that "handle" will get better as the years go by. These things are essential if one is to be a successful part of a school or paper that goes beyond a local congregation in work and influence.

Michael will be helping me to edit the paper and all that editing entails. In time he will put together certain editions of the paper. This alone will assist me greatly. Moreover, his coming to the paper at the age of 32 years will help, the Lord willing, to perpetuate *CFTF*. No matter how lengthy our days are, none of us will be here for very long. And, none of us know when we shall leave this world. Thus, we do what we can to perpetuate the Lord's work while it is day, for the night comes when no man can work. Therefore, not knowing the future, we try to make arrangements to keep things in safe and sound hands while we can. In my mind Michael's selection to be assistant editor goes a long way towards keeping *CFTF* in faithful hands for the foreseeable future. Please pray for Michael and all of us as we begin our work together.

#### THE INDISPENSIBLE HELP BEHIND THE SCENES

While this article serves to introduce Michael to you I want to take this opportunity to mention the team of which Michael is now a part. At present I preach regularly for the Spring congregation as well as direct and teach in the *Spring Bible Institute*. I also travel extensively in preaching the gospel. And, it needs to be said here that I could not do all of these things without help. The following people help make Contending for the Faith possible.

The Spring elders (**Kenneth Cohn** and **Buddy Roth**), as is true of the Spring church, have been tremendous in their encouragement and backing in the work with *CFTF*.

Kenneth Cohn, my partner in this work, handles the accounting/bookkeeping part of this endeavor. Many thanks are given to him and his wife **Nancy** for their work with the paper.

My wife **Joann** handles all the book selling (ordering, boxing, wrapping, billing, mailing, bill paying, and check writing). This involves much time and is hard work. How grateful I am to her for her selfless work with me as a gospel preacher over the 31 plus years that she has walked by my side in the work of the Lord.

I also want to express my deep appreciation for and to my daughter **Rebekah Melton** who does the lay out for the paper. **Nathan**, her husband, is very generous and understanding in allowing her to be a part of the work of *CFTF*. She does this work along with putting together the Spring church bulletin. Her work usually begins around 5:30 a.m. while their children **Marin** and **Wyatt** are sleeping.

## In This Issue . . .

### Studies from the Biblical Text

Does Acts 2:41 Prove That The Holy Spirit Personally and Directly Instructs the Christian?

Daniel DeBham 1

### Editorial

Michael Light to Serve as Assistant Editor of *CFTF*

David Brown 2

Attempting To Protect Their Name

Dub Mowery 3

Living in Sin

Tyler Young 10

Encounter Theology

Wayne Coats 12

Body Piercing and Tattoos

Danny L. Box 14

### Restoration Reflections

"They are Too Nondenominational"

Paul Vaughn 16

A Little Bit of History

V. B. DeBham 17

### Current Events that Concern Christians

The Emergence of Religious Diversity, Avoiding Biblical Language, and Disney's World's Gay Days

Mark McWhorter 18

### One Woman's Perspective on

Our Topsy-Turvy World

Annette B. Gates 20

Modesty in Worship

Russell M. Kline 22

### The Last Word

Pride: A Lurking Danger

Edie Whitten 23

In the *Spring Bible Institute* **Lynn Parker** assists in more ways than can be imagined in the work of the school. This he does while carrying a heavy load of writing assignments and speaking appointments. He contributes articles regularly to *CFTF*. Lynn, along with his wife **Mary Ann**, have enough to do in rearing their five children; but **Mary Ann** also does the secretarial work for the church and *SBI*. I am deeply thankful to and for all these brethren for their sacrificial work in the kingdom of the Lord.

#### TO OUR FAITHFUL SUBSCRIBERS

Now, most especially to our subscribers, I am very thankful. Without you our work would not exist. However, *CFTF* reaches more than our regular subscribers. During the year through our special mailings we will send out papers to as many as 6,000 and sometimes 10,000 people who need what we have to say. (Recently we sent 3,000 papers to that many individual Nashville, Tennessee addresses.) In reality our paid subscribers do not begin to cover the church members we reach in one year. To those who make generous contributions to our "special mailings" fund we are deeply appreciative. *We need you to continue to make those contributions to our special mailings fund.*

#### WILL YOU HELP CFTF GROW IN SUBSCRIBERS?

I want to appeal to every subscriber to make a concerted effort to get others that you know who need

and/or are appreciative of *Contending for the Faith* to subscribe to the paper. The paper can double in size by each one of you subscribing for another or getting another to subscribe. This seems very little to ask for the good that can be accomplished. A one-year subscription is only \$14.00 and a two-year subscription is only \$24.00. *Will you make it a point to help us get subscribers?*

#### TO THE WORK— THE NIGHT IS AT HAND

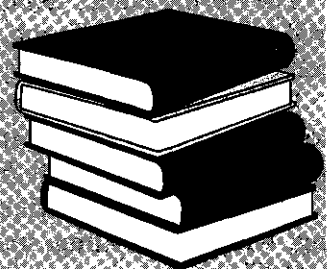
Yes, I am glad to have Michael Light as my assistant editor for *Contending for the Faith*. I am also thankful to our faithful readers and the kind comments of encouragement you write to us from time to time. As editor I am deeply concerned about keeping the paper in harmony with the truth of the Bible. I want everything we do to be for God and his cause and against Satan and his work.

I will continue to write and publish articles that show no favoritism or respect of persons. My intention is to write and select articles that follow the literary form of the New Testament writers, for one cannot improve on perfection as a pattern to follow. I do not intend to preach in one way and write in another way. On the pages of *CFTF* we do not intend to preach, "**consider the lilies**" to those who need to hear "**thou hast made my father's house a den of thieves**" and vice versa.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

## Attention School Teachers!

There are a number of school teacher openings available with the Beeville Independent School District. If you, or any brethren you know, are looking for a school teaching position opening or have been planning to relocate but have been concerned about being able to attend and work with a faithful congregation of the Lord's church, we hope that you will consider the school teaching opportunities available in Beeville, Texas. Information concerning job openings with the Beeville Independent School District can be viewed online at:  
BISD Home page Address: [www.beevilleisd.eso2.net](http://www.beevilleisd.eso2.net)  
BISD E-MAIL: [webmaster2@beevilleisd.eso2.net](mailto:webmaster2@beevilleisd.eso2.net)



If we can be of any assistance, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Church of Christ at 1701 N. Adams Street, Beeville, Texas, by phone at (361) 358-4428 or Bob Patterson at (361) 358-5760. Fax: (361) 358-3743, or at our website: [www.churchofChristBeeville.org](http://www.churchofChristBeeville.org)



# Does Acts 2:41...

(Continued From Page 1)

2:41 is taken as a text that demonstrates that one alternative (the “word only” view) cannot be true. It is then asserted that the personal indwelling view must be true. The argument runs that the “word only” view implies that when one receives the word, then he also receives the indwelling of the Spirit. The text, however, shows that those who received the word did so prior to being baptized and becoming Christians. Thus, it is averred that the “word only” view implies that one receives the indwelling of the Spirit before he becomes a Christian, and thus while he is still “in the world.” Yet the Bible expressly teaches that the world cannot receive the Spirit (John 14:17). It is also affirmed that Acts 2:38 teaches that “**the gift of the Holy Spirit**” is to be received upon being baptized for the remission of sins. This gift is taken by the personal view proponents as a reference to the indwelling of the Spirit. Thus, it is concluded that the “word only” view leads to an inescapable dilemma. One must either hold that the indwelling of the Spirit can be received by unregenerate men prior to baptism or else forfeit the “word only” view completely. Acts 2:41 is taken as involving this order of events: (1) They accepted the truth of Peter’s sermon – “**received his words,**” (2) they then were baptized for the remission of sins and thus received “**the gift of the Holy Spirit,**” and (3) they were thereupon “**added**” to them, i.e. the disciples, by the Lord.

The argument appears to be compelling, if not outright decisive. After all, no one holds that the Spirit indwells those who are not saved, and any doctrine seeming to imply that conclusion is automatically suspect. If Acts 2:41 could be clearly shown to decide the issue one way or the other, it would be of profound importance in the debate. However, I do not believe that the text does that. In fact, I do not believe that it was designed to address the question of the indwelling at all despite how compelling it may appear from the vantage of being one who personally holds to the personal indwelling view.

## THE BASIC FALLACY OF THE ARGUMENT

I believe that the argument above commits a very basic fallacy in its formation. It is a form of the equivocation fallacy, which both sides in some fashion helped to formulate. There are two differing meanings actually being employed for the word “receive” in the debate on the subject, particularly in view of Acts 2:41. Though not expressly stated, there is a shifting of meaning in the word “receive.” How the word “receive” is used in Acts 2:41 and what is meant by the word “receive” in its usage by the “word only” people are not necessarily the same.

*The common use by the “word only” view holds that when the word of God is genuinely received, it is obeyed and that reception of the word is identical to obedience to the word. One thus receives the “word only” when one obeys it. Receiving then is more than hearing and understanding what the word teaches, and it is also more than*

mentally assenting to certain facts or accepting the word to be true in the mind. The term “receive” is taken in this view to be more comprehensive in scope. The personal indwelling proponent who makes his case on Acts 2:41 ascribes to the “word only” view, however, a meaning for the word “receive” that the “word only” proponents do not necessarily accept. [NOTE: Some “word only” advocates have not “thought through” their position, at least, as it pertains to Acts 2:41. They seem confused as to just what they believe the passage teaches. This in turn fuels the misapprehensions of the “personal indwelling” advocates of the “word only” view.] *If the participle rendered “received” in Acts 2:41 means simply to accept mentally, then the “word only” response could simply be that this is not what is generally meant by the “word only” view. The text then does not specifically address that view. The personal indwelling view tries to impose a definition of the word “receive” as conceived in the thinking of the “word only” folk that the latter do not use aside from specific texts. When they are talking about one receiving the word so as to have the Spirit indwelling him, they are talking about nothing less than obedience to the word. Acts 2:41 is then taken by some of the “word only” proponents to mean simply “accept” in a mental way the truth of Peter’s words. The personal indwelling view then misapprehends the “word only” view by applying to that view the meaning of “receive” across the board as that found in the argument on Acts 2:41. Given a weakened force for the word “receive” in Acts 2:41, the “word only” advocates could agree with the scenario set forth by the personal view on Acts 2:41, while rejecting the idea that “the gift” in Acts 2:38 is the personal indwelling of the Spirit. The “word only” view would simply clarify that “received” in Acts 2:41 does not refer to what is generally meant by “receiving the word” in the general “word only” doctrine of the indwelling.*

## EVIDENCE FROM THE GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX OF ACTS 2:41

I am of the persuasion that the argument also commits a critical mistake in the exegesis of Acts 2:41 grammatically. It is my opinion that the grammatico-syntactical construction shows that the action of the receiving and the action of being baptized are actually coincidental or simultaneous and not consecutive or sequential as is assumed in the argument. *I believe that it has been wrongly assumed that the verse establishes a sequence of events rather than describing a single event viewed from two separate perspectives.*

First, an examination of the construction of Acts 2:41 would permit this view. The construction utilizes an aorist participle in the dependent clause “they that gladly *received* his word” (Gr. *apodexamenoi*), used as the subject of the sentence, in connection with an aorist indicative verb rendered “were baptized” (*ebaptistheesan*) in the predicate. It has the force of reading more literally as “Therefore (or then) ‘the receiving (or received) his words ones’ (they) were baptized...” with the dependent clause being rendered either as the subject itself or as an apposition to the implied subject “they” embodied in the main verb; hence “They who received (or were receiving) his

words were baptized.” *It should be noted that the aorist tense, and indeed with all the Greek tenses (but especially with the aorist), is not concerned principally in itself with time of action, but rather with the kind of action.* The Greek aorist can be rendered as past, present, or future depending upon the context, et al. Also, it should be noted that in such constructions as that in Acts 2:41, the time of action relative to the participle that is under consideration in any fashion has to do with the time indicated both contextually and with the action of the main or controlling verb. Thus, “received” or as some render it “were receiving” could be possible depending upon the relation between the participle and the main verb. The latter rendering would reflect a closer connection in time frame of the action. Either, however, would permit one to hold to a coincident or simultaneous view of the action in the central and dependent clauses in Acts 2:41.

#### WHAT DO THE GREEK GRAMMARIANS HAVE TO SAY?

In Acts 2:41 Luke uses the verb *ebaptistheesan*, and it is the *controlling* verb as to the time of the central or main action described in the text. Syntactically then, the action of the aorist participle may precede or coincide with the action of this controlling verb. In the predominance of cases, the action of an aorist participle precedes the action of a controlling verb. There is, however, a notable exception to this rule. *Many times the action of the aorist participle and its controlling aorist verb are coincident and thus simultaneous.* Relative to the development and use of the aorist participle in its connection with a controlling verb, Nigel Turner states: “...the aorist ptc. came to denote a time which was past in relation to the main verb...” He then adds, “Yet in spite of that development there are numerous examples of the aor. ptc. denoting coincident action, where the time of the action is not antecedent to that of the main verb...” (*Syntax*, p. 79.). In his monumental work *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek*, Ernest DeWitt Burton writes: “An Aorist participle of identical action most frequently accompanies an Aorist verb, both verb and participle thus describing the action indefinitely as a simple event” (p. 65). A.T. Robertson and W. Hershey Davis show that “the aorist participle is punctiliar of course” as to kind of action, and is “either simultaneous” or “antecedent” in relation to the action of a controlling verb (*A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament*, p. 379). They cite Acts 25:13 as an example of the former. In the text the aorist participle *aspasomenoi*, rendered “saluting,” modifies the action of the aorist indicative verb *kateentesan* “came down” (p. 379).

Other grammarians take note of this simultaneous use of the aorist participle. (1) After having stressed that “the Aorist Participle is most frequently used of an action which took place before the action of the main verb,” H.P.V. Nunn observes in a key footnote, “The Aorist Participle sometimes denotes action identical with that of the main verb, but described from a different point of view.” He cites Matthew 27:4 as an example, and then adds, “The Aorist Participle of identical action most frequently accompanies a verb in the Aorist Indicative, but it also occurs with the Future...” (*A Syntax of New Testament Greek*, p.

124). It will be remembered that Acts 2:41 uses the aorist indicative in the controlling verb. (2) H.E. Dana and Julius Mantey note that, while “*antecedent action* relative to the main verb is ordinarily expressed by the aorist or perfect” tense, “nevertheless, the aorist frequently expresses contemporaneous...” action. As an example of this, they cite Matthew 22:1 (*A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p. 230). Matthew 22:1 literally reads, “**And Jesus answering spake unto them again by parables, and said (says)**” (emphasis mine, HDD). (3) In his *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, Daniel B. Wallace states: “The aorist participle, for example, usually denotes *antecedent* time to that of the action of the controlling verb. But if the main verb is also aorist, this participle *may* indicate contemporaneous time” (p. 614). (4) Blass and DeBrunner clearly believe that there is an “identical” or simultaneous use of the aorist participle in the Greek Testament (*A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Christian Literature*, p. 175). (5) Gerald L. Stevens in his recent grammatical textbook *New Testament Greek* maintains that the aorist participle can be used of either antecedent or simultaneous action (p. 316). (6) J.W. Wenham, after noting that “...the Aorist Participle denotes action which took place before the action of the main verb,” observes, “The Aorist Participle is however sometimes used to describe *attendant circumstances*, i.e. an action taking place at the same time as the action of the main verb...” (*The Elements of New Testament Greek*, pp. 152-153). (7) William W. Goodwin, in his classic work *Greek Grammar*, also observes succinctly, “The aorist participle in certain constructions (generally with a verb in the aorist) does not denote time past with reference to the leading verb, but expresses time coincident with that of the verb when the action of the verb and of the participle is practically one” (p. 274).

One important example of coincident action of a participle with the action of an aorist verb (though an imperative) is found in James 1:21, “**Wherefore lay apart (lit. aorist participle, ‘laying apart’ or ‘putting away’) all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive (aorist verb) with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul.**” Obviously, repentance must necessarily coincide with the study and reception of the word. Logically, repentance does not precede the influence of the scriptures unless one accepts certain Calvinistic or Arminian presuppositions.

Acts 2:41 uses both an aorist participle in the subject construction and an aorist indicative verb as the controlling verb. This then makes simultaneous action very plausible. There is nothing within the construction itself that would demand sequential action as held by many who teach the personal indwelling view.

#### A SYNECDOCHE FOR OBEDIENCE

More important than the preceding, however, is the evidence to be adduced from Luke’s use of the expression “**received his words.**” A form of this expression is used by Luke in Luke 8:13 of those who “**when they hear (the word), receive the word with joy.**” It is clear that the expression is meant in Luke 8 as a synecdoche for obedience

to the word. The individuals thus described **“for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.”** Fall away from what? It is contextually obvious that the Lord is describing some who **“fall away”** from their initial state of being saved. They fall from grace (Galatians 5:4). They are thus lost once more. Matthew’s parallel, using the singular number as opposed to Luke’s use of the plural, shows that the Lord was talking about one who **“endureth for a while”** (Matthew 13:20-21), but **“when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”** cf. Mark 4:16-17. It must be the case in Luke 8 that Luke is writing of the obedience of certain ones to the word.

It would seem reasonable that Luke should use the same expression elsewhere in similar fashion. In fact, in Acts 8:14 that is precisely how it is used. Luke records, **“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John.”** This text references the events involved in the conversion of the Samaritans and summarizes the result (cf. Acts 8:12-13). The word used in Luke 8:13 and Acts 8:14 is *dechomai*, while the word used in Acts 2:41 is *apodechomai*. One will note that the latter term is a form of the former augmented with the preposition *apo* (generally meaning “from”) as a prefix that actually intensifies the force of the verb to stress the idea of “welcome” (cf. Luke 8:40; Acts 15:4; 18:27; 28:30) involved in the receiving—hence the KJV reading “gladly received.” *Dechomai* is also used by Luke in Acts 11:1 to describe and summarize the response of the household of Cornelius to the word of God and in Acts 17:11 in describing and stressing the openness of the Bereans to the truth of the word. These are the uses of the term by Luke as connected with the response of certain ones to the word.

This same word is used similarly by Paul in I Thessalonians 1:6 and James in James 1:21, as seen above. It is clear from the context of the former that Paul has in mind the obedience of the Thessalonians to the gospel of Christ. Their response to the word was of such a nature that it “turned” them around from serving idols to serving the living God (v. 9): one key reason being that they **“received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually”** worked in them **“who believed”** (I Thessalonians 2:13). The word rendered “received” in I Thessalonians 2:13 is *edexasthe*, which is the 1<sup>st</sup> Aorist Middle Indicative of *dechomai*. Berry’s *Interlinear* renders the word here as “accepted” (p. 530). James 1:21 concerns obedience as the very next verse emphasizes, **“But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves”** (v. 22). The action enjoined in this latter admonition naturally follows from the proper response to the word. James demonstrates that the proper response to (receiving of) the word entails obedience. Where the latter does not occur, the former has not happened.

One interesting use of *apodechomai* in Acts 24:3 should here be observed. The Jews’ “mouthpiece” against Paul, Tertullus, in his opening words to Felix sought to “butter up” the Roman governor by saying, **“Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept**

**it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness”** (Acts 24:2-3). The word rendered “accept” in the KJV is *apodechomai*, and is taken to express the Jews’ joyous and grateful reception of the wonderful benefices the governor had bestowed on the nation. Tertullus’ flattery, however, was empty and shallow. It was also a lie: for the Jews in reality despised Felix, who was infamous for both his personal debaucheries, graft, and corruption. Bribery was a common tool for access to the governor’s favor. But what is especially of importance for our current study is the fact that Tertullus used the word *apodechomai* in a very positive and proactive sense relative to the feigned affection for Felix and his **“very worthy deeds.”** Tertullus, a gifted orator, understood the force of the word as a means to express a complete and happy response to the fortunes afforded by the Roman governor. There is without a doubt, at the very least, a note of submissiveness to the governor’s will that Tertullus wishes to convey on this occasion in view of the matter then at hand—the desire by the Jews to do away with Paul once and for all. What better way to overturn Roman law but by doing so, while appearing to be humble and subservient in the face of Roman authority!

The adjective *apodektos* is used by Paul in I Timothy 2:3 and I Timothy 5:4 in the familiar clause **“this is good and acceptable”** in connection with Deity. The force of the adjective, as derived from its verb root, most surely is that of acceptance with the idea of approval.

#### SHALL WE IGNORE THE LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE?

In view of this linguistic evidence, how then can we justify weakening the force of the participle, which maintains the verbal aspects of kind of action, etc., in Acts 2:41 to mean something akin to simple mental-assent or acceptance short of obedience? It seems to me that Luke is stressing the fact that certain ones and only certain ones—those who honestly, sincerely, and with good hearts considered the evidence presented by Peter on Pentecost—obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, Acts 2:41 presents the event from two perspectives—the inward and the outward. Who gladly received the word of God? All of those who were baptized. Who were those who were baptized? All of those who gladly received the word of God. The inward working of God’s word is visibly seen in the outward submission to the act of baptism. The former inevitably led to and was consummated in the latter.

Acts 2:41 has been in recent years a text frequently used by brethren who hold to the personal and direct indwelling of the Holy Spirit in seeking to establish that doctrine by means of falsifying the “word only” view. However, the text does not seem to me to settle the question of the mode of the indwelling of the Spirit. I do not believe that it really even addresses the matter, though some claim that the argument on it is unanswerable. One must turn elsewhere to other texts to seek an answer.

*At any event, the mode should not become a point of division among us, unless one contends for the continuation of the miraculous today, including any doctrine that involves a direct and immediate moral influence on the spiritual heart (mind) of man essential to his ultimate salvation.* By direct and immediate, I do not have reference to provi-



dential or secondary causation in the making of moral choices. I refer by these terms to Spirit upon spirit contact without means or medium. Some teach that such takes place in addition to other influences (the word, for example) that God brings to bear to effect moral change. Any such operation of this nature, whether completely separate and apart from the word or *in conjunction but distinct* from the word, implies that man is not fully a free moral agent in the functioning of his moral faculties and choices and in the effecting of moral change, which is essential to both salvation and sanctification. As to the means by which God effects moral change in the heart of any man, it must be the

case – in order for him to be functionally free – that it is done through the word and through the word alone! Secondary influences can have some, even great, bearing upon how one responds to that word, but it is the word itself that effects the change when it is received and thus obeyed.

Let us always be for the right and against the wrong. The future of the Lord's church for the next generation is fraught with many problems over the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit.

—117 Owens Ave.  
Rutherford, Tennessee 38369

## ATTEMPTING TO PROTECT THEIR NAME

Dub Mowery

In 1877, a new English translation of the New Testament was published by the *American Bible Union*. It was referred to as *The New Testament of our Lord and Savior... the common English version, corrected by the American Bible Union*. This organization, affiliated with a Baptist association, wanted a translation that revealed that baptism was not sprinkling or pouring. The Greek word *baptizo* means to immerse. The Greek words for sprinkle and to pour are not the same as the one for immersion. *Rantizo* means to sprinkle, whereas *ekcheo* means to pour. In the King James Version and many other translations of the New Testament, the Greek word *baptizo* was not translated into its English equivalent, but rather was transliterated into the English language. It was simply anglicized to conform to the English manner of spelling. However, their translation never did become popular among members of the Baptist faith because, in their view, it did away with the name Baptist. In that translation, the forerunner of the son of God was called "John the Immerser," instead of "John the Baptist." Because of that fact, the *American Bible Union* later attempted to recall all of the copies of that translation.

### SALVATION IS IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

The truth of the matter, salvation is not *in* the name of John the Baptist, but in the *name* of Jesus Christ. Concerning the son of God, the Apostle Peter declared, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Nor did the spiritual kingdom of the Lord, which is the church, begin with John the Baptist. The church was established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2). John served a very important mission in preparing for the coming of the Messiah.

And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be

brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; (Luke 3:3-5).

John the Baptist said, in referring to the son of God, "He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose" (John 1:27). The harbinger was not called "John a Baptist," but rather, "John the Baptist." There is a big difference in speaking of "a Baptist," and "the Baptist." Nowhere in the New Testament is anyone other than the forerunner of Christ called Baptist. Not only that, but the church was never called "The Baptist Church" in the scriptures. The church was not built upon John the Baptist, it was built upon Christ (I Corinthians 3:11).

John the Baptist was never in the church. It was only after he was beheaded that the son of God promised to build his church (Matthew 16:18). Jesus, in speaking of John said, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11). This is true because John died before the spiritual kingdom, which is the church, was established. Yet, on one web site of a Baptist Church, there is a claim that Jesus and the apostles were members of the Baptist Church. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Baptist Church did not begin until 1609 with John Smyth as its founder. The church is the spiritual kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:18-19; Colossians 1:2, 13). Our Lord gave his life so that the church could become a reality (Ephesians 5:25-27). The Apostle Paul refused to be a party to establishing a sect after him. He stated, "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Corinthians 1:13). These words of Paul could as easily be made concerning John the Baptist. He is not our savior! Therefore, the church does not belong to him, but unto the son of God.

### NO PROPER NAME FOR THE CHURCH

The New Testament church does not have a proper name as such. It does have specific designations which de-

dict its spiritual relationship with the Godhead. It is referred to in the scriptures as **"the church of God"** (I Corinthians 1:2; II Corinthians 1:1). In speaking of more than one congregation, the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Rome, **"...The churches of Christ salute you"** (Romans 16:16). In matters pertaining to life and godliness, it is essential that we speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where it is silent. The Apostle Peter stated, **"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God;"** (I Peter 4:11). The Apostle Paul wrote by inspiration, **"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).

**MR. AND MRS. ADAM**

It would be a disgrace for a man's bride to wear some other man's name. And yet, this is precisely what is happening in this era of the feminist movement. At the beginning of time, the family name of the first couple was Adam. At Genesis 5:2, **"Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."** Eve became Mrs. Adam. The church is the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27; II Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 21:9). If a groom's new bride wanted to wear the name of his best man instead of his name, it would be a disgrace and humiliation unto him. Spiritually, the church is the bride and Jesus is portrayed in the scriptures as the bridegroom, while John the Baptist speaks of himself as "the friend of the bridegroom." In common usage today, John was the best man. He said,

**...A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease** (John 3:27-30).

John did not exalt himself by demanding that the bride of Christ wear his name. Instead, he said of Christ, **"He must increase, but I must decrease."**

**UNIMMERSED BAPTISTS**

In recent years, some Baptist associations have had controversy within their ranks concerning whether or not baptism (immersion) was necessary in order to be a member of the Baptist Church. Some South Carolina Baptist congregations have been ousted from their Baptist associations because they opened their membership unto those who had not been immersed. Since Baptists, in general, do not believe that baptism is essential for salvation; some argued that it should not make any difference whether or not a person is baptized in order to be a member of the Baptist Church. The Director of Missions of a Baptist association in South Carolina stated, "If you're going to be a Baptist, this is one of the distinctives." I corresponded with him by email and inquired:

It has recently come to my attention that some Baptist churches in South Carolina accept people into their membership who have not been baptized. Is this the general practice

among Baptist churches of that area, and does the Greenville Baptist Association endorse this procedure? if not, are there some congregations from which you severed association?

**Ron Davis**, their Director of Missions responded:

Several churches in SC accept a person's baptism whether it was by immersion or not. It is not a general practice, and our association does not endorse the practice. Immersion is the right method of baptism. Unfortunately, any church can call itself Baptist regardless of what it believes or practices.

I thanked him for his response and then inquired further, One more thing, did the Greenville Baptist Association in which you are the Director of Missions, actually sever fellowship with Baptist congregations that accepted individuals into fellowship who had not been immersed?

His response, "Yes—one congregation!"

After having said the above, many of my friends and relatives are of the Baptist faith. I do not question their sincerity; in fact, I was baptized into the First Baptist Church (of the Southern Convention) at Idabel, Oklahoma in 1948. However, in 1955, brother **Roy M. Henderson**, a faithful gospel preacher, baptized me for the remission of sins. He motivated me to become a gospel preacher. For more than 47 years, I have been striving to reach precious souls with **"the unsearchable riches of Christ"** (Ephesians 3:8).

—P. O. Box 3  
Drumright, Oklahoma 74030  
nativeheritag@juno.com

**Contending FOR THE Faith**

**2001 Bound Volume**

- Only \$8.00 plus \$2.00 S&H

**ORDER TODAY!**

- P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357  
fax: 281.288.0549

# LIVING IN SIN

**May couples who are in adulterous marriages live together as long as they are celibate?**

Tyler Young

Time and time again we have experienced that sad, sinking feeling which comes over us when we discover a hopeful prospect for conversion or beloved couple in the church is in an unscriptural marriage. It is not uncommon to find people in such circumstances who have been happily "married" for years with several children. Their homes may be pictures of domestic bliss, except for the fact that a husband or wife has had a previous marriage which ended in an unscriptural divorce.

## **GOD'S MARRIAGE LAW**

Those familiar with scripture know that God's law concerning marriage is simply this: one man joined to one woman for life. Once married, one may never be married to another person again unless his or her first spouse dies (Romans 7:1-3). Jesus said, **"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery"** (Mark 10:11-12). There is but one exception to this rule, as stated by the Lord in Matthew 19:9: **"Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."** Given the prevalence of divorce in our culture, this means there are multiplied thousands of people who have divorced and are remarried in the eyes of the state but are actually living in adultery in the eyes of God. If they continue in such a state, they will be lost, for scripture unambiguously declares that **"adulterers.. shall not inherit the kingdom of God"** (I Corinthians 6:19-20). As we have increasingly encountered people in and out of the church living in adultery, brethren have sought ways to justify them and avoid the difficulty of demanding they repent and remove themselves from their sinful unions. Souls have been lost, and the precious bride of Christ divided, because of the false doctrines propagated far and wide designed to circumvent God's law on divorce and remarriage and accommodate people in marriages in which, according to God's word, they have no right to be. The church has been filled with adulterers because of brethren who lack compassion, courage, and the conviction for truth to say to those in unscriptural marriages, **"It is not lawful for you to have her"** (Matthew 14:4).

## **AN UNPLEASANT DUTY**

We may not lose our heads, as John did, for saying that to people today, but it is still a most unpleasant duty to inform happily married couples that they are living in sin. No matter how gently and patiently we do so, it is nonetheless a painful experience to have to confront people with the consequences of their sin. I once baptized a man in his late sixties who was dying of cancer. A member of the congregation had studied with him and was satisfied he was ready to obey the gospel. With tears in his eyes the gentlemen put

on Christ in baptism. He and his wife of twenty years had four beautiful daughters, but as we studied further with him after his conversion, he revealed that he had been married five times before. After a brief marriage of less than a five months, he had divorced his first wife as a young man, but not because she had committed adultery. That meant every marriage he had after that—including his last one—was sinful in God's sight. We taught him the Lord's will on marriage and divorce and explained to him the requirements of repentance that he would have to end his marriage with his wife. Like the rich young ruler, he went away "sorrowful" never to return, unwilling to forsake all to follow Christ. Sadly, his response to the demands of our Lord is all too typical.

## **MAN MADE REMEDIES ARE NO REMEDIES**

Some well-meaning brethren have tried to ease the burden of repentance for couples in adultery by suggesting that they may remain living together as husband and wife as long as they cease engaging in sexual relations. Their reasoning seems to be something like this: Jesus said that those who divorce and remarry are in adultery, and adultery is a particular kind of unlawful sexual activity. Therefore, if they abstain from all sexual activity, they will not be committing adultery, though still married and functioning in every other way as husband and wife. Since adulterous acts will not be occurring, their marriage relationship can be pleasing in the sight of God. The appeal of this line of reasoning is obvious: Couples in adultery need not endure the tremendous emotional and financial hardship of having to separate, as long as they sleep in separate beds. If they are already Christians, they simply need to make public confession before the congregation and then may continue living together as they always have, provided they are celibate.

As attractive as that option might seem to be, it is not a biblical one. The idea is based on a faulty premise, namely, the notion that in labeling unauthorized marriage as adultery, Jesus was condemning only the physical aspect of the relationship. When Christ spoke of divorce and remarriage resulting in a state of adultery, he did so because the sex act is the natural consequence of the marriage union. In marriage, two become **"one flesh,"** an expression which refers to the intimate bond which occurs in sexual activity (I Corinthians 6:16). And so since the sexual relationship is a primary element of the one-flesh union of marriage, Jesus condemned unlawful marriages as involving adultery. But simply because he focused on the sinfulness of that aspect of a marriage does not mean the only problem with divorcing and remarrying is unlawful sexual relations. In this writer's view, Jesus was using a figure of speech known as synecdoche, in which a part of something is used to stand for the whole (as in the expression, "lend me a hand,"

where the hand is put for help supplied by the whole person). We are familiar with the frequent use of synecdoche in scripture regarding the plan of salvation, where one part of man's response to the gospel—belief, repentance, confession or baptism—is put for all that is required to be saved; (I John 3:16; Acts 11:18; I Peter 3:21). When we read that salvation comes by means of faith, we err if we interpret that to mean faith only, since other passages clearly indicate that faith secures salvation only when it prompts one to obey all of the conditions of salvation, including baptism (James 2:24; Hebrews 5:9; Acts 2:38). Faith—the part—is put for the all that faith involves.

#### MORE TO MARRIAGE THAN SEX

In a similar way, Jesus chooses one aspect of the marriage relationship; one that is supposed to be peculiar to it—sexual intimacy—to condemn the entire relationship. There is more to marriage than sex, and **two people who do not have a right to be married to each other do not have a right to any aspect of the marriage relationship.** Are we really willing to accept the implications of suggesting that two people who have no right to be married may live together and carry on as husband and wife as long as they do not engage in sexual relations? Suppose a man has been married and unbiblically divorced and wants to marry a woman who has also been unbiblically divorced. There are brethren who would not dare say to them, "Sure—you may marry each other in clear violation of scripture and still be pleasing to God, just as long as you don't engage in sexual relations." Yet if these two did go ahead and marry, these same brethren would say, "Now that you have already married, you may continue to live together as long as you don't engage in sexual relations." What is the difference? In either case, they do not have a right to be husband and wife. It should be axiomatic that if two people have no right to enter a marriage, they have no right to remain in a marriage.

What if a man who is incapable of engaging in sexual activity (for whatever reason—perhaps he is paralyzed or similarly incapacitated) wants to marry a woman who has been married and divorced unscripturally several times. Would we suggest that, since there will be no sexual activity taking place, they may marry? Of course not. They have no right to be married and live together as husband and wife regardless of whether or not they will be sharing the marriage bed. Or would we tell two people in the congregation who have been unbiblically divorced and who start taking a liking to each other that they may move in and live together and give the appearance to everyone that they are husband and wife, just as long as they have separate beds? If we could put our approval on such a situation, we would have to give the green light to our young people to "shack up" with their girlfriends or boyfriends without being married, just as long as they are not engaging in sex. When put in this light, surely we can see the error of suggesting that two people, whom God has said may not be married to each other, may live together as though they were married as long as they avoid physical intimacy.

#### PROVIDING THINGS HONEST BEFORE ALL

There are other factors to consider. What about the appearance of the relationship to the church and community.

If a brother and sister in Christ continue to live together and carry on in every other way as husband and wife save for the sexual aspect of their relationship, they are still giving every appearance of being married when all the while God has said they must not be married. How in the world would people in the community know they are abstaining from conjugal affection? If they are living together as husband and wife, the natural assumption is that they are also sleeping together. In this instance, the appearance of the relationship matters, since we are to **"have regard for good things in the sight of all men"** (Romans 12:17).

Then there is the issue of temptation. How do we justify the notion that two people who love each other, who desire each other, and who have been accustomed to engaging in sexual relations remain living together in the intimate environment of the same home, when we are to "flee" the temptations of the flesh (II Timothy 2:22). Again, would we be so foolish as to suggest to our sons and daughters that they may put themselves in such circumstances?

There is no easy way around it. Repentance of an adulterous marriage requires ceasing to live together as husband and wife. Couples living in adultery not only have no right to the physical relationship; they have no right to *any* aspect of the husband and wife relationship, including cohabitation. Surely they can and should work closely together to fulfill, as much as possible, their responsibilities to their children as mother and father. But this and other obligations must be addressed while living apart.

Our hearts break when we think of what happily married couples must do when they are living in adultery, and we should deal kindly and patiently with them as we seek to help them make the necessary adjustments to conform their lives to the will of God. But we do them no favors when we recommend to them anything less than what genuine repentance requires. Instead we jeopardize not only their souls, but ours as well.

—1211 N. Granbury St.  
Cleburne, Texas 76033  
toddyoung@hyperusa.com

**SPRING BIBLE INSTITUTE**

**2002 Lectures Book**

*The Jehovah's Witnesses*

**ONLY \$16.00**  
(plus \$2.00 s/h TX residents add \$1.16 tax)

**Contending for the Faith**  
P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77383  
fax: 281.288.0549

# ENCOUNTER THEOLOGY

Wayne Coats

Two of the leading theologians who represented the Neorthodox view came from Switzerland. **Karl Barth** was from Basel and **Emil Brunner** from Zurich. These men could see what German Rationalism had done for the protestant church. They attempted to find an antidote for such destructive concepts. Like Luther, they knew something was terribly wrong, but their method was ineffective and weak.

## PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS

Brunner wrote, "The Protestant faith was in a state of rapid dissolution, is in a stage of complete decomposition." The thrusts of Brunner were made against **Schleiermacher**, **Ritschl** and **Harnack**. **Robert Nelson** of Vanderbilt University said that Brunner was, ("trained in the historical-critical method. He detested Biblicism.") Brunner rejected a literal reading of the Bible.

After studying under Harnack at Berlin, Brunner came to America where he studied at Union Theological Seminary and later became a professor at Princeton. Like all modernists, Brunner rejected the virgin birth of Jesus. If the Jesus story had a human father, it would be much simpler and would have given greater emphasis to the humanity of Jesus.

In Brunner we have the, "encounter theology" receiving its greatest emphasis. He said, "Truth from God comes only in personal encounters." In his book, *The Divine-Human Encounter*, Brunner states that, "Man can never come to God or come to know God who takes the initiative and comes to man. He keeps encountering man." Barth accused Brunner of rejecting scripture as the means of Revelation. Brunner referred to Barth's book as, "That terrible book." If man must experience an encounter, and if God initiates the encounter, then what benefit is some dim-wit professor in a university babbling about encounters?

In his book, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, we learn about Brunner's views of God. He wrote:

**The ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity established by the dogma of the ancient church is not a Biblical kerygma—Hence it does not belong to the sphere of the churches' message, but it belongs to the sphere of theology. So we must admit that the doctrine of the Trinity did not form part of the early Christian—New Testament message. This doctrine developed out of the process of defending the truth against certain doctrines which would eventually have destroyed the Unity of the Nature and the Revelation of God. The formula of the classical doctrine of the Trinity places the Three names as Three persons side by side, thus creating a speculative truth, which is really an illusion. No Apostle would have dreamt of thinking that there are Three Divine Persons whose mutual relations and paradoxical unity are beyond our understanding. The mystery of the Trinity proclaimed by the church is a pseudo mystery,**

**which sprang out of an aberration of theological thought.**

Such is the sleaze copied by our professors and pygmies, who assign speech topics which deal with "encounter theology." A real good speech is a good copy of Brunner's subjective theology.

## "FORM" AND "SOURCE CRITICISM"

After World War I, a renewed interest in studying the gospel accounts began. The efforts of **Martin Dibelius** and **Rudolph Bultmann** were concentrated in what came to be known as Form Criticism. What Jesus may have said or done was written on small pieces or scraps. These scraps according to Dibelius were known as paradigms. Another term was used to describe certain miracle tales. To Dibelius, these were referred to as Novellen. The tale of Jesus stilling the storm would fit into this category.

As various preachers and teachers traveled about, they made up whatever stories would fit the needs of the Christian community. There were some cases where tales would be made up which no one had ever heard about. In this way Form Criticism developed. In close parallel to Form Criticism, the method of Source Criticism was developed. The modernists have been able to pull out different strands or sources from the gospel accounts which they say are much earlier than Matthew, Mark and Luke. We are told that Luke copied certain strands from Mark and another source known as the material which is similar in Matthew and Luke but different in Mark. Those similarities in Matthew and Luke supposedly point to common sources which were copied.

**Reinhold Niebuhr** had soaked up the Rationalism of German theologians and after coming to America, he became a professor at Union Theological Seminary. His influence as an infidel professor could extend far and wide as he trained young theologians. The focal point for Niebuhr was man. This was made paramount in his book, *The Nature And Destiny Of Man*. Niebuhr championed the cause of the down-trodden while regarding the Biblical account of Creation as a myth. The work of Niebuhr would have been just as valuable if he had studied the social conditions of a monkey colony.

The story of the Tower of Babel is just another myth and the true meaning of the tale is the effort of man to be autonomous. The story of Adam and his fall did not really happen and the myth of the flood depicts man's corruption in society.

As for the kingdom, it is somewhere in the future and it is not the task of man to build the kingdom. Man's quest to know about the nature and destiny of man can be known apart from Biblical sources. In Niebuhr we see another professor who like Jereboam, "made the people to sin."

—705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 27122

**The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual POWER Lectureship  
conducted by the Southaven church of Christ**

**THE SAYINGS OF JESUS:  
"LET THESE SAYINGS SINK DOWN INTO YOUR EARS" (LUKE 9:44)**

**AUGUST 4-8, 2002**

**Sunday, August 4th**

- 9:30 a.m. What Did Jesus Actually Say? –*Ted J. Clarke*  
10:30 a.m. Let These Sayings Sink Down Into Your Ears –*B. J. Clarke*  
7:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About False Teachers/False Doctrine –*David Brown*  
8:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About Marriage, Divorce, And Remarriage –*Keith Mosher, Sr.*

**Monday, August 5th**

- 9:00 a.m. What Jesus Said At His Baptism, Temptation, And Transfiguration –*Dan Cates*  
10:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About His Mission –*Brandon Britton*  
11:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About Prayer –*Ronnie Hayes*  
1:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About Following Him –*Bobby Liddell*  
2:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About The Law of Moses –*Mark Mosher*  
2:00 p.m. LADIES CLASS: What Jesus Said About Mary Anointing Him With Spikenard –*Jan Beard*  
3:00 p.m. Hard Sayings Of Jesus: Questions And Answers: Panel Discussion  
7:00 p.m. What Jesus Said At The Last Supper And Garden Of Gethsemane –*Michael McDaniel*  
8:00 p.m. What Jesus Said At His Arrest And Trials –*Paul Meacham, Jr*

**Tuesday, August 6th**

- 9:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About Worry/Fear –*Bill Burk*  
10:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About Judging –*Wayne Jones*  
11:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About Worship –*Lester Kamp*  
1:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About The Church/Kingdom –*Kevin Beard*  
2:00 p.m. What Jesus Said To The Woman At The Well –*Mark Lindley*  
2:00 p.m. LADIES CLASS: What Jesus Said About The Poor Widow –*Teah McWhorter*  
3:00 p.m. Hard Sayings Of Jesus: Questions And Answers: Panel Discussion  
7:00 p.m. What Jesus Said From The Cross (Part One) –*Billy Bland*  
8:00 p.m. What Jesus Said From The Cross (Part Two) –*Paul Sain*

**Wednesday, August 7th**

- 9:00 a.m. What Jesus Said After His Resurrection And At His Ascension –*Tom Bright*  
10:00 a.m. What Jesus Said To Nicodemus –*Gary McDade*  
11:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About Hypocrisy –*Chuck Webster*  
1:00 p.m. What Jesus Said To The Rich Young Ruler –*Barry Grider*  
2:00 p.m. What Jesus Said To The Woman Taken In Adultery –*Gary Summers*  
2:00 p.m. LADIES CLASS: What Jesus Said To Martha –*Martha Bentley*  
3:00 p.m. Hard Sayings Of Jesus: Questions And Answers: Panel Discussion  
7:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About Hearsay Errors –*Tom Wacaster*  
8:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About Evangelism –*Jason Roberts*

**Thursday, August 8th**

- 9:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About The Father –*Don Walker*  
10:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About Himself: The "I Am" Sayings Of Jesus –*David Jones*  
11:00 a.m. What Jesus Said About The Holy Spirit –*Gary Grizzell*  
1:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About Humility –*Garland Elkins*  
2:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About How To Treat Our Fellow Man –*Wayne Cox*  
2:00 p.m. LADIES CLASS: –*What Women Can Do For Jesus (Luke 8:1-3)* –*Tanya Cox*  
3:00 p.m. Hard Sayings Of Jesus: Questions And Answers: Panel Discussion  
7:00 p.m. What Jesus Said To Mary (John 20:11-18) –*Robert R. Taylor, Jr.*  
8:00 p.m. What Jesus Said About His Second Coming –*Dub McClish*

**Electrical Hookups for RV's Will Be Available on the Grounds of the Southaven church of Christ  
Limited Display Space Is Available On A First Come First Serve Basis (662) 393-2690  
All Lectures Will Be Published In A Beautiful Cloth-Bound Volume**

**SOUTHAVEN CHURCH OF CHRIST  
P. O. BOX 128, SOUTHAVEN, MISSISSIPPI 38671  
(Just minutes from Memphis, TN)**



# BODY PIERCING AND TATTOOS

Danny L. Box

The fads of teenagers can run from the ridiculous to the absurd. In my teenage years (1960's), the fad was Mohawk hair cuts, long sideburns, swallowing goldfish, and fast cars. In the 70's we saw the young people with peace signs, long hair, and psychedelic clothing. The 80's brought about even more changes, as did the 90's. All of these fads were considered "weird" and shocked the parents of that day, but it soon passed, and there was no permanent damage from it.

## "BODY ART" AND "PIERCINGS"

But today, the situation with some of the fads can be quite different. More and more of our teenagers are boasting of their "body art" and their "piercings." As we look all around us, we can see more and more young and old alike with multiple holes in their ears, noses, navels, nipples, eyebrows, lips, tongues, cheeks and even in their private parts. What was once associated with "punk" rockers, bikers and prison inmates is now popular with untold numbers of our young people in all walks of life.

When asked why they have subjected themselves to these procedures, many young people give the following as their reasons. Some say they got "pierced" or "painted" to make a fashion statement. Some say they wanted to experiment with how it would look. Others stated they got a tattoo, or pierced some part of their body because they thought it would be sexually stimulating, while still others admit that they were pressured into it by their peers. But regardless of the reason, what most young people (and even older) fail to realize is that body piercing and tattoos bring with it all sorts of potential problems that have to be dealt with.

## THE RISKS INVOLVED

Body piercing and tattoos are invasive procedures. This is a procedure that breaks the continuity of the skin which is the body's defense mechanism against disease. When the skin is broken, by whatever means, all types of bacteria can enter, leading to potential exposure of different kinds of bloodborne diseases. Even if the person doing the procedure is a reputable professional operator, there are still some risks involved. The most serious potential medical complications include infections such as hepatitis B and C, HIV, and syphilis as well as staph and strep infections. In a recent issue of "EMERGENCY MEDICINE," a monthly publication written for and by emergency room physicians, **Dr. Charles Stewart**, an emergency room physician who practices in Colorado, summarized the various complications that he had seen resulting from tattoos and body piercings. They are as follows:

**ALLERGY:** Most common are allergic reactions to the jewelry inserted in the piercing, or allergies to the dyes used in the art work. The allergy typically results in a weeping, crusting, itchy wound. At times these allergies can become severe and even life threatening.

**INFECTION:** Almost as common and potentially far more serious, are the infections, which result in redness, swelling, tenderness, pain and often swelling of nearby glands. When sterile technique breaks down, bacteria and viruses can be introduced into the blood stream, including the hepatitis B virus that can cause chronic hepatitis and liver cancer, and HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In people born with heart valve disorders, bacterial endocarditis, a potentially deadly infection of the heart can result. Piercing the nose can result in a staphylococcal infection, and piercing the ear can result in a pseudomonas infection. Even tetanus is a risk in people who have not had an immunization in the last 10 years.

**UNSIGHTLY SCARS AND INJURY:** Some people develop large, ugly scars called keloids. These may have to be surgically removed. Also, if piercing jewelry catches on something, the tissue can be ripped away. Piercing of the tongue can result in permanent numbness, difficulty talking, loss of taste and breathing problems if swelling becomes severe. The jewelry inserted in a pierced tongue can cause teeth to fracture or the lining of the mouth to become chronically inflamed.

**MOVEMENT AND REJECTION:** The jewelry may move causing the hole to become thin and narrow, or even enlarged, causing scarring, inflammation and prolonged healing. Stress is a common cause, for example, when the jewelry is under pressure or friction from clothing, or the piercing has been placed in an area of the body that changes shapes with body movement.

**PAIN:** Pain is often associated with the procedure itself, whether a piercing or a tattoo. But sometimes during the procedure, a nerve can be damaged which leads to an increase in pain and discomfort. This pain may last from just a few hours, to days and even weeks. Also, an infection in the nerves can occur and cause a severe, and sometimes permanent disability.

Many people are putting their health on the line when they make the decision to decorate their body with either a tattoo or some type of piercing. For this reason, it is very important that people know the dangers and risks involved before the procedure is carried out. Because of the potential hazards to consumers, 33 states have already enacted laws which govern tattoo and piercing parlors, and many states are proposing even tougher legislation to regulate the "body art" business. Some of these tougher laws include: no one under the age of 18 may be permitted to be tattooed or pierced without parental permission (this does not include the piercing of ears); the parlors must use all disposable equipment including "paint pots" after each customer; the parlor, and especially the tables used must be disinfected after each customer; parlors must meet that state's health department codes; and parlor managers must give detailed instructions on the care of the new tattoo or piercing, to prevent infection.

## REASONS TO OPPOSE BODY PIERCING AND TATTOOS

As a Christian, a minister of the gospel, and a registered nurse, I am opposed to body piercing and tattoos. I understand full well that in the Old Testament times they had "body piercing." In Exodus 21:6 we read of certain servants who, after working for their indentured time, did not want to be set free of their master, so they would pierce their ear to show that they were a servant for life. We also read that the golden calf made by Aaron was made from the earrings of the people (Exodus 32:2-4), and I know that Abraham's servant gave a "ring for her face" to Rebekah (Genesis 24:47). I see nothing wrong with ladies having their ears pierced one time, this dresses them up, however, when they go to the extreme and have multiple holes in their ears, they have gone from the fashionable to "gaudy." As for "body art," the Old Testament view of tattooing one's self is plain and simple. One of the laws given by God to the children of Israel was instruction to not "print any marks upon you" (Leviticus 19:28). These Hebrew words meant simply, "Don't Tattoo Yourself!"

Please consider the following reasons why I believe that Christian teens (and adults) should not be caught up in this fad of decorating the body, either by piercing or tattoos; (1) **The potential for injury or illness is there with every tattoo or piercing.** If we choose to go through with either of these, knowing the potential for problems, then we have willfully chosen to harm our body. Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth addresses this very fact when he wrote, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God...If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy..." (I Corinthians 3:16-17). He further wrote in I Corinthians 6:19-20 that this body is not our own, but it is the temple of God, and we are to use it to glorify God, not to paint it up or decorate it to glorify the worldly things as so many are doing. (2) **Body art and piercing bring attention to one's body.** People look and comment about the person that has multiple tattoos or piercings in their body and often times, this is why people will decorate themselves, so people will look.

It is almost assured that anyone that has multiple tattoos and body piercings has done this for the sole purpose of gaining attention. But Paul, by inspiration wrote that we are to adorn ourselves in "modest apparel with shamefacedness" as a people professing godliness (I Timothy 2:9-10). We cannot adorn ourselves with anything that will bring undue attention to ourselves and be pleasing to God. (3) "Piercings" and "paintings" are acts of defiance. Often times when a young person gets either a tattoo or a body piercing, they are doing it in an act of defiance against authority. It might be parental authority, governmental authority, or even religious authority, but for whatever reason, they shout out to those in authority, "Look what I did! I don't respect your rules." Paul, in writing to young people said, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right" (Ephesians 6:10). He also wrote other passages that tell us that we are to be in subjection to those who have rule over us (Romans 8; Hebrews 2:8; Hebrews 12:9). Anything we

do that would violate or defy the authority of those over us is a clear violation of God's word. (4) **Body piercings and tattoos send the wrong message to those around us.** As we said before, in times past, only bikers, "rockers" and prisoners would have multiple tattoos and numerous piercings of their body, and we could tell who and what they were by their appearance. As a Christian, if you have tattoos and piercings, you are often lumped into this group, and people see you as a potential trouble maker or problem. This is not the way a Christian is to come across to the world. Did not our Lord say, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16, 20)? A Christian, young or old, is to be a "light to the world" (Matthew 5:16). They are to be one that the world can look to and see the influence of the Lord within them, so that God will be glorified. Paul set the precedence for

Christian youth when he wrote the following to the young man Timothy; "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation (manner of life-ASV), in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Timothy 4:12). We, as Christians cannot do anything that might bring reproach upon ourselves, because this in turn, brings reproach upon the Lord and his church.

I would like to ask anyone who is thinking about getting a tattoo or a body piercing one question, **IS IT WORTH IT?** Is it worth the potential health problems and years of misery? Is it worth the social rejection that face so many that "paint" and pierce"? Is it worth the family problems that result from disobedience to rules of home? Is it worth the permanence of carrying a mark on your body to your grave? It is hard to think of one advantage that a Christian could gain from having tattoos or body piercings, **SO WHY DO IT?**

—deceased

## Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**  
**\$35.00 if ordered as set**  
*(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)*

*Order from:*  
**VADA RICE**  
**3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE**  
**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461**

# "THEY ARE TOO NONDENOMINATIONAL"

Paul Vaughn

The swift currents of change have swept many congregations away from the security of walking in the path lighted by God's word. The Hebrews writer gave an explicit warning about neglecting the message of the gospel and being carried away from the safety of God.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. <sup>2</sup>For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; <sup>3</sup>How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him (Hebrews 2:1-3).

## THE NEED TO CONFORM TO THE BIBLE— UNDERSTOOD BY RESTORERS

The leaders of the Restoration movement that started in the late 1700's and early 1800's understood the necessity of conformity to the revealed will of God. **Barton W. Stone** said:

Wearied with the works and doctrines of men, and distrustful of their influence, I made the Bible my constant companion. I honestly, earnestly, and prayerfully sought for truth, determined to buy it at the sacrifice of everything else.<sup>1</sup>

He was willing to leave a denomination his family grew up in for the simplicity of the scriptures. During a meeting of the Republican Methodists, on August 24, 1794, **Rice**

**Haggard** stood up with a copy of the New Testament in his hand and said, Brethren, this is sufficient rule of faith and practice, and by it we are told that the disciples were called Christians and I move that henceforth and forever the followers of Christ be known as Christian simply.<sup>2</sup>

**Thomas Campbell** stood firm against the divisions in denominationalism in writing the Declaration and Address. It was his desire to point people back to the pattern given in the scriptures for the church. He wrote:

That the Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one, consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the scriptures, and that manifest the same by their tempers and conduct, and of none else can be truly and properly called Christian.<sup>3</sup>

**Moses E. Lard**, in 1863, inaugurated *Lard's Quarterly* with an article on the importance of following the scriptures. Lard taught that one of the features of the "Reformation" (Restoration) was "to construct the body of Christ after the divine model..."<sup>4</sup>

It was the desire and work of the early restorers to proclaim nondenominational Christianity. They fought the religious sects around them with the Sword of God, never giving in to denominational teachings or traditions of men.

## THE FRUIT OF LIBERALISM


During the past twenty five years the Gateway Church of Christ in Pensacola, Florida has been a beacon for liberal thinking. In February 2002 this congregation went through a split. Half of the church, about 300, formed a congregation calling it the "First City Church: A Church of Christ where Grace Abounds." This congregation has taken a major step into Postmodernism. They do not believe there is a pattern for the Church to follow in the New Testament. One of the areas in which they are "progressive" is in the music of the church. They have no problem using mechanical instrumental music. The worship service is in more of a charismatic direction with the holding up of hands and applauding. They are advancing toward a more "progressive" role for women in the church.

When this group first split from the Gateway Church of Christ, one of the members asked a friend of mine to attend their worship service. My friend first asked why they did not go to the Bellview Church of Christ instead of forming their own congregation. Their reply was "The Bellview Church of Christ is too nondenominational." The seeds of liberalism have progressed to the point that they are people who claim to be members of the Lord's church and



## MEMPHIS SCHOOL of PREACHING

- Two-year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966
- Applications now being accepted
- Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
Fax (901) 751-8098

have lost completely the idea of the Restoration Plea of going back the Bible.

The fruits of this split started years ago when the Gateway Church of Christ chose to travel down the road of liberalism. Each step away from the divine pattern magnifies even more steps of future generations. The Disciples of Christ, an ultra liberal denomination, started out in the Restoration Movement. Today they do not believe biblical inerrancy. How long will it take the "First City Church" before they come to such a conclusion? The direction in which the "First City Church" is traveling indicates they are not far from it and may have already arrived at the point, judging by the fruits of their efforts.

I hold no hatred for these people. But, I do hate the direction in which they are progressing because many people will lose their souls as a result of it. When they said the

Bellview Church of Christ is too nondenominational, they meant it as a criticism. But their critique was one of the highest compliments someone could say about a church of Christ.

The road of liberalism leads only in one direction- away from God. The Restoration Plea leads only in one direction- toward God. In what way are you traveling?

#### ENDNOTES

1. Hoke S. Dickson, editor, *The Cane Ridge Reader*, J.A. & U.P. James publishers, Cincinnati, 1847, p. 31.
2. Colby Hall, Rice Haggard *The American Frontier Evangelist Who Revived the Name Christian*, University Christian Publishing, Fort Worth, 1957, p.28.
3. Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*.
4. Moses E. Lard, *Lard's Quarterly Vol. 1*, Osborne & Co., Georgetown, 1864, p.22.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewsiport, Kentucky 42351

April 13, 2002

Mr. David P. Brown  
Editor, Contending For the Faith  
P. O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383

Dear Brother Brown,

I have read your article in the March issue of your paper, which begins a series that will deal with the doctrines of the "Antis."

Please accept my apology for sending you this hand-written paper. My wife, an excellent typist over many years, can no longer type because of arthritis in her fingers. Although I will be 90 years old on June 1, this year, I will try to write legibly.

In connection with the 1945 music hall Meeting, there was one event, or non-event, that had a drastic negative influence on Roy Cogdill. The Central church, the largest and wealthiest congregation in Houston then, chose not to participate in the financial support of the meeting. Cogdill took this as a personal offense, and I do not believe it was. As a long time observer of Central's activities it appeared to me Central was following a well-established policy there of contributing financially only to activities which they controlled. In other words it seemed they were intent on "calling the shots."

You need to know something about my credibility. I became a Christian in 1931 at the Heights church, Houston, which I understand remains active today. Later I graduated from Stanford University, Palo Alto, California with a B.A. degree in Economics. And returned to Houston and the Heights Church.

Subsequently, because of a change in residence my family and I became part of the MacGregor Park Church, where I served as an Elder for 15 years (1950-1965). C. Ellis McGaughey and Wendell Winkler preached for the church 10-11 of those years.

I also have known and been a personal friend of **Buster Dobbs** (what a tragedy) for some 40 or more years.

I casually met Roy Cogdill when **N. B. Hardeman** held 2 meetings for the Norhill church in the mid 1930s and heard Cogdill preach before anti-ism appeared on the scene. He was a very capable gospel preacher.

As I recall in the early 1950s a young gospel preacher, **James Walter Nichols** brought the idea to the Highland Church in Abilene, which developed into the *Herald of Truth* program. It went on the air in 1952.

Sometime after Nichols left the program some two or three years later, he came into my home as an invited guest. Immediately upon sitting down he told me that the "anti" movement had arisen from preacher jealousy." He added that the elders of the Highland Church had received a letter from Roy Cogdill wherein he criticized them for the use of a young and unknown preacher and suggested that someone like himself or his friend, **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.**, could have done a better job. (Actually Nichols was a very good preacher of the gospel) The elders of Highland never employed Cogdill, nor any of his friends or associates. Cogdill in his mind had now experienced a second rejection by a large congregation of the Lord's people, which I believe they were at that time. Apparently this angered him sufficiently that he decided to develop a system of "pay back" that would draw members away from loyal churches of Christ into his new organization, which would be herald as the "true church of Christ." Out of this the doctrines designated "antis" soon appeared in churches where Cogdill and his followers preached, I might add, with some success.

Of the utmost importance in this connection is that everytime a new doctrine was developed and accepted by the "anti group" Cogdill and his close associate, **Yater Tant**, had to repudiate and reject a lifetime of beliefs and practices up to that point.

Although we may not be able to offer "court proof" to show that "antiism" arose from "preacher jealousy," when you put 2 and 2 together, you will always get 4.

I wanted to be sure that someone in your position be aware of what brother Nichols had told me many years ago so that it would not perish with my death, which is imminent because of my age.

In recent years **Buster Dobbs** learned of the letter Cogdill had written to the Highland elders and told me about it, thus confirming what brother Nichols had previously told me.

Sincerely,  
[signed]  
**V. B. Dishongh**  
P. O. Box 1462  
Friendswood, Texas 77549

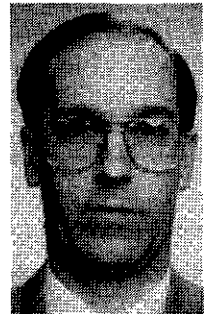
Appreciation is extended to brother Dishongh for sharing this bit of history with us. A belated happy 90th birthday to him. We wish him and his wife well. I will continue to write on the various aspects of "antiism" in future issues of *CFTF*. — Editor

# Intolerance of Religious Diversity, Avoiding Biblical Language, and Disney World's Gay Days

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

“While thankfully in the United States we do not have to face such severe threats to religious liberty [as under Taliban control], other, subtler forms of intolerance for religious diversity still surface from time to time. This year for example, the American Psychological Association proposed to strip religious colleges and universities with psychology programs of their accreditation unless they agreed to hire and admit professors, administrators, board members and students of all faiths on an equal basis. Religious colleges could keep their accreditation, in other words, only if they essentially transformed themselves into secular schools. ...The wheels seemed greased for dramatic new change, imposing a new uniformity of opinion on religious schools in the name (of course) of diversity. Enter the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty — not quite the U.S. Special Forces perhaps.... The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty defends the rights of all Americans of whatever creed to have and express their religious views, both individually and communally. The net effect of removing the accreditation of religious colleges' psychology departments, the Becket Fund argued, would not be to increase diversity but to use the APA's delegated power from the federal government to discriminate against schools with religious viewpoints. A major no-no, in other words, from a constitutional perspective. For the U.S. government to delegate accreditation decisions to an organization that does not respect religious liberty would be a blatant violation of the First Amendment. ...Surprise! The APA beat a quick retreat. ...Proving that even in America,

the price of religious liberty, no less than any other kind, is eternal vigilance. Good thing for us, the Becket Fund is at post.” —Maggie Gallagher [While it is great that a constitutional right was upheld, it would be even better if most religious schools would drop psychology programs. Most psychology taught today is based upon theories of secular thinking men and women. Many religiously based programs fuse this with Biblical teaching which produces a false hybrid. Much of it sounds good but is in fact anti-Bible. This is not politically correct even among professed Christians. But it is time that professed Christians turn away from the god of psychology/counseling and turn back to the Great Counselor.—mtm]



\*\*\*\*\*

College administrators who fired a teacher for a classroom exercise that had students shouting out sexual vulgarities are shielded by qualified immunity in a suit brought by the teacher, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Friday. Five administrators at New York Maritime College will escape liability for the dismissal because the law on free speech and academic freedom was not clearly established at the time. (Law News Network, 12/01/01) [How can making students shout vulgarities be considered free speech?? This is a perfect example of the complete misunderstanding of what the Founding Fathers intended by “speech.” Not to mention that shouting such is sin.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

Republican State Representative John Lawless criticized Penn State for allowing a so-called “Sex Faire” on February 3, and then letting pornographer Larry Flynt speak on campus. In his speech, Flynt called President Bush an “idiot.” Lawless said he would raise the issues when university representatives defend their funding requests before the state appropriations committee early next year. Lawless also said he did not think it was “appropriate to have the owner and publisher of Hustler magazine (speak) at Pennsylvania’s largest institution of higher learning” when he gets numbers sent to him “all the time about all of the rapes and prob-



**CHECK YOUR**  
address label if it has the  
date:  
7/01/2002

**IT IS TIME TO RENEW!**  
Send your renewal to:  
**Contending For The Faith**  
P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, Texas 77383

lems they have with student behavior (at Penn State)." (Agape Press email service, 10/15/01) [Penn State should receive thousands of letters from parents who do not want such filth supported by a "higher learning institution" such as Penn State.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

"If you harbor a terrorist, you're a terrorist. If you feed a terrorist, you're a terrorist."—**George W. Bush** (The same principle holds if one in the church harbors and feeds a false teacher.—mtm)

\*\*\*\*\*

Two homosexual web sites, PlanetOut.com and Gay.com, have just reported the results of a study indicating that as many as 38% of homosexuals may be infected with an incurable sexually transmitted disease linked to cancer. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) examined the medical records of 83 homosexual and bisexual men from 1988 to 1994. It showed that 38% of them were infected with HPV, type 16. This is the genital human papillomavirus, which has been linked to half of all cervical cancer cases. The rate is five times as great in homosexuals as in heterosexuals and twice that of women, said the researchers. One in 2,900 homosexual men may develop anal cancer each year. And this is the sexual behavior that groups like the National Education Association and the Gay, Straight Education Network (GLSEN) want to teach to elementary school children! (Traditional Values Coalition, 3/16/02). [Just more evidence that living an un-Godly life will reap its rewards.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

**LUCADO & DRINKING**—**Max Lucado**, noted pastor of the Oak Hills Church of Christ (San Antonio) and a prominent Promise Keepers speaker stated "I don't have a strong opinion about Christians and drinking. Some of the people that I really look up to, they drink." [Jan.-Feb. Fund. Digest] (as reported in the *Calvary Contender*, 3/15/02 issue) [Lucado continues to show himself as one that lacks a love of God's law. In fact, one has to wonder if he has obtained a disdain of God's law. We pray that Lucado would encourage his congregation to change their name. They are not a church of Christ. Lucado considers himself a denominationalist and preaches such.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

**Tony Campolo**, the keynote speaker at the National Council of Churches' general assembly gathering in November, told attendees that the primary hindrance of ecumenical unity between mainline Christians and evangelicals is not political or theological disagreement, but the manner in which the NCC avoids using Biblical language (1/2/02 Foundation). He said both groups share the same social vision, "the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven." He said "you are Biblically-based, but you seem to avoid Biblical language." He noted, "Language is dividing us, not the issues—and it's a big problem." (*The Calvary Contender*, 3/9/02) [Campolo is right when it comes to many of the professed Christians. Their issues (doctrines) are the same as the NCC. They nor the NCC use

proper Biblical language. If they did, they would be New Testament Christians and would cease their activity in the denominational world. What most do not know is that the NCC has been an arm of the socialist/communist movement for many years. Ecumenism is a socialist movement within religion.—mtm]

\*\*\*\*\*

The following is from the *Orlando Sentinel*, Friday, May 31, 2002, Section Bi in an article entitled, "Holy Union accents Gay Days" **Jeffrey Carlson** had last minute jitters, but **Steven Hoff** was nervous all day leading up to the ceremony. It's not every day that a couple exchanges vows before hundreds of strangers.

But Carlson, 37, and Hoff, 39, were determined to have their 'holy union,' the gay equivalent of a wedding, at the place they met three years ago—Walt Disney World during Gay Days, the annual event that draws about 125,000 gays and lesbians to Central Florida's attractions. Carlson and Hoff's ceremony was the first 'holy union' performed during an event known more for being on giant party than a family oriented vacation and is an example of just how large and diverse Gay Days has become.

Beginning 12 years ago as a single day at Disney World that attracted mostly single gay men, Gay Days has developed into a week-long gathering with events ranging from a hip-hop party to a Roman Catholic Mass.

Gay and lesbian visitors—including European tourists, single people and families with children in tow—are expected through Sunday.

"We've tried to be very inclusive of all our communities," said **Chris Alexander-Manley**, director of sales and marketing for Gay Days, Inc. "We have completely expanded. It's not just a gay man's event."

As Carlson and Hoff shared a first dance in the ballroom of the Hotel Royal Plaza, the host hotel for Gay Days, couples—male and female—snapped photos and offered congratulations. Some brought their children or bounced babies on their knees.

Gay Days has gained an international reputation through the years and stands as one of the region's biggest tourism events, pumping an estimated \$100 million into the local economy. A first this year, the event has netted corporate sponsorship including Anheuser-Busch—through its Bud Light brand-First Union and others.

Also this year, Gay Days organizers were contacted by Dignity USA, a Washington based organization of gay and lesbian Catholics, and the Family Pride Coalition, a national advocacy and support group for gay and lesbians.... The liturgy scheduled for Saturday provides a vehicle for worship to which gay Catholics may not have access where they live.

With the state's ban on adoptions by gays and lesbians, Gelnow saw Gay Days as a way to demonstrate support to change the law. "Florida needs a strong parenting community," she said. "It is important to us to help build that."

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125



## OUR TOPSY-TURVY WORLD

Annette B. Cates

One of the methods that a conquering nation uses in order to subjugate a people is to change as much as possible their language, culture, and traditions. We find an example of this in Daniel 1. Certain children, especially the brightest and most promising, from the first carrying away into Babylonian captivity were chosen for special schooling in the learning and language of the Chaldeans (v. 4). We know that among those children were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. We know, too, that part of their "training" included changing their names to ones that honored the gods of Babylon (v. 7), and changing their diet from the foods that God had approved as "clean" to the less healthy preferences of the Babylonians. We also know that God took care of them when they refused to be defiled (v.15, 17).

### THOSE WHO SEEK TO DESTROY US

While we have not been conquered by another nation at this point in time, there are those who would seek to destroy us from within. Compare the history textbooks that children use today with those from forty or fifty years ago. Doing so would be enlightening and frightening, for therein one sees the effect of revisionist history. This is not history as it actually occurred, but history rewritten with a bias laced with untruths that would plant false ideas into the minds of our children, a subtle form of brainwashing. The intent is to undermine the credibility of the United States. For example, note the biographies of some from the fields of art and literature. There are those individuals who are said to have been homosexual, but their works, correspondence, and that of their contemporaries never gave any such indication. The people thus accused, and those who knew them, have long been dead and cannot speak to defend themselves. This type of thing is done to make homosexuality sound widespread and acceptable. Indeed, as we look around us at the areas that are most vulnerable to destructive change, the deterioration of our freedoms becomes obvious.

*Change can be seen in attitudes toward religion.* While it is true that this nation was founded on the principles of freedom OF religion (not FROM religion), we recognize that there have been periods in our history when deism, atheism, and general Godlessness seemed to have free reign. Nevertheless, even in those times, there were not the attempts such as we see today to wipe out all traces of Christianity and the God of the Bible. The gods of the world religions are being accorded unprecedented acceptance, and even respect. Our society is being secularized and steeped in humanism. Denominational churches are preaching a social gospel, which is nothing but socialism draped in religious overtones. Their preachers are forego-

ing their roles as spiritual leaders in exchange for a good old buddy system. Even the church Christ died for is being infected with this godless thinking. Yes, our nation is under attack through destruction of our religious values, which in times past were based on principles found in God's word.



*Change can be seen in our cultural standards.* The media and the entertainment industry should bear much of the blame for this aspect of destruction. Their influence on the public life of our nation could serve a tremendous role in keeping us strong, but, instead has been in the forefront of a movement to make that which has been (and should always be) socially unacceptable (illicit sexual relationships, homosexual lifestyle, dysfunctional families, gutter language, etc.) seem to be a normal way of life. We are on the fast-track to becoming like the people about whom Jeremiah wrote, **"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush:..."** (Jeremiah 6:15). However, the entertainment industry would have no power were it not given to them by those who buy the theater tickets, rent the movies, purchase the tapes and discs, and tune in the stations that present such filth. Thus, it behooves us to get the message out, **"Do not support it by your patronage!"** Yes, our nation is under attack through the destruction of our culture, which in times past had a sense of moral direction.

*Change can be seen in our language.* At this point, we will not even consider the havoc that can be wrought by giving other languages equal billing to the English language which has been our nation's basic means of communication for nearly four hundred years. Instead, we will focus on what is happening within the English language to bring about change. "Political correctness" has invaded this area of our lives in another attempt to make that which is not acceptable, sound good, thus valid, softening the reality of sin. Just as Paul wrote in Romans 16:18, those who would destroy our nation (and the church) use good words and fair speech to deceive hearts and minds. Homosexuals (Gays) are "involved in an alternative lifestyle" with a "partner." Lies are phrases that are "technically correct," a ploy used by a former president to justify lying under oath. Foul language and filthy jokes are the speech of the new millenium. Abortion is said to be just another form of birth control lest we face the reality of murdering an unborn child. Our people are steeped in the language of Ashdod (Nehemiah 13:24). Yes, our nation is under attack through the destruction of our speech.

## CHRISTIANS MUST MAKE A STAND

The only way for the light of God's word to shine through and to have a positive effect on this nation, thus making vain these frontal attacks against us, is for Christians to take a stand, "serving God with one consent" (Zephaniah 3:9). The Apostle Paul was in the midst of a corrupt society, yet he stood ready to preach the gospel, and was not ashamed of it (Romans 1:15-16). We cannot

soften the reality of sin by a rewritten history, a watered-down religion, and changed words. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isaiah 5:20)!

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

# 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. Sun. 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, Sun. 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—

**Cambridge**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## —Florida—

**Pensacola**—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## —Georgia—

**Cartersville**—Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. Tel. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## —Indiana—

**Evansville**—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 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. www.garden-city-coc.org Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sun. 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, 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.

## —Oklahoma—

**Porum**—Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, Evangelist, email: lawson@starnetok.net.

## —Tennessee—

**Crossville**—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 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.

**Rockwood**—Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## —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 Bob Patterson, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**—Church of Christ, Sun. 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. Sun. 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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, 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 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.

**Roanoke**—Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262, Tel. (817) 491-2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm.

**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.

# MODESTY IN WORSHIP

Russell M. Kline

Recently, I was invited to attend a series of preliminary hearings at the Circuit Court of Hopkins County. As one defendant after another came before the judge to enter his plea, I noticed that most of them were dressed slovenly, with an overall appearance which was unkempt. At one point, the judge stopped the proceedings, and admonished the courtroom. The gist of what he said was this:

Most of you defendants are before me today facing felony charges. You are here to enter a plea, negotiate bail, and schedule a pretrial hearing. Portions of this process, especially bail are matters which are at the court's discretion, and first impressions are very important. When you come into court wearing blue jeans, t-shirts, exercise outfits, and overalls, you seem to be acting as though this is just another ordinary day in your life, and that this is no big deal to you. Well, this is not just another day, and these proceedings ought to be a *very* big deal to you. The next time you appear before me, dress appropriately!

Much of what the judge said about appearing before him in court could also be said about appearing before the heavenly father in worship. How we dress ought to reflect a reverent mind-set toward God..

What does it mean to dress "modestly," and how does modesty apply to the attire in which we worship God? In I Timothy 2:8-10, the apostle Paul wrote:

**I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting, in like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamfacedness and sobriety; not with hroided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.**

In these verses, Paul emphasized that all Christians ought to be serious about their spirituality. This should be reflected in the prayers which they offer, and in the manner in which they dress. Emphasis must be placed upon the beauty of one's inward self, rather than upon one's outward self (II Corinthians 4:16-18). In making this point, Paul stated that Christian women (and men, by implication) must clothe themselves in "**modest apparel**," at all times. The Greek word which is translated "**modest**," in this passage literally means "appropriate." While the concept of modesty does indicate clothing which covers one's body, so as not to incite illicit thoughts in others, it also indicates clothing which is appropriate for a given situation.

Certainly, it is possible for one to be clothed from head to toe, without being appropriately attired for the present situation. A Christian who wears blue jeans and a t-shirt to worship may be fully dressed, but he is not *modestly* dressed. When an occasion is important, people tend to want to look their best, so they put on their best attire, and they try to look their best, so they can make a good impression upon those who observe them.

On the other hand, a Christian who wears a tuxedo to worship may be fully dressed, but he is not *modestly* dressed, either. Appropriate attire does not call undue attention to the wearer. Certainly, when one worships God, it is an occasion to dress up, but it is not an occasion to show off "**with shamefacedness and sobriety**;" (I Timothy 2:9).

When we come before God, to worship him, the spirit we bring with us is just as important as the worship, itself (John 4:23, 24). When we fail to dress appropriately for worship, we convey certain messages to God, and to others who see us, that we may not intend to convey. When we underdress, we say to the world that worship is not important enough for us to go to the trouble to look our best for God. In a way, it is a demonstration of disrespect for God (Ecclesiastes 12:13). A friend of mine who preaches in another part of the state told me about a woman in his congregation whose friend died, prompting her to visit the local funeral home, after services on a Sunday evening. As she left the church building, she was heard to say, "I'll have to go home and change before I go to the funeral home." In her own words, she illustrated how her attire reflected more respect for her dead friend, than for the living God! When we overdress for worship, we reveal a kind of self-absorption, which seeks to draw undue attention to us, and away from God (Galatians 6:3).

We may need to reorganize our priorities. What does the way you dress for worship say about your attitude? Is your attire *modest*, in *every* sense of the word? If not, then it is time to change your mind, and to let that change be reflected in the way you present yourself to God, on the Lord's day (II Corinthians 7:10). We must always remember that the Lord's day is not just another day in our lives because of what Christians do on that day—assemble to worship God. Its importance, and the respect which we have for what Christians do on it ought to be evident to all who see us!

—1035 N. Main  
Madisonville, Kentucky 42431

Please Contact Us Regarding Your  
CHANGE OF ADDRESS  
Each returned address costs  
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH  
55¢

# PRIDE: A LURKING DANGER

Eddie Whitten

If you are not familiar with the story of Naaman and his leprosy, let me encourage you to read his experience in II Kings, chapter 5. It is a captivating story. It involves five main characters. There is a "little maid," an Israelite girl captured in a Syrian raid on Samaria. There are the kings of Syria and Israel. There is the prophet Elisha, and there is Naaman. Naaman is the central figure. He was no regular, run-of-the-mill person. He was the captain of the host of the king of Syria. Not only that but he was called a "great man," "honorable," and a "mighty man in valor." He was special. The text also says of Naaman that he was a leper. Leprosy was a horribly debilitating disease for which there was no cure. It made no difference that Naaman was a mighty man. Leprosy was a killer.

## HUMAN PRIDE

The "little maid" told her mistress that she wished that Naaman would go to Samaria for there was a prophet there who would heal him of his leprosy. Naaman was told and immediately his attention was aroused. He went to the king of Syria with the prospect of his being healed. The king agreed and wrote a letter to the king of Israel. Much goods and money were sent to the king of Israel to insure the healing of Naaman's leprosy. With great anticipation, Naaman made his journey to the king's palace. *This is the first illustration of pride.* When the king of Israel read the letter from the king of Syria that he should heal Naaman's leprosy, he rent his clothes at the suggestion that he could do such a thing. Naaman had gone to the wrong place and he still had his leprosy!

Now enters the lowly prophet, Elisha. News came to him that the king had rent his clothes, and he sent the king word to have Naaman come to him instead. Naaman wanted his leprosy healed. He came to the house (not a palace) of Elisha and stood outside! Elisha did not come out to meet Naaman. Instead, Elisha sent a messenger out to Naaman to tell him to go dip in the river Jordan seven times and he would be healed. Naaman was furious. *This is the second illustration of pride.* He expected something spectacular to be done in keeping with his station in life. After all, he was the captain of the king's hosts! He was really somebody! How dare some lowly prophet to treat him with such disdain. The Bible says Naaman was wroth and went away, and said, "Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and re-

cover the leper" (II Kings 5:11). "Behold, I thought!" *This is the third illustration of pride.* In spite of what Naaman thought, he still had his leprosy.

Fortunately for Naaman, his servants had more sense than he did. They reasoned with him that if Elisha had required Naaman to do some great thing, he would have done it. Naaman finally conceded to do what Elisha commanded. He dipped seven times in the Jordan river and after the seventh time, he leprosy was gone! Naaman had swallowed his pride and was healed!

## LESSONS WE MUST LEARN

First, we have a disease much more deadly than leprosy. That disease is sin. The consequence of leprosy was physical death. The consequence of sin is eternal death.



Spring  
Bible  
Institute

SEIZE THE  
OPPORTUNITY!

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO BOX 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR  
SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (IN RESIDENCE).
- STUDY BY INTERNET (DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM)
- ASSISTANCE IN RAISING SUPPORT.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, "HANDS-ON" TRAINING.

"I am so thankful I was steered in the direction of Spring Bible Institute and have been allowed to take this course. It has already had an impact on my life..."  
—Distance Learning Student, August, 2001

CONTACT US TODAY!

ON THE WEB: CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM    EMAIL: [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)  
PHONE: (281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN                      ASST. DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

*Second*, "little maids" we call preachers, teachers, next door neighbors, classmates, friends, preach their hearts out trying to tell dying sinners of a Savior in Spiritual Israel who, and only who, can heal their spiritual leprosy which is sin.

*Third*, the sinner need not go to the cathedrals of denominationalism expecting some exciting phenomenon to take place such as an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, or some other great thing to exorcize evil from their souls. They need to go to the source of healing, the Bible, the word of God that tells them simply what to do to have their sins cleansed forever. If they choose to reject the cure, they will still have their killing sins with them. The danger of pride lurks in the shadows of death.

*Fourth*, like Naaman, they need to submit their stubborn wills to the power of God. Jesus stated, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Unless we swallow pride and admit there is a higher power than what "I think," we will still carry our sins to our grave. We will suffer the consequence of rejecting the only healing power we have, the blood of Jesus. The healing process for sin is to do the simple commandments of God (1 John 5:3).

#### THERE IS PRIDE AMONG US TODAY

There is soul-damning pride among us today, to be sure. Those who have allowed pride to control them have, and are, exacting terrible tragedies within the church. Pride has resulted in fractured friendships, divided elderships, divided congregations, gossip, backbiting, lying, destroyed respect, terrible loss of confidence and influence, discouragement, loss of evangelism and on and on. Those responsible for such upheaval in the church will surely face judgment for their actions. Look up Proverbs 6:16-19 for your personal consideration. After careful and honest self-examination, if you find yourself described therein, please repent while opportunity exists.

#### A PLEA

In my judgment, there is probably nothing more heinous than inflicting hurt and damage to the precious body of Christ, his church. The church is not a social organization designed for the fun and frolic of its members. It is the body of Christ which has the blessed privilege of assembling to offer worship and adoration unto God through the sacrifice of his son, Jesus the Christ as well as daily service to Christ to the glory of God the father. Those who would do damage to that sacred body because of pride must surely repent, or perish!

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

## Attention Subscribers

Do you know someone who would enjoy reading CTF as much as you? Then why not give them a gift subscription.

Please check one:

\$14.00 for one year     \$24.00 for two years

Send Gift Subscription To:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose payment with your subscription

Mail Subscriptions To:

Contending for the Faith

P.O. 2357 • Spring, Texas 77383

fax: 281.288.0549

**Contending** FOR THE **Faith**™  
Post Office Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT# 1863

August/2002  
Volume XXXIII, No. 8  
\$14.00 per year; 2 years \$24

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## Does One Receive Holy Spirit Baptism at the Same Time He is Baptized in Water for the Remission of Sins?

Daniel Denham

A recent article espousing the view that Holy Spirit baptism occurs at the same time one is baptized in water for the remission of sins has come to my attention. The author of the article is **Bob Berard**. It is my purpose to review and respond to that article, which I sincerely believe to be terribly flawed, and that it involves a very dangerous idea that is simply wrong. It evidences how far off the "beaten trail" some have now gone on the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit, not only relative to the sanctification of the child of God but also relative to the salvation of the alien sinner!

I personally am astonished at where Berard and others of like mind are finally winding up in their speculations about the Spirit. I have through the years held him and those with him in the highest regard. Some of these men have been and are still deemed by me as good friends. What I will have to say is not meant then in any measure to be a personal attack on Bob or any one else, but these matters must be addressed. Friendship aside, truth is paramount, especially when it bears upon the salvation of men's souls.

This error is not new, even among members of the Lord's church. Over the past three decades it has been espoused in some fashion or other by **Richard Rogers, Richard Oster, David Hogan**, and others. It is, however, shocking that one with the stature and background of Bob Berard among faithful brethren should now seek to attach his name to its furtherance. It is indeed "a sad day" in spiritual Israel.



### OPENING PARAGRAPH

Berard's opening paragraph is somewhat enlightening. He begins by admitting that he at one time believed that Holy Spirit Baptism "always involves the miraculous." The force of the statement is that he has *changed* his position on the subject. He has now arrived at a different conclusion. Sometimes, he avers, it does not involve the miraculous. He states clearly:

It is true that miracles ended with the first century and



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher  
jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor  
Mclight@bwoodtx.com

*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

*Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.*

## ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

*Contending for the Faith was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7, 11) 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 needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval. All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be 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. CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.*

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

*Editorial...*

## DID YOU KNOW THAT IN ORDER TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN YOU MUST BE BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

In the 2001 Robertson County Lectures (located between Greenbrier and Springfield, Tennessee) **Glen Jobe** presented two sermons entitled "Christ and The New Birth: I and II" in which he declared that Holy Spirit baptism is for us today. **Bob Berard** wrote an article advocating the same doctrine that Jobe preached at the Robertson County lectures. I have Jobe's tape and Berard's article.

The article by **Daniel Denham** beginning on the front page of this issue of *Contending for the Faith* is a study of Berard's article. Indeed, it is a lengthy article and it will take some time to study through it, but I think it will enlighten brethren regarding where the Deavers, Jobe, Berard, et al. are in their thinking regarding the Holy Spirit and his work (at least where they are at this present time). I have also printed Berard's article in this issue of *CFTF* so that all may read for themselves just what Berard wrote. Thus, there can be no quibbling wherein someone may say, "Berard did not write that."

Besides **Roy and Mac Deaver**, **Glenn Jobe** and **Bob Berard**, the other speakers on the 2001 Robertson County Lectures were **Johnny Ramsey**, **Michael Hughes**, **Charles Conally**, **Terry Varner**, **Charles Pugh**, **Lawrence Williamson**, **Roy McConnell**, **Rob Caton**, **Gary Wilder**, **Miller Frost**, and **Dale Flowers**. Obviously these speakers believe what the Deavers do regarding the personal, direct, indwelling of the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit's direct strengthening of the Christian's inward man over and beyond the power of the Gospel to do so, as well as over and beyond one's own natural strength, and the Spirit's direct impartation of infallible wisdom (information that

is not from the Bible or source-information) to Christians. Or they disagree, but do not see any problems with these doctrines. Now we have the Deavers, Jobe, and Berard's view on the availability of Holy Spirit baptism today. Do these men and others hold the same view preached by Glenn Jobe and about which Bob Berard wrote concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit; or do they think their views as represented in this issue of *CFTF* by Berard are of no consequence?

All along in this controversy the Deavers have told us that the direct work of the Spirit that they champion is for the faithful child of God. However, in their teaching on John 3:5, they have the Spirit operating directly on the non-Christian. Granted such a person is in the process of becoming a Christian, but never the less that person has not yet been raised from the watery grave of baptism to walk in newness of life. Thus, such a person has not completed his or her obedience and is, therefore, not yet a Christian—a member of the Lord's church. There you have it—the Deaver doctrine of the direct work of the Holy Spirit is now applied to the alien sinner and is necessary to salvation. This is their doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit—well, at least as far as they have evolved it or seen fit to tell us.

#### **NOAH HACKWORTH LEAVES THE PULPIT OF THE WEST VISALIA CHURCH OF CHRIST**

One my best friends is brother **Noah Hackworth**. He is a faithful gospel preacher. We have traveled the world together in proclaiming Christ and him crucified, and Noah has been a regular contributor of articles to *CFTF*. He has, until this year, spoken on all our Spring Bible Institute Lectureships. Over the years Noah has spoken on many lectures as well as directed lectures in San Mateo and Visalia, California. However, from one day to the next we never know what can happen that will greatly affect our lives. For Noah and his wife **Glenda**, one of those wide-ranging shocks came in early September 2001 when Noah suffered a massive stroke. While he has made tremendous progress in his rehabilitation, it has become necessary for Noah to leave his work as the

### *In This Issue.*

Does One Receive Holy Spirit Baptism at the Same Time He is Baptized in Water for the Remission of Sins?

**Daniel Denham** 1

*Editorial*

Did You Know that In Order to Become a Christian You Must Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit?

**David P. Brown** 2

Baptism With Holy Spirit and Baptism Into Christ Are They the Same or Different?

**Bob Berard** 14

Thomas B. Warren and Holy Spirit Baptism

**David P. Brown** 17

Letter from the Spring Elders 20

preacher and one of the elders with the West Visalia Church of Christ, Visalia, California. In part the elders had this to say regarding Noah's work with the West Visalia congregation.

Brother Noah Hackworth came to Visalia in early October 1996, to begin his work with the congregation. Noah came highly respected and qualified for the work here. He has served us well and we have been greatly blessed by his efforts, and we have enjoyed both spiritual and numerical growth. He has been a true soldier of the cross, preaching and standing for the truth. He is known nationally as a guest speaker on various major lectureships. His leaving us is brought about by a serious misfortune on his part, something over which he had no control.

For many months the hearts of Noah's many friends have gone out to him, Glenda, and their family. Our prayers have regularly ascended to the throne of grace on their behalf. As the Hackworths make further adjustments *CFTF* wishes them well, and we trust that Noah will continue to improve. We want and need him to be as active in the kingdom of the Lord as he possibly can. To that end we offer our prayers. And with much thanksgiving we praise and thank God for his recovery thus far.

Of course, the elders of the West Visalia congregation, **Ted Haire** and **Gene Mullins** are in the process of looking for another preacher—not just any preacher but a faithful preacher. As they have said, “He must be sound in the faith—liberals need not apply.” Our prayer is that the elders and the whole West Visalia church will ever remain strong in their service to God, and they will find the right man to work with them as their evangelist. You may contact the elders of the West

Visalia congregation at the following address: West Visalia Church of Church, 4525 West Caldwell Avenue, Visalia, California 93277.

The elders and the church in West Visalia are to be commended for standing by Noah and Glenda in their time of trial and through these many months of Noah’s recovery. Our prayer is that the West Visalia Church will ever walk in the “Old Paths.”

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

## Does One Receive?..

(Continued From page 1)

completion of the New Testament, but it is also true that baptism in the Holy Spirit is not in every case associated with the miraculous...

What is of special importance on this matter is that one of the assertions that has been made by **Mac Deaver** and others, including **Berard**, in their teaching on the Spirit over the past couple of years is that they have not changed relative to the work of the Spirit on the heart of the alien sinner. Yet here is a doctrine that expressly admits to a change on this matter. Baptism is an act involving the heart of the alien sinner. The change that is effected by God, according to the notion of a direct baptism in the Spirit in the act of being baptized in water, *implies a direct operation on the heart of the alien sinner!* There is no way to get around it! As will be seen, even **Berard’s** explanation of the process itself shows that such must be the case. This is disturbing to say the least.

### THE BASIC ARGUMENT

Bob’s basic argument is that because John 3:5 demands two elements in the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5, and because these elements are “water” and “Spirit,” then it must be the case that both elements are involved in water baptism for the remission of sins in the same fashion and to the same degree. In other words, if literal water is involved in the act, so then is the literal Spirit! **Berard** asks, “If ‘water’ in the passage (i.e. John 3:5) is the water of baptism, why is ‘Spirit’ of the passage not the Spirit?” He then asserts that those who do not agree with his view “change the word ‘Spirit’ in John 3:5 to ‘word’ and do so without warrant.” He explains then at some length,

Of course one’s obedient response to God always involves understanding the Spirit’s word (the Bible, the truth – I Peter 1:22-23) and doing what the Bible says, but the element ‘water’ and the element ‘Spirit’ are both taught by the Spirit’s word in John 3:5 as essential to entering the kingdom of God. When one is under the water of his baptism for remission of his sins, he there receives an operation or working of God whereby he is ‘raised with’ Christ (Col. 2:11-13). Hear Paul in verse 12, ‘buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God.’ Christ shed His blood in His death, and it is in the likeness of Christ’s death that one is cleansed by that blood, puts sin to death, and has Christ’s Spirit enter his heart giving spiritual life (Rom. 6:3-7; 8:9-13). All Christians are those who were baptized into the one body by one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). That baptism involved the elements of water and the Spirit (emphasis his, HDD).

This statement is actually devastating to **Berard’s** entire case. *First*, he misrepresents the view of those who oppose his teaching. They do not “change” the word “Spirit” into “word.” The position actually is that it is the word of God by which the Spirit does his work in effecting the new birth of John 3:5. Is water involved? Yes, most certainly. Is the Spirit himself involved? Again, most certainly. However, the use of the word “Spirit” does not of itself explain “how” the Spirit is involved, any more than the use of the word “water” explains all the particulars involved in its use in the new birth!

Does the Spirit operate in conversion of the sinner? Most certainly. But *how?* That is the central question! The element quibble is a red herring. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17). The

swordsman does the cutting through the sword. Both are involved, but one is the means by which the other operates and accomplishes his task. Does the fact that the sword is being used imply that there is no swordsman involved? The Spirit can be—and indeed is—involved in conversion, but it is through means. John 3:5 merely

***“Does the fact that the sword is being used imply that there is no swordsman involved?”***

expresses the fact of the Spirit’s involvement; it does not specifically address the matter of how or in what way he is involved. Other passages provide further instruction on the new birth, and John 3:5 cannot be taken to their exclusion (cf. James 1:18, for example).

*Second*, he *assumes* that the operation (KJV) or working of God in Colossians 2:12 is a direct operation of the Holy Spirit himself in the heart of the one being baptized. The passage specifically calls it “the operation of God,” which name contextually refers to the father *and not the Spirit*. Now if our brother is going to get upset over how some treat John 3:5, why is he not more circumspect in his use of Colossians 2:12? By what basis does he draw the conclusion that the work of the Spirit is actually what is under consideration here in Colossians 2:12? Is he asserting that the Spirit’s direct operation is the *means* by which “the working of God” the father is taking place? How would he go about establishing that point?

How does he even know that the phrase “operation of God” has reference to an operation taking place in the heart of the individual? Nothing in the context demands that consideration. The crucial verse reads:

**Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.**

The clause “**who hath raised Him (Christ) from the dead**” modifies “**God**” in the text, and points to the operation or working that is actually under consideration by Paul. He is writing of the mighty work that the father did in raising Christ from the dead, and the necessity for faith in that great act that gives baptism its spiritual substance and significance. Baptism saves us “**by the resurrection of Jesus Christ**” (I Peter 3:21). I believe that we have here an objective genitive in the term *energeias* (properly meaning, “power”), as opposed to the subjective genitive. It is the *object* of faith that is in view in the construction and not the cause which the subjective use would normally imply. This object is clearly the power of God demonstrated

in the resurrection of Christ. As J. B. Lightfoot observes relative to this objective genitive use of *energeias*,

Only a belief in the resurrection are the benefits of the resurrection obtained, because only so are its moral effects produced. Hence St. Paul prays that he may ‘know the *power* of Christ’s resurrection’ (Phil. iii. 10)... (*Commentary on Colossians*, p.185).

Similarly, H. C. G. Moule observes in Colossians 2:12, “Faith rests upon God as he is viewed specially as the Raiser of the Lord from the dead...” (*Studies in Colossians and Philemon*, p.105). Faith in the efficacy of the power of God in raising Christ from the dead is necessary for faith in the efficacy of the power of God in forgiving us of our sins and thus receiving God’s gracious mercy. Does Berard take the phrase as a subjective genitive—faith *produced* through God’s working in the heart of the sinner? If so, then he teaches a direct operation on the heart of the alien sinner and clearly contradicts Romans 10:17 that shows that faith comes by *means*— by “**the hearing of the word of God.**” If he admits that it is objective genitive, then he is compelled to accept that the principal object in view is the resurrection fact (cf. Ephesians 1:19-20). *There is nothing in the construction itself that ascribes the operation (power) to something going on inside the baptismal candidate. One must “beg the question” to make the argument.*

***“Faith rests upon God as he is viewed specially as the raiser of the Lord from the dead.”***

*Third*, Berard’s argument on Colossians 2:12 implies that *one must actually believe that he is receiving Holy Spirit baptism while he is being baptized in water in order for him to be saved*. It is not an optional matter, if his position be granted: for it is “**through the faith in the operation of God...**” which operation Bob says is Holy Spirit baptism, that one is raised to life. If one does not believe that he is receiving such an operation on his heart, and especially it be through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, then he cannot be raised. If he is not raised, then he is not saved. One wonders if Berard and those of like belief are now going to treat us to a series of “rebaptisms” on the part of themselves and their followers, in a fashion similar to the “Lordship baptism” spectacle that attended the Crossroads and Boston Church Movements. Remember, Bob admits at the beginning of his article that he did not always believe the doctrine that one receives

Holy Spirit baptism at the same time as when he is baptized in water to enter into Christ! If so, then was he really raised **“to walk in newness of life,”** when he was baptized some years ago? His doctrine makes this a matter where there is indeed a difference. It becomes necessarily a matter of faith and fellowship. It is a salvation matter. Bob may quibble that God will save the

***“The resurrection aspect of the act of baptism has not ever been completed, but he is now a child of God.”***

one baptized for the remission of sins despite his not actually realizing the fact that he receives this working of God in water baptism through the means of Spirit baptism or that God will apply Spirit baptism retroactively when one becomes aware of the truth of the doctrine, but neither quibble addresses the text itself. Paul teaches that it is by faith in the working of God that one is raised up to walk in the new life. One must believe in the working while being baptized in water. Ignorance of the doctrine would seem to invalidate the baptism of any who do not believe as he now teaches, and also invalidate the baptism of any who did not believe exactly what he now teaches when they were being baptized in water. This latter group includes Berard himself, given his admission that he has but recently changed his belief to his current view.

*Fourth*, Berard fails all together to observe the force of the clause **“who hath raised Him from the dead”** and its bearing on the phrase **“faith in the operation of God.”** When he quotes Colossians 2:12 the clause is completely left out as though it has no bearing on the overall construction. The entire argument of Paul on the significance of baptism focuses on the concepts of death, burial, and resurrection and the tie between these events relative to Christ and their connection with the baptism of the baptismal candidate. *I am amazed at the lack of any consideration being given to this connection and its implications on the phrase that Berard makes so much use of in formulating his own argument! Paul is not permitted, it seems, to finish his case, before Berard decides what the “working of God” is in the text!*

*Fifth*, Berard’s statement has the Holy Spirit directly, immediately imparting “spiritual life” to the one being baptized even “when one is under the water of his baptism.” Thus, before one has even been **“raised to walk in newness of life”** (Romans 6:3-5), he is already saved! The resurrection aspect of the act of bap-

tism has not even been completed, but he is now a child of God! The baptism is not complete, but one is already saved. If Berard says that this one really is not yet a child of God, then he implies that the Holy Spirit has operated directly on the heart of one who is an alien sinner, and who therefore is still in the world. Yet the world cannot receive the Spirit (John 14:17). He also has one possessing “spiritual life” while not quite yet a child of God. Also, either Romans 6 is wrong as to the death, burial, and resurrection significance of baptism or alien sinners receive a direct operation of the Spirit, if his view on Colossians 2:12 be granted. Take either horn of the dilemma created by the position. Bob, however, is on record that “spiritual life” is being imparted even while one “is under the water of his baptism for the remission of sins.” He implicitly jettisons Romans 6, not to mention Colossians 3:1.

*Sixth*, he seeks to tie the misshapened package of his argument together with an appeal to I Corinthians 12:13. He asserts that it refers to Holy Spirit baptism. This he cannot prove. The phrase “in one Spirit” or “by one Spirit” contextually refers to the guidance and direction of the Spirit (hence his teaching) that leads men to obey the command to be baptized. When men comply with the words of the Spirit, revealed in the word of God, on the matter, then they are **“baptized by (or in) one Spirit into one body.”** One should examine the use of the prepositional phrase in I Corinthians 12:3-9, which is the immediate context for 12:13. Bob needs to set forth the argument that demands his conclusion on I Corinthians 12:13 before he tries to put on the bow.

#### **JOHN 3 AND ANOTHER SERIES OF PROBLEMS FOR BERARD’S THEORY**

Bob creates another dilemma for himself and those of like persuasion relative to the baptism of John and that of the Great Commission, by writing,

The contrast that John the baptizer made in Matthew 3:10-12 and parallel passages is not between the water baptism into Christ and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but between the water baptism of John and the water baptism into Christ, the latter of the two involving also the element of the Holy Spirit. When John said, ‘I indeed baptize you with water’ and ‘...He (Jesus) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire’ he was not contrasting the baptism taught in Acts 2:38 with baptism of or with the Holy Spirit; rather, he was contrasting the baptism he was then administering with the baptism of Acts 2:38; John 3:5; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:5). (sic) John’s baptism did not involve the Holy Spirit entering the heart of the one baptized even though it was a baptism for remission of sins (Mark 1:4; John 7:37-39). The one baptism (non-miraculous)

of Ephesians 4:5 is first reported in Acts 2:41 and it involved both the life-giving Holy Spirit (v.38) and water (Acts 8:35-38). The Spirit was given while one was/is in the waters of his baptism into Christ."

***Bob has those legitimately under John's baptism having the remission of their sins but no "spiritual life," which is said to come by way of Holy Spirit Baptism.***

While admittedly there were some differences between the two baptisms, there were also certain important points of correspondence, especially pertaining to salvation. Bob admits that John's baptism was "for the remission of sins," just as the baptism of the Great Commission. However, he implies that John's baptism was not in any way involved in the new birth of John 3:5. He thus teaches that the new birth only came into effect on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Therefore, all of those who were baptized under John's baptism prior to Acts 2 did not experience the new birth! Bob has those baptized legitimately under John's baptism having the remission of their sins but no "spiritual life," which is said to come from "the life-giving Spirit" by way of Holy Spirit baptism. Once more, he implies that they were still lost.

Will Berard apply this premise to the case of the apostles? The new birth is essential to enter the kingdom (John 3:3,5). Does he hold the position that the apostles were baptized again under the baptism of the Great Commission to enter the kingdom? Roy C. Deaver is on record as opposing that conclusion. The new birth is essential to salvation, but those baptized under John's baptism did not experience the new birth (Bob's position); therefore, it must be the case that all of those baptized under John's baptism were either lost or had to be baptized again under the baptism of the Great Commission. Let Bob take either horn of the dilemma he wishes. If the former, then they were lost while yet having their sins remitted. If the latter, then their sins were never really remitted or else their sins came back upon them in some sense, because the baptism of the Great Commission is also "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). So the phrase "for remission of sins" would not necessarily be assurance of the actual forgiveness of one's sins. The doctrine then implies that the baptism of the Great Commission itself is not necessarily essential to the forgiveness of sins.

Also Jesus declared in John 15:3 to the apostles, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." This statement was made by Christ before they received Holy Spirit baptism. They were already clean and thus regenerated (Titus 3:5) – and that through the word of God! Yet Berard teaches that one must have Spirit baptism to cleanse the heart so that the Spirit can then take up residence and personally indwell him. If the apostles were already clean separate and apart from Spirit baptism, then they must have already experienced the new birth of John 3 before being baptized in the Spirit. Either that or Jesus lied! Bob asserts later that Titus 3:5-6 applies to "every baptized believer (past and present)." That text shows that "the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit" occur at the same time and implies that cleansing and regeneration occur together. If the apostles were already clean by John 15:3, then they must have already experienced the new birth. Therefore, John 3:5 does not relate only to the baptism of the Great Commission, and his doctrine on Spirit baptism is false!

The baptism of John was the baptism in vogue when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about the new birth in John 3. Are we to conclude that Jesus was commanding Nicodemus to do something that he could not do until Acts 2? Poor Nicodemus would have to wait to be "born again." Jesus should have explained to him that he would have a little while longer to wait before that could happen, given Berard's view.

***"His speculations have opened a number of new cans of worms to say the least."***

Another problem besetting Berard's artificial distinction between John 3 and the baptism of John is that his doctrine implies that all of those who were entering the kingdom in its preparatory state (Matthew 21:31-32; Luke 11:20, 52) were somehow sneaking into or breaking into the kingdom by "some other way" (cf. John 10:1) than through the door of the new birth! So "except" really does not mean "if and only if" in John 3:3, 5. What implications might this have on the use of "except" elsewhere in the word of God (e.g. Matthew 19:9)? His speculations have opened a number of new cans of worms, to say the least. Fascinating it is. The Lord rebuked the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:13 for discouraging men from entering the kingdom. He said:



**But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.**

He really, if Berard's theory on Holy Spirit baptism and the new birth is right, should have praised the scribes and Pharisees for keeping these folk from trying to break into the kingdom through some other way! The Lord should have been thankful for their help in keeping men from entering into the kingdom when the new birth which is essential to that was not yet available to them! His doctrine implies that the scribes and Pharisees were actually doing the Lord a favor by keeping men from entering into the kingdom. I wonder if Bob and his companions are going to treat us now to a re-study of the kingdom that will strangely parallel some denominational notions our brethren, including Roy and Mac Deaver, have debated into oblivion? I am not writing this to embarrass these brethren, but to exhort them to re-study their speculations on the Spirit and give them up before it is too late and to warn others against accepting these ideas.

If Berard admits that John 3 does involve John's baptism as well as the baptism of the Great Commission, then his prior admission on Matthew 3 destroys his entire case on Holy Spirit baptism being a part of the new birth. He recognizes that Matthew 3 demonstrates that the baptism of John could not include Holy Spirit baptism. He notes elsewhere that Holy Spirit baptism, in fact, occurred for the first time in Acts 2 – some time after John's baptism had been in vogue. Thus, any argument that he makes, including his chart argument on page 4 near the close of his article, runs afoul of John 3:3, 5. This latter passage dooms his doctrine, his "parallels" notwithstanding.

#### **TWO BAPTISMS AND NOT ONE**

Bob's doctrine on Holy Spirit baptism and water baptism into Christ implies the existence of two baptisms and not one, as he asserts. He is faced with the self-evident force of Ephesians 4:5, which shows that as of about A.D. 63, when Paul penned the Ephesian letter, there was but one baptism in vogue. He has the impossible task of making  $1 + 1 = 1$ . Somehow he must get Holy Spirit baptism plus water baptism into Christ to equal water baptism into Christ. This is the same problem that has beset the United Pentecostals and other Oneness Pentecostals for almost a century, and even the Anglicans, going back to a time even before John Wesley, have been bedeviled with a quest for a solution that would enable them to hold to their view of a direct operation on the heart of the alien sin-

ner and water baptism for the remission of sins. Berard is no more successful than they have been.

**1 + 1 = 1?**

In fact, his very language exposes the failure in his approach to the subject. Under the heading "Different Administrator," he writes:

A man (one administrator) lowers someone into the waters of baptism and Jesus (another administrator) baptizes a person under the water with the Holy Spirit; both are facts, but the human administrator does not preclude a divine administrator also operating.

When one lowers the candidate into the water of baptism, what is he doing? He is baptizing him, correct? Now that is one baptism. But, according to Berard, while the candidate is under water, the Lord then baptizes the candidate with the Holy Spirit. That makes two baptisms that are also distinct in both time and operation. The former begins first before the baptism of the Spirit. While the water baptism is still in progress, Holy Spirit baptism occurs. Two separate administrators are involved: again showing that two different baptisms are under consideration. Though they may coincide briefly in time, with the one clearly beginning before the other can occur, and the latter may depend upon the former, there are two baptisms occurring according to Berard's scheme. Once more we are being made to believe that  $1 + 1 = 1$ .

#### **HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM-ITIS**

A basic fallacy in Bob's reasoning is that in almost every passage where the Spirit is mentioned, it seems he sees Holy Spirit baptism – either in actuation or in its immediate effect. This again is a common approach of Pentecostal and Wesleyan preachers to the various passages on the work of the Holy Spirit. He ties together without any sort of formal argument disparate texts as though they directly relate. In his article, the gift of the Spirit and Holy Spirit baptism are reduced to one in the same. For example, he states:

When (one, HDD) has been lowered into the water by a man, Christ baptizes that same man with His Holy Spirit as He promised to do (John 14:23; Acts 2:38; 5:32; Rom. 8:9; John 3:5; Eph. 2:22; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Cor. 12:13). Without the Spirit one is lost; with the Spirit one is saved (Rom. 8:9). Having the Spirit in this indwelling and saving sense is called the 'gift of the Holy Spirit,' but also (it is, HDD) referred to as 'living water' and as baptism 'with the Holy Spirit'.

Bob simply asserts that these verses all relate to the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the proposed simultaneous occurrence with water baptism into Christ. No

argument is made on the texts at hand. John 14:23 speaks of both the Father and the Son making their abode in the Christian. No mention is made of the Spirit in that specific text. Berard may try to quibble that the father and the son would indwell through the medium of the Spirit, but 1) that is not taught in this verse and 2) that would involve an indwelling by means other than the person(s) expressed, a hermeneutical approach that he seems to hold in disdain when “word only” advocates use it on passages that deal with the indwelling of the Spirit. Surely, the legs of the lame are not equal. He tries to tie the indwelling in 14:23 with the baptism of the Spirit, but does he really wish to explain how that contextually Jesus is obviously talking about a miraculous operation of the Spirit in the immediate context (cf. John 14:26) and yet his version of Holy Spirit baptism is non-miraculous? John 14 is in the midst of material discussing the miraculous conditions attending the work of the Spirit specifically through the apostolic office. None of the other passages listed in the preceding quotation from him addresses the subject of Holy Spirit baptism. Berard simply asserts that they do. The burden of proof rests upon him to prove it in each case. This is also the case with his abuse of John 7:37-39 on page 3, where he equates the indwelling of the Spirit and the gift of the Spirit with Holy Spirit baptism. The only criterion, it seems, for such an equation to be formulated is the mere mention of the Holy Spirit by name or of some aspect of redemption wherein the Spirit is said to have some part. The only time this hermeneutical approach is disowned is apparently when the miraculous is obviously in view, but even then some blinders help to obscure the exegete’s vision on particulars in crucial texts (John 14, for example).

#### **A STRAW MAN ATTACKED**

Berad builds a straw man at the bottom of page 2 by introducing Joel 2 and the use of the text by brethren to “prove that baptism of the Holy Spirit is always accompanied by the miraculous.” While Holy Spirit baptism did fall within the purview of Joel’s prophecy in Joel 2:28ff. (cf. Acts 2:17ff.), the prophecy was not completely limited to the miraculous. It pinpointed the beginning of the gospel age with its miraculous element (which later revelation showed to be temporal in duration) and its lasting effects beyond the initial outpouring in Acts 2. There is nothing in Joel’s prophecy that of itself confined Holy Spirit baptism to the miraculous. *However, the baptism of the Spirit is confined to the miraculous by virtue of the nature of the*

***“The emphasis in Acts 2 is clearly on the miraculous element involved in the prophecy.”***

*act itself—its being direct and immediate, and by the texts that specifically refer to it.* His entire discussion on Joel 2 confuses the issue by introducing a proposed argument against his position that has not been made, as far as I am aware.

Berad is correct when he observes that Joel’s prophecy deals with more than the miraculous era, but he fails to observe that Peter’s principal use of the prophecy is designed to show that the miraculous outpouring on Pentecost was a work of God, and thus confirms the message that the apostle would then go on to deliver. The emphasis in Acts 2 is clearly on the miraculous element involved in the prophecy. It is also clear that the Pentecost outpouring, which was in part a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy, was indeed miraculous and is described as baptism with the Holy Spirit. If Bob tries to equate this with Acts 2:38 and “**the gift of the Holy Spirit,**” then his position is in serious trouble. If he ignores the miraculous connection of the outpouring in Acts 2, then he loses all credibility. You cannot separate what happened to the apostles on Pentecost from the miraculous; nor can you completely sever Joel’s prophecy from the miraculous. Berard needs, instead, desperately to find a text that specifically and unequivocally refers to Holy Spirit baptism in such a fashion as delineates that it is non-miraculous. But no such text exists. Ultimately, he, like numerous others before him, will be compelled to defend a view that calls for two distinct baptisms of the Spirit—one miraculous and the other non-miraculous—by way of an arbitrary and haphazard use of Spirit passages. He will hold that the apostles received a miraculous baptism with the Spirit, but the 3000 on Pentecost received a non-miraculous baptism with the Spirit. This implies two differing baptisms of the Spirit. His justification will be his arbitrary use of the word “Spirit.”

#### **BOB’S USE OF TITUS 3:5-6**

Berad comments relative to Titus 3:5-6:

Titus 3:5-6 says that salvation is by washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit ‘whom **He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ...**’ The word translated ‘poured’ (NKJV) or ‘shed’ (KJV) is from the same Greek word translated as ‘pour’ (NKJV) in Acts 2:17 and Acts 2:17 is Peter’s quoting from Joel chapter 2 about the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. The plain language of Titus 3:5-6 re-

fers to every baptized believer (past and present), thus the pouring out of the Spirit that Joel and Peter spoke about has a non-miraculous import. Indeed this is the most important matter at hand in the passage (Luke 10:20). Will someone claim that Joel had no reference to the pouring out of the Spirit in Titus 3:5-6 or claim that it is of lesser importance than the miracles?

The key clause upon which his argument in Titus 3:5-6 depends is that which he translates as “whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ.” Bob evidently takes the relative pronoun *hou* as neuter in gender and applies it to the name “Holy Spirit” (“Holy Ghost,” KJV). In Greek, pronouns must agree with their antecedents in number and gender, but do not have to agree in case, which is governed rather by the pronoun’s function within its relative clause. One plausible response to the position espoused by Bob is that the pronoun here could be taken instead as masculine in gender and as referring or relating back to the phrase “His mercy” (*ton autou eleon*), which in fact is the central topic of the text: for Paul is stressing how salvation is not based on “works of one’s own righteousness” but rather on God’s “mercy” with the intervening prepositional phrase “by (or through, from *dia*) the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” being clearly subordinate to this main thought. From this perspective then it would be the mercy “which was shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ.” This accords well with the context in which Paul has but just recently stressed the gracious gift of God’s son to “redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (cf. Titus 2:11-14). One might quibble against that view that the nearest antecedent is Holy Spirit, but, while suggestive in English grammar, the nature of Greek syntax is not nearly as “cut and dried” when examining the pronoun/antecedent relationships that exist in certain constructions. Often the more dominant subject matter of the text has determinative force.

But even if the pronoun *hou* is taken in the neuter and as referring to the Holy Spirit, other alternatives from Bob’s position are plausible. For example, Paul in his use of the pronoun “us” in verse 6 could contemplate only the apostles, and not “every baptized believer (past and present)” as he avers. This is a position held by David Lipscomb in his comments on the text. This then would make a distinction between “we” and “us” based upon subject matter. Keep in mind, Paul places himself within the scope of Titus 3:5-6. Did he receive Holy Spirit baptism? He was not “a whit behind the very chiefest apostles” (II Corinthians 11:5;

12:11). They were all equal in power and thus possessed the same things necessary for their respective offices. If the others were baptized in the Spirit, it would seem reasonable to conclude that Paul, likewise, received Spirit baptism. Was it miraculous in its attending features or non-miraculous? Berard tries to establish from Titus 3:6 a non-miraculous baptism of the Spirit. Is this the same baptism the apostles on Pentecost received? How then does one account for the obviously miraculous attending features in Acts 2:1-4, if the baptism is non-miraculous? He must answer these questions. If Paul is included in the scope of Titus 3:6 as having received a non-miraculous baptism of the Spirit, as per Berard’s exposition of the text, then what of the rest of the apostles and Acts 2:1-4? If Acts 2:1-4 concerns a miraculous measure of Spirit baptism, then was Paul shortchanged? Was he really inferior in power to the other apostles?

*If Paul is included in the scope of Titus 3:6 as having received a non-miraculous baptism of the Spirit... then what of the rest of the apostles and Acts 2:1-4?*

But even if the pouring out of the Spirit referred to “every baptized believer (past and present),” the construction does not show that the pouring under consideration has any connection with Joel’s prophecy and Acts 2:17. The word *ekcheo* is a quite common and ordinary Greek term. The expression could simply be a comparably picturesque way to refer to the indwelling of the Spirit and not necessarily the baptism of the Spirit. But if Bob wishes to apply the word to a non-miraculous outpouring by virtue of *ekcheo*’s use in Joel’s prophecy relative to the Spirit, then he needs to square his conclusion with the obviously miraculous attachments of it in Acts 2 and 10, where *ekcheo* is used to describe the action involved. Peter declares in Acts 2 that Jesus Christ, by virtue of his exaltation to God’s right hand and by means of his reception of “the promise of the Holy Spirit,” “hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (v. 33). Peter’s reference is to the miraculous manifestations. “This” is what was “shed forth” by Christ. The Pentecostians both saw and heard some remarkable things, the very things that had occasioned the query, “What meaneth this?” (Acts 2:1-12). What did they see? What did they hear? Whatever they saw and heard is what was actually “poured out” by the Lord through the baptism of the

Spirit upon the apostles! It is also certainly the case that the magnifying of God in other languages indicated to the Jews in Acts 10 that the Gentiles had “the gift of the Holy Spirit” poured out upon them (Acts 10:44-46).

***Strange, is it not, that the record of their actual baptism with the Spirit bears little resemblance to what Berard says applies to “every baptized believer (past and present)”***

Remember the event in Acts 2 to which Peter immediately applies the prophecy of Joel was miraculous and not non-miraculous. Berard wants to “pick and choose” what parts of Joel’s prophecy to apply to Titus 3:6. He wants the salvation part without the miraculous gifts, etc. He knows that to take all of Joel’s prophecy as given in its initial force in Acts 2 implies a miraculous connection for Holy Spirit baptism. On what basis does he separate Titus 3:6 from a miraculous connection, if it relates directly to Joel’s prophecy as he argues? Why could not the Pentecostal or Charismatic folk point out that he has *implied* by his view a continuation of the miraculous for “every baptized believer (past and present),” and it is his use of other passages to teach an end to the miraculous by the close of “the first century and completion of the New Testament” that are in error?

One assumption that is made by advocates of the present-day Holy Spirit baptism view is that “the **renewing of the Holy Spirit**” occurs through the pouring out of the Spirit upon the believers. The text does not demand that connection between the renewing and the pouring, if it be the Spirit who is poured out in the text! The text does not say that it is *through the pouring of the Holy Spirit* one is renewed. The actual means by which the Spirit effects renewal is not immediately addressed by Paul.

One final point of note on the text is that Berard’s view is faced with a severe problem relative to the case of the apostles and also that of Cornelius and his household in Acts 10. If the text of Titus 3:6 applies to “every baptized believer (past and present)” *in the way described by Bob*, then did the apostles receive merely a non-miraculous baptism of the Spirit, which he states is established by this text? Or did they receive two separate baptisms in the Spirit – one miraculous and one non-miraculous? The record of Acts 1 and 2 is very clear on the matter. What the apostles received was

miraculous through and through. As the baptism with the Spirit applies to the baptism of the Great Commission alone, as he contends, were the apostles “re-baptized” in order to receive it? Strange, is it not, that the record of their actual baptism with the Spirit bears little resemblance to what Berard says applies to “every baptized believer (past and present)”? The household of Cornelius, who received the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 10:44-45, did so prior to being baptized in the water (Acts 10:48), rather than while they were “under the water.” And was their baptism in the Spirit miraculous or non-miraculous, or did they receive one of each? You would think that an example would have been given that expresses his scenario somewhere in indisputable fashion, given the importance of the subject, but none exists!

### **BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT AND FREE WILL**

Three serious contradictions are put forth by Berard in his article under the heading “Different Prerequisites.” *First*, he, throughout his article, argues for a very literalistic approach to the interpretation of passages on the Holy Spirit. His handling of John 3:5 is a case in point. If water is literal water, then the Spirit must be the literal Spirit. It must therefore be a literal baptism in the Spirit, even as one is literally baptized in water. However, he writes,

Unlike the pouring of water on the head which some wrongly substitute for immersion, the Spirit is not a physical element and cannot therefore be presumed to run off one’s head and onto the ground. When the Spirit is *figuratively* poured out by Christ into the heart of the one immersed in the waters of baptism, he becomes the subject of the Spirit’s powerful (but non-miraculous) influence as the baptized person (of his own free will) studies and does his best to apply the Spirit’s Word to his life (Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 3:14-20). (emphasis mine, HDD)

Berard’s position contradicts his assertion that the baptized person has free will. If the heart or spirit of the baptized person is in any fashion directly, immediately impacted by the Spirit in his moral faculties (reasoning, volition, etc.), then he is not genuinely free. His choices then are in some measure, however slight it may be, directed by a force *beyond* his own natural powers. There is no full functioning of his own powers without interference, coercion, or control exerted by the Spirit in part, if not in whole, if this be the case.

Any position that involves a direct and immediate contact between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man in a fashion wherein the former exerts raw *power* on the latter in the area of moral influence implies that

genuine free will in the spirit of man does not exist in the human agent by definition of terms. If the Spirit directly and immediately enables a person to do what he could not choose to do through his own natural, unaided powers or could not actuate through his own natural powers, then the Spirit supersedes those natural, unaided powers and thus renders free will impossible. (Not even the apostles had this kind of power from the Spirit, for Peter with all his miraculous power still sinned—Galatians 2:11ff.—Editor) Such an act on the part of the Spirit within the human spirit would also of necessity be by definition miraculous: for it involves an operation *beyond* the natural, unaided powers of the human agent acting in his natural environment. Under this kind of an economy, any failure to carry out a good act that is required by God, but beyond the natural powers of the human agent to choose or to actuate, would in turn be the fault of the Spirit in failing to provide the needed power to accomplish the act. Bob may contend that the Spirit is only helping the baptized believer to understand the word and to obey it. But the very nature of the contact he describes involves help that supersedes the natural, unaided powers of reason. When God exerts even a minuscule fraction of direct, immediate power on the will of a man to produce a moral choice that he could not otherwise make, then that man cannot be genuinely acting as a free moral agent. Some measure of supernatural compulsion is involved.

*Second*, his position expressly states that the baptism of the Spirit and the subsequent influence of the Spirit “in the heart” of the baptized believer is non-miraculous. But by implication by the definition of terms, even as he has used them, it is miraculous. He cannot have the Spirit exerting power without means upon the naked spirit of man and it not be miraculous. A direct superintendence on the will of man would demand it. Redefining the miraculous may be one approach in trying to solve his troubles relative to Holy Spirit baptism, but a toy wagon does not become an airplane simply because a child pretends it is so.

#### THE PROMISE OF THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Berard tries to skirt the implied obligatory aspect of Holy Spirit baptism demanded by his view by noting that it is a promise to be received when one obeys the command for water baptism. He states:

There is still one baptism according to Ephesians 4:5, but that one baptism involves two administrators (man and Christ), two elements (water and Spirit) and occurs when men obey the command and receive God's

promise.

This does not avail his case, as I have shown from his own use of Colossians 2:12 and John 3:5. His position implies that one must believe that he receives Spirit baptism while he is in the water or he cannot be saved! Attempting to make a distinction between the command of water baptism and the promise of Spirit baptism, after having stressed the absolute necessity of the latter to salvation, is incongruous. The attempt to do so evidences Bob's difficulty in squaring what he believes to be a requirement for man's salvation with not only a lack of conclusive evidence for it but an explicit scriptural depiction of it that suggests, by its very nature, otherwise. The very fact that Spirit baptism is always spoken of as a promise, and not a command, shows that it was not intended as a prerequisite to salvation.

***“...it is certain from the Lord's own statements...that without the need for the reception of that miraculous power there would have been no need for Holy Spirit Baptism.”***

The promise contemplated only and ultimately the apostles (Luke 24:44-50; Acts 1:4-8). They were so overwhelmed by the Spirit in their spirits that they were “**endued**,” or better, “**clothed upon**” with “**power from on high**” (Luke 24:49) so that they received the needed—miraculous—credentials by which they could serve as the personal eyewitnesses to and ambassadors of the King of kings and the Lord of lords (Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:20; 12:12; Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:2-4). *The power was the effect that the promise was to produce in the recipients of the baptism in the Spirit.* Yes, he is right when he points out that the apostles manifested miraculous power while Christ was with them *on earth*. But he fails to note that the baptism of the Spirit provided the essential power needed for them to function as apostles while Christ *reigned in heaven!* The father sent the Spirit by the personal authority of Christ for the specific purpose of revealing and confirming his blood-ratified covenant (John 14:26; 16:8ff.). Berard resorts to an old Pentecostal dodge to try to get around the miraculous connection between Spirit baptism and its apostolic use and the implicit, necessary ability to perform miracles that attended it. One would think, from reading his article, that the power demonstrated by the apostles was simply an afterthought in their baptism. As **J. W. McGarvey** notes: The effect (of the baptism in the Spirit, HDD) was to

depend upon the coming or pouring; for Jesus explains the promise, 'You shall be baptized in the Spirit,' by saying, 'You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you' (*Commentary On Acts*, p.29).

The essential characteristic of the baptism was the power it effected. Bob may wish to avoid that problem, but it is certain from the Lord's own statements on the matter that without the need for the reception of that miraculous power, there would have been no need for Holy Spirit baptism.

**BERARD'S PROBLEM WITH ACTS 1**

In his comments on Acts 1 Berard admits that the Lord was speaking to the apostles (p. 4), but he contends, "but He (Christ, HDD) was not speaking only about their reception of the Spirit as a means of empowering them to do miracles." He contends that Acts 1, among other passages, does not show that "the Holy Spirit and the miraculous power, must always go together when we are speaking of the baptism of the Holy Spirit." But this comment flies in the very face of the Lord's explicit statement in Acts 1:8 and its parallel passage in Luke 24:49. When the power would be given, the promise would be fulfilled. That promise was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is simply no way to get away from that. The baptism was the promise, and its effect was the power. There is nothing in Luke 24 and Acts 1, the two most extensive passages describing the nature of Holy Spirit baptism and pinpointing its application, to suggest even remotely a non-miraculous aspect.

As noted earlier, Bob is in desperate need of finding a passage that is unequivocally dealing with the baptism of the Spirit in such a way that it demonstrates a universally available, non-miraculous baptism of the Holy Spirit. Each passage that expressly deals with the subject of Spirit baptism either does not establish the needed points (Matthew 3) or it ties the baptism directly to a particular application and a miraculous fulfillment (Luke 24; Acts 1; 2).

**CHART ON MATTHEW 3:10-12**

Bob submits a chart that supposedly proves that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all who are in a "saved state." The chart is as follows:

<b>THE SAVED</b>	<b>THE LOST</b>	<b>THE RESULT</b>
verse 10 Trees with good fruit	Trees without good fruit	Cast into the <b>FIRE</b>
verse 11 Baptism with Holy Spirit	Not baptized with Holy Spirit	Baptized with <b>FIRE</b>
verse 12 Wheat	Chaff	Gathered into <i>garner</i> /burned up with <b>FIRE</b>

He maintains that in as much as the lost in verses 10 and 12 are to be cast into fire, and as verse 11 talks about some being "baptized with fire," then it must be the case that each of the verses, including verse 11, describe also those who are saved. Verse 11 then shows that baptism with the Spirit applies to all the saved. Therefore, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all baptized believers and is not limited to the miraculous.

The chart does not address Bob's problem trying to harmonize Matthew 3 with John 3:1-12 the case of those baptized under John's baptism already discussed. But even more than that, the chart is fundamentally flawed. In verse 12 the wheat are to be gathered into the garner just as the trees that bear good fruit will not, by implication of the text, be cast into the fire. When are these things to happen, brethren? According to the Bible, the gathering depicted in verse 12, being contrasted with the casting of chaff into the fire, occurs at the end of time during the Second Coming of Christ (Matthew 13:30, 37-43). The same is true relative to the trees bearing good fruit. Are we then to conclude that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to be received at the end of time when the righteous are "gathered" into the heavenly "garner"? What proves too much proves nothing.

**AN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN**

I am deeply concerned over the current direction that is being taken by some on the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit. Bob Berard's article is a case in point. I call upon him and those who agree with him to rethink their position carefully. They are rapidly drifting away from the distinctive doctrine of the New Testament on the subject. Let us lovingly but firmly call them back to the sure and safe moorings of Holy Writ. Belief in a present day, non-miraculous baptism of the Spirit has no authority in the book of God, by which the Spirit actually effects—in the primary sense—moral change.

—117 Owens Ave.  
Rutherford, Tennessee 38369



# BAPTISM WITH HOLY SPIRIT AND BAPTISM INTO CHRIST ARE THEY THE SAME OR DIFFERENT?

Bob Berard

Many advocate that baptism with the Holy Spirit is a baptism different from the baptism of Acts 2:38, the baptism that puts one into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27). They believe (as I once did) that Holy Spirit baptism always involves the miraculous and they know that the baptism of Acts 2:38 reports the one baptism mentioned in Ephesians 4:5. Apparently in fear of supporting the possibility of miracles after the first century, some of us have gone too far by rejecting the term "baptism of the Holy Spirit" as applicable to all who obey the gospel. It is true that miracles ended with the first century, and completion of the New Testament, but it is also true that baptism in the Holy Spirit is not in every case associated with the miraculous as will be shown below.

Those trying to prove that Holy Spirit baptism is distinct from the baptism of the Great Commission cite several points supposed to make this distinction. Consider some of these points and the Bible evidence showing that such distinction is not warranted.

1) **DIFFERENT ELEMENT**—Some reason that different elements (water and Spirit) demand different baptisms, but this is not true. As there are *two elements* in *one* living human being, that is, body and spirit, there are *two elements* in the *one baptism* of Ephesians 4:5, that is, water and Spirit (John 3:5).

It is obvious that water and the Spirit are not the same element, but that does not necessitate two baptisms. Both water and the Spirit are elements of the one baptism which men must have to put them into Christ's spiritual body adding them to the saved found only in the Lord's church (Galatians 3:26-27; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 4:5). Proof of this point is found in John 3:5 where Jesus stated that birth of the water and the Spirit was necessary to enter the kingdom (body of Christ, church of Christ). If "water" in the passage is the water of baptism, why is "Spirit" of the passage not the Spirit? Those who argue that baptism with or by the Spirit is always miraculous change the word "Spirit"

in John 3:5 to "word" and do so without warrant. Of course one's obedient response to God always involves understanding the Spirit's word (the Bible, the truth—I Peter 1:22-23) and doing what the Bible says, but the element "water" and the element "Spirit" are both taught by the Spirit's word in John 3:5 as essential to entering the kingdom of God. When one is under the water of his baptism for remission of his sins, he there receives an operation or working of God whereby he is "**raised with**" Christ (Colossians 2:11-13). Hear Paul in verse 12, "**buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God.**" Christ shed his blood in his death and it is in the likeness of Christ's death that one is cleansed by that blood, puts sin to death, and has Christ's Spirit enter his heart giving spiritual life (Romans 6:3-7; 8:9-13). All Christians are those which were baptized into the one body by one Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). That baptism involved the elements of water and the Spirit.

The contrast that John the baptizer made in Matthew 3:10-12 and parallel passages is not between the water baptism into Christ and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but between the water baptism of John and the water baptism into Christ, the latter of the two involving also the element of the Holy Spirit. When John said, "**I indeed baptize you with water**" and "**...He (Jesus) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire**" he was not contrasting the baptism taught in Acts 2:38 with baptism of or with the Holy Spirit; rather, he was contrasting the baptism he was then administering with the baptism of Acts 2:38; John 3:5; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5). John's baptism did not involve the Holy Spirit entering the heart of the one baptized even though it was a baptism for remission of sins (Mark 1:4; John 7:37-39). The one baptism (non-miraculous) of Ephesians 4:5 is first reported as being administered in Acts 2:41 and it involved both the life-giving Holy Spirit (v. 38) and water (Acts 8:35-38).

The Spirit was given while one was/is in the waters of his baptism into Christ. The biblical term “baptism” describes an immersion or an overwhelming in some element as seen from the term’s use in phrases such as “baptism of suffering” or “baptism...in the cloud and in the sea;....” One upon whom the Spirit is abundantly poured (Titus 3:5-6 as noted above) and who thereby is equipped to be “strengthened with might through” the “Spirit in the inner man” (Eph. 3:16) fits the description of one baptized in the Spirit. Unlike the pouring of water on the head which some wrongly substitute for immersion, the Spirit is not a physical element and cannot therefore be presumed to run off one’s head and onto the ground. When the Spirit is figuratively poured **out** by Christ into the heart of the one immersed in the waters of his baptism, he become the subject of the Spirit’s powerful (but non-miraculous) influence as the baptized person (of his own free will) studies and does his best to apply the Spirit’s Word to his life (Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 3:14-20).

2. **DIFFERENT ADMINISTRATOR**—A man (one administrator) lowers someone into the waters of baptism and Jesus (another administrator) baptizes a person under the water with the Holy Spirit both are facts, but the human administrator does not preclude a divine administrator also operating. Will anyone dare deny the operation of God in Colossians 2:12? As there are two elements, but only one baptism as shown above; there are two administrators, but only one baptism. Men administer baptism into Christ; but as this is done, Jesus administers baptism with the Holy Spirit. The first is visible, the second invisible, but both are real elements in the same baptism, that identified in Ephesians 4:5. Men administer baptism into Christ as Philip did with the Ethiopian, but in that baptism Christ also administered baptism of the Holy Spirit as John promised (Matthew 3:10-12; Mark 1:7-8; Luke 3:16-17; John 1:33). Baptism with the Holy Spirit is not mentioned in that conversion account, but neither is the gift of the Holy Spirit or remission of sins. To argue that something does not happen because the Bible does not mention it is, by itself, less than conclusive. All must go to various accounts of conversion to get the details of what happens in every case of conversion. We know from John’s promise and other teaching noted in this paper, that baptism with the Spirit occurred/occurs in every instance when one is baptized into Christ. When one [sic] has been lowered into the water by a man, Christ baptizes that same man with his Holy Spirit as he promised to do (John 14:23; Acts 2:38; 5:32; Romans 8:9;

John 3:5; Eph. 2:22; Titus 3:5-6; I Corinthians 12:13). Without the Spirit, one is lost; with the Spirit, one is saved (Romans 8:9). Having the Spirit in this indwelling and saving sense is called the “**gift of the Holy Spirit,**” but also referred to as “**living water**” and as baptism “**with the Holy Spirit.**”

3. **DIFFERENT PURPOSE**—It is alleged that baptism with the Holy Spirit is identical with miraculous power or always connected with miraculous power, and therefore it must be a baptism different from the one commanded for all men in the Great Commission. This is the basic false assumption that accounts for people trying to make the case that the element of water and the element of the Spirit cannot be involved in the same baptism. Often Joel’s prophecy cited by Peter in Acts 2 is claimed as proof that baptism of the Holy Spirit is always accompanied by the miraculous. Admittedly, the passage includes information about miracles and those who would perform them, but more important than miracles (the temporary means of getting the Gospel to men and confirming it as being from God) is Joel’s message of salvation which included the life-giving Spirit (what Jesus called “**living water**” at times—John 4:10-14; 7:37-39) that would be received by every believer who was baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38). See Luke 10:20 to show the greater emphasis on salvation relevant to miraculous powers. Incidentally, those sent out by Christ on what is called the limited commission had some miraculous powers, but none had what is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit or the gift of the Holy Spirit prior to Christ’s death. We err in focusing on the miraculous as the main point of Joel’s prophecy since such powers were in evidence before the glorification of our Lord, but only after the crucifixion and resurrection was the indwelling Spirit, gift of the Holy Spirit, or baptism of the Holy Spirit available (John 7:37-39).

Titus 3:5-6 says that salvation is by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the *Holy Spirit* “whom He *poured* out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ...” The word translated “**poured**” (NKJV) or “**shed**” (KJV) is from the same Greek word translated as “pour” (NKJV) in Acts 2:17 and Acts 2:17 is Peter’s quoting from Joel chapter 2 about the *pouring out of the Holy Spirit*. The plain language of Titus 3:5-6 refers to every baptized believer (past and present), thus the pouring out of the Spirit that Joel and Peter spoke about has a non-miraculous import. Indeed this is the most important matter at hand in the passage (Luke 10:20). Will someone claim that Joel had no reference

to the pouring out of the Spirit in Titus 3:5-6 or claim that it is of lesser importance than the miracles?

4. **DIFFERENT PREREQUISITES**—Some say there are no additional prerequisites for baptism with *the* Holy Spirit than those set out for baptism into Christ, and this is true, but the fact does nothing to disprove that such baptism may also be called the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Passages cited above, like John 3:5 and First Corinthians 12:13, show that the baptism for salvation involves both elements, water and Spirit. When the Pentecost crowd of Acts 2 received water baptism for remission of sins, they also received the gift of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit Himself—Romans 8:9). When men met the prerequisites of baptism into Christ they were ready to be immersed in water and in that immersion in water they would receive all the promised benefits including the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). This Holy Spirit reception may be called “**the gift of the Holy Spirit**” or “**the baptism with the Holy Spirit.**”

5. **COMMAND-PROMISE**—Some claim a need to think of baptism with the Holy Spirit as different from the baptism of Acts 2:38 because baptism in water is commanded, but Holy Spirit baptism was a promise. Again John 3:5, First Corinthians 12:13, and Titus 3:5-6 show that one’s obedience to the **command** to be baptized is the one way by which he can receive the **promise** of God’s life-giving Spirit. The **command** to be baptized for the remission of one’s sins involves the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a **promised** result. There is still one baptism according to Ephesians 4:5, but that one baptism involves two administrators (man and Christ), two elements (water and Spirit) and occurs when men obey the command and receive God’s promise.

6. **THERE IS NO SCRIPTURAL CONNECTION** between baptism into Christ and baptism with the Holy Spirit some allege; however, John 3:5, First Corinthians 12:13 and Titus 3:5-6 show a connection.

It is true as some note that Jesus was speaking to the apostles in Acts 1, but he was not speaking only about their reception of the Spirit as a means of empowering them to do miracles. In Acts 1:4-5 the Lord said they were to wait in Jerusalem to receive the “Promise of the Father **‘which,’** he said, **‘you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit...’**” In verse 8 of the same chapter, Jesus said, **“But you shall receive power when (KJV says “after that”) the Holy Spirit has come upon you;...”** The miraculous power was received by means of the Holy Spirit, but

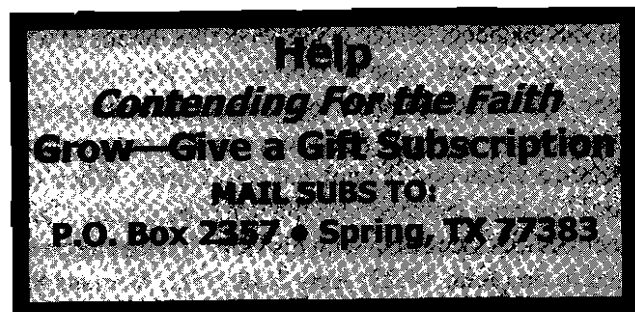
the Holy Spirit himself (or baptism with the Holy Spirit) was received by many others who did not receive a miraculous measure of power. Many of us have only **assumed** that the two, that is, the Holy Spirit and the miraculous power, must always go together when we are speaking of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

There is a connection between the baptism into Christ and Holy Spirit baptism. Look carefully at Matthew 3:10-12 and the first mention of the term “baptize with the Holy Spirit.” These three verses talk about two and only two groups of people. In verse 10 we can see by implication that there is one group who are good fruit-bearing trees and a second group described as bad fruit-bearing trees which are to be “thrown into the fire.” In verse 12 there is one group that is called “wheat” and a second group called “chaff” that “**He will burn up**” “**with unquenchable fire.**” In between these two verses, verse 11, there is one group referred to as those whom “**He will baptize**” “**with the Holy Spirit and fire.**” Each verse sets out those in John’s audience as those who would receive fire or something in contrast to that fire. If the “**fire**” in verse 10 and 12 is the fire of torment and/or hell how can we conclude that the “**fire**” in verse 11 is something other than that fire? And, if the fire of torment/hell is contrast with a saved state in verses 10 and 12, how can we conclude that that which is contrast[ed] (sic) with fire in verse 11 is something other than a saved state?

Examine the chart of Matthew 3:10-12— (See chart on page 13).

John was not talking about miracles in this context and in verses 10 and 12 he was clearly talking about the saved and the lost with emphasis on the destiny of the lost. If context is important, and it absolutely is, then how can we take “**baptism with the Holy Spirit**” in verse 11 to refer to the miraculous powers which only some in the church would have?

—P.O. Box 461  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia



# THOMAS B. WARREN AND HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

David P. Brown

The late **Thomas B. Warren** drew the charts under consideration (pages 18, 19) for **David Lipe** in his debate with **Billy Lewis** of the United Pentecostal Church. The debate was on Pentecostalism.\*

Numerous times **Mac Deaver** has declared that 30 years before he came to believe it (He says he came to believe the view in preparing for the Deaver-Fox debate in 1994. Bob Berard came to believe it some time in the spring of 1999), that brethren Warren and, his father, **Roy C. Deaver** believed that the Holy Spirit personally, directly, and immediately indwells and operates on the inward man of the Christian. In part it is alleged that the Holy Spirit is directly connected to or indwells the inward man of the Christian for the purpose of directly imparting divine strength to the Christian which strength is above and beyond one's normal human strength. Furthermore it is alleged that this divine direct strength from the Holy Spirit to the Christian is for the purpose of enabling the Christian to overcome temptation. Moreover, according to Mac Deaver, Warren and Roy Deaver for 30 years before Mac Deaver and Berard believed it, taught that the personally indwelling Spirit directly and immediately infuses divine wisdom into the Christian per their view of the meaning and directions of James 1:5. If such was the case with brethren Warren and Roy Deaver may we not rightfully conclude that these two brethren had direct divine help in the formation of their beliefs whatever they may have been?

As set out in **Bob Berard's** article in this issue of *CFTF* we are informed that Holy Spirit baptism happens to the person being scripturally baptized while he/she is buried in the watery grave of baptism. However, consider Warren's chart M-20. In this chart Warren affirms that, "THE MEANS OF OBTAINING MIRACULOUS GIFTS HAS CEASED." As the chart simply and clearly reveals—the means of obtaining miraculous gifts was the Holy Spirit through Holy Spirit baptism. Warren then concludes with, "\*SINCE THERE IS NO HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM TODAY (ONLY ONE BAPTISM IN WATER) AND NO

APOSTLES TODAY THEN MIRACULOUS GIFTS HAVE CEASED." And, Warren's conclusion is true.

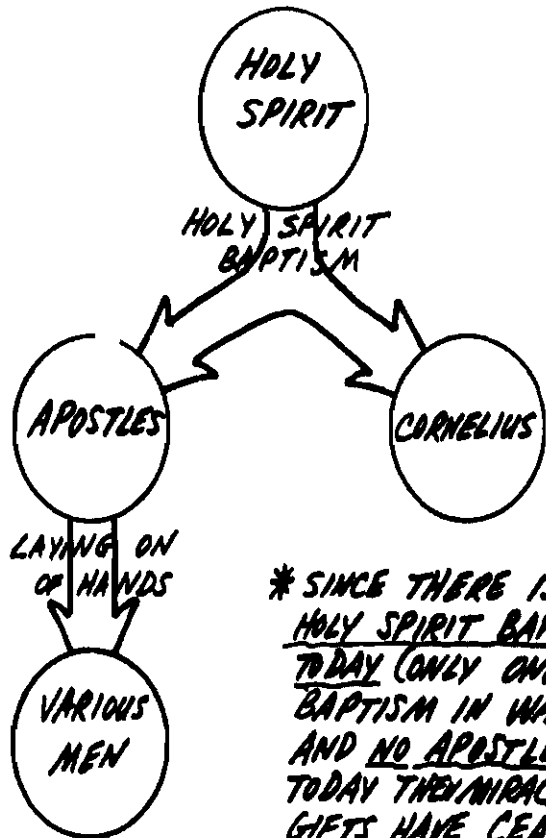
On chart M-22 entitled "BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" Warren explains point by point what he thinks the baptism of the Holy Spirit is. Moreover, he contrasts Holy Spirit baptism with water baptism. Notice that he says in point 5 that Holy Spirit baptism is "MIRACULOUS IN NATURE" and under point 6 it had "CEASED BY A. D. 62 (EPH. 4:5)." On chart M-24 titled, "WHAT IS THE ONE BAPTISM?" in the second column headed, "\* WATER BAPTISM" under point 6 Warren says that water baptism was to "CONTINUE UNTIL END OF WORLD (MATT. 28:20)."

In his article in this issue of *CFTF* Berard affirms and argues for a Holy Spirit baptism that has nothing to do with the miraculous. That it is for everyone who is baptized for the remission of sins. Holy Spirit baptism is not, as Warren believed, for the apostles and the household of Cornelius only. See chart M-22, point 3.

Berard tells us that we are wrong to limit Holy Spirit baptism to the way Warren's four charts explain it. Furthermore, Berard tells us that the Lord administers Holy Spirit baptism while the subject is buried in the watery grave of baptism. Also, he teaches that Christ will administer Holy Spirit baptism as long as man is to administer water baptism.

Berard has a difficult time not seeing that he is advocating two baptisms when he says that there is only one baptism, but two administrators and two elements. Warren did not have that problem and charts M-23 and M-24 are for the purpose of showing that water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism are two separate baptisms and not one. Chart M-24 is specifically aimed at showing the difference in Holy Spirit and water baptism and that Holy Spirit baptism ceased almost two thousand years ago, but water baptism will "CONTINUE UNTIL END OF WORLD (MATT. 28:20)." Take note of point 6 under each column on chart M-24. Also notice that under point 5 of column 1

**THE MEANS OF OBTAINING MIRACULOUS GIFTS HAS CEASED** (M-20)



\* SINCE THERE IS NO HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM TODAY (ONLY ONE BAPTISM IN WATER) AND NO APOSTLES TODAY THEN MIRACULOUS GIFTS HAVE CEASED.

Warren says Holy Spirit baptism is "NOT FOR ALL PEOPLE (ACTS 1:26; 2:1-4; 10:44)." Bob says it is. You will notice that Warren never mentions John 3:5 or Acts 2:38 as having a thing to do with Holy Spirit baptism. To the contrary, on chart M-23, he clearly differentiates between Holy Spirit and water baptism. That is not the case in Berard's studies of Holy Spirit and water baptism.

Remember Roy C. Deaver, Mac Deaver, Robert F. "Bob" Berard, et al. and, if Mac is correct, Thomas B. Warren believe(d) in the personal indwelling and direct work of the Spirit on the inward man of the Christian. They believe(d) that the direct work of the Spirit on the heart of the Christian was to impart directly and immediately divine strength. And, per their view of the meaning of James 1:5, the Spirit also supplied direct divine wisdom. That being the case, and brethren Warren and Roy Deaver having learned these truths 30 years prior to Mac Deaver and Berard, why did not

[MEANS ARGUMENT]

**BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

1. PROPHESED AND PROMISED (M-22) (JOEL 2:28-32; MATT. 3:11; ACTS 1:4,5,8)
2. ADMINISTRATOR WAS CHRIST (MATT. 3:11; JOHN 1:33; ACTS 2:32,33)
3. RECIPIENTS WERE:
  - (1) APOSTLES (LK. 24:49; ACTS 1:4,5,8,26; 2:1-4)
  - (2) CORNELIUS (ACTS 10:44,45; 11:15)
4. PURPOSE WAS:
  - (1) TO INSPIRE AND QUALIFY APOSTLES AS AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST (JOHN 14:16,17,26; 15:26; 16:13; II COR. 5:20)
  - (2) TO PROVE THAT THE GENTILES WERE RECIPIENTS OF THE GOSPEL (ACTS 10:47-48; 11:1-3; 15:18; 15:7-11)
5. MIRACULOUS IN NATURE (ACTS 2:43; 3:1-7; 5:1-11,12,15,16; 10:46)
6. CEASED BY A.D. 62 (EPAH. 4:5)

brother Warren with all this direct divine strength and wisdom not determine from the scriptures that Holy Spirit Baptism is still being administered by the Lord to the person being baptized while said person is under the water? Did brother Warren not pray enough for direct input from God in understanding the scriptures on Holy Spirit baptism? Did he not have enough faith as per their view of the meaning of James 1:5, to receive wisdom (non-source information—Source information, according to Mac Deaver, is Bible information. Wisdom is non-source information) from God on these subjects? In view of what Berard has written regarding the baptism of the Spirit, would Mac or Roy Deaver or Bob Berard in debate with a Pentecostal use these four charts just as brother Warren has drawn them and as Lipe used them without any alteration whatsoever?

Of course, since the Lipe-Lewis debate was held in 1976, Mac Deaver and company might say that

brother Warren had changed his view of Holy Spirit baptism and at the time of his death he believed what Berard advocates in his article in this issue of CTFE. If that is the case, was not brother Warren obligated to report to the brotherhood that he had repudiated his views as set out on the four charts herein printed? Also, if he has changed, is not Roy C. Deaver obligated to let the brotherhood know that he has changed—if he has? Indeed, if the propositions that Mac has debated regarding the direct work of the Spirit on the inward

man of a Christian were believed by Warren and Roy C. Deaver 30 or more years ago, why did they not seek to propagate their view? Especially is this the case since Mac believes that those who believe the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian only through the word are at best weakening Christians and at worst killing them. There is not a person going to heaven who teaches a doctrine that spiritual kills Christians, yet for 30 years, according to Mac, brethren Warren and Roy C. Deaver never tried to deal with those who believe in the Holy Spirit indwelling the Christian only through the word

**HOW MANY BAPTISMS TODAY?** (M-23)

[MEANS ARGUMENT]

\* TWO BAPTISMS AT PENTECOST - AD. 33  
 1. APOSTLES RECEIVED BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (ACTS 1:4, 5:2-1-4)  
 2. PETER COMMANDED THE PEOPLE TO BE BAPTIZED (ACTS 2:37, 38)  
 \* TWO BAPTISMS AT CAESAREA - AD. 41  
 1. CORNELIUS AND HIS HOUSEHOLD RECEIVED THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (ACTS 10:44, 45; 11:15, 16)  
 2. PETER COMMANDED CORNELIUS AND HIS HOUSEHOLD TO BE BAPTIZED IN WATER (ACTS 10:47, 48)  
 \* ONE BAPTISM AT EPHESUS - AD. 62 (EPH. 4:3-6)  
 1. ONE MIGHT JUST AS WELL AFFIRM THAT THERE ARE TWO LORDS AS TO AFFIRM THAT THERE ARE TWO BAPTISMS TODAY.  
 2. ALTHOUGH THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF MANY BAPTISMS, IN A.D. 62 THERE WAS BUT ONE BAPTISM.

**WHAT IS THE ONE BAPTISM?** (M-24)

[MEANS ARGUMENT]

\* HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM \* WATER BAPTISM

1. A PROMISE (LK 24:49; ACTS 1:4, 5)  
 2. ADMINISTERED BY CHRIST (MATT. 3:11) MEN (MATT. 28:18-20) FOR REMISSION OF SINS (ACTS 2:38; MK. 16:7)  
 4. NOT INTO THE NAME OF THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT  
 5. NOT FOR ALL PEOPLE (ACTS 1:26; 2:1-4; 10:44)  
 6. CEASED BY A.D. 62 (EPH. 4:5)

1. A COMMAND (ACTS 10:47, 48)  
 2. ADMINISTERED BY MEN (MATT. 28:18-20) FOR REMISSION OF SINS (ACTS 2:38; MK. 16:7)  
 4. INTO THE NAME OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT  
 5. FOR ALL MEN (MATT. 28:18-20)  
 6. CONTINUE UNTIL END OF WORLD (MATT. 28:20)



as they dealt with error on marriage, divorce, and re-marriage. But if believing and teaching that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian only through the word of God kills Christians, then it is on the same level as the "Bales' Doctrine" on MDR. Thus, brethren Warren and Roy C. Deaver should have given it the same attention as they did the "Bales' Doctrine" on MDR or atheism or "anti-ism." Since history is clear that they did not do so, how can they not be guilty of the sin of omission?

Mac also declares he would fellowship those who believe the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian only through the word of God. However, being that such a belief kills Christians, how can he desire to fellowship them while they believe their Christian killing doctrine? Where is there Bible authority to fellowship brethren who teach a doctrine that, when it is believed, kills Christians? May Christians fellowship brethren who teach a doctrine that allows and encour-

ages people to live in adultery? In other words, may Christians fellowship brethren who teach a doctrine that damns souls to hell? If the "Bales' Doctrine" (and like errors on MDR) does not spiritually kill people, what does it do to them? If Mac has not made the Spirit indwelling the Christian only through the word of God synonymous with the "Bales' Doctrine" on MDR in killing power, what would he have to teach to do so? Therefore, why does he want to fellowship those who believe the Spirit indwells the Christian only through the word in the first place?

#### ENDNOTE

\*Billy Lewis and David Lipe, *The Lipe-Lewis Debate on Pentecostalism* (Winona, MS, 1984), no Page number.

—25403 Lancewood Dr.  
Spring, Texas 77373

SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Home of *SPRING BIBLE INSTITUTE*  
**1327 Spring Cypress Rd. Mail: PO Box 39 Spring, TX 77383-0039**  
Phone (281) 353-2707 Fax (281) 288-3876 Email [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)

July 3, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

The following are comments on matters pertaining to problems existing between the Spring congregation and brother Bob Berard.

It has been reported to us that brother Berard allows some people to believe that the dispute between him and the Spring Church of Christ emanated from a disagreement over the manner and mode of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, i.e., the literal, personal/direct, or representative indwelling (through the word of God) in the child of God. This is not the case. Such a representation is false and brother Berard knows it to be false.

For many years brethren have amicably disagreed over the manner and mode of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit while agreeing that the Holy Spirit operates only through the word of God in conviction, conversion, and sanctification. The Deaver Doctrine, however, teaches that God has provided the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit to work directly on the inward man or spirit of the Christian, i.e., Divine Spirit on human spirit. (This doctrine has been termed the Deaver Doctrine because it is identified

with brethren Roy and Mac Deaver, Mac Deaver being its chief propagator.) There is thereby accomplished a divine, direct, and immediate strengthening of the inward man that, the doctrine alleges, the word of God cannot and was never intended to do. And, certainly this present Deaver Doctrine has nothing to do with miracles that ended in the first century A. D. or the providential work of God through his natural laws on behalf of Christians, as faithful children of God have long believed and taught.

Brother Berard upholds and defends this Deaver Doctrine. Furthermore, brother Berard and the Deavers teach that this direct work of the Holy Spirit imparts wisdom directly from God to the inward man of the Christian. This is what the Deaver Doctrine teaches regarding the meaning of James 1:5 as to how a Christian receives wisdom from God. One might observe that coming from an infallible, omniscient God such wisdom of necessity must be infallible because an infallible God cannot dispense fallible "wisdom." Would that elders everywhere had such direct help from God. It would solve a great many problems with which elders must deal as they guide the flock of God committed to their care. Indeed, it would have certainly helped the Spring elders in dealing with brother Berard.

Although we disagree with brother Berard on his

"direct operation of the Holy Spirit" doctrine, that is not the totality of our disagreements. Approximately three months before the 1998 Annual Denton Lectureship, the elders were informed that brother Berard was leaning toward, but had not yet espoused, the Deaver Doctrine. The elders asked that he not speak publicly on this matter, and he so agreed (subsequently he has both disputed and confirmed this agreement). During the 1998 ADL, brother Berard took umbrage at comments made by brother Curtis Cates respecting the Deaver Doctrine. Brother Berard responded by authoring an anonymous fourteen-point letter and addressing that letter to brother Dub McClish with instructions to distribute it to a number of individuals listed in the letter that brother Berard knew to be opposed to the Deaver Doctrine. Nevertheless, he included his own name in the list of those opposed to the Deaver Doctrine implying that he likewise opposed the doctrine.

Brethren Berard and Mac Deaver defended and continue to defend Berard's deception at the 1998 ADL as righteous, approved of God, and, since Berard and the Deavers believe that the Holy Spirit imparts wisdom directly to the Christian, an act of "wisdom." However, in a November 25, 1998 letter brother Berard addressed to the other men to whom he directed his anonymous material at the 1998 ADL he wrote, "You have my apology for any offense that was caused by my unwise manner (bold ours, KDC, BRR) of expressing my thoughts." Then, in the January/March 1999 *Biblical Notes Quarterly*, Volume III, Number 1, p. 1, column 1, brother Mac Deaver attempted to defend brother Berard when he wrote, "We appreciate the courage that it took to publicly point out the logical mistakes that some ... are making in holding up 'the Deavers' as false teachers."

We may conclude from the Deaver Doctrine that the Holy Spirit must have directly worked to supply wisdom directly to brethren Berard and Mac Deaver. Yet, brother Berard apologized to the men who received his material at the 1998 ADL saying such was done in an "unwise manner." One or more conclusions which must be drawn from all this are: (1) in view of brother Berard's apology, the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with the "unwise manner" in which brother Berard distributed his material at the 1998 ADL; or (2) brother Berard did not realize his manner of disseminating his information at the 1998 ADL was not an "unwise manner", but a wise approach directly given to him by the Holy Spirit; or (3) the Holy Spirit revealed directly (and perhaps only) to brother Mac Deaver that brother Berard's "unwise manner" of giving out his material at the 1998 ADL was done in a courageous and "wise" (in spite of brother Berard's statement to the contrary) manner; or (4) putting together what Mac Deaver and Bob Berard wrote, brother Berard's conduct in the disseminating of his views at the 1998 ADL was an unwise, yet plausible, act of courage; or (5) brethren Berard and Mac Deaver are confused regarding what is wise and unwise as well as the source of either.

Might one ask, since brother Berard's hindsight of

his deceptive act at the 1998 ADL was that it had been done in an "unwise manner", where was the Holy Spirit's direct wisdom at the time brother Berard originally decided to distribute his material at the 1998 ADL? Did the Holy Spirit give brother Berard direct wisdom at the 1998 ADL or did the Holy Spirit provide him with direct wisdom when he wrote his letter of apology on November 25, 1998? The truth is this: in all that the brethren Deavers and company have argued in debates, sermons, articles, and private conversations for a direct leading, strengthening, and imparting of wisdom from a direct and personally indwelling Holy Spirit, they end up committing the same mistakes in the conduct of their affairs as do the rest of us. It is a pity that their doctrine does not "live" as well as it "preaches."

Brother Berard knew full well that his breach of his agreement with the elders would result in the termination of his employment with the Spring congregation. Shortly after the 1998 ADL, he admitted his deception at Denton to Spring's elders whereupon we terminated his employment with the Spring congregation. We allowed him ample time to make other employment arrangements meanwhile providing him an office, a place to live and financial support. However, during this time, while he continued to declare that he did not believe the Deaver Doctrine, he steadfastly and routinely defended the Deaver position and opposed those who opposed the Deaver Doctrine. Brother Berard persisted in defending the Deavers and their doctrine during the 1999 *Spring Bible Institute Lectures*. Then, sometime in May of 1999 (this is the first time we heard of his conversion), brother Berard revealed that

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL of PREACHING

- Two-year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966
- Applications now being accepted
- Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
 3960 Forest Hill Lane Road  
 Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
 School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
 Fax (901) 751-8088

he had fully converted to and embraced the Deaver Doctrine.

His actions at the 1999 *SBI Lectures* caused us (the elders) to instruct him to vacate his office and move his mobile home off the church property. Even so, brother Berard continued to advocate the doctrine to the members at Spring. Even after leaving the Spring area, he continued to advocate the Deaver Doctrine via the mail to the membership at Spring. This ended only when many in the Spring congregation wrote a letter with their individual names signed to it making it clear that they did not desire to receive his material any longer. In view of this and other factors of like nature, Spring withdrew its fellowship from him in late 1999.

It is important to note that brother Berard has spread far and wide that the Spring elders and preachers will not meet with him to discuss this matter. This is not true at all. We have lost count as to the number of times from August of 1998 until February of 1999 that we met with him. What brother Berard really means when he says we will not meet with him is that we will not continue to meet with him until he persuades us he is correct in his conduct and doctrine. Seeing that such meetings would be only

a rehashing of what has already been said, we do not see the need of meeting with him unless he desires to repent of his sins.

We have heard it has been said that the withdrawal of fellowship from brother Berard by the Spring congregation was not scriptural since it took place after he left the Spring church. Do such detractors mean that a congregation of God's people can only withdraw fellowship from those who comprise its membership? If that is the case, a person could commit sin, remove his membership, and, according to this false doctrine, prohibit the church from practicing corrective discipline on the erring and "marking" the unrepentant child of God. We do not believe that for a moment. Such comments, if true, are a sad attempt to discredit the disciplinary action of the Spring congregation's withdrawal of fellowship from brother Berard and reveal much about the person who holds such a false view on church discipline.

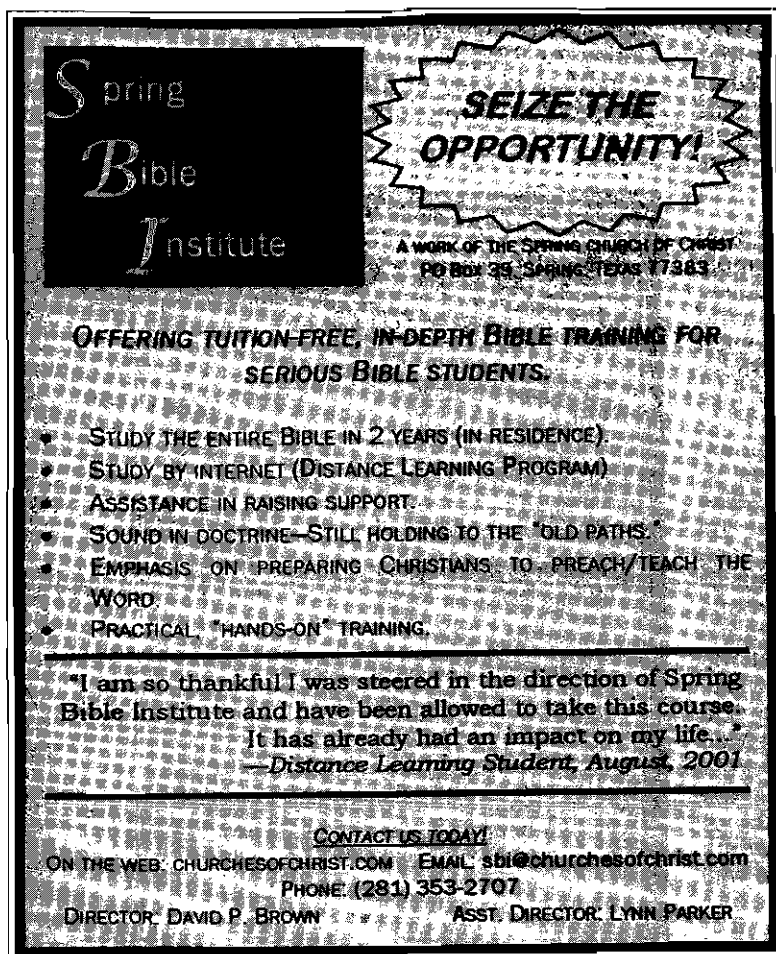
In recent months the Deavers, brother Berard, et al., have revealed they now believe the words "born of the Spirit" of John 3:5 mean that one is baptized in the Holy Spirit (non-miraculous) while he is in the waters of baptism. Furthermore, they believe and teach that such a baptism is necessary for the purifying of the essence of the human spirit, or the inward man, so that following baptism the Holy Spirit may directly and personally indwell the saved human spirit. This direct action of God is referred to, they say, in Colossians 2:12 as well as John 3:5. We do not believe this doctrine to be true, but it is more evidence that the Deaver Doctrine is still in a state of evolution.

Much more could be written, but this is sufficient information to set out the problems between the Spring congregation and brother Bob Berard. If you have any other questions regarding this matter please feel free to contact us. In hopes that this has been helpful to you, we, the Spring elders, remain

Faithfully yours,

/s/ Kenneth D. Cohn  
Elder

/s/ Buddy R. Roth  
Elder



**Spring Bible Institute**

**SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY!**

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO BOX 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

**OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.**

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (IN RESIDENCE)
- STUDY BY INTERNET (DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM)
- ASSISTANCE IN RAISING SUPPORT
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD
- PRACTICAL "HANDS-ON" TRAINING

"I am so thankful I was steered in the direction of Spring Bible Institute and have been allowed to take this course. It has already had an impact on my life..."  
—Distance Learning Student, August, 2001

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

ON THE WEB: CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM    EMAIL: sbi@churchesofchrist.com  
PHONE: (281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN    ASST. DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

# 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. Sun. 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, Sun. 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-

**Cambridge-South Cambridge Church of Christ**, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire-Ramsey Church of Christ**, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## -Florida-

**Pensacola-Bellview Church of Christ**, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## -Georgia-

**Cartersville-Church of Christ**, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. Tel. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## -Indiana-

**Evansville-West Side Church of Christ**, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 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. www.garden-city-coc.org Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sun. 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, 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.

## -Oklahoma-

**Porum-Church of Christ**, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, Evangelist, email: lawson@starnetok.net.

## -Tennessee-

**Crossville-Lantana Church of Christ**, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 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.

**Rockwood-Post Oak Church of Christ**, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## -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 Bob Patterson, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station-Church of Christ**, Sun. 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. Sun. 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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, 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: portlandcoco@juno.com.

**Richwood-1600 Brazosport**, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.

**Roanoke-Church of Christ**, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262, Tel. (817) 491-2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm.

**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.

# Classifieds...

**EVANGELIST WANTED** for a small congregation of 200 + Christians. The candidate should be in his late 30's to early 50's, must be married with children and must have solid experience. He must be biblically and fundamentally sound in the scriptures and must also be evangelistic minded with a strong desire for church growth. The position would be available on January 1, 2003. Please send resume and an audio and/or video tape of a recent sermon to David Jester, Search Committee Chairman, 1011 Harriet Street, Carlisle, PA 17013.

**RUN YOUR AD HERE!** Classified Ads are only \$2.00 per line per month. For more information on placing ads in CFTF see page 2 or contact P.O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77383.

# 14th Annual 5th & Grape Street Lectureship

5th & Grape Street Church of Christ, 433 Grape Street, Abilene, Texas Phone (915) 673-0211

## Challenges Facing the Church in the 21st Century

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

- 7:00 P.M. *Keeping the World Out of the Church, and the Church Out of the World* — Tim Kiddell, Buda, TX  
8:15 P.M. *The Trend to Dissolve the Office of Deacons, and Overthrow the Eldership* — David Brown, Spring, TX

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

- 5:45 P.M. *The Role of Women in the Church — Do We Need to Change? (LADIES)* — Melame Spoeck, Giddings, TX  
7:00 P.M. *The Church of Christ — Are Some Trying to Turn It Into a Denomination* — Michael Light, Bangs, TX  
8:15 P.M. *Dealing With the Change Agent's Agenda* — Jodie Boren, Abilene, TX

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

- 9:30 A.M. *The Trend Toward Cultural and Emotionally Driven Worship* — Ricky Spoeck, Giddings, TX  
10:30 A.M. *Identifying and Exposing the New Hermeneutics* — Lester Kamp, Aurora, CO  
5:00 P.M. *Facing the Growing Pressure to Change the Worship Assembly* — Royce Williamson, Abilene, TX

Abilene has many excellent hotels and motels in town. A Quality Inn is conveniently located about three blocks from the building and had excellent rates with clean, comfortable rooms. For rates and reservations call (915) 676-0222.

There will be a pot-luck luncheon following our Sunday morning services and light refreshments between the lectures on Friday and Saturday. For other meals, Abilene has many fine restaurants from which to choose.

All lectures will be recorded on audio tapes. Order forms will be available during the lectureship. They will be priced at \$5.00 per set plus \$1.50 if mailed.

**Contending for the Faith**  
P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT #1863

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## THE ROMANS 7 CLAUSE

Brandon Renfroe

In the July 14, 1955 issue of the *Gospel Advocate*, page 600, in an article entitled "What the Gospel Advocate Has Meant To Me" the late N. B. Hardeman wrote:

In spite of its long existence, the Advocate must confess its inability to settle matters pertaining to elders. Neither has it been able to satisfy the brethren regarding marriage and divorce. Like the poor, they are always with us.

We might add, in response to the words of brother Hardeman, "The more things change, the more they stay the same." The words of Solomon also come to mind: "...there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Indeed, the words of Hardeman ring true today, especially concerning the matter of marriage, divorce, and remarriage (hereafter MDR), and the various teachings offered in attempt to provide a balm to the consciences of those who are either not aware or do not care what the Lord taught. It is indeed sad that many today, instead of wanting to know the truth, only wish to be placated and justified, so that they might continue in a lifestyle pleasing to them.

Though perhaps not surprising, it is nevertheless sad-tragic, even—to see our own brethren breathing doctrines concerning this matter that are wholly contradictory to the teachings of the New Testament. And though it is readily admitted that the subject of MDR is an emotionally charged battle ground, and plays upon our tender emotions, we are in no wise absolved of our heavenly commission to "prove all things" and to

"hold fast to that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21).

### THE ISSUE AT HAND

The issue at hand may be sufficiently encapsulated in one simple question: *Does a put-away fornicator ever have the scriptural right to contract another marriage?* Faithful brethren for years have answered this question in the negative. There are some today, though, who would unabashedly answer in the affirmative.

Our Lord, in whose person all authority and power rests (Matthew 28:18), clearly taught the one exception whereby one may remarry following divorce is fornication. "And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matthew 19:9). We see the only person given authority by Christ to scripturally remarry following divorce is the "innocent party." The question then begs to be answered: *Where is the authority for the put-away fornicator to ever contract another marriage?* An honest examination reveals that there is none. If no authority exists, we must not permit—even champion, as some are doing—what the Bible does not authorize.

### WHAT DOES ROMANS 7:1-3 TEACH?

There is a contingent today, however small, that

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher  
jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor  
Mclight@bwoodtx.com

**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

**Single Subscriptions:** One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00.  
**Club Rate:** Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. **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 \$11.00 per year per family address.  
**Foreign Rate:** One Year, \$30.

## 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 needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval. All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be 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. **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH** is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

## EDITORIAL...

# Attempts To Alter God's Laws On MDR

When Adam sinned he blamed Eve for his eating of the forbidden fruit. And, because God created Eve for him, by implication Adam blamed God for his sinful conduct (Genesis 3:12). Is it not interesting, then, when God confronted Adam regarding his and Eve's sin, that the Bible makes no mention of Adam even hinting at his own deliberate personal choice (his responsibility) in partaking of the forbidden fruit?

Throughout mankind's history Adam's conduct has routinely evidenced itself in countless episodes. Wrong is done or right left undone. Guilty people, then, attempt to "pass the buck" rather than admit their own guilt and face the consequences of their actions. Or, worse than the preceding, they attempt to change their standard of conduct in an effort to find sanction for their sinful actions. And, there are some who seek to have fellowship with one another though they know they believe differing and contradictory views on obligatory matters of faith—things one must or must not do in order to be saved and remain saved. In reality, and to one extent or the other, these are the fundamental reasons for all departures from the Bible.

## MAN'S EFFORTS TO ALTER GOD'S WILL ON MARRIAGE AND THE HOME

Marriage and the home as God would have them have fallen victim to man's lusts. While every facet of society in America (and the world) is polluted and perverted by people who have little or no respect for authority in general and biblical authority in particular, marriage and the home have suffered tremendously from man's attempts to alter God's will in this vital area. In the later half of the twentieth century, with the church of our Lord becoming worldlier, all sorts of false doctrines have flowed from the fermented minds of proud and foolish brethren in an attempt to justify their unrighteous acts regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage (hereafter as MDR). Thus, through false doctrines the church in many places embraces fornicators and adulterers. While, on the other hand, other church members teach doctrines that forbid scriptural MDRs. In either case, such is done with no compunction of conscience on the part of the

false teachers.

In the last few days it was reported to me regarding a certain church in a Southeastern State that, with some time passing between the two events, two "married" couples placed membership with that church. *The problem:* each couple was composed of one of the former spouses of the other couple. Indeed, all of one's "X's" may not be in Texas, but they may be the spouse of one's brother or sister in Christ on the next pew. It is obvious that according to Matthew 19:9 at least one of these couples is living in adultery and possibly both. However, they were taught that since their original marriages "ended" before they became Christians their baptisms sanctified their second marriage unions. These poor folks do not understand that the "Whosoever" of Matthew 19:9 covers ALL accountable persons—in and out of the church.

What will they and the church of which they are members do about the problem? Each one's actions will reflect their belief in the truth of the Bible on this matter and the courage of their convictions or the lack of them in dealing with it. Will these couples be teachable and make the necessary sacrifices to be in harmony with the will of heaven? Will the church be strong enough in the faith (Jude 3) to comply with God's will in all things? Or, will they follow the worldly attitude and easy way out (for now), and walk in guilty Adam's path of blaming somebody else for the mess of their own making? Time will tell and the Judgment Day will declare it.

**DOES CIVIL GOVERNMENT AND THE COURTS POSSESS THE POWER TO CHANGE MATTHEW 19:6, 9?**

Another false doctrine that has been pressed in some areas of the country within the church regarding MDR is that *civil law or court decisions have the power to alter God's law on MDR*. As we did in the November 2001 edition of *CFTF*, in this edition of the paper we have several articles dealing with this false doctrine.

How serious is this issue? If the doctrine that the courts et al. have the power to alter God's laws on MDR is true, then some of us are not binding where the scriptures bind. Thus, in the area of MDR we are teaching a doctrine that allows for adulterous unions to exist with those involved therein thinking their marriage is acceptable to God. On the other hand, if civil government does not have

## *In This Issue..*

The Romans 7 Clause Brandon Renfro	1
Who Is It Also God's Law On MDR? David Brown	2
Assistant Editorial "We Can Make a Difference Today" Michael Light	6
Americanizing Matthew Lynn Pappert	9
Current Events that Concern Christians President Bush and Homosexual Benefits, When Does Life Begin and More Mark McWhorter	13
Whoever Remarries First and Whoever Remarries Second James C. Mettenbrink	14
A Brief Response to Mettenbrink Terry M. Hightower	15
Sermon Outlines Division in the Church Tom Moore	18
Restoration Reflections Eddie Whitten Faithful Soldier of the Cross Paul Vaughn	19
One Woman's Perspective That Ringing Cell-Phone! Annette B. Cates	22

the authority to alter God's law on MDR, then some brethren are forbidding where God allows in the matter of MDR. *One cannot teach a doctrine that causes people to live in adultery or forbid men from MDR when they have a scriptural*

*right to MDR and go to heaven (Matthew 5:32; 19:6, 9; 1 Timothy 4:3).* Who is it among us that will affirm the following two propositions?

1. "The scriptures teach that one is well pleasing to God while teaching doctrines that forbid scriptural marriages."

2. "The scriptures teach that one is well pleasing to God while teaching doctrines that cause people to live in adultery."

**DOES GOD AUTHORIZE "UNITY IN DIVERSITY" IN OBLIGATORY MATTERS OF DOCTRINE?**

Of such matters it has been said, "We have decided not to make our view a test of fellowship." That comment is comparable to someone saying, "I do not believe that baptism is for or unto the remission of sins, but I have decided not to make my view a test of fellowship." Have we forgotten the first principles of ascertaining Bible authority, which authority we must have for every thought and action in order for God to be well pleased with our conduct (Colossians 3:17)? Have we never learned that obligatory matters are not to be treated as optional matters or vice versa?

Some, for conscience sake will not eat in a church building. However, they do not make their belief a test of fellowship. (Of course, others have made eating in the church building a matter of fellowship because they think that God has not authorized or he has forbidden brethren to eat in the church building. To them it is an obligatory matter. The result is that not eating in the church building is identified with certain "anti" groups. Those who make optional matters obligatory.) Those who believe it is scriptural to eat in a church building and those who for conscience sake will not do so are able to remain in fellowship because each group does not try to force its views on the other. This is perfectly acceptable in matters that are not obligatory in their nature. But, does MDR and baptism for the remission of sins fall into the same category as eating or not eating in the church building? *Answer:* Absolutely not! And why is this the case? *Answer:* Because false doctrines on MDR have people either living in adultery or they forbid them from scriptural MDR. In either case, people are taught to sin. Such is not necessarily the case regarding one's belief of eating or not eating in the church building. Only if those not eating in the church building decide it is obligatory on all Christians in order for them to be ac-

*Attention  
Subscribers*

Do you know of an individual or a congregation that needs to be made aware of the false doctrines and teachers that are afflicting the Lord's Church today? If so why not give them a subscription of *Contending for the Faith*.

**PLEASE CHECK ONE:**

- \$14.00 FOR ONE YEAR
- \$24.00 FOR TWO YEARS

**CLUB RATES**

- \$36.00 (3-ONE YEAR)
- \$58.00 (FIVE-ONE YEAR)

- WHOLE CONGREGATION RATE**  
\$11.00 PER FAMILY

**FOREIGN RATE**

- \$30.00 (ONE YEAR)

**SEND SUBSCRIPTIONS TO:**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ST:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ST:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TO SEND A SUBSCRIPTION JUST FILL OUT THE FORM AND MAIL TO:**

P.O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77373-2357  
or fax: 281.288.0549

ceptable to God not to eat in the church building does it become a fellowship problem. Again, this is “anti-ism”—making an optional matter an obligatory one. Matters that pertain to what one *must* do in order to become a Christian and matters that pertain to fornication, adultery, and forbidding scriptural MDR are not optional matters. Man has no authority from God regarding any obligatory matter to say, “I’ll not make this a test of fellowship so we can remain in fellowship.” Do doctrines that teach one has a God-authorized MDR or that one does not have a God-authorized MDR fall into the category of obligatory matters? If they do not, into what category do they fall—optional or matters of indifference?

#### **FROM HISTORY A CASE IN POINT**

Before he ascended to the throne of England George IV lead a playboy’s life. He married one of his girl friends and kept it quite. However, his life was such an immoral and irresponsible mess that his father George III decided to settle him down by marrying him to a woman he thought to be appropriate for a king’s consort and Queen of England. The marriage was arranged and carried out. The first marriage was swept under the proverbial the rug. Civil government (including the reigning monarch who arranged his son’s second marriage) had no problem with the whole scenario. Because civil government said “King’s X” to the first marriage of the “going to be” George IV, does that mean that God said “King’s X” to the future king’s first marriage when no fornication was committed on the part of the future king’s spouse or the future king in the first marriage? Moreover, when the civil government allowed a “King approved” marriage in the second wedding, did that make it a God approved marriage?

#### **CIVIL GOVERNMENT IS NOT THE FINAL AUTHORITY**

There are other areas where the government has meddled and is attempting to meddle where it has no God given authority to do so. Does the U. S. Supreme Court’s decision that abortion is legal mean that God via the U. S. Supreme Court now has authorized abortion simply and only because the High Court approved it? What about civil government approved so-called homosexual MDRs? Will some seek to apply Matthew 19:9’s restrictions to a homosexual divorce as if it were a Mat-

thew 19:6 marriage? Will some say that a civil government approved homosexual marriage is included in that about which Jesus was speaking in Matthew 19:6?

Surely some will not attempt the lame dodge that such things will never happen in our day and time. Although in Texas about ten years ago this is “the out” one tried to take in an attempt to dodge the consistent application of his false view on MDR in other parallel areas. Homosexual marriages and other errors on MDR are being advocated right now in the good ole U. S. A., and the end is not yet. Mark it down—if the government recognizes homosexual MDRs with all the rights and privileges of scriptural MDRs, certain brethren will attempt to find a way for them to be acceptable. Brethren will attempt to deal with them as if they were God approved MDRs. The sad part about it is that some brethren are advocating premises at this time on MDR that will not consistently stand up when placed in the crucible of the polemic platform in correctly dealing with these immoral activities. However, we know of a fellow in a church in Texas who pronounced a faithful preacher to be a false teacher because he would not accept the premise that the ruling of a court did not countermand God’s laws on MDR.

#### **WHERE WE STAND**

Let it be frankly and candidly stated and clearly understood that no matter how many legislatures and civil courts declare that homosexuals may marry or advocate other false doctrines on MDR, that does not and will not change the teaching of our Lord in Matthew 19:6; 5:32, 19:9 et al. *Who is it that will affirm that God has granted authority to civil government and the courts to dissolve marriages contrary to Matthew 19:9? Furthermore, who will affirm that man is bound by unscriptural laws and rulings of civil authorities and must submit to them at all costs?* Let us learn that God’s law is above any legislature or court and countermands all human laws not in harmony with his will. On these truths we take our stand and oppose all who teach to the contrary whether such teaching is explicit or implicit. Indeed, **“We ought to obey God rather than men”** (Acts 5:29). Yes, even in the matters pertaining to MDR.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

## "We Can Make a Difference" Today

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, were is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein (Jeremiah 6:16).

These words of Jeremiah are just as pertinent today as when he put quill to scroll. God's faithful followers have always had to remind the wayward to return to Jehovah. There is as much need today to be called to return to the old paths as ever before.

This need can be met in several ways. Individual preachers must preach the truth in clear forceful fashion. Members must demand that elders and fellow-members return to the book. And papers like *Contending for the Faith* must stand in the breach by exposing error and defending the holy precepts of God.

**David P. Brown** (editor of *CFTF*) approached me a few months ago about serving as the assistant editor of the paper. I have agreed to join him in this fine work. *Contending for the Faith* has been, and continues to be, a paper like no other. Since brother **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** founded the paper it has stood for something special. Brother Rice was attacked, ridiculed and hated by many, even of our own number, for his unyielding stance for the whole truth.

The tradition of commitment to first century church is now continuing through David Brown, the current editor. While some people still gripe and belly ache about the paper, the course of our actions have been dictated by God almighty, and we will not deviate from the "old paths." I am honored to be a part of this paper. We will continue to labor in presenting the truth as best we can in the time we have left on this earth. Those who dislike it when we expose false doctrine need to realize it is not our fault that false teachers propagate error. It is not uncommon to hear someone complaining about the paper "calling names." These people need to read their Bibles more closely. God, Jesus, and the inspired writers called names regularly

(Matthew 23; John 8; I Timothy 1; et al.). The Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul commanded us all:

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).

We have an obligation to honestly and openly examine the teachings of preachers and other teachers. In I John 4:1 we read, "**Beloved believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.**" Unfortunately, there are thousands of false teachers in the world, and not a few in the church. We must, without prejudice, examine their teachings. When a false teacher is discovered, the flock must be warned. We pray for readers who can and will be warned.

Another element of the work of this paper is to simply teach and defend the doctrine of Christ, as found in the New Testament. However, it is not our desire to work only in the area of exposing wrong. We are equally committed to teaching the "**whole counsel of God**" to the end that faithful Christians may be edified (Acts 20:27). We strive to present a balanced diet of milk and meat as set forth in the Bible.

There are many issues that face the church, there always have been such. We must continue to raise the banner of truth on every battle-field. Satan and his forces must be opposed. With God's help *Contending for the Faith* will continue to lead the charge for truth. We desire your prayers as we endeavor to do our part in preserving the life-giving message of the Messiah. Brethren, working together we can stem the tide of the humanistic society in which we live as well as denominationalism in and out of the church. We can be a light in a dark world. We can make a difference.

—Michael Light, *Assistant Editor*

# THE ROMANS 7 CLAUSE

(Continued From page 1)

is advocating that Romans 7:1-3 gives the guilty-divorced person who has remarried the right to be in such a marriage, following the death of the first spouse. It is claimed that an admittedly adulterous union goes from abominable to honorable in the sight of God through the death of the innocent party of the first marriage and the “repentance” of the guilty. (Making confession of fault but refusing to rectify the wrong.)

Let us examine more closely the text in question. Paul writes:

**Know ye not, brethren, for I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as 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 7:1-3).**

It should be abundantly clear what Paul is teaching in these first verses of Romans 7; namely, that a widow has the right to remarry upon the death of her husband, since death terminates the bond between husband and wife. Though upon remarriage she will be married to a man other than her first husband, she is clearly no adulteress. Paul uses this example to teach us that we are **“dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another”** (Romans 7:4). It should also be abundantly clear what Paul is *not* teaching in the context of Romans 7—Paul nowhere advocates the right of the guilty-divorced to remarry.

## **THREE CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE WHO ARE AUTHORIZED BY GOD’S WORD TO MARRY**

Faithful brethren have always recognized that there are three categories of people who may scripturally contract a marriage: those never married (provided, of course, that they marry an eligible candidate); those who were married but whose spouse has died; and those who have put away their spouse because of fornication. *Are we now to add a fourth category—those who have been guilty of adultery but whose original spouse has died?* Those who suggest that this is an “additional teaching” of Paul on the subject of MDR err in interpreting the passage, much like those who see a “Pauline Privilege” in I Corinthians 7:15. It would indeed take help (if it could truly be called such) to misunderstand the fact that our Lord spoke in Matthew 19:9 concern-

ing MDR, while Paul, via Romans 7:1-3, addressed the remarriage of a widow, due to death—not divorce—and certainly not the remarriage of a guilty fornicator!

I am personally aware of an unfortunate situation wherein a sister in Christ had the fellowship of faithful Christians withdrawn from her some twenty years ago due to the fact that she unscripturally divorced her husband and married another, thus living in adultery with him. Many years later, her first husband died. Some time after the death of her first husband, she “repented” of what she had done, but nevertheless decided to remain with the man with whom she had been living in adultery (The very man with whom she was living in adultery when the fellowship of the church was withdrawn from her.) Unfortunately, she was welcomed back into fellowship, and any pleas to correct her current situation were regarded as “extreme.” In fact, it was suggested to me by one brother at this congregation, the former preacher, no less, there upon the day that the church originally withdrew from her, she could have been told one of two things: (1) We are concerned for your souls and want you to repent and cease living in adultery or (2) Continue in this adultery but just hope that your first spouse dies before you do. How utterly absurd and unscriptural!

## **THE MARRIAGE IS DISSOLVED**

What the brethren proposing this false position fail to understand is that the passage in question, the self-styled “Romans 7 Clause”, is not even broaching the subject of divorce. When a fornicator is put away, per the Lord’s authority in Matthew 19:9, the innocent is free to remarry and thus is no longer bound to the guilty. *That marriage is dissolved; it no longer exists, or the innocent party who divorces the spouse guilty of fornication could never be free to contract another scriptural marriage.* To suggest that there is a bond of any type remaining between the innocent and the guilty is to suggest that the Lord sanctions bigamy, which is exactly what the innocent party would be engaged in upon exercising his God-given right to remarry. Obviously, then, the innocent and the guilty are no longer bound to one another, though the guilty will be forever bound to God in that no other marriages may be contracted. This is exactly the reason that our brethren purposing a Romans 7 clause fail miserably in their attempt to sanction what Jesus forbade.

Again, death terminates the bond between a husband and a wife. In fact, the very first phrase of Ro-



mans 7:2 negates any argument that might be made: "For the woman which hath an husband..." Notice that this passage cannot be referring to the right of the guilty-divorced to remarry. Why? Because once she is put away, no bond exists between she and her former husband, lest he become a bigamist upon remarriage as noted earlier. Simply put, she (the guilty divorced) is no longer his wife, and, consequently, hath not a husband. Romans 7:2 clearly speaks of the woman which "hath an husband" which, obviously, the scripturally put-away person would not have!

### ROMANS 7:1-3 DEALS ONLY WITH REMARRIAGE FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF A SPOUSE

Once we realize that Romans 7:1-3 deals only with remarriage following death, not the imagined right of the fornicator to remarry upon the death of one no longer her husband or the mysterious transformation of an adulterous union into a scriptural one upon the death of the innocent party, any argument suggesting otherwise becomes impotent and futile.

Some, though, have said that asking a man and woman living in adultery to separate is "extreme." Some have even called such situations "intractable." I am reminded of I John 5:3, where we learn that to love God is to keep his commandments, "and His commandments are not grievous." Perhaps we need to remind ourselves that God did not create these unfortunate situations. To the contrary, if those now living in adulterous unions had obeyed God in the first place, such situations would not exist!

### WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING

I am also reminded of Ezra. Perhaps many brethren today would call him "extreme" for the position that he took.

And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God: and let it be done according to the law (Ezra 10:2, 3).

And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore *make confession* unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and *separate yourselves* from the people of the land, and from the strange wives. Then all the congregation answered and said

with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do... All these had taken strange wives: and some of them had wives by whom they had children (Ezra 10:10-12, 44).

The souls of those living in adultery are not the only ones at stake. In fact, the danger in this false proposition reaches far beyond those directly involved. Indeed, if fellowship is extended to one openly in adultery, if sin is in essence welcomed into the camp, we, like Achan of old, will surely have to pay.

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 his God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 9-11).

We cannot and must not fellowship that which God does not authorize (Colossians 3:17). May God help us not to turn to the right hand or to the left hand of God's word in our ongoing effort to serve him. He demands no less from us (John 12:48).

—5030 Crowne Chase Parkway  
Birmingham, Alabama 35244

## Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY  
IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**  
**\$35.00 if ordered as set**  
*(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)*

*Order from:*

**VADA RICE**

**3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461**

# AMERICAN-IZING MATTHEW

Lynn Parker

Generally, the world does not know and does not care about God's law concerning marriage. "Marriages" between two people who have been previously married and divorced for trivial causes are so commonplace that society never gives them a second glance.

In the church, liberal brethren have disregarded Christ's will and averred that baptism makes adulterous unions into holy ones, and that repentance does not require cessation of sin (in this case, separation of a man and woman who are not scripturally married). *It is a fearful thought to loose where God has bound.*

*Likewise, it is a fearful thing to forbid what God has permitted and draw lines of fellowship where God has not.* The Lord's marriage law has been attacked by some outside the church who forbid marriage when God permits it (i.e., Catholicism). It has been, and is currently under siege by some today in the church who would do essentially the same thing—forbid what God authorizes in the matter of marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Such an extreme is no better or safer than liberalism. It is not "safe" to legislate and bind where God has not (Matthew 15:2ff; Galatians 2:3ff). It is not a "better" position to exclude from fellowship those whom the Lord regards as faithful (III John 10).

## THE ISSUE UNDER CONSIDERATION

Jesus stated,

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 (Matthew 19:9).

Some have "American-ized" Christ's divorce and remarriage laws. By this I mean, they have interpreted Matthew 19:9 through the culture and laws of the United States so that American legislatures and courts become the final law in determining a marriage and a divorce. These brethren hold and teach the following:

John and Sally are scripturally married. Sally, against John's will and despite his scriptural efforts to maintain the marriage, files for a civil divorce in a court of competent jurisdiction. John refuses to cooperate with such divorce, telling the court that there exists no scriptural reason to divorce. Nevertheless, the State grants the divorce on April 1st. Sally then, according to the laws of that particular state, marries her old high school sweetheart, Bill, on April 2nd. Bill and Sally now engage in sexual relations that are Biblically authorized only between husband and wife. Thus, Sally is an adul-

teress. However, since Sally did not commit adultery BEFORE April 1st—the day the court granted the divorce—John may never remarry. John has no grounds for remarriage. The divorce on April 1st was not for "fornication." The fornication occurred April 2nd.



This scenario illustrates the point we make here—these brethren have "American-ized" Matthew 19:9. They say that a divorce is a divorce is a divorce. They argue that once the Judge's gavel hits the bench and the Judge cries, "Divorce granted," (for ANY reason), a couple is no longer married under man's or God's law. We would say, because the Bible implicitly teaches, that "in God's eyes," John and Sally are still married on April 1st following the civil court action granting a divorce; those in opposition argue that there is no such thing as "in God's eyes."

## JOHN THE BAPTIZER RECOGNIZED THE DIFFERENCE

John the Baptizer recognized the difference between a marriage approved of God and that which was simply a marriage according to man's laws. There is indeed a sense in which a couple is still married in God's eyes even though they are not according to man's laws. Note carefully these verses:

For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife [according to God's law - emp. LP]; for he had married her [according to man's laws - emp. LP]. For John said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife [according to God's law - emp. LP]. (Mark 6:17-18).

God, through his word said that Herod "had married" Herodias. He also said that Herodias was Philip's wife. Get that! *Herodias remained Philip's wife!* Surely our omnipresent and omniscient God knows the activities of every man and all of time. God knows when an unscriptural divorce has taken place (and he condemns it) and he knows when an unscriptural "marriage" takes place (and he condemns it). At the same time, our God knows (because God is both omnipresent and omniscient) when an alien sinner offers a prayer for forgiveness yet the Bible teaches that such prayer is not heard (in the sense of being recognized) by God.

## THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

"The Waiting Game" is a term coined to describe

where parties to a scriptural marriage are looking for a reason to divorce and remarry. So the husband and wife alienate themselves from each other, hoping that the other will commit adultery first, thus freeing the “innocent” party to scripturally put the guilty away and remarry with God’s blessings. In fact, this scenario does not have an “innocent” party for both are in violation of God’s laws concerning marriage (I Corinthians 7:1-5; Ephesians 5:22, 25, et al.). Both seek to circumvent the will of heaven and destroy the home. Both parties are conspirators in sin. Let it be said, here and now (again) that such is sinful. *The faithful have always stood against it.*

The Bible does not authorize everyone to be married. We can easily define those who are scripturally eligible to marry. The Bible teaches that only those in one of three categories are eligible to marry: (1) one who has never been married provided he/she marries an eligible partner, (2) one whose mate has died, provided he/she marries an eligible partner, and (3) one who, as an innocent party, has put away his/her spouse because such a spouse was guilty of fornication. *There is no authorized divorce and remarriage for a cause other than fornication.* Period! That’s it! The list is short and you have previously read it.

#### NEW AND NOVEL?

Some that have disagreed with the truth on this matter have stooped to trying to make the doctrine appear to be new and novel. It is not. Such characterizations arise from either ignorance or dishonesty. John the Immerser knew that there was a difference between what God recognized as a marriage and that recognized by civil law. God’s word implicitly teaches it! But then, even more recently (but not overnight), Guy N. Woods dealt with this very question in a rather public forum some years ago. Note this rather lengthy quotation:

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?”

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.

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 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, 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. The New Testament teaches that when one of the parties of the marriage bond be-

comes guilty of fornication, the other (the innocent one, not the guilty) may scripturally put away the offending party and remarry. Luke 16:18 does not countermand Matthew 19:9; it simply supplements it (Guy N. Woods, *Questions and Answers*, Volume II, pp. 45-46).

### **SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS AND DIFFICULT PROBLEMS**

Those who teach that civil laws determine when a couple is married and when a couple is divorced ought to set aside a few nights and a large bottle of aspirin to ponder the following scenarios and questions. Let us start with this news article.

#### **VOID MARRIAGES**

**Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall's** "marriage" was annulled because their 1990 Hindu wedding in Bali was not recognized in English law. The BBC's Legal Correspondent **Joshua Rozenberg** explains when a marriage can be declared legally void.

In English law, some so-called "marriages" are not regarded as marriages at all. They are said to be "void". That can apply when one of the parties is under 16, or they are closely related, or one of the parties is already married to someone else.

Since there is no marriage there is nothing for the court to annul, but it may be convenient to have a court document showing that the "marriage" was void.

Other marriages are said to be "voidable". That means they are valid until a court issues a decree of nullity at the request of either party.

A voidable marriage can be annulled if it has never been consummated, or one of the parties had not understood they were taking part in a ceremony of marriage, or the marriage was to someone with a venereal disease.

Mick Jagger's publicity agents had previously said he would contest Jerry Hall's divorce petition on the grounds that their Indonesian marriage was not legally valid.

There seem no grounds for arguing that the couple went through what the law would regard as a "voidable" marriage.

It therefore seems that the couple have agreed that their so-called marriage was void from the beginning. In other words, they seem to accept that there never was a valid marriage.

If a couple have never married, there is no need for a divorce. There is no "common law" marriage in England, despite what people sometimes say.

BBC Online Network, Friday, July 9, 1999  
(<http://www.international-divorce.com/voidmarriages> as of July 1, 2002)

Nowhere in the New Testament do you read of "void marriages" or "annullments." No provisions made for such. Either two people are married or they are not married according to God's will. But along comes man's law, and in one country the couple are

married but in another, the marriage is not recognized. Are they or are they not married? It seems like man's laws often conflict and create chaos in the area of marriages.

Look now at another case. This is not hypothetical. These deserve real consideration. The following is taught in law schools to first year students in Contracts courses.

#### **SHAW V. SHAW**

##### **2 Q.B. 429 (C.A. 1954)**

In 1937, Percy Shaw, a farmer, met the plaintiff, a widow, and later in that year proposed marriage to her, describing himself as a widower. She accepted him and on December 10, 1938, they went through a form of marriage at the Cannock Registry Office. For fourteen years, Percy Shaw and the plaintiff lived together as husband and wife at Cannock during which time the plaintiff advanced to Shaw about 250 (British pounds—ed.) to buy stock, to assist him in acquiring land... In 1952, Shaw died intestate. After Shaw's death, the plaintiff became aware for the first time that she had not been legally married to him (his legal wife died in 1950) and she brought an action against the administrators, a son and a daughter of the deceased, claiming damage for a breach of a promise of marriage by the deceased. The lower court gave judgment for the defendants holding that the alleged promise to marry was unenforceable being contrary to public policy since at the time of the promise Shaw had a wife living. The plaintiff successfully appealed (**Friedrich Kessler and Grant Gilmore**, *Contracts*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1970, pp. 128-129).

So brethren, the same government that pronounced Percy Shaw and the "new Mrs. Shaw (#2)" to be married in 1938 came back in 1954 and admitted that they were not married because they could not be married. Shaw, according to the appeals court, was not eligible to marry (*something that needs to be noted by our brethren who do not understand that only eligible partners can be married in God's eyes!*) and thus his "form of marriage" at the Cannock Registry Office was not a marriage at all. What a mess! Man's law at first said they were married. Then man's law said they were not married. But even the Judge in his subsequent ruling noted that the marriage, once thought to be valid, was not legal and these two were not married!

You see, man's laws and those of God are not at all identical in saying when one is married and when he is not. Civil governments change with the times! Civil laws change! Civil government makes mistakes! Legal definitions and elements change. They differ from one year to the next, and from one society to the next. You must not make the mistake of letting current cultural practices or civil laws determine when one is married or divorced. *You must not "American-ize" Matthew 19:9.*

Consider some more instances of man's law and

God's law on marriage and divorce being incompatible. Please note that at one time, Egyptian law required women to get their husband's consent before divorcing.

But, in January of this year, al-Azhar in cooperation with the Egyptian government changed the law of khul' so that the consent of the husband was no longer required. Some journalists protested that the change spelled the end of Islamic law in Egypt; but the change in the law was passed and now Egypt follows the prophetic tradition of granting khul' without the consent of the husband. Although it is too early to say, there are other countries getting ready to follow suite (<http://understandingislam.tripod.com/USmarriage.htm>)

What if the husband in such case was an adulterer? Could the wife not put him away under God's law if the Egyptian law made no provision for such? Or is civil law to rule over God's law in the matter of divorce?

I know a case where a woman had two husbands. How? One under Islamic law, one under American law. She couldn't divorce the other one. She wanted to divorce the one under Muslim law; she couldn't. She wanted to divorce the one under civil law, but she didn't have the money to divorce him. So she was stuck with two and actually had none. This could get sticky (<http://understandingislam.tripod.com/USmarriage.htm>).

How about if you are scripturally and legally married in one country but another country refuses to recognize the marriage or pronounces you divorced. Are you married or are you not? Of course you are—IN GOD'S EYES—if not in the eyes of the civil law of the land. This point is too clear to miss.

**DO YOU STILL SAY THERE IS NO  
DISTINCTION BETWEEN CIVIL  
LAW AND GOD'S LAW?**

1. John and Sally are scripturally married. John

begins a course of continued adultery and then files in court to divorce Sally. Can Sally scripturally remarry following the divorce? Remember, John—the guilty adulterer—filed for the divorce, not Sally, the innocent party. The guilty put the innocent away in civil court.

2. John and Sally are scripturally married. John then begins a course of continued adultery. Sally decides to divorce him but John's lawyer gets to the courthouse a few days before Sally's lawyer does, and thus John files the divorce. John's cause is heard in court and divorce is granted. Must Sally remain unmarried or has she lawfully put John away even though John's action initiated the divorce.

3. John and Sally are scripturally married. John then begins a course of continued adultery. Sally would divorce him but does not have the money yet for a lawyer and filing fees. In the mean time, John files for and obtains a divorce. May Sally scripturally remarry?

4. John and Sally are scripturally married. John then begins a course of continued adultery. Sally would keep the marriage together and keep trying to reconcile. She does not want a divorce. John sues for and obtains a divorce. May Sally scripturally remarry?

5. John and Sally are scripturally married. While John is serving in the Army in Afghanistan and unbeknownst to him, Sally divorces him for trivial reasons (anything other than adultery). Sally then commits fornication. May John, upon return home, put her away "in God's eyes" and scripturally remarry? Has John "played the waiting game?"

6. John and Jason (obviously, both men) are "married" in a legal ceremony recognized by the state. Are they married in God's eyes?

7. Indirectly, this "ism" that "*all 'marriages' according to civil law are marriages according to God and all divorces according to civil law are divorces according to God*" supports the error of **John L. Edwards** in his attempt to redefine adultery and give God's blessings to unscriptural "marriages" (see Bill Jackson-John Edwards Debate, ). We must be careful here lest we fill the church with adulterers!

**CONCLUSION**

It is never noble to bind where God has not. It is not laudable to be more "conservative" than Jesus Christ. The legislature in Texas will meet again before long. While in session, it is conceivable that matters pertaining to marriage and family law will again be addressed by new laws or amendments to old ones. It is folly to interpret God's marriage law through the eyes of a prevailing and ever changing culture and civil law. God's word, his law, and his definitions do not change. And, that is the refreshing truth on the matter!

—P. O. Box 39  
Spring, TX 77383

**Reminder...**



**Check Your Address  
Label if it Has the Date  
09/02/02  
it is Time to Renew**

**Send renewals to:**

**P.O. BOX 2357  
SPRING, TX 77373  
FAX: 281.288.0549**

*[This article was sent to us by one other than its writer as a response to Guy N. Woods' article quoted in Lynn Parker's article in this issue of the paper and printed in the November 2001 CFTF. I asked Terry Hightower to respond to it. His article follows Mettenbrink's—Editor-in-Chief]*

## WHOEVER REMARRIES FIRST AND WHOEVER REMARRIES SECOND

James C. Mettenbrink

(This article appeared in THE WORDS OF TRUTH Published by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, Jasper, AL, on June 16, 1989.)

During the days of Jeremiah, Judah was on the threshold of Babylonian captivity for continually ignoring the will of God and for adapting the ways of the idolatrous nations around them. In his prayer concerning the coming onslaught of Jerusalem, Jeremiah acknowledged that it is not without man to direct his own steps (Jeremiah 10:23). Indeed, this has always been the plight of mankind and is the very reason God gave him his word. For nearly 2000 years we have had the completed revelation of God's will showing man the way of salvation. Yet man persists in following his own wisdom. This might be expected of those who are unbelievers, but why is it that Christians twist (and ignore) the divine guidance to suit themselves? This attitude is readily evident with the many prevailing doctrines concerning divorce and remarriage. Many Christians are bent on getting every divorcee comfortably remarried regardless of the plain teaching of the New Testament.

Some of the world's best bridge builders are in the church and are fervently attempting to get over and around God's law of divorce and remarriage. The various bridges include (1) that an adulterous remarriage is not a continuous state but a one time act from which one may repent and which is somehow changed into lawful marriage; (2) that since non-Christians are not amenable to God's law of marriage, whatever occurs before baptism is of no biblical consequence; (3) that an adulterous remarriage between non-Christians (sic) is somehow changed into a lawful marriage in their baptism. Another bridge that is frequently crossed is the "after the divorce" justification that allows remarriage. We are being told that when a couple divorces for a cause other than fornication, one of the parties may lawfully remarry. But which party may do so? Advocates respond that the person "who remarries first" commits adultery, thereby freeing the other person to lawfully remarry.

In discussing this view, proponents assert "It just isn't fair for God to require the innocent mate to live a

celibate life." They argue, "How could God be so severe in his Laws?" They remind us that "God never intended that man should live alone." Emotions and misplaced sympathy are the unstable foundation of this bridge. Indeed, God said it is not good for man to live alone (Genesis 2:18)—that is why he created woman and instituted marriage. God's plan for an orderly family and society is one man and one woman for life (Genesis 2:24)! However, it was not God who did the divorcing, it was man who did so and then against the wishes of God. The cry of unfairness regarding the mate who is divorced unwillingly discounts that God never intended for the pair to be divorced but rather for them to be reconciled (I Corinthians 7:10-11). This supposed unfairness and resultant celibacy and loneliness highlights God's seriousness about the sanctity of a lifetime marriage between one man and one woman.

In meeting the testy Pharisees, Jesus stated the most complete account of God's universal law of divorce and remarriage. **"Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."** (Matthew 19:9 NKJV, cf. Matthew 5:32). When Jesus said let not man put marriage asunder (Matthew 19:6), was he not saying that it was within the power of man to divorce? The only cause for a divorce which allows remarriage is when fornication is committed by a spouse. Then only the mate who did not commit fornication is free to remarry without committing adultery. Is it not clear from the scripture that if the cause for the divorce is not fornication that neither spouse can lawfully remarry? If both parties remarry they both commit adultery. Yet, there are those who say that after a divorce where fornication was not the cause, one of the spouses can lawfully remarry. Effectively, the proponents say that the first party to remarry commits adultery. This adulterous remarriage then frees the second party to lawfully remarry. Essentially, this denies that the di-



orce ever occurred in the first place. It implies that the one who remarries first effects an ex post facto divorce (regardless of which party initiated the original divorce) by the agency of his own adulterous remarriage. If the case is a denial that the first divorce actually took place (yet they were in fact divorced by decree), then how can a person divorce and not divorce simultaneously? Or is it the case that those advocates are implying that two divorces are necessary; The first at the time of original divorce and another by the person who remarries first. Where is the biblical authority for either of these views?

The word for adultery rather than fornication was divinely chosen to show that the remarried party in fact belongs to the mate of the first marriage (Matthew 5:32; 19:9). They are to be reconciled to each other (I Corinthians 7:10-11). Jesus said he who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery and he that marries her that is divorced commits adul-

tery (Matthew 19:9). If either or both of them remarry, adultery is committed. Adultery damns one to hell (Galatians 5:19, 21). Surely God is not complicated or vague in matters eternal. What constitutes adultery is simple. Again, Jesus stated simply that whosoever puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery and he who marries her who is divorced commits adultery. If either of them remarry adultery is committed. The only exception to this law is if one of the mates commits fornication. God grants the privilege of remarriage to the innocent mate.

Where is it written that whoever remarries first frees the other to lawfully remarry? Emphatically, it is "nowhere!" Let us stop bridge building! Let us stop sending people to their eternal destruction and let us stop going beyond what is written by the inspiration of God.

—810 Greenwood St.  
Montgomery, Alabama 36107

## A BRIEF RESPONSE TO METTENBRINK

Terry M. Hightower

Though James C. Mettenbrink's foregoing article was perhaps not written in opposition to a specific position many of us hold in regard to MDR, it is nonetheless being used by a few individuals in opposition to those of us defending the right of remarriage for an "innocent party" under certain specific circumstances. I will call our view "MLOCL" for *Moral Law Over Civil Law*. One brother I know makes a hobby out of this matter, but cannot "stand the heat" of inquiry though regularly jumping into the "kitchen" of controversy at least in writing.

Though I agree with many points made by brother Mettenbrink (hereinafter JCM), I plainly disagree in his *application* of several of them. With JCM, I also oppose "Christians who are bent on getting every divorcee comfortably remarried regardless of" plain Bible teaching.

### NO LIBERALS HERE!

I know as well as anyone that touting brotherhood "names" proves nothing in regard to the Bible, but it should surely "give one pause" when one looks at those of us who uphold "MLOCL" (e.g. the late Guy N. Woods, Wayne Jackson, David P. Brown, Don

Tarbet, Jack Hendry, Dub McLish, Jackie M. Stearsman, Garland Elkins, Lynn Parker, and many others). This is NOT a laundry list of "liberals" hankering to justify a myriad of "bridges" over and around God's law on MDR, but is rather a list of faithful brethren who have stood firm orally and in writing against innovations in all areas regarding the one faith—including MDR. Thus, we are NOT to be included in JCM's first three "bridges" as listed in his 2nd paragraph. Neither are we defending "The Waiting Game" or "Freezeout."<sup>1</sup>

JCM at least gets the next part correct when he (by implication) "separates" us from rank liberals when he asks which ONE party of the two may lawfully remarry after a couple divorces for a cause other than fornication. Please hear this answer to his question: "The ONE party NOT initiating the divorce—the one in fact OPPOSING it—the one ready at any time to RECONCILE with the other party both before and after the divorce" according to the principles taught in I Corinthians 7:10-13 and Romans 3:8! Thus, it may be that neither party can lawfully marry another according to God's word. Liberals may do so, but as cited

by JCM neither Genesis 2:18 or the fairness/severity of God as to celibacy by the innocent mate is involved in MY argument at all. What is involved is the proper application of God's law on MDR?

### THE REAL ISSUE

JCM gets to the real issue when he mentions (in a critical way) the person "who remarries first" as committing ADULTERY thereby freeing the OTHER person (in our MLOCL case the ONE not initiating a divorce or promoting it!) to scripturally remarry. This is a very good question which opponents like JCM never seem to fathom! Does the person DOING the divorcing (unscripturally since no fornication has occurred yet) really commit ADULTERY when they either remarry (or when they have sexual relations with ANY third party) or not? When I can get our opponents to answer, not one has missed this question by answering "No" as of this good moment! But if one correctly answers "Yes", then we should like to point out that such adultery is NOT just against GOD alone, but is rather adultery against the still God-joined MATE (Matthew 19:6; Mark 10:11). Therefore, the partner unscripturally put away NOW has the ground of ADULTERY required by our Lord (Matthew 5:32; 19:9) for breaking up the God-joined bond between them. I have over the last 30 years met few congregational members who find this difficult to see and fewer still who do not recognize that God's moral wishes supercede Caesar's law. It does seem that a few have more difficulty seeing the principle of Acts 5:29 operating POSITIVELY on a person's behalf, while readily seeing it operating negatively or restrictively (as in the attempt to stop the preaching of the gospel). But instead of finding difficulty with such, we all should recognize that the "except for fornication" (Matthew 19:9) phrase in scripture was obviously intended to declare and to protect the rights of an innocent party in the case of marital infidelity.

JCM correctly points out that, "it was not God who did the divorcing" but then he says "it was man who did so and then against the wishes of God." Yes, and this divorcing CAN apply though only to one party in a marriage and not necessarily to the other. Significantly, JCM unwittingly "gives up his case" when he says: "The cry of unfairness regarding the mate who is divorced unwillingly discounts that God never intended for the pair to be divorced but rather for them to be reconciled (I Corinthians 7:10-11)." As pointed out above, "unfairness" is not really the issue. THE ISSUE IS HAVING OR NOT HAVING THE NECESSARY GROUND OF ADULTERY! JCM says: "God never intended for the pair to be divorced" but fails to see that God DOES allow his God-joined union to be broken up or dissolved WHEN ADULTERY HAS OCCURRED (Matthew 19:9).

### JCM'S MISTAKE

JCM (perhaps unintentionally) betrays a lack of concern for *Total Context* in his claim that "Jesus stated the most complete account of God's universal law of divorce and remarriage" in Matthew 19:9 (though he does add Matthew 5:32). No, ALL the verses—in both the Immediate Context and the Remote Context (Psalms 119:160-ASV) are crucial to a proper understanding of the Bible especially as applied to real cases. For instance, just how does Jesus' statement apply to one who suddenly discovers that he is involved in adultery by virtue of his (legal) spouse having been married before? Is this particular kind of an adulterer allowed to lawfully remarry if marrying an eligible person? How so if Matthew 19:9 forbids all divorced adulterers to be married? Is it not the case that this person simply got out of an unscriptural union when he learned about it? What if Caesar grants the divorce to the one previously married? Does such do violence to Jesus' words?

JCM seems to forget the fundamental stress of Genesis 2 involving the "joining by God" and also how civil law is secondary to God's law (Acts 5:29). He somehow fails to see how our point concerning the occurrence of adultery actually AGREES with his stated view that "if the cause for the divorce is not fornication that neither spouse can lawfully remarry." This latter quote is true AT THIS POINT with no further action by either party. I personally know of several cases in which a divorce was sought and granted to a sister who was not interested in marriage or in physical relations, thereby causing the innocent brother involved to have to follow God's will in celibacy as we all must affirm. But should the sinful aggressor (in or out of a new marriage) have carnal relations with a third party, we again simply ask: "Is adultery THEN committed or not?"

### TWO SENSES INVOLVED

To claim that I am essentially denying, "that the divorce ever occurred in the first place" is more evidence of JCM's confusion. While I admit that a CIVIL divorce has occurred, I do deny that the breaking up of the MORAL/SPIRITUAL BOND by which the couple is amenable to God's Moral law has yet occurred since there has to this point been no FORNICATION. JCM wrongly assumes that the only "joining" of a couple is a civil one by the government! If this is true, then should the government ever declare our brother (i.e. JCM) and his God-joined wife as "unmarried" then he would be sinning by having relations with her that night! Or is it not the case that God's law in reference to their union supercedes Caesar's law? Given his own question to us concerning "two divorces", JCM needs to be similarly asked: "Are you implying that two marriages are necessary?" While we ought to subscribe to the dic-

tates of civil government as far as possible (cf. Romans 12:18; 13:1-7; 10:23, 32; 1 Peter. 2:13-17), we all ought to recognize the truth of MLOCL. Even if state or national law annulled my present marriage, I would still be married to my wife according to God's word where it really counts! Our brother needs to re-study the implications of Mark 6:17-18 to see that there indeed are two senses in which people can be "married" or "joined" which WE are respecting and HE is not. *Herod and Herodias both had legal divorces from previous spouses, so how could it be rightly said by inspiration that Herodias was still Philip's wife? Please explain!*

Further, JCM unwittingly implies MY position when he says: "The word for adultery rather than fornication was divinely chosen to show that the remarried party in fact belongs to the mate of the first marriage (Matthew 5:32; 19:9)." PLEASE NOTE: JCM has here admitted by implication that the legally unmarried (i.e. to each other) couple are "mates" or that in one sense they are NOT married while in another sense they ARE married! JCM fails to see that in the particularized case we are defending the innocent per-

son: (1) did not and could not at the point of mere legal or civil divorce biblically "put away" anybody, but (2) could and did acquire the God-required ground of adultery against their spouse in order to do so despite the prior legal dissolution of their marriage. Quite obviously this innocent person would look rather foolish attempting NOW to "divorce" their partner legally since such has already occurred due to the sinful aggressor, but they surely can now recognize the dissolution by God of their previous joining. If some want to call this "mental divorce" then so be it! I will ask about their parallel "mental marriage" in the paragraph just above. When pressed about his wife committing adultery and then her being granted a civil divorce by a civil judge instead of to him, one devotee to JCM's error declared: "Uh, no... THAT would be MY putting her away"! He was correct in this assessment despite the fact that this was not exactly the scenario laid out by Jesus in Matthew 19:9.

### ANTI-ISM IN PRACTICE

Amazingly, JCM once again implies my position when he concludes: "God grants the privilege of re-marriage to the innocent mate." This is CORRECT! But what JCM grants in words he denies in application. As per our brother we must conclude that the Lord intended for a person innocent of adultery and having the ADMITTED ground of adultery against their spouse to forfeit the right to use that ground as a result of: (1) not being able to providentially get their mate to commit the adultery BEFORE their civil divorce and/or (2) their sinful mate being granted the civil decree BEFORE their civil divorce! *All of this mishandling of scripture implies that the TIMING of the adultery is more important with God than its occurrence and that WHOEVER gets Caesar's courthouse ruling reigns supreme over God's divine one.* Believe it, who can? Let us oppose those who uphold ungodly marriages with all our might, but let us also recognize that it is possible to sin by "forbidding to marry" (I Timothy 4:3) and casting out of the church those who have merely exercised their God-given rights as per his divine word (III John 10). I have no quarrel with private opinions being maintained in this matter so long as such does not "spill over" into church disciplinary actions against those innocent according to the Total Context of the Bible, but with sword in hand I WILL fight "anti-ism" wherever I find it. Will you (Ephesians 6:17)?

## SPRING BIBLE INSTITUTE

**PREPARING MEN AND WOMEN TO FAITHFULLY AND EFFECTIVELY TEACH THE TRUTH (2 TIMOTHY 2:2).**  
*Can our Distance Learning Program (DLP) help you?  
 If you answer "Yes" to these questions, then give us a call today!*

**Do you want...**

- ...sound instruction in the Bible?
- ...a thorough exposition of the text of the Bible?
- ...a practical approach to Bible study?
- ...clear answers to Bible questions?
- ...experienced teachers that know the Bible?
- ...a tuition free Bible education?

**Are you searching for a program that...**

- ...is flexible and can be delivered by video to your home using the internet?
- ...allows you to watch classes anytime of the day or night as your schedule permits?
- ...challenges you to be a well-disciplined Bible student?

**Why wait any longer?**

Call for David P. Brown, Director  
 Lynn Parker, Assistant Director  
 (281) 353-2707

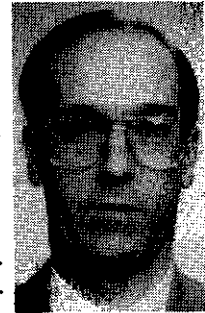
Web: [churchesofchrist.com](http://churchesofchrist.com) Email: [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)

—2950 State Rd. 544

Winter Haven, Florida 33881-9664

## **President Bush and Homosexual Benefits, When Does Life Begin and More**

Compiled by Mark McWhorter



The Associated Press (AP) reports that after a steady decline in membership, the leaders of seven Protestant denominations are looking for ways to reverse the trend. The denominations include the Christian Reformed Church, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Christ. Each has seen a drop in attendance over the past 20 years. (Religion Today, 7/10/02) *[Could it be that people are not interested in a "church" that is adamantly teaching there is no truth? Could folks be wondering why worry with a denomination that does not believe that Christ was the literal Son of God? Could folks be deciding that it is useless to proclaim faith when the church they are a part of believes any faith will do? —mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

...The Christian Medical and Dental Society is embarking on a new project to help combat efforts by pro-abortion forces to re-define when life begins. Society director **Dr. David Stevens** says the new project has begun and its goal is simple: to educate people that life really begins at the one-cell embryonic stage. A debate has begun recently as pro-abortion forces have suggested life begins at "implantation" of the fertilized human egg inside the mother's womb, while cloning advocates maintain it begins only at natural fertilization because a cloned embryo is never really "fertilized." Stevens says those who maintain to the "implantation of a fertilized egg" theory are wrong. He explains that it is not just fertilization that defines life, because human beings can be created now through cloning, and natural fertilization does not even take place using the procedure. Since cloning bypasses natural fertilization, cloning advocates want to establish "fertilization" as the beginning of life. Stevens adds that advocates of stem-cell research want "implantation" to be the start of life because that would free them to kill all the embryos they want prior to that event. Stevens says human life needs to be protected at every stage of its development. (Agape Press, 7/9/02) *[Keep your eye on this. Redefining the beginning of life will lead to redefining when it ends. —mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

Without much fanfare, **President Bush** signed a bill that will provide benefits to the homosexual partners of policemen and firefighters who die in the line of duty. The law was named for homosexual priest **Rev.**

**Mychal F. Judge**, the New York Fire Department's chaplain who died in the 9-11 attack on the World Trade Center. **David Smith** with the Human Rights Campaign correctly predicted what will be the result of this law. It will "be the beginning of government recognition that gay families deserve the same rights and privileges as non-gay families have." Rev. Sheldon commented on this law in the "Washington Post": "Homosexual folks see this as a first step toward recognizing homosexuality on the same level as marriage, and that's what it will be used for," said Sheldon. For more on this new law, go to: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A44912-2002Jun25.html> (Traditional Values Coalition, 6/28/02) *[President Bush continues to demonstrate that he talks out of both sides of his mouth. He touts family values while at the same time pushing the homosexual agenda. Do most conservatives realize how dangerous Bush is as a wolf in sheep's clothing? Yes, he is better than Clinton in some ways. But at least with Clinton it was very obvious who the enemy was when it came to biblical values. With Bush you are constantly made to wonder. —mtm]*

\*\*\*\*\*

President **Graham Spanier** who heads up the Penn State University network wrote his thesis on wife swapping and claimed that a person's personal perspective determines if a sex act is deviant or not. He also wrote that there is no evidence that wife-swapping is harmful to marriage or family stability. Spanier has had a long career of promoting deviant sexual activities on college campuses. At the University of Nebraska, Spanier promoted homosexuality. On the Penn State campus, he has allowed obscene sex fairs on campus. His most recent scandal involved a female-to-male transgender who came on campus to discuss sex change operations and gender issues. The transgender, **Patrick Califa Rice**, has written positive articles about the North American Man-Boy Love Association and about incest. (Traditional Values Coalition, 6/28/02) *[Higher learning is in big trouble at Penn State. Members of the church should think twice before allowing their child to attend this university. They should have their eyes wide open as to what their child may be exposed to. —mtm]*

—420 Chula Vista Dr.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

# DIVISION IN THE CHURCH

Tom Moore

## INTRODUCTION

- A. One of the most destructive things happening in our Lord's church today is division.
1. There are a great amount of churches that split each year for various reasons:
    - a. Some doctrinal issues.
    - b. Some over personalities.
  2. Many churches, thought they may not split, have very horrible divisions within.
    - a. Many churches have members who hate each other.
    - b. Many churches have members who are prejudice.
  3. When these types of things occur in the church, the devil applauds, and we make his work so much easier.
- B. In our lesson today we will consider four important items in reference to division:
1. The Scriptures declare division to be sinful.
  2. Exceptions to the rule.
  3. What causes division?
  4. The results of division.

## DISCUSSION

- A. THE SCRIPTURES DECLARE DIVISION TO BE SINFUL.
1. Jesus prayed for unity.
    - a. John 17:20-21
    - b. The importance of unity among the people of God can be easily seen here, for Jesus considered it important enough to pray about.
  2. Paul says we are to strive diligently to keep unity.
    - a. Ephesians 4:1-6
    - b. To be unified is to:
      - 1) Walk worthy of our vocation or calling.
      - 2) Be longsuffering.
      - 3) Uphold the seven principals stated in verses 4-6.
    - c. To fail to do this causes division, and division is a sin.
  3. God hates division.
    - a. Proverbs 6:16-19
    - b. The worst of all seems to be those who cause division.
  4. Jesus warned against division.
    - a. Matthew 12:25
    - b. Division will cause the church to crumble.
  5. The elders at Ephesus were warned concerning division.
    - a. Acts 20:28-31

- b. Division can arise in the leadership that will divide and destroy the church.
6. The church in Corinth was warned concerning the division among them.
  - a. I Corinthians 11:1-19
  - b. Paul is condemning them for their contentions and heresies.
7. Paul condemns division.
  - a. I Corinthians 1:10
  - b. We are to be of the same mind and judgment.
8. To have division is to be carnally minded.
  - a. I Corinthians 3:3
  - b. Division shows that we are immature Christians.
9. We are to reject those that cause division.
  - a. Romans 16:17-18
  - b. Those who cause division serve their own desires—and not our Lord's.



## B. EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE

1. We must reject ungodly ways, doctrines and practices of our brethren.
    - a. Romans 16:17-18
    - b. Remember, it is not those who stand for the truth that cause division, but those who uphold error.
    - c. We cannot biblically have fellowship with a brother who:
      - 1) Is involved in sinful practices... I Corinthians 5:11.
      - 2) Who teaches and upholds false doctrine... II John 9-10.
  2. We are to reject and not be involved in the things of this world that are contrary to the Lord's will.
    - a. This will mean that at times when our friends of this world are involved in things that are sinful, we cannot keep company with them at that time.
    - b. If our friends are constantly involved in things contrary to the will of God—maybe we ought to find some new friends.
      - c. I Thessalonians 5:
      - d. Ephesians 5:11
- C. WHAT CAUSES DIVISION?
1. Worldly minded people.
    - a. I Corinthians 3:1-3
    - b. Babes who should be mature Christians by now.
  2. Factious and divisive people.

- a. Titus 3:10
- b. Some people just enjoy causing trouble.
- 3. Perverters of the gospel.
  - a. Galatians 1:6-10
  - b. False teachers
- 4. Those who reject the truth.
  - a. Romans 2:8
  - b. Those who reject the truth and will not obey.
- 5. Those who speak against the truth.
  - a. II Peter 2:1-2
  - b. Many belittle the truth and those who stand for truth.
- 6. Leaders seeking preeminence.
  - a. III John 9-10
  - b. Many want to be top dog, and they do not care whom they have to stomp on to bring

it about.

#### D. THE RESULTS OF DIVISION

1. It will destroy the church ... Matthew 12:25
2. It will cause many not to believe in Christ ... John 17:20-21.
3. It will cause God not to be glorified ... Romans 15:5-6.
4. Will not have God ... II John 9-11.
5. Should be withdrawn from ... Romans 16:17.

#### CONCLUSION

- A. Are you promoting biblical unity?
- B. Or, are you a cause of unscriptural division?

—2406 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

### *Restoration Reflections...*

# EDDIE WHITTEN: FAITHFUL SOLDIER OF THE CROSS

by Paul Vaughn

Everyday to the Christian should be a day filled with blessings. The joy of being in God's family will help the faithful servant of God to overcome any trial, burden, or misfortune that comes down life's highway. Paul teaches us how to overcome suffering and the problems of life. One should seek peace and live honorably with all people.

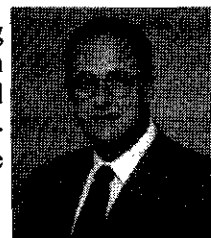
**Recompense to no man evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men (Romans 12:17,18).**

In this article we will look at a faithful soldier of the cross, **Eddie Whitten**, who truly exhibits Christian character in his life. Whitten is a sterling example of a man who endeavors to live honorably with all men, giving the family of God an example of Christian love and the importance of following God.

Eddie Whitten was born on May 14, 1927 in Madisonville, Texas. His parents were **Edd and Emily Brownlee Whitten**. He grew up in a family that be-



lieved the teaching of the Baptist Church and was baptized into the Baptist denomination at the age of nine.



#### THE INFLUENCE OF A GODLY WOMAN

Peter said:

**Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives (I Peter 3:1).**

The influence of the Christian wife is beyond measure in teaching her husband about Christ. Eddie married **Maxine Sivils** on November 21, 1945. Maxine grew up in a Christian home. Her parents were **Jesse and Marybelle Sivils**. Maxine, by example and precept, taught Eddie about New Testament Christianity. In Baytown, Texas on August 29, 1945, Eddie Whitten obeyed the gospel. He was baptized by **James Lefan**.

During the past fifteen years of doing mission work, I have met a number of families where one of the two, wife or the husband, was a Christian and in a



majority of those cases the Christian partner gave in to the non-Christian beliefs of their mate. There have been some wives who even voiced the disappointment of their husbands not being a Christian. Yet, by their very lives *their mate is turned away from the truth*. This was not the case with Maxine Whitten! She influenced her husband to follow the scriptures and many souls have been touched because of her firm stand on God's word.

Eddie and Maxine have three children, **Cheryl Foster (Bobby-husband)**, **Janice Boyle (Pat-husband)**, and **Patti Allen (Blake-husband)**. Because of their powerful example of faithful Christian parents, Maxine and Eddie influenced their children to follow Christ. Thank God for faithful parents who lead their children to obey the gospel.

### FACING TRAGEDIES

The Christian life prepares one to face untold tragedies. In March 1990, Eddie Whitten was preaching the wonderful words of Christ in a lectureship in California when on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> he received news of an accident in which his wife and mother-in-law were killed. Maxine was buried at Bryan, Texas. **Roy Deaver** and **Perry Cotham** preached her funeral. The next week Eddie spoke at the Memphis School of Preaching lectureship in Memphis, Tennessee.

It was faith in God and his word that enabled him to keep pressing on toward the mark. Eddie said, "If you don't believe in what you preach, you don't need to be preaching!" God has never promised that tragedies would not come into our lives, but has given us what we need to overcome the suffering and pain in this world. **"For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance"** (Psalm 94:14).

### STANDING ON THE PROMISES

When Eddie Whitten obeyed the gospel he surrendered all to stand on the promises of God. He entered the Brown Trail School of Preaching in 1967 and graduated in 1969. Brother Whitten was the director of the school from 1982-1988.

In 1991 he was instrumental in establishing the North East Church of Christ in Hurst, Texas. While at

Brown Trail, Eddie directed their lectureship, editing a number of very excellent books. He has lived his life with the idea that preaching and teaching God's word was not an eight-hour a day job but a twenty-four hour a day service. He averages traveling about 20,000 miles a year doing the work of an evangelist.

If one word could characterize Eddie Whitten's life it would be "faithfulness." He was a faithful husband and is a faithful father. But, his faithfulness to the church of Christ as a strong, kind, and loving soldier of Christ is beyond compare. He would never compromise the scriptures, thus Eddie is an example for all preachers to follow.

One cannot talk with Eddie long before you soon realize that he has an immense joy for life. He enjoys being a Christian and believes all Christians should lead a life filled with happiness. He said, "If I can't enjoy life as a Christian then it is not worth living. I like to live, having fun with a purpose and encourage others to enjoy life with me."


There are many who view Christianity as gloom and doom, a life filled with "thou shalt nots." All one has to do is look at the life of Eddie Whitten. You will see that *one can stand firm for God, live a faithful life as a husband and father and in doing so find true joy and purpose of life. How wonderful and joyful it is to face each day following God.*

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

**YOU CAN HELP US cut down on postal costs, Please notify us of your address changes in advance or if you are having any other problems with your subscription contact us: P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77373, PHONE: 281.350.5516.**

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

- Two-year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Spring Bible emphasis
- Established 1966
- Applications now being accepted
- Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
Fax (901) 751-8098

# *“Lessons From The Lives of The Kings— Saul, David, Solomon And The Kings of Judah”*

**November 1-3, 2002**

## **Friday, November 1**

- 9:00 A.M. Saul (Part One)-“The King Who Preferred Sacrifice To Obedience” David Brown (Spring, TX)  
10:00 A.M. Saul (Part Two)-“The King Whose Jealousy Consumed Him” B.J. Clarke (Southaven, MS)  
11:00 A.M. David (Part One)- “The King Who Had Been A Shepherd Boy” Roger Campbell (Cleveland, TN)  
1:00 P.M. David (Part Two)- “The King Who Gave In To Temptation” Russell Kline (Madisonville, KY)  
2:00 P.M. David (Part Three)- “The King Whose Son Tried To Overtake The Throne” Keith Cozort (Whitehall, PA)  
3:00 P.M. David (Part Four)- “The King Who Was A Man After God’s Own Heart” Wayne Lankford (Murfreesboro, TN)  
7:00 P.M. Solomon (Part One)-“The King Who Desired Wisdom” Glenn Colley (Collierville, TN)  
8:00 P.M. Solomon (Part Two)-“The King Who Built A House For God” Gary Grizzell (Cookeville, TN)

## **Saturday, November 2**

- 9:00 A.M. Rehoboam-“The King Who Rejected Wise Counsel” Lloyd Gale (Lebanon, TN)  
10:00 A.M. Abijah-“The King Who Walked In All The Sins Of His Father” & Asa-  
“The King Who Loved God More Than He Loved His Family”  
11:00 A.M. \* Jehoshaphat-“The King Who Was Holy Yet Human” Steve Yeatts (Murfreesboro, TN)  
1:00 P.M. \* Jehoram-“The King Who Died In Dishonor” Greg Dismuke (Athens, GA)  
2:00 P.M. Ahaziah-“The King Whose Mother (Athaliah) Seized The Throne” David Smith (Calhoun, GA)  
3:00 P.M. Joash-“The King Who Made A Good Start But Had A Bad Finish” Cliff Goodwin (Talladega, AL)  
7:00 P.M. Amaziah-“The King Whose Heart Was Not Like David His Father” James Cossey (Manchester, TN)  
& Azariah (Uzziah)-“The King Whose Pride Was His Downfall” Eric Owens (Decatur, GA)  
8:00 P.M. Jotham-“The King Who Was Righteous, A Builder, And A Soldier”  
& \* Ahaz-“The King Who Burned His Children Alive” Johnny Trail (Murfreesboro, TN)

## **Sunday, November 3**

- 9:00 A.M. Hezekiah-“The King Who Believed In And Practiced Restoration” Stan Stevenson (Lebanon, TN)  
10:00 A.M. Manasseh-“The Wicked King Who Repented” Lynn Parker (Spring, TX)  
11:00 A.M. \* Amon-“The King Whose Reign Was Short And Sinful” & Josiah-  
“The King Who Turned Neither To The Right Nor To The Left” Mike Weeks (Murfreesboro, TN)  
1:00 P.M. \* Jehoahaz-“The King Who Reigned For Only Three Months”  
& Jehoiakim-“The King Who Cut And Burned Scripture” Darrell Broking (Mountain City, TN)  
2:00 P.M. \* Jehoiachin-“The King Who Was In Prison For 37 Years” Dewayne Scott (Gallatin, TN)  
3:00 P.M. \* Zedekiah-“The King Who Became A Blind Slave” Bob Winton (Manchester, TN)

*\*Denotes a subtitle used from Herbert Lockyer’s book, “All the Kings and Queens of the Bible (published by and permission granted by Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan).*

**Hosted by:**

**BETHLEHEM CHURCH OF CHRIST  
2644 Lascassas Pike • Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37127**

All lectures will be published in a beautiful clothbound volume projected to contain 600 pages. The cost of the book is \$15.00 (not including shipping). Books will be shipped at book rate (media mail) unless otherwise requested. Book rate is usually less than half the cost of sending it via first class mail. Lectureship books may be ordered by contacting the Bethlehem church of Christ at 615-893-2297 or by mail at: 2644 Lascassas Pike, Murfreesboro, TN 37127, or by e-mail at [seyeatts@bellsouth.net](mailto:seyeatts@bellsouth.net). Please access our website at [www.bethlehemchurchofchrist.org](http://www.bethlehemchurchofchrist.org) for directions to the Bethlehem building.

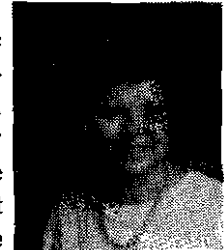
## THAT RINGING CELL PHONE!

Annette B. Cates

We seem to be hearing the ringing of cell phones everywhere we go, whether at the grocery store, the department store, the restaurant, and, yes, even in worship services. However, if one attends a golf tournament or a tennis match, respect for the game and the concentration of the players demand that cell phones be turned off. This makes me wonder—do we have more regard for these secular activities than we do for our Creator and for those who worship him? However, the cell phone is not the issue; it is but one symptom of a larger problem. Each ringing telephone should remind us of the diminishing respect our society has for the sacred.

*The ringing cell phone represents the attitude with which many speak to and about God.* One of the Ten Commandments states, **"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in**


**vain"** (Exodus 20:7). The principle established in this moral commandment is true also in the Christian age. **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth"** (Philippians 2:9, 10). Evidently many people, including Christians, are not mindful of the awe with which we should speak the names of those members of the Godhead. There are those who address prayer to "Daddy." "Oh, my God" is a phrase that is heard in reference to the most trifling of circumstances. Jokes make light of spiritual situations. Then, there are the euphemisms where God's name is changed ever so slightly, but still used as an expletive. Such lack of reverence seems to be everywhere. The Bible tells us that it is the enemy of God that uses his name in vain (Psalm 139:20). Let us think before we speak.



*The ringing cell phone represents the casual dress seen in worship services.* It is no longer uncommon to observe the wearing of mini-skirts, shorts, blue jeans, and revealing tops in the assembly of the Lord's people. The clothes we wear reflect our inner attitudes. **"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"** (Proverbs 23:7). Our appearance indicates the importance we place on any given activity. Appropriate attire is a must for worship. Not only might the clothes one wears be distracting and, thus, a hindrance to others, it reflects as irreverent attitude on the part of the wearer. One way in which we can give our best to the Master involves taking care to dress the best we can for the occasion. God gave Aaron specific instructions as to how he was to dress when going into the holy Place (Leviticus 16:4). Can we say that he cares less for our actions today? David stated in Psalm 29:2, **"Give unto the Lord the glory due** (CONTINUED ON PAGE 24)

**FOR THE Faith**

**Contending**



**2001  
Bound Volume**

• Only \$8.00  
plus \$2.00 S&H

**ORDER TODAY!**

• P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357  
fax: 281.288.0549

# 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. Sun. 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, Sun. 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-

**Cambridge**-South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**-Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax: 1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## -Florida-

**Pensacola**-Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sausley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## -Georgia-

**Cartersville**-Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. Tel. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## -Indiana-

**Evansville**-West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 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. www.garden-city-coc.org Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sun. 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, 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.

## -Oklahoma-

**Porum**-Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, Evangelist, email: lawson@starnetok.net.

## -Tennessee-

**Crossville**-Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 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.

**Rockwood**-Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## -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 Bob Patterson, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station**-Church of Christ, Sun. 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. Sun. 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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, 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: portlandcocf@juno.com.

**Riehwald**-1600 Brazosport, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.

**Roanoke**-Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262, Tel. (817) 491-2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm.

**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.

# Classifieds...

**EVANGELIST WANTED** for a small congregation of 200+ Christians. The candidate should be in his late 30's to early 50's, must be married with children and must have solid experience. He must be biblically and fundamentally sound in the scriptures and must also be evangelistic minded with a strong desire for church growth. The position would be available on January 1, 2003. Please send resume and an audio and/or video tape of a recent sermon to David Jester, Search Committee Chairman, 1011 Harriet Street, Carlisle, PA 17013.

**RUN YOUR AD HERE!** Classified Ads are only \$2.00 per line per month. For more information on placing ads in CFTF see page 2 or contact P.O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77383.

unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Do the clothes we wear when we worship him demonstrate such beauty?

*The ringing cell phone represents our conduct before and during the time we are to be worshipping God.* Yes, we want to be friendly toward those who sit to others, it reflects an irreverent attitude on the part of the wearer. One way in which we can give our best to the Master involves taking care to dress the best we can for the occasion. God gave Aaron specific instructions as to how he was to dress when going into the Holy Place (Leviticus 16:4). Can we say that he cares less for our actions today? near us and to be certain to greet visitors. A certain amount of noise is necessary as people enter the auditorium. Little children are excited to show their parents the handwork from class, and this is as it should be. However, at a point where we should be making the mental transition from the busy activities of the day to the quiet and peace of a heart attuned to God, there is almost a roar of loud talk and laughter around us. The various acts of worship are often spoiled by the behavior of those in attendance. Our songs are our way of offering praise to God (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12), but many around us are paying no attention, or are not participating at all. We should be mentally following the one who is leading in prayer, making his words our own. The Lord's Supper is a memorial to the death,

burial, and resurrection of our Savior, but few conduct themselves as reverently as they would at a funeral for a loved one. The sermon is a time for growing in knowledge and in learning to apply God's truths to our everyday lives, but many are in the decision-making process as to where to go for lunch and beat the crowds. Little thought is placed on the giving of our means and becoming less selfish (I Corinthians 16:2). A baptism in many places is greeted with applause. Yes, it is a time for rejoicing, but it is also a time when we should be overwhelmed with a sense of awe that this person has gone down into a "watery grave" and has arisen in a newness of life (Romans 6:3-7). For Christians, a baptism should be a further reminder of the sacrifice that Jesus made for all of us, not a time for applause as if it were a form of entertainment. We need to place our concentration on the acts of worship that it not be done in vain. Let us not be as the hypocrites about whom Jesus spoke in Matthew 15:8: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

*Cell phones are ringing all around us.* It is an easy matter simply turn off that cell phone as one enters worship. It will be a lot harder to turn around the attitudes that lead to such irreverence.

—9194Lakeside Dr.  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

**Contending for the Faith**  
P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT #1863

October/2002  
Volume XXXIII, No. 10  
\$14.00 per year; 2 years \$24

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## "I DON'T READ BROTHERHOOD RAGS"

Lynn Parker

Yes, that is what he told me. A brother, fellow preacher, and friend of many years was unaware of the fact that certain individuals were teaching a different and false doctrine. Likewise, he was unaware of the doctrine that was being taught. His defense was two-fold. He said that he was too busy preaching to worry about what others did, and he was not going to read brotherhood publications—"rags" he called them. They were too negative.

Strange it is that being informed and forearmed against error is low on any Christian's priority list. You read the Bible and it appears that this is every bit as much of the Christian's life as righteousness, godliness, and zeal (Titus 2:12-14; II Thessalonians 3:6,14). Note Paul's command and warning to the Colossians: **"Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"** (Colossians 2:8). Paul expected the brethren to be watchful—to "beware." The word in the original is in the "present active imperative." Here's the country version: **"present" means do it now and keep on doing it, "active" means YOU personally, and "imperative" means this is not a suggestion!** Now you cannot beware of "any one" or any doctrine with your head willfully stuck in the sand!

Turn away from them (II Timothy 3:5). But do not tell **Paul Revere** that he's an alarmist and there are no such things as Redcoats!

A neglected doctrine by many, the word of God still commands, **"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them"** (Romans 16:17). You cannot mark nameless, anonymous error-bearers and divisive heretics. Their doctrine is propagated by human agency. It deceives and beguiles (Romans 16:18). It is not harmless. It is stopped, in part, when it and its propagators are identified and marked. Is that too negative? Careful here! Take that up with Jesus Christ if you dare. He commanded it.

Can you picture some first century brother asking another about Hymenaeus and Philetus only to hear the second brother reply, "I haven't read Paul's letter—it's too negative and I don't read brotherhood rags" (II Timothy 2:17ff).



—P. O. Box 39  
Spring, Texas 77383



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher  
jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor  
Mclight@bwoodtx.com

**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

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

## 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

Editorial...

## A MEDLEY OF MATTERS

### NO NAME CALLING GONE TO SEED—

Recently an eldership in Northeast Texas announced from the pulpit to the congregation that one of their former staff members had been committing adultery for six years with a member of the congregation. They called no names. Some in the congregation thought it was one preacher, others thought it was another, and so on. A younger preacher had recently resigned his work with the congregation. Thus, he was a chief suspect. However, the culprit turned out to be an older goat, rather than a younger one.

In this case the calling of names was demanded by the nature of the sin. *Indeed the guilty should have been named to protect the innocent.* Regardless of whether the guilty adulterous parties repented or not, if the elders found it necessary to announce such to the congregation, surely for the sake of the innocent the guilty parties should have been named. Is it any wonder the church in many places is in the mess it is in when such men who think as these men thought are the shepherds of the flock? However, nowadays some churches are best described by the soap opera "As the World Turns." Stay tuned for the next sordid episode of the church of Christ in your community with each production directed by such elders as exemplified by those of this East Texas church.

**AN EXCELLENT WAY TO LEARN—**The fall semester of 1964 was my first semester in college. One of the most valuable courses in that semester was called "Fundamentals of Speech." Before the students were allowed to attempt to make a brief speech, several weeks passed with the class engaged in the study of outlining—detailed outlines. These were turned in to the teacher and they were graded. When we finally began to make our speeches it was without a lectern. The only notes we were allowed to use in delivering our speeches were our outlines on 3X5 inch cards.

It was in that first speech course that I outlined my first religious tract. We were to deliver a persuasive speech. Since this was a state college I decided to outline a tract on what the Bible taught on dancing. I did and delivered it. Later I turned it into a sermon. The next Spring (1965) I had my

first real opportunity to preach in a small rural congregation several miles west of my home. For over four years I preached for that congregation. I cannot begin to remember all the religious articles, tracts, written sermons and the like that I outlined.

I not only sought sermons to preach to benefit others, but I was interested in learning more myself. Besides developing sermons from my own study of the Bible, I looked to the works of **J. W. McGarvey, N. B. Hardeman, James D. Bales** (under whom I later studied while in Harding College), **Guy N. Woods, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Roy C. Deaver, Thomas B. Warren, G. K. Wallace, Franklin Camp, Rex Turner, Sr., Gus Nichols** and many lesser-known preachers in the brotherhood were studied and outlined by me. I learned that if I could not personally sit in classrooms at the feet of these men, I could have them teach me through their writings. With some of these men I had closer relationships than with others. However, to one extent or another and at one time or another I was privileged to meet and study under all the previously listed men except, of course, **N. B. Hardeman and J. W. McGarvey.**

One of those men whom I was exposed to more than some of the others was Roy Deaver. In recent years brother Deaver and I have not been close because of his belief in the direct work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian, which his son Mac has championed. However, what I have learned from Roy Deaver in over thirty years is greatly appreciated. And, because we are at odds over the Holy Spirit matter as set out on the pages of *CFTF* and other places over the last several months and years does not mean that I have not benefited and continue to benefit from his work. To the contrary, so much of his work is ever so valuable. The same would be true regarding others—**J. W. McGarvey, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., James D. Bales,** and others who believed some things contrary to Bible teaching.

One of the many writings of Roy Deaver from which I have learned is his tract entitled "*Premillennialism: Matthew Chapters 24 and 25 Do Not Teach It!*" Until recently it had been some time since I had read the tract. However, I was exposed to his material in the tract before it appeared in tract form in 1977. The truth of the matter is I do not remember when I first studied the material that is printed in his 1977 tract. I know it was available to the public before it appeared in

## *In This Issue..*

"I Don't Read Brotherhood Rags" Lynn Parker	1
<i>Editorial...</i>	
A Medley of Matters David P. Brown	2
<i>Assistant Editorial...</i>	
What Are You Looking For—In A Preacher That Is? Michael Light	6
<i>Immersion In The Holy Spirit</i> J. W. McGarvey	8
<i>Restoration Reflections...</i>	
"Uncle Jake" Starling Paul Vaughn	17
<i>Sermon Outlines...</i>	
The Pivotal Command (Mark 12:30) Tom Moore	18
<i>One Woman's Perspective...</i>	
Swimming Alone Annette Cates	20
<i>Current Events That Concern Christians...</i>	
Church of England, Christian Without Religion, Heaven and Hell Mark McWhorter	21
<i>The Last Word...</i>	
A Little Child Shall Lead Them Eddie Whitten	22

tract form. It was delivered at one lectureship previous to its publication as a tract. And, I am quite sure more than that—namely, every time he taught on these chapters. I know that I learned from him, as well as Rex Turner, Sr. and Guy N. Woods, what I write and preach on the matter. A long time ago I made much of Roy Deaver's material mine. I internalized it through my outlining; in which outlining I use the author's own words and sentences. Indeed, if a person knows how to write (and the men previously listed certainly knew how to write), every sentence will fit into an outline. However, for many years now when preaching or teaching on Matthew 24 I have not used written notes.

I think the late Guy N. Woods in his book of sermons entitled *Sermons on Salvation*, best expressed how one internalizes the material from others. Brother Woods wrote:

We are vastly indebted to that unspeakably wonderful store of knowledge that great and good men, who have gone before, have mined for us, and which is today one of our richest heritages. So much a part of us has that portion of this heritage we have acquired become that it is impossible to give specific acknowledgements. That it is again to go forth in another form testifies to the permanence and abiding value of truth. May it be blessed of God to the salvation of souls, is our earnest prayer.

It is reported about the late **N. B. Hardeman** that when a preacher asked if he could preach the sermon he had heard brother Hardeman deliver, brother Hardeman responded with, "If the fellow I got it from does not care, I don't." Recently as well as several years ago brother Deaver told me that he was so exposed to brother Hardeman as a teacher and personally that he used brother Hardeman's material to such an extent that he did not attempt to separate it from his own work because he could not do so. *In fact, we are limited in the ways the truth on any topic can be stated.*

At one time following a sermon preached by **G. K. Wallace** a preacher confronted brother Wallace with the charge that brother Wallace had preached his sermon. Brother Wallace inquired of the upset brother as to the whereabouts of his sermons. The preacher told brother Wallace that it was in a book he had printed and it was for sale. Brother Wallace told the preacher that since he had bought the book the sermon belonged to him. Some preachers do not know when their sermons have been complimented.

At this time on one web cite there are two sermon outlines under the name of a faithful brother, which outlines came from an old sermon outline book published in the 1920s. I assure you that this good brother at the time he put them on his web cite did not realize where those outlines came from.

Not long ago a young preacher was telling me about some material that a mutual friend of ours was using in a sermon. The young brother said he had picked it up from our friend. What I had to tell him was that our friend got the material from hearing me preach it. And, I obtained it from another source not connected with anyone in the church.

I do get somewhat amused at some (especially preachers—some younger one's in particular) who attempt to make a difference in the oral presentation of someone else's sermon and the writing of it. The oral presentation is recorded and sent all over creation and the written material is printed and sent out too. But the young fellow who attempted to make the difference with me claimed there was a difference in the oral and written sermons. And, there is a difference, but it is not in the material, it is in the presentation. I continue to think now as I thought then—maybe his inability to see likenesses and opposites (**D. R. Duncan** in his book on hermeneutics calls that "common sense") is one reason that same young man cannot see *there is no difference as far as something originating with someone else whether it is presented orally or in writing.*

#### **THERE IS A DANGER IN OPERATING FROM MEMORY**

The danger from using outlines developed many years ago is that it is easy to forget the origin of one's material. Therefore, record the source where it is readily available. One may have to get a few years on him as well as get as busy as a one-armed paperhanger to appreciate what I am saying, but never the less such is the case. Indeed, we are obligated to provide things honest before all men (II Corinthians 8:21). Whatever the case, do not stop teaching the truth on any subject no matter from where you learned it. Your enemies are not going to accept your explanations any way, so why spend any more energy and time dealing with them than is necessary? And, if you do what is necessary to remember where you obtained your material, you will save yourself the aggravation

of having to deal with such things later on.

**ANTISM**—What is “antism”? It is making laws where God did not make any. While we are busy battling all sorts and sizes of “liberalism” (doctrines that loose men from God’s laws) today, we should not forget that in the New Testament it was “antism” that posed the greater problem for the Lord and the early church. Remember the Pharisees. They bound their traditions as if such came from heaven. Remember the Judaizing teachers. They too bound where God did not bind. Remember Paul’s warning of apostasy in I Timothy 4. “Antism” again—“**forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats**” (verse 3).

Recently a woman visited the Spring congregation where I preach. Some time had passed, but I had seen her with her husband when they earlier had visited. I met her as she left the building and told her we were glad to have her and that she was welcome to come back. She responded by saying that she had heard that I had stated that “anties” are going to hell. I told her that what I had said at different times in preaching in a number of places as the sermon topic demanded it was that those who bound on people what God had not bound would be lost. What she said next I usually hear from liberals. She said that I should not judge lest I be judged. Of course like the liberals she was not engaged in judging anyone, was she? What a rude awakening such people will have if they die in that frame of mind!

Of course, these matters from the Bible previously mentioned do not lessen the danger of “liberalism”—it does point out that there is the tendency for extremes in one direction to beget extremes from the opposite direction.

What do “liberals” and “antis” have in common? They are not content with where God has drawn the lines. Neither one **only** does what God has authorized man to do and leave undone what is not authorized or forbidden by the Lord. The sad part about it is that some who strongly oppose “liberalism” are not very concerned about “antism.” God is not happy with either, and faithful children of God will oppose “antism” as strongly as they do “liberalism.”

The abysmal ignorance extant today regarding how the Bible authorizes is appalling. We can only expect more extremes to the left and to the right of truth among brethren on a variety of subjects as long as men do not respect Bible authority

and are ignorant of how to ascertain it.

**THE BROWN TRAIL CHURCH MESS**—Someone ask me the other day what I thought about the turmoil in the eldership, among the preachers (now former preachers), and some of the membership of the Brown Trail Church of Christ in Hurst, Texas. My reply to the question was and is: “If the people of that church who are guilty of sinful conduct do not repent before they step into eternity they are going to be lost.”

The only doctrinal error that I know of that had somewhat to play in the recent fiasco and the fall out which continues on, is the re-evaluation of the elders doctrine. This is not new with those brethren. Although some of us thought they had learned their Bible better since it has been over ten years since they practiced elder re-evaluation the first time. But alas, such was not the case.

At present the powers that be at Brown Trail are trying to say everything is A-OK. But I have not seen any sign of repentance from anybody for anything. Unless the Brown Trail elders want us to believe the goings on over the past several months are exemplary of Christian conduct and a pattern for all churches to follow, somebody needs to repent.

Of course someone may say this trouble concerns only the Brown Trail congregation—it is an internal matter. That is simply not the case. Brown Trail has too many works that depend upon the brotherhood for them to function. Therefore, there mess and whoever made it becomes a concern for all faithful Christians. Remember Pearl Harbor—No, wrong catastrophe—I mean remember the Herald of Truth and Highland.

For example, under date of September 9, 2002 a letter from Ed Allen addressed to “Dear Friends” was mailed far and wide. Note the first sentence in the letter. “This is a plea four your congregation to consider giving a significant amount of money to Truth in Love to position it financially as we launch into a new chapter of her existence.” The first sentence of the second paragraph reads, “As you know, Truth in Love is a work of the church and is entirely supported by the church of Christ.” The first two sentences in the eighth paragraph read, “What I am asking your congregation to give to the Truth In Love is a one-time lump-sum donation of \$5,000. Additionally, I am asking you to consider giving \$250 per month for the next year.” The Truth In Love is a work of the

Brown Trail Church of Christ. In making this plea for financial support and telling the churches that the Truth In Love is a tool that the churches may use to reach the lost makes what goes on in and with the Brown Trail eldership et al. of interest to every faithful child of God. And, this does not begin to consider the thousands of dollars over the years from throughout the brotherhood that have helped students go through Brown Trail School of Preaching, which students leave Brown Trail to work among the churches.

The letter from which I have previously quoted is seeking financial help from the brotherhood in the amount of approximately \$826,000.00. This money is to be overseen and administered by the Brown Trail elders. Yes, when a church seeks support of the brotherhood what goes on in the eldership and among the preachers, etc. is the concern of the faithful whom that church calls on to support them.

We do not need an Enron Church of Christ whose elders do not indicate that in a fiasco that was

long in coming to a head in the Brown Trail Church that no one involved therein is guilty of sin. Why will people think that they are worthy of the trust of the brotherhood when they go right on as if nothing wrong (sinful) happened? Where is the person or persons at Brown Trail who will say that every person involved in all the trouble that has transpired therein did no sin and therefore need not repent of anything? Moreover, if they do admit that people sinned and they have not repented, why is not church discipline being carried out? The thing that upsets me the most is that some people think they can dismiss the whole thing as if nothing ever happened, attempt to sweep it all under the proverbial rug, and this will satisfy the brethren. While such may satisfy some brethren, for those brethren who desire things to be done according to the Bible it will certainly not satisfy them.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

*Assistant Editorial...*

## WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? —IN A PREACHER THAT IS

One of the aspects of preaching that must be dealt with from time to time is the need to relocate. Hardly a month goes by when two or three preachers do not call or write asking if I know of a congregation looking for a preacher. Usually there is no shortage of congregations in need of a preacher, so I do what I can to get the two parties together. While in many instances there is nothing earth shattering about changes in the pulpit, there has been and is a troubling trend that seems to be permeating many congregations as they develop their criteria for the position.

There seems to be a move for congregations to hire younger preachers. About three years ago the late **Bobby Bates**, one of my preaching friends, was discussing this very point at one of our preachers' meetings. He was discussing the fact that after a preacher reaches his sixties many congregations tend

to lose interest. I too have noticed this. There seems to be a desire to offer people some kind of excitement through the instrumentality of the preacher.

Could it be that many "conservative" congregations have fallen into the same entertainment driven mentality as our "liberal" counterparts? Liberal congregations seem to have accepted the maxim, "build a better mousetrap." They labor in jazzing up the services by importing music ministers and praise teams, and filling the pulpit with entertainers. The assumption seems to be that we must offer the populace what they want.

While faithful brethren have not overtly accepted this mindset, perhaps we have been more influenced by it than we wish to admit. It is not rare to hear of congregations looking for a

preacher and that they are only interested in someone under forty-five, preferably with children. I certainly have nothing against young preachers (in fact I am one) but it is worrisome to see our older more experienced men ignored because of their age.

I have never understood the mindset that would choose a young inexperienced "preacher boy" over a seasoned man of God who has actually lived and worked in the Lord's kingdom for years. Many prefer the younger man because he is more excitable and speaks in a louder fashion. I am reminded of a statement our departed brother **J. Noel Merideth** once made. He said, "I learned a long time ago, it's the lightning that kills, not the thunder." How true this is. Just because a preacher is loud and boisterous does not make him worth a flip as a preacher of the gospel.

When we disrespect and disregard our older preachers we are in direct violation of the biblical principle of respecting our elders. In II Timothy 2:2 we read, "**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.**" The natural order is for the older men to teach the younger. Many congregations have serious problems develop because their young preachers do not know how to handle various problems that arise.

There is no doubt in my mind that as a group our older men are much more valuable than most of us give them credit. As I look across my desk at the bookshelves in my office, I see volume after volume written by, or edited by several of our older men. I get frustrated when I hear younger men making light of a lecture delivered by an older man because it was boring. This attitude is what I was speaking of earlier. Are we really more concerned with the manner in which a man speaks, or the message that he speaks?

I too think a man should preach like he is convicted about the subject under consideration, but, "it's the lightening not the thunder that kills." What a preacher says is far more important, than how he says it. It is easy for conservative brethren to attempt to compete in the religious arena by trying to hire a "fireball" to stir the membership and draw a crowd. I would suggest a man's doctrine be considered more closely than his diction. And his commitment to Christ over the volume of his voice.

We younger preachers should thank God for our older men who have shown us the way in so many areas. We could learn much about how to deal with brethren, how to confront false teachers, and how to live the Christian life for decades and be better for it. I would encourage congregations to think long and hard before turning their older preachers out to pasture. Proverbs 23:22 reminds us that we should not despise the elderly, let us make sure that we do not. The psalmist adds, "**Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth**" (Psalm 71:9). Just because our society despises the elderly and views them as a burden, we must avoid such a godless view. Our elderly are one of the most precious commodities of the church. Our faithful older preachers are living heroes of the faith.

The next time the congregation where you are is involved in searching for a preacher, do not overlook the seasoned veterans. They have earned an opportunity, let them continue to serve.

—Michael Light, Assistant Editor

## Pressing Toward the Mark, Vol. I & II

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY**

**IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 each**

**\$35.00 if ordered as set**

**(plus \$2.50 postage and packaging)**

**Order from:**

**VADA RICE**

**3809 WIND VALLEY DRIVE**

**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38125-2461**



# IMMERSION IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

J. W. McGarvey

*[The following article was written by J. W. McGarvey. He wrote it in response to an article written by Moses E. Lard, the editor of Lard's Quarterly in the March 1864 issue of his paper. McGarvey's article appeared in the June 1864 issue of the Quarterly (pages 428-442). This exchange began a discussion by various writers on the Holy Spirit (especially concerning the direct or indirect work of the Spirit and the baptism of the Spirit) that continued for several issues to come in the Quarterly.]*

*Many years later McGarvey was asked if he had changed his view on the matter as set out in the 1864 article. He had not. His full response appears in his book on Biblical Criticism on page 253. From his remarks we are enlightened concerning how he came to write his response to Lard's March 1864 article. McGarvey wrote:*

*Bro. Lard and I agreed as to the meaning of the passage; but he had some misgivings about it, so he made the proposal that I should write a defense of our interpretation; that he should make under an assumed name the strongest objections to it that he could, and that I should then make a short rejoinder.*

*In view of what Bob Berard, Mac Deaver, and Glenn Jobe are teaching regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit (See the August 2002 issue of CFTF), it seemed good to note that what they are saying is not new (Glenn Jobe's quotation of Goebel Music in the 2001 Robertson County Lectures regarding new ideas not-with-standing). Lard wrote that every Christian receives the non-miraculous baptism in the Holy Spirit in his March 1864 article. Though quite lengthy and somewhat tedious, I am reproducing in full McGarvey's response to Lard's article.*

*Furthermore, to read the articles in Lard's Quarterly pertaining to the Holy Spirit one can find about everything that Mac Deaver and company are espousing concerning the Holy Spirit's indwelling, his alleged direct work today, and Holy Spirit baptism for every Christian. As Solomon wrote: "That which has been is that which shall be; and that which hath been done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Indeed, while some would like us to believe them original in their thinking, in reality they are simply restating and refining what was long ago declared and discussed.*

*When McGarvey refers to "the author," "the writer," and so on in his article he is referencing Lard in "Baptism in one Spirit into one Body," Volume I, Lard's Quarterly, pages 271-281, March 1864. —David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief]*

An article in the last number of the *Quarterly* entitled "Baptism in one Spirit into one Body," has struck the public mind as quite a novelty in the literature of the Reformation. It is not only novel, but it is contradictory to some conclusions very generally received among us, and upon a subject which the brethren have studied with great diligence. Of this the author was fully conscious, and in anticipation of the reception which awaited his article, very justly remarked that "no view is to be rejected merely because it is new." The lover of truth should never be a dogmatist; nor conclude, that on any subject he has nothing more to learn. But he should stand ready, whenever his conclusions, even those of which he is most confident, are challenged upon the basis of new reasons, to renew his investigation. We say, upon the basis of *new* reasons, because the mere reiteration of old and oft refuted ar-

guments against any proposition can impose no such obligation. The novel conclusion of the article in question is sustained by a course of argument equally novel, and with an ingenuity unsurpassed on the pages of the *Quarterly*. It demands, therefore, the most careful consideration, and we propose to review it deliberately and thoroughly.

I have for some years been convinced that the immersion in the Holy Spirit is not fully understood, and that it needs investigation and discussion *de novo*. The same may be said of the entire subject of the Holy Spirit and his work in human salvation. Although there are some propositions upon this subject, which are well defined, and well settled among us, yet on no other subject are there so many points in which we feel distinctly and painfully the want of certainty. It is a surprising fact, that amid all the myriads of volumes with

# "UNCLE JAKE" STARLING

Paul Vaughn

In studying the past two hundred-years of the church there are those who are but shadows in history. Men and women who have been forgotten in the mists of time but their silhouette is there in history if one desires to look for it. "Uncle Jake," **Jacob Sanford Starling** is one of those pioneer preachers who worked daily in the kingdom without notoriety. He never wrote an article, went to college or a school of preaching, but he was a student of the Book and many people obeyed the gospel because of his efforts.

There is little information about the early life of brother Starling. We know he was born on May 8, 1864 in Kentucky and in 1874 his family moved to southern Missouri, and the next year they moved to Lawrence County, Arkansas. He had an older brother **Will** and two sisters, **Nacey** and **Niecey**. The family settled near **Opposition, Arkansas**. **Niecey** never liked living in Arkansas so she made up her mind to return to Kentucky.

She left home, heading back to Kentucky afoot, at the top of the ridge above the Starling home she stopped and waved good-bye to them as they watched her leaving. They never saw her or heard from her again.<sup>1</sup>

In 1883 Jacob married **Julia Park**, she was seventeen years old, two years younger than Jacob. The Park family had moved to the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas from Tennessee at the beginning of the Civil War.

Shortly after their marriage, the Starling's heard the gospel proclaimed by **Alexander Douglas**. The "Seed was Sown" in honest hearts and they obeyed the message of salvation for their soul. Jacob's heart was

on fire and he would study the Bible at every opportunity. He was a farmer who worked extremely hard to plow out a living from the Arkansas dirt. Walking behind a team of mules all day is an exhausting job, yet when it came time to rest, Jacob would pull out his New Testament from his hip pocket and study God's word. One could contrast the attitudes of many Christians' today who work in air-conditioned buildings and enjoy the advantages of modern society, but they never have time for Bible reading.

By 1900 "Uncle Jake" Starling was preaching the gospel. It was not unusual for Starling to "plow until noon Saturday, unhitch his mules and curry one, a big gray mule whom he called 'Beck', saddle her and away to his appointment where he would preach Saturday night, Sunday and Sunday night and ride most of the night getting home."<sup>2</sup> They were poor in that part of the country and there was very little support for the preachers, many times he never received support from the brethren for his labors. It is believed the most he ever received in support for the preaching of God's word in a week-end preaching appointment was \$2.50.

Humility is a character that every Christian should exhibit. Brother Starling was a man of humility. He never was a located preacher. Starling was offered the



YOU CAN HELP US CUT DOWN ON postal costs. Please notify us if your address changes in advance or if you are having any other problems with your subscription contact our P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77373 PHONE: 281.950.5518

## Reminder...



Send Renewals to:

P.O. BOX 2357  
SPRING, TX 77373  
FAX: 281.288.0549

which the presses of the past century have been teeming, we should have had no masterly and scriptural work on the Holy Spirit. The work of Jenkyn comes nearer meeting the demand than any other; but it is marked by defects which are inseparably connected with Calvinism, and it stands almost alone. Even among our own brethren nothing more has appeared than a few well written essays on special points in the great range of inquiry. The most complete and scriptural exposition of the subject is to be found in the Campbell and Rice debate; but there only a single branch of it comes under review. The range of the discussion upon which we are now entering must be still more limited; but if it should be the means of stimulating inquiry, and, as a final result, of leading some sound student of the Bible to give the world such a volume as we have indicated, it would not be by any means fruitless.

The main issue presented by the article under review is this: was the immersion in the Holy Spirit confined to certain persons who received miraculous gifts, or is it enjoyed by all disciples alike? The latter is the conclusion in which the writer's course of reasoning terminates. A number of reasons are offered in support of this conclusion; but it is unnecessary to refer to them at all, if, as the writer declares, it is *actually asserted*, that we become members of the one body by "being immersed in one Spirit into it." If this be asserted in the passage under consideration, it is not to be questioned, and needs no further proof than this assertion affords. We may say further, that if the author has given us the right rendering and collocation of the words, they certainly contain this assertion: for he would have them read, "*we were all immersed in one Spirit into one body.*" This is not the collocation of the words which he gives in the formal rendering of the verse; but he contends that this expresses the meaning correctly.

Previous to offering this new rendering, and in the very first paragraph of his article, he makes this observation: "The question, how is it that by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body? has, heretofore, caused no little perplexity; and as long as it is put in the words here used, it will never cause less." If he should find that the new rendering proves no less perplexing than the old one, perhaps the latter will grow somewhat in his favor. And really the *perplexity* which the new rendering must cause, is the very first result of it which strikes the mind. If it be true that the immersion by which we get into the one body is immersion in one Spirit, then, instead of coming in by a kind of double immersion, of Spirit in Spirit, and body in water, it will be difficult to prove that the immersion in water is any part of the process whatever. Suppose it were denied that baptism in water brings us into the one body, or any part in doing so. You answer, Paul

says, "**as many as have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have put him on,**" and this language proves that we are baptized into Christ, which is the same as being baptized into the one body. I say, yes, very true; we *are* baptized into Christ, but this is not *water* baptism; it is *Spirit* baptism; for "**we were all immersed in one Spirit into one body.**" You fly to Romans sixth, and quote, "**So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death;**" but I again answer that as it is *in one Spirit* that we are baptized into one body; wherever a baptism is mentioned which brings us into Christ or the one body, we are bound to understand it as the baptism in Spirit, unless there are some qualifying words to give it another reference. Thus, by the admission that it is immersion in the Spirit which brings into one body, I shut you off from every method of proving that immersion in water is a part of the process. If you appeal to the commission as recorded by Matthew, and quote, "**baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,**" I may still assert, that though the immersion administered by the apostles brought them into the name, it is the immersion in the Spirit which brings them into the one body. When you quote that except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God, I could admit that a birth of water is necessary to entering the organized kingdom; but that the immersion in the Spirit alone brings us into the mystical body of Christ. You might consider this caviling; but you would find it somewhat puzzling; and, with your very best efforts you would fail to show by a direct declaration concerning immersion in water, what I show concerning immersion in the Spirit, that it *brings us into the one body.*

Still further. If it be true that the immersion in the Spirit brings us into the one body, then all proper subjects of this immersion are in the body as soon as the immersion takes place. But Cornelius and his friends were immersed in the Spirit, and therefore into the one body, *before* they were immersed in water. This is still further proof, that on this hypothesis immersion in water has no part in bringing us into the one body.

Again, the apostles on the day of Pentecost are expressly declared to have been immersed in the Holy Spirit. On your hypothesis this immersion brought them into the one body, and previous to it they were not in the body; but their immersion in water took place previously, therefore it was not this that brought them into the body Christ. Now, is there not something puzzling in these facts? And even if the puzzle could at last be successfully solved, does not the new rendering of this passage in the 12th of 1 Corinthians rob us of some of the passages on which we have relied to prove that by immersion in water the penitent believer is brought into Christ and into his death?

But an effort may be made to save some of these passages in their true sense, by the rule of criticism, that when the word immersion occurs unqualified we must understand it in its primary scriptural sense, of immersion in water. Indeed, this effort is made (p. 281) in reference to Paul's statement, "there is one baptism." I meet this effort in two ways. *First*, I propound a rule of interpretation equally imperative, that when it is clearly ascertained that a certain effect is attributed to a certain cause, wherever that effect is mentioned, that cause is implied, unless there is some limiting expression to indicate another cause. By the application of this rule, as it is positively asserted that immersion in the Spirit brings us into the one body, wherever immersion, unqualified, is mentioned as bringing us into the one body, or into Christ or as effecting the same change under other forms of expression, we must understand it as immersion in the Spirit. This rule would hold good, unless it were also explicitly declared that we are *immersed in water into one body*; in which case the term immersion, in such passages as we have supposed, would be ambiguous. But there is no such declaration as this.

Upon this rule, the statement of Paul in Ephesians fourth, that there is *one baptism* would bear quite a different meaning from that which the writer gives it. The seven units there enumerated by the apostle are specifications under the exhortation to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" (see the connection, Ephesians 4: 3-6), and the baptism there mentioned must be that one by which "unity of the Spirit" is attained, and maintained. Moreover, it stands connected with the "one body," and must therefore be understood as the baptism which brings us into the one body. But the baptism which meets both these demands is that in the Spirit; for "we were all immersed in one Spirit into one body:" therefore the *one baptism* of Paul is the baptism in Spirit and not in water.

There is not only something puzzling in all these conclusions, but they show that the establishment of the writer's criticism would completely revolutionize our course of argument in reference to the office of immersion in water. There is no one to whom this would be more repugnant than to the author himself.

But, in the second place, the rule of criticism that the word immersion, when unqualified, must be understood in its primary sense of immersion in water, is strictly correct; and, unfortunately for the rendering and interpretation for which the write contends, it applies to his text as well as to other passages. When Paul says, in this passage, that "we were all immersed into one body," this rule requires us to understand the term "immersed" of immersion in water, unless it is so limited as to compel us to understand it differently. But the writer assumes that it is so limited here, and lo-

cates the expression "*in on Spirit*," immediately after the term "immersed" for the very purpose of thus limiting the meaning of the latter term. But this certainly is a mislocation in fact, if not in meaning. The apostle locates this expression at the beginning of the sentence, so as to read, "In one Spirit we were all immersed into one body." Now with this arrangement of the proposition, the expression "*in one Spirit*," limits the term *we*, instead of the term *immersed*. Assuming that *we were first in one Spirit* it asserts that we were *immersed into one body*; and makes the latter event take place subsequent to the former. This suits the Baptist idea that a man must first be in the Spirit, which in New Testament phraseology, is equivalent to having the Spirit in him, Romans 8: 9, and must afterwards be immersed into the body, the church. Indeed, it corresponds precisely to their conception of the case of Cornelius and his friends, who were first *in the one Spirit*, and afterwards *immersed into the one body*. According to Paul's real collocation of his own words, therefore, the term "immersed" in this passage still means immersed in water, and the only difficulty in the case is found in detemining (sic) the meaning and proper rendering of *en epi neumati*.

Before proceeding to grapple with this difficulty, it may be proper to start the inquiry, may it not, after all, be true, that one or the other of the conclusions to which the writer's rendering seems to drive us, is the correct conclusion?

First. Is it not true, that we are brought into the one body by immersion in the Spirit? If so, it is certainly not proved by the passage we have been considering; for, as we have just seen, this passage, even with the rendering in question, contains an entirely different proposition. Again, by the rule which requires the term immersion, when not otherwise limited, to be understood as immersion in water, it is certain that in the latter sense, we are immersed into Jesus Christ, and into his death. This is the one immersion which brings us in the unity of the Spirit into the one body. Moreover, it is certain that neither of the two immersions in the Holy Spirit which are expressly so styled in the Scriptures brought its subjects into the one body. The apostles constituted a part of the body of Christ before they were immersed in the Spirit and Cornelius and his friends were immersed into the one body, born out of water into the kingdom, *after* they had been immersed in the Spirit. Now, how is it possible for us to maintain that all are brought into the one body by immersion in the Spirit, in face of the fact that this is not true of the only persons who were unquestionably so immersed? Even if we had an express declaration that immersion in the Spirit brings us into one body, we would find extreme difficulty, if not an impossibility, in attempting to reconcile it with these facts.

Second. Is not the Baptist hypothesis the true one—that we are all first in the one Spirit, and afterwards, by immersion in water, brought into the one body? If so we must find the historical facts upon the subject in harmony with this idea. But we find the apostles all in the one body *before* they were immersed in the Spirit; and we find the twelve disciples in Ephesus immersed by Paul “into the name of the Lord Jesus,” (Acts 19: 5-6), *after* which Paul laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And lest these should be considered anomalous cases, it was some days, if not weeks, after the Samaritans had been immersed by Philip, that the Holy Spirit came upon them in answer to the prayer of Peter and John: “for as yet he was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 8:14-17. In all these cases the Baptist idea is reversed; and so it appeared to Paul and Peter in reference to all other cases; for Paul says: “Because you are Sons, God has sent forth ‘the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father;’” (Galatians 4: 6), and Peter commands, “Repent and be immersed for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2: 38).

We now proceed to the inquiry, what is the real meaning of the expression, *en neumati*? rendered by the writer, *in one Spirit*, and in the common version, *by one Spirit*. That *en* means *in*, and must be so rendered when there is nothing to rule otherwise, cannot be denied. And that *en epi neumati*, standing alone, should be rendered *in one Spirit*, is equally undeniable. But *en* is sometimes rendered *by* and must be so, when either the context of the harmony scripture statement requires it. If we were to consult the context alone, there would be found nothing in either the grammatical or logical structure of the sentence to forbid the use of *in*. But we have already seen that other facts and statements in the New Testament forbid the idea expressed by the rendering, “*in one Spirit we were all immersed into one body*.” This alone is sufficient ground for inquiring whether there is any other admissible rendering which will better harmonize with other unambiguous passages. If the laws of the language admit another rendering, we are compelled to seek it; and if New Testament usage furnish any other in similar connections, we are invited to adopt it.

Now it so happens that there are just three forms in which the agency of the Holy Spirit is expressed by *neuma* in conjunction with a preposition. These three are *dia* with the genitive, *upo* with the genitive, and *en* with the dative. Of these three, all of which are rendered *by* or *through* the Spirit, the last occurs *most frequently* so that the very expression under discussion, which the writer so unhesitatingly renders *in one Spirit*, is the Greek form most frequently rendered *by the*

*Spirit*, and used in declaring that some thing is done by the Spirit as an agent or actor. That it is correctly thus rendered, will be apparent upon examination of a few of these passages. We find no less than *four* occurrences of this usage in the very chapter which contains the text in dispute, and in the immediate context. We read in the third verse, “No man *en neumati Theou by the Spirit of God*, calls Jesus accursed; and no man is able to say that Jesus is the Lord, but *en neumati agio by the Holy Spirit*.” In neither of these cases can we render it *in the Spirit*, and because it is evidently the purpose of the writer to express an agency of the Spirit; and because men can say that Jesus is Lord *by the Spirit*, though they be not themselves *in the Spirit*. It was *by the Spirit* as the source of all evidence and not *in the Spirit*, that men were able to believe in and acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus and when a man called Jesus accursed, it proved not merely that he was not *in the Spirit*, but that he did not speak *by the light* which the Spirit afforded through his divine testimony.

Again, in the ninth verse we read, “To another is given faith *en tow auto neumati the same Spirit*; to another the gift of healing *en tow auto neumati by the same Spirit*.” Now, the parties on whom these gifts were conferred were all *in the Spirit*; but these gifts were conferred *by the Spirit*, and this is what the apostle here affirms. In the ten verses of this chapter, from the third to the thirteenth, there are twelve things said to be done by the Spirit, and *en neumati* is the prevailing expression, only varied for the sake of euphony by *dia neumatōs* once, *kata neuma* once, and leaving *en neumati*, to be understood throughout the tenth verse.

As this criticism constitutes a capital point in this inquiry, I will be excused for accumulating evidence upon evidence in its favor. The two forms *upo neumatōs* and *en neumati*, are used in the same sense by Matthew and Luke in describing the same event. Each says that Jesus was “*led the Spirit*” into the wilderness,” (Matthew 4:1, Luke 4:1), Matthew using the former expression, and Luke the latter. Peter and Paul do the same thing. In declaring that the prophets of old spake “*as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*,” Peter uses *upo* with the genitive; while Paul, in speaking of the mystery which was not made known to other generations, “*as it was revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit*,” uses *en* with the dative. (Compare II Peter 1: 21 with Ephesians 3:5.) In view of all this evidence, we hold it is undeniable that the expression *en neumati* is frequently used by the apostles in expressing what is done *by the Spirit*, and that it may be rendered *by the Spirit* wherever it is more suitable either to the context, or to *the nature* of the subject under discussion in a particular passage.

I think it may now be affirmed that we have es-

established three propositions: *First*, That to render the passage in question, “we were all immersed in one Spirit into one body” would be a mislocation of the apostle’s words, and untrue in fact. *Second*, That it would be equally untrue to render it, “in one Spirit we were all immersed into one body;” meaning thereby, that we were first in Spirit, and afterwards immersed into the body. *Third*, That the passage may be rendered, so far as grammatical propriety is concerned, “by one Spirit we were all immersed into one body.” This last rendering being entirely consistent with New Testament usage, and the only alternative if the first two are rejected, we shall be compelled to adopt it provided it yields a sense in harmony with the context and with other known facts upon the same subject. This is now to be tested.

The writer objects to this rendering, and the meaning it yields, for several reasons which he does not “consume space to state,” and for one which he does state. He says, “The long and not very smooth ellipsis which it requires us to supply lies strongly against it.” Now, it would be very acceptable to us if the ideas of the apostles were always expressed in such a way as to avoid an ellipsis; but, certainly the necessity of supplying an ellipsis is no very serious objection to a certain rendering, provided, the passage is so worded as to readily suggest that ellipsis. But, after all, is there any ellipsis in the passage? It states that “By one Spirit we were all immersed into one body.” The sense is as complete as when it is said we are saved “by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” It may, and does, require the supply of a number of words in each of these cases, to show *how* these things are so; but these additional words constitute an *explanation*, and not the supply of an *ellipsis*. The writer supplies what he styles the ellipsis, in these words:

“By the teaching of the one Spirit through the apostles, we have all been induced to submit to the one baptism in water, and by that act have all become united to and are therefore component members of the one body.” I confess that if this were an ellipsis, it would be a frightfully long one, and as awkward and unsightly as it is long. But the writer, in the hurry of a closing paragraph, has obviously miscalled an *explanation* by the name of an *ellipsis*; and even as an *explanation*. I fear he has thrown it into the contortions which disfigure it rather for the purpose of making it look ugly. Having a more affectionate regard for it, myself, I can smooth its features, and dress it up more handsomely in this style: By one Spirit, as the divine agent moving us thereto, we were all immersed into one body; I declare, that to my eye, this looks very smooth, and it is certainly not very long. It looks, indeed, very much like some of its kindred in the same

chapter: for when it is said (verse 3), that “no man speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no man is able to say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit,” the same explanation is needed. It is not by the Holy Spirit as actually inspiring every believer, but by the Holy Spirit as the source of all divine evidence of the Lordship of Jesus. When it is said that we must be “born of the Spirit,” a similar explanation is needed, but there is no ellipsis.

But we have another passage which presents a still more striking parallel to the one in question. It is I Corinthians 6:11; where Paul says, “you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and *en neumati by the Spirit of our God.*” Now, they were not washed in the Spirit, neither were they sanctified or justified *in* the Spirit of God. But these were all done by the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus. Neither of them however, was done *directly* by the Spirit. The act of justifying is the prerogative of the Father; and the Spirit can be said to justify only as he leads us to comply with the conditions of justification. Sanctification is the work of the Spirit, but it accomplished *through the truth*. As for the washing here mentioned, it evidently refers to the effect of baptism, in which they “*washed away their sins calling on the name of the Lord.*” In what sense had this been done “by the Spirit of our God”? Evidently, in the same sense in which Paul says in the same Epistle that, “*by one Spirit we were all immersed into one body.*” It was done, in one sense, by themselves; for they obeyed the gospel in immersion. It was done in another sense, by Paul, and Timothy, and Apollos, for they had been immersed by these men. But in still another sense, it was done by the Holy Spirit for he both directed the administrator in commanding and performing the immersion, and also influenced the subject to submit to it. By the Holy Spirit, therefore, strictly and properly, the Corinthians had been *washed*, and by the same Spirit, in the same act, they had been, immersed into one body.

I can but regard it as a serious defect in the article, that the writer did not state more fully his objections to this rendering, and the meaning which it so obviously expresses; and especially, as he must have known that it is the only rendering at all likely to prevail against his own. I attribute this, however, to a fact quite apparent throughout his article, that he had no great confidence in the correctness of his own position but threw it before the brotherhood rather with the expectation if not, indeed, the hope that it would be thoroughly refuted. It is not his way of arguing a question when he is confident that he stands upon unassailable ground.

In the absence of formally stated objections, I can only revert to such as suggest themselves to my own



mind. After what I have said concerning the grammatical issue involved, I can think of only one objection likely to strike the mind of a candid reader, which is this—that it appears far-fetched in the apostle, when referring to the person by whom they had been immersed into the one body, to say that it was by the Spirit, instead of saying that it was by Paul, and Timothy, and Apollos, and others, by whom they had actually been led into the water. But this objection is at once set aside, when we remember the purpose for which the whole statement was introduced. The purpose of the whole context was to establish the identity of that one Spirit by whom all spiritual manifestations were effected. He starts the proposition, in the fourth verse, that there are “**diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.**” He then specifies: “**To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit.**” Other gifts are specified, and he adds, “**But all these work that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to each one severally as he will.**” Lest it should appear strange to us that he should so earnestly insist upon a proposition which none of us ever doubted, we must remember that to the Corinthians this subject of spiritual manifestation was entirely new, and there were two obvious sources from which they might imbibe the error that Paul is here so earnestly combating. In the first place, the inability of the human mind to comprehend how the same Spirit could speak at the same moment, on a thousand different topics through a thousand different and widely separated individuals, would naturally suggest that these manifestations were the work of a multiplicity of spirits. Again, when they observed that one inspired man had only the gift of tongues, and could not work other miracles, whilst another could work miracles but could not speak in tongues; that one had the gift of healing, but could not prophesy, whilst another could prophesy but could not heal, it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that they were different spirits, and of different kinds of supernatural power. That this error did actually prevail in the church is rendered certain by Paul’s formal attempt to eradicate it. His course of argument consists in showing them that all these diversities of gifts were wrought by one and the same Spirit, distributing to the brethren, as he severally chose, limited and various degrees of his own supernatural power. And finally, in order that they all, both those who had gifts, and those who had not, might know still more definitely what Spirit this was, he tells them it was the same Spirit by whose direction and influence they had all been immersed into one body. Thus we see that the course of his argument most naturally and logically brought him to mention the Holy Spirit in connection with that ordinance by which they had become one

body.

We may further remark, here, that the mention of the Holy Spirit in this connection must have had a more vivid effect upon the minds of these brethren, than it can have upon ours. For they recollected that when Paul came among them preaching Christ, he accompanied the word with “**demonstrations of the Spirit, and of power,**” and claimed that he spoke “**not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches.**” The whole of this, too, was for the express purpose, that their faith might not rest “**in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.**” I Corinthians 2:1-13. The Holy Spirit was a visible working power and authority in their presence, and it was with most explicit reference to him that the Corinthians, “**hearing, believed and were immersed.**” Acts 18: 8. When therefore, Paul refers to the fact that it was “**by one Spirit,**” they had all been immersed into one body, they could be at no loss to understand his meaning. The one reason why our minds do not as readily catch the catch the same thought, is because the Holy Spirit did not exhibit himself, when influencing us, in the same startling “**signs and wonders and diverse miracles**” in which he appeared to them. This shows the importance of transferring ourselves to the exact position of parties addressed in the Scriptures, if we would understand allusions which are made to their condition or past history.

That the interpretation of the passage in question which we have now given is the correct one, is confirmed by evidence in the passage itself. That the last clause of the verse, “**and were all made to drink into one Spirit,**” refers to the reception of the Holy Spirit, I would say is indisputable, had it not been disputed by most of the Commentators.—See *Bloomfield in loco*. They refer it to drinking the wine in the Lord’s Supper—a reference quite foreign to the subject of the context, and having nothing to suggest it or justify it except the word *drink*. But the drinking in that institution is drinking the blood of the Lord Jesus not drinking the Holy Spirit. The term *drink* certainly expresses the idea of receiving within us what is drunk; and when used of the Holy Spirit it is scarcely possible that it does not refer to the reception of the Spirit within us. Why the term *drink* should be used in the connection, I would rather account for from the refreshing effects of receiving the Spirit, like a draft of cool water to man parched with thirst; than by the writer’s conceit that it was suggested by the accident of drinking some water when one is immersed.

If we are right in thus understanding the last clause of the sentence; we are right in our interpretation of the first clause. For after saying that “**we were all immersed in one Spirit into one body,**” it would be but a useless repetition to add, “**and we were all made to**

**drink into one Spirit.**" The reception the Spirit is the fact affirmed in the last clause, and it is presented as something additional to what was said in the first; but if the reception of the Spirit is declared in the first, the last is not an additional fact, but a repetition. We conclude, therefore, that the first clause does not refer to the reception of the Spirit at all. On the contrary, it declares that it was by the Holy Spirit that we were induced to be immersed and become one body; while the last clause declares the additional fact that we all then became partakers of the refreshing influence of a guest within us.

We now dismiss the consideration of this passage; fully persuaded that the common version of it, and the meaning of it as commonly understood among our brethren are correct. With a few paragraphs upon the universality of immersion in the Spirit, we will bring our article to a close.

There seem to me but two methods by which it can be proved that all Christians are immersed in the Holy Spirit; *First*, by producing a declaration of Scriptures to that effect. *Second*, by proving that what is called immersion in the Holy Spirit, is identical (sic) with something said to take place with all Christians. The writer attempts the proof upon both of these methods. His main reliance under the first method, is upon the passage which we have just dismissed, and which fails to sustain him. He also makes use of a declaration or prophecy uttered by John the Immerser: "**He shall immerse you in the Holy Spirit.**" He says of this prophecy "To limit the word *you* in this passage to such persons only as were miraculously endowed, seems to me to be a most unwarrantable restriction." Now, this remark would undoubtedly be correct, if we were compelled to look at John's words alone. But when we are permitted to see a prophecy and its fulfillment both at the same glance, we are not at liberty to interpret one without some reference to the other. The fulfillment, indeed, is often the only key to a proper interpretation of the prophecy. When this prophecy began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, there were one hundred and twenty disciples in Jerusalem, but it is certain that only the twelve apostles were then immersed in the Holy Spirit. This would require us to limit it forever to them unless we find it extended to others. Consequently, the reader of Acts naturally goes forward from the second chapter, under the impression that it is so restricted, until he is surprised, in the tenth chapter, as all the apostles were, to find the same gift bestowed on Cornelius and his friends. Acts 11:15. This is sufficient proof, that whether the restriction is authorized or not, John's words do not establish the universality of immersion in the Spirit. The writer himself admits that his argument upon these words is not decisive.

We may further observe, that John's prophecy

may be, for aught that yet appears, one of those in which the prophet looked to all the wide flowing consequences of the event predicted, and swelled his words beyond their literal fulfillment, to take in this whole area. For it is true that though the immersion in the Holy Spirit may have been confined, as respects the Jews, to the apostles, and as respects the Gentiles, to Cornelius and his friends, yet from this beginning all the good effects of it were spread abroad to all believers, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free. Such prophecies, like that to Abraham, that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him, must always await their fulfillment for the correct adjustment of their limitations.

Under the second method of proof which we have designated, the writer presents one argument which involves the whole question. He says: "If the soul of the inspired man is literally immersed in the Spirit which dwells in him, why not as well the soul of the uninspired be literally immersed in the Spirit, which dwells in him?" The argument involved in this question is an attempt to prove the universality of immersion in the Spirit by showing that that which takes place in us all by the indwelling of the Spirit is the same thing that is called an immersion in the case of those who were immersed in the Spirit. If this can be clearly shown the attempt must prove successful. But to establish the identity of two effects, each must be unmistakably and clearly defined. This he well knew, and he has therefore attempted a definition of immersion in the Spirit. He says correctly that it pertains to the soul; and that it is a literal immersion of the human spirit in the Holy Spirit. It was during his debate with Mr. Caples, in the fall of 1860, that this position was first advanced in public discussion, after being thoroughly canvassed in private conference; and I recollect distinctly how it thrilled the vast concourse of brethren who were present, like a sudden emission of new light from heaven; while it astounded Mr. Caples and his friends so completely that nothing more was said about proving *pouring* from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This definition is undoubtedly correct. But an immersion of the human spirit in the Holy Spirit necessarily implies a *contact* between the two; and the contact of Spirit with spirit not contact in its physical sense; but implies vital action of the one Spirit upon the faculties of the other. Such vital action must be contemplated as the chief part of the immersion; otherwise, it would be like the immersion of an inanimate block of wood in some inanimate liquid. The promise of immersion in the Spirit would have been a very empty promise, if it meant nothing more than the envelopment of one spirit in another, like the envelopment of a globule of floating gas in the surrounding atmosphere. The Saviour promised more than this, and

there was more than this in the fulfillment of the promise for when he immersed them in the Holy Spirit he brought about an action of that Spirit both upon their memories and their perceptive faculties. Their memories were quickened and rendered infallibly correct; and their perceptive faculties were lifted to the immediate perception of divine truth.

The writer denies that miraculous endowment was a part of the immersion, and distinguishes it as the work of the Spirit, while the immersion was the work of Jesus. He says it is positively false that the baptism and the endowment are identical; and that it can never be shown that the endowment is an invariable indication of the baptism. There is truth in this distinction; but it is truth which is still consistent with what we have said above. To make this appear, we have only to discriminate more closely in reference to what constitutes miraculous endowment, as distinguished from immersion in Spirit. Now to speak in tongues, to heal the sick, to prophesy, and to do any miracle is an endowment conferred by the Holy Spirit. These of course are distinguished from the *immersion* in the Holy Spirit. But before the Spirit conferred these powers, and in order to conferring them, he was placed in immediate contact with the human spirit, so that the latter became energized by the former. In order to justify calling it an immersion, this divine energizing must have pervaded at least the entire intellectual nature of the human spirit; for it is the intellect that we find directly affected. To separate this from the immersion is to take away from it all vitality, and reduce it, as we have said above, to a mere material immersion like that of one inanimate thing in another. We conclude, therefore, that whilst the power to work miracles, both physical and intellectual, was an endowment conferred by the Holy Spirit, the direct inspiration of the human soul was an essential part of its immersion in the Holy Spirit. This being the case, no one is immersed in the Holy Spirit in whom this inspiration does not take place. But Christians in general, whatever may be said of direct operations on their *hearts*, certainly are not subjects of an immediate impact of the Holy Spirit upon their *intellects*; therefore, Christians in general, are not immersed in the Holy Spirit.

We may reach the same conclusion by another course of argument. There are two events which in the Scriptures are called immersions in the Holy Spirit. There are certain other events similar to these two, which are not called immersions in the Holy Spirit. If, upon examination, we find these two classes of events precisely alike, then the fact that one of them is styled an immersion in the Spirit would justify us in applying the same term to the other. But if, upon examination,

there is a marked difference between the two classes, it would be unwarrantable to thus extend the appellation; for no one could know but that this difference constituted the very reason, in the divine mind, why one was called an immersion in the Spirit, and the other was not. Now, upon examination we do find a very great distinction between what is styled immersion in the Spirit, and the indwelling of the Spirit common to all Christians—no less distinction than that in the former the intellectual powers of the subjects were completely pervaded and possessed by the Holy Spirit, while in the latter there was nothing of this kind. It is, therefore, *unscriptural* to call the latter immersion in the Spirit.

These two cases of immersion in the Spirit, are still farther distinguished from all other cases of inspiration or miraculous endowment. In all other cases, unless it be that of the Apostle Paul, of which we have no information, the Holy Spirit entered persons in answer to the prayers of apostles, and in connection with the imposition of their hands. In these two, it came upon them direct from Jesus Christ, the administrator of the immersion in the Holy Spirit. The fact, therefore, that these two were ministered by Christ, and all others by the apostles, does constitute a material difference between the two; and this difference may be the reason why the latter are not called *immersions* in the Spirit. It would, therefore, be an unwarrantable extension of Scripture phraseology, and would involve the obliteration of distinctions maintained in the word of God, to say that even those brethren who received miraculous gifts by imposition of hands, were immersed in the Holy Spirit.

We have now discussed the salient points in the article before us, and though there are some minor matters mentioned in it of a speculative character, to which we have decided objections, we here dismiss it. We do so with our confidence not at all shaken, but rather strengthened, in the correctness of the views to which the brethren have been accustomed upon this subject. The truth can never suffer by the most thorough and sifting discussion; it must always gain by it. Error alone is afraid of objections, or becomes irritated when they are presented. Truth smiles at the opportunity of more thoroughly vindicating itself, and enters every conflict with calm and hopeful confidence. Let us, then, have all the objections which any man can offer against anything we teach, and let us consider them candidly.

—deceased

# TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES

## DUB MCCLISH, DIRECTOR

# STUDIES IN MARK

## NOVEMBER 10-14, 2002

### TWENTY-FIRST ADL SCHEDULE

#### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 10

The Gospel Account of Mark—An Introduction  
Ephraim and Sebastian

3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM

8:30 AM B. J. Clarke

3:45 PM B. J. Clarke

6:00 PM DINNER BREAK

7:00 PM Ronnie Hayes

8:00 PM Curtie A. Coyne

9:00 AM Jesse Whitlock

10:00 AM Gene Bengert

11:00 AM Jason Roberts

12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK

2:00 PM Tom Bright

#### MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Jesus Is Transfigured; Identifies "Elijah," Heals a Possessed Boy (8:1-50)

Jesus Answers Questions from Emmaus, Warns About Scribes (12:1-49)

Answering False Doctrines: Why/How all to be baptized in the Holy Spirit (1:8-17) Is it permissible to violate God's law in cases of dire need? (2:25-26)? Did Jesus desire to cancel the mighty works and His Sonship, consult demons by Him of the Holy (1:32, 31; 2: 6, 43, 7, 36, 8:30; et al.)? Should nothing one believe or divine defines, the drinking alcohol beverages permitted? (7:15)?

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

Jesus Performs More Miracles, Teaches Is Called "The Christ" (8:1-50)

at Bethany (14:3-9); et. Mat. 26:6-13; Luke 7:36-50; John 11:2-12:1-37 Did Simon or Jesus bear His cross (11:25)? John 18:17-19? Who are "them that believe" (16:17-18)?

Does Mark 16:7-20 Belong in the Bible?

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand and Walks on the Water (6:30-56)

The Destruction of Jerusalem and Jesus' Second Coming (13:1-37)

Jesus Thoroughly Enters Jerusalem, Cleanses the Temple (11:1-59)

Judas Falls, Jesus Identifies Him and Instructs His Disciples (14:1-51)

Jesus' Progress, Arrest, First Trial, and Peter's Denial (14:32-72)

Difficult Passages: When Jesus "blessed" before breaking the bread, what did He do (8:41, 14:22; 9: 8, 6-7; 14:23; Luke 22: 19, 1 Cor. 11:23-28)? Why was the vision of the blind man not restored completely at Jesus' touch (9:22-25)? How many blind men did Jesus heal at Jericho and were at the entrance or the exit of the city (10:46-52; Mat. 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-41)? Do how many animals did Jesus ride into Jerusalem (11:1-7; Mat. 21:1-7; Luke 19:28-34; Zac. 9:9)?

The Kingdom of God Versus the Community Church Movement (1:14-15; 8:1; 14:26; et al.)

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Demon Possession in the Scriptures

Answering False Doctrines: Was Jesus not powerful enough to heal the blind man at the first attempt (9:22-25)? If one has a wicked heart body, can he work miracles (9:23; 11:20)? Should we not oppose and expose the errors of those who are doing some "good works" (8:36-41)? Will some be saved outside the Lord's church (9:36-10)?

Jesus Heals the Gerasene, the Women, and Heals the Son of the Daughter (9:31-43)

Difficult Passages: Why do the demons want to inhabit the man and were the demons of the demons when the pig drowned (6:11-13)? Why did Jesus require faith on the part of some, but not all when He healed (5:34, 38-42; 6: 5, 5-6, 10-52; et al.)? Why would Jesus do no signs among the acquiescent (8:37) What role did ascending with oil play in healing the sick (6:13; et. Jam. 5: 14-15)?

Jesus Rebukes the Jews, Goes to Pheonice, Heals a Daughter (7:1-37)

Jesus Does More Miracles, Preaches, Appoints Apostles (3:1-56)

The Demons Involved in Pornography (7:20-29)

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Jesus Arrested, Appears to Various Groups, Leaves the Galilee (16:1-20)

The Gospel Account of Mark—A Summary

312 PEARL ST.

DENTON, TX 76201

940.387.3531



- |                         |                          |                      |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 9:00 AM Lester Kamp     | 9:00 AM Michael Shepherd | 9:00 AM J. Rogers    | 9:00 AM David P. Brown  | 9:00 AM Michael Shepherd  |
| 10:00 AM Dub McClish    | 10:00 AM Ted Clarke      | 10:00 AM J. Rogers   | 10:00 AM David P. Brown | 10:00 AM Michael Shepherd |
| 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK    | 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK     | 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK | 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK    | 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK      |
| 2:00 PM Lynn Blair      | 2:00 PM Ted Clarke       | 2:00 PM J. Rogers    | 2:00 PM David P. Brown  | 2:00 PM Michael Shepherd  |
| 3:00 PM Bryan Braswell  | 3:00 AM Michael Shepherd | 3:00 AM J. Rogers    | 3:00 AM David P. Brown  | 3:00 AM Michael Shepherd  |
| 4:00 PM Joseph Meador   | 3:45 PM David P. Brown   | 3:45 PM J. Rogers    | 3:45 PM David P. Brown  | 3:45 PM Michael Shepherd  |
| 5:00 PM DINNER BREAK    | 6:00 PM David P. Brown   | 6:00 PM J. Rogers    | 6:00 PM David P. Brown  | 6:00 PM Michael Shepherd  |
| 7:00 PM Guy Summers     | 7:00 PM Kenneth Gossett  | 7:00 PM J. Rogers    | 7:00 PM David P. Brown  | 7:00 PM Michael Shepherd  |
| 8:00 PM David E. Wilson | 8:00 PM Marvin Weir      | 8:00 PM J. Rogers    | 8:00 PM David P. Brown  | 8:00 PM Michael Shepherd  |

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12**

The Twelve Sent Forth, John the Baptist's Baptism (9:1-29)

Answering False Doctrines: Are "Bobby" Blessings" authorized in our worship assemblies (10:13-18)? Did Jesus deny that He was "good" (10:18)? Does Jesus' teaching on exorcising authority apply to exorcisms (10:42-44)? Does Jesus' clearing the temple apply to setting such things as tables and stools on church property (11:15-17)?

Answering False Doctrines: Are there "signs" by which we can verify the time of Jesus' return (13:1-42)? Does the "rapture" refer to a "rapture" period (13:5, 18, 24)? Does the "rapture" refer to a "rapture" period (13:5, 18, 24)? Does the "rapture" refer to a "rapture" period (13:5, 18, 24)?

Difficult Passages: To what does the coming of the Son of man refer (13:29)? How many times were Jesus' disciples at Bethany (14:3-9)?

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14**

Jesus Heals the Gerasene, the Women, and Heals the Son of the Daughter (9:31-43)

Difficult Passages: Why do the demons want to inhabit the man and were the demons of the demons when the pig drowned (6:11-13)? Why did Jesus require faith on the part of some, but not all when He healed (5:34, 38-42; 6: 5, 5-6, 10-52; et al.)? Why would Jesus do no signs among the acquiescent (8:37) What role did ascending with oil play in healing the sick (6:13; et. Jam. 5: 14-15)?

Jesus Rebukes the Jews, Goes to Pheonice, Heals a Daughter (7:1-37)

Jesus Does More Miracles, Preaches, Appoints Apostles (3:1-56)

The Demons Involved in Pornography (7:20-29)

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Jesus Arrested, Appears to Various Groups, Leaves the Galilee (16:1-20)

The Gospel Account of Mark—A Summary

312 PEARL ST.  
DENTON, TX 76201  
940.387.3531

ORDER BOOKS FROM VALID PUBLICATIONS, INC. • 908 IMPERIAL DR. • DENTON, TX 76209-8610  
PHONE: 940.323.9797 • FAX: 413.473.2309 • E-MAIL: valpub@charter.net

• DAILY DISCUSSION FORUMS ON CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS •

Contending for the Faith—October/2002

# "UNCLE JAKE" STARLING

Paul Vaughn

In studying the past two hundred-years of the church there are those who are but shadows in history. Men and women who have been forgotten in the mists of time but their silhouette is there in history if one desires to look for it. "Uncle Jake," **Jacob Sanford Starling** is one of those pioneer preachers who worked daily in the kingdom without notoriety. He never wrote an article, went to college or a school of preaching, but he was a student of the Book and many people obeyed the gospel because of his efforts.

There is little information about the early life of brother Starling. We know he was born on May 8, 1864 in Kentucky and in 1874 his family moved to southern Missouri, and the next year they moved to Lawrence County, Arkansas. He had an older brother **Will** and two sisters, **Niecey** and **Niecey**. The family settled near **Opposition, Arkansas**. Niecey never liked living in Arkansas so she made up her mind to return to Kentucky.

She left home, heading back to Kentucky afoot, at the top of the ridge above the Starling home she stopped and waved good-bye to them as they watched her leaving. They never saw her or heard from her again.<sup>1</sup>

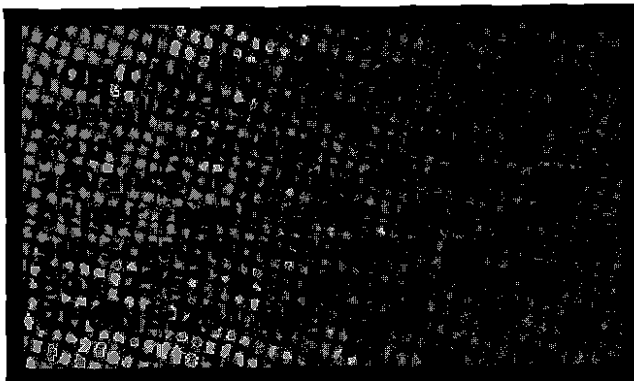
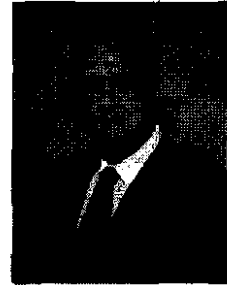
In 1883 Jacob married **Julia Park**, she was seventeen years old, two years younger than Jacob. The Park family had moved to the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas from Tennessee at the beginning of the Civil War.

Shortly after their marriage, the Starling's heard the gospel proclaimed by **Alexander Douglas**. The "Seed was Sown" in honest hearts and they obeyed the message of salvation for their soul. Jacob's heart was

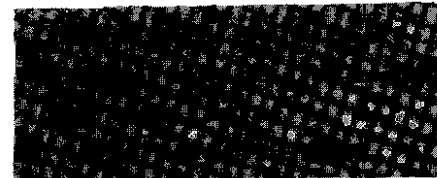
on fire and he would study the Bible at every opportunity. He was a farmer who worked extremely hard to plow out a living from the Arkansas dirt. Walking behind a team of mules all day is an exhausting job, yet when it came time to rest, Jacob would pull out his New Testament from his hip pocket and study God's word. One could contrast the attitudes of many Christians' today who work in air-conditioned buildings and enjoy the advantages of modern society, but they never have time for Bible reading.

By 1900 "Uncle Jake" Starling was preaching the gospel. It was not unusual for Starling to "plow until noon Saturday, unhitch his mules and curry one, a big gray mule whom he called 'Beck', saddle her and away to his appointment where he would preach Saturday night, Sunday and Sunday night and ride most of the night getting home."<sup>2</sup> They were poor in that part of the country and there was very little support for the preachers, many times he never received support from the brethren for his labors. It is believed the most he ever received in support for the preaching of God's word in a week-end preaching appointment was \$2.50.

Humility is a character that every Christian should exhibit. Brother Starling was a man of humility. He never was a located preacher. Starling was offered the



## Reminder...



Send Renewals to:

**P.O. BOX 2357  
SPRING, TX 77373  
FAX: 281.288.0549**

job of preaching for one congregation full-time, but turned it down. He replied in "writing and saying that he was just a one-horse preacher."<sup>3</sup> This attitude is completely different from some men preaching today who believe and act as if they are a "thoroughbred," behaving as if they were a notch above the rest of the team.

Jacob Starling died on March 2, 1950. The funeral was held at Imboden, Arkansas and he was buried in the Opposition cemetery. His son, **Harry Starling**, became a gospel preacher and his grandson,

**Homer Starling**, was a gospel preacher.

There is very little information about Jacob Sanford Starling. But, what can be found speak volumes. He loved God and preaching gospel of Christ. He did not preach for notoriety, money, or praises from man, but, his shadow is cast in history on the Lord's side. We need more preachers like that today.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Boyd E. Morgan, *Arkansas Angels*, College Bookstore & Press, Paragould, 1995, p. 34
2. *Ibid*, p. 735.
3. *Ibid*. p. 36.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

### Sermon Outlines...

# THE PIVOTAL COMMAND

(Mark 12:30)

By Tom Moore

#### INTRODUCTION

- A. In Mark 12:30 we have a very pivotal command for every Christian, a command that is at the very heart of Christianity.
- B. Mark 12:28-30
- C. We know these verses, we have heard them often, and we understand that they mean we are to love God with our total being.
- D. Many, though, do not really understand what it means to love God with our total being; thus, let us delve deeply into Mark 12:30 and come to understand what it really means to love God with our total being.

#### DISCUSSION

- A. "Thou shalt LOVE the Lord thy God."
  1. First notice that this is not a request or an option, it is a command, an imperative.
  2. We are to love (αγαπη)
    - a. The highest form of love.
    - b. An intellectual love with always does the proper and best thing.
  3. We are to love God, this would exclude idols or putting anything above God.
- B. "With ALL thy ....."
  1. There is to be no holding back with our love
  2. Giving our best effort.
  3. Not settling for second best.
- C. "Love ... with all thy MIND".
  1. This has to do with the intellect or knowledge.
  2. To love God as we ought, it must be done through

knowledge.

3. The Biblically ignorant really do not love God.
  - a. Romans 10:3
  - b. Ephesians 4:8
  - c. John 14:15 ... How can one keep that which he does not know?
  - d. Hosea 4:6
4. To love God with all of our minds, we must study.
  - a. Deuteronomy 17:19.
  - b. Isaiah 34:16.
  - c. John 5:39.
  - d. Acts 17:11.
  - e. II Timothy 2:15.
5. Our minds must be filled with truth.
  - a. I John 4.
  - b. III John 3.
- D. "Love ..... with all of thy HEART."
  1. This is loving God with emotion and affection.
  2. Because of the Pentecostal movement in the church in the 50s and 60s, many swung completely to the other side and are afraid to show any emotion.
  3. We can't please God on pure emotion
    - a. People end up doing as they please with this
    - b. Emotion under control and guided by knowledge
  4. Emotions are important:
    - a. Lord's Supper
    - b. Baptisms





- c. Lost souls
- d. The hurting
- 5. The Bible is filled with emotion.
  - a. "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).
  - b. Romans 12:15.
  - c. Philippians 4:4.
  - d. "Rejoice always" (I Thessalonians 5:16).
  - e. Matthew 9:36.
  - f. Psalm 122:1.
  - g. Psalm 84:10.
- E. "Love .... with all thy SOUL."
  - 1. This is loving God with our very life, the Greek word is translated as life in many verses.
  - 2. This involves the willingness to give over our whole life to the Lord.
  - 3. A sacrificial life.
    - a. Romans 12:1-2.
    - b. Matthew 16:25.
    - c. I Corinthians 10:24.
    - d. Philippians 2:4.
  - 4. To love God with all of our soul we must be willing to give whole life over to him, to devote our whole life to his service, and even be willing to die for him.
- F. "Love .... with all thy STRENGTH."
  - 1. This we do using our abilities, our money, and our

- time.
- 2. We must use for the Lord our abilities.
  - a. Matthew 25:14-30.
  - b. So many talents are never used for the Lord.
  - c. Many talents are never developed.
- 3. Giving shows our true love for the Lord.
  - a. II Corinthians 8:1-5.
  - b. II Corinthians 9:7, 12.
- 4. Giving of our time shows our true love for God.
  - a. Ephesians 5:15-16.
  - b. Psalm 90:12.
  - c. Ecclesiastes 12:1.
  - d. Colossians 4:5.


**CONCLUSION**

- A. We must understand that we really can't love God with all of soul and strength without first loving Him with all our mind and heart.
- B. Loving God is more than just lip service, if giving over our ALL!!!
  - 1. ALL of our mind.
  - 2. ALL of our heart.
  - 3. ALL of our soul.
  - 4. ALL of our strength.

—2406 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL of PREACHING

- Two-year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966
- Applications now being accepted
- Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9984  
Fax (901) 751-8098

## Healthcare Savings Plan

**Starting at \$19/mo.**

**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS,  
MEDICAL, DENTAL, VISION**

**ALL PRE-EXISTING  
CONDITIONS ACCEPTED**

**CALL BOB AND JACKIE SWEETEN**  
TOLL FREE 1-866-252-3382  
OR VISIT  
[WWW.JBSWEETENMYRIGLANETUSA.COM](http://WWW.JBSWEETENMYRIGLANETUSA.COM)  
AND CLICK ON CARE CLUB®

*One Woman's Perspective...*

# SWIMMING ALONE

Annette B. Cates

Our house is situated on a twenty-eight acre lake. We derive soothing relaxation by going out to feed the fish, ducks, geese, and other waterfowl. When tossing crumbs of bread into the water, the usual sight is a rolling of the water as catfish, small and large, grab for all they can get. A few bream brave the turmoil and enter the fray. The leftover bread is broken into the tiniest bits and drifts away with the gentle current. One day, we observed a very small bream feeding just a yard or so beyond the mad rush for the crumbs. He was getting his fill of those wee pieces of bread that the larger fish had missed. He had discovered the advantages of not following the crowd.

Aggressive behavior seems to have become the norm. All around us we see those who would trample anyone in order to get ahead, whether in the business world, on the highway, in the classroom, and yes, occasionally even in the church. We know it as corporate scandal, road rage, and schoolyard bullying. It is as if going for the gusto has become more than a catchy phrase for a commercial. We thought the me first generation would grow up eventually; instead, that mindset has become an infectious disease. To many people, the way up is to build a ladder of those who have been hurt, abandoned, or destroyed along the way. Have we become a society of catfish gobbling all the crumbs? If we follow the crowd, that is exactly where we will be, and the peace and love of Christianity will be left in the dust.

Drifting away from this maddening crush of twenty-first century life and into tranquility and peace, are the bits and pieces, the remnants to reward those who would dare to swim alone. These are God's people who know not to "follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2). They know that the way up is through humble service. This was the point in Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet (John 13:4-15). This was the point in Jesus' answer to those who desired to be great in his kingdom (Matthew 20:25-28). They know that happiness is not to be found in the wisdom of the world (James 3:13-18). They know that satisfaction in life is not in the material goods one might acquire; thus one accomplishes nothing by ill-gotten gain (I Timothy 6:7). They know to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

By swimming alone, the Christian avoids the taint

of worldliness. Indeed, we are to remain unspotted from the world (James 1:27). We are affected by the influences around us. We often consider the importance of our positive influence on others, but unless we swim alone, we can be impacted by others in a negative sense. Being around evil makes us more tolerant of evil. Foul language, jokes, reading matter, and media programming enter the database of the mind whether we would repeat it or not. Just as God's people of the Old Testament wanted to emulate the nations around them by having kings to rule over them (I Samuel 8:5), we face the temptation to compromise with the world. We cannot flirt with the world's sinfulness. If we do, it will consume us (Romans 6:12).

By swimming alone, the Christian grows spiritually. Adding the "graces" of II Peter 1:5-8 will help us grow as we should. It takes strength to stand and to go against the tide, thus we need all of the resources we can command. We must be watchful and have conviction in order to stand fast in the faith (I Corinthians 16:13). Those who cannot stand for right are like those described by Job,

**How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! And how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in His anger. They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away (Job 21:17-18).**

A tiny fish, not three inches long, figured out the importance of the ability to swim alone. Can we recognize the benefits of our doing so? Certainly, companionship in doing that which is right is wonderful and welcome. However, all too often companions are allowed to corrupt good morals (I Corinthians 15:33). For those who maintain their goodness and purity in the sight of God, there is a reward. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James 1:12).

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654



*Current Events that Concern Christians...*

## THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, CHRISTIANS WITHOUT RELIGION, HEAVEN AND HELL

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

...The newly nominated archbishop of Canterbury has been installed as an honorary white druid, alarming some conservative clergy in the Church of England. Rowan Williams, currently archbishop of Wales, was inducted into the Gorsedd of Bards, a Welsh society that denies pagan or religious affiliation. But Archbishop Williams, who will soon head the World Anglican Communion including the U.S. Episcopal Church, called it "a very Christian service." In ancient times, druids were both priests and judges. The Reverend Angus Macleay of the Anglicans' Evangelical Reform Group told the BBC that Williams' involvement in the service leaves a bad impression. He asked: "How will it help African bishops and pastors seeking to draw people away from paganism to follow Christ when they see him involved in this sort of activity?" (Agape Press, 8/6/02)[*The Church of England does not ask people to follow Christ anyway. There is no such thing as a conservative preacher in the Church of England. Perhaps this silliness will make a few members of the CoE wake up and ask serious questions. —mtm*]

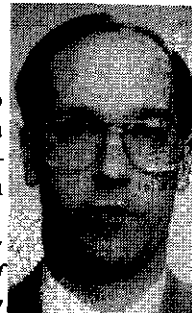
\* \* \* \* \*

...One Christian author says true believers need to be equipped to point out the differences between the world's many religions from true Christianity. In his book, *How To Be A Christian Without Being Religious*, Fritz Ridenour makes a clear distinction between "religion" and Christianity. He says there are a lot of fine religions and a lot of good qualities in "religious behavior" — reverence, faith, and seeking a supreme being—but the Christian realizes the supreme being—God—has found him and has reached down to him and all he must do is respond and come into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Ridenour says too many Christians do not know the primary difference between Christianity and the beliefs of numerous other false religions. (Agape Press, 8/6/02)[*I am not sure I would agree with all that he has in his book. But he is correct that many do not know the difference between New Testament Christianity and false religions. Liberal brethren fall into this category. And sadly, a significant number sitting in the pews of "sound" congregations would have a hard time telling you the difference. We must never tire of teaching the basics. —mtm*]

\* \* \* \* \*

...The cover article of this week's *Newsweek* — entitled "Visions of Heaven" — depicts heaven and hell as human inventions to convince early Christians to keep the faith. A *Newsweek* poll finds that 76% of Americans believe in heaven, and 60% believe in hell. Contributing editor Ken Woodward says many people like to think

that God is too nice to send anyone to hell forever. The article's author, Lisa Miller, discounts divine revelation—viewing the Bible as the work of human authors reacting to pagan oppressors. (Agape Press, 8/5/02)[*Ms. Miller needs to tell us what the people believed in if they did not have the Bible before they were being persecuted by pagans. How could there be pagans if there was not a True God in existence until they had the Bible?—mtm*]



—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

### SPRING BIBLE INSTITUTE

PREPARING MEN AND WOMEN TO FAITHFULLY AND EFFECTIVELY TEACH THE TRUTH (2 TIMOTHY 2:2).

Can our Distance Learning Program (DLP) help you? If you answer "Yes" to these questions, then give us a call today!

Do you want...

- ...sound instruction in the Bible?
- ...a thorough exposition of the text of the Bible?
- ...a practical approach to Bible study?
- ...clear answers to Bible questions?
- ...experienced teachers that know the Bible?
- ...a tuition free Bible education?

Are you searching for a program that...

- ...is flexible and can be delivered by video to you, some using the internet?
- ...allows you to watch classes anytime of the day or night as your schedule permits?
- ...challenges you to be a well-disciplined Bible student?

**Why wait any longer?**

Call for David P. Brown, Director  
Lynn Parker, Assistant Director  
(205) 355-2707

Web: [churchofchrist.com](http://churchofchrist.com) Email: [sb@churchofchrist.com](mailto:sb@churchofchrist.com)

# A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

Eddie Whitten

**"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1-4).**

It is rather disturbing to note the trend that has long been present with many of our parents. This trend is not limited to religious affiliation; it is evident in secular decisions as well. It, like many other basic qualities of life, has changed over the years since the onset of "Spockism." The rejection of authority has undermined and severely damaged the responsibility of parents as well as the emotional values and balance of our children.

The trend that is so disturbing is that of allowing

our children to dictate the course and direction they want to take rather than the parents directing them in the way they need to go. The children are guiding the parents rather than the parents accepting their God-given responsibility of training the children. Children are not wise enough and experienced enough to be made to make signal choices as to what is best for them. Parents who shirk their responsibility to raise their children are depriving them of one of the greatest needs the child has—the security of the protection and guidance of their mothers and dads.

What is so tragic about this reversal of roles is that children are establishing the criteria for their own spiritual training. The result is that choosing a congregation which the family is to attend is not a matter of what is best for the spiritual welfare of the souls of the family members, it is what pleases the child, or children. A child cannot be expected to have the depth of knowledge to know the difference between growing spiritually according to the teaching of the Bible as opposed to having a good time with their peer group. The social climate of a congregation is not the criteria for salvation.

## PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

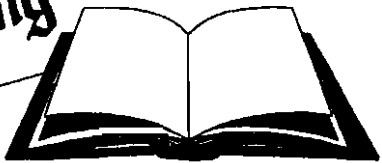
The faithful discharge of parental responsibility extends much farther than choosing a congregation to attend. It also involves behavioral values that will affect the future of the child in many ways. Some parents, as a result of the misguided counsel of **Benjamin Spock**, abhor the very thought of discipline. All of the fanciful conjectures of Spock have been proven, even to himself, to be destructive to the mental and emotional balance of the child. Unhappy, rebellious and defiant, children have degenerated emotionally and socially into a violent and dangerous society. The absence of parental authority has resulted in mothers and fathers wringing their hands in utter dismay at the disrespect their children have toward them. The same is true with the child's disrespect for school regulations, civil authority and, above all, spiritual matters.

The tossing of all teaching and references to

(Continued on Back Page)



**Contending FOR THE Faith**



**2001 Bound Volume**

- Only \$8.00 plus \$2.00 S&H

**ORDER TODAY!**

- P.O. Box 2357

Spring, Texas 77383-2357  
fax: 281.288.0549

# 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. Sun. 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, Sun. 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-

**Cambridge-South Cambridge Church of Christ**, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire-Ramsey Church of Christ**, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax: 1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## -Florida-

**Pensacola-Bellview Church of Christ**, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## -Georgia-

**Cartersville-Church of Christ**, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. Tel. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## -Indiana-

**Evansville-West Side Church of Christ**, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 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. www.garden-city-coc.org Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sun. 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, 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.

## -Oklahoma-

**Forum-Church of Christ**, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, Evangelist, email: lawson@starmetok.net.

## -Tennessee-

**Crossville-Lantana Church of Christ**, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 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.

**Rockwood-Post Oak Church of Christ**, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## -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 Bob Patterson, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Bryan/College Station-Church of Christ**, Sun. 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. Sun. 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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, 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. Email: portlandcocf@juno.com.

**Richwood-1600 Brazosport**, (979) 265-4256. Sun. 9:30; 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.

**Roanoke-Church of Christ**, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262, Tel. (817) 491-2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm.

**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.

# Classifieds...

**EVANGELIST WANTED** for a small congregation of 200+ Christians. The candidate should be in his late 30's to early 50's, must be married with children and must have solid experience. He must be biblically and fundamentally sound in the scriptures and must also be evangelistic minded with a strong desire for church growth. The position would be available on January 1, 2003. Please send resume and an audio and/or video tape of a recent sermon to David Jester, Search Committee Chairman, 1011 Harriet Street, Carlisle, PA 17013.

**RUN YOUR AD HERE!** Classified Ads are only \$2.00 per line per month. For more information on placing ads in CFTF see page 2 or contact P.O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77383.

God and the authority of his word, coupled with the teaching of evolution as a fact (which it is not), has produced a generation(s) of confused and indecisive children who cannot but believe that people are just a cut above apes and gorillas. Is it any wonder, then, that there is no hesitancy to shoot down fellow students and teachers as if they are nothing more than animals? Children are not adults and therefore cannot be expected to think and act as adults. If adults do not realize that they are not adults! They are **children** and need to be guided and nurtured as children!

#### **IS THERE A SOLUTION?**

Is there a solution to the trend that is among us? Remember, the trend is that parents are letting the children call the shots both in the secular world and in the church. Yes, there is certainly a solution; one that every parent ought to know and that every preacher ought to preach: **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"** (Proverbs 22:6). This just means that the parents need to take control of their kids again. It means telling them **"NO"** in uncertain terms when **"no"** is best for them. It means applying the **"board of education"** to the **"seat of learning"** when it is necessary to press a point. Solomon, given special wisdom from God and who was much, much wiser than Spock, advised: **"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell"** (Proverbs 23:13-14). Spankings, administered with care and with love, shape and strengthen a child's character. He/she will be happy, well-adjusted and content knowing the love that necessitated the discipline is meant for his/her good. It also teaches the child the value of authority. Again,

Solomon admonished: **"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame"** (Proverbs 29:15). Poor are the parents who reject the most precious of all their privileges, that of raising their own children.

#### **PARENTS, PLEASE LISTEN!**

Parents, there are two major factors regarding your children that you **MUST** consider: (1) Your child's emotional and social balance, his happiness and adjustment that he must have to function successfully in society, and (2) his respect for authority. His respect for authority is vital to the relationship he will have with his spiritual welfare. He will never submit his will to the will of the father without respect for authority. That authority must be taught him. He will not appreciate your authority or anyone else's unless you guide him in his formative years. That includes **TAKING** him to the place where the word of God is taught, not where he can only have a good time with other children! You should investigate congregations to see that the Bible is being taught; that Jesus is Lord; that God is to be revered as our heavenly father, and that he is to be loved, feared and obeyed. The social functions necessary to a well-balanced upbringing can be obtained at home, with other Christian families, any other wholesome environment, but the spiritual nurturing of the soul that will one day produce obedience, hence salvation, is your special responsibility.

May we all be aware of, and accept with thanksgiving, the wonderful privilege that is ours to **"bring [our children] up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."**

*—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021*

**Contending for the Faith**  
**P.O. Box 2357**  
**Spring, Texas 77383-2357**

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT #1863



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## SCRIPTURAL PATTERNS OF POLITY, WORSHIP AND PRACTICES FOR CHURCHES OF CHRIST

J. E. Choate

Our liberal post-modern brethren speak half in the language of Ashdod, and half in the language of post modern theology. They no longer “speak where scripture speaks, and remain silent where scripture is silent.” The post modern liberals have a great dislike for calling Bible things by Bible names, and doing Bible things in the Bible way.

The *Christian Chronicle* editors have given thousands and thousands of words in print to promote the contention that the churches of Christ form one more Restoration Movement Church whose roots are embedded in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement.

The big question for our liberal post-modern brethren to answer is— “Do the writers of the New Testament prescribe divinely ordained patterns for the organization, worship, and practices of the church?” By church, I have in mind the **church** which Jesus promised the apostles by divine fiat he would build on the foundation that he is the Christ, the incarnated son of God. Paul in writing to Titus established the concept of ‘pattern theology’ said: **“In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech,**

**that cannot be enied....”** (Titus 2:7, 8)

As God advised Moses: **“See, said he that you make all things according to the pattern”** (Hebrews 8:5). Likewise, the writer of Hebrews stated that there is pattern in the New Covenant for Christians, which is likened unto the Old Covenant which served as the pattern for the people of Israel. Is there indeed such a pattern for Christians in the New Testament which is as binding on Christians as was the Law of Moses on the Hebrew people (Hebrews 8:6-10)? The apostle Paul said: **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect”** (II Timothy 3:16).

### SEVEN SELF-INCRIMINATING STATEMENTS

The following seven statements are of recent vintage, and contradict every word of the inspired writers of scripture that there is a pattern for the worship and practices for all Christians in every age. Would the brother who wrote the statements care to explain the meaning of his words in the light of scripture? This

(Continued on Page 7)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher  
jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor  
Mlight@bwoodbx.com

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

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

## 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 needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be 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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

## EDITORIAL...

# "We Ought To Obey God Rather Than Men" (Acts 5:29)

While working with the church in England recently, I noticed that the British Parliament was considering whether or not to make the United Nations policy of no corporal punishment for children a law of the United Kingdom. If the UN policy becomes the law of the realm, it will become illegal for parents to spank their children. Thus, at least in this area of British law the civil government will stand in opposition to the following passages in God's word. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 13:24; 22:15). Obviously, God has authorized parents to spank their children as a part of their parental responsibilities in "bring[ing] them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4b; Romans 15:4). Therefore, the British Parliament or any other civil government has no right to attempt to change God's law regarding the home or any other of God's institutions. Court decisions or the laws enacted by legislative bodies do not loose parents from their scriptural responsibilities to one another or their children. However, if the British government enacts a law or by court decree makes corporal punishment for children illegal, it will not alter in any way whatsoever or make null and void the responsibilities of parents to obey God rather than men.

## CANADA'S GENOCIDE AND HATE CRIMES LEGISLATION

According to WorldNetDaily, Oct. 21, 2002 Svend Robinson, a homosexual member of the Canadian House of Commons, is to reintroduce bill C-415 in the Canadian Parliament. The bill would add sexual orientation as a protected item in Canada's genocide and hate crimes legislation.

A man in Saskatchewan was fined \$5000 not long ago for buying a newspaper ad that quoted verses from the Bible condemning homosexual behavior. Printer, Scott Brockie, was fined \$5000 two years ago because he refused to print a letterhead for a homosexual advocacy group. Brockie stated that his Christian faith constrained him to reject the group's request. Opponents to C-415 argue that Robinson's

amendment would make both men criminals.

The country of Sweden passed a constitutional amendment this past June. It adds sexual orientation to groups protected against "unfavorable speech." This fall the amendment must be voted on again. If passed it would become law in January of 2003. The law would carry a sentence of four years in prison for anyone who teaches that homosexuality is wrong.

Canadian pro-family activists also are concerned about challenges to the definition of marriage, especially after an Ontario court ruled earlier this year that restricting marriage to a man and a woman is unconstitutional and discriminatory.

**John Paulk**, a gender and homosexuality specialist for Focus on the Family of Colorado Springs, Colorado said that he thought the United States is not far behind Canada.

**Brian Rushfeldt**, executive director of the Canada Family Action coalition in Calgary, Alberta in an "action alert" wrote that if C-415 becomes law in Canada, "the following consequences will result, especially once hate crime charges are brought before the courts": (1) The Bible, at least certain portions of the Bible, may be determined "hate literature." (2) Churches will be forbidden to mention certain scriptures. (3) Preachers could be open to criminal charges. (4) Parents could be open to criminal charges if they refuse to allow their children to attend classes wherein homosexual behavior is discussed, promoted, and taught. (5) To express disagreement with homosexual behavior or their agenda in writing or verbally could be considered hate propaganda. (6) Both public and private educators could not refuse to teach homosexual sex. (7) Blood services would not be able to screen risk-behavior donors. (8) Civil government at every level would be prevented from discussing sex standard laws much less passing them.

**WHAT WILL CHRISTIANS DO IF SUCH LEGISLATION BECOMES THE LAW OF THE LAND?**

Of course, as painful as the consequences might be for violating civil law, Christians must obey God rather than men. Christians will not stop upholding the truth of God regarding marriage and the home.

Let us suppose that the U. S. Congress enacts a law or the United States Supreme Court decides that, "restricting marriage to a man and a woman is unconstitutional and discriminatory." Will the high court's ruling change Matthew 19:4-6? *Will God join together a man to a man or a woman to a woman in marriage because laws were enacted or the court decided that, "restricting marriage to a man and a*

## In This Issue.

Scriptural Patterns of Polity, Worship and Practices for Churches of Christ  
J.E. Choate 1

Editorial...  
"We Ought To Obey God Rather Than Man"  
David F. Brown 2

Assistant Editorial...  
Practical Liberals  
Michael Light 5

"Sin Taxes"  
Steve Yeatts 9

A Bit More About Bullman  
Wayne Coats 11

On Defending the Family  
"Be Wise as Serpents and Harmless as Doves"  
Gary Grider 14

Being A Negative Can Be A Positive  
Richard Morrey 15

What's In a Man?  
Jeffrey Marshall, Jr. 16

They  
Wayne Price 17

One Woman's Perspective...  
Man, This Is the Life!  
Annette Gates 19

The Last Word...  
Some Things I Have Learned  
Eddie W. Price 21

woman is unconstitutional and discriminatory”? Indeed not. Why is this the case? Because God has authorized that *only* a male may marry a female (Matthew 19: 4-6). Thus, the law or a court’s decision that “restricting marriage to a man and a woman is unconstitutional and discriminatory” does not overrule, set aside, cancel out or make null and void God’s will concerning the persons authorized by God to marry one another.


If a civil government decided that it is unconstitutional for anyone who is a member of the church of Christ to be married as that institution is set out by the Lord in Matthew 19:4-6, could said male and female members of the church of Christ who are eligible for marriage be joined together by God in the holy estate of matrimony without the sanction of civil government and, in fact, contrary to the laws of civil government? (1) If the answer to the question is “Yes,” then it is obvious that wherein any civil government prohibits scriptural marriages, that God’s will concerning marriage takes precedence over the laws of men and the ruling of civil courts which laws and rulings are contrary to Matthew 19:4-6. Thus, civil government *only*

has a part to play in marriage and the home as it acts in harmony with God’s law—in this case Matthew 19:4-6. Moreover, Matthew 19:4-6 makes null and void man’s laws that are contrary thereto, not the other way around. (2) If the answer to the previous question is “No,” then Matthew 19:4-6 is made null and void by civil law or the ruling of civil courts (the will of men) when they prohibit members of the church of Christ from marrying. Now who would advocate such a doctrine regarding God’s laws pertaining to marriage and the home? Thus, a man and a woman who are authorized by God to be husband and wife are joined to one another as husband and wife when they declare themselves so to be. If civil law that is in harmony with God’s law has something to say about the moment a man and a woman become husband and wife, then we are duty bound to God to comply with such civil requirements (Romans 13; I Peter 2:13, 14). However, if civil law or court decrees are contrary to God’s law concerning who may marry and when they become husband and wife, such unscriptural civil laws and court decrees do not prevent a man and a woman who are authorized by God to become husband and wife from being joined together by God in his holy estate of matrimony. We ought to obey God rather than men.

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

**MEMPHIS SCHOOL  
OF PREACHING**

- Two-year program
- Fifty-four courses
- 2,760 clock hours
- No tuition
- Qualified faculty
- Limited Scholarships
- Strong Bible emphasis
- Established 1966
- Applications now being accepted
- Call or write for application



**Curtis A. Cates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Kene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
Fax (901) 751-8688

**Why Not Help  
Contending For the Faith  
Grow?  
Give a Gift Subscription**

**MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS TO:  
P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77383  
FAX: 281-288-0549  
PHONE: 281-350-5516**

## **PRACTICAL LIBERALS**

A basic definition of liberalism would be, “loosing where God has bound.” In other words, “going beyond what the word authorizes.” Those who adopt this approach to the scriptures have in essence cut themselves loose from the moorings of the Bible. We have witnessed the maturation of this process and seen various departures from the gospel by our brethren who have been swallowed up by it.

### **HYBRID PREACHERS**

The result has been the birth of preachers and churches that no longer teach the Bible’s plan of salvation. Some have denied the essentiality of baptism, others are more than happy to accept as members anyone who claims to be a “believer” in Christ.

We have seen the development of new “jazzed up” worship services. Congregational singing has been replaced by special singing groups, praise teams, choirs, and in some cases the addition of mechanical instruments. Dramatic acting has taken the place of biblical preaching and the whims of the crowd are given precedence over the will of God.

It is true that not all churches have fallen into the liberal trap. In fact, many stand strong in opposition to the change agents and their antics. However, in this article I am going to address a cat of a different stripe.

I would style these preachers and congregations as “practical liberals.” It is not all that uncommon to talk to preachers who will not stand up for the truth. These men will speak on programs with known liberals and act like everything is okay. When you ask them about the doctrinal stance of the liberal speakers they will say things like, “Well, I don’t personally agree with them.” Some congregations are no better. They do not want their preacher to preach blatant false doctrine, but they will not stand for a proclamation of the whole truth (Acts 20:27).

My point is that in reality there is no practical difference between such men as previously described and the full blown liberal. What is the difference in a blatant false teacher and the one who speaks with him, and by his silence gives his tacit approval? What is the difference in a congregation that is eaten up with liberalism and one that will not tolerate all the truth of the Bible? It is simply a matter of degree.

### **WEAK-KNEED BRETHREN**

I become weary of weak-kneed brethren attempting to sooth their consciences by giving lip service to being faithful, while at the same time showing an open disdain for those who actually teach the whole truth.

When I hear congregations complaining because some other congregation took a strong doctrinal stance, I know I am dealing with a practical liberal. There are preachers who try to, “go along to get along” with liberal preachers. These are also practical liberals. What is the difference in one who teaches false doctrine, and the one who allows such to take place and says nothing about it?

Jesus certainly confronted false teachers. In Matthew 23 and again in John 8, the Messiah hammered the religious elite of his day. Jesus never tried to get along with a false teacher. The reason is because when you get along with a heretic you must compromise yourself.

In Romans 16:17,18 we read:

**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.**

### **“BUDDIES” WITH FALSE TEACHERS**

The Bible knows nothing of faithful preachers being “buddies” with false teachers. Nor does it know anything of faithful congregations that would not allow preaching on any and every subject in the scriptures. Congregations that will not stand up for the truth, and that like their preaching watered down, are practical liberals.

The New Testament writers demand that we oppose false teachers. Notice Paul’s message to elders in the letter to Titus:

**For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake (Titus 1:10,11).**

Playing “footsies” with liberals and liberal churches is not a biblical option for the faithful child of God. I am convinced it is high time that we begin to “call a spade a spade.” If weak preachers are un-



comfortable around men and women of God who stand for the whole truth, they need to fess up to the charge that they are in practicality liberals. The same holds true of spineless elders and congregations.

**PRACTICAL  
LIBERALS ARE LOST**

I am pointing these things out in hopes of getting some to realize how far down the road of compromise they have traveled. When preachers and congregations become practical liberals, they are in the process of loosing their souls. Heaven does not await those who are ashamed of the gospel of Christ. In fact Jesus said:

**Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels (Mark 8:38).**

We need to stress to our "open-minded" brethren, that their refusal to stand up is an indicator of their lost condition. You cannot be for Jesus and a friend of the world at the same time.

Note what the Spirit said through John:

**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (I John 2:15-17).**

Those who seek a free pass to straddle the fence are out of luck. The Bible knows nothing of a middle road. Jesus said, "**He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad**" (Matthew 12:30). If you do not stand with Jesus you stand opposed to him. Practical liberals will lose their souls. Let us make sure we do everything in our power to reach those who have drifted away from the truth.

— Michael Light, Assistant Director

**"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).**

*Pressing Toward the Mark*  
Volumes I & II

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF IRA Y. RICE, JR.**

**\$20.00 Each**  
**\$35.00 if ordered as set**  
**(Plus \$2.50**  
**Postage and Handling)**

**ORDER FROM:**  
**VADA RICE**  
**2809 WIND VALLEY DR.**  
**MEMPHIS, TN 38125-2461**



# SCRIPTURAL PATTERNS....

(Continued From Page 1)

brother sits where **David Lipscomb** sat exercising the highest level of influence in training the next generation of church leaders, preachers, and teachers. His only explanation so far to defend his statements is that one must be a Bible scholar to understand what he has in mind.

1. "The simple appeal to **command, example, and necessary inference**, as the solution in all questions of biblical hermeneutics, has lost its attraction, not only for the Bible scholar, but for the college student and many a Christian in the pew."
2. "The Bible was not written to us, but it was preserved for us."
3. "The books of the Bible are not systematic theological treatises. They are not a compendium of Lukan or Pauline theology. They are **occasional documents** and comprise **task theology**."
4. "'**Strict pattern theology**' [doctrine] must be abandoned. Yet the practice of the early church must matter. There must be guidelines."
5. "One must reject a rigid 'pattern theology' which simply transplants religious and cultural forms from the first century to the modern era. Such transplanting may force a norm which is devoid of the theological principle it was meant to express."
6. "This author has a real distaste for imposing a system on the Bible. But some system will be imposed."
7. "No longer can one simply argue the New Testament church always did it."

The foregoing seven statements were lifted [not wrested] from the context of a 1989 Christian Scholars Conference paper read on the Pepperdine University campus. The CSC writer is able to launch his concepts of post-modern theology from the most important podium in all our Christian schools, exercising an influence on the next generation of students who will be leaders tomorrow. His influence will be much greater than that of the president and the board of trustees of the university.

The seven statements to be more fully understood must be strictly read in the context of the CSC paper to capture the subliminal suggestions floating around the words. A common sense understanding of what Post-modern theology is all about is an understanding which comes from tracking the cultural advancement of man from the Dark Ages, the Renaissance, the Age of the

Enlightenment, the Modern period, and the post-modern era. Post-modern theology is not one thing, but a compounding of many elements and cross pollinations enabling us to understand the paradigms of liberal post-modern theology.

## UNDERSTANDING POST-MODERN THEOLOGY

The purpose of this article is to come to some kind of an understanding of the make-up of post modern theology. The task is both easy and impossible to accomplish. Post modern theology has developed in the past two centuries. The foundations for the modern age were laid in the 18th century called both the Age of Enlightenment and the Age of Reason. We can only touch bases briefly as we move through the time period. The 18th century is called the Age of the Enlightenment because it marked the culmination of the Renaissance, and marked the beginning of the Modern Age. This was the age marked by great faith in the instrument of reason. The Enlightenment Age humanized theological systems. This was the Age of Deism which emphasized an impersonal Deity and natural reason. This was the age which laid the foundation of the ethical and Social Gospel.

## MAJOR CURRENTS OF POST-MODERN THEOLOGY

The Industrial Revolution of the 19th century radically changed the social structure of Western society. The cry of human justice for the poor and dispossessed was sounded. Much is owed to the Christians in the cities who witnessed the squalor of the poor and were outraged. Never ending liberal movements sprang up. The liberal movements in the Catholic and Protestant churches attempted to apply Bible teachings, associating them with the abolition of child labor and improving the working conditions of women.

The Social Gospel concept became formalized and a powerful force in the churches and in the social structure of the state. The New Deal legislation of the 1930's started a cycle of legislation to improve the lives and fortunes of people in all of society.

There were other forces at work which would call special attention to the human condition in 20th century society. **Charles Darwin's** concept on the evolutionary upward spiral for the betterment of man became a dominant and controlling part of the political and social ideologies of people in the 19th century. **Karl**

**Marx's** attack on organized religion found its social gravitation pull in the concept of materialism and sharing in the good life for all people. **Sigmund Freud** opened new frontiers in modern psychology to explore and map out the hidden regions of the human psyche. *Freud was no champion of organized religion. But while Freud led no frontal attacks on religion, his influence was as great as that of any of his contemporaries. However, the 19th century produced vocal enemies of organized religion, and no voice was more strident and powerful than that of Nietzsche who was the first to phrase the modern notion that "God is dead."*

### THE FOCUSING ON THE PARADIGMS OF POST-MODERN THEOLOGY

Whatever is written, heretofore, to describe the peripheral influences on the development of post-modern theology, our immediate purpose is to view a century of development in what we choose to term as post-modern theology, which is modern theology and more in which our liberal brethren are immersed in over their eyes.

The bedrock of post-modern theology is traced back to the *Graf Wellhausen Documentary Hypothesis* of the Pentateuch, and Form and Source Criticism of the New Testament which call to mind the name of **Martin Dibelius**. Modern theology began to shape up in the preface of **Karl Barth** in the 1919 commentary of the Roman letter. Here the seed was sown that led to the full blown theology labeled Neo-orthodoxy. The thinking of Karl Barth set up a whole chain of reactions which included the theologies of **Rudolf Bultmann**, **Paul Tillich**, and the "Death of God Movement."

One might think that all that could be said about modern theology was said by **Rudolph Bultmann**. But this is not so—the stripping away of every claim that scripture is divinely inspired...and is man's religious guide in every age. The greatest outrage and attack on the churches of Christ find a common center in the Westmar Institute and the Jesus Seminar. Jesus is stripped of his divinity. **Robert Funk** would tell us what words Jesus actually spoke in the book's gospel, and the words he did not speak. **John Dominic Crossan** comes up with his slice of fiction which he passes off as probable history. His story is that the only resurrection that the corpse of Jesus experienced was that of being dug up by wild dogs and devoured from a shallow grave on the crucifixion grounds.

### POSTSCRIPT

My primary purpose in this article is to alert the "remnant" of the biblical churches of Christ what our

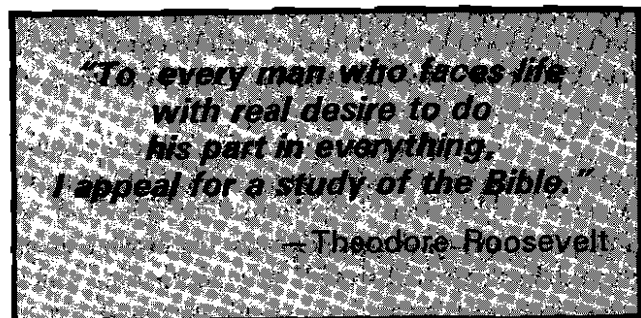
post-modern liberal "change agents" are doing to **deconstruct** the biblical identity of the traditional churches of Christ, and to **reconstruct** the churches of Christ into a post-modern paradigm, another denomination, whose roots are embedded in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement. These brethren do not "look like sheep, and they do not smell like sheep."

They are not the good shepherds of scripture, but wanton pious predators who are robbing sheep folds one by one. The "shepherds" of the "Willow Creek" type community churches are false leaders who slip into the sheep folds by night to rob the folds.

My plans are to explain the ideas of our post liberal brethren in a series of articles using this article as a launching platform to set up the paradigm (models) of the Documentary Hypothesis and Form and Source Criticism to show their influence on our liberal brethren who accept the conclusions of liberal post-modern theology. I have no choice but to name names, and fix blame as I understand the issues. I worked almost one year in developing the history of the "hermeneutical" rage of the 1980's and the early 1990's. Numerous other articles developed the history of the church growth paradigms such as "Third Wave" post-modern Pentecostalism, the Vineyard churches, and the Kansas City Prophets.

My articles will succeed or fail. I solicit response from my post liberal brethren. I expect none. What they would say would open up their minds to us. This is the last thing that they will do. I believe in the freedom of expression in our democracy. May I have my say? It is not my purpose to deliver self-serving moral and ethical strictures against my liberal brethren who obviously take their conservative brethren to be such idiots that we cannot understand their ploys.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Blvd.  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215



# "SIN TAXES"

Steven. E. Yeatts

The recent Tennessee state budget debate and debacle has caused the word "taxes" to receive over use lately. Taxes of many varieties have been discussed from income tax, to gasoline tax, to sales tax, to wheel tax. However, as I watched the state legislature in action one evening, I was struck by the irony of a proposal that included the raising of the so-called "sin tax." As the television news reporter spoke the words "sin tax," a graphic appeared on the television screen listing the words in bold font—**SIN TAX**. I imagine most of us know what these two words mean, but do we really grasp the true sense of its impact? The people of the world use this jargon in reference to the taxes levied on tobacco products and alcohol. In other words, one who wants to use tobacco products (whether inhaled or just a pinch between your cheek and gum), or one who chooses to drink alcoholic beverages of any variety, pays an exorbitant and disproportionate tax ("sin tax") in order to feed their addiction and choice.

## **BRETHREN PAY SIN TAXES**

Is this phraseology lost on anyone but me? Certainly not. Even the world in its spiritually unwise state of mind assigns a nickname to the taxes on tobacco products and alcohol that calls usage of such products to be what it is—**SIN**. The thing that further provoked my interest in this phrase "sin tax," is my wondering how many of my brethren (sisters included) are paying this tax because of their inability to exercise biblical self-control (Galatians 5:23; I Peter 2:11; II Peter 1:6).

So many flimsy defenses are paraded out when one tries to justify their usage ("recreational" or otherwise) of cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and alcoholic beverages. Some argue that the "social use" of alcohol is acceptable. After all, the Bible only condemns drunkenness, right? Any argument to defend a Christian's use of physically and spiritually harmful substances falls in light of I Thessalonians 5:17, "**Abstain from all appearance of evil.**" Others state, "Where does the Bible say I cannot drink alcoholic beverages or smoke cigarettes or chew tobacco or dip snuff?" I am glad you asked! Here are some passages that very clearly denounce the usage of products that are harmful to our physical health, but much more profoundly harmful to our spiritual health.

## **ADDICTS IN THE CHURCH**

The Bible is consistent in its denunciation of Christians harming themselves by paying such a "sin tax."

Paul told the Romans, "**Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof**" (Romans 6:12). One who uses alcohol or tobacco (the nicotine found in tobacco products is a highly addictive drug) has yielded control of himself to an external substance, and thus is allowing sin to reign supreme in his physical body. Paul told the Galatians in 5:24, "**And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof**" (ASV 1901). When we become a new creature in Christ, our efforts against the "old man" of sin are to be heightened, and we are to "put away" our old habits and act like the new creature that we are (II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10). One who was a smoker (or chewer or dipper) or a drinker before they obeyed the gospel should have targeted that behavior as one of the first things to rid himself of because of his obedience to the gospel. One who developed his addiction to tobacco products or alcohol after obedience to the Gospel has fallen far from his calling and needs to seriously re-evaluate his life (Romans 6:1-2; Colossians 3:1-5).

## **A WRONG ATTITUDE**

Some argue that ceasing their tobacco or alcohol usage cannot be done, that one can be so powerfully addicted that stopping is impossible. That attitude is contrary to the words of Christ and contrary to our calling. Jesus said, "**The things which are impossible with men are possible with God**" (Luke 18:27). In this passage from Luke, Jesus acknowledged the extreme difficulty of one who was rich entering the kingdom. Surely it will be very difficult for one to abandon an addiction to a harmful substance, but it is definitely possible, and for a Christian it is absolutely necessary. If one does not develop the strong spiritual attitude from reading the word of God and through prayer about such a matter, then of course, he cannot defeat this physical addiction. Paul wrote, "**I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me**" (Philippians 4:13). For a Christian to say that he or she cannot stop smoking or using tobacco products or that he or she cannot stop drinking is contrary to Holy scriptures which says we can do ALL things through Christ. One who says he cannot is really saying he chooses not to cease that behavior which violates his Christian calling most blatantly and publicly.

What about a Christian who would be foolish enough to say, "*Well, it is my body, and I will do*

what I want with it. After all, I am only hurting myself." Paul asked, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ" (I Corinthians 6:15a)? He continued to write in that same chapter:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

There's the answer for Christians who claim self-ownership over their bodies. They have forgotten who bought them and who owns them, and for Christians to harm their bodies by using the products that require "sin taxes" is an assault on the owner of our bodies, Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES?

Even the world's vernacular ("sin taxes") indicates their knowledge that usage of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages is sinful. Sadly, some in the Lord's church continue to pay "sin tax" while ignoring the obvious results of their behavior. Indeed, sin

truly does tax all people. "For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23). For a Christian to use tobacco products and alcohol, sin taxes their spiritual growth, their example to family, co-workers, friends, neighbors, and ultimately could jeopardize their eternal destiny if they are obeying the lusts of their addiction and not actively trying to cease their addiction (remember—"I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME."

There are some taxes that all citizens, Christians or not, have to pay in order to fulfill the law. In such legal matters we have no choice but to comply. However, paying "sin tax" is a willful act that is contrary to the example that a Christian should set and is detrimental to one's body and one's soul. What a great day it would be if only the sinners paid the "sin tax," while the saved of God refused to participate in the ingestion of that which led to such a tax in the first place.

—1909 Sterling St.  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130

**S**pring  
**B**ible  
**I**nstitute

**SEIZE THE  
OPPORTUNITY!**

A WORK OF THE SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PO BOX 39, SPRING, TEXAS 77383

**OFFERING TUITION-FREE, IN-DEPTH BIBLE TRAINING FOR  
SERIOUS BIBLE STUDENTS.**

- STUDY THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS (IN RESIDENCE).
- STUDY BY INTERNET (DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM)
- ASSISTANCE IN RAISING SUPPORT.
- SOUND IN DOCTRINE—STILL HOLDING TO THE "OLD PATHS."
- EMPHASIS ON PREPARING CHRISTIANS TO PREACH/TEACH THE WORD.
- PRACTICAL, "HANDS-ON" TRAINING.

---

"I am so thankful I was steered in the direction of Spring Bible Institute and have been allowed to take this course. It has already had an impact on my life..."  
—Distance Learning Student, August, 2001

---

**CONTACT US TODAY!**

ON THE WEB: [CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM](http://CHURCHESOFCHRIST.COM) EMAIL: [sbi@churchesofchrist.com](mailto:sbi@churchesofchrist.com)  
PHONE: (281) 353-2707

DIRECTOR: DAVID P. BROWN ASST. DIRECTOR: LYNN PARKER

**Reminder...**

**✓ Your Labels**

If your label  
has the date  
**11/01/02**  
It is time to  
**Renew!**

**Send Renewals to:**

PO BOX 2357  
SPRING, TX 77383  
FAX: 281.288.0549

# A BIT MORE ABOUT BULTMANN

Wayne Coats

In a previous article I wrote a paragraph relative to **Rudolph Bultmann**. I will post a brief piece additional to that which was presented about Bultmann, however one line about the old modernist is far more than he deserves. Bultmann is a sort of transcendent god to some of our highly sophisticated scholars who like to revel in supercilious assumptions of plain infidelity. Bultmann usually finds a brief space in the volumes that treat of hermeneutics. To Bultmann, when one is confronted with the interpretation of a specific problem, the question should arise as to why one is interested in the given text. Here one must have a “pre-understanding” of what one is looking for. For example, the historian, the psychologist, or the existentialist will seek to interpret scripture from different viewpoints.

Bultmann would write:

The historical method includes the presupposition that history is a unity in the sense of a closed continuum of effects in which individual events are connected by the succession of cause and effect—This closedness means that the continuum of historical happening cannot be rent by the interference of supernatural, transcendent, powers and that, therefore, there is no “miracle” in this sense of the word.

How much stupidity does he need to understand and accept such foolishness?

## **GOD DID NOT INTERVENE IN HUMAN HISTORY?**

Bultmann would not deny that the Old Testament speaks freely of the presence of God in many Old Testament events, but all of the events cannot be demonstrated by historical proof. The Old Testament records simply show that there were those who believed the events actually occurred. Man can thus believe whatever he wants to believe, and likewise he can disbelieve whatever he may choose to disbelieve. To Bultmann, there can be no real objective proof that God ever broke through into all the events as recorded by man.

Back in 1951-1952 while on a lecture tour within the United States, Bultmann had much to say relative to his interpretation of the myths contained in the Bible. To Bultmann, anything in the Bible that is contrary to a

modern scientific world-view is a simple myth. The concept of heaven, earth, and hell presented, as a three-story universe was a myth invented by man. All of the supernatural events recorded in the Bible could not be accepted. Very brazenly Bultmann could write, “There remains no room for God’s working.” The low depths of Rationalism into which Bultmann plunged can be seen when he wrote, “For modern man the mythological conception of the world, the conceptions of eschatology of redeemer, and of redemption are over and done with.”

## **STUPIDITY GONE TO SEED**

Any honest person will wonder how a man like Rudolph Bultmann could reach such low depths while claiming to be a theologian. The truth is, Bultmann dared to go the limits into which liberalism, modernism, and brazen atheism will lead one. The weak and wobbly smatterers among us who try to pose as scholars in our universities while bowing and scraping before the old modernists do not seem to realize how STUPID they really are. Indeed, a man is exceedingly STUPID who will reject parts and parcels of the Bible and relegate to the trash can whatever he pleases. Such is modernism.

Bultmann simply attempted to make public what he actually believed. Karl Barth wrote, “Rudolph Bultmann—an attempt to Understand Him.” In his essay Barth declared that Bultmann, “has forsaken our road and gone back to the old one again.” I do not think Bultmann had gone back suggested by Barth, but rather it is the case that Bultmann plunged ahead into the sheer atheism which modernism of necessity would lead him. *Proposition:* Show me one of the little tad-pole modernists who has had free reign to express his theology in one of the universities called, “Christian,” and I guarantee I will be able to show you a budding infidel, or one who is altogether an atheist. Oh, I know how inconsistent characters like to shift from one foot to the other, how they vacillate back and forth from one position to another. It would be decent and thankworthy if all of the little baby Bultmanns would go ahead and declare, “There remains no room for God’s working.” That day will not come as long as ignoramuses can be conned into emptying their cookie jars to support the Judas traitors. The very day and hour the finances are

cut off, that moment will be the time the modernists will change like the little chameleons in the woodpile.

### **DISHONESTY PRACTICED**

Someone asks, "Why present such sleaze as that which is advocated by Rudolph Bultmann?" Such is an attempt to show where some of our brethren are headed and where they will go as soon as they try to be consistent. The road to infidelity is crooked and down hill all the way. The little pygmy who stops along the way to preach his stench in a university classroom practices a gross amount of dishonesty. He can do this because there is such shortage of brains in the church pews.

With his blatant infidelity, Bultmann had no problem denying the resurrection. He would say, "The resurrection story was fabricated by men and is a myth." When Bultmann disposes with God—which all of the rationalists will do, there cannot be any moral standard by which men can measure their lives. If and when one eliminates God, obviously there can not be thought that Government is ordained of God. Instead of God being on the throne—Bultmann would elevate man to the place of sovereignty.

The severe attacks, at one time, came from without, but now the situation has changed and some of the subtlest attacks are coming from within—from the University classrooms controlled by baby Bultmanns.

**Bishop Pike** and **Bishop Robinson** would join in with Bultmann and deny the existence of the Godhead. To the sleazy fellows who sputter that we must make the faith attractive to the secular world, may I please remind such shallow-minded, compromising so-called scholars that such was the desire of Bultmann, the "Christian atheist," who attempted to present something called by him, "The Christian faith", in a way so as to appeal to the secular mind. Bultmann was one of a great number of German rationalists who burped what some copycat liberal theologians are spitting forth.

### **AN ABSURD CONCEPT**

I suspect one or two might take umbrage at my use of the term, "Christian atheist" but I did not invent the fool notion. The Rationalists use the absurd concept freely as they attempt to explain their antithetical and converse positions. Men such as Bultmann would be experts in changing the meaning of words to conform to all kinds of fool-hearty ideas. Does that sound familiar?

To Bultmann, God did not mean what the term has meant for long centuries. The God of the beginning and the God of the Bible became some sort of "Wholly Other," or the "Ground of Being," maybe the Eternal Recurrence, or positively "The Ultimate Reality." What the preceding expressions might mean, it is certain that

they cannot be equated with Almighty God, The El Shaddi of the Old Testament and the father God of the New Testament.

I find it completely ludicrous that anyone who claims to be a Christian, who sits in a Professor's chair, and who influences young people would be so dependent on men like Bultmann, yet such is the case. When reading, "The Peaceable Kingdom" by **Carrol Osburne** of Abilene University, I noted so very often that Osburne's god was, "The Ultimate Reality." What does he mean? Ask Bultmann! Yet this is what some people want to support. Hogwash!

When men become inebriated with a bloated sense of their worth, they will often times exert an enormous amount of effort in attempts to seek recognition even if they have to mimic the worse kind of radicals. This is exactly what the present-day liberals and modernist who sit on dunce stools in our university classrooms are doing. Scratch out one of their little pep talks and compare such with Bultmann, **Tillich**, and **Bonhoeffer** or other modernists and note the similarities.

### **"GOD-TALK"**

Then consider the replicas, and similitude of words! While reading from the works of Bultmann and other rationalists, I kept seeing the expression, "God-talk" as it emerged in their writings, "God-talk" to the modernist is no more than dog-talk when god is reversed in its spelling.

The great **Rubel Shelly** informs us: "I do not understand God-talk." Neither did Bultmann, **Thomas JJ. Altizer**, **Bishop Robinson**, and many others who reject the word of God. With such foolishness, do those characters understand, "Thou shalt not commit adultery?" Do they understand, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife..." (Exodus 20:17)? Every modernistic infidel will understand exactly what they want to understand, and understanding and copying from the German rationalists is truly what they want to understand.

Where did the likes of Shelly the Great, learn about "God-talk?" I learned about such carrion from reading the silly pieces from German Rationalists, modernists, infidels and "Christian Atheists." I do not mind telling you the source of my information, such as it is. "God Talk" sounds smart to the ignorant. God spoke in and through the Old Testament prophets, but Shelly does not understand "God-talk." I can only wonder what type of mentality Shelly will impress?

—705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122



*Spring Bible Institute Lectures*  
**“ISLAM—FROM GOD OR MAN”**

**February 23-26, 2003**

**David P. Brown, Lectureship Director**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23**

9:30 A.M. *The Islamic View of the Bible*  
 10:30 A.M. *Abraham Sows & the Middle East Reaps*  
 4:00 P.M. *Biography of Muhammad*  
 5:00 P.M. *An Overview of the Koran*  
 6:00 P.M. *Islamic Objections to the Trinity & Deity of Christ Answered*

Gary Grizzell  
 Tom Wacaster  
 Paul Vaughn  
 Gary Summers  
 Tom S. Bright

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24**

9:00 A.M. *Who Owns Palestine?*  
 10:00 A.M. *The Status of Women In Islam*  
 \*\*10: A.M. *From The Women's Quarters*  
 11:00 A.M. *Is Islam a Religion of Peace*  
 1:30 P.M. *The Religious Hierarchy in Islam*  
 2:30 P.M. *The Causes of Division In Islam*  
 3:30 P.M. *The 5 Pillars (Duties) of Islam*  
 DINNER BREAK  
 6:30 P.M. **CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**  
 7:00 P.M. *Jihad*  
 8:00 P.M. *The Jesus of Islam (Born of a Virgin, a True Prophet—But Not Deity)*

Roddy Covington  
 Jim Nash  
 Fran McClure  
 Charles Collett  
 Darrell Broking  
 Michael Hatcher  
 David Baker

Jerry Murrell  
 Barry Grider

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25**

9:00 A.M. *Religious Tolerance of Muslims In Islamic States*  
 10:00 A.M. *Islamic Holy Places*  
 \*\*10: A.M. *Through the Lattice*  
 11:00 A.M. *Islamic Worship: Then and Now*  
 1:30 P.M. *Sources of Authority In Islam*  
 2:30 P.M. *Muhammad Is Not The fulfillment of Biblical Prophecy*  
 3:30 P.M. *Islam's Eschatology*  
 DINNER BREAK  
 6:30 P.M. **CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**  
 7:00 P.M. *The Nation of Islam (Black Muslims)*  
 8:00 P.M. *The Church Confronts Islam In America*

Rick Popejoy  
 Clifford Newell  
 Fran McClure  
 Randy Mabe  
 Keith A. Mosher, Sr.  
 Richard Massey  
 Jerry Brewer

Michael Shepherd  
 Curtis Cates

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26**

9:00 A.M. *Islam—From God or Men*  
 10:00 A.M. *Shariah Law (Punishment by Severing Fingets, Hands, etc.)*  
 11:00 A.M. *How Islam Grew—the Culture in which Muhammand Lived*  
 1:30 P.M. *Islamic Distinctives in Diet, Clothing, Etc.*  
 2:30 P.M. *The Impact of Islam on World Affairs*  
 3:30 P.M. *The Islamic view of the Prophets*  
 DINNER BREAK  
 6:30 P.M. **CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**  
 7:00 P.M. *A Christian's View of Islam (Salvation is Only In Christ's Church)*  
 8:00 P.M. *Allah: Islam's God is Not The God of the Bible*  
 \*\*Ladies Only

Kent Bailey  
 Preston Silcox  
 Michael Light  
 Lester Kamp  
 Bobby Liddell  
 John West

Lynn Parker  
 B. J. Clarke

**LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE SPIRING CONGREGATION EACH DAY AT NOON**

Hardback Book Of Lectures Available\*\*R.V. Hook-Ups\*\*Video and Audio Tapes\*\*Approved displays

Elders: **Kenneth D. Cohn** and **Buddy Roth**

For more information re: R.V. reservations or display requests, contact the church office

Phone: (281) 353-2707; Fax: (282)288-3676; E-mail: [springbibleinstitute@swbell.net](mailto:springbibleinstitute@swbell.net)

# IN DEFENDING THE FAITH

*"Be Wise As Serpents and Harmless as Doves"*

Barry M. Grider

Jesus said to the twelve, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). Jesus warns that in the midst of enemies, his servants must be prudent, cautious, and careful as serpents, yet maintain the gentleness and peacefulness of a dove. This admonition still serves the followers of Christ well, even today. The church of our Lord is threatened with various extremes. Both radicalism and liberalism have harmed the body of Christ in a significant way. This has caused some to react with an unbecoming attitude. A wise older preacher once said to me, "Despite many departures from the faith, those who are faithful must always behave like Christians." The current digression has caused many to be skeptical of others and to sometimes begin ques-

tioning the integrity and soundness of brethren, often unnecessarily. Those who love God's truth and want to defend it should remember, for example:

## **BE FIRM, BUT NOT FACTIOUS**

It is important that God's people hold true to their convictions. Never is there any room to compromise that which is sacred. Such is condemned in the Bible repeatedly. However, one should never confuse his conviction with his opinion. An opinion can sometimes be elevated above scripture, and many are willing to break ties with faithful brethren over an opinion. While remaining true to our beliefs, let us never promote division, but let us always be "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

## **BE CAUTIOUS, BUT NOT CONSPIRING**

The Bible teaches us to be watchful for the Lord's cause (Ezekiel 3:17; I Corinthians 16:13). However, we are not to hang on another's every word just to try and catch someone in error. Often because of petty jealousies or misunderstandings, "Christians" engage in character assassination under the guise they are protecting God's truth. Even after a brother may clarify or even repent of something he has stated, many will keep a distance from him or continue to conspire against him, unwilling to forgive. Sometimes it is easy to identify a false teacher. When the evidence is there, and one fails to repent, such should be made known to the entire brotherhood (Romans 16:17). If you are not sure about another's specific doctrinal stance, be quiet until you are sure. Be willing to give the individual the benefit of the doubt, instead of saying, "There is something wrong with that fellow, I just can't place my finger on it." Such an attitude is certainly not in accord with the lovely description of a Christian (I Corinthians 13:7).

## **BE NARROW-MINDED, BUT NOT CLOSED-MINDED**

Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

**Contending FOR THE Faith**

**2001 Bound Volume**

• Only \$8.00 plus \$2.00 S&H

**ORDER TODAY!**

• P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357  
fax: 281.288.0549

Truth by its very nature is narrow. Salvation comes to those who walk the narrow way (Matthew 7:14). I am thankful for airline pilots, doctors, pharmacists, etc. who are narrow-minded. But to be closed-minded is a very dangerous attitude to possess. If you have already made up your mind about a specific Bible subject, and are unwilling to change your thinking, even when proven wrong, you should be alarmed about yourself. Because of pride, some refuse to open their minds and listen to others.

### **BE BOLD, BUT NOT BRASH**

Joshua was encouraged to be **“strong and of a good courage.”** (Joshua 1:6). Likewise, Christians are to exhibit the same in the Lord’s service (I Corinthians 16:13). This is particularly true when one considers the following admonition, **“... that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”** (Jude 3). This is a command, not an option. While contending earnestly for the faith demands our boldness and courage, it does not entail our being brash and caustic. Never be hasty or rush to judgement in condemning another; and, for sure, do not resort to sardonic statements that are meant to hurt an individual personally (Galatians 5:15).

### **BE STUDIOUS, BUT NOT SNOBBISH**

To know the truth demands our study (II Timothy 2:15). The only way Christians can teach others is by being diligent students of the Book themselves (I Peter 3:15). Every Christian should be grateful for those who have sacrificed time and money to be educated and skilled in God’s word. How beautiful is the picture of the one who has collected a vast knowledge of the sacred scriptures, faithfully teaches the truth to others, maintains his integrity, and still walks humbly before his fellow man. Always be willing to share what you have learned, but never let the devil cause you to think, because of your knowledge, that you are superior to your other brothers and sisters in Christ.

May we ever be diligent in combating error of any stripe. Christ, his church, the truth of God, are definitely worth defending. However, we must always maintain the proper conduct, or else our efforts in defense of the faith will become futile.

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

# BEING NEGATIVE CAN BE A POSITIVE

Richard Massey

Sometimes preachers are criticized for presenting lessons that are negative. The problem with being critical about negative preaching is that it is being negative, too. Being negative in preaching is not wrong.

Is it wrong for a parent to sternly rebuke his child when there is misbehavior? Was it wrong for President Reagan to express in a negative way, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall?” Is it wrong for teachers to tell students, “Don’t run in the hall?” What about a policeman expressing loudly and negatively, “Don’t drive down that road, the bridge is out!” Are these negative statements intended to help or hurt? They are meant to bring a positive result.

Did God intend for the negatives in the ten commandments to help or hurt the Israelites? **“Thou shalt not make any graven image.”** **“Thou shalt not steal.”** **“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”** If it is a bad thing to be negative, then what does that say about God?

Notice the negative statements of Jesus. **“Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence to me.”** That was stated to one of his close disciples, Peter (Matthew 16:23). Remember, Jesus offended the Pharisees in saying, **“In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men”** (Matthew 15:9). Consider his public exposure of them as hypocrites, a brood of vipers, whites sepulchers, blind guides, gnat strainers, and more (Matthew 23). Was he being mean-spirited or was he truly concerned about the souls of men? The Bible says God loves the world (John 3:16).

No one can avoid being negative, regardless if it is politics, school, police work, public service, general conversation, or religion. You could never have safety, order, and good behavior without negatives. The reason our Lord used so many negatives is because of the wonderful results they bring.

It is not possible to preach the whole counsel and avoid being negative. Like they used to say, “you have to be connected to both the positive and the negative post on a battery before you can get any power out of it.” The same is true with the Bible—the power of preaching can only be realized when you have both the positives and the negatives proclaimed.

*—P. O. 760  
Rising Star, Texas 76471*

# WHAT IS MAN?

Clifford Newell, Jr.

With this lesson, we begin a study of a question that appears in both testaments. We read in Psalm 8, **“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”** (Psalm 8:4). **“Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!”** (Psalm 144:3). This question occurs once in the New Testament and is a direct reference to the quotation in Psalms. **“But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?”** (Hebrews 2:6). The very fact that this question is asked at least three times in Holy Writ underscores its importance. It is worthy of our meditation.

## THE EPICUREAN VIEW

While in Athens on his second missionary tour, Paul met with the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers: **Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblersay? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection** (Acts 17:18). They possessed the playboy spirit of their age. They believed in having fun at any price. Their philosophy was **“Let us eat, drink, and be merry today for tomorrow we die.”** Paul alludes to this in I Corinthians 15:32. It was a fatal philosophy for it led to spiritual death for all its followers. It is a false view today as well and will lead to death.

## THE SADDUCEAN VIEW

The Sadducees were one of the two main Jewish sects in the first century. They are on the wrong side of truth every time they are mentioned in the New Testament. They opposed John the Baptist, Jesus, the apostles, and were the first ones to persecute the early church in Acts 4. They denied man a spirit, rejected the resurrection, disbelieved in angels, and said that when man died he died all over, that nothing survived him at death. They were the materialists, the modernists, the religious liberals of the first Century. Their view of man was totally false.

## THE EVOLUTIONARY VIEW

This view has man with no Maker and only the product of chance and time, the twin idols of organic evolution. This system denies that man has been created by a wise and infinite God (Genesis 1:1, 26-27).

Instead it has man the product of aimless and purposeless evolution that did not have him in mind at the beginning. This system has man from the slime—not from the sublime. Organic evolution has man produced from lower forms of life; he is just a bit higher up the scale of life but really is no more important than the animals that produced him. This system has a NOTHING turning itself into a simple non-living something; that simple non-living something turning itself into a simple living something and that simple living something turning itself into enough kinds as ultimately to produce man. This is a brutal view of man and one that is false (I Timothy 6:20).

## THE CALVINISTIC VIEW

Calvin has man totally depraved at birth, minus any conditions by which he can be saved, only a limited atonement for the elect, in a system where God's grace cannot be resisted when it strikes and man cannot be lost when he is once saved. This, too, is a false view of man. The case is that upon the pages of Holy Writ one will find the teaching that man does not go astray until he reaches the age of accountability (Ezekiel 18:20). The election of mankind was according to a plan of God, i.e., He elected a plan according to obedience (Romans 8:28-30). The fact is that God's Son died for all men (Hebrews 2:9) in regards to atonement. Grace is God's goodness to us but not according to our meriting it. **“Ye are saved by grace...”** (Ephesians 2:8-9). The final view of Calvinism involves man who has been saved cannot be lost. The Bible teaches that we are to take heed lest ye fall. Fall from what? All of mankind will be before the great Judge (II Corinthians 5:10). Calvinism has absolutely nothing to offer man except a false security in a false system.

## THE HUMANISTIC VIEW

Humanism makes man the measure of all things. It makes man his own God. It is a synonym for atheistic philosophy. It is false to the core. If man is the measure of all things, what does that view do to God? Far too many religious systems have a false view of Jehovah God. 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. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith”** (Romans 1:16-17).

### THE BIBLICAL VIEW

The Bible teaches that man is a being created by God (Genesis 1:26-27). He is a rational being (I Thessalonians 5:21). Man is a free moral being (Matthew 11:28-30). Man is a being with a conscience (Romans 2:15). Man is an eternal being (Matthew 25:46). Man is a being accountable to God (I John 3:4). Because of his being accountable to God, man has been given the power to think, reason, and to choose. Man must learn the truth that will set him free (John 8:32).

He must obey as did Christ (Hebrews 5:8-9). And he must grow in the Christian virtues (II Peter 1:5-11). This growth will culminate in man growing in grace and knowledge (II Peter 3:18).

Thus, the question, "What is man?" is an extremely important soul searching question. What is your concept of Man? Think about it!

—25 Risto Rd.  
Bristol, VA 24201

## Studies In Greek...

# "THELO"

Wayne Price

As Bible students are aware, many original Greek words are translated into our English language by numerous synonyms, and even the King James Version often renders the same Greek word by many different English equivalents. Perhaps this truth is as well represented by the Greek verb (*Thelo*) serving as the title of this article, as by any other original word which we might select.

This word, whose basic meaning is "to wish, desire, take pleasure in, be inclined or ready" is found over two hundred times in our New Testament. The King James translators used eighteen different words, such as *will*, *would*, *desire*, plus fifteen less frequent words in translating this fascinating Greek verb.<sup>1</sup> The burden of this short treatise is to focus on the problems caused by using the first two words (*will* and *would*) in the rendering of this word into English.

Translating from one language into another is made more difficult when that target language (the English, let's say) uses a word that means more than one thing to its English readers. As I often remind my New Testament Greek grammar students, our misunderstanding the English language rather than the Greek causes many problems in biblical interpretation.

Oftentimes in our English language, we use auxiliary verbs (or "helping" verbs) in forming a sentence: i.e., "am going", "were lost", "should watch", etc. "Be", "do", and "have" are the most common auxiliaries; "can", "may", "shall", "will", "must", "ought", "should", "would", and "might" are frequently used as auxiliaries." It is this very construction that sometimes causes the reader to misunderstand what the New Testament writer was saying, especially as it pertains to the use of the Greek verb *thelo*. In addition, the English words

"would" and "will" can also show simple futurity that further complicates the problem for Bible students.

The Greek word *thelo* is not to be understood as an auxiliary verb, nor as expressing something that is to happen in the future, but rather as emphasizing "the will or desire" to do a thing, much akin to the Greek word *boulomai*. This is the primary significance of the term. Places in these two categories where students might miss the point made by the inspired writers are listed below.

At the time when the King James Version was translated into English, no doubt the common folk understood the terms "will" and "would" to be expressing "intent and/or desire," but many people in the world today understand those words to mean something else. Examples of where some might erroneously believe that the *auxiliary verb* is being used include the following:

Matthew 18:30 - Instead of "**would not**," we should understand it to be saying, "**was not inclined**" or "**did not desire**" to be patient.

Matthew 23:37 - Instead of understanding our Lord to merely be saying that people "**would not**" come, we need to realize he was addressing their mindset; they just **did not desire** to come to Him.

II Thessalonians 3:10 - "**would not**" work is best understood as meaning these lazy persons just **did not desire** to work.

Passages where some students might think that simple futurity is being expressed (instead of the will to do something) are as follows:

Matthew 20:26, 27 - Instead of saying "**Whoever will be great...**" (i.e., sometime in the future), Jesus stresses the desire or wish that a person has to be great. To better understand what Jesus emphasizes,

we need to realize that he is saying “Whoever wishes (desires, et al.) to be great among you...” A number of the new versions available clear up this problem caused by the English reader’s use of “will” as an auxiliary verb.

In Acts 17:18, some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were not asking “what will this babbling say?” but rather what does he “desire to say.” Other terms such as *wish*, *want*, et al. do a fine job in expressing the concept of desire inherent within the Greek verb.

Realizing this simple point surely makes the text “come alive” for the Bible student.

A few other passages illustrating this point include:

I Corinthians 7:39 “to be married to whom she will” is better understood “to whom she *desires*...”

Galatians 1:7 is not simply saying that some “would pervert the gospel of Christ” but instead informs us that they *wish* to pervert the gospel.

Finally, In I Timothy 2:4, the point emphasized is not that God “will have all men to be saved” but that God “*desires*” all men to be saved.

It is hoped this short study will prove beneficial in the study of the English Bible, especially as it relates to the meaning of the original verb *thelo*.

#### ENDNOTES

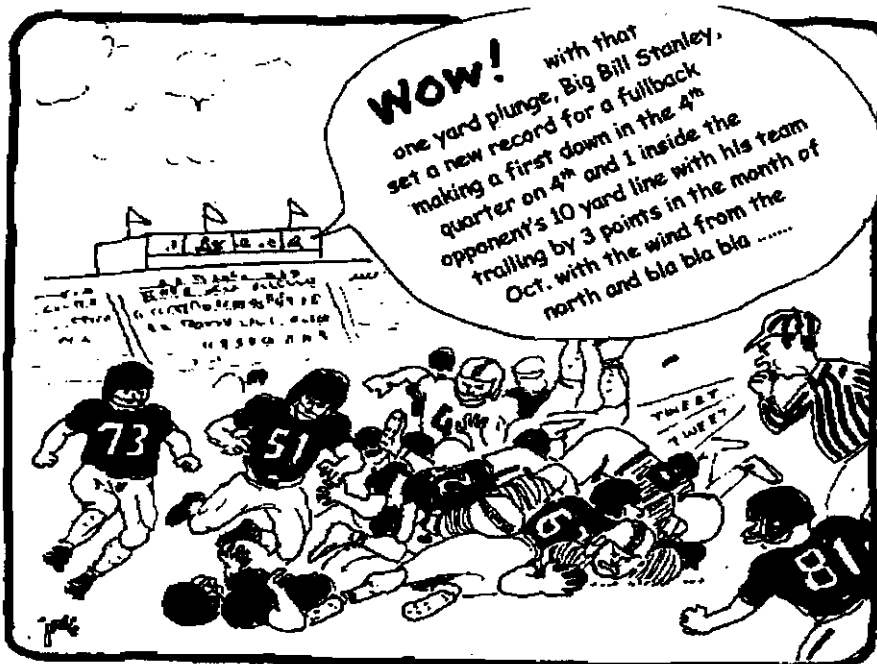
1. Winter, Ralph, *The Word Study Concordance* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1978). p p. 362-63.
2. Perrin, Robert, *Writer's Guide and Index to English* (Scott, Foresman and Company, 1959), p. 435.

—P.O. Box 760  
McLoud, OK 74851

## Seeing It Helps Saying It...

# RECORD BOOKS

by Jodie Boren



It seems that Americans are obsessed with records. Many will do outlandish and even dangerous acts in order to get into the Guinness Book of World Records. Whether the record is for a golfer who can play the most holes in a day—or one who can skip rope for the longest without missing a jump—or who can stuff the most doughnuts in one’s mouth—Americans are obsessed with records! They are either trying hard to break a record or are observing someone in their

efforts to set a new record. There’s really nothing wrong with records. It is a powerful motivation to achieve. This is good! But like all secular endeavors—the pursuit of records must be kept at its proper perspective. All of us must keep Matthew 6:33 in mind and put the kingdom of God at the very top of our priorities. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul” (Matthew 16:26)?

Just as man keeps records, so does God. In Revelation 20:12, we read, “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand

before God; and the books were opened. ...” Most scholars understand these books to mean the ones where God records all the works of all men. Though the language is not to be taken literally, nevertheless, it teaches the great truth that stored in God’s memory are the deeds and thoughts that all men have done. Paul wrote:

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 (II Corinthians 5:10).

This passage could not be fulfilled on judgment day if God does not “record” in his memory the things we do, say, and think. This truth cannot be denied. Revelation 20:12 continues: **“...and another book was opened, which is the book of life.”** This book of life contains the names of all the faithful who will be welcomed into that eternal kingdom, the sweet home of the soul. See verse 15.

In view of the pending judgment, Paul exhorts us in I Corinthians 9:24-25:

**Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.**

In striving for the mastery we must do it lawfully (II Timothy 2:5). Paul said in Philippians 3:16 that Christians are to walk by the same rule. The word *rule* means “standard” or “law.” Christians are under the law of Christ which was prophesied by Isaiah in Isaiah 2:2 and fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). About Christ’s law, read I Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2; and James 1:25; 2:8,12. Jesus adds to this law keeping by simply saying, **“... be thou faithful unto death, and I**

**will give thee a crown of life”** (Revelation 2:10). Keep in mind that Jesus is **“ the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him”** (Hebrews 5:9).

On that judgment day we will be judged by Jesus (Acts 17:31) according to the words of Jesus (John 12:48). Therefore, we should **“... lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith”** (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Whatever world record you may set or rejoice in one being set, this pales into insignificance when you think about God’s record book—the book of life. In Luke 10:17-20, our Lord tells us the true reason for rejoicing.

**And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.**

I want to be in the Lord’s book of life. How about you?

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601

## *One Woman’s Perspective...*

# MAN, THIS IS THE LIFE!

Annette B. Cates

Our four year-old grandson, Trey, is enamored with the story of Peter Pan, and especially with the character of Captain Hook. This has led to a fascination with pirates, in general. Recently, he described to us the life of a pirate and the things a pirate would do. His concluding point was that pirates get to have dirty teeth. With this said, he sighed longingly and said, “Man, that is the life!”

How many people go through their lives thinking theirs is THE LIFE? On their way to casinos, bars, dances, and other places where iniquity abounds and Christian influence is nil, they say to themselves, “Man, this is the life!” They display their bodies at the beach or at the public swimming pool thinking that they have it made. Perhaps they relish the freedom to use profanity, tell dirty jokes, and read explicit materials. Or,

as they take a draw on a cigarette their concept is that they are living the high life. This is particularly a problem for a young adult who has recently moved out on his/her own. People whose focus is in the world revel in what they see as freedom from religious and parental restraints, forgetting that God sees it all. **“Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? And who knoweth us?”** (Isaiah 29:15). Surely, they appear more repulsive to God than a pirate with dirty teeth would look to those of us who recognize the value of personal hygiene. God does not see “the life” the way man does, but he looks on the heart and sees the spiritual values



one possesses or lacks (I Samuel 16:7).

#### **OF SOWING AND REAPING**

While people of the world think they are really living, they do not realize how close they are to disaster, for as we sow, we will reap (Galatians 6:8). The day of accounting may not come until the judgement, but there are other ways in which payday often comes more swiftly, as the laws of nature take their course. That trip to the casino that started out with anticipation of "easy" wealth usually closes with a return home with empty pockets and growing debt. The alcohol and illegal drugs that provided a temporary high, more than likely will result in addiction and a loss of control over one's actions. Examples abound of those whose lifestyle led to heartbreak. The freedom to do whatever one wants is not true freedom, but is, in reality, imprisoning. When based on principles of Biblical righteousness, social and moral restraints provide protection and security for everyone whereas sin leads to a loss of self-respect, and brings about insecurity and destruction.

#### **"THE LIFE"—A GODLY LIFE**

What really is "the life"? The good life is found in seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matthew 6:33). When this is the focus of our decisions and actions, everything else falls into place.

There is spiritual confidence to be found in living as God would have us live. "The life" is the joy of worshipping our Creator with fellow Christians. It is awakening in the morning with a clear conscience. It is the feeling of satisfaction that comes from showing kindness and in serving others. It is dealing ethically with others, even though it may cost us in the short run. It is closing the day with a prayer, knowing that God hears. The Apostle Paul stated, "**I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me**" (Philippians 4:13). We know that God will see us through no matter the test. "**Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast...**" (Hebrews 6:19).

The Christian has trials and temptations, just as does the atheist. We all live in a physical world where the results of the sin of Adam and Eve are apparent in the deterioration of all things material. Man is a free moral agent and has the choice to do good or to do evil. Unfortunately, some choose evil and we have the inhumanity of man to man. The forces of nature bring about natural consequences, sometimes resulting in disaster. Thus, one (Christian or atheist) can be in the wrong place at the wrong time and lose his life or loved ones. The difference for the Christian is that regardless of what happens to him, God knows and cares. God went through the torture and death of his sinlessly perfect, only begotten son (John 3:16). This was for the sins of the world, most of whom, God knew, would have no appreciation whatever for the sacrifice made for them. If God so loves a rejecting world, how much more, then he cares for those who live their lives for him!

The scriptures give an accurate description of "the life." By these words, we shall be blessed in our daily actions (Matthew 7:24-25; Ephesians 1:3), and by these words, we shall be judged. "**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgement...**" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

Temptation and peer pressure are powerful influences on people. Sometimes there are individuals or situations that appear to be representative of "the life" but will lead us astray. Let us think of how God sees us in the actions we take, and this will help us in choosing the way we should live. "**And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve;...as for me and my house we will serve the Lord**" (Joshua 24:15).

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

**Healthcare Savings Plan**

**Starting at \$19/mo.**

**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS,  
MEDICAL, DENTAL, VISION**

**ALL PRE-EXISTING  
CONDITIONS ACCEPTED.**

**CALL BOB AND JACKIE SWEETEN  
TOLL FREE 1-866-252-3282  
OR VISIT  
[WWW.JBSWEETEN.MYBIGPLANETUSA.COM](http://WWW.JBSWEETEN.MYBIGPLANETUSA.COM)  
AND CLICK ON CARECLUB**

## SOME THINGS I HAVE LEARNED

Eddie Whitten

I am not assuming that the end of my life is near, although it could be. I have lived long enough to observe some things that, to me, are important. I do not usually write in the first person, but this time I am. We learn by the experiences of life. We benefit by what we learn if we are wise. I want to pass on to you some of the things I have learned in life. There are far more than can be related in this short space, but these are submitted for your consideration: **I have learned that—**

### **I DO NOT KNOW EVERYTHING**

Some of the pitfalls of life can be averted if only we can come to the realization that we do not know all there is to know about anything. Some of our younger preachers, especially, seem to have the idea that they have all the answers to life's problems. It is not an indication of ignorance to admit that "I don't know." In fact, it is the height of arrogance to give the impression that one knows all about everything.

### **I CAN STILL LEARN**

Did you ever encounter someone that cannot be taught? It seems they are convinced that the conclusions they have reached are beyond question. It is senseless to try to impart further knowledge to them, and they are insulted if you question their conclusions. The very idea that one may think that he cannot be taught is a glaring indication that he needs to be taught that he can be taught. The study of the Bible is the ultimate example. The depths of the riches of Christ cannot be fathomed. The more one studies the word of God, the more he learns. This is a blessing to be treasured. One can come to the knowledge of the truth and obey the principles of righteousness and the plan of salvation. He can know the requirements he must meet to be saved, and how he should live before men. He can learn the principles of ethical and moral conduct. He can learn compassion and selflessness. He can learn submission to and dependence upon the word of God. He can learn how to worship and to serve God. He can learn the unfathomable profit of prayer and faith.

He can know of the great love that is God, but he

can never learn the depth of God's love. He can never understand all that is involved in the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins. He can never plumb the riches of the blessings God has poured out upon us so profusely. He can never understand and appreciate the forgiving nature of God for the penitent. He can never totally comprehend the reward for faithfulness God has provided. He can also never understand the severity of God for those who reject him.

Those who are unteachable are losing one of life's greatest blessings—that of letting the word of God teach him of the incomprehensible majesty of our Almighty Father. I am so glad that I have learned that I can still learn.

### **I AM NOT SELF-SUFFICIENT**

A friend of mine once said to a group of young people, "I know young people sometimes think they are bullet-proof and invincible." I think that is an appropriate comment for I can remember those days in my life. It is common, I suppose, for some to think they can go through life without depending upon any thing or any body. It is amazing upon just how many things and how many bodies we are dependent. Our land of plenty has spoiled our thinking. Independence is a wonderful thing depending upon what it is of which we think we are independent. I have another friend who made the statement, in derision, "I am a born again atheist!" Imagine that! He is, in his mind, totally independent of God. Unless he repents and obeys the gospel before he dies, he will find that his statement of self-sufficiency was totally wrong.

Those who may think they are not dependent upon God need only to look about them. The air we breathe, the food we eat, the sun that gives life, the water we drink, all the elements that comprise the earth are products of God, without which we could not live. Self-sufficient? Not on your life! These are only the physical aspects of our dependence upon God. The spiritual aspect is even more important. God has provided the means by which our souls can be with him for a never-



ending eternity. Man cannot conceive of such a thought, much less do anything about it. Self-sufficiency is the thought of ignorance of the Bible, of common sense and the evidence of a Supreme Being that provides for us all.

### **TRUE FRIENDS ARE PRICELESS TREASURES**

There is a difference between friends and true friends. Friends are those we like and who like us. They smile and we have fun with each other. We work with them and play games with them. We give each other cause for pleasant times and cherished memories. True friends, on the other hand, are those who actually share our lives. They are a part of us because of mutual interests, principles and love. They believe in us and we in them. To disappoint or discourage a true friend would be tragic because it would hurt them so deeply. We would go completely out of our way to avoid such an eventuality.

True friends are those upon whom we can share our thoughts and concerns because we know they care. It makes little difference if we sometimes become curt with one another because we know the deep-down love that overcomes hurt feelings. True friends can see beyond the surface to the core of the heart. No hardship or trauma is sufficient to prevent a true friend from giving whatever he needs to give to help. Many illustrations are played out every day of those who have

given their lives for their friends.

Jesus gave his life for his friends (you and me). It is a sad person who can say in truth that he has no friends. I cannot contemplate life without my cherished friends made and cultivated over a lifetime. The greatest friend man can have is Jesus Christ, our Lord.

### **WITH JESUS, I AM NEVER ALONE**

Loneliness is a debilitating malady. For one who is lonely, life is drudgery. The hours are long and the nights are endless. Anticipation is a forgotten word. Accomplishment has no allure. Ambition is, at its best, minimal. There just seems to be nothing that is important anymore. Such a condition is deplorable especially in an environment that is so conducive to happiness. Loneliness in America is proof that happiness does not consist of the abundance of the things one possesses (Luke 12:15). Loneliness is a great contributor to emotional stress, social dysfunction, suicide, attention-getting crimes and many other mental disturbances. The travesty of all of this is that it is not necessary at all.

The teaching of the Bible relieves one of the pain of loneliness. Self is minimized against the person of Jesus. Because Jesus is Deity, he can assure us of never being alone if we will just let him be a part of us. His teaching, his comfort, his compassion gives us the will to be active and beneficial in life. Accomplishment produces ambition and ambition produces anticipation. All of these things result in contentment and happiness. Loneliness is not part of the Christian existence.

Some may say in all this rambling, "He used very little scripture." To the contrary, that is just what I did do! These thoughts are all based on the principles of the Bible. They are the essence of God's word. Were it not so, they would have no meaning at all. Everything we do must be done to the glory of God, or it is senseless prater. You have learned these things as well. There is nothing new in what I have related. It is only in the interest of being reminded of our course in life, our commitment to our Lord, and our service in His kingdom that these matters are addressed. May God bless us all in our submission to his will and our efforts to preach and teach the gospel of Christ.

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

## *YOU CAN HELP US*

**You can help us cut down on postal costs. Please notify us of your address changes in advance or if you are receiving duplicate subscriptions or having any other problems with your subscription contact us:**

**P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77373  
• PHONE: 281.350.5516**

# 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. Sun. 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, Sun. 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-

**Cambridge**-South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**-Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

## -Florida-

**Pensacola**-Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## -Georgia-

**Cartersville**-Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. Tel. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## -Indiana-

**Evansville**-West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 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. www.garden-city-coc.org Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sun. 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, 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.

## -Oklahoma-

**Porum**-Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, Evangelist, email: lawson@starnetok.net.

## -Tennessee-

**Crossville**-Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 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.

**Rockwood**-Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## -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 Bob Patterson, Evangelist, (361) 358-5760.

**Houston area**-Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, tel. (281) 353-2707. Sun. 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. www.churchesofchrist.com

**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, 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 Hieks, 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 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.

**Roanoke**-Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262, Tel. (817) 491-2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm.

**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.

# Attention CFTF Readers

Do you know of an individual or a congregation that needs to be made aware of the false doctrines and teachers that are afflicting the Lord's Church today? If so why not give them a subscription of *Contending for the Faith*.

**THERE ARE MANY SUBSCRIPTION PLANS AVAILABLE:**

*Single Subscriptions:* One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. *Club Rate:* Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; *Five One-Year Subscriptions,* \$58.00. *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 \$11.00 per year per family address. *Foreign Rate:* One Year, \$30.

**TO SEND A SUBSCRIPTION JUST FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW:**

NAME _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 YEAR <input type="checkbox"/> 2 YEARS
ADDRESS _____	
CITY _____	STATE _____ ZIP _____
NAME _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 YEAR <input type="checkbox"/> 2 YEARS
ADDRESS _____	
CITY _____	STATE _____ ZIP _____

**MAIL SUBSCRIPTION TO:**

**P.O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77373-2357 • fax: 281.288.0549**  
**email: [jbrow@charter.net](mailto:jbrow@charter.net) • phone: 281.350.5516**

**Contending for the Faith**  
**P.O. Box 2357**  
**Spring, Texas 77383-2357**

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT #1863



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## BEING FAIR

Gary Summers

In the 2002 January-March issue of *Biblical Notes Quarterly* Mac Deaver penned an article critical of statements I had made, titled, "We Ought To Be Fair With The Living And The Dead." For several reasons we have delayed our response. To this hour, not a single person has contacted me about what he wrote; probably there is no need to respond now, either. Since the word *fair*, however, was used, some comments should be offered about Mac's use of quotations and data.

Preliminary to these comments we once again affirm that we harbor no personal ill will toward Roy, Mac, Weylan, or Todd Deaver; they have repeatedly proven themselves to be both intelligent and capable. We are saddened that they have chosen to propagate a very dangerous doctrine, that we must oppose vigorously. For them personally we have nothing but kind regards. Our goal here is to examine the teachings of certain brethren in relation to Deaver's doctrine.

Mac insists that brethren Thomas B. Warren, Andrew Connally, and Goebel Music agree with his position that the Holy Spirit *directly* strengthens the Christian. If this hypothesis were true, it would not make Mac right; it would only demonstrate that they were/are in error, also. But we have seen no compelling evidence that they agree with him.

### THOMAS B. WARREN

Few Gospel preachers commanded the respect that brother Warren did. I attended all three of his debates with atheists and have read almost everything he has written. Never would I have a desire to misrepresent him (or anyone else). I quoted in previous articles what brother Warren wrote on Matthew 7:15-20 from

the Spiritual Sword lectureship book, which he co-edited with Garland Elkins. Brother Warren, in his analysis of that text (267-71), said that "the fruits," in his opinion, were not their deeds but "the doctrines which they teach" (269). Brother Warren's exegesis of this text shows that he did not agree with a cardinal component of Mac's syllogism—that *fruit* in this text refers to the fruit of the Spirit.

Anyone who has carefully followed this controversy will notice that Mac has neglected to comment on this point. He has entirely ignored brother Warren's teaching on this passage and insisted that he agreed with him. Mac has also failed to address what several have observed—that he has used the fallacy of *equivocation* in his syllogism. He assumes that the word *fruit* has the same meaning in every passage which he cites, although it has been demonstrated that it does not. Instead of responding to these crucial matters, Mac offers up a *red herring*, another logical fallacy.

He presents a letter (See bottom of page 9—Editor) written by brother Warren on April 10, 1998, which he first presented in his debate with Jerry Moffitt. He assures us that this letter is *incontestable proof* that Warren agrees with his "direct influence" doctrine. The reader can judge for himself what brother Warren addressed. He begins:

Recently it has come to my attention that a 'rumor' is being circulated to the effect that I have never believed and that I do not now believe what Roy and Mac Deaver believe and teach on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

He then makes clear which aspect of teaching concerning the Holy Spirit he means:

(Continued on Page 8)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher  
jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor  
Mclight@bwoodtx.com

**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

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. 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 \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

## 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 needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be 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.

**CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH** is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder  
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

## EDITORIAL...

# "Time is Filled With Swift Transition"

As is true each year so it is with 2002 as it draws to a close—we are made to ponder how much longer we shall walk these earthly shores. When will I preach my last sermon, pray my last prayer, assemble my last time with the saints for worship, for the last time tell my wife, children, and grandchildren that I love them, engage in my last battle for the Lord, write my last word for him, and with the words of truth encourage the brethren to be faithful? I do not believe those thoughts are peculiar to me, but to one extent or another they are a part of every Christian's day to day thinking. Each day we desire to be more knowledgeable of God's word and to live more in harmony with it. We desire to keep our hearts pure and to esteem honesty and integrity priceless commodities. We strive to cultivate a mind set that is ever willing to repent of any and all sins we see in our lives. Therefore, we lament more deeply our sins, shortcomings, and failures as well as the same in the lives of others. We rejoice more in the saving blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior (I John 1:7, 8). We become more aware of the terrible blight of sin corrupting the hearts of those made in the image of God. We want to do more for the Lord and are keenly aware of the fact that the night is coming when no man can work. We are more determined than every to be set for the defense of the gospel and brook no compromise (Philippians 1:17; 3:12, 13; Jude 3; Titus 2:1).

## MUCH TO DO AND LITTLE TIME TO DO IT

As I write these words there comes to mind a statement the late **Thomas B. Warren** made. In a private conversation he remarked, "I hate to go to the Judgment having done so little for the Lord." Regarding his remarks some may ask, "How could such a faithful, busy, talented, highly educated, and hard working person think in such terms?" It is because only those with great dedication to, faith in, and love for the Lord are the people who recognize the brevity and uncertainty of life, their own weaknesses, areas where they need to grow, and realize that no matter

how much they do in service to the Lord it amounts to little when contrasted with what God has done for us that we could never do for ourselves. As the late **Guy N. Woods** has preached many times regarding man's salvation needs from the human perspective, "God had the hard part, we have the easy part." Certainly those who are caught up in the affairs of this present world do not think in the terms previously mentioned. They are without hope and cannot afford to think of death, judgment, and existing in the pain and misery of a devil's hell for ever.

With the previous realities before us we at *Contending for the Faith* desire once again to express our deep appreciation for each of you and to request your prayers as we, in God's good providence, press on in the work of upholding God, Christ, the Bible, the gospel, the Lord's church, and exposing without apology all that is opposed thereto whether in the church or out of it. Also please pray that "**we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith**" (II Thessalonians 2). Yes, part of being faithful is to stop the mouths of certain persons as well as open our mouths to speak the truth and oppose error (Titus 1:11; II Thessalonians 3:1).

**PLEASE HELP CFTF GROW**

Please help *CFTF* to grow and determine with all of your might to live only as the New Testament authorizes you to live. May God bless you and us in that worthy goal in the remainder of this year and in 2003. May all of you have a happy new year in your service to Christ (Revelation 2:10; I Corinthians 15:58).

—David P. Brown, Editor-in-Chief

**YOU CAN HELP US**

You can help us cut down on postal costs. Please notify us of your address changes in advance or if you are receiving duplicate subscriptions or having any other problems with your subscription contact us:

**P.O. Box 2357 • Spring, TX 77373  
•PHONE: 281.350.5516**

*In This Issue..*

Being Fair Gary Summers	1
Editorial... "Time is Filled with Swift Transition" David P. Brown	2
Letter from New Hope Road Church of Christ	4
Editor's Response to New Hope Road Church of Christ Letter	5
Assistant Editorial... Do You Know How to Farm? Michael Light	7
Restoration Reflections... The Establishment of the Hawesville Church of Christ Paul Vaughn	10
Are You a Bell Ringer? Joe F. Travis	14
Studies in Greek... The First Day of Every Week Wayne Price	16
Current Events that Concern Christians... Cultural Marxists Christian-Jewish Relations Mark McWhorter	17
Seeing It Helps Saying It... "In Every Thing Give Thanks" Jodie Boren	18
One Woman's Perspective... You Can't Buy a Home Annette B. Cates	19
Sermon Outlines... The Unshakable Kingdom Tam Moore	20
The Last Word... Choose You This Day Whom You Will Serve Eddie Whitten	22

# New Hope Road Church of Christ

## ELDERS:

Melvin Kirkham  
Frank Matherley

██████████  
Douglas Pace

2600 New Hope Road  
Hendersonville, TN 37075  
615-822-5616

*Ministers: Miller Frost and Frank Matherley*

## DEACONS:

Tim Flowers  
Nick Gregory  
Tim Guinn  
Frankie Matherley  
Benny Page  
Bud Park  
George Welch

Aug. 25, 2002

Dear brethren,

This letter is to inform you that the congregation here at New Hope Rd. does not believe nor teach that the Holy Spirit dwells directly in a Christian, nor do we believe that he works separate and apart from the Word. It is our belief and teaching that the Holy Spirit, Christ, and the Father all dwell in us through the Word dwelling in us.

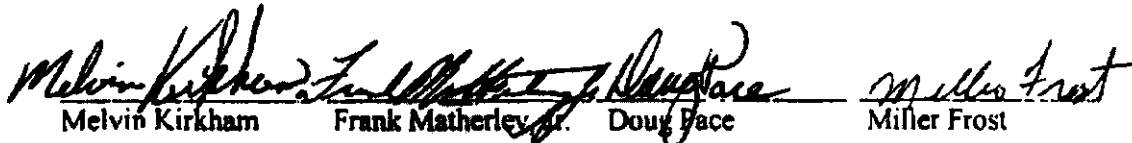
Bro. Miller Frost, an associate minister here, has never taught anything else. His speaking at the Robertson Co. lectureship was not an endorsement of any other philosophy on this matter, nor an agreement with Bro. Deaver or the Robertson Co congregation, if their position is different.

We appreciate your stand for the truth, but before categorizing brethren, it would be better to talk with those whose names you wish to mention in print. It only hurts faithful brethren and their reputation.

We are very grounded congregation and are not involved with the "liberal" elements in many congregations today. We teach against those things which are "contemporary" that pervert the gospel, and we hold to the "old paths". We are not aware of every "wind of doctrine" taught by every brother or individual congregation, but we try to avoid being an encouragement to any who are of perverse doctrines. We believe in "speaking where the Bible speaks," and "being silent where the Bible is silent."

We hope this letter will clear our names and answer any question anyone might have as to our soundness doctrinally.

In His service,

  
Melvin Kirkham      Frank Matherley      Doug Pace      Miller Frost

*[See Editors Response on Page 5]*

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

---

October 28, 2002

The Elders and Evangelists  
New Hope Road Church of Christ  
2600 New Hope Road  
Hendersonville, TN 37075

Dear Brethren:

Thank you for your letter of August 25, 2002. I apologize for being so late in responding to it. However, with my travels and other work, in most instances I am running very far behind in answering my correspondence.

In responding to some things in your letter I will frankly and candidly point out certain inconsistencies in it. However, I assure you brethren that I have no ill will toward you. To the contrary, I have the kindest regards for you and I wish for you only the very best in your service to our Lord. I am assuming that the reason you wrote said letter to CFTF is because you desire for all to know where you stand on the matter of the alleged direct work of the Holy Spirit on the Christian's inward man.

Before getting to your letter please note in my August 2002 editorial in CFTF I pointed out that the preachers on the 2001 Robertson County Lectures (1) agreed with the Deavers' view of the work of the Holy Spirit or (2) they disagreed, but did not see any problems with the Deaver's views on the Holy Spirit's direct work on the Christian. I should have added a third and fourth category—(3) those preachers on said lectures who had no idea what the Deavers taught about the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the Christian and (4) those who not only did not know what the Deavers taught but who did not care to learn about it.

In your letter you wrote in part:

(1) [Neither] Brother **Miller Frost** [nor] the New Hope Road Church of Christ is in "agreement with Bro. Deaver or the Robertson Co. congregation, *if their position is different* (italics mine and the words "neither" and "nor" should have been in the original letter—DPB).

At the time you wrote your August 25, 2002 letter to CFTF you were continuing to say "if" the Robertson County church's position is different from that expressed in the first paragraph of said letter. Your "if" makes it clear that a year following brother Frost's appearance (2001) on the Robertson County Lectures you had not determined what the position of the Deavers and the Robertson County congregation was/is on the

direct work of the Holy Spirit on the Christian. Moreover, in the same lectureship in which brother Frost participated (2001) **Glenn Jobe** taught in two separate lectures that in being baptized into Christ, thus being born of water and the Spirit, that Christ uses the Holy Spirit to baptize the person while he/she is under the waters of baptism. Certain ones in attendance took exception to brother Jobe's sermons. While you are to be commended for your stand against error, your faithful efforts to uphold the truth, and preach the gospel, there was/is incumbent upon all of you as is the case with all members of the church, but especially elders and preachers, to be correctly informed.

For many years I appeared on the Robertson County Lectures. I counted those brethren as good friends and in many ways still think highly of them. However, I declined to appear on the 1998 lectures due to the doctrine taught by the Deavers concerning the alleged direct work of the personally indwelling Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian. I had appeared in the summer of 1997 in a friendly public exchange in the Robertson County church building with **Mac Deaver** regarding our views on the work of the Holy Spirit in the area already mentioned. I also appeared on the next lectureship (1997). But after the January 1998 Mac Deaver/**Bill Lockwood** debate concerning the alleged direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian, I declined the invitation to appear on the 1998 lectures. *These things were done in your own backyard.* However, in your August 25, 2002 letter you say, "if their (Deaver's—DPB) position is different." Their position was made clear long before the 2001 lectures on which brother Frost appeared. Indeed, at the 2000 Denton Lectures Mac Deaver again debated his view with **Jerry Moffitt**. I mean this kindly, but how could anyone not know assuredly what the Deavers and the Robertson County Church's position was/is on the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian long before the 2001 Robertson County Lectures? I hope you thoroughly read the August 2002 issue of CFTF regarding what was taught at the 2001 Robertson County Lectures concerning Holy Spirit Baptism. **TO BE FOREWARNED IS TO BE FOREARMED.**

What you evidence in your August 25, 2002 letter is all too often characteristic of certain brethren—*They do not know what is going on around their own doorstep.* If the shepherds and preachers are functioning accordingly, what of the sheep? The Au-

gust 2002 issue of *CFTF* in which brother Frost's name appeared was barely out to the public before you brethren found out about it, got together, no doubt discussed what to do, decided to write a letter, wrote it (August 25, 2002), and mailed it to *CFTF*. Therefore, we all know what and how quickly something can be done when the motivation and interest is there—even by members of the church. Moreover, if that kind of diligence and zeal could be exercised regarding getting your message to *CFTF*, it could have worked the same way in finding out what was/is going on in the brotherhood—especially since the Robertson County congregation is just a “hoop and holler” across the woods from you.

(2) In your third paragraph you wrote:

We appreciate your stand for the truth, but before categorizing brethren, it would be better to talk with those whose names you wish to mention in print. It only hurts faithful brethren and their reputation.

What is sauce for the goose is also sauce for the gander. I too appreciate what you say you are doing for the cause of Christ. However, you categorized your own selves when you did not keep up with what had been going on for four years in virtually your own neighborhood. As far as this subject is concerned regarding the Robertson County Church of Christ, I live hundreds of miles away and I know more about this given subject than you brethren who, for all practical purposes, live right down the road from Robertson County. If your reputation was hurt, it is only because you chose not to know what was going on right under your own feet before participating in it. Do not blame me for simply noting in an article in *CFTF* what had already been advertised a year earlier all over the country through the efforts of the Robertson County brethren publicly advertising their own lectureship. Did you brethren advertise the 2001 Robertson County lectureship whereon brother Frost appeared? Could you have talked to the Robertson County brethren or the Deavers to find out what, for several years, had been publicly advocated all over the country in various ways and in two public debates in Tennessee and Texas? Did you attend the presentations Mac and I made in the summer of 1997 at the Robertson County church building? Did you attend the debate at Robertson County on this very subject in January of 1998, or get the video or audio tapes, or buy the book to see what who believed about what and why? Why scold me for mentioning that of which you chose to be a part over a year before the article of your concern appeared in *CFTF*? Again, it did not bother you brethren at all to have brother Frost's name “in print” in the original advertisement of the 2001 Robertson County Lectures.

I am taking this occasion to make a point that has characterized a host of elders and preachers for years

in the Lord's church. And, I have no doubt will continue to be characteristic of many brethren. Namely, through their own indiscretions brethren get themselves into something that turns out to be an embarrassment to them. They then seek to blame and rebuke others for publishing what they chose to do and did in the first place.

(3) In the next to the last paragraph of your August 25, 2002 letter to *CFTF* you wrote: “We are not aware of every ‘wind of doctrine’ taught by every brother or individual congregation, but we try to avoid being an encouragement to any who are of perverse doctrines.”

I assure you that I know it is difficult to keep up with all that is going on throughout the brotherhood—especially with so much happening so quickly today. Around 15 years ago the late **Guy N. Woods** told me that so much error was coming across his desk that he did not have time to thoroughly study one error before something else arose that demanded his attention. Such is the natural result of many people in the church giving up the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice as well as caring little or nothing about having Bible authority for everything they believe and practice. And, in some cases being out right hostile to Bible authority. However, in this case we are not discussing something done in a corner a 1,000 miles away from you. I am speaking of that which had been going on publicly for four years (now over five years) almost next door to you. So, please don't fault me for what you chose to do.

Please realize that if you can write this letter to me to clarify and mildly rebuke me regarding the matter heretofore discussed, you can get into the greater Nashville apostasy and let the Sword of the Spirit cut “coming and going” among the apostates in your own direct sphere of influence as you continue to spread the old Jerusalem gospel to those who have never heard it. In truth, we need all good brethren standing shoulder to shoulder in this present fight against the liberal apostasy at work in the Lord's church. **THIS INVOLVES DOING WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO STAY PROPERLY INFORMED.**

Brethren, whatever good (as the Bible defines the good) you can do, we at *Contending for the Faith* will back you 100%. I assure you again that I bear you no ill will and stand behind you in every faithful effort. Please keep it up without compromise. May God bless you in your service to him.

Faithfully,  
[signed]  
David P. Brown

Contending for the Faith—December/2002



## **DO YOU KNOW HOW TO FARM?**

If you have ever tried to raise crops you know there is quite a bit of work that must be done. The principles used in the raising of produce is very similar to that which is necessary to produce a Christian. First, you must prepare the soil. A piece of land must be selected and worked up prior to planting. We should always be watchful for soil (a soul) in which to plant the seed of the kingdom. Just as with soil some initial preparation may be necessary prior to the sowing of the seed. You may need weeks, months, or even years of building a friendship or winning respect of the one you wish to teach, before they are willing to open up their inner being and truly study God's word with you. We must be ready always to give an answer to those who are seeking the truth (I Peter 3:15). Many never help convert anyone to the truth because they have little interest in preparing the soil. A failure in this area can doom our evangelistic efforts.

### **SECOND, YOU MUST PLANT THE SEED**

Many never accept the gospel because far too many members of the Lord's body will not plant the seed. If we refuse to seek out souls to teach and ignore our obligation (and privilege) to teach the gospel we sin (Matthew 28:18-20; James 4:17). Do not just make friends, make disciples. We must teach the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). God will not hold us guiltless if we shun our duty in the area of evangelism. In Ezekiel 33:1-11, we are warned of the serious nature of neglecting our responsibilities to the lost.

### **THIRD, WE MUST TEND TO THE SOIL ONCE THE SEED IS PLANTED**

Paul discussed how he and Apollos had both had an influence on many of the Corinthians. One member may make the contact, another may plant the seed and yet another may water (stay in touch and be a consistent influence for the good). Farmers know the value of keeping weeds out of their crops as well as the application of fertilizer to help with the maturation of their fields. How many times have we witnessed the death (falling away) of various members of the church over the years. We must do everything in our power to be aware of the spiritual well-being of our fellow-members. In the letter to the Galatians the apostle Paul wrote, "Bear ye one another's bur-

dens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." I do not know why members are eager to rush to the hospital when someone is physically ill, but refuse to visit those who are spiritually ill and risking much more than physical death. We must tend to the "tender sprouts" (new Christians).

### **FOURTH, WE MUST BE READY TO ANSWER QUESTIONS**

When those who are studying begin to ask questions (and they will) we need to be aware, attentive, and prepared to answer them once asked. We should determine that if there is any way possible we will not let our deficiencies stand as a hindrance to the process of the conversion of a soul. Many are hesitant to engage in meaningful religious conversation because of their own lack of knowledge. We must be good students of the word (II Timothy 2:15). And sooner or later we need to (rather, we must) get started in the business of saving souls. The great commission is for each and every one of us. If we are not willing to do what we can in the area of teaching the lost, we will lose our souls. We must be equipped with the word, and filled with enough love and compassion to see to it, that as much as is in us, we attempt to show Christ to a dying world.

### **FIFTH, WE MUST HELP THE CROPS GROW**

Once the good and honest heart responds to the gospel call and becomes a Christian (is baptized for the remission of their sins—Acts 2:38), we need to continue to help that person grow in the word of God. Perhaps the greatest failing in the church of our time is the "dip'em and drop'em" syndrome. We labor tirelessly to make contacts and convert them to Christ then do precious little to help them develop into what God would have them be. We should offer special classes for new converts and individual members should make it a part of their daily routine to pray for and encourage new members. We should never get too busy to be a part of the lives of our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

### **FINALLY, THE PRINCIPLES OF FARMING CERTAINLY ARE PARALLEL TO THE PROCESS OF CONVERSION**

The soil must be found, prepared and planted. Once the crop comes up it must be tended carefully and watered and fed often. Upon maturation the new

plant will itself bring forth still more fruit. The new convert should realize that God expects them to bear fruit as his children. Just as with crops, there is a cycle of bringing forth after ones kind. All Christians are expected by God to share the Good news; which in-

cludes finding more soil, which they help prepare, plant and tend. Praise God for those who helped us and may we encourage others to follow our lead to Jesus the Christ.

—Michael Light, Assistant Editor

# Being Fair

(Continued From Page 1)

...I have believed and taught that there is an actual, literal, indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the faithful child of God, as is clearly taught in such passages as Acts 2:38, Acts 5:32, Romans 8:9-11, Galatians 4:6, and many other such passages.

You will notice that there is no reference to “direct influence” as yet and that **Gus Nichols**, **Terry Hightower**, or **Dub McClish** could make the same affirmation. That brother Warren thought the current controversy was over the *indwelling* of the Spirit and not the “direct influence” is seen clearly in this paragraph:

For a number of years, I was engaged in editing a fine journal, with a dear friend and brother. Even though we did not see eye-to-eye on this matter at hand, we did not let it affect our friendship, love and respect for the other’s view.

That “fine journal” was, of course, the *Spiritual Sword*, and that “dear friend and brother” is **Garland Elkins**, who believes in the representative indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Brother Warren was advocating peace among those who hold to these two views of the indwelling (and rightly so). This letter does not touch Mac’s “direct influence” doctrine at all! Brother Elkins worked with brother Warren closely for fifteen years, and he *never* heard brother Warren take the position that Mac is propagating. Not only is this letter a *red herring* to divert our attention from what brother Warren actually taught; the letter itself does not prove what Mac claims it does.

## ANDREW CONNALLY

Andrew Connally was one of the most powerful and convincing speakers I ever heard, but that does not mean he, like any of us, was infallible. He did write some things that appear, on the surface, to agree with Mac. In the Denton lectureship book on James, he wrote on James 1:5: “This wisdom comes directly from God and is the answer to believing prayer. This is not the result of study; it is the result of prayer” (49). We disagree that wisdom does not come with study when we

pray for it, because it presumes too much. The text does not say *how* God will grant wisdom. It could be through studying the word and experience.

He also wrote: “All the Bible knowledge in the world does not give us common, ordinary horse sense. But God gives it, directly to us, and he gives it ‘liberally’” (50). Once again, Connally writes:

Thus here is something God does for the child of God personally and directly, in response to believing prayer. Just as God ‘strengthens with power through His Spirit in the inward man’ (Ephesians 3:16), so God gives wisdom to His faithful asking children to help us meet the needs of everyday life (50).

If I were brother Deaver, I would emphasize that Connally used the word *directly* three times, and then conclude that that settles the matter. Truly, if he were to write these words TODAY, we would instantly acknowledge that he agreed with Mac’s doctrine, but this chapter appeared in 1990, when no one (including Mac) was publicly advocating the “direct influence” theory. None of us who read these words envisioned brother Connally to mean a direct, Spirit-on-spirit influence. We remain unconvinced that he intended that meaning, either.

Brother Connally echoes these sentiments in the *Spiritual Sword* lectureship book on *The Providence of God*. He writes: “God works mightily in us” and “God works in us. God strengthens us. What a glorious concept! The law of operation works!” (484). We do not know specifically what our brother had in mind with some of his terminology, but he clearly distinguished between providence and miracles: “This is a far cry from believing that God works supernaturally (i.e. miraculously) in my life or yours. This I categorically and emphatically deny” (482). “We believe strongly in God’s divine providence while rejecting the miraculous or the direct intervention theory” (492). These words imply that he would have opposed “direct influence.”

Brother Connally published a book called *The Fundamentals*, which includes six chapters on the Holy Spirit, each of which is two or three pages apiece. They deal with the personality of the Holy Spirit, his work, his baptism, his miraculous gifts, his universal gift, and false claims concerning him. In none of these chapters

is Deaver's doctrine set forth. In other words, the chapter on the work of the Holy Spirit says nothing about directly strengthening the Christian. Only one remark comes close to commenting on this issue: "The Holy Spirit 'strengthens the inward man'; this may be strange, but He docs!, Eph. 3:16" (40).

These words indicate that perhaps brother Connally was not sure in his own mind how this verse was to be applied, but he had ample opportunity to teach Mac's doctrine at this point and failed to do so. We do agree with his Introductory statement of the "false claims" chapter: "I do not believe any single Bible Doctrine has been abused more than the Holy Spirit. Even within our own fellowship our brethren have espoused error concerning 'leadings' and 'directives' from the Holy Spirit." If brother Connally did hold to Mac's doctrine, we do not believe sufficient evidence of it has been shown.

### GOEBEL MUSIC

When debating Jerry Moffitt, Mac brought Goebel's name into his speeches time and again. He continually insists that brother Music is in his corner: "Goebel Music agrees with us and we agree with him" (3). He even tells us about private telephone conversations he has had with him, which are subject to Mac's interpretation. He may be unaware of it, but Goebel

Music is on our mailing list, and he has received every one of the articles I have written concerning Mac's teaching. Although Goebel's name has been cited in several of these, he has yet to call or write to me and say, "Brother Summers, you have it wrong. I agree with Mac."

Instead of offering hearsay evidence, Mac should present a statement written by Goebel, in which he says something to the effect: "I believe that the Holy Spirit not only personally indwells the Christian—but that he also influences us directly, Spirit on spirit." Since they are such good friends, according to Mac, and they both agree with one another wholeheartedly, this endorsement should be a fairly simple thing to obtain. We will be watching for it but do not expect it to be forthcoming.

### MAC DEAVER

We have always been careful to represent Mac's teachings correctly, yet he insists we have misrepresented him. However, his examples of misrepresentation reflect mere quibbles about peripheral matters—not the substance of his teaching. He says that he did not criticize the Pearl Street Church. Well, excuse us, but what else can it mean when he titles an article, "Pearl Street Preachers and Their Failures." Since Dub and I are the only two preachers here engaged in full-

J-257c

### SOME OF WARREN'S LAST WRITTEN WORDS (2)

My position in regard to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the same as the position of both Roy and Mac Deaver—and I hold that this position is precisely what the New Testament teaches. It is my sincere wish—I feel certain that your sincere wish is basically the same as mine—that we all can work together in love, harmony, and fellowship as we strive to save, not only our souls and others, but to even save millions of lost souls, which we have been unable to do while we have been involved in the present matter.

J-257f

### SOME OF WARREN'S LAST WRITTEN WORDS (2)

May God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, both bless us all to work together in love and fellowship in the saving of many lost souls.

Sincerely, in the love of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior,

Thomas B. Warren

cc: My beloved friends, Curtis Cates and Garland Ekins  
TBW & fw

[A letter to the Forest Hill elders, April 10, 1998]

J-257d

### SOME OF WARREN'S LAST WRITTEN WORDS (2)

During the some fifty-five years that I have been a preacher of the gospel, I have opposed all errors—especially the doctrines of Calvinism and Pentecostalism. I still oppose these. I attended (after getting my education from one of our brotherhood schools) many of their very own universities, in order to better equip myself to know how to prepare for them. Many of the opponents that I have met (especially in Calvinism and Pentecostalism—as well as others) were said by their people to be their best and brightest men. I always felt that I came out the victor for the Lord.

J-257e

### SOME OF WARREN'S LAST WRITTEN WORDS (2)

For a number of years, I was engaged in editing a fine gospel journal, with a dear friend and brother. Even though we did not see eye-to-eye on this matter at hand, we did not let it affect our friendship, love and respect for the other's view. We worked together in a labor of love for our Lord and with each other. I still dearly love and respect this dear brother and friend of mine and cherish the time that we were blessed to work together on this project, and on many others. I believe that this is what the Bible teaches us to do, and the way our Lord would have us to do.

time work, and we are paid by Pearl Street, what does that say about a congregation that would keep two failures working for them—especially when Mac has, by his own estimation, “proven their effort at exposing us to be a logical failure” (2)? This point is not worth arguing, but the implication is irresistible that, if a congregation stands with two failures, they must likewise be failures.

Concerning the debate statement, Jerry Moffitt asked Mac (because of his repeated inclusion of Goebel Music’s name): “Mac, are you saying that Goebel Music himself wrote that book because he has your position? Yes or no.” Mac answered, “No.” Many of us understood the “no” answer to mean that Goebel did not write the book because he believed Mac’s views *and* that he did not hold to Mac’s views. Apparently,

he was only affirming the former; so we stand corrected on that point. Nevertheless, this “misrepresentation” was neither intentional nor significant, since the controversy focuses on Mac’s doctrine of “direct influence.”

No one in the Pearl Street Church has any desire to create a faction (as Mac charged us). Mac is the one who has introduced a doctrine that disagrees with what brethren on both sides of the personal indwelling issue have taught for decades. With one accord they have agreed that, whether or not the Holy Spirit literally indwells the Christian, he does not do anything *directly* TO the Christian. Most people recognize that it is Mac who has created a faction. We sincerely pray for their repentance.

—312 Pearl Street  
Denton, Texas 76201

## *Restoration Reflections...*

# THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HAWESVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Paul Vaughn

Christians should endeavor to be fruitful in the kingdom of the Lord, the church of Christ. It is the responsibility of every member of the church to labor to win souls for the Redeemer. It is a sign of wisdom to be evangelistic. It is written, “**The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise**” (Proverbs 11:30).

Evangelism is the key to being successful. The early church “**turned the world upside down**” (Acts 17:26). Yet, we live at a time when many churches are not growing in number or spirit. To often we have lowered our efforts of evangelism to one Saturday a month door knocking for 2-3 hours, if that much. We cannot turn the world upside down working 2-3 hours one day a month.

### **IS THERE A NEED TO ESTABLISH THE CHURCH IN AMERICA?**

There is a need in to establish churches of Christ in Kentucky. There are 23 counties which do not have a church of Christ out of 120 counties. In Kentucky there is about 45,546 Christians out of the population of 4,065,556. That is 1.1% of the population.

There is a need to establish churches of Christ in Indiana. There are 22 counties which do not have a church out of 92 counties. In Indiana there is about 27,509 Christians out of a population of 6,114,745. That is .5% of the population.

There is a need throughout the United States. In this country we have a population of 284,796,887 (taken

from the census of 2001). There is about 1,264,152 members of the church. That is .4% of the population. In the North Central States there is a group of counties beginning from Wisconsin going westward without a church. In the North Eastern states (where most of the population is located) one would be hard pressed to locate a congregation in many areas. There is a need to do mission work in this country.



### **NEW WORK IN HAWESVILLE, KENTUCKY**

The first Sunday of February 2000, the Hawesville Church of Christ was established. Hawesville is located in Hancock County, Kentucky. Until the February 6, 2000, there was never a church of Christ in the county. The congregation came about because of the evangelistic zeal of the Henderson Church of Christ, Henderson, Kentucky. Gary Puryear, the preacher at Henderson, called to ask me if I knew of anyone who would be willing to help them establish a congregation in Hancock County. After talking it over with my wife, Ricki, we said “yes we do know of someone who would like to help establish the church in that area.” So we moved to Hancock County in January 2000. At that time we did not know how many members, if any, we would be able to start with. The church at Henderson began to advertise in the local papers of our intent to establish a church of Christ in Hawesville. From our first meeting



is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13,14). We must never close our eyes to the "Great Commission," so let us open them to the potentials around us. "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

*[It was a privilege for me in September of this year to bring a special series of sermons on Christian evidences at the Hawesville church building. They have done much good in a short time. They are worthy of our support. Paul and Ricki along with the other members are doing a great work for the Lord.—DPBJ]*

we found out that we would start with fourteen charter members of the church. They were members of the church who lived in the area. Some were driving as much as 50 miles to worship.

In the first year, we were able to purchase land and build a building. It will seat about eighty people. We work in Kentucky and Indiana. Perry County, Indiana across the Ohio River does not have a faithful congregation. During the past two and half years we have able to baptize eight new members. At this time we have home Bible studies going on with six non-members.

There are many ways we have used to open doors to people in the community. The church mails over one thousand House to House papers every other month. We have a weekly newspaper article, use campaigns, gospel meetings, Vacation Bible School, and special lectures. The church is growing in number and in grace and knowledge of our Lord.

It is our prayer to retire the note on the building as soon as possible so we can start being self-supporting. The church building cost \$168,000.00. The Henderson church bought the land for us. We borrowed \$98,000.00. At this time we owe \$81,000.00.

There is a need to do both domestic and foreign mission work. Will Christians convert every person to Christ? NO! Jesus said that there will be few who will enter the narrow gate and travel the narrow way. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow

## SPRING BIBLE INSTITUTE

**PREPARING MEN AND WOMEN TO FAITHFULLY AND EFFECTIVELY TEACH THE TRUTH (2 TIMOTHY 2:2).**  
**Can our Distance Learning Program (DLP) help you?**  
**If you answer "Yes" to these questions, then give us a call today!**

**Do you want...**

- ...sound instruction in the Bible?
- ...a thorough exposition of the text of the Bible?
- ...a practical approach to Bible study?
- ...clear answers to Bible questions?
- ...experienced teachers that know the Bible?
- ...a tuition free Bible education?

**Are you searching for a program that...**

- ...is flexible and can be delivered by video to your home using the Internet?
- ...allows you to watch classes anytime of the day or night as your schedule permits?
- ...challenges you to be a well-disciplined Bible student?

### **Why wait any longer?**

Call for David P. Brown, Director  
Lynn Parker, Assistant Director  
(281) 353-2707

Web: churchesofchrist.com Email: sbi@churchesofchrist.com

# 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. Sun. 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, Sun. 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-

**Cambridge**-South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**Cambridgeshire**-Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); [www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org](http://www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org). Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; [www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org](http://www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org) and [www.Myth-and-Mystery.org](http://www.Myth-and-Mystery.org).

## -Florida-

**Pensacola**-Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (850) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## -Georgia-

**Cartersville**-Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Harris PKWY NW Cartersville, GA 30120-4222. Tel. (770) 382-6775. E-mail: bdgayton@juno.com. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist.

## -Indiana-

**Evansville**-West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 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. [www.garden-city-coc.org](http://www.garden-city-coc.org) Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sun. 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, 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.

## -Oklahoma-

**Porum**-Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, Evangelist, email: lawson@starmetok.net.

## -Tennessee-

**Crossville**-Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun. 10:00 a.m. 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.

**Rockwood**-Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., 37854. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

## -Texas-

**Houston area**-Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, tel. (281) 353-2707. Sun. 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. [www.churchesofchrist.com](http://www.churchesofchrist.com)

**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, 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.

**New Braunfels**-1130 Hwy. 306, 1.5 miles west of I-35. (830) 625-9367. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Lynn Parker, Evangelist. Website:[www.nbchurchofchrist.com](http://www.nbchurchofchrist.com).

**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 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m.

**Roanoke**-Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262, Tel. (817) 491-2388. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm.

**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.



# Spring Bible Institute Lectures

## “ISLAM—FROM GOD OR MAN”

February 23-26, 2003

David P. Brown, Lectureship Director

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

9:30 A.M. *The Islamic View of the Bible*  
10:30 A.M. *Abraham Sows & the Middle East Reaps*  
4:00 P.M. *Biography of Muhammad*  
5:00 P.M. *An Overview of the Koran*  
6:00 P.M. *Islamic Objections to the Trinity & Deity of Christ Answered*

Gary Grizzell  
Tom Wacaster  
Paul Vaughn  
Gary Summers  
Tom S. Bright

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24

9:00 A.M. *Who Owns Palestine?*  
10:00 A.M. *The Status of Women In Islam*  
\*\*10: A.M. *From The Women's Quarters*  
11:00 A.M. *Is Islam a Religion of Peace*  
1:30 P.M. *The Religious Hierarchy in Islam*  
2:30 P.M. *The Causes of Division In Islam*  
3:30 P.M. *The 5 Pillars (Duties) of Islam*  
DINNER BREAK  
6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:00 P.M. *Jihad*  
8:00 P.M. *The Jesus of Islam (Born of a Virgin, a True Prophet—But Not Deity)*

Roddy Covington  
Jim Nash  
Fran McClure  
Charles Collett  
Darrell Broking  
Michael Hatcher  
David Baker

Jerry Murrell  
Barry Grider

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

9:00 A.M. *Religious Tolerance of Muslims In Islamic States*  
10:00 A.M. *Islamic Holy Places*  
\*\*10: A.M. *Through the Lattice*  
11:00 A.M. *Islamic Worship: Then and Now*  
1:30 P.M. *Sources of Authority In Islam*  
2:30 P.M. *Muhammad Is Not The fulfillment of Biblical Prophecy*  
3:30 P.M. *Islam's Eschatology*  
DINNER BREAK  
6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:00 P.M. *The Nation of Islam (Black Muslims)*  
8:00 P.M. *The Church Confronts Islam In America*

Rick Popejoy  
Clifford Newell  
Fran McClure  
Randy Mabe  
Keith A. Mosher, Sr.  
Richard Massey  
Jerry Brewer

Michael Shepherd  
Curtis Cates

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

9:00 A.M. *Islam—From God or Men*  
10:00 A.M. *Shariah Law (Punishment by Severing Fingers, Hands, etc.)*  
11:00 A.M. *How Islam Grew—the Culture in which Muhammad Lived*  
1:30 P.M. *Islamic Distinctives in Diet, Clothing, Etc.*  
2:30 P.M. *The Impact of Islam on World Affairs*  
3:30 P.M. *The Islamic view of the Prophets*  
DINNER BREAK  
6:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:00 P.M. *A Christian's View of Islam (Salvation is Only In Christ's Church)*  
8:00 P.M. *Allah: Islam's God is Not The God of the Bible*  
\*\*Ladies Only

Kent Bailey  
Preston Silcox  
Michael Light  
Lester Kamp  
Bobby Liddell  
John West

Lynn Parker  
B. J. Clarke

2004 S.B.I. Lecture Theme — “Judaism”

LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION EACH DAY AT NOON

Hardback Book Of Lectures Available • R.V. Hook-Ups • Video and Audio Tapes • Approved displays

Elders: Kenneth D. Cohn and Buddy Roth • For more info: R.V. reservations or display requests,

contact the church office: Phone: 281.353.2707; Fax: 281.288.3676; E-mail: [springbibleinstitute@swbell.net](mailto:springbibleinstitute@swbell.net)

# ARE YOU A BELL RINGER?

Joe F. Travis

Every Christmas season many of us visit various commercial establishments where we are kindly addressed, outside the door, by a neighbor or friend standing beside a kettle, ringing a bell and asking for donations. If you were not asked directly it was suggested by their presence and signs located nearby that suggest that you should give. Did you feel guilty if you walked on by in a hurry to enter the store? This person was probably a volunteer representing the Salvation Army. This organization is one of the best known benevolent organizations in the county, indeed in the world. They perform a vast array of social services for the needy. They provide free meals to the hungry, temporary housing to the homeless, furniture and clothing to the victims of fires and many other acts of kindness. You can see their trucks and vans at many natural disasters helping the victims. Most G.I.s have received a cup of coffee and a donut from them at one time or another. It is not my intent to detract from these works of human kindness in this message, *BUT I think that many Christians do not know the Salvation Army for what it really is and are caught up in the "spirit of the season" to give and volunteer. The Salvation Army is not an organization a Christian can support. I'll tell you why! The Salvation Army stresses their good works when they seek help from volunteers and say very little, if anything, about the religious side of their work. People who are housed and fed, in their buildings, are encouraged, strongly, to attend the worship services.*

## **THE SALVATION ARMY IS A RELIGIOUS DENMINATION**

I know members of the Lord's Church who have answered the call, given to the kettle, and supported the Salvation Army even to the point of volunteering to be a "bell ringer." In the following paragraphs, I intend to show the religious side of the "Army." Most of the information is available on the Salvation Army web site at [www.salvationaryusa.org](http://www.salvationaryusa.org). I suggest you take a look for yourself to determine the truth of the following. I contend that the Salvation Army is a religious denomination with all the characteristics of many other "churches" that are readily identified by most members of the Lord's Church as denominations. The following is evidence of their denominational characteristics:

The Salvation Army was established in 1865 by **William Booth** and his wife **Catherine**, in London, England. Booth's ministry "recognized the interdependence of material, emotional and spiritual needs." His original ministry, the "Christian Mission," became The

Salvation Army and soon evolved into a quasi-military pattern with Booth being the "general" and others filling the lower ranks. Still today, the ministers are known as "officers," I.E. Captains, Majors, etc. The ratings used today are Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel and Commissioner. The international leader holds the rank of "General." An Officer who marries must marry another S.A. officer or leave his/her status. The husband/wife team hold equal rank and perform assigned duties. They are authorized to perform the duties common to denominational pastors.

## **A WORLDWIDE RELIGION**

It has expanded into 103 countries and its "gospel" is preached in 160 languages. The 1999 income, in the United States, as reported in its financial statement, was over \$1.7 Billion dollars. Their "Mission Statement" identifies them as "an evangelistic part of the universal Christian Church." Their beliefs are stated in their "Doctrines" consisting of eleven tenets. The fifth one says in part, "...in consequence of their" (Adam and Eve—jft] "fall, all men have become sinners, totally depraved and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God"... "We believe that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ..." The basic belief taught is Calvinistic to the core.

The membership of the Salvation Army consists of "adherents," "soldiers," and "officers." "Adherents are persons who consider the Salvation Army their PLACE of WORSHIP. Soldiers are required to sign a declaration of faith and practice known as ARTICLES of WAR and must give volunteer service to the Army. Soldiers who have served for more than six months may apply to the COLLEGE for OFFICERS' TRAINING and, if accepted, enroll as CADETS. The Army operates four two-year-in-residence training facilities. They are required to make a "Covenant" to be true to the principles of the Salvation Army. Upon graduation from these schools, the cadets become fully ORDAINED MINISTERS, Commissioned Officers and are APPOINTED to a PLACE of SERVICE. If this sounds like a SEMINARY and a hierarchical method of placing ministers then you have just identified another characteristic of a denomination. Nonmembers or "volunteers" are also used to do the work of the Salvation Army. There are approximately 1.5 million volunteers registered with the organization and their services run the gamut of tasks performed in every program of work. "They increase the efficiency of The Salvation Army by providing 'extra hands' to perform

God's work."

**CHRISTIANS MUST NOT GIVE AID ND COMFORT TO ANY DENOMINATION**

If you are not convinced that the Salvation Army is a religious organization and a denomination then read no further. I do believe, however, you should do more research if you support the Salvation Army in any way.

Denominations teach false doctrine. There is no way that fact can be denied. Anyone who has compared their teachings with the Bible can see the contrast between their doctrine and the simple truth of the New Testament. They **"teach for doctrine the commandments of men"** Matthew 15:9. Being false teachers they participate in vain worship and stand condemned by the word of God. Worse than that they lead the unwary to eternal damnation and give them false hope of salvation. Consider Matthew 7:21-23:

**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 unto 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.**

Now look at II John 10, **"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 a partaker of his evil deeds."** We, as members of the church of Christ, cannot aid, abet, support, contribute to nor volunteer to work for those who teach and practice a false religion. When we do, we dishonor God by working for the enemies of Christ and will be held accountable in the judgment. Good deeds done to mankind will not guarantee our salvation, no matter how many and how generous. We must obey God to be saved (Hebrews 5:9).

It is just as wrong to help the Salvation Army, as it is to assist the First Baptist Church with their car washes, the Methodist Church with their garage sales or the Catholic Church with their bazaar. In fact, we must refrain from giving any aid to any church other than the church Christ died to establish. By the way, Did you know that the United Way supports the Salvation Army in many areas of the country. Think about that.

—P.O.Box 2456  
Angleton, Texas

17<sup>TH</sup> Annual

# Shenandoah Lectures

February 14-17, 2003

## Great Questions In The Bible

**"What Is Truth?"**  
**"Whom Have I In Heaven But Thee?"**  
**"What Is Your Life?"**  
**"Where Is Your Faith?"**  
**"What Shall I Render Unto The Lord?"**  
**"Whom Seek Ye?"**  
**And Many More**

- ~ Four Days Of Spiritual Feasting
- ~ Lessons To Build Our Faith
- ~ By Faithful Gospel Preachers
- ~ Opportunities For Fellowship
- ~ Opportunities For Outreach
- ~ Lectureship Books Available
- ~ Audio & Video Tapes Available

## Shenandoah Church of Christ

11026 Wurzbach • San Antonio, TX 78230

210.696.5532 • Fax: 210.696.5181 • E-mail: shenandoahchurch@juno.com

# THE FIRST DAY OF EVERY WEEK?

Wayne Price

In I Corinthians 16:2 the apostle Paul writes these familiar words: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." This verse, when used to show the necessity of meeting with the saints every Lord's Day, is often challenged with this retort: "It does not say *every* first day of the week."

This argument is countered with the facts regarding the Sabbath Day enactment, and is then paralleled with Acts 20:7, Hebrews 10:25, et al., showing that the Lord did not say "*every*" Sabbath when giving the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8) either, yet the Israelites understood the positively stated command as meaning "*every*." During the wilderness wanderings, a certain individual had gathered sticks on the Sabbath Day, a clear violation of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. Numbers 15:32-36 records the command that he be stoned to death outside the camp. One could almost hear modern man, had he been the one guilty of disregarding the Sabbath law shouting, "But God did not say *every* Sabbath," even as the stones sailed toward his head.

## THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

Such examples are forceful, logical, and irrefutable. It needs to be pointed out however that the basic argument which maintains that "God did not say *every* first day of the week" is just not true. The fact is that this is just what the apostle Paul records as being the Lord's commandment (I Corinthians 14:37) regarding the frequency of the assembly (Hebrews 10:25; I Corinthians 16:2).

The basic meaning of the Greek preposition *kata*, when not found in composition with other words, is "down," but one of its resultant meanings (when used with the accusative case) signifies "down along," "according to," et al. When this Greek preposition is followed by a word in the accusative case, we may have what is called the distributive usage of *kata*. This particular construction is found quite often in our New Testament, especially in the writings of Luke.

It is not difficult to see how that "down along the cities" evolved into the idea of "every" city. The phrase "down along the synagogues" meant "from synagogue to synagogue," or "every synagogue." The phrase "down along the years" could be translated "year by

year," "annually," or "every year."

I have divided the occurrences of the distributive use of *kata* into two groups, one dealing with *time* and the other dealing with *place*. These lists are by no means intended to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative. All citations are from the King James Version.

As related to the concept of *time*, the distributive use of *kata* is variously translated, with the idea of "each" or "every" either inherent within the meaning of the translation or else specifically stated. Note these examples relating to the time element:

Matthew 26:55	"I sat <i>daily</i> with you"
Luke 2:41	"his parents went to Jerusalem <i>every</i> year."
Luke 16:19	"rich man . . . fared sumptuously <i>every day</i> "
Luke 19:47	"he taught <i>daily</i> in the temple"
Luke 22:53	"I was <i>daily</i> with you"
Acts 2:46	"continuing <i>daily</i> with one accord"
Acts 2:47	"Lord added to the church <i>daily</i> ."
Acts 3:2	"whom they laid <i>daily</i> "
Acts 16:5	"increased in number <i>daily</i> "
Acts 17:11	"searched the scriptures <i>daily</i> "
I Corinthians 15:31	"I die <i>daily</i> "
I Corinthians 16:2	??????
II Corinthians 11:28	"that which cometh upon me <i>daily</i> "

Regarding the idea of *place*, the following examples show how the King James translators rendered this distributive use of *kata*:

Luke 8:1	"he went throughout <i>every city</i> "
Luke 8:4	"out of <i>every city</i> "
John 21:25	"if they should be written <i>every one</i> "
Acts 15:21	" <i>every city</i> them that preach him..."
Acts 20:23	" <i>every city</i> "
Acts 22:19	" <i>every synagogue</i> "
Ephesians 5:33	"let <i>every one</i> of you love his wife"
Titus 1:5	"ordain elders in <i>every city</i> "

## WHY NOT THE SAME IN I CORINTHIANS 16:2?

All of the above citations show that the translators of the King James, on numerous occasions, translated this distributive *kata* usage as "every." Our ques-

tion is why did they not do so in I Corinthians 16:2? Would not consistency demand that it be translated the same here as elsewhere in the King James Version?

The answer to the question found in the title of this paper is a resounding "YES." I Corinthians 16:2

ought to read: "every first day of the week" and the word "every" need not be put in italics either, for the original language in which the New Testament was written contains the idea of "each" or "every" in this verse.

—P. O. Box 760  
McCloud, Oklahoma 74851

## Current Events That Concern Christian...

# Cultural Marxists, Christian-Jewish Relations

compiled by Mark McWhorter

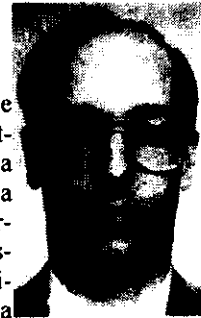
...A conservative activist says people who believe in traditional American values and culture face a daunting task—taking on two enemies that do not particularly like each other, but that both believe Western culture must be destroyed. **Bill Lind** directs the Center for Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation. Lind says conservatives continue to face a powerful two-pronged assault in the ongoing culture war. He says on one side are the forces of Islam; and on the other side are the "cultural Marxists" he says dominate not just political establishment, but the establishment across-the-board in America. Lind says that includes the entertainment industry, the media, public schools, universities, and even many of the mainline churches. Lind says if conservatives hope to turn things around in the culture war, they must be diligent in getting out the word that "political correctness" is nothing more than cultural Marxism. (Agape Press, 9/30/02) [*Even more important is the preaching of the gospel. Unfortunately, most Americans do not have a clue what Marxism is. Otherwise they would not be voting for most of those running for office. They would insist on political candidates sticking to strict constructionism interpretation of the Constitution and to Biblical values. They would insist that the schools teach the same. The only way to instruct in all of these issues is to first teach the scriptures. Once the groundwork is laid hopefully individuals would be able to recognize unBiblical values and principles. Since Marxism is based on unBiblical principles it would reveal itself—no matter what form or arena it was in.—mtm*]

\* \* \* \* \*

On Thursday, September 5, an ecumenical group of Christian scholars issued a statement arguing "Jews are in an eternal covenant with God" and renounced "missionary efforts at converting Jews." "We know there has been a long tradition of anti-Judaism within that Christian tradition," said **Joseph Tyson**, chairman of the scholars group and professor emeritus at Southern Methodist University. "It's based on certain misperceptions of history, and it's theologically invalid." According to Religion New Service, the statement was issued by members of the Christian Scholars Group on Christian-Jewish Relations and represents an on-going effort to strengthen dialog between Christians and Jews. In August, a statement issued by Jewish and Catholic leaders

claimed that efforts to evangelize the Jews are no longer "theologically acceptable." The statements have articulated a theological position that represents a significant departure from historic, orthodox, Christianity. "Evangelical Christians cannot assent to a diminished universal significance of Jesus as both a Jewish and gentile messiah and savior," said **Gordon R. Lewis**, professor of theology and philosophy at Denver Seminary. "The Jews were the ones who needed the atonement (because) there aren't any, Jew or gentile, who live faithfully by the law. The law is fulfilled only in Christ, and only through the atonement can we who cannot keep the law be saved." The idea that a new covenant has superceded the covenant of the Old Testament has been a foundational element of Christian teaching from the beginning of the church. **James Sibley**, coordinator of Jewish outreach for the Southern Baptist Convention has articulated the historical position, saying, "While that covenant (between God and Jews) is still in place, it in no way implies salvation. If it did, why would God send his son to die this horrible death if it were not necessary?" (Religion Today, 9/15/02) [*Neither Mr. Sibley or the scholars group have it right. It is amazing that folks who supposedly study the Bible can have such a basic misunderstanding.—mtm*]

—420 Chula Vista Mountain Rd.  
Pell City, Alabama 35125

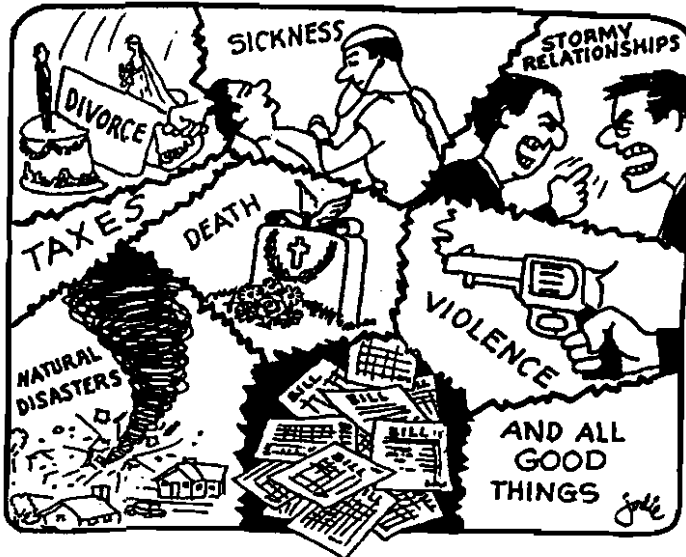


*Mark McWhorter has done a great job in researching and supplying the news items that have appeared in this article. However, we are going to expand this page to more than news items. I have asked Jerry Murrell who presently preaches for the Needmore Church of Christ, Indian Mound, Tennessee to write more definitively on the matters that are dealt with on this page. I want to thank Mark very much for this good work and dedication to the Lord. Mark and his wife Tina do a much needed work in supplying good books to the church. Check with him for all your book needs—especially hard to find used books. Thanks again to Mark for his work for CFTF.—DFB}*

*Seeing It Helps Saying It...*

## "IN EVERY THING GIVE THANKS"

Jodie Boren



**"Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble"** (Job 14:1). How true! We can attest to it for all our lives are filled with troubles. No one is immune to the trials and tribulations of life. What family has not experienced the untimely death of a love one? Most families have been touched by the tragedy of divorce. Many suffer terrible physical pains from some chronic ailment or debilitating disease. A great number of people bear the heavy burden of financial stress. Bad relationships within the family—at work—at school—or with neighbors cause stress and anxiety on the hearts of multitudes. Violent crimes of murder, robbery, rape et al. leave deep emotional and psychological scars that forever change lives. Destructive forces of nature such as fires, tornadoes, flooding, earthquakes, and such prove to be disasters and great trouble for many. We could go on and on enumerating the troubles we have, but the question arises, how do we cope with these adversities that come our way?

The Bible is replete with scriptures that address this, such as Hebrews 13:5 where we are told that God **"... will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."** While we are strengthened and encouraged by many similar passages, let us examine briefly a couple of passages that are seldom considered.

In I Thessalonians 5:18, Paul says, **"in every thing give thanks."** This same admonition is given in Philippians 4:6. What a tremendous thought! How are we to understand it? For example, if a loved one's life

is taken suddenly by a heart attack or accident, are we to understand this passage to mean that we are to thank God for that tragedy? Certainly not! This is not what the Holy Spirit through Paul is saying. Logic and reason from other scriptures tell us this. Notice that Paul wrote **"in every thing give thanks."** He did not say **"for"** everything. In any of these adversities we have mentioned, God does not say we are to give thanks for what happened, but whatever happens, God wants us to remain faithful and find those things in crisis—or sorrow—or heartache for which we can be thankful!



In the above example, can we not be thankful for the godly life of that loved one and the blessed assurance that one is safe in the arms of Jesus? Can we not be thankful for the time we had them with us? For the love we shared? And for the precious memories we have of them?

Even in great distress or deep sorrow, we can cope with these things when we look for those blessing within that trouble for which we can be thankful.

A companion passage to I Thessalonians 5:18 is found in James 1:2. James writes, **"...count it all joy when you fall into divers temptation"** (outward trials and hardships). The word *joy*, means "gladness." It is the same idea found in Acts 5:41 where the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his (Christ) name. When we rejoice in hardships and give thanks in everything, including all our troubles, this means we are maturing in Christ and are trusting God to keep his promise of Proverbs 11:8 where we are told, **"the righteous is delivered out of trouble."**

May we never forget the great blessing that we find in Romans 8:28. Paul writes, **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose."**

It is easy to thank God for the wonderful things in life that he blesses us with daily (Psalms 68:19), but we need to learn to count our blessings in the hardships of life and to thank God for them.

—2557 Campus Court  
Abilene, Texas 79601



## One Woman's Perspective...

# YOU CAN'T BUY A HOME

Annetta B. Cates

"For sale: home with family room, custom kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths..." Thus reads a typical real estate advertisement. "Home" in this instance is a misnomer. One can purchase a house, but a home is priceless. No amount of money can make a house a home. While a house is merely the shelter in which people reside, home is the special relationship shared by the individuals that make up a family. A good home provides the foundation that will strengthen its members for a lifetime. A bad home is a living horror story.

### THE MARRIAGE BOND IS HOLY

We see many social ills around us that are not conducive to the positive development of today's homes. There is little or no commitment to one another by many couples. There are those who never legitimize the relationship of husband and wife, but simply live together until they decide to go their separate ways. Others do not recognize the sanctity of the marital bond, and they divorce when problems arise. There are still others who continue in marriage, but there is no love and warmth shared. It is as if the forces of evil conspire to destroy the fabric of our homes through humanism, pornography, alcohol and drug abuse, and countless other avenues of sin. The good news is that even in an environment such as this, there are untold numbers of families who are successful in creating the kind of homes that will produce tomorrow's God-fearing, well-adjusted, and productive adults.

### FAMILY TIME TOGETHER

Time together as a family is priceless (Ephesians 5:16). The time will come when the children are no longer in the home of their parents, and the opportunities to build the relationships are past. **"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it"** (Proverbs 3:27). Every family needs to establish its own traditions, such as in celebrating holidays, birthdays, and other events. Special times between parents and children build memories that will never be forgotten. Once a year when our sons were young, each boy had "his" day with his dad. We parents would find a time in the spring when it seemed that the school schedule was not pressured, no tests scheduled, no papers or projects due. Before dawn, my husband would awaken one of the boys, and they would head off for a day of fishing. It would come as a complete surprise, and the boy who did not go one day, would know that his day was coming. The excuse for the absence read that something important had arisen. What could be more important? There were other ways in which I had my precious times with our

sons. The creative ways that a family finds to build its unique memories and traditions are what make such activities so special.

### THE UNITY OF THE HOME

United, consistent parents are priceless (Psalm 133:1). I think of the family as a team. God is the coach, the parents are the players, the children are the waterboys, and the in-laws are the cheerleaders. A true team is loyal to its several members, and each has an important role to fill. If parents disagree about some aspect of child-rearing, they should come to an agreement when the children are not present and stand as one on the issue. Children cannot grow emotionally or psychologically on mixed signals and/or inconsistencies. Parents who put one another down in front of the children do nothing to build respect for either parent; in fact, they hurt themselves more than they hurt the spouse, and the children are destroyed. Children thrive when they have the security that results from parents who establish rules and are consistent in enforcing those standards. Home should be the shelter that protects from the storms of life.

### "FIRST THINGS FIRST"

Putting God first is priceless (Matthew 6:33). There should be no question as to where the family will be on Sunday morning at the time for Bible study and worship. In fact, the family that puts God first will be present at every opportunity to meet with fellow Christians for the services of the church. Every day will have time for Bible study and prayer. The Bible is respected as the word of God. Every decision will be made in the light of what is ethically and morally right. The children of a God-first family observe their parents serving others and seeing to the needs of those who are less fortunate. The family that puts God first lives every day with a focus on the heavenly goal.

You can buy a house, but it will just be a shell if there is no home in it. The most luxurious, most beautifully decorated mansion without a loving family within cannot compare to a simple house wherein love abides. **"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it"** (Psalm 127:1). We face a dilemma similar to that of Joshua 24:15. We can choose whether to serve the gods of a cruel world with its attendant pleasures(?), or we can serve the God of the Bible and his righteousness, **"...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."**

—9194 Lakeside Dr.  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654



# THE UNSHAKABLE KINGDOM

Tom Moore

## I. Introduction

### A. Hebrews 12:18-22, 27-28

#### 1. Inspiration says:

- a. You have not come to Mount Sinai (or to any other similar mountain), but you have come to Mount Zion.
- b. The "Mount Zion" is the Lord's church.
- c. The church is a kingdom which cannot be shaken.

#### 2. "Cannot be shaken" is translated from *asaleutos*.

- a. It means not liable to disorder or overthrow; firm, stable.
- b. Luke 6:48

#### 3. The material creation stands under the divine promise that it will be shaken

- a. But the Lord's church/kingdom stands under the sacred promise that it cannot be shaken
- b. Luke 1:30-33

### B. Many brethren (who have gone out from of us because they are no longer of us) are seeking to change the Lord's church.

1. Many talk and write about "restructuring the church."
2. James Woodroof, in his book *The Church in Transition*, says: "Any institution which thinks it can treat the future as though it were just an extension of the past or present is doomed to fail. That goes especially for the church."
3. He is saying that the church described in the first century cannot meet today's needs.

### C. The Lord's church is both human and divine.

1. That is, it is God's soul-saving institution, divine in concept, in nature, and in purpose.
2. But this divine institution is made up of human beings.
3. There is a divine side, and there is the human side.
  - a. On the divine side it is absolute ultimate perfection.
  - b. If there is any imperfection, it is on the human side.
4. The human beings, who make up the church, can be changed.
  - a. From better to worse, or
  - b. From worse to better
5. But on the divine side—there can be no cha-

nge. We cannot change its:

- a. Head ...Colossians 1:18.
- b. Authority ...Matthew 28:18.
- c. Foundation ...I Corinthians 3:11.
- d. Message

- 1) Men may preach a perverted message, but they cannot change the divinely authorized message.
- 2) Galatians 1:6-10

## II. Discussion

### A. From eternity the Lord's church was in God's eternal plan ...Ephesians 3:10-11.

### B. The Lord promised ..... Matthew 16:18

1. Thus the church was to be built upon Christ
2. Isaiah looking to Christ as the foundation of the church said ...Isaiah 28:16.

### C. The inspired writer of Hebrews calls this divine institution a "kingdom that can not be shaken." It is stressed that those in Christ .....Hebrews 12:22-24.

### D. Daniel 2, God, through Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of his dream. The king saw a head of gold, arms chest of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron with feet part of iron and clay.

1. Daniel explained that this great image represented the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Grecian Empire, and the Roman Empire.
2. With reference to the Roman Empire Daniel explained ...Daniel 2:44.
3. It was in the days of "those kings" that the Lord's church was established on Pentecost of Acts, and it shall stand forever.

### E. In Daniel 7:13-14 it is recorded:

1. That Daniel saw the Son of man ascend upon the wings of the clouds of heaven.
2. That the clouds brought Him to God ("the Ancient of Days").
3. And, that there was given Hi dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that "all people, nations, and languages, should serve him."
4. Daniel explains that this kingdom "...is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall never be destroyed."

5. Let it be noted here that God is not saying that the church would never have any

problems, but that it will always be ultimately victorious.

F. Let us now look at the Victorious Church as presented in the Revelation.

1. Revelation 6:9-11 .... here there seems to be a sense of defeat.

a. In chapter 20, though, we are given a picture of these same souls, now removed from underneath the altar, and sitting "on thrones."

b. This is a scene of victory

c. In fact, "The Victorious Church" is the basic theme of the Revelation.

2. As you study through chapters 5 thru 11 you will notice the constant ongoing battle between the world and the church

3. Then, you will notice in chapters 12 thru 20 this same conflict, but with the emphasis being the battle between the Christ and Satan.

a. In chapter 20, after the defeat of the beast and the false prophet, and the dragon (Satan), we are given a picture of these same souls now sitting on thrones.

b. This is a scene of victory

c. Taking these souls out from under the altar and placing them upon thrones, reigning with Christ, is "the first resurrection"—victory of the Christ and His saints.

d. All the evil forces combined could not, and cannot, destroy the Lord's church.

4. Notice the beautiful picture painted for us in Revelation 19:11-16

a. Clearly, the rider of the white horse is the Christ Himself.

b. And the horse, in this instance, might be the New Testament church, and "white" is the symbol of victory.

c. We are told that the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat upon the white horse, and against His army.

d. **"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet....they two were cast into the lake that burneth with brim stone"** (Revelation 19:19-20).

e. Only the dragon (Satan) was left and he was finally **"cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false propbet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"** (Revelation 20:10).

5. Then in Revelation 20:11-14 we are given "the Great White Throne" scene, clearly a judgment scene.

a. John then sees .... Revelation 21:1-2

b. Then John hears ... Revelation 21:3-7

G. Whatever else may be included in the beautiful symbolism thus set forth, the message given had to have some very special meaning to those Christians to whom the book of Revelation was first addressed those persecuted, suffering saints of God undergoing horrible persecutions by the Roman Empire.

1. The symbolism may reach out to include points and thoughts even of the final judgment and of heaven for the righteous and hell for the wicked; but the basic message was: "There is marvelous Victory in Jesus!"

2. The closing chapters of the Revelation emphasizes the triumphant Church of our Lord!

III. Conclusion

A. Romans 8:35-39


B. And we rejoice exceedingly that we can be faithful servants and citizens in the Kingdom which cannot be shaken!

—2406 Main  
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

## MEMPHIS SCHOOL of PREACHING

Two-year program  
Fifty-four courses  
2,760 clock hours  
No tuition  
Qualified faculty  
Limited Scholarships  
Strong Bible emphasis  
Established 1966  
Applications now being accepted  
Call or write for application

**Curds A. Gates, Director**  
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242  
School (901) 751-2242 Bookstore (901) 751-9964  
Fax (901) 751-8098



The Last Word...

## CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YOU WILL SERVE

Eddie Whitten

*(Several weeks ago brother Eddie Whitten notified me along with several other brethren that he was retiring from most of what he was doing. He told us that he was going to spend most of his time working with the Northeast congregation in Ft. Worth, Texas. This congregation, of course, is his home congregation. Since that time several of us have prevailed on him to reconsider his "retirement." We were able to persuade him to "stay in the harness" a while longer. (No, we did not say, "There is no mule like and ole mule." And, we restrained ourselves from asking Eddie, "From what was he retiring?" Neither did we say, "Retire! You have not yet begun to work." And, I personally did not remind him that he is the same age as my mother. For some strange reason when I remind him that he is the same age as my mother he gets a sour look on his face, almost as bad as the late and lamented Bill Jackson use to get when I would remind him that to the year, month, and day he was the same age as my father-in-law.) Be those things as they may be, what some of us did do was threaten Eddie within an inch of his life unless he agreed to continue with at least some of the work he had been doing—such as writing and speaking on lectureships. Of course, we really did not threaten him. However, we did twist his arm quite severely. So, Eddie has agreed at least to appear on certain lectureships. We are glad for that much change of his mind.*

*All that being said, Eddie is giving up certain things. And, one of them is writing each month in CFTF. I personally regret his decision to do that but, understand perfectly well why he has come to that conclusion. Several of us wonder how long we can do all that we have been blessed by the Lord to do. But that is another story.*

*Eddie is a long time friend and a faithful brother in Christ. We have literally traveled the world together preaching the gospel as we had opportunity. In fact, we were to travel to the UK this past October, but due to a conflict in his schedule Eddie was not able to make the trip.*

*Eddie is a person with whom you can have fun—lots of it. Nevertheless, when it is time to get serious he is right there with his Bible open, stressing the importance of a "thus saith the Lord" for all we believe and practice. I personally look forward to seeing him at our upcoming 2003 SBI lectures on Islam and I hope to see many of you in attendance also. CFTF appreciates Eddie's efforts and we look forward to receiving an article from him for publication in CFTF from time to time.*

*Eddie, thank you for your work in the kingdom—a level headed and sane work. Also, we are thankful for your council and are not unmindful of that pleasant "from ear to ear" grin that is so reflective of your heart. —DPB.]*

**NOTE:** This being my last article on a regular basis, I wish to take this opportunity to express to brother David Brown, my deepest heartfelt thanks and appreciation for allowing me the privilege of participating in the content of *Contending for the Faith* for the last several years. I have long cherished the efforts of *Contending for the Faith* under the editorship of the late Ira Y. Rice, Jr. and continued with brother Brown. It is my conviction that *Contending for the Faith* has been and continues to be a herald for truth for those who hold the Bible to be the Standard of authority for what we do in service to God. My sincerest wishes for brother Brown and the staff of *Contending for the Faith* are for ongoing success in the defense of God's truth.

We are all familiar with the wonderful words of Joshua 24:15 when he challenged the Israelites as to their loyalty. He brought their attention to the fact that other interests were being respected over their loyalty

to God. The time comes all too often that we must be reminded who we are, and who we serve. God will not tolerate mixed feelings when it comes to our priorities. God either occupies top priority in our life, or he is not our priority at all (Matthew 6:24).



### MATERIALISM

Materialism, the desire for things, is eating this country alive. The desire for more and more gadgets and gimmicks feeds the coffers of commerce to the tune of billions of dollars each year. Credit cards are "maxed out" and bills pile up, yet buying keeps right on going. Financial mismanagement is an increasing cause of divorce (always has been ranked among the highest three causes of divorce). It also results in suicide in extreme cases, emotional breakdowns and humiliation for those caught in the clutches of overbuying. Much too often, the church is the first "cut" in the efforts to curb overbuying. In spite of the meager trimming of

the spending that cutting off one's contribution to the church accomplishes, little is made to go begging with regard to personal wants. When materialism captivates us to the degree that we sacrifice our giving, it has become our god. We cannot serve God and put materialism first in our priorities.

### POPULARITY

Young people are more affected by the desire for popularity than older folks most of the time. Notice, we did not say all of the time, but most of the time. Adults are guilty of this weakness just as are young people. Popularity many times is the cause of one forfeiting that which he knows is more important to his eternal destiny. The hearing of faith (Galatians 3:2, 5) has little importance to one who is more interested in popularity than in truth. It is the case that peers have more respect for one who will stand for truth than for one who seeks popularity by compromising truth. This is a lesson that is hard to learn.

### SELF

All of us suffer from some degree of ego. Self is a prime motivating force in the life of every individual. It is the control of ego that makes one aware of what is of more importance. Unfortunately, many are controlled by ego to the point that they can rarely see the sorrow into which they are falling. Self is the beginning of selfishness. That characteristic is hated by all. It says that there is little or no consideration for friends, family, God, or anyone else. It says that "I" is the center of my affections and no one else matters to me. True friends, one of life's most precious treasures, are hard to come by with someone who is selfish. Self demands that whatever standard I wish is the standard by which I will live. Regretfully, that is also the standard by which they will die unless repentance is manifested. Selfishness is probably the most detested characteristic of all that man can possess. Jesus condemns selfishness (Matthew 16:24; 23:12).

### TRADITION

Change is just not in the vocabulary of some folk. We have been doing thus and so this way for fifty years and there is no need to change anything. Tradition that comes from repetition destroys the purpose of Bible study. Why study the Bible if we are going to do the same old things which may or may not be in accord with the teaching of the Bible? Tradition that comes from Bible teaching (2 Thess. 3:6) is not to be discarded, but tradition that comes from just doing things the same way for a long period of time is not done by Bible authority. Rote worship is not acceptable to God. Sometimes it is possible to fall into a habit of going through our worship of God just as a formal gesture and not

from the heart. Most of the members of the Lord's church sing songs for years and can't recite the words of the songs at all. Sometimes it is a matter of course that we observe the Lord's Supper but are not attentive to the sacrifice that memorializes it. Changing the number of songs before the sermon, or having the Lord's Supper before the sermon or after it upsets some. Tradition must not be allowed to become the motivation for what we do in worship or in our service to God.

### MODERNISM

We use the word, modernism, in this context, to include humanism, new ageism, neo-orthodoxy, or post modernism. All of these are connected with the exaltation of the thinking of men over the teaching of the Bible. The Bible, to them, is not the verbal, plenary, inspired word of God. It is the compilation of man and has no viable place in the control of man's thoughts or actions.

Modernism produces ungodly philosophies such as evolution, documentary hypothesis, agnosticism, atheism, skepticism and such like. All of these deny the Deity of Jehovah, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It relegates god to anything that pleases, or mystifies man. Modernism has also resulted in promiscuous sexual conduct and in the immodest display of the human body. Modesty is a Biblical term used in such manner as to control the exposure of one's body to the opposite sex. Paul told Timothy that "**I will that...women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array**" (I Timothy 2:9). Now, say what you will as to "what is immodest?" but the Bible says there is such as thing as immodesty. Everyone knows what is enticing to the opposite sex, and what is not! Let there be no misunderstanding, what is immodest is not a secret! Christians should not be followers of the world in respect to modesty, but should be leaders in showing the world the virtue of modesty.

There are other areas in which we need caution and warning. These are mentioned to bring our attention to that which should be of utmost importance in our relationship to God and to each other. We are living the dream of life, the end of which can be beautiful, blissful and blessed in an endless day in the presence of God, Jesus and all the heavenly angels. Or we can lose our souls because of our choice in life. The question still rings through the ages, "Choose ye this day whom you will serve?"

—3616 Brown Trail  
Bedford, Texas 76021

# Why not help us grow? Give A Gift subscription!

Do you know of an individual or a congregation that needs to be made aware of the false doctrines and teachers that are afflicting the Lord's Church today? If so why not give them a subscription of *Contending for the Faith*.

## THERE ARE MANY SUBSCRIPTION PLANS AVAILABLE:

*Single Subscriptions:* One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. *Club Rate:* Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; *Five One-Year Subscriptions,* \$58.00. *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 \$11.00 per year per family address. *Foreign Rate:* One Year, \$30.

## TO SEND A SUBSCRIPTION JUST FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW:

NAME _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 YEAR	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 YEARS
ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP _____
NAME _____	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 YEAR	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 YEARS
ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP _____

## MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS ALONG WITH PAYMENT TO:

P.O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77373-2357 • fax: 281.288.0549  
email: [jbrow@charter.net](mailto:jbrow@charter.net) • phone: 281.350.5516

**Contending for the Faith**  
P.O. Box 2357  
Spring, Texas 77383-2357

PRSR STD  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DALLAS, TX  
PERMIT #1863