

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

SHALL WE JUST BOW DOWN TO THE LIBERAL MIND SET?

Mark Lance

Having the opportunity to work at the local community college in the town wherein I also preach offers some interesting opportunities. Last year one of the teachers of the community college was conducting an open forum debate. In actuality it would have been more accurate to have called it “the teacher shoves his personal opinions down the throats of his students” forum.

He first proceeded to condemn **President George W. Bush**, then promote the ideas of our former degenerated **President Bill Clinton**. Though I strongly disagreed with his statements I remained a spectator for the time being. Next he started making remarks about Christians that did not support the immorality of Clinton (by no means did he ever refer to Clinton as immoral). He pointed out how they needed to apply the words of Jesus: **“Judge not, that ye be not judged.”** Then the discussion turned to why we should legalize marijuana. Of course the teacher declared that legalizing marijuana would be respecting the rights of those who desired to use it. Following his comments regarding legalizing marijuana, one of his students took the microphone and stated that the apostle Paul was a homosexual. Of course, this liberal minded teacher enjoyed such remarks. A couple of his students (obviously religious) tried to speak up and against these views just noted, but the teacher dealt with them in a way to intimidate them. And, it seemed that the rest of the class was in agreement with the teacher, or, at least afraid to speak up. At this point during the “forum” I could not remain silent any longer.

When given the microphone and the chance to speak I first addressed the subject of legalizing marijuana. This discussion was on a Friday and it just so

happened that my wife, daughter and three other church members were hit by a drunk driver the Sunday night before sending them all to the hospital. I related how we do not need any more people on the road under the influence of drugs. Of course those determined to have their own way will still argue their worldly thoughts. Hey, just because we endanger the lives of others should not stop us from doing what makes us feel good, should it?

Next I pointed out how that **“Judge not, that ye be not judged”** from (Matthew 7:1) was taken out of context, and there was another passage we should consider, **“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment”** (John 7:24). I pointed out to the audience that the teacher said **“Judge not, that ye be not judged”**, and then proceeded to condemn everyone with whom he did not agree. But you have to keep in mind that liberals in politics and the church are not bound by the same principles they bind on the rest of us. If you ever want to make a liberal mad, just point out his inconsistencies. Although that was not my intent, it was certainly accomplished.

Following my comments earlier mentioned, the teacher then proceeded to verbally explode, and from the color of his face it looked as though there might be a physical explosion as well. He never bothered to answer his inconsistencies that we pointed out, but rather tried intimidation and screaming at the top of his lungs. I decided I had as much right to speak as he did, but I did not want to conduct myself in the manner he was, so I just refused to give him back his microphone. That way I could be as loud as he was without raising my voice. By now the college teacher has not only lost his audience that he had been dominating, but he also lost

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

Editorial...

WHERE WE STAND—AGAIN

[You may have wondered from where the quotes and charts came and who's quotes and charts they are in the article entitled "Where We Stand", April, 2005 *CFTF* pages 5, 6. They are quotations and charts from *Divorce Debate, Olan Hicks vs Jim Waldron*. The debate was held February 21-25, 1977. The question was put to Jim Waldron by Olan Hicks. *The answer is Waldron's answer to Hick's question. CFTF stands today on and with the truth that Jim Waldron stated in his answer to Olan Hicks in February 1977*—Editor]

CONTRADICTORY ANSWERS TO A VITAL QUESTION

During the 14th Annual South Texas Lectureship of the Adams Street Church of Christ in Beeville, Texas, January 2001, a pertinent question was asked in the "Question & Answer" session. The question and subsequent answer are herein transcribed. **Robert R. Taylor, Jr.** was conducting the Q. & A. Session.

QUESTION

A wife decides to divorce her husband. No adultery at this point. The husband refuses to cooperate with this, trying to do all in his power to keep the marriage together as per God's Will. Regardless, the wife goes on to divorce her husband in State court, finds a boyfriend, and marries him. Can the original husband now put her away in God's sight for adultery and be free to remarry? Is this what you would call—(quote) the waiting game (unquote)? Brother Taylor.

TAYLOR'S ANSWER TO THE PRECEDING QUESTION

Well, I do not believe that this is really what we call "the waiting game." In my judgment, "the waiting game" would be where a husband and wife or wife and husband tire of the marriage. Both of them want to be free of the marriage—neither one has been unfaithful to the other, and they decide mutually to separate, no longer live under the same roof, no longer be intimate with each other, and they begin to play what might be called "the waiting game." She'll decide in her mind, "I'm going to wait until he either has an affair or enters into marriage with somebody else" or he decides to do the same. And then the one that enters into the marriage—the other one feels, "I have perfect justification for entering into a marriage." I believe this is a situation that is entirely different. The wife is doing all of the action and trying to end the marriage and the husband

is doing all in her, his power to keep the marriage intact. He does not want a divorce to occur; he wants their marriage to continue, but of course it takes two to enter into a marriage with the Lord's blessing, and it takes two to keep that marriage intact. And where one decides I'm not going to be his wife or her husband any longer, and the other one may decide, "Well, I want to keep the marriage together," I believe is a case that's described in this scenario that she's clearly wrong. She was wrong in leaving him, wrong in violating her vows, wrong in not living up to what she promised God and him at the wedding ceremony, and of course when she left him and then decided to enter into another marriage, I believe that this really constituted grounds on which he could put her away in the sight of the Lord. Now, of course, what might be done in civil government doesn't always coincide with God's law. A marriage might end in the courthouse and yet might not end in the sight of the Lord at all. As I pointed out in the discussion about marriage, divorce, and remarriage last night, there is one ground for the entrance into another marriage for the innocent party, and that is that the guilty party commits fornication. The innocent party may be able to put that individual away. But I do not believe that this really constitutes the so-called "waiting game" and it's unfortunate that we have situations like this that do develop. I know personally of some situations where one decides, "I'm going to end the marriage," and of course, if one decides it, then according to the laws of the land, he or she can pretty well get a divorce on his or her own. And the other one, a devout Christian, desires to keep the marriage intact (and has) no interest at all in the ending of the marriage, it's unfortunate that Christians sometimes find themselves in that situation. But I do not believe that this really constitutes the so-called "waiting game" that many people have practiced, accepting the thought, "Well, if I no longer live under the same roof with him or with her, he or she will be tempted to either have an affair, adulterous in nature, or maybe enter into another marriage if there's been something like the way of a civil divorce." So this would be my judgment about the matter.¹

*In the preceding answer we believe Robert Taylor taught the Truth of the Bible. Taylor's answer serves well to state **Contending for the Faith's** position on this matter.*

IF TAYLOR TAUGHT THE TRUTH AT BEEVILLE IN 2001, WHAT ABOUT STAN CROWLEY'S TEACHING AT BEEVILLE IN 2004?

During the 17th Annual South Texas Lectureship of the Adams Street congregation in Beeville, Texas, 2004, Stan Crowley delivered a sermon that was diametrically opposed to what was taught from the same pulpit by Robert Taylor in January of 2001. To date no oral or printed expression has come from the Beeville elders of which we know that would indicate Taylor's answer was erroneous. Without any evidence

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to the contrary, we may only conclude from the extant evidence, that the Beeville elders must also believe Crowley's views on marriage, divorce, remarriage. Now, if the preceding sentence is not the case, let them set the record straight. But, in his Beeville sermon Crowley not only taught that man's law can su-

persede, countermand, void and nullify God's law, but he taught other errors as well.

A MAN AND A WOMAN ARE NOT MARRIED UNTIL THEY ENGAGE IN SEXUAL INTERCOURSE.

Crowley taught error when he preached that the word “**joined**” of Matthew 19:6 means sexual intercourse. This is the meaning he assigns to “**cleave unto his wife**” in Genesis 2:24 and “**joined unto his wife**” in Ephesians 5:31. He makes a weak attempt to prop up his shaky shed of error by, of all things, referring to Paul's terminology used to describe a man being “**joined to a harlot**” (I Corinthians 6:16). Crowley preached: “Well, what does it mean when it talks about a man and a woman being joined? What does it mean when it talks about them being joined into one flesh? It's talking about them being sexually united.” Again in the same sermon he declared, “Jesus is referring only to the physical joining between the man that God had made and the woman that God had made for that man.” So, according to Crowley's false doctrine, we may only conclude that when a scripturally authorized for marriage man and woman publicly declare themselves to be married, we understand by their declaration that prior to the marriage announcement they have engaged in their first sexual intercourse in order be married. That is the case, or when they publicly declared themselves to be married, having yet to engage in their first sexual relation, they are declaring themselves married (joined together) when they are not—per Crowley's false view of the meaning of “joined”. Why do we say that the two in our previous illustration would be declaring a falsehood regarding their marriage? Because, according to Crowley, a man and a woman become husband and wife *ONLY* at the point when each one engages in sexual intercourse with the other for the first time.

Dub McClish observed that Crowley...

...uses I Cor. 6:16, in which Paul says that one who “**is joined to an harlot is one body**,” after which he employs the “**shall be one flesh**” phrase of Gen. 2:24 as an illustration of how/why this is the case. The connection Paul makes between the two passages is undeniable, as the brother notes. It is also clear that Paul's reference to being “**joined**” and to “**one flesh**” is a description of sexual union. However, even this fact does not therefore demand that Gen. 2:24 refers *only* to the sexual union. While such is only *one* facet of the “**one flesh**” husband-wife relationship, it is the *only* facet of the man-whore relationship. The brother seems to embroil himself in an absurdity. On Gen. 2:24 his argument seems to be that sexual intercourse (i.e., cleav-

ing, one flesh) constitutes marriage. If this is the case, then (by his own rule of making Gen. 2:24 and 1 Cor. 6:16 precisely parallel) every time a man joins himself to a harlot (or any other woman outside of Scriptural marriage), he thereby “marries” each one of them. Remember, this brother is defining Gen. 2:24 solely in light of 1 Cor. 6:16. . . . In other words, if cleave and one flesh mean only sexual union and constitute marriage in Gen. 2:24, then joined and one flesh in 1 Cor. 6:16 must mean a sexual union that constitutes marriage to a whore, also.³

Who will answer **True** to the following **True/False** questions? (1) T F The man and woman of Matthew 19:5, 6 become husband and wife *only* when God joins them together in their first sexual intercourse. (2) T F God joins the man and woman of Matthew 19:5, 6 to be husband and wife *prior to* their first sexual intercourse. (3) T F God joins the man and woman of Matthew 19:5, 6 to be husband and wife when they publicly declare themselves so to be. (4) T F In order for the first sexual intercourse between a man and woman to be authorized by God, He (God) must join said man and woman together to be husband and wife before their first sexual intercourse (Hebrews 13:4).

“ONE CAN PUT AWAY A UNION BY PUTTING A DISTANCE BETWEEN THE MAN AND THE WOMAN”—STAN CROWLEY

The topic sentence heading this section of our article is from Crowley's Beeville sermon. When put into propositional form it reads: “*The Scriptures teach that one may ‘put away’ a marriage union by ‘putting a distance between’ a husband and a wife.*” Do those responsible for the production of the 17th Annual South Texas Lectureship in 2004 where Crowley made this and other erroneous statements in his sermon desire to affirm this proposition? They either believe it or they do not.

How would you answer the following questions?

(1) **True False** “*The Scriptures teach that one may ‘put away’ a marriage ‘union’ by ‘putting a distance’ between a husband and a wife.*” Or, if one desires to deal with Crowley's actual quote, here it is again—(2) **True False** “ONE CAN PUT AWAY A UNION BY PUTTING A DISTANCE BETWEEN THE MAN AND THE WOMAN”. Now where is the person who will answer True to questions (1) or (2)?

In demonstrating the absurdity of the previous doctrine, **Lynn Parker** wrote:

...Johnny and Susie have a disagreement and they go

in different directions to “cool off.” Are the (sic) still husband and wife? According to this new doctrine, you have to wonder! The separation has somehow, mysteriously, changed them into unmarried folks. And if they are now unmarried, must they go through a ceremony again to be married? Or, must they simply have intercourse to be remarried, since our speaker’s view of “cleave” and “joined together” is exclusively sexual?⁴

It is a shame that some will make a human civil court or legislature the final factor in determining who is scripturally divorced or who is not. Or, for that matter who is married and who is not. They certainly will not make the unscriptural decision of a civil court or legislature the final standard when it comes to abortion, euthanasia and homosexual marriages, but they will when it comes to divorce. To them a divorce must always be from and according to the civil courts of the United States. However, Matthew 5:32 and 19:6, 9 were given long before the divorce courts of America and our jurisprudence system existed or for that matter any other present jurisprudence system. This they seemingly cannot or will not grasp. With them everything turns on the decree of “Divorce granted” declared by a judge when the gavel falls in a civil court when it should turn on whether one’s marriage situation fits Matthew 19:6, 9 rather than the capricious judgments of human civil courts and legislatures.

CONFUSION GONE TO SEED

Now watch the confusion of the fellow whom we shall now quote as he labors in his lame attempts to uphold his false doctrine. He wrote: “The basis that a civil law overrides God’s law in the case of civil divorce is completely unfounded.” Indeed, such is the case, but it is not only the case in civil divorce but in any other area wherein man’s will conflicts with God’s will. However, following that sentence the same fellow affirmed: “God joins a couple in marriage per Matthew 19:6, *but only in view of the civil ceremony* (Italics mine—DPB). Otherwise, fornication would constitute marriage.” But, did he not affirm earlier that, “The basis that a civil law overrides God’s law in the case of civil divorce is completely unfounded.”? Yet, almost in the same breath he turns around and affirms that where there is no “civil ceremony” (not civil law only but he says a “civil ceremony”) pertaining to marriage there is no marriage. Well, he cannot have it both ways. But, evidently he is going to try to do so. Now, how is he going to attempt to prove the proposition that “God joins a couple in marriage per Matthew 19:6, but only in view of the civil ceremony?” What if the

“civil ceremony” is contrary to God’s will? Read on and see how far he is willing to go in his attempts to uphold his false view.

Remember what he said in the first two sentences we quoted—“The basis that a civil law overrides God’s law in the case of civil divorce is completely unfounded. Otherwise, fornication would constitute marriage” If nothing else comes from this quote, it is obvious that the fellow who wrote the preceding sentences and Stan Crowley do not see eye to eye on the word “joined” of Matthew 19:6.

But his previous material we have recorded is not all he advocates. Having declared that “a human civil court or legislature” is not “the final factor in determining who is scripturally divorced or who is not.” He does an “about face” and immediately states that civil law is the final arbiter in such matters. He writes: ‘Put away,’ or ‘putting away’ refers to civil divorce, does it not?’ But the absurdity of these contradictory statements of this confused fellow is mild compared to what he then wrote. Please notice the following material from the same paragraph from which the preceding sentences came.

PERVERTING THE BIBLICAL TEXT IN A DESPERATE AND SHAMEFUL EFFORT TO UPHOLD THE UNSCRIPTURAL PLACE OF COURT DECISIONS IN THE MATTER OF DIVORCE

As shocking and blasphemous as it is, the following radical effort was made in the same letter (of which we have a copy) as this fellow continued his lame attempt to bolster his false position that he began to do earlier and from which we quoted in the previous paragraph. Mind you, the sentences we have quoted are all in the same paragraph—a paragraph composed of only seven sentences from which we have previously quoted three of them. Following the last sentence we quoted in our previous paragraph, in a lame effort to uphold the unscriptural place of a civil court’s decision regarding divorce, he wrote:

Jesus said then, “Whosoever divorces his wife **in a civil action**, except for the cause of fornication, and marries another commits adultery.” (Bold mine—Read it and weep—DPB)

Talk about inserting one’s doctrine into the Biblical text—here it is, and in print. What a perversion of the text of Matthew 19:9! I do not know of one single solitary version of the Bible that translates this portion of Matthew 19:9 into the words of our confused “scholarly translator”. At least we know what this fellow thinks that Jesus meant when he reads Matthew 19:9. Please remember the Bible teaches

explicitly and implicitly and what it teaches implicitly is just as authoritative and binding as what it teaches explicitly. And, in his new translation this person has affirmed far, far more than he realizes.

We make the following offer to the person who gave us this new version of Matthew 19:9—if you will sign to affirm in public debate the following proposition, we will be glad to sign the negative to it, which proposition is in the exact words of the propagator of this pernicious doctrine.

RESOLVED: “Jesus said then, ‘Whosoever divorces his wife in a civil action, except for the cause of fornication, and marries another commits adultery.’”

AFFIRMATIVE: _____

NEGATIVE: David P. Brown

The above proposition is, in part, exactly what certain ones teach and they know it. And, since at this writing the fellow who wrote this new version of Matthew 19:9 was far more frank and candid than others of his belief regarding this doctrine (in that he willingly altered the biblical text in his effort to uphold his false doctrine); and, since he has notified us in other correspondence that he no longer has fellowship with us because we do not accept his false doctrine as set out in his “translation” of Matthew 19:9; will he be as bold to sign to affirm publicly in debate his doctrine as he wrote it and as we have herein quoted it? And, if this bold and learned fellow will not publicly affirm on the polemic platform that which came from his own mind, then is there anyone else who will be as bold as this fellow and come forth to help him out by signing to affirm this new “translation”—“**Jesus said then, ‘Whosoever divorces his wife in a civil action, except for the cause of fornication, and marries another commits adultery.’**”? This is the proposition I am willing to negate on this given subject because, in part, this is exactly what certain ones believe. So, on *this given point* concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage please do not trouble me with offering another proposition. The previously stated proposition precisely states what certain ones believe and evidences how far at least one is willing to go in advancing his false doctrine, *namely, to alter the biblical text in order to teach his doctrine.*

God’s Word does not authorize a human court or any other human organization or individual to nullify a Matthew 19:6 God-joined marriage when there has

been no Matthew 19:9 fornication involved in the Matthew 19:6 “God-joined” marriage.

WE “OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN” (ACTS 5:29)

In 1978, the late **Frank D. Young**, longtime teacher at the Memphis School of Preaching, wrote the following in the book, *Your Marriage Can Be Great!*, edited by the late **Thomas B. Warren**:

Too often “the laws of the land allow it” is the standard as to the right and wrong of marriage. When courts have decreed, but God has *not*, we have no choice but to obey God! We are taught to obey civil government *except* when the laws conflict with God’s will. “We must obey God rather than men” was spoken to those in power and authority: the apostles refused to yield to laws that conflicted with Christ’s will. If, because we are amenable to civil laws, we divorce and remarry as *they allow*, then God’s law means nothing!²

We “ought to obey God rather than men” because what God has bound in heaven is what he has bound on earth and what he has loosed in heaven is what he has loosed on earth. And, what he has bound and/or loosed is declared through the direct statements, examples and implications of his infallible word revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Bible (II Timothy 3:16, 17). Therefore, when a man and a woman are joined together by God to be husband and wife (Matthew 19:6), he will not loose them from that bond of matrimony unless and until one or the other dies (Romans 7:2), or one of them commits fornication and the spouse who is innocent of the fornication divorces the “guilty of fornication spouse” because of the fornication the spouse has committed (Matthew 19:9)—courts, presidents, congresses, parliaments, tribal councils, Herod, the Pope, women’s quilting bees, elders, editors, preachers schools and/or preachers to the contrary notwithstanding (John 12:48)—more to come on this important subject.

—David P. Brown, Editor

ENDNOTES

1 Lynn Parker, “Civil Law (Man’s Will) and its Relationship to God’s Laws (God’s Will)—Especially Relating to Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage,” *Morals—From God or Man?*, ed. David P. Brown, (Gospel Light Publishing Co. Delight, AR, 2005), pp. 6, 7.

2 Frank D. Young, “We Must Obey God Rather Than Men,” *Your Marriage Can Be Great*, ed. Thomas B. Warren, (National Christian Press, Inc., Jonesboro, AR), p. 29.

3 Ibid. Dub McClish, as quoted by Lynn Parker, *Morals—From God or Man*, p. 20.

4 Ibid. pp. 29, 30.

[Some do not believe that the word “marriage” means anything other than a Matthew 19:6 marriage. However, the following article by **Wayne Jackson** makes clear that the term “marriage” does not always mean a God-sanctioned marriage—Editor]

An “Unlawful” Relationship

Wayne Jackson

Of all the Herods in the bloody family of that name, Antipas receives the most prominent treatment in the New Testament — and this because of his connection with John the Baptizer.

Though Antipas was married to the daughter of an Arabian king, en route to Rome (cir. A.D. 29), he became infatuated with Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife. They entered into an intrigue whereby the ruler would divorce his wife, and Herodias would divorce Philip. Antipas and Herodias then “married” one another (cf. Mark 6:17; see Josephus, *Antiquities* 185.1ff). Note that word “married”; it will be significant momentarily.

Both Matthew and Mark record the fact that a controversy between Herod and John the Baptizer developed over this matter. John, in a direct confrontation with the ruler “**said (an imperfect tense, suggesting repeated rebukes) unto Herod, It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife**” (Mark 6:18). The rebuke cost John his life!

There are a couple of important points to note here. First, observe that the union of Antipas and

Herodias is, in some sense, characterized as a “married” relationship. Does the use of this term legitimize the union? It does not. John described the situation as “not lawful.” The verb *echein*, rendered “have” can be used in this sense: “to have (use) a woman (unlawfully) as a wife (Thayer, Greek Lexicon, p. 266). Frequently words are employed in common parlance, rather than in a technical sense. Antipas and Herodias were “married,” insofar as society viewed the matter; from the divine vantage point, though, the relationship was *unlawful*. Circle both “married” and “not lawful” (Mark 6: 17-18), and connect them with a line. A mere ceremony does not transform an “unlawful” union into a lawful one.

Now, what must one do when he finds himself in a relationship (even though sanctioned by civil procedure) that is “not lawful”? The answer is clear. He must abandon the sinful activity. True repentance demands nothing less.

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Assistant Editorial...

Attitude and Eternity

It might shock some to think of it, but our attitude is going to determine where we spend eternity. The Bible has much to say about our heart (attitude) and its importance in how we view God, his word, and our world.

The sage of old said, “**Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life**” (Proverbs 4:23). The way we view the world (our attitude) is to be guarded (maintained within the parameters God determined). If our heart is not right the word of God will be of no effect.

Perhaps the best single passage that illustrates God’s view of our hearts is the *Parable of the Sower* recorded in Luke 8; Matthew 13 and Mark 4. In this parable Jesus discusses four different types of attitudes (hearts). We will note the main points concern-

ing each.

THE SOWER AND THE SEED

This parable is one of the few that the Lord interprets for us. Since this is the case, it is extremely useful, and easy to discuss.

Jesus tells us that the seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11). The sower is anyone who spreads (teaches) the word of God (the seed). All Christians are to be sowers of the divine message of hope (Matthew 28:18ff).

THE WAYSIDE (HARD-HEARTED) SOIL

The first attitude talked about is the one that is impervious to the seed. It is hard, wayside, shoulder of the road. Unfortunately, the world in which we live is filled with people whose hearts are like this.

Many seem interested only in work and entertainment. How to acquire more stuff seems the only stimulus that gets many excited in the modern day. Spirituality is an unknown character trait to these types of individuals.

These are the people who have no problem whatsoever turning a deaf ear to the truth when they do hear it. Anyone who possesses and maintains this type of attitude will have no hope of heaven. They are resigning themselves to an eternity of torment (Matthew 25:46).

THE STONY (SHALLOW-HEARTED) SOIL

The second type of attitude is that of shallowness. The great book of Ecclesiastes deals at length with various vain and meaningless pursuits. Jesus speaks of those who hear the word with joy, but have no depth of learning.

Individuals depicted in this segment of the parable lack commitment to the truth. The knowledge of the truth brings them some momentary happiness, but during the trials and temptations of life they fail to remain true to God.

They have no root to sustain them when things go awry. This being the case they wither and die (lose

their souls).

THE THORNY (HALF-HEARTED) SOIL

Perhaps the greatest problem that afflicts the church (individual members of the Lord's body) today is being beset by thorns in our lives. This heart (attitude) is one divided against itself.

Only the Lord knows how many people have accepted the truth, only to become distracted by the cares of the world.

Most of us have probably known people who "quit the church" (stopped being faithful to the Lord). I do not believe that many of them consciously decided to become unfaithful. Rather, they simply "get too busy" and their jobs, relationships, entertainment pursuits, etc... get in the way and over time, "choke" them spiritually.

Left unchecked, this attitude, of being constantly distracted from the work of the Lord, will cause spiritual death and eternal damnation.

THE GOOD (HONEST-HEARTED) SOIL

The fourth and final type of soil mentioned is the good soil. God is looking for a few good hearts. These individuals have a good attitude. They are receptive to the truth. And once they find the Lord, they are committed (for life) to staying with his right way.

Please consider closely the following. Have you ever wondered about the hesitancy on the part of some to obey the truth? We all know people who we say are "good people" or a "good prospect for conversion," yet they come to services for years and never respond to the invitation of the Lord.

Some of these people have had hundreds of opportunities (literally) to heed the call, yet they linger. Based on this parable we can know that they do not possess a good and honest heart.

When we read the biblical accounts of conversion we are (or should be) impressed with the rapidity of the conversions. In Acts two after hearing a sermon that can be read in less than ten minutes, 3000 people responded to the message.

If you are one such person, you need to examine your attitude in light of this parable. A good and honest heart will heed the message of the Book of God (the Bible).

Please give close and serious attention to this article then do something about it if you are not currently right with God.

—Michael Light, Assistant Editor

Contending for the Faith—May/2005


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SHALL WE JUST BOW DOWN...

(Continued from Page 1)

his temper and his microphone.

This teacher finally decided the best approach was a smoke screen. That kind of response is not surprising, coming from a liberal. He said “Oh, I know what it is, you are a Bush supporter and don’t like it because something was said about him”. Although I am a Bush supporter, I stayed out of the conversation until it turned to slandering those things the word of God upholds. He now wanted to know what did Clinton ever do wrong while in office.

Now, it is only a few hours until it gets dark so we might have to narrow down the things Clinton did wrong while in office. I responded, “He lied under oath to the nation”. After some other comments he once again wanted to know, “Well what did Clinton ever do?” I responded with the same answer, “He lied under oath.” His response was very, very revealing, “So what?”

This is the public response from a college teacher regarding to his thoughts on lying. To him it did not matter. This kind of teacher is the type so many of our young people face once they leave our homes to attend colleges and universities. To so many in these institutions of higher education sin does not matter.

I did challenge this teacher to a formal debate, with the school chancellor as moderator. He has thus far declined. Although I do not claim to be a great debater, at the same time I do not intend to just sit back with my mouth closed while those things that are holy are run down and ridiculed:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3).

It is well past time for those who profess to be Christians to stand up and be counted on the side of God’s truth. We sin when we just sit back and let Satan and his forces have their way. Although it is common to hear that the pulpit is no place for politics (to which I agree), it is the place where Biblical morality is to be preached. It is a shame that too many members of the church profess to love God and then turn around and lend their support to some degenerate just because he is in their favorite political party. A member of the Lord’s church cannot be faithful to God and support those who support abortion, which is murder:

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Revelation 21:8).

No child of God can be faithful to God and sup-

port those who support and endorse homosexuality:

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them (Romans 1:26-32).

Seeing the pressures with which our young adults are faced, to the wise member of the church these things (such as the one related to you in this article) will serve as a wake-up call to the faithful in Christ. We simply must instill within our children the way God would have them to live while they are under our roof; **“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”** (Ephesians 6:4). If we do not train them properly they will not stand a chance once they have to go face to face with teachers and their peers that care nothing for God and his word.

Not only are they faced with these anti-God people in so many schools, upon leaving home they also run the danger of finding a congregation that says church of Christ on the sign out front, only to once again be confronted with liberal-minded brethren in the church. If we do not teach our young people the truth regarding the gospel and the church in her work, worship and organization, rest assured someone else will teach them error on these matters. With all the warnings that are sounded out in the Bible as well as from faithful brethren today, there are still many parents who will not take seriously their charge to instruct their children as the Bible declares they must, and as the children deserve to have done to and for them. If children are not brought up **“in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”** (Ephesians 6:4), the eternal and horrendous price to be paid will be the souls of our precious young people along with their unfaithful parents residing in a devil’s hell.

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May Women Speak in Bible Class?

Douglas Hoff

Occasionally, a Christian will express his or her belief that it is wrong for a woman to speak in Bible class. This usually includes all types of speaking whether it is commenting on a scripture, offering an observation, reading a passage from the Bible, answering a question the teacher posed to the class or even asking a question about the material being studied. Those who believe this know it is wrong for women to exercise leadership over men in the church. This comes primarily from two passages: I Corinthians 14:34-35 and I Timothy 2:11-12. To assist the reader, these passages and the verses pertinent to the context are reproduced below:

How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church (I Corinthians 14:26-35; NKJV).

I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve (I Timothy 2:8-13; NKJV)

In I Corinthians 14 Paul was dealing with a gathering of the church where men and women were present. The men were teaching in various ways and in this setting the women were told to **“...keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak... for it is shameful for women to speak in church.”** The Greek word translated as “silent” in verse 34 is *sigao* which means absolute silence. This Greek

word is also used in Luke 9:36 where the American Standard Version (1901) translated it as “they held their peace, and told no man.” Clearly, this indicates saying nothing.

Interestingly, *sigao* is also applied to the men of the Corinthian assembly. If the Holy Spirit gave a man the ability to speak in a foreign language (“tongues”) but no interpreter was present, then that man was told to **“keep silent in church”** (v. 28). Similarly, if the Holy Spirit revealed a prophecy to two or more men, only one was permitted to speak at any given time. The others were commanded to **“keep silent”** (v. 30).

In I Timothy 2 Paul was dealing with the different roles men and women have as Christians. These roles are to be respected at all times—not just when the saints gather for worship. In this passage Paul points out that men are to be the leaders. They are to lead in prayer (v. 8). The sisters are not allowed to exercise authority over a man (v. 12). By its very nature, public teaching of the gospel requires a type of exercising of authority over the students. Thus, it would be wrong for a sister to teach a Bible class where men are present. If the class consists only of women, then it is proper for a woman to teach (Titus 2:3-5).

It is critical to our understanding to realize that a different Greek word is used in I Timothy 2:12 where Paul said the woman is **“... to be in silence.”** Here the Holy Spirit used the word *hesuchia*. Unlike *sigao*, *hesuchia* does not mean absolute silence. Instead, it means stillness, quietness or desistance from bustle or language. The ASV correctly translates *hesuchia* in I Timothy 2:12 as “quietness” instead of silence. Paul said the women were to learn in quietness, not absolute silence.

Do these two passages teach that women cannot speak at all “in (the) church?” No. Asking a question does not put a sister in a position of authority over the teacher. Rather, it shows the sister’s submission to the teacher just as it would if a man asked a question. Reading a scripture the teacher requested also does not violate scriptural principles. The teacher is still in charge of the class. Answering a question, making a comment on a scripture or offering an observation does not necessarily mean the student has taken the lead. As long as those remarks are made in a spirit of “quietness,” then the sister is not exercising authority over the teacher.

Unfortunately, this teacher has seen a few sisters who tried to dominate the class. They were not in sub-

mission to the teacher and tried to exercise authority over the class. This behavior is condemned by both I Corinthians 14:34-35 and I Timothy 2:11-12. At all times the men must lead so that all things will be done “de-

cently and in order” (I Corinthians 14:40).

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NEVER SAY, “WE’VE GOT THE TRUTH”

Marvin L. Weir

Forty or fifty years ago members of denominations would ridicule members of the Lord’s church when they said they knew the “truth” regarding religious matters. Such ridicule is expected from people who place their faith in the ever-changing creeds of men. What is surprising is the attitude that many today have toward Bible truth who profess to be members of the church of Christ. Some of these people still attend where the name “church of Christ” is still at least on the building, and others have “joined” some community church. My good friend, **Richard Massey**, had the following quote in his bulletin, *Rising Star Courier*, dated March 3, 2004:

Some are now saying that we in the church of Christ should never say “we’ve got the truth” (Mark Henderson, *Abilene Reporter News*, 2/23/04, p. 4). To say you have the truth is an attitude of pride he says (ibid). The person that said these things seems to think he has the truth on this subject. First, he tells us not to say we have the truth, then he turns around and presents (what he believes to be) the truth. This is contradictory. Any teaching that contradicts itself is false. If we cannot know the truth, then why does the church of Christ exist? We might as well close up shop and go home.

Why would one who claims to be a Christian state that we should never say, “We’ve got the truth.” Let us consider several reasons why such a statement is made.

First, those who teach false doctrine realize that truth is narrow and restrictive. If Bible authority is needed in religious matters (and it is), then man-made ideals, innovations, and opinions must be rejected as they count for naught. If one argues that no one has the truth, then he frees up some wiggle room to peddle his interpretations, beliefs, and concepts. After all, you do not have a corner on truth, thus, you cannot condemn the beliefs you are being confronted with.

John, writing by inspiration, said, “**Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world**” (I John 4:1). If one does not have the truth, how will he prove whether or not some teaching is true or false? Mark this down—*only false teachers* will claim that you cannot know *all* the truth regarding religious matters! Those who teach the truth have absolutely nothing to

hide, and they will gladly furnish one who demands evidence for their teaching with book, chapter, and verse references.

Truth will not allow false doctrine to gain an entrance or foothold. The searchlight of God’s truth exposes error for what it is — false teaching designed to lead soul’s astray. Listen to Paul as he pleads: “**Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is**” (Ephesians 5:17). Men can understand the will of the Lord! People can know the truth (John 8:32), and God’s Word (not man’s word) is always true (John 17:17).

Second, one religion is as good as another religion if one does not have access to all truth. Go ahead and attend the church of your choice because no one really knows for sure which religious group is right. Such belief allows man to worship the way that he desires to worship. Whatever pleases me in this present moment is what I will do, and no one can be sure that I am wrong because no one has all the truth. The Bible says there is “**one body**” (Ephesians 4:4).

Third, one plan of salvation is as good as another because there may be truth that you do not possess. The Bible teaches that one must hear the word of God (Romans 10:17), believe the word (Hebrews 11:6; Mark 16:16), repent of his sins (Luke 13:3), make the good confession (Romans 10:9-10), and be immersed for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). If you do not have *all* of the truth regarding God’s plan of salvation, however, you cannot teach the above plan as the absolute correct plan of salvation.

Fourth, the command to “**worship God in spirit and truth**” (John 4:24) does not have to be taken seriously because no one really can say that he has access to all truth. False teachers do not take kindly to condemnation, and if you are missing some truth then how can you dogmatically declare that they are wrong?

God’s word says:

Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work (II Timothy 3:16-17, emph. MLW).

God’s word again states that God in “**his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness...**” (II Peter 1:3). God’s word

admonishes us to be like the noble Bereans who “**received the word with all readiness of the mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so**” (Acts 17:11).

Those who try and convince you that you should

never say you have the truth are those that the Bible warns about as being “**ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth**” (II Timothy 3:7).

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RECOMMENDED READING: **MORALS—FROM GOD OR MAN?**

Gary W. Summers

Over the years brethren have produced some excellent books on the subject of morality. This year’s lectureship book from Spring, Texas (February), however, is both current and comprehensive (670 pages). For \$17.00, it is a far better investment than dinner for two at Cracker Barrel.

Lynn Parker writes the first (and lengthiest) chapter (76 pages, with a related 16-page addendum at the end of the book by **Daniel Denham**): “Civil Law (Man’s Will) and Its Relationship to God’s Laws (God’s Will)—Especially Relating to Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage.” Not everyone will be interested in this material, but those who are will find a thorough examination and refutation of the false idea that the authority of civil law is more binding than God’s Divine law.

Brother Parker defines (from the Scriptures) *marriage*—with an emphasis on the words translated “cleave, cleaving.” Entering into the discussion are Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, as well as 1 Corinthians 7. The subject centers on *when* a man and woman become married and *when* a marriage is terminated. The reader will find a serious and scholarly assessment of this subject—one that is much needed in light of the fact that some have been quite zealous in propagating erroneous views on this subject.

The next three sections are more brief; they deal with the foundations of morality: “Does God Exist and Can We Know It?”; “Morality Without God Is Immoral” and “Morality and the Nature of Man.” The first of these deals with the various arguments often used to demonstrate the existence of God; the second shows that God is the only basis for morality, and it refutes the errors of alternative standards; the third focuses on man, sin, and free will. By way of contrast to man, the following chapter (36 pages) presents the nature of animals from a Biblical perspective—as opposed to those who place animals on a par with or even greater than man.

Terry Hightower presents an up-to-date look at the people and the tactics behind the “animal rights” movement. Those who think that PETA and other groups are merely trying to protect the *abuse* of animals (something all of us would protest), must read

statements such as those made by **Chris DeRose** (Director of the Last Chance For Animals): “If the death of one rat cured all diseases, it wouldn’t make any difference to me” (132). The evidence of the fanaticism of many of these people—especially **Ingrid Newkirk**—is documented with 67 endnotes.

More foundational information follows: “Morality and the Bible” and “Positive and Moral Laws in the Bible.” Most brethren know what moral law is, but the discussion on positive law (its definition and applications) is something that would benefit all of us (195-201). Another area in which we could use more information is “Modernism and Postmodernism’s Effect on Ethics.” These terms are defined and explained—particularly we need to see how our culture has become influenced by postmodernism, which is also the operative philosophy of liberals in the church—that there may be multiple views of truth. **Randy Harris**, co-author of *The Second Incarnation* with **Rubel Shelly** (and speaker at last year’s Spiritual Growth Workshop) admitted to a class of graduate students: “I am a postmodernist” (224).

Having established the foundation of morality, the book now begins to examine various aspects of immorality, beginning with idolatry. Of course, not all idols are like those made out of wood and stone in the Old Testament. Some of the modern-day ones include secularism, materialism, recreation, sexual license, worship of the stars (celebrities), denominationalism, and others. Seemingly equally obvious is that “Murder Is Immoral,” yet our society seems to be tremendously confused in that regard. Besides the definitions of murder that the reader would expect, capital punishment is also included.

In “Gambling Is Immoral” **Don Walker** includes some quotes from our founding fathers that this nation has lost sight of. George Washington, for example, said (rather appropriately): “Gambling is the child of avarice, the brother of iniquity, and the father of mischief” (271). Of course, gambling is a form of covetousness, which is the subject of a later chapter that not only challenges individuals but Christian colleges as well (327-29). “Stealing Is Immoral” also relates to gambling,

since gambling is simply stealing by mutual consent, but it is much broader, since it is possible for man to rob God of both money and time.

Another necessary and helpful chapter is “Profanity and Other Abuses of the Tongue.” We live in a profanity-laden society, one that is full of corrupt communication. Other abuses, however, include lying, gossip, slander, anger, and boasting. A related and later chapter is “Bearing False Witness.” Material from the Old and New Testaments is highlighted, as well as lying with respect to religion.

Another moral issue of any age concerns “Beverage Alcohol and the Recreational Use of Other Drugs.” The reader will learn what is “the most dangerous drug on earth,” according to one drug abuse expert (295), as well as some of the arguments made in a tract by Anheuser-Busch (296). Among the Scriptures reviewed are John 2:1-11 and I Timothy 5:23 (300).

“When Does God Approve of Disobedience to the Civil Government?” Although the answer to this question may seem obvious, one can quickly become confused when various situations present themselves; one section is devoted to: “The Authority of Jesus Versus the Authority of Civil Governments.”

“Dressing Modestly” has been a necessary topic for 40 years; even non-Christians have been upset over recent trends. Referenced in this chapter is a *Reader’s Digest* article from last September, titled “The Jailbait Look Is So Over,” which states:

Parents of teenage girls can breathe a bit easier this season. After years of cropped tops and belly-baring-and-beyond pants, retailers are trying some-thing new: clothes that actually clothe (355).

How ironic that preachers are now getting confirmation from the world in order to convince a few “Christian parents” that the sermons they heard on modesty were right all along! Another similar topic that some brethren have resisted is: “Dancing and Other Lascivious Activities.” The chapter opens with the true story of a tragedy relating to dancing (408-409), but it also contains the sad instance of the way that worldliness has invaded the church with young people “performing” prior to worship, dressed immodestly and moving in a lascivious manner (417). Although the book does not mention this fact, some have now moved such actions *into* the worship under the guise of “interpretive dance.” One wonders what the Head of the church must think to see what human beings have done to it.

Similarly (and unfortunately), the need also exists for information about *pornography*, which has adversely affected the lives of more Christians than one might suspect. The subheadings of this material include “The Presence, The Profitability, The Appeal, The Definition, The Duplicity, and The Poverty of Pornography,” as well as a discussion of its “Progression.”

Observations from one who was greatly affected by it (Ted Bundy) are also included (528-29).

Two chapters consider opposite perspectives of the same point: “Heterosexual Fornication Is Immoral” and “Marital Sex Is Moral.” Both of these titles may seem obvious, but our society ignores the former and occasionally challenges the latter. Therefore, the extremes of Asceticism, the errors of Montanism, and the dictates of the Roman Catholicism, requiring celibacy of some, are examined (442-47).

Over 40 pages of material are devoted to the immorality of “Homosexuality.” Some of the information considers the role that the entertainment media have played in the acceptance of this sin, as well as the pseudo-scientific findings of **Simon LeVay**. A pertinent observation is: If homosexuals are “born that way,” how do we next explain those who are bisexual? Popular figures, such as **Oprah Winfrey** openly promote the sin of homosexuality; she played Ellen’s therapist on the “coming out” episode in 1997, thus contributing to this nation’s DeGeneres-y (478). The impact that this sin is having on religious denominations (Gene Robinson, e.g.) is referenced. A number of attacks have been made against the scriptures in order to justify this perversion. This chapter is well researched (56 endnotes).

On the positive side is: “The Importance of Self-Control in Living a Godly Life,” which contains twelve principles that are necessary in the process of discipleship. Another chapter stresses the scriptural emphasis of providing for those in need.

“Godly Morals and the Practice of Medicine” and “Abortion and Euthanasia Are Immoral” are not unrelated. The first of these assesses to some extent “The Problems That Doctors Face” and “The Need For Christian Doctors.” The second one is 40 pages long and documented with 67 endnotes. **B. J. Clarke** provides a thorough look at both subjects and compares them with what the scriptures teach in Luke 1 and Exodus 21:22-25. Brother Clarke does not sidestep the difficult questions, such as: “What about rape?”; “What about the deformity of the fetus?”; “What if the life of the mother is threatened?” The material in this section alone is worth the price of the book.

Also included is the Bible’s view of church discipline, deception, Biblical characteristics of older women, and “A Review of the Warren-Barnhart Debate,” one that occurred in 1980—and is especially pertinent to much of the content of this book. The 30-page review will be helpful for those not familiar with that debate. *Morals—From God or Man?* may be ordered from *Contending for the Faith*, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383.

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TAKING ANOTHER LOOK AT JOHN 3:16

Bruce R. Curd

Possibly there is no one passage of the entire New Testament that is more frequently tortured, perverted and misinterpreted than John 3:16. It reads: **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”**

Of all the many scholars and preachers and other Christians that we have read and heard on this passage, none, not one, makes any attempt to delve into the text and to explain clearly and precisely what the Savior is teaching. Assuredly, many wonderful and good things are said about this treasured text. Some are:

Martin Luther: “It is the little Bible.”

Guy N. Woods: “It has often been called the Golden Text of the Bible.”

Others: “It contains the sum total of the plan of salvation.” This, however, is patently false.

Of all brethren who I have found set their hands to write a commentary on the fourth gospel, brother Woods has penned some of the richest and best statements on the text this writer has found among us. And, even then, it is very doubtful that the Savior had any of them directly in mind when he spoke.

This lamented brother beautifully wrote, “The blessings it offers are all superlative.” In it we are told of the greatest giver (God); of the greatest gift (his only begotten Son); of the greatest measure (the world); and the greatest future blessing (eternal life). This gifted and talented brother continued with these gems of truth:

It is a refutation of Atheism (it begins with God); of agnosticism (it reveals God), of Calvinism (it extends God’s provisions to all the world, and not to an arbitrarily selected few), of Unitarianism (it establishes the deity of Jesus and shows him to be of the same nature as God), of Oneness Pentecostalism (it demonstrates God and Christ to be separate and distinct persons), of Universalism (it reveals that men will perish who refuse the way of escape) and the doctrine of denominational creeds which allege that Jesus died that God might love us whereas this teaches that Jesus came to the earth and made salvation possible because God loved us. (Romans 5:8-9). (The Gospel According to John, pp. 66, 67).

Woods does not comment on two key phrases at this place, namely, “only begotten Son” and “eternal life,” but he does his usual masterful job with these topics at John 1:14 and John 5:24, respectively, thus exposing the sophistry and perversion of all denominational scholars and preachers, as well as a few mis-

guided brethren who write and presume to translate Holy Writ. Also, in his fine commentary on John, brother **Robert R. Taylor, Jr.**, comes to grips with the Greek term *monogenes* (rendered “only begotten Son”, KJV) and says that it is correctly translated. (Studies in the Gospel of John, p. 14). Still, yet, neither of these superbly talented brothers ever express what, most assuredly, the Master was teaching in John 3:16. This poor writer and preacher would never question the ability and/or honesty of these good brothers, or any other, but they, at least, in this place, are remiss in their comments.

SOME THINGS THE PASSAGE TEACHES AND DOES NOT TEACH

Many who read this text, including preachers, hold that “eternal life here mentioned is identical with salvation which the child of God now enjoys. They claim that one is saved at “the point of faith”, and, therefore, at that moment has eternal life and of course, if such be true, they can never be lost. Such, though, is far far from the meaning of the passage and hundreds of others.

This text concerns all of time and reaches into eternity. On the one hand it speaks of those who will perish at the judgment; on the other, it teaches of those who will receive eternal life at the same time. For the one class it will be the time they “perish” and for the other it will be the time when they are extended life eternal.

But the time when the “perishing” will take place, to those who die in their sins, rebel against God, will be at the last day, when the resurrection and judgment come (Luke 13:3; Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29). Hence, it will be at the same time the Christian will receive eternal life. This verse then contemplates the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment and the last day.

This text teaches against two resurrections a thousand years apart, a theory of premillennial vintage.

Again, it refutes the theory that the dead go immediately to their final destinations, or rewards. Paul, in considering his own demise, wrote,

There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (II Timothy 4:8).

The “crown” is bestowed at the last day and not at the moment of death. John 3:16 teaches the same thing.

Finally, the passage teaches that there is an intermediate state of the dead, where both the righteous and the wicked await the judgment. (Luke 16:19-31).

**NO ONE IS KNOWN WHO MAKES
THE TERM "PERISH" APPLY
TO THE PRESENT**

This scripture teaches that he that **"believeth not shall perish."** See also Mark 16:16. When? At the last day? But what of the Christian (the believer) who is also in view. He will not perish but will receive life eternal.

Again the Savior says that the wicked will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life (Matthew 25:6). Lord, when was it said. It was spoken by Martha when Jesus raised her brother, Lazarus, from he dead, **"In the resurrection at the last day"** (John 11:24).

Clearly, then, John 3:16 affirms that the time when the child of God receives eternal life will be in the resurrection on the last day, and precisely at the same moment the "perishing" ones will be meted out their reward.

This viewpoint coincides with and explains all of the passages which are commonly used to teach that the believer has eternal life at the present time. In 3:15; 16, 36; 5:24; 10:28, et. al. The believer has eternal life in promise, just as the unbeliever perishes in promise now. Such is what our Lord affirms in John 3:16.

**THE GREEK GRAMMAR OF
"SHOULD NOT PERISH" CONSIDERED**

"Should" is frequently a part of the translation of

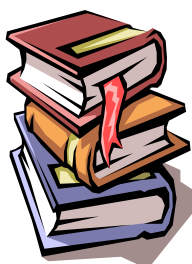
the tense of the verb *mello* which means to be about to do something. The uses of *should* and *would* correspond to those of *shall* and *will*. In our text the word "should" is in the subjunctive mood which expresses doubt or a wish or condition contrary to fact. Examples: "I wish I were a lawyer", or "If I were you, I should go." Moreover, in John 3:16 Jesus used the word "not" which negates the force of *should*. The original reads: "me apoletai alla", (rendered **"should not perish"**, KJV). In the Greek this phrase is second aorist, middle subjunctive, intransitive, of *apollumi*, meaning to destroy. Hence the believer should not be destroyed, but have life eternal, the exact opposite of what will happen to the unbeliever.

Earlier we saw that the verb "should" conveys a doubt, a wish or condition contrary to fact. Thus in John 3:16, the believer may or may not exercise his right as a believer. He has a choice to believe and obey the gospel or else to simply acknowledge the Lord (believe in him as a person) and die lost. (Acts 26:27; James 2:19; John 12:42). See also, John 1:11,12; 20:31).

John 3:16 teaches exactly the same thing but here the unbeliever (the perishing one) is also considered.

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CALVIN'S QUANDARY

Daniel Denham

The French theologian **John Calvin** (A.D. 1509-1564) built the system known as Calvinism on two basic interrelated assumptions. First, he assumed that God maintained complete, active, and sovereign control over even the most trivial of minutia in his government of the Universe. Everything that happens God directly causes to happen. He held to a view of God that portrayed him as a rigid and rigorous micro-managing Deity. Calvin also had a severe turn of mind himself (His classmates dubbed him "The Accusative Case") and ascribed such an attitude to God. This severe view of the divine nature saw a Deity who was just waiting for man to get out of line so that he could punish him. Second, Calvin believed, like his mentor **Augustine of Hippo** (A.D. 354-430), that man was morally, totally depraved from conception (hence hereditary total depravity). The doctrine of original sin was a cornerstone in his view of man, which Calvin came to hold due to his erroneous assumption mentioned earlier relative to the nature of God. If man was totally depraved, then he could do nothing at all to save himself and, by extension, once saved he could not do anything at all to be lost, but would surely persevere in his faith regardless. From these basic assumptions arose the key tenets of the T-U-L- I- P by way of the synod of Dort (A.D. 1618-1619), which formally codified the teachings of Calvin in opposition to Arminianism.

The basic problem of Calvinism and the subsequent quandary in which Calvin and his successors found themselves lies in these two assumptions. If man can do nothing at all to save himself because he is totally depraved (assumption #2), then he has no genuine free will. Without genuine free will he is nothing more than an automaton doing only what he is made to do. If God is the one who makes him do it, then God must be the author of every action in which men engage and this includes sin! Thus, Calvinism implies that God is the active author of sin. He made the Devil and his angels to sin, and he made man to sin. Every evil deed ultimately God willed to occur! If everything happens because God makes it happen (assumption #1), then even sin was actively caused by God who then punishes the sinner who complied with his fiat to sin! Thus, Calvinism in turn implies that God is not really a just God, he is reduced to a meta-physical monster responsible for every evil act and thought that men and angels may commit. Every murder, including Hitler's murder of six million Jews, and every sexual deviancy including in-

cest and pedophilia, God is culpable for as to its causation.

Calvin himself wrestled with the question of free will, but ultimately came down on the side of Augustine's view of depravity that precluded any ability to choose to counter. The result is a tragic doctrine that impugns the character of God and enslaves Calvinism's adherents to a system that corrupts man's understanding of himself and cripples the cultural ethos. **Edward Palmer**, a noted Calvinist, stated that God "has foreordained everything" to such an extent that it includes "the aiming of a finger, the beating of an heart, the laughter of a girl, the mistake of a typist—even sin." The implications of such a doctrine are immense and devastating. The Christian bears no semblance to Calvinism!

Calvinism also cannot provide any effective and compelling answer to atheism's argument from evil. God, according to Calvinism, is the author of evil: so any attempt at an answer from its premises is doomed to failure from the start. Calvinists are forced to talk inanely about "the mystery of suffering," etc. They say that rather than focusing on the pain and evil in the world, men should focus on the good things that God has ordained, which sounds nice on the surface unless one is faced with the anguish of watching a loved one being tortured to death by a sadistic murderer or a child crushed by car driven by a drunkard. Calvinism implies the murderer murders because God makes him do it, and the drunkard and his driving are as much God's handiwork as the lilies of the field and the sparrows of the air. Atheism rejoices at the prospect of confronting the failures of Calvinism.

Calvinism's implication that God is unjust, seen especially in the frequently ignored doctrine of double predestination, also called preterition. Not only are the elect ones individually, unconditionally, and unchangeably predestinated to be saved as per Calvinism, but the non-elect are equally individually, unconditionally, and unchangeably predestinated to be lost! God, according to classic Calvinist teaching, predestinated the non-elect to sin, and to remain in sin, and thus to be forever lost in Hell fire. He would make them sin, and then would punish them for it. This he determined to do before the world even existed. He would elect them to be lost in order to damn them. Calvinists not surprisingly, do not like to talk about this aspect of their view of predestination, which is founded upon the two false assumptions John Calvin made several centuries ago!

Calvinism is a false and pernicious system. Yet some of our brethren have become enamored with its view of salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Let us oppose it with every fiber of our being. It is a monstrous lie against the very nature of God. The

wooden theology of Calvinism feeds the steam of atheism in our nation today!

—607 72nd Street
Newport News, Virginia 23605

THE POPE GOT ONE THING “RIGHT”

Jerry Murrell

Being Pope must be a difficult job. I cannot imagine waking up in the morning thinking that over one billion people accept the fact that I am infallible. As **Pope John Paul II** was the main source of authority in the Roman Catholic Church, all those who have great authority have great pressure placed upon them. Think about the recent **Terri Schaivo** case. Why were there protestors outside the judges’ chambers while they were trying to render verdicts? I submit to you that the vast majority on both sides of the debate were not simply concerned about the outcome of the case for the one individual at the center of it. Most people were protesting because they recognize that in our world, a judge that has the right to decide whether Terri Schaivo lives or dies also has the right to determine whether you live or die.

The Pope has almost as much power in the Roman Catholic Church as a United States Federal District judge has in our present judicial system (I say that with tongue planted only slightly in cheek). Given our postmodern culture, this great power possessed by the Pope must have been a great burden. Imagine the threats and lobbying that he must have endured on all of the “social issues” that divide Americans. Yet, John Paul II did not reverse the Catholic position on subjects like birth control, abortion, homosexuality, and the death penalty. On some of these matters the Bible agrees with the Catholic positions. On others it does not, but regardless of your view, you have to admire his decision to stand firm and not change in the face of pressure from the people who wanted to change the Roman Catholic Church, not to make it more Biblical, but to make it agree with the latest American focus group poll.

One area where the Pope withstood great pressure to change the Roman Catholic Church is the question of whether or not women should serve in the priesthood. The reason that the word “right” is in quotation marks in the title of this article is because the idea of

the Roman Catholic priesthood is foreign to the Bible. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, the priest serves as “the religious mediator between God and man.” This is in spite of the fact that the Bible teaches that there is only one mediator between God and man, and that mediator is Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2:5). They also teach that priests are not to be married. This is not only contrary to scripture, since all Christians are priests (I Peter 2:5, 9), but was also a mark of apostasy that Paul predicted to Timothy (I Timothy 4:1-3).

However, if one understands the term priest as the one who leads the church in its worship, then the Pope got this one right. There has been and will continue to be great pressure on the Roman Catholic Church to admit women into their priesthood. One of the issues that will surely press upon the new Pope is the question of “female ordination” to the Roman Catholic Priesthood. In spite of the mounting pressure on him, on May 22, 1994, Pope John Paul II issued what was called an “apostolic letter.” The document was called “On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone.” He concluded this letter by writing “***I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church’s faithful***” (emphasis in the original document).

In the document, John Paul II cited mostly precedents set by previous Catholic leaders like **Paul VI** instead of scripture. Though the conclusion was correct, he should have cited the apostle Paul’s words to Timothy where he said, “**Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence**” (I Timothy 2:11-12).

The problem that led to this discussion is a lack of understanding concerning Biblical authority. Some women think that if they are not permitted to have authority over a man in religious matters, this premise implies that women are inferior to men. This assump-

tion is not true. Let me mention a few facts about authority in the Lord's church that will help us in this matter. 1. All authority in the church belongs to Christ (Matthew 28:18) and is communicated to us in His written word which will judge us (John 12:48; II Timothy 3:16, 17; James 1:25). Therefore, all authority possessed by mankind in the church is delegated to us from the Christ. 2. No one man possesses any delegated authority over any other person in the Lord's church. This delegated authority was not passed to any one member, preacher, deacon, or elder. However, special authority was delegated to the eldership in order for them scripturally to oversee the flock (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17). However, even that eldership is authorized to act only in areas where God has given them the authority to act—primarily in matters of expediency. For example, they do not have the authority to allow women to preach or otherwise have religious authority over men (I Timothy 2:11-12). 3. A person may be equal in worth and even greater than the person God has placed in authority over him or her. For example, the apostle Paul wrote that Christians were under the authority of Nero (Romans 13), this obviously did not imply that Nero was better than, or more important in God's eyes than any faithful first century Christian. Jesus himself was "subject unto" Mary

and Joseph (Luke 2:51). However, He, as God incarnate, was obviously superior to these two mere humans. *The question of authority is separate from the question of worth.*

Pope John Paul II was another in a long line of Popes which took on the role of the head of the Roman Catholic Church. He like all of these men had feet of clay. He was probably better than most of the men who held that chair. Now the Cardinals have elected someone to be the new head of their Church—**Pope Benedict XVI**. No one will know for sure whether he will measure up to the example of John Paul II or not. No one knows absolutely whether or not he will bow to cultural pressure or stand firm in the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. At this early date in his reign, all indications are that he will not. How grateful we are that the church of Christ already has a head, Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:23). Jesus is not going to die and leave humans to find a replacement for him. Regardless of what this present Pope does or does not do, and no matter what any Popes who are yet to come do or do not do, it is obvious that God's plan is superior to man's.

—1025 Snug Harbor Court
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A GIFT FROM MOTHER

Irene C. Taylor

Each May society pauses on a given Sunday to pay tribute to one of the greatest vocations given to woman: Motherhood. It is fitting to honor godly mothers for, though no religious ceremony is warranted, no human influence has such a far reaching effect as does the influence of Mother. Not only on this day but every day we women should be thankful to God for granting us the privilege of wielding such influence and we should renew our determination to wield that influence for good.

For those whose mothers are still living, thoughts are directed toward the selection of an appropriate gift which adequately expresses the deep love and appreciation felt for Mother. In this article, I would like instead to direct the minds of mothers toward the gifts we should be giving our children.

Ours is the first taste of love our children receive. We have the privilege of teaching them the warmth and security inherent in family love but, more importantly, the value and deep respect which should be directed toward God and his church. An integral part of

real love is an attitude of obedience. Obedience to God is not merely doing what we understand nor is it doing what is convenient. It is, rather, recognizing that God is the Supreme Authority. Ours is not to question nor change, but to obey. Think of the havoc which would be eliminated today if this concept had been instilled more carefully by mothers in the hearts of their children.

Mothers need to give their children a concept of self-worth and a respect for the worth of others. We have witnessed a generation instilled with the fallacy of evolution and we are reaping the end result—a low regard for human life. Self-worth permits one to recognize his/her abilities without being boastfully proud. It is just as wrong to underestimate one's talents (thus excusing oneself from becoming involved) as it is to think no one else is capable of doing a task right! It is mother who trains the child toward independence as an adult. Someone has said a successful mother is one who trains so well she is out of a job! We greatly handicap our children when we do not teach them to make

intelligent decisions for themselves and do everything for them. Children learn adult skills by practice. Sure they will make mistakes but they will profit by them if we guide rather than dictate. Sharing responsibility prepares our children for a stable adult life. Insist they stick with a job until it is complete and give them the gift of pride in a job well done.

Beginning early in the child's life, instill the fact that real happiness comes from serving God in God's way. It is impossible to begin too early molding and shaping the child's life toward becoming a Christian. Both by example and word, show them the beauty of serving. Christianity is a life of service to others. Jesus' life on earth was one of service. He took the **"form of a servant"** (Philippians 2:7). He taught the way to greatness was the road of service (Mark 9:35; 10:43). Yet today we see all too often an attitude that rejects such service. We do not wish to be inconvenienced in order to accommodate others. This attitude is not compatible with the example set by Jesus.

There is a crying need for change in today's world, yea, even in the church. But the change needed is not the kind being effected in too many circles. We need to be training our young men to be gospel preachers and teachers and God-approved elders with the courage to stand for the truth. Our daughters need to be taught to encourage and support those gospel preachers and godly elders. It grieves me no little to note the number of preachers' wives who beg their husbands to quit preaching, who resent being a preacher's wife, who complain of being left alone at times or having to adjust personal plans because of a church matter. We teach our children to resent being a part of the preacher's family by our attitude. Mothers discourage their sons from being preachers and their daughters from marrying preachers because they will not be making as much money as in other vocations. Instead of instilling these wrong concepts in our children, let us determine to give them the gift of contentment. Teach our children to be proud of Daddy's work as a preacher and help them desire to be useful to the church as adults. *Your attitude will determine their attitude to a great extent!* Help them see that the highest form of pleasure is not found in secular activities.

We have too many bench-warming Christians today. Give your children the desire to be an asset to the church. There is a crying need for sound Bible class teachers. Too much of what is taught in many classes today is foreign to the Bible. Compromise erases the distinction by which we were once known. Those who were once encouraged to stand fast are now often ridiculed for so doing. Give them the gift of courage and help them see the wrong where it exists.

We mothers must more seriously treasure our God-given role. The home and motherhood are under fierce attack today, of that no one surely will deny. Instead of viewing our role as confinement, we should

see it for what it is: a challenging opportunity. In what other career can we mold and train tomorrow's leaders to be God-fearing? In what other role can our work result in the solution to the problems facing the church? the community? the nation? the world? Though we have not been placed in the role of church leadership and public preaching, we have been given a very vital role in God's work on earth! It is our privilege and responsibility to train those future leaders and preachers. We but need to arise to our task instead of clamoring for roles not intended for us to fill.

Ezekiel declares, **"...as is the mother so is her daughter."** A careful study of Israelite history reveals the wisdom inherent in this proclamation. Jezebels aren't likely to rear Marys and Elizabeths—or Josephs or Timothys! We need to teach our daughters and sons the beauty and necessity of purity of life and the virtue of modesty in deed and dress. The double standard too often practiced not only creates resentment but sparks outright problems. We pride ourselves in thinking we allow no one to tell us what to do. We are wrong. The question is: is it God or Satan who dictates our standards? Give your son and daughter the gift of virtue. This is a gift too many of us have failed to give.

If the gift of love, proper attitudes and attributes is given to our children, it will return a thousand fold. We will know the happiness generated from observing a well-adjusted, productive Christian young person who will make a significant contribution to the church and community. What better gift could any Christian mother wish for Mother's Day? We may give without loving but we cannot love without giving. If we will but give the proper gifts to our children, we shall reap bountifully in return.

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THE CROSS OF CONTRITION

Annette B. Cates

Many sermons have been preached on “The Three Crosses.” Typically, each cross on Calvary represents an aspect of sin. Most have said that they are “the cross of rebellion,” the cross of repentance,” and “the cross of innocence.” Another way of putting it is that one person died in sin, one to sin, and the third Christ, for sin. I would like to focus on the second of these crosses from a slightly different angle—that of contrition, a part of repentance.

Contrition is an attitude of a heart that is broken in sorrow by a wrong that one has done. It is a recognition that there is a price to be paid for actions, and a willingness to follow through in order to make things right. One cannot repent if there is no contrition. While one of the malefactors on the crosses railed on Jesus, the other rebuked him, **“Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds....”** He turned to Jesus and asked that he remember him when he came into his kingdom (Luke 23:40-42). He acknowledged his sin, accepted the penalty, and asked for mercy and forgiveness.

The importance of a contrite spirit can be seen in the Old Testament. In Psalm 34:18, David wrote that the Lord is near to those who have a contrite heart. In a prayer for remission of his sins, he also stated, **“a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise”** (Psalm 51:17). *The Pulpit Commentary* calls Psalm 51 “the penitent’s prayer book.” David had sinned grievously and openly. In this psalm, David first expressed his despair over his sin, then looked to God in faith that he would pardon him,

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit (Psalm 51:10-12).

Isaiah also wrote that those with a contrite heart are the ones that are his and will dwell with him in eternity (Isaiah 57:15; 66:2).

The principle of a contrite heart carries over into the New Testament. The beatitudes are a catalog of traits that describe contrition: **“Blessed are the poor in spirit... they that mourn... the meek... they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness... the merciful... the pure in heart... the peacemakers... the persecuted...”** (Matthew 5:3-11). Fur-

ther, Jesus told of two men who went to the temple to pray. One stood and **“prayed thus with himself** [emphasis abc]” that he was so much better than others, and told God of all of his good works. The other stood afar off, was too humble to even look toward heaven as he prayed, and asked, **“God be merciful unto me a sinner.”** Jesus said, **“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”** (Luke 18:10-14).

God does not want and cannot use a person who is self-willed, self-exalted, and stubborn before Him and others. He desires those whose hearts are tender and obedient to his will. These are the people who will step forward to bury the old man of sin in order to arise and walk in a new way of life (Romans 6:3-8). Sin no longer has dominion over the obedient (Romans 6:9). Such an individual admits when he/she has done wrong. He is willing to say, “I’m sorry. Please forgive me.” Like the crowd gathered on that Pentecost following the crucifixion and resurrection, upon recognizing our sins, regardless of where we are along the way, we will gladly receive the word, and say, “What shall we do?” (Acts 2:37-41).

An attitude of contrition impacts one’s life positively, even beyond the blessing of eternal salvation. All of our interpersonal relationships would be better if we could deal with one another in such a gentle manner as characterizes contrition. How many marriages and families would be happier if the ones involved would say, “I’m sorry.”? Friendships would be mended when someone steps up to smooth over disagreements. Such an attitude would have an effect in the workplace, possibly even advancing careers. Non-Christians would note the difference and be influenced toward imitating, even following a better way of dealing with others.

We might ask ourselves, “What is MY attitude?” We choose whether to bear the cross of contrition or not. There is no sin so vile that God will not hear the cry of contrition and forgive those who come to him in humble penitence and obedience. God gave us his word on it.

—9194 Lakeside Drive
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The Last Word...

The Fallacy of Drawing The Wrong Conclusion

Kent Bailey

New Testament Christianity is a religion that both recognizes and respects the principles of valid reasoning. Numerous passages set forth in the scriptures indicate that one must “think straight” in order to draw proper conclusions in our study of the Bible:

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (I Thessalonians 5:21).

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15).

One cannot prove the validity of any proposition, reason correctly, and properly handle the scriptures without recognizing the value of logical thinking. Many sincere individuals have drawn false conclusions regarding their study of the scriptures not due to the fact that they lacked in diligence with regards to the amount of both time and effort, but rather due to incorrect reasoning. They did not recognize the importance of the law of rationality, or the laws of thought; therefore, did not consider all of the evidence prior to drawing a conclusion, or perhaps committed some other logical fallacy. Although it is indeed crucial that we take great care not to be “ever learning” yet “never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,” it still nonetheless important that we take sufficient time to carefully consider all of the evidence and reason correctly from such in the study of any issue.

It is indeed possible to build an elaborate argument, reason correctly regarding the premises, then draw a conclusion that is totally unrelated to the premises. It is therefore crucial that we not only carefully consider the premises in a particular argument, but that we also give careful consideration as to whether or not the conclusion is properly warranted by the premises. Often times those who have made the best of a bad case prove the wrong conclusion and then leave individuals to imagine, in a confused sort of way, that they have established their case. I recently read about an individual using this particular fallacy of thought in a court of law. He had been charged with the crime of theft on the evidence of three witnesses; he proposed to call thirty witnesses in his defense who had not seen

him commit the crime!

Baptist preachers may quote forty passages of scripture regarding the essential nature of faith relative to salvation from past alien sins. However, when they conclude based upon such a premise that water baptism to penitent believers is not unto the remission of sins, they have committed the fallacy of drawing the wrong conclusion. Indeed, one may with proper warrant draw the conclusion that, based upon New Testament teaching, the element of faith is essential to salvation; however to draw conclusions regarding the design of baptism we must ascertain what the New Testament teaches regarding baptism. Just as the New Testament teaches that faith is necessary for salvation it also teaches that baptism is also essential.

Sincere, well-intentioned brethren at times commit this same fallacy in other areas. Some reason that recreation is a good wholesome activity. They also rec-

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ognize that as individual Christians we have the right to provide such for our family and friends. They, however commit the fallacy of drawing the wrong conclusion from these premises when they assume that the local church has scriptural warrant to provide such.

Although it is indeed the case that there are some areas where the local church is authorized to engage in the same area of work as the individual Christian, it is not the case that such is authorized in all areas. The basic principle that we need to remember regarding individual action and church action is scripturally set forth as follows: *All God given obligations that exist upon the basis of one's being a Christian, and that*

are equally related to all Christians also apply to the local church. Recreation does not exist as a God-given obligation because of one's being a Christian. Such has no equal relationship to all Christians.

Therefore, recreation is not an area of activity that also applies to the local church.

Let us always take great care in our study of the scriptures by drawing proper conclusions as warranted by the evidence.

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Evansville-West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, evangelist.

-Louisiana-

Chalmette-Church of Christ, 200 Delaronde St., Chalmette, LA 70044. Mark Lance, evangelist, (504) 279-9438.

-Massachusetts-

Chicopee-Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive; Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, evangelist.

-Michigan-

Garden City-Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Dan Goddard, evangelist. (734) 422-8660. www.garden-city-coc.org

-North Carolina-

Rocky Mount-Scheffield Drive Church of Christ, 3309 Scheffield Dr., Rocky Mount, NC 27802 (252) 937-7997.

-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-

Memphis-Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. (901) 751-2444, Barry Grider, evangelist.

-Texas-

Houston area-Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, (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

Hubbard-105 NE 6th St., Hubbard, TX 76648, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Delbert J. Goines, evangelist; djgoines@writeme.com.

Huntsville-1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. Huntsville, TX 77320. Sun. 9, 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (936) 438-8202.

Hurst-Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, Hurst, TX 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. (817) 282-3239, Toney Smith and Dan Flournoy, evangelists.

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. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Lynn Parker, evangelist. (830) 625-9367. www.nbchurchofchrist.com.

Richwood-1600 Brazosport, Richwood, TX. Sun. 9:30; 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (979) 265-4256.

Roanoke-Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm. (817) 491-2388.

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

-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., Tel. (307) 635-2482. evangelist: Tim Cozad.

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