

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

THE NEW FACE OF THE CHURCH

GLENN L. WALLACE

(DELIVERED AT PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY LECTURES APRIL 20, 1970)

A recent issue of *U. S. News and World Report* has an article titled: "The Churches are Worried." The author reveals that membership in Protestant churches is declining and that the financial programs are in trouble. His conclusion is pointed out in these words: "At the present time the liberal bodies are functioning as way stations for those who are moving away from orthodoxy" (March 23, 1970).

It is no secret that the churches of Christ, we of the restoration heritage, are also in trouble. We are facing serious problems and the drop-outs are numerous. We must, with courage, look at the problems and seek a solution.

We have had our problems in the past over many questions. Our differences have been over cups, literature, colleges, classes, located preachers, and cooperation. Always in the past we have faced one another with an open Bible and we have sought the answer from the Scriptures. Each group was willing to open the Bible and study. There is hope for a people who will do this.

Today we live in a psychedelic world of emotionalism, existentialism, private interpretation, and individual direction. In this time of emphasis upon the emotions of man we are finding it increasingly difficult to communicate with one another. We have a generation who has forgotten the motto:

"Speak where the Bible speaks—silent where the Bible is silent." We have a growing number of theologians who care little for what the Bible says and they are making it clear that they believe that the early Christians were simply a misguided sect and the founders of a mere denomination.

The situation that faces us today can be summarized in the following words: We have a loose, compromising attitude toward the Bible. With some it is only a partial rejection; with others, an effort is being made to cut us away from all Biblical authority. It is an effort to downgrade the Scriptures and make them a set of broad guide lines that can become relevant and adaptable to a changing world. Situations are not the same, they say, so "situation ethics" has found a place among us.

We are faced with a spirit of ecumenism. The Pope's council has had more effect than many of us wish to admit. We are found equating the Church that Jesus built with any and all denominations. We are accepting the error of "fellowship without endorsement."

There is a definite move among us to revamp and restructure the church. The Church is being called "the establishment," and other terms of derision. Even force and violent protests are being advocated to reach such ends. The

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Single Print Subs: One Year, \$25.00; Two Years, \$45.00.

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

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

Editorial...

GLENN WALLACE'S FRONT PAGE ARTICLE

At this writing brother Wallace's article is 44 years old. I received my copy of it directly from him not long after he had put it into tract form. As is clear from his article, vigilant men of biblical faith in the Lord's church who believed and practiced the directive of Jude 3, clearly saw the inroads false teachers were making in the Lord's church at that time and for a number of years before Wallace delivered his Pepperdine University (P.U.) lecture. Today P.U. would never allow such a stalwart of the faith as was brother Wallace to deliver this kind of lecture on their campus.

It is accurate to say that for well over half a century the Lord's church has been moving away from its New Testament moorings. And, as the rock of apostasy gained speed over the years as it rolled, tumbled, and bounded down the mountain side toward the swamp of total apostasy at the bottom, one interesting thing that stands out in Wallace's article are the quotes from heretical teachers in the church at the time. They obviously saw their work growing and flourishing in the Lord's church in the years following 1970. They knew it would be carried on through the younger church members of that time. These same people make up the 60s and beyond age group in the church today. And, I have fought their devilish doctrines from my late teens in the mid 1960s until now. Moreover, I am persuaded until I die or am unable to fight any longer my opposition to them will continue. It is strange that many of those in 1970 who supposedly were grounded in the faith refused to see what such "dyed in the wool" apostates of that time could clearly see regarding the direction the Lord's church was going.

Over the intervening 44 years since brother Wallace delivered his lecture, false doctrine has opposed and corrupted every New Testament identifying mark of the church. Of course, it was and is done by attacking the authority of the Bible, its right division, and the way to ascertain our Lord's authority for our actions (Mat. 28:18; Col. 3:17; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17; Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 2 Cor. 5:17; John 12:48). Today, many who claim to be a friend of God and His Word only give "lip service" to the necessity of having Bible authority for all they believe and practice or they repudiate it out right. It is one thing to teach the truth concerning Biblical hermeneutics, it is quite another matter to consistently and with regularity in all things practice it.

In 1970, few thought that marriage, divorce, and remarriage would create the storm that it has from the mid-1970s to the present. In 1970, there were still three years remaining before the U. S. Supreme Court would make abortion legal. And, living together without benefit of marriage was still a strange thing to most of the nation. Now we must prepare ourselves for a hostile civil government that is fundamentally secular and ready to intervene on the side of immorality by championing, in the name of "civil rights," homosexuality and threatening

(Editorial—Continued on Bottom of Page 12)

LONE STAR BIBLE CAMP

July 20-25, 2014



ABOUT LONE STAR BIBLE CAMP

The Lone Star Bible Camp is located 4 miles north of Bellville, Texas and 12 miles south of Brenham, Texas on Hwy 36 N. The Lone Star Bible Camp uses the facilities of Woodmen of the World. This is a beautiful 66 acre campground with a 10 acre lake located in the rolling Texas hills. We emphasize Bible study, fellowship, edification and spiritual development. Bible classes and devotionals will be conducted everyday and the week will culminate in a group review of the material studied. The Lone Star Bible Camp is staffed by the Fish Hatchery Road Church of Christ, Huntsville, TX and the Spring Church of Christ, Spring, TX .

VARIOUS ACTIVITIES PROVIDED

The Lone Star Bible Camp offers opportunities for Bible classes, physical recreation, and guidance from a faithful and experienced camp staff. There is a dining hall and an up-to-date kitchen with an experienced kitchen staff. There are two large air conditioned dormitories and a covered pavilion housing a full court basketball and volleyball area. Also available are 3 fishing docks, paddle boats, and canoes. This shaded campground offers many nature trails for hiking. In keeping with biblical modesty, all involved in the camp have a dress code by which they must abide.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Our study theme for the 2014 camp session is: Practical Christian Living from the book of James. All involved with The Lone Star Bible Camp invite and urge you to send your children, grandchildren, or other children to join us for a week of Bible study, fellowship, and fun. I have the privilege and responsibility of serving as the camp director and I extend my personal invitation to you to be a part of this Christian endeavor. It is The Lone Star Bible Camp staff's desire and prayer to assist parents, grandparents, and other child care providers in spiritually molding our children now and for the future.

Camp Director: *Bruce Stulting*

For applications visit: www.lonestarbiblecamp.com or phone: (936) 581-5164 or (936) 581-4346

Registration Deadline: June 15, 2014

(After this date there will be a \$5.00 fee and campers will be accepted based on availability)

(Continued from page 1)

doctrine of the pulpit is under fire. The worship program is being attacked; the Lord's Supper is set up as a "smorgasbord"—come and get it as you feel like it. The organization of the Church is being endangered by powerful extra organizations that are privately financed.

This new move among us finds its strength in those who downgrade the church and ignore and ridicule the pioneers who brought the Truth to us out of the theological confusion of the past. We have those who urge us to turn our faces "toward Antioch and not Jerusalem." We are swamped with the schemes of those who would bury the "faith once delivered" in the dust of modern thought and present day religious fads.

The move has been, for a time, underground. It has worked in cell groups, home Bible classes, fellowship hours, and private meetings where the seeds of unrest have been planted. It has its leading theologians, many of whom have never preached under ordinary circumstances, having come from graduate school into a field where they can see nothing but reform. Some are but hangers-on. These hope to change the direction of the rebels and lead them back into the fold.

The movement has several voices. One, a magazine called *Mission*, gives literary and intellectual assent to the reconstruction of the entire brotherhood.

In 1967, Leroy Garrett of the extreme radical left wing of the brotherhood, reported on a meeting of Campus Evangelism in Dallas, Texas, at the Baker hotel. He wrote:

"More than 300 church of Christ young people were there and my immediate impression was that I was beholding the New Face Of The Church Of Christ. The old church of Christ orthodoxy is dying—a new brotherhood is emerging. The daring young princes among us have crossed their Rubicon—they have set their faces toward Antioch rather than Jerusalem." (*Restoration Review*, Jan. 1967)

The article written in 1967 seems now almost like a prophecy of what we are looking upon in 1970. The New Face of the Church is being sketched in many places and in many ways. Some are knowingly contributing to the destruction of Truth; others are ignorant of that which really faces the brotherhood in the decade of the seventies.

WE ARE GIVING OUR BLESSING TO PERMISSIVENESS IN MORALS

Immorality is being overlooked and more and more sin is being toned down to a mere whisper against the offenders. Ugly, sly, and sarcastic techniques are being used to upgrade the new morality. Slurs and innuendoes are hurled in youth meetings and some of the modern "love feasts." If some knew what was really taking place in some of the youth meetings they would stop them immediately. Samples of this type of propaganda are offered below.

"Are you going to church more and enjoying it less?"

This is a bit of humorous sarcasm against "the establishment" or the Church as we have known it. "A funny thing happened to me on the way to heaven." Here we have many people and many divine commands held up to ridicule. A prize was offered in *GO*, the voice of Campus Evangelism, for the best article on "the establishment." This was to ridicule the Church as we have known it. A recent issue of *Mission Messenger* wrote off our forefathers and the restoration movement in these words: "In a frontier culture, uneducated and illiterate, possessed of quick tempers and touchy pride, the traditions of our brotherhood were set." (*Mission Messenger* Jan. 8, 1970) [Note: It was actually November 1969—DPB, Editor]

In 1933 Eleanor Roosevelt urged young American youth to learn how to drink properly. The National Council of Churches has the philosophy that each should make up his own mind as to what is right in each situation. BUT, in 1970, a gospel preacher among us urges us: "Learn not to judge those who drink—as long as they know when to stop."

The term sickness is more and more being applied to all sinners. Alcoholics are sick, they tell us, not sinners. Homosexuals are sick and not sinners. Easy divorce, permissiveness in all morals leaves us with sin being merely a dirty word.

WE ARE FACED WITH MOVE TO DEBUNK THE BIBLE

The modern Holy Spirit issue among us is not of real concern to many of the more liberal element. They couldn't care less about the Holy Spirit. To them the theory is a way to be free from the authority of the Scriptures. They hate the idea of being fenced in by the Bible. A speaker at a college lectureship a few years ago said: "We must not lapse again into the error of putting the Bible ahead of Christ" (A.C. Lectures, 1966, page 16). Another shouted: "Our religion is not a religion of the book" (A.C. Lectures, 1966, page 14).

These men find in the seclusion of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit doctrine, that they can completely reject Biblical authority. Each man has the voice of God in himself.

Many efforts to downgrade the Bible are in evidence today. The most glaring ones have come in some of the Campus Evangelism meetings. Campus Evangelism as an organization has been largely aided by college teachers. In a Los Angeles meeting, at a home gathering in the yard of a prominent Hollywood entertainer, a young man gave his testimony. He told how that when he talked, God was talking through him. He reminded his audience that when God told him to hush, God would close his mouth. Just as expected, in the middle of his infantile talking about how much he loves Jesus, he closed his mouth and stared up at the heavens. A hush fell over the audience and many were amazed at how God can use men (?). You see, they felt God spoke through him and closed his mouth.

We have watered down the Bible and made it difficult to offer proof of anything by our cheap and vulgar translations of the Scriptures. Two modern translations are responsible for much of the confusion among our youth. The *T.E.V. (Today's English Version—Editor)* makes Paul teach the doctrine of faith only in Romans 1:16-17; 3:28. Only Martin Luther was so bold as this latter day reformer. Phillips, who is widely read, has Paul saying that “tongues are a sign of God’s power to those who already believe.” All know that Paul said the very opposite. Phillips says Paul must have had a slip of the pen. Most of us know whose pen slipped. Is it any wonder that you have tongue talking, spiritual séances, and holy roller episodes? Give people Phillips and they are on the way to Pentecostalism.

WE FACE TODAY, AN EMOTIONAL AND HYPNOTIC TYPE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

We have our disciples of the existentialist way of life—God in each man and each man can find God in his own experience. We have people who are reaching for the “turn on valve.” Weird experiences are being produced. Hand-holding, lights out, a flickering candle, a burning cross, a constant chant or loud singing; all this will finally send one into a state of self-hypnosis in which one can and does see and do strange things. Shouting, whirling and pounding in the name of religion takes the participants on a “trip.”

LSD and other related drugs can send one on a similar trip. These spiritual séances of hand clapping, crying, praying under weird circumstances can produce what psychologists have long known and Pentecostals have long capitalized upon.

John Banks of Fresno, California tells in his book on the Holy Spirit about such experiences among the Indians of the Crow tribe. They hand suspended in agony until they get their “mana.”

The Comanche rubs cow dung into new wounds in his chest and with a self induced fever, he prays until he gets his “mana.” The Methodists in their early history in America worked on this self-hypnosis trip and later the Holy Rollers came to bat. We are a little late in this game. (John Banks, *Holy Spirit Lessons*).

WE ARE TRYING TO MOVE OUR PEOPLE INTO THE SOCIAL GOSPEL ARENA

We are being challenged to enter the poverty struggle and go where the action is. We have been found in “half-way houses” and the attempts to rebuild the slums. We are being thrust into the Civil Rights battle and are asked to move our people into the field of social legislation.

“The Church Of Christ Starts To Change Racial Policies.” This was a headline in the Los Angeles Times. The author is quoted: “If we continue to be the citadel of the status quo, we have troubles.” (*Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 1968)

The author was Prentice Meador, a San Fernando minister.

At the 1969 lectureship at Pepperdine College, several speakers warned us of impending trouble. “Churches of Christ are sitting on a powder keg” said one man and another warned: “We have created and maintained black churches by paternalistic actions.”

As we view the calm and sacrificial work of such men as A. M. Burton who gave thousands of dollars to bring the gospel to black people, we are made to think that we need more “paternalistic actions.” Such greats as Marshall Keeble are being called Uncle Toms by the revolutionary speakers, both black and white. God give us more Uncle Toms.

A meeting of evangelists was jolted by the charges of a New York College teacher who warned the people of the churches to stay out of social gospel crusading. The professor of social philosophy was quoted:

Christian ministers must stick to their business of preaching the gospel of salvation from sin instead of dissipating their energies at tasks in which they have no business or special abilities (*Christianity Today*, July 7, 1967).

Many of us have been sowing the seeds of hate and division in matters of racial problems by our delving into social matters, economic, and political problems. We would do well to leave these things to politicians.

THE CHURCH IS CEASING TO BE THE CHURCH AND BECOMING A SIDELINE

Campus Evangelism, along with other nationwide projects, is a prime example of the church being sidetracked. This college group moves from one eldership to another with ease and grace of people who know where they are going. It has its own public relations man who recently in a left wing radical political paper in Texas, made a vicious attack upon one of our Christian Colleges. It has a private source of income from a private foundation. It publishes its own paper, called *GO*. It fosters unrest, and plants the seeds of rebellion, operating in cell groups and refuses in many places to even acknowledge the name of Christ’s church. A sample of the revolutionary philosophy accepted by this organization is recorded in a recent issue of that paper, *GO*.

Fundamental Christian honesty and our own evaluation compel us to believe that Christian colleges have little choice but to become responsive to the urgent needs that relate to students. Time honored concepts need immediate study. Those mentioned included: *in loco-parentis* (in the place of parents—**Editor**); attendance at a private college is a *privilege* not a *right*; (how does this hit those who have given your money to provide a Christian privilege—Wallace?) students have the *right* to participate in the *policies* and *rules*; (here comes Berkley and Santa Barbara right out of Campus Evangelism—Wallace) and inter-racial dating is a matter that needs administrative attention (So, the social life of your child is to be directed by this policy—Wallace).

Students can make constructive contributions in re-examina-

tion of the role of a Christian College; the *value* and *forms* of long standing *religious traditions*; (what are they?—Wallace) all *rules* and *regulations*; ways for providing for constructivism on the campus.” We are then told: “they (the youth) are impatient with our *hypocrisy*, injustice, and their growing concern is with *organized religion*. OFTEN WILLING to work within the structure, they are willing to *demand, demonstrate* and *force* concessions when necessary. (Prentice Meador and Jennings Davis Jr., *GO*, 1969).

We have a call for force, demands, demonstrations to bring about the change of the college structure and in the end what they call religious traditions of our brethren. Revolution is coming to our campuses and to our pews and it is being aided by Campus Evangelism.

Campus Evangelism in Santa Barbara and at the Irvine Campus in California, operated under the name “Campus Evangelism.” They say that youth would be repelled by the name of Christ or the idea of a church. These groups are independent of the church; they have their own boards and yet they solicit money from congregations for their support. A speaker at a Campus Evangelism rally told the audience of youth: “We must recruit, train, establish cells, and infiltrate society” (See *GO*, December 1969). Here we have an outside organization, seeking only money from that which it seeks to destroy, crying out for students to infiltrate and divide the body of Christ.

WE HAVE A PULPIT THAT PRESENTS A FACELESS CHRIST OF UNCERTAINTY

Carl Ketcherside, of the left wing radicals, writes in *Mission Messenger* under the heading of “The Fading Fear.” He says certain ones of us have come to terms with the Christian Church that the instrument will not be a test of fellowship. He charged that the administration at Pepperdine College had made such an agreement. He says there are teachers at A.C.C. (Abilene Christian College, now Abilene Christian University—Editor) who dare not speak out on this issue of the instrument. They are in a difficult position, their money and jobs are at stake. We would hope this is not true but if I were a teacher in any place I would let my voice be heard so that even Carl Ketcherside could hear it. This widely circulated charge should be answered by Christian schools (See *Mission Messenger*, Nov. 1969).

Evidence of a sad state of affairs among us is seen in a report from a left wing magazine that reads:

The east Maple Street church of Christ, Hartford, Ill., held a forum drawing front rank men from the Disciples, Christian Church and churches of Christ. The 1969 forum had five sessions. Subjects discussed: Is the gift of tongues available today? Affirmative, Paul Logue, elder of the Central church of Christ, St. Louis, Mo. The negative was by a Christian Church preacher. Is the theory of evolution incompatible with the Bible? Defending evolution, Neal Buffaloe, elder in a Conway, Ark. church of Christ and the negative was by a Christian church preacher (*Mission Messenger*, Dec. 1969).

Mission magazine, edited by Dr. Roy Bowen Ward, gave the award for the outstanding article of the year, to Dr. Neal Buffaloe, Conway, Ark., for his article defending evolution as opposed to the Genesis record.

A report in *Christianity Today* tells us of the way the wind blows in Texas. Ron Durham, a recent graduate of A.C.C. reports on the lectureship at the college. He is placed under the heading, “Rainbow Over Abilene.”

While lectureship space was allowed for hard-liners who left the impression that heaven is closed to those of different views, the biggest crowds went to hear younger men *score* the churches for that kind of thinking (*Christianity Today*, March 27, 1970).

Many men warned that some of these younger men would advocate such a philosophy as this reporter says they did. We hope that those younger men who advocated a line of such liberal fellowship with all denominations, so long as men profess faith in Christ, who find the instrument a product of our illiterate frontier culture, that these men will not find such a lovely rainbow over Abilene when they return to the hill. There are those who would more aptly put it: a cloud hangs over Abilene.

WHY ARE WE AT THIS PLACE IN OUR HISTORY?

We are the products of our congregations. Dedicated elders should and must take things in hand even if it means the loss of some rabble-rousers. Yet, when we have self-appointed elders who depose elders, with young men in their 30's taking over, it is a sad day for many of us. We have too long sat by and been spoon fed a diet of denominational theories, sectarian youth programs, revolution, liberal philosophy, and all the evils of the ecumenical movement until we are almost helpless to stop the revolt.

We are the products of what we read. The bookshelves of “our” Bible stores are lined with Elton Trueblood, a Quaker preacher and his philosophy. Keith Miller and his *Taste of New Wine* is even used in some youth meetings. *The Cross and the Switchblade* is offered in Bible classes as good reading matter. The latter is a story of a Holy Roller preacher and his work in the slums of a great city. And now, we will have one of our own (Pat Boone, who left the Lord's church not long thereafter—Editor) to portray this story on the silver screen. If one can portray the life of a Holy Roller preacher on the screen, then could he as well portray the Pope, with his crown and purple robes? What is the difference? Even in the entertainment field, Christians should have a little respect for God.

The mails are flooded today with *Integrity* and *Mission* as well as the granddaddy of *Mission*, the *Mission Messenger*. Then there are *GO* and other revolutionary sheets that can be had for the asking.

A March issue of a magazine called *Testimony*, (Rose-

mead, CA, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1970) published by the Pentecostals, is being freely circulated among some of us. It has the pictures of three men and their families, along with their testimony. It reveals how they have received the “baptism of the Holy Ghost and now speak in tongues.” Pat Boone, who a few months appeared on Oral Roberts’ show, says: “One year ago I received the baptism and now speak in tongues.” Ben Franklin allows as how the church in Downey, CA once offered a \$1,000.00 reward to Oral Roberts for proof of a genuine miracle, and now, he says, miracles are happening in the church of Christ.

I was in the Downey meeting when the reward was offered and Oral Roberts did not try to claim it. I now offer \$2,000.00 to Ben Franklin for proof of a miracle, supported by the testimony of a qualified member of the medical society of San Diego, if he can prove a miracle. Maybe Ben can get what Oral Roberts could not have. We shall see.

We are the products of our preachers. Our colleges have a tremendous responsibility in this matter. We send them our youth in response to their call. They send their brightest boys to the centers of atheism and unbelief. Most of these young men have never preached and know but little of what it takes to build the church and defend the Truth. They return to us speaking a language not found in the New Testament. We love our Christian colleges, but when there are teachers who teach evolution; when they foster the ecumenical doctrine of fellowship; when they will not combat the evils of the Holy Spirit error—it is time for these teachers to answer to the men who send their sons and daughters. And they will answer. Dedicated parents will not send their children to places where they will be led to revolt against the church.

We have heard much about academic freedom and in-

tellectual honesty. It is also true that a preacher or teacher who receives money from a group of people who expect that certain things shall be taught, and the receiver is unwilling to teach the position expected of him, this man is neither honest nor does he represent any kind of freedom. If he cannot comply, he should quit. Our colleges can assume their share of blame for the confusion, and the watered-down theology that is being proclaimed today (See Carl Ketcherside, *Mission Messenger*, April 1970).

Are we as Christians going to debunk the Bible, reject its authority and retreat into the dark ages? Must we shelve the apostolic authority and leadership and accept the theories of the ecumenical age? Are we going to lay down and play dead before the onrush of the revolutionaries among us? Or, will we stand up and fight and cast them out of the temple, back into the sectarian crowd from which they are getting their theories and experiences?

We have lived through persecution, denominational attacks, terror, and atheism. Once more we are facing a battle and from within — “from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things—” (Acts 20:30). Give these men no place in our pulpits. Make no room for them in Christian journals and give them no greeting (2 John 10). I am persuaded that there are thousands who are not ready to surrender to the New Face of the Church. (Note: Some statements about Campus Evangelism are given in present tense, though this movement is supposed to be dead; but some feel it has merely gone underground and its promoters will make other moves to captivate young people’s minds and restructure the church.—College Lectureship Book Editor)

—Deceased



EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Thomas B. Warren

There are those today who claim that the Bible teaches that there are Christians who are not members of the church of Christ. But I have no hesitation in affirming that the Bible teaches that every person who is a Christian is a member of the church of Christ. This means, obviously, that I am affirming that the Bible teaches that there are no Christians who are not members of the church of Christ. The church of Christ is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Co. 1:18). The saved are those who have been reconciled unto God, and those who have been reconciled unto God are members of the body (church) of Christ (Eph. 2:13-18). The matter is really just that simple, but in the light of the importance of the matter, let us say a bit more about it.

The Bible teaches that salvation is in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10). To be in Christ is to be in His church (Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Cor. 12:13; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 20:28; 2:38; Eph. 1:7). The Bible teaches that it is impossible for one to “cross the line” into salvation without “cross-

ing the line” into Christ. The Bible also teaches that it is impossible for one to “cross the line” into Christ without “crossing the line” into the church.

The crucial relation of the church to salvation is seen in the statement, “**And the Lord added** [Greek imperfect “was adding”] **to the church daily such as should be saved**” (Acts 2:47). *The English Revised Version*, in an excellent treatment, translates Acts 2:47 in this way: “**And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved**” (Geek present participle). In short, the Bible teaches that there are no Christians outside of the church for which Jesus died. When one obeys the Gospel, being baptized (as a penitent believer) in the name of Christ (that is, by His authority), the Lord adds him to the church. He never fails to do this (Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Cor. 12:13).

—Deceased

DEVIATIONS FROM THE TRUTH

Roelf L. Ruffner, Sr.

Whatever therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31; Also see Col. 3:17).

“No Amount of Alcohol is Safe.”

This was the title of the 2014 *World Health Organization Cancer Report*. It maintains that any consumption of alcohol increases one’s risk of causing many types of cancer. It blows a hole in the myth of “responsible drinking.” At the time of this writing you can view this report on the internet at www.medscape.com/viewarticle/824237.

Of course the Christian does not need a report to confirm what the Bible has taught for thousands of years. **“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise”** (Pro.20:1).

Even unbelievers can note the thousands killed each year in the USA by the consumption/effects of beverage alcohol. In my own life, I have witnessed several generations of families decimated by this poison. All of them started as “responsible drinkers.” They ended up addicted to the drug ethyl alcohol.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these.....drunkenness revellings, as such like: of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21).

What is the difference between a drunkard and a sober person? The answer is obvious—*one drink!* Christians realize that their physical bodies are a gift from God, the **“temple of the Holy Spirit”** (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20), and they should treat it with care so as to bring glory to God.

May we partake of any sin in small amounts or even occasionally and still go to Heaven? Whether it be gossiping or adultery, the answer is a resounding **“NO!”**

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him (Gen. 18:19).

God gave this compliment to His ninety-nine year old friend, the father of many nations—Abraham. Abraham would not only be the father of Isaac but also Ishmael, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shushan (Gen. 25:1-3), and the father of the faithful. He also had influence on Jacob and Esau, his grandsons. In addition he had hundreds of servants in his employ (cf. Gen. 14:14; 17:23). His influence echoes down through the ages.

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:9,10).

Christian fathers, you have a special responsibility to your

family. **“And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”** (Eph. 6:4). *The American Standard Version* (1901) translates it, **“nurture them in the chastening”**.

Fathers are you seeking to raise future Christians or just educated heathens? Our modern world is filled with unbelief. We need to instill in our children/grandchildren not only a belief in God but a love of the Truth and salvation.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest down in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up (Deu. 6:6,7).

Defile not yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants (Lev. 18:24-25).

Jehovah spoke these words to ancient Israel through Moses to remind them why He was giving the promised land to them (besides His promise to Abraham)—the moral and spiritual corruption of the Canaanites. One thing He mentioned that caused these people to be expelled from Canaan was their acceptance and practice of homosexuality (**“it is abomination”** — Lev. 18:22).

In spite of this graphic warning, the United States of America is heading down the same path of revulsion. The homosexual agenda, which includes same-sex marriage, is running full steam ahead in our land. Even religious groups that, at least at one time in their history, put on a pretense of morality are falling by the wayside.

A case in point is the United Methodist Church. The denomination that once headed up the Prohibition movement in the 19th Century is about to endorse same-sex marriage! Some groups in this “mainline” denomination oppose it. But one poll shows 90% of the laity support it. A split is in the UMC may happen if they change their bylaws. Other denominations such as the Presbyterian Church USA are about to do the same thing.

For me this is just one more proof, among many, that a denomination is in and of itself an abomination. Jesus intended for His brethren to be **“one body”** or church (John 17:21; Eph. 4:4) with unauthorized division being anathema (1 Cor. 1:10). And, He never intended anyone to change His word by a “vote.” In Christ’s kingdom, the church of Christ, His word rules, not a majority of voters (John 12:48; Col.3:17) [<http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/watchman-on-the-wall/44267-why-united-methodists-should-split-over-same-sex-marriage> as of June 20, 2014].

—2530 Moore Court
Columbia, TN 38401

THE OLD PATHS PULPIT

Sermon Outline

Danny Douglas

POOR OF THIS WORLD—RICH IN CHRIST!

James 2:1-7.



Introduction:

1. There are some “well-off” saints who are faithful to Christ. (Give examples). Abraham (Gen. 13); Philemon (The Book of Philemon); Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-10); and some today.
2. However, there are, and have been, throughout the ages, many faithful saints who are poor in this world, or of meager means (cf. Mark. 12:41-44; Luke 16:19-31; Jam. 2:1-7; 2 Cor. 8:1-5).

AIM: *Whether we have wealth or not, let us all strive to be rich in Jesus Christ!*

I. Many of the Poor Obeyed Christ in the First Century—Some Today.

- A. God chooses the poor who choose to follow and obey His Son, Jesus Christ—Jam. 2:1-7.
- B. They are rich in faith & They are heirs of the eternal kingdom—2 Pet. 1:10-11.
- C. They wear the worthy name of Christ, being true Christians (Acts 11:26; 4:10-12; Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Pet. 4:14-16).

II. Those in Christ are truly Rich.

- A. Even if poor in this world, we can be rich. For example, the Lord’s church at Smyrna was the “poor rich church, because they were poor in this world but rich in Christ. (cf. Rev. 2:8-11). *vs 9.
- B. On the other hand, the Laodiceans made up the “rich poor church,” because they were well off in this world, but spiritually they were in poverty! (cf. Rev. 3:14-19). *vss. 15-17.
- C. Lay up treasure in heaven. Mat. 6:19-21.
- D. Those who have wealth are warned not to trust in it (1 Tim. 6:17-19).
- E. The desire for material riches and the love of money is a real danger and evil! (cf. 1 Tim. 6:9-10).
- F. We lay up treasure in heaven by faithful obedience to Christ—John 15:1-5, 13-14.
- G. We must be rich in faith—Acts 20:32; 2 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 10:17; Jude 20-21; James 2:14-24, *vss. 21-24!
- H. If we are faithful followers of Christ:
 1. We have an inheritance—an eternal reward in heaven (1 Pet. 1:3-5; Tit. 1:2).
 2. We have the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8).
 3. We have all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3, 7; 2:13).
 4. We have the Lord, so we should be content with what we have (Heb. 13:5-6, 8; 1 Tim. 6:6-8).

III. Those without Christ are in a Miserable Condition.

- A. No hope, without God, without Christ—Eph. 2:12.

B. Those in the church who are not faithful to Christ—Rev. 3:15-17.

C. Those without God have much suffering to look forward to, even if they are rich in this world (Heb. 10:26-31; Luke 16:19-31; 2 The. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:15; 21:8).

IV. There are many blessings for those who are Faithful children of God.

- A. God will provide their needs—Mat. 6:33; Phi. 4:19; Heb. 13:5; Psa. 37:25.
- B. Cleansing by the blood of Christ & redemption, that all the silver and gold in the world cannot buy! 1 Pet. 1:17-19, vss. 20-21; 1 Cor. 6:20.
- C. “**In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;**” (Eph. 1:7).
- D. The unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8). Many examples: Forgiveness; Hope of eternal life; Fellowship of the saints; membership in the body of Christ; fellowship with God; Prayer; the presence of God; many others (Acts 20:28; 1 John 1:3-7; 2 Cor. 13:14).

V. A great price has been paid that we might have true riches—not the riches of this world.

- A. Christ became poor for us—in coming to earth and suffering in this world (2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-11; Mat. 8:20; 1 Pet. 2:21-25; 3:18; John 3:16; Rom. 5:6-8).
- B. Those who are faithful in Christ have the true and lasting riches! 2 John 2:15-17.

VI. Invitation.

- A. Will you obey Christ? Heb. 5:8-9; Mark. 16:15-16; Acts 18:8; 2:38; 8:32-39; 22:16. Then, put on Christ, where all spiritual blessings are—Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-4; Eph. 1:3, 7.
- B. Some need to return to Christ—Acts 8:22-24; Rev. 2:4-5; 3:15-17; Jam. 5:16; 1 John. 1:9-2:3.
- C. This is a true story that happened in a Tennessee county where I once preached. An erring member of the church stepped out into the aisle to come forward during the invitation. Then, he stepped back in. Within the next 2 days, his soul departed into eternity! [2 Pet. 2:20-22]. Now is the day of salvation! (cf. 2 Cor. 6:2; Pro. 27:1).
- D. Many years ago in Anniston, AL, a man came forward to baptized in the middle of a gospel sermon and requested baptism right then. He did not want to wait till the invitation, lest Satan: “talk him out of it,” (so to speak). Let us be warned: 1 Pet. 5:8; Mat. 13:20-21.

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WHAT OF THE BELIEVER MARRIED TO THE UNBELIEVER? THE CONDITIONAL INDICATIVE STATEMENTS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 7:12-16

Daniel Denham

In addressing certain questions posed by the Corinthian brethren on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, the apostle Paul addressed specifically in 1 Corinthians 7:12-16 the case of a believer married to an unbeliever. He had just set forth the basic principle applying to all married couples in verses 10-11 by appealing in effect to the Lord's teaching from Mark 10:11-12.

From the nature of the answer given by Paul we can easily deduce the question, which was simply: Should or must a believer separate from the unbeliever in such a marital relationship? It should be kept in mind that historically Roman law and ancient practice knew nothing like legal separation today. Under Roman law, by which Corinth was then governed as a colony, separation for the purpose of ending the relationship constituted divorce in the first century A.D. Such was called *divortium* by means of *repudium*. Divorce under Roman law was predicated on the practice of "free marriage," which held that no civil contract was required and that marriage was premised on the joint agreement of the two parties forming it. If one ceased to agree to it, then it could be dissolved at will by that party.

The Greek verb *choridzomai*, the middle-passive of *choridzo*, is used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7 and was a technical term for divorce in ancient Greek. One Latin synonym was *repudio*, from whence we get our term "repudiate." *Choridzomai* is used interchangeably in the chapter with *aphiemi* (cf. vss. 10-11, 12-15), which also contemplates "divorce" in the sense of "to send away, to leave, et al."

The general practice in Rome and her colonies was for the man to send his wife out of the house. "Give me the keys, and take your things, and go," and similar expressions were often said to make the point that the marriage was ended. In the case of wives divorcing their husbands, the most common practice was simply to leave and take up residence elsewhere—either with her father's family or with another man, so forming a new marriage on the heels of the former one. Sometimes the man would leave or be sent away, if the woman, as sometimes in Rome was the case, owned the house. Some would even simply abandon their property to be rid of an unwanted spouse. Such easy divorce made for moral and social chaos. One woman, it is recorded, was divorced some 90 times winding up at the end of her life with the man with whom she first was married under Roman law. Women, who were married to one man for their lifetime, were often singled out for special praise in the inscriptions on their tombs. Such conditions existed at Corinth as at Rome itself.

In answering the question posed above, Paul gave three conditional indicative statements (using the Greek particle *ei* to make the condition specific and plain with the indicative mood), i.e., statements that entail an "if..., then..." form of statement which establishes an obligation or desire (with an infinitive) under the parameters of the *protasis* or "if" portion. In logic, the "if" portion is also called the "antecedent," while the "then" portion is the "consequent." In linguistics, the "then" portion is called the "*apodosis*." Conditional indicative statements are also called first class conditional statements.

In 1 Corinthians 7:12-13, we have the first two conditional statements of this nature given by Paul relative to the question he is addressing. Paul writes:

If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him (NKJV).

In the latter verse, a better reading would be: "And if any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he is willing (or consents, HDD) to live with her, let her not divorce him." These two conditional indicative statements state the same basic thing from both opposite perspectives. The first looks at the relationship from the standpoint of the believing husband or "brother" (Gr. *adelphos*) married to an unbelieving wife, while the second looks at the relationship from that of a believing wife or woman married to an unbelieving husband. In essence, their force then is the same.

The principle in both statements is that if the unbelieving spouse consents to live with the believer, then the believer is not to divorce that spouse. This, of course, presumes that they have a right to be married under God's law to begin with (cf. Mat. 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:10-11). The word rendered "consents" or in the *NKJV* as "willing" is *suneu-dokeo*. It means properly "to approve of any thing with another." When used with an infinitive, as here, it means "to be willing to, to consent to, to be disposed to do" that thing (cf. *Bloomfield; Thayer; Sophocles*; etc.). The nature of the construction presupposes the obligation of the believer to be willing, to consent to, or to be disposed to dwell with the unbeliever. It should be noted that the verb specifically takes here the unbeliever as the subject—not both the believer and the unbeliever. Indeed, it is a joint-agreement, but Paul takes for granted that the believer is to be disposed to agree from the start. He implicitly places that obligation upon the believer by the construction. It is not the case that the text au-

thorizes the believer to divorce his or her unbelieving spouse because the believer decides not to live with him or her. It is a false conclusion to try to force the verb to carry that idea. The text specifically says of the unbelieving wife that, if she is willing to live with the believing husband, then he is not to divorce (or put away, *aphiemi*) her. The same is also true concerning the other scenario involving a believing wife married to an unbelieving husband. If he is willing to dwell with her, then she is not to divorce (*aphiemi*) him. In each case the prohibition against divorce is *mee aphieto*, a negated (with *mee*) third person present active imperative. A present active imperative can also have conative or tendential force: thus meaning “Let him/her do not even try or intend on divorcing him/her.” God simply will not accept or sanction it!

We pass over 1 Corinthians 7:14 in our present study, as it is explanatory to the reason for the first two conditionals, and thus outside of our current purpose in studying the structure of the conditionals themselves. Perhaps, on another occasion, we can come back to that verse and examine it more closely. Verse 16, which we will also ignore at present, does shed some light upon its force as to the spiritual significance of the believer’s relationship to the unbeliever in God’s plan for the home. The believer provides an opportunity for the unbeliever to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. But that still depends upon whether or not the unbeliever is willing to abide in the relationship as God intends for it to be. There is much more that can be said relative to this point, but for now we pass on to the third conditional indicative statement, which is in verse 15. **“But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.”**

In the *protasis*, Paul postulates the possibility of an unbeliever choosing to depart and from the believer and thus the unbeliever being unwilling to live with the believer. In the *apodosis*, he commands, “Let him depart.” Again, the command is a third person present imperative, but he uses *choridzetai* specifically with the idea of leaving or separating from the believer. It should be recalled that the idea of divorce according to Roman practice is under consideration in the text historically.

The force of the third person imperative here is that of a permissive imperative. It does not express approval of the decision by the unbeliever. Neither does it grant the unbeliever the Scriptural right to leave with God’s blessing nor the right of remarriage to another party with God’s approval. It simply notes the fact that the unbeliever has determined to leave, and the believer is not obligated to keep him or her from leaving at all costs. It begrudgingly tells the believer not to compromise his or her faith in order to keep the unbeliever in the relationship and the unbeliever to get out. It is a resignation to the inevitability of the evil conduct of the unbeliever. It tells the unbeliever, in effect, “If you are going to go, then go!” The third person imperative has the force, “He (or she) leave!” The action is not for the believer to leave the unbeliever, but

for the believer to allow the unbeliever to leave (hence our English, **“Let him depart”**) and for the unbeliever to go. It is better that the relationship be so ended than for the believer to lose his or her faith due to the pernicious behavior of the unbeliever. In effect, it is God giving up on the unbeliever in the case because of the unbeliever’s obstinate behavior toward the believer. In Corinth believers were persecuted by unbelievers for the formers’ refusal to engage in the same riotous lifestyle of the latter, especially when it came to the temple rites and festivals which entailed debauchery and sensuality on a massive scale. These pressures were keenly felt in the homes of Christians married to non-Christians.

Obviously, if the unbeliever leaves to form a sexual relationship with another person, then, according to Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, the believer would then have authority to marry another marriageable person. Barring that, however, there is no authority granted in the text of 1 Corinthians 7:15 for remarriage. As has been noted by many brethren, the “bondage” under consideration in the text is not the marriage bond. First, the word used for being bound in the sense of marriage in 1 Corinthians 7 is *dedetai* (from *deo*) and not *dedoulotai*, as here. The root of this latter term refers to slavery, and the participle means “being enslaved.” Marriage is not slavery.

Second, the negated perfect participle (Gr. *ou dedoulotai*), translated “not under bondage,” also will not support the idea that it is the marriage bond to which Paul refers. The perfect tense refers to a completed action in the past with an abiding condition existing up to the present. In Koine Greek the latter part of that idea—the abiding condition—is especially emphasized in this verb form, which is even more acute in the participle. The negation of the action of the perfect participle means that the action or event depicted by it never was realized. It simply did not come to fruition and this is the condition of things standing at the present time. That

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is its force. If the bondage is supposedly the marriage bond, then Paul would be saying that the believer and unbeliever never entered into the state of being married (i.e., bound) to one another. That is clearly an absurdity, as Paul is dealing specifically with the case of believers being married to unbelievers. Thus, the word “**bondage**” refers to slavery, as it properly denotes. The believer has never stood in a relationship with the unbeliever as a slave in the state of marriage under the law of Christ. Marriage is not slavery. To treat it as such is to demean that high and noble state into which man and woman is to enter in the sight of God as “**heirs together of the grace of life**” (1 Peter 3:7).

It should also be noted that the text deals with a specific case—that of an unbeliever who no longer desires to live with the believer. It is not addressing the case where two believers are married. Neither does it address the case where two unbelievers are married. Nor does it even address the case where a believer seeks to divorce an unbeliever simply because the believer no longer desires to live with the unbeliever.

The transition from the present general conditional statement used parenthetically in 1 Corinthians 7:11, where *ean* is used with the aorist subjunctive in the *protasis*, to the use of the conditional indicative statements of verses 12-16 is especially significant. The former concerns the general principle governing all marriages (period). The construction of it is also called a third class conditional statement giving in the *apodosis* the general principle or truth applying to the conditions of the *protasis*. The verb force of the conclusion is gnomic, i.e., it expresses a general truth that holds for cases anticipated in the “if” portion of the statement. The only exception to the rule is found in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 in the clause “**except it be for fornication.**” So, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 7:11, states a general principle or rule.

The conditional indicative statement, by contrast, deals with a specific case or cases. Here the cases are involving a believer married to an unbeliever and thus establishing the rule that if the unbeliever consents to dwell with the believer, then the believer is not to divorce the unbeliever. In applying the rule to the case of the unbeliever who does not desire

to dwell with the believer in verse 15, Paul clearly places the onus of divorce on the unbeliever by way of a corollary. Again, there is no authority for the believer to divorce the unbeliever. In fact, verse 15 says nothing at all about the prospect of remarriage with God’s approval for either party. The implications of other texts (particularly the exceptive clauses of Matthew 5:32 and 19:9) bearing on the general principle already stated in verses 10-11 are the only bases for contending for any right of remarriage and that on the part of the innocent party where the other is guilty of fornication. Beyond that there is no authority for remarriage. The adverbial dependent clause “**except for fornication**” (Mat. 5:32; 19:9) by its very nature limits the scope to the grounds of sexual unfaithfulness by one of the parties alone. That is the significance of an exceptive clause. It means “if – and only if.” “If—and only if” one’s spouse is guilty of fornication is one then authorized to marry another marriageable person. This is the simple truth of the matter. There is no such thing as the “Pauline Privilege” given in 1 Corinthians 7:15 countermanding or modifying the limitations that Jesus placed on divorce and remarriage some 28 to 30 years prior to 1 Corinthians.

We need to do more preaching and teaching on the subject of marriage, divorce, and remarriage, especially emphasizing the purpose and permanency that God intends for marriage. He will not hold us guiltless if we fail to confront the many errors attacking the home in general and marriage in particular, some from even among our own brethren. Paul did not alter the teaching of Jesus from Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 to allow divorce with permission to remarry on other grounds than that of fornication. God’s marriage law always has stressed one woman for one man for life as the rule of marriage. The only bases in which a viable marriage bond fashioned by God can be severed are by death (Rom. 7:1-4; 1 Cor. 7:39) and by the committing of fornication by one of the partners (Mat. 5:32; 19:9). That is both the long and the short of the matter.

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(Editorial—Continued from Page 2)

anyone with dire consequences who would oppose such ungodliness and filthy living. Throughout the intervening years the plan of salvation, the undenominational nature of the church, its oneness, its government, its organization, its worship, what it is to live the Christian life, the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation, His influence on the Christian, and many other matters involved in the Christian System have been attacked, some even denying the eternality of Hell. Sadly, to their eternal ruin, many have followed their pernicious ways and the way of truth is evil spoken of.

In recent years many, who at one time stood against such innovations, have embraced the erroneous view that Christians

can differ over obligatory matters and remain in fellowship. They simply do not believe in practicing the truth of 2 John 9-11 regarding fellowship. More and more they have fallen victim to following the course of least resistance. They have learned to pursue a course that seeks to determine what is right and wrong by a consensus of those they look to as leading “lights” in the brotherhood of chief seat seekers. They glory in varnished pulpits covered only with a veneer of truth; pulpits that sin more from what they refuse to address than by what they actually say. Is it nothing to all you who pass by?

—David P. Brown, Editor

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

Brock Hartwigsen

The late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Baptist preacher who preached the Social Gospel. On July 18, 1952, Dr. King wrote a letter to his future wife, Coretta Scott, about his beliefs as a minister and proclaimed:

Let us continue to hope, work, and pray that in the future we will live to see a warless world, a better distribution of wealth, and a brotherhood that transcends race or color. This is the gospel that I will preach to the world.¹

Dr. King wrote that his theology was concerned “with the whole man, not only his soul but his body, not only his spiritual well-being, but his material well-being.”²

“The social gospel differentiated itself from earlier Christian reform movements by prioritizing social salvation over individual salvation.”³

History

In the late nineteenth century and early twenty century many Protestants were disgusted by the poverty level and the low quality of living in the slums. The Social Gospel movement provided a religious rationale for action to address those concerns. Activists in the Social Gospel movement hoped that through public health measures as well as enforced schooling, the poor could develop talents and skills so that the quality of their moral lives would begin to improve.

One important concern of the Social Gospel movement was labor reforms, such as abolishing child labor and regulating the hours of work by mothers.

Many reformers inspired by the movement opened “settlement houses,” which offered services such as day care, education, and health care to needy people in slum neighborhoods.

The movement faded during World War II, but many of its ideas reappeared in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.⁴

Social Gospel principles continue to inspire newer movements in both mainline and black denomination/churches, as well as to blend with more radical trends such as, e.g. Liberation Theology, Black Theology, Feminist Theology and Gay Theology.⁵

The Social Gospel was a main contributing force to the establishment of the modern European welfare state. The modern European welfare state has led to socialist government policies and the abandonment of the churches’ traditional responsibility as primary agencies of public charity.⁶

The Social Gospel is behind most of Liberals/Progressive political policies here in America, e.g. Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “New Deal,” Lyndon Johnson’s “Great Society,” and many other such programs. These things were not done for

religious reasons, but to solve physical ills, poverty, hunger, etc., that many believe are worse than spiritual ills, e.g. slothfulness, fornication, lasciviousness, drunkenness, etc.

President Obama has openly called for the repeal of all tax deductions for charitable giving and the central government taking over all responsibilities of private charities and churches when it comes to the physical wellbeing of the citizens of America.

Theology Or Reasoning Behind The Social Gospel

There were two main underlying beliefs of the Social Gospel when it began. The first one was about the Second Coming of Christ. The leaders of this movement “believed [in] the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. They wanted Jesus to come and believed that it could not happen until humankind rid itself of social evils by human effort.”⁷ This tenet has been pretty much forgotten today by supporters of the Social Gospel.

The second reason dealt with salvation. “The social gospel differentiated itself from earlier Christian reform movements by prioritizing social salvation over individual salvation.”⁸ They believed that a person’s individual salvation was tied up with society’s salvation and instead of trying to save one person, they set out to save society, thus they believed, saving everyone.

President Obama preaches “collective salvation,” which is a new name for the second tenet of the Social Gospel. In a commencement address delivered Wesleyan University President Obama said:

You can take your diploma, walk off this stage and chase only after the big house and the nice suits and the other things that our money culture says you should buy, you can choose to narrow your concerns and live life in a way that tries to keep your story separate from America’s, but I hope you don’t, not because you have an obligation to those who are less fortunate, although I believe you do have that obligation; not because you have a debt to all those who helped you get to where you are today, although I do believe you have that debt to pay. It’s because you have an obligation to yourself. *Because our individual salvation depends on collective salvation.* (Emph. mine—B.H.)⁹

On another occasion President Obama said: “And recognizing that my fate remains tied up with their fates, *that my individual salvation is not going to come about without a collective salvation for the country.*”¹⁰ (Emph. mine—B.H.) (Obviously President Obama does not believe in the separation of church and state.)

The whole emphasis of the Social Gospel is on the physical, not the spiritual. Proponents teach that since Jesus fed the hungry, cared for the needy, and healed the sick, therefore this is the essence of Christianity. Seeing to people's physical well being should be the primary work of Christians, society, and government. Therefore, Christians should try to change society and government so that everyone will understand that the most important thing is the removal of social evils, i.e. poverty, hunger, inequality between the poor and the rich, etc.

Errors Of The Social Gospel

Physical Needs: It is true that Jesus occasionally fed the hungry, cared for the needy, and healed the sick. But, it is not true that this is the essences of Christianity.

Twice Jesus miraculously fed a multitude. Not because they were poor, but because that had come to hear Him preach and were getting hungry. Jesus could have miraculously solved the world's food problem, but He did not. Why then should we think that He wants us to do what He chose not to do?

Jesus could have miraculously healed everyone in the world and have put an end to sickness and suffering, but He did not. Why then should we think that He wants us to do what He chose not to do?

Jesus could have miraculously eliminated poverty, but He didn't. According to Jesus poverty will never be solved. **"For the poor always ye have with you"** (John 12:8). Why then should we think that He wants us to do what He chose not to do and said will never happen?

Jesus' Purpose: Jesus said that He came **"to seek and to save that which was lost"** (Luke. 19:10). Jesus did not say that He came to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, tend to the sick or provided housing for the homeless. On occasions He did see to some peoples' physical needs, but that was not His main mission. Why then should we think that He wants us to do what He did not come to do? In Matthew 25:35ff Jesus did tell Christians that He expects them to do these things. They, however, were not His mission nor are they the mission of the church. They are simply a means Christians are to use achieve their mission.

John tells us that the reason we have a record of the times that Jesus miraculous feed the hungry or healed the sick was not to show us what is expected of us, but so that we **"might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name"** (John 20:30-31).

The Great Commission: In the first part of the Great Commission Jesus commanded Christians to go **"teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ..."** (Mat. 20:19). Jesus did not command Christians to go and feed, or clothe, or house, but to teach and baptize.

In the second part of the Great Commission Jesus com-

manded Christians to teach the new converts **"to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"** (vs. 20). Jesus commanded Christians to teach the new converts to obey, not to clothe, feed, or house them.

Perverted Gospel: The Social Gospel is not the Gospel of Christ. It is a perverted gospel and Paul warned us about false gospels telling us that those who **"would pervert the gospel of Christ" will "be accursed"** (Gal. 1:6-9).

The Jews in Jesus' day were looking for a Messiah to establish a physical kingdom in fulfillment of their understanding of the prophecies. This led to their rejection of and crucifixion of Jesus.

Proponents of the Social Gospel are looking to establish a paradise here on earth instead of preparing for one in eternity. This leads to their rejection of the true Gospel of Christ.

Proponents of the Social Gospel reject the admonition to **"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"** (Phi. 2:12). They are looking for a collective salvation to their own damnation and the damnation of those who believe them.

Conclusion

Most, if not all, of the man-made "Christian" churches have adopted at least some of the Social Gospel as their gospel. Sadly, so have some in the Lord's church. Clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, etc., is easy to do and is non-threatening. It makes a person feel good about himself. It is generally appreciated by the ones who we help. Whereas, trying to share the true gospel with the lost is not easy to do and many are afraid to do it. It generally isn't accepted nor appreciated. It often produces a negative response for the ones you are trying to help.

But, if we, who have the true bread and water of life, don't share it with the masses who are spiritually starving and dying, then who will? All our benevolence should be done with the goal of saving souls, the goal of Christ's Gospel, not making someone else's life here on earth a little better, the goal of the Social Gospel.

END NOTES

1. mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/.../encyclopedia/enc_social_gospel
2. Ibid.
3. Some of this section comes from www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Social_Gospel.aspx
4. conservapedia.com/Social_Gospel
5. www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Social_Gospel
6. Ibid.
7. conservapedia.com/Social_Gospel
8. www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Social_Gospel.aspx
9. <http://www.wfsp.com/news/16389467/detail.html>
10. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0crth_g9E

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Gotham Looks for Hero on Gay Rights

From the *Family Research Council*.

President Obama can probably fit the people satisfied with his leadership in one ballroom—and last night (June 17, 2014—**Editor**) in New York City, he tried. With the world literally crumbling around him, Obama sought solace from one of the few groups still wholeheartedly embracing him: the gay and lesbian movement. At New York City's Gotham Hall, the President got a hero's welcome for a six-year legacy of forcing his radical sexual agenda on the rest of the nation.

Not so coincidentally, his speech came just one day after the White House capped off its summertime pandering with an executive order to do what Congress would not: give homosexuals, transgenders, and cross-dressers special treatment in the workplace. To the crowd, which forked over anywhere from \$1,200 to \$32,400 for tickets, the President took credit for his extreme military makeover, the redefinition of marriage, circumventing benefits laws, and general lawlessness

where “spousal” policies are concerned.

President Obama, who can't find a few minutes to call for Meriam Ibrahim's release from a Sudanese prison, had plenty of time to fly to New York and fundraise for homosexual activists. “...I'm here tonight to say thank you for helping to make America more just and more compassionate.”

Of course, “just” and “compassionate” aren't words bakers like Jack Phillips would probably use to describe the country's evolution. Or sportscasters like Craig James. Or educators like Dr. Angela McCaskill. Their businesses, careers, and reputations were destroyed on the backs of this “compassionate” new America whose one-sided equality is hardly the progress Obama thinks it is.

[<http://www.frc.org/washingtonupdate/the-vanish-inquisition-missing-emails-haunt-irs>, Accessed June 26, 2014]

“Prejudice Is Prejudice”:

V. P. Biden Says Gay Rights Trump Culture

[Have you seen this sad story by the Associated Press and reported by ABC News online? (<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/rice-protecting-gays-difficult-rights-issue-24284926>—Accessed on June 25, 2014). My comments are within the article in parenthesis, bold, and caps.—**Charles Pogue**]

Seeking to mobilize a global front against anti-gay violence and discrimination, Vice President Joe Biden declared Tuesday that protecting gay rights is a defining mark of a civilized nation and must trump national cultures and social traditions. **(NO, IT IS A DEFINING MARK OF A REBELLIOUS AND UNCIVILIZED NATION!)**

Biden told a gathering of U.S. and international gay rights advocates that President Barack Obama has directed that U.S. diplomacy and foreign assistance [to] promote the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender men and women around the world. **(HOW LONG WILL IT BE BEFORE BEING ANTI HOMOSEXUAL WILL BE A CRIME FOR INDIVIDUALS? ONE SUPPOSES THIS PROMOTION MEANS CROSS DRESSERS SHOULD BE FREE TO USE WHICH OF THE TWO PUBLIC REST ROOMS LABELED MEN AND WOMEN—MUCH LIKE WHAT WAS RECENTLY DONE IN HOUSTON, TX??)**

“I don't care what your culture is,” Biden told about 100 guests at the Naval Observatory's vice presidential mansion. “Inhumanity is inhumanity is inhumanity. Prejudice is prejudice is prejudice.” **(WHAT BIDEN DOES NOT CARE ABOUT IS WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS. SO FROM THE VP WE LEARN THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S JOB INCLUDES DETERMINING CULTURE?)**

With anti-gay laws taking root in nearly 80 countries, Biden and other top White House officials met with religious, human rights and HIV health care advocates in a forum dedicated to promoting gay rights internationally. **(LAWS? IS JAIL TIME ON THE HORIZON FOR PREACHING AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY? LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. HOMOSEXUALITY IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF HIV, SO IT IS IMPORTANT TO PROTECT THE ACTIVITY THAT SPREADS THE VIRUS?)**

Biden, who has emerged as a leading gay rights advocate within the Obama administration ever since he got ahead of Obama in declaring his support for gay marriage, said that across U.S. government agencies officials have been instructed to make the promotion of gay rights abroad a priority. **(MARRIAGE IS GOD'S INSTITUTION, NOT THE GOVERNMENT'S. GOD HAS MADE THE RULE, ONE MAN ONE WOMAN FOR LIFE!)**

Where countries fail to move toward protections of LGBT people, he warned, “there is a price to pay for being inhumane.” **(PROMOTING THAT WHICH IS NATURAL AS OPPOSED TO THAT WHICH IS PERVERTED IS INHUMANE? PERHAPS THE MOST BLATANT EVIDENCE OF STUPIDITY IN THOSE INITIALS IS THE “T.” IT ALSO MAGNIFIES THE WORD “THE” OF “THE” EVIL IN “THE” LG&B.)**

Among those at the evening reception were leading gay rights activists and the ambassadors from Britain, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland. Earlier Tuesday, White House National Security Adviser Susan Rice cast the protection of gays from global discrimination, abuse and even death as one of the most challenging international human rights issue facing the United States **(NO TRUE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATES VIOLENCE AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS. HOWEVER, VIOLENCE AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS IS NOT THE MOST CHALLENGING HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE FACING THE U.S. AND THE WORLD. ABORTION (VIOLENCE AGAINST THE UNBORN) IS AHEAD OF VIOLENCE AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS, BY FAR).**

Biden called gay rights “the civil rights issue of our day.” **(NO TRUE CHRISTIAN, AS THAT WORD IS DEFINED AND USED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, ADVOCATES OR SUPPORTS VIOLENCE AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS. THE SUGGESTION THAT VIOLENCE IS RAMPANT AGAINST HOMOSEXUALS IS A SMOKE SCREEN TO COVER UP THE REAL ISSUE—THE REAL ISSUE IS SIN!).**

“To achieve lasting global change, we need everyone’s shoulder at the wheel,” she said. “With more voices to enrich and amplify the message — the message that gay rights are straight-up

human rights — we can open more minds.” **(THEIR SHOULDERS ARE ROLLING THE WHEEL TOWARD A PLACE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE. “GAY RIGHTS” ARE A VIVID REMINDER OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH).**

Rice cautioned that the effort is difficult because laws limiting gay rights in some countries enjoy strong popular support. But she said cultural differences do not excuse human rights violations. **(ANOTHER SMOKE SCREEN USED TO PROMOTE THE APPROVAL OF SIN).**

“Governments are responsible for protecting the rights of all citizens, and it is incumbent upon the state, and on each of us, to foster tolerance and to reverse the tide of discrimination,” Rice said. **(DID YOU CATCH THE, “EACH OF US” IN HER COMMENT? SHE IS DECLARING THAT IT IS INCUMBENT UPON EVERY CHRISTIAN TO SILENCE HIMSELF AND ALL THOSE WHO TEACH GOD’S TRUTH ON THE SUBJECT. I THINK NOT!).**

— WASHINGTON, Jun. 24, 2014, 2:25 PM ET
By JIM KUHNHENN Associated Press

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PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS AND EXAMPLES FOR CHRISTIAN WOMEN

Lavonne J. McClish

There is little in the Word of God in the way of detailed and specific instructions for women of God. Therefore, these suggestions are simply that: possible ways of applying the Scriptures to our own needs.

Example: Preachers’ wives must sometimes learn to accept the fact that we are not good at certain things—for instance, coordinating and serving meals to those families who have lost loved ones, even if the previous preacher’s wife did this quite well for years. We may find that our talents lie instead in such areas as cataloging the library, if any. If there is none, we might consider beginning one.

Some of us have absolutely no talent for finding or making visual aids, but we do have a knowledge of the Scriptures and the ability to present the lessons clearly. We must choose the method that suits our particular personalities, and we must make sure that the importance of God’s message comes through, rather than the beauty and cleverness of our methods or even our personalities. One excellent solution would be for one who is artistic and imaginative to help make visual aids, charts, and other things for a seasoned teacher who is better with making the Bible lesson come alive. Such teamwork or

partnership (and you can think of other ideas) would produce much better results than either woman or girl could do alone.

My experience as a young preacher’s wife might prove instructive here. For many years, as I attended Ladies’ Bible Classes, Preachers’ Wives’ Workshops, lectureships, and other classes for women, the idea was repeatedly pounded into my head that there is a creature called a “Preacher’s Wife” (and the same would apply to the wives of other leaders), with qualifications listed in God’s Word—#1, #2, #3, and so on. If I did not “fit the mold,” then I could never qualify as a good preacher’s wife. I didn’t. I also remember that, invariably, if such a wife had any kind of problem (especially between her and her husband, and also with her children), she alone was to blame. Her husband deserved better.

Furthermore, it would be selfish of her to expect anything from him, since he was doing the Lord’s work, and all his time, energy, and effort were needed and expended elsewhere. (Several times through the years a total stranger [or someone I just met] has laid a hand on my shoulder, looked me in the eye, and commanded, “You take good care of that man, because he is doing the Lord’s work!” All the while, I

was laboring under the delusion that I was doing the Lord's work, also!) She alone must see to it that their children were properly brought up. (I once heard a preacher [one of those who traveled the country presiding over "weekend workshops"] say, "My wife has brought up our sons [and she did a good job!]; I have not been home on a weekend for 20 years!") Thinking of Ephesians 6:4, I wanted to stand up and say, "You have sinned and you need to repent!" but I restrained myself. Needless to say, since I never fit the mold nor did I ever measure up to the standards set by those who were teaching (and not, I finally realized, by God's Word), I was continually discouraged, depressed, and plagued by feelings of guilt. All my efforts to improve seemed to fall short.

Some wives of preachers, elders, and deacons are great hostesses. They have just the right touch in artistic and culinary matters. They keep their houses spotless, and they can be prepared for guests at the drop of a hat. And then there are the rest of us. For my part, I just try to stay one jump ahead of the health department. I have never been organized or methodical. The only thing I know how to do is try to make my guests feel comfortable, at home, and at ease. The food I serve is very plain. (I wouldn't dare try anything fancy; I am just an old country cook.) Our table is just as plain, and most of the time we use a plastic tablecloth, sometimes even when we have guests.

Some women are extroverts, enjoy being with people continually, and even like to be in the public eye. Others are more introverted and are more attuned to pursuits such as reading, studying, and writing. They might be good at such things as writing articles for periodicals or for a series of studies for Bible classes, cataloging the church library, proof-reading bulletin articles, or writing songs (lyrics or music or both—for children or for adults). Many situations come to mind in which this kind of personality would accomplish much. Think of the assistance she could provide for other teachers, from nursery age to adults. There is a vital need for both the extroverts and the introverts. However, we need to stress here that none of us is exempt from teaching others—women and children, in a group or individually—and sometimes (in a private setting, such as Priscilla did) men. We may plant, as Paul did, or we may water, as Apollos did, but we must all be teaching (1 Cor. 3:3–11).

Yes, how well do I know that it is hard to find a time when we can be alone and have peace long enough to study. No one protects our study time (answering phone, doing necessary household chores, caring for children) the way we try to shield our husbands so they can study. Each one of us must find her own time, place, and method. I am a morning person, so when our three children were small—and when, day after day, I would find myself exhausted at the end of the day with absolutely no study at all done—I formed the habit of getting up early in the morning, before my husband or my children were up (two of the children were very early risers), to have a few quiet minutes of reading, study, and prayer before time to

start breakfast. That might not work for others at all. Maybe you would prefer to wait until everyone is in bed at night, and have that time alone. If your children still take naps, and if you are a stay-at-home mother, you might like to set that time aside for your study.

Should a preacher's wife or an elder's wife go to the back of the auditorium after worship so that she can stand with her husband and greet people? Doing this helps her to get to know the members of the church and their families. It helps the members of the church to see her as a part of her husband's work and possibly to gain respect for her (something she needs!). Another important consideration is that, if she does not do this, many of the visitors may get away before she can seek them out and meet them.

On the other hand, to some people that practice seems to be "affected"—like trying to look important and "official." Then, too, if she has young children, there will be problems if she does not supervise them. I can well remember being criticized for holding on to my small sons' hands and not getting around to meeting people. So I started trying to get around and meet people, and then I was criticized or letting my children run wild. This is not a hugely important matter, but it is one that a wife will have to think about.

Many have said that, if a leader's wife is willing to hire a baby sitter so she can have some recreation, she should also hire a baby sitter so she can go out to visit and to teach. I'm not sure I would go this far, but the idea would merit some thought and discussion. Some are never able to afford a baby-sitter for any reason, but there are alternative solutions, which might work. For instance, we might offer to trade child-care duties with another mother in the church (either for recreation or for visiting).

As the children get a little older, it might be good to take them along when we visit. Nursing home visits are a good place to start. Older people, especially, love to see children. It is very important that children learn to respect, love, and appreciate older people. Think of the countless ways and areas in which children (not to mention young parents) can learn from the elderly! There is, of course, the problem of behavior; some children are particularly active, noisy, and rowdy, while others are naturally quieter. But as they get older, they can be taught about appropriate behavior in different settings and about being gentle with frail, delicate older people, and can learn to subdue themselves for short periods.

CONCLUSION

The reader can doubtless think of many more practical applications of Scriptures directed toward women or that apply to women as well as to men. It would be good to form the habit, whenever we study the Bible, of concentrating on possible ways to implement Scriptural commands and exhortations and incorporate them into our own areas of service.

—Deceased

Abraham to Sinai—A Chosen People (Part 3)

John D. Rose

INTO EGYPT AND ON TO SINAI

In the eternal purpose of God to bring the Christ into the world that salvation may be a realized thing and not a product of prospect only, He desired a foreshadowing of the church—the body of His dear Son. The shadow would be a nation of priests and a holy people unto the Lord. This body of people would be a living example of holiness and obedience before the world around them; a nation of godliness in the midst of nations of wickedness. Israel was to be a holy people, a theocratic nation—but a nation nonetheless. To this end God brought His people into Egypt to grow them and prepare them for Sinai that they might truly be a nation in number, law, and Divine purpose. This maturation was effected through the agency of the life of Joseph.

JOSEPH

Joseph was also called, tried, and greatly blessed. Joseph's call came by way of two dreams of his youth. Both dreams spoke of that which would come to pass many years in the future when Joseph become ruler in Egypt second only to Pharaoh (Gen. 37). At the time that the dreams were Divinely revealed to Joseph, he was but a youth among the sheep—loved by his father but hated by his older brethren. In great cruelty, he was stolen from his father by his brothers and sold into Egyptian slavery (Gen. 37). A temporary respite was given to Joseph in the house of Potiphar. God richly blessed Joseph that he rose to prominence over Potiphar's household. Once more, calamity befell Joseph, for he was insidiously betrayed by Potiphar's wife and cast into prison (Gen. 39). While in prison opportunity was given to Joseph by God through the imprisoned butler and baker of Pharaoh (Gen. 40). In time, Pharaoh dreamed a dream that greatly troubled him. Then Joseph was remembered in prison and brought before Pharaoh to give the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream (Gen. 41). By Joseph's Divinely appointed ability to interpret Pharaoh's dream, he was set over all the kingdom to be administrator. As administrator, Joseph prepared Egypt, through the guidance of the Lord, to be a sanctuary in the time of terrible famine—and it was the famine that was the impetus for Jacob to send his sons into Egypt to buy grain. Through the actions of Joseph with his brothers, Jacob journeyed with all Israel, some seventy souls, and came into Egypt to settle in the land of Goshen (Gen. 41-45). That this was part of the eternal purpose of God is beyond dispute, for Joseph said,

Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life, and, ...God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God... (Gen. 45:5, 7-8).

To serve God and further His plans to bring the Christ into the world was Joseph's greatest blessings.

A NEW NATION

With Israel now in Egypt, every opportunity and advantage was theirs to grow and be readied for their departure unto Sinai. To lead the people, God chose a shepherd of Midian who was of the stock of Israel reared in the house of Pharaoh. That man was Moses. Moses was certainly called, tried, and blessed, but it was for the greater purpose of calling, trying, and blessing Israel. He was called by God to bring His people Israel out of bondage—out of the land of Egypt (Exo. 3:10). Moreover, Moses was called upon by the Lord to be His prophet, to speak unto Israel and Pharaoh all the words of God (Exo. 3:16; 4:14-16). Moses was the instrument by which God called His people out of bondage saying:

...The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. (Exo. 3:16-17)

To this calling the children of Israel hearkened, for when they heard the words of God and saw the confirming signs, "...the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped" (Exo. 4:31). From this moment unto Sinai the people of Israel saw and experienced many new and wondrous events: the plagues, the Passover, and the parting of the Red Sea. The greatest was at Sinai. Exodus chapters nineteen and twenty chronicle one of the greatest events to have ever happened in the sight and hearing of mortal men. God spake into existence a nation. A nation gathered unto Himself to show forth His own glory:

For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt (Deu. 7:6-8).

God again reiterated His calling of Israel and set forth the challenges and trials to prove Israel and the attendant blessings for the faithful. Upon that day, God spoke to the people from Heaven (Exo. 20:22). He reminded them that He had brought them forth from bondage with His own strong arm. He reminded them that He was a jealous God unwilling to share His glory

with any other. The Lord stated plainly that mercy was abundant for the obedient but wrath only awaited the ungodly. God demanded honor for it was due Him and Israel was to show mercy and do justice unto all (Exo. 20:1-17). If Israel would give up their idols (Jos. 24:14) and worship and obey God, He would come unto them and His presence would be with them and He would bless them:

And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee (Exo. 20:22-24).

God has always required of men to give up their fear and trust in Him and worship only the one true living God. He required this of Abraham. He required it of Joseph. God also demanded this of Israel. And He demanded it of those who would hear and obey the Gospel on, “...that great and notable day of the Lord...” (Acts 2:20).

PENTECOST THE SUBSTANCE OF SINAI

About fourteen hundred seventy-seven years after God established Israel as a nation *in number*, *in Divine Law*, and *in Divine purpose*, He established a new nation—a new Israel (Gal. 6:16). This would be a nation *in number*—every creature (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38, 41, 42), *in Divine Law*—the Gospel (Heb. 8:10; Rom. 1:16; also see James 1:25), and *in Divine purpose*. It was and is to teach and live as the Gospel instructs that it may be saved and save those it teaches (1 Tim. 4:16; See Col. 3:17; Rome. 10:17; 2 Cor. 5:7). *This nation would be the church of Christ as that term is defined and used in the New Testament.*

With its tabernacle, Temple, Levitical priesthood, and animal sacrifice, the old Law was a shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10:1, 4). As the shadow is not the substance, so the Law of Moses and its ordinances were not the actual law or the body of the Christ. God brought forth Israel from Mount Sinai, but He said He would bring forth a new covenant—a new people:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (Jer. 31:31-34).

The calling would not be from Sinai but from Zion:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3).

As it was with Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and Israel: so it was with those on the day of Pentecost. They were called, they were tried, and they were greatly blessed.

THE CALLING, TRIAL, AND BLESSING

On that great day, just ten brief days after the ascension of the Lord back to Heaven, where He presented His own blood before the Throne of God and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High (Dan. 7:13-14, Heb. 1:3), God began His final steps toward the first Pentecost day in Jerusalem after the ascension of Jesus to redeem mankind from their sins, which steps were started all those years earlier in Abraham in that far away land on the other side of the “flood” (Gen. 12:1-3; Jos. 24:15). After the death, burial, resurrection, and enthronement of the Christ, the greatest moment for mankind was when God, for the first time, opened the door to the church through the apostles preaching of the Gospel in its fullness. Thereby Heaven was made available to all those that would obey—“**And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven...**” (Mat. 16:19).

On that Pentecost day Peter called on his audience to, “**...Save yourselves from this untoward generation**” (Acts 2:40). How could they so do? They could be saved if they believed, “**...that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ;**” and if they would, “**...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...**” (Acts 2:36, 38). Three thousand passed the trial and proved themselves worthy of the Kingdom (Acts 2:41). Those three thousand souls put off their fear, their prejudices, and their rebellious traditions and submitted unto the Gospel (Mark 16:15, 16; Rom. 1:16). They triumphed in faith as Abraham had. They walked in trust as Joseph had. And they became a holy nation unto God as Israel had.

CONCLUSION

God has always sought belief, love, and obedience from mankind (Heb. 5:8, 9). In Abraham, He found just that. God also found faithful servants in Joseph and Moses. All of these men were tried and refined through hardships, failures, and triumph. The anchor of their faith was the Almighty God. Today, every man is called by the Gospel to give up his idols and serve the Living God in sincerity and in truth. As those on the day of Pentecost were saved so shall a man be saved today—being called by the Gospel, triumphing in trial throughout one’s life by obedience to God’s Word, and finally receiving that crown of life eternal (1 Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10).

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