

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

GOOD PEOPLE IN BAD CHURCHES

Dub McClish

Introduction

Numerous brethren have asked me what they can/should do about the liberal congregation of which they are members. When God announced the coming destruction of “Babylon,” He warned His people: **“Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues”** (Rev. 18:4). This warning applies to God’s people in the “Babylons” of every age and species, including the many apostate congregations of our time that have rebelled against Heaven. What can/should they do? The answer from Scripture is clear: **“Come forth, my people....”** Many good brethren have obeyed this warning and have left such corrupt bodies in recent years, but I believe thousands of unhappy saints yet remain in them.

“Come forth”—The Fellowship Factor

The Heavenly voice warned God’s faithful people to “come forth” because they must “have no fellowship” with Babylon’s sins. Fellowship refers to sharing in common or jointly participating with others. Those who stay in a liberal congregation are in fellowship with its errors. God has never approved of His children’s having fellowship with His enemies.

Zero fellowship permitted: “Some” fellowship with sin and error is not an option. The consistent rule of Scripture is “no fellowship”: **“Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness”** (Eph. 5:11; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14–18; emph. DM). In these passages, both the Lord and Paul addressed fellowship with unbelievers, but

the teaching is the same concerning apostate brethren: **“Receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works”** (2 John 10–11; cf. 1 Cor. 5:9–11; 2 The. 3:6; emph. DM).

God’s Word knows nothing of the Rubel Shelly scheme of “Big F” and “Little f” “levels of fellowship”—the doctrine of “limited fellowship” (which apes the heretical Ketcherside/Garrett “Gospel/doctrine” dichotomy). Those who remain in a church bent on error violate the Lord’s “no fellowship” prohibition.

Contributing money on the Lord’s day is one means of fellowship with a congregation. Contributors in a bad church help support false teaching from its pulpit, liberal missionaries, and all of the erroneous doctrines and practices of that church, even if they object to them. Liberal elders and preachers (and most Christian university administrators) pay little attention to verbal opposition. The one language they understand is M-O-N-E-Y. We cannot eradicate the current digression so many congregations now manifest, but it might be significantly slowed if thousands of objecting brethren would “come forth” from them and cease supporting them financially.

Besides their financial fellowship, good brethren who remain in a bad church also implicitly endorse the congregation’s errors. All of the objections one might offer to digressive elders and preachers begin to sound hollow and insincere after awhile when one stays in spite of the doctri-

(Continued On Page 20)

IN THIS ISSUE...

GOOD PEOPLE IN BAD CHURCHES—DUB McCLISH.....	1
EDITORIAL—THERE’S FAULT ON BOTH SIDES.....	2
CAN WE KNOW TRUTH—JOHN WEST.....	4
WHAT IF JESUS WERE ON FACEBOOK?—DON BLACKWELL.....	5
FACEBOOK AND FELLOWSHIP—GARY W. SUMMERS.....	5

TOE-FUE FELLOWSHIP AND IGNORANCE—GARY W. SUMMERS.....	7
WELL, NOW I’VE HEARD IT ALL—GARY L. GRIZZELL.....	9
AN INTERVIEW WITH N. B. HARDEMAN.....	11
DEVIATIONS FROM THE TRUTH—ROELF RUFFNER.....	15
HOW IS PEPPERDINE ANY DIFFERENT?—JOHNNY OXENDINE.....	19
ONE GOSPEL—JOHN ROSE.....	19
LIKE DOGS AND PIGS—SONYA WEST.....	23

Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher
dpbcftf@gmail.com

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

FREE—FREE—FREE—FREE—FREE—FREE

To receive CFTF free, go to www.cftfpaper.com and sign up. Once done, you will be notified when the current issue is available. It will be in the form of a PDF document that can be printed, and forwarded to friends.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR THE PAPER EDITION

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

NO REFUNDS FOR CANCELLATIONS OF PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS.

ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH exists to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we advertise only what is authorized by the Bible (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary and reserve the right to refuse any advertisement.

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH. A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged if such setup or layout is needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than one month preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published 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...

“THERE’S FAULT ON BOTH SIDES.”

We begin this editorial with an examination of its title. From the wording, we may correctly conclude that there are at least two opposing sides. If it were a criminal court case, there would be (1) “the defense,” comprised of the defendant’s attorney, the defendant, who is presumed innocent until proven guilty and who has entered a plea of “innocent.” (2) “The state,” comprised of the prosecution who must under the law(s) governing the case prove from adequate evidence and credible witnesses that the defendant is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. (3) “A judge,” to preside over the court, keep order, and make sure the trial is conducted according to proper court procedure. (4) “A jury” composed of 12 of the defendant’s peers to hear the case, draw only those conclusions warranted by the evidence, and under the law governing the case, render a fair and impartial verdict of guilt or innocence.

Could the accused receive a fair trial if the jury heard only the prosecution’s case? To ask that question is to answer it. I know of no one who believes that the defendant could receive a fair trial if the foregoing were the case. The same would be true if the jury heard only the case for the defense.

BUT WHAT ABOUT SETTLING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRISTIANS?

Over the years, we have observed problems arise between brethren. We have watched one side or the other, and sometimes both sides, take their differences beyond their origins and the place where their problem(s) could and ought to have been settled. For whatever reason, brethren on one side or the other conduct themselves in this manner in order to vindicate themselves and denigrate those with whom they differ as well as anyone they perceive as not agreeing with them. I remember one such case that took place many years ago. A problem arose between an elder and a brother from another congregation over a business matter. His fellow elders learned of the problem many years after the fact when a work of the church involved the brother with whom the elder had the problem. When the matter became known to the fellow elders of the elder who was at odds with the other church member, said elders made an effort to reach a Biblical solution to the problem.

Having heard their fellow elder’s account of the problem they then sought to hear the side of the brother with whom their fellow elder had the problem. But, when the elder who had the strong disagreement with said brother was informed by his fellow elders that they were going to listen to what this brother had to say regarding the problem he had with their fellow elder, said elder became very angry and wanted to know if his fellow elders were calling him a liar. His fellow elders made clear to him that it was only fair that they hear the brother with whom this elder was offended, since they had listened to him. Each time they tried to reason with him accordingly,

this elder would angrily react by asking his fellow elders if they were calling him a liar.

The upset elder became so angry that he sought to divide the congregation and privately set up a meeting of certain men of the congregation whom he thought would side with him in the matter. At least some of the men he invited to this meeting did not know what the meeting was about and assumed that all the elders knew about it and had called it. One of the men invited to meet realized something was amiss and reported to the other elders what was about to happen—they were about to be ambushed by the disgruntled elder. Thus, when the other elders learned what their conniving fellow elder had planned, they came to the church building where the men were assembled in a class room with the elder who had invited them. Instead of them going into the room with the disgruntled elder and his hand picked men, one of the elders asked the angry elder to come with him to another class room where the rest of the elders were waiting. Therein, away from the men the disgruntled elder had personally selected, his fellow elders dealt with their embittered, deceitful, and self-willed fellow elder.

When all was said and done, it was the less than honest elder in the business deal who had not understood the nature of the business set up and the legal requirements for handling money involved therein. In that particular matter, the offended elder was the problem. He had carried a grudge for years, became embittered, and in order to have his own way was willing destroy a congregation. This “elder” was unwilling to abide by the teaching of the scriptures in settling the differences between him and another brother.

These kinds of sins among and between brethren have done as much harm to the church as those who actually teach false doctrine. Sadly, over the last half century we have witnessed this on more than one occasion and to one extent or the other.

We have also noticed that those brethren involved in a problem, but who do not desire that both sides be heard, and/or they refuse to answer questions, are not brethren who desire to arrive at a scriptural, impartial, and fair decision in solving said problem dividing them. The late and lamented brother Guy N. Woods often pointed out in the beginning of a debate that the way those debating handled questions went a long way toward declaring who was and who was not honest in dealing with such matters.

Brethren who try to keep back the other side(s), permitting only their side to be heard, are not a whit behind a court case where only one side would be permitted to present its case in a court of law, and everyone expects the jury to render a fair and impartial verdict in the case. If brethren can see in the example of a court case as described in the beginning of this missive what a travesty of justice it would be, how much more horrendous it is for brethren in the Lord to desire and work hard to keep back all but their side, expecting their brethren to make up their mind as to who is guilty or inno-

cent in the division. What a terrible attitude such people must have. Does that kind of mess somewhat resemble the kind of trials our Lord was put through—a Kangaroo Court?

How much common sense, experience, and integrity does it take for brethren to recognize that they have made up their mind as to the guilt or innocence of brethren when they know they have heard but one side of the matter over which certain brethren are divided?

HOW SOME BRETHREN ATTEMPT TO HANDLE SUCH CASES

There are those brethren who, having jumped into the middle of a fray only to realize things are not going the way they thought they would go, will seek to extricate themselves from it by declaring, “There is fault on both sides.” But, in order for anyone to charge both sides with being at fault, one must have adequate evidence and/or credible witnesses about the conduct of both sides before one can truthfully make such a bold accusation as, “I know in a given case that fault exists on both sides.” But, if one is truly able to prove the foregoing proposition, then one is obligated to God and his brethren to do so.

We have found that those who declare “there is fault on both sides” are usually seeking a way to get out of the controversy without having to prove what they have alleged, namely, that “there is fault on both sides.” Also, such brethren do not intend to confess that they poked their nose into something that turned out different from what they thought it would. If brethren know there is fault on both or however many sides there are in a matter resulting in brethren being divided, brethren with such knowledge must show that evidence to all before whom they have affirmed that “there are faults on both sides.” But those who declare such a statement for the purpose of extricating themselves from the trouble into which they purposely chose to walk are rarely honest and brave enough to do the right thing. All too often by their actions they prove they are dishonest cowards who are interested only in one thing—having their own way. Thus, when called upon to be open, honest, above board, and to prove their accusations, like the proverbial scalded dog, they run yelping to their den to lick their wounds and bark at anything that disturbs them. This is what all too often happens when brethren choose to launch themselves into such trouble without an honest and proper investigation of said matters.

When brethren conduct themselves as previously described, I think about what Paul said about the cowardly actions of the city magistrates of Philippi, who did not do their homework before arresting and ill-treating Paul and Silas. Having learned that they had violated Roman law, the magistrates decided to take the low road of extricating themselves from a problem of their own making. When the city magistrates sent messengers notifying Paul that they were set free, Luke records Paul’s response to them. **“But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they**

thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out” (Acts 16:37). In their attitude and conduct, such fault-on-both-sides-brethren are in agreement with the thinking of the Philippian city magistrates in how they attempted to handle their illegal conduct toward Paul and Silas. They did not have the honesty to come face to face with those they had falsely accused to admit their error. Indeed, without doubt they are the kind of characters that would, in their efforts to extract themselves from a mess of their own making have well said, “there has been fault on both sides.”

Any person who has charged others with wrong doing, but who will not 1) withdraw the charges because he cannot prove them, accompanying the withdrawal with the appropriate apologies to those falsely charged, or 2) set about to prove said charges in as public a manner as they were made, is a liar and the truth regarding the same is not in him.

—David P. Brown, Editor



CAN WE KNOW TRUTH?

John West

Jesus made the statement in John 8:32, “**And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.**” Is it possible for us today to know truth? According to some, we can only guess at truth. Some today believe that if God has a supreme plan, then it is beyond our comprehension. Is God so ignorant or mean that He would give us a Bible to follow and then say you cannot comprehend it? ABSOLUTELY NOT! Was Jesus so misguided that he failed to realize that truth was beyond our comprehension? ABSOLUTELY NOT! Jesus taught that truth was knowable. He also knew and taught that truth was obtainable (John 6:44-45). Paul reminded Timothy that he had been taught truth from the time he was a baby (2 Tim. 3:15).

It is also taught today by many that the reason we cannot know truth is that different religions use the same Bible to teach different doctrines. The apostle Paul dealt with this situation in Galatians 1:6-7 when he wrote,

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ into another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Paul told them that a “new” gospel was not being taught, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. In verses 8-9 he adds that anyone, including himself, who teaches a perverted gospel, will be accursed. He further states in verse 11, that what he preached was a “certified” gospel, not the doctrines of men. Sadly, what is being taught in many pulpits worldwide is the doctrine of men, not the doctrine of God.

God did not reveal truth to some and not to others? Of course, that would make God a respecter of persons. Peter taught that God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). God has revealed truth to all today, but all do not follow truth. Some are following the doctrines and creeds of men.

It has also been taught that “we cannot know, we can only guess at the ultimate answers.” The Bible teaches that we can and must know the truth if we want to spend eter-

nity in heaven with God. God will not allow those who rebel against him to go to heaven. In 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Paul wrote,

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.

Those who “**know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ**” will be separated eternally from God, whether “religious” or not.

Friends, truth is knowable (John 8:32; 2 Tim. 3:15), it is obtainable (John 6:44-45), and it is essential. The truth about salvation is given in the Word of God. Please read the following passages that teach about salvation (Rom. 10:17; Acts 17:30; Acts 8:37; Mark 16:16; Gal. 3:27; 1 Pet. 3:21). If you have not obeyed God’s plan, then there is a great need in your life for salvation.

Many obey the truth, and somehow think that there is nothing else to do, but wait for heaven. The Bible says that we will be judged according to our works (2 Cor. 5:10; Mat. 16:27). James tell us that “**faith without works is dead**” (Jam. 2:20). When one becomes a Christian, it is just the beginning. As the song says, “There is much to do, there’s work on every hand.”

Jesus brought truth (John 1:14, 17). If we love Christ, we will seek truth. Paul said that love “**rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth**” (1 Cor. 13:6). Do you want truth? If so, then “**obey the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren . . . Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever**” (1 Pet. 1:22-23).

—3901 Aspen Dr.
Montgomery, TX 77356

WHAT IF JESUS WERE ON FACEBOOK?

Don Blackwell

[Editor's Note: This article was sent out via the Internet. It raises some thought-provoking issues for young people and concludes on the next page. Adults may want to consider some additional applications in connection with these principles.]

When I woke up this morning, I grabbed my iPhone, turned off the beeping alarm, and immediately updated my Facebook status. On the way to school, I scrolled through my friends' status updates and again updated mine with the song that was playing on my iPod. At lunch, I took a picture of me and my friends and uploaded it via the Facebook utility that I downloaded from the app store. I'm lying in bed now with my laptop and chatting with my BFF in Tennessee. Status update: "Good night all. I'll text you in the morning." Such is the day of a typical American young person.

Facebook has taken the cyber world by storm and our social lives forever in a different direction. Compete.com ranked Facebook as the most used social network in the world. According to Facebook's own stats page, there are currently more than 350 million active users, and 65 million people are accessing Facebook through their phones/mobile devices. They say that the average user has 130 Facebook friends and spends more than 55 minutes a day on their site. What if Jesus were on Facebook? I want you to use your imagination and pretend that you log onto Facebook one day, and Jesus has sent you a friend request. We know that such is not possible, but for the sake of illustration pretend. What would you do? Would you have to stop and think before you accepted it? Would you have to look through your pictures to be sure that you don't have any immodest pictures of yourself or anything tasteless?

Maybe make sure that you don't have any pictures taken in inappropriate places? Would you go back over your postings to be sure that you haven't said anything crude or inappropriate? Would you scan through your list of favorite movies and music and perhaps delete a few of them before you let Jesus on your site? What about the games you play? Quizzes you take? Is there anything there that would make you stop and say to yourself, "I think I'll delete that before I let Jesus on my site?" If the answer is, "Yes," to any of those questions, then why not go ahead and take it off?

The fact of the matter is the Lord does look at our Facebook pages! He sees everything that we post on Facebook (and everywhere else for that matter). Proverbs 15:3 says, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place keeping watch on the evil and the good."

There's another part of this even beyond the fact that God is watching me on Facebook, and that is that other people are watching me. Why does this matter? It matters because what they see on my Facebook site affects what they think about me, the church, and Christianity. What if I have my "religious preference" listed as "church of Christ" and then have pictures posted of me at a nightclub, or dancing, or at the beach immodestly dressed, or with an alcoholic beverage? Or what if my status update has the lyrics to the latest Lady Gaga song? Or maybe I'm venting and running someone else down with a generally ugly demeanor? We could give dozens of examples, but the question is, "What effect is it going to have on my non-Christian friend who looks at my site?" He might say to himself, "I do better than that, and I don't even pretend to be a Christian!" Or he might just think, "What a hypocrite!"

Once again use your imagination. Imagine that you are surfing Facebook, and you see that Jesus has His own site. You are excited; so you send him a friend request. Would He accept it? Most of us when we receive a friend request have some sort of criteria before we indiscriminately accept someone as our friend. We want to know if we know the person. We glance at his information, his friend list, where he lives, etc. But what about Jesus? Does He have criteria for friend requests? Sure he does! He said, "You are my friends if you do whatever I command you" (John 15:14). Therefore, to be a friend of Jesus, you have to obey Him. In light of this, Christian friend, ask yourself, "Would Jesus accept my friend request?" Before you answer the question, consider your faithfulness in attending worship, your Bible study habits, your efforts to teach others, your giving, the way you treat other people, etc. Now, with your answers in mind, "Would Jesus accept your friend request?" [*In the following article Gary Summers reviews and critiques Blackwell's article.—Editor*]



FACEBOOK AND FELLOWSHIP

Gary W. Summers

The preceding article is well written and well worth thinking about—especially for the younger generation. The first paragraph explains how young people are immersed in the new technology while the second one shows statistics concerning the popularity of such things as Facebook before asking the question (hypothetically) that if Jesus requested you be His friend, would you be able to accept? The author comments on sites and links you might have to remove or pictures of yourself in inappropriate places. Now all that

he wrote involved fellowship with the world and dealt with immodest pictures, crude behavior, and maybe associations with unsavory music or movies. But what about spiritual associations?

Fellowship Errors

Using the same scenario, (Jesus asking for your friendship on Facebook), what spiritual associations might you need to delete? Before casting any blame on anyone else,

I must admit failure to always take everything into account concerning fellowship choices a few times. The first time was when I was at a lectureship at a “brotherhood” university in the northeast, which is no longer located there. While attending a program there, I realized that something was wrong with the school’s stand on the truth (or lack of it).

It was far different than attending Freed-Hardeman College’s annual lectureship, where everyone showed his position from the Scriptures. In fact, many of the speakers at FHC lamented that there were so many “uncertain sounds” coming from various places in the brotherhood. Being young and inexperienced at that time, I had no idea what “uncertain sounds” were—until I attended this lectureship in the northeast. Many things were claimed for which there was no Biblical substantiation. Opinions were set forth which either were not found in the Word or contradicted it. The question arose, “Should I be here?”

A decade later one of the participants of the Joplin Unity Summit invited me to attend the three-day program, which I did. I began to wonder what was the purpose of the meeting. The final morning the event concluded with two men (one of “us” and one from those who use musical instruments) speaking about the fact that their families had been divided over the instrument, but such would no longer be the case. At least one of them was highly emotional and sobbing, but, “What exactly had happened to change the division that exists?” The answer was clearly, “Nothing.” They were going to continue using the instrument, and we were not; the only thing that changed was that now some of “us” were going to fellowship them despite their erroneous view of the way God authorizes acts of worship (which excludes instruments).

God had not changed. Leviticus 10:1-2 still shows the folly of offering God unauthorized worship. Colossians 3:17 still insists that everything we teach and practice must have the authority of Christ behind it, which Hebrews 7:14 illustrates. God’s principles had not changed. The Christian Church was not giving up their use of instruments. No, the only change was that some of “us” were no longer going to count it as a matter of fellowship. When they asked all of those in attendance to pose for a picture of this “historic” moment, I chose not to be associated with it.

Not long after moving to Denton, I learned there was a meeting of liberal preachers in the area, which I ignored—until one day a preacher from a nearby congregation called me and asked me to come hear him speak. He had taught in a school of preaching in another state; so I acquiesced. His presentation was all right, but noting the liberals who were present, I asked myself, “What am I doing here?” I not only felt awkward being in their midst, I repented by never returning to such a gathering. There was no way any sound preacher could be in fellowship with many of those present, and the words of Paul kept echoing—**“not even to eat with such a person”** (1 Cor. 5:11).

A few years later, I visited the gathering for preachers in Fort Worth and noticed a false teacher eating with us. Afterward, I told the planner of those meetings that if this particular erring brother was going to be welcomed by area preachers while believing and teaching doctrines that were not true, it would be my last time there. He refused to exclude him on the grounds that the error was not that bad; therefore it became my last such meeting.

These events from my personal experience demonstrate that my own judgment has not always been perfect (I understand others making similar mistakes)—but one can control his future policy. Looking back, there are places I should not have been—and will not be at again. The reason is that we must guard our reputations and not be guilty of associations that would harm ourselves or others. We also have no authority to fellowship those whom Jesus would not endorse, which brings us back to the purpose for this article.

Would Jesus Approve of Faulty Fellowship?

So Jesus has sent you a friend request. Do you have pictures of yourself at brotherhood events where you are mingling with heretics that you might want to delete before accepting? Have you been at inappropriate places: the Tulsa soul-winning workshop, the Spiritual Growth Workshop in Orlando, the Affirming the Faith lectures, the Oklahoma Christian University lectures, the Pepperdine lectures, the Abilene Christian University lectures?

Does your circle of friends include those who fellowship false teachers or those who are known for teaching one or more false doctrines? Do you want to link to those who also link to liberal universities and liberal events? Before you accept the Lord’s request, would you need to delete some of the places you have been and some of the spiritual activities you have been involved with?

Did Brother Blackwell not argue that what people see on your Facebook page affects what others think about you, the church, and Christianity? So if they see you fellowshiping those who teach error, what are they to think? What is true of earthly connections must also be true of spiritual associations. For example, suppose the description of a movie warns that it has nudity and strong language. Is this a film you would want to see, much less link to? Oh, but what if the film is very popular? Does that then justify watching and endorsing it? No, because it is still of the world and endorses various types of corruption. A child of God does not need to immerse himself for two hours in that which totally opposes Christian values and the struggle to be holy before God.

Suppose a university has a professor or a congregation has a preacher who does not teach the truth about salvation. He says that people ought to be baptized but that they are saved first—apart from and without being baptized. This is denominational doctrine, but he is preaching at one of “our” churches or teaching at one of “our” universities. Consis-

tent with his beliefs, he fellowships those in denominations. He may speak at their churches or even appear on programs with them. Let's call him TOE (Teacher Of Error). No one has any question about this individual not being faithful in what he teaches; he is a compromiser all day long.

Now we come to brother FUE (Fellowships Usually Everyone). For the most part, although he may say something a little strange once in a while, he presents decent material. However, he appears on programs with TOE so that, if you are looking at the program, you will see TOE and FUE together. Does FUE believe what TOE does? He may or may not, but he fellowships and associates with him.

All of this brings us to Brother DADT (Don't Ask, Don't Tell). He always brings good Bible lessons, and no one can accuse him of ever having taught anything wrong. But he fellowships FUE, who fellowships TOE. Would he speak on a program with TOE? Absolutely not! But he has no problem at all fellowshipping FUE who does. If DADT is asked about those who FUE fellowships, he will likely say, "Are you sure? I've never heard that. I can't be expected to know all about every speaker on every program." DADT is dodging the issue.

If you would not link to a movie that Jesus would not approve of, then why link to someone who does? A Christian should not only keep himself from associating with movies that are corrupting influences, but why link to either an individual or a website that will do what he refuses to? "But what if the preacher is popular and well-known? What if he is capable and does the best work in a certain field?" The

question must still be: "Who is he spiritually linked to?" Are you prepared for the link to be from TOE to FUE to YOU? Some might complain that this is "chain" fellowship. Count the number of links between Teacher Of Error and you. Do you really want to be Brother DADT?

Instead of your Facebook page having the words of a Lady Gaga song, what if there is an intermediary link that you can click on to have all the lyrics of her songs? Or in this case what if DADT associates with FUE who then provides him with a whole bunch of TOEs? Does Jesus have criteria for friend requests? Yes (John 14:15). Does Blackwell, who wrote the "Facebook" article, have criteria for his friends? Do they need to be faithful to Jesus and the apostles in their teaching, or can they be associated with FUE and TOE?

The Clinton "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was in force, according to Wikipedia, from December 21, 1993, until September 20, 2011. After seventeen years of trying to ignore the problem of homosexuality, those in the military now must tolerate it. How long will it be until those who are now ignoring the problem of liberalism will be embracing it? For centuries brethren preached 2 John 9-11 with respect to false teachers. About ten years ago, brethren decided to ignore the passage as it related to certain individuals. The damage done in doing so may already be irreversible. Those who decided to fellowship men whom they ought to have called to repentance set a dangerous and deadly precedent, which most once-sound preachers are now following.

—5410 Lake Howell Rd.
Winter Park, FL32792-1097



TOE-FUE FELLOWSHIP AND INNOCENCE

Gary W. Summers

Some brethren have become so lax on the subject of fellowship that they have grown quite careless in recent years. Some have adopted a "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) policy concerning where they hold gospel meetings, conduct workshops, or appear on lectureships. Then, when they are questioned about it, they profess total innocence, saying, "I didn't know it was like that," or "I was not familiar with some of those speakers." All right; that will work—once—but what about when it is a common occurrence? If the director of a lectureship invites one individual (usually upon someone else's recommendation and he turns out to either teach error or fellowships those in error), the mistake will probably not be repeated. But when said director has invited several of that kind over a period of time, does it not dawn on brethren that there is something wrong? And in some instances, it would be really hard to plead ignorance—even once.

In my writing over the years, I have featured the names of a few men who have been recognized by most brethren to be false teachers. About a dozen have featured Max Lucado (portions of which were republished a few weeks back. Rick "Abihu" Atchley has been the focus of attention on occasion (10-19-03, 10-26-03, 11-2-03, 1-14-07, 1-21-07, 1-28-07, 2-4-07, and 2-11-07). Another name has been Rubel Shelly (5-14-00, 5-21-00, 5-28-00, and others). All of these are TOEs (Teachers Of Error). They have all appeared on the lectureships at Pepperdine over the years, along with Jeff Walling, Patrick Mead, Don McLaughlin, and other well-known heretics. The director of those lectureships at Pepperdine from 1983-2012 was Jerry Rushford.

The question one might ask is, "Who would fellowship all of these TOEs?" And the answer is FUEs (Fellowships Usually Everyone). The Affirming the Faith lectureship is an annual event conducted by the North MacArthur Church of

Christ in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; it includes on its program brethren from a number of “our” universities, as well as the Bear Valley Bible Institute. However, some of these also speak on the Oklahoma Christian University lectures. So much information concerning this subject is available that one begins to overload trying to digest it all.

One name that appears on both the Affirming the Faith (ATF) lectures and the Oklahoma Christian University (OCU) lectures is that of Jay Lockhart, who is on the Master’s faculty of Bear Valley. This writer has never met Brother Lockhart, so far as he knows, and he has no idea if Lockhart personally teaches error. His current article in the *Spiritual Sword* (April, 2015) is sound. Here is the problem. He has spoken more than once on the ATF lectures (2009, 2013) and at least once on OCU (2012). The OCU lectures are not known for their soundness. The group known as Acappella appears there often.

In fact, they sang at OCU in 2012. Keith Lancaster, who organized Acappella Vocal Band, was present this year (2015). Most conservative brethren do not believe the premise of Acappella Vocal Band is Scriptural (imitating musical instruments with the voice). Most conservative brethren would not be on a program if that particular group was going to be there, but Jay Lockhart did in 2012. This raises the question: “Do all of those who appear on OCU endorse Acappella?” If they do not, could they explain why they are on the same program?

Although this situation is deserving of an answer, it is not even the main point. The fact is that OCU invites men like Jerry Rushford, as well as Jay Lockhart, even though they may not have appeared on the same program. In other words, here is the situation.

Jerry Rushford, who directed the Pepperdine lectures for 30 years invited such men to participate as Max Lucado, Rubel Shelly, and Rick Atchley. If he is not a TOE, he is at least a POE (Promoter Of Error) and a FOE (Fellowship Of Error).

The same lectureship who invited men like him (OCU) invites Jay Lockhart (FUE). So is Lockhart also a FOE? If not, why not? Who wants to explain the reason why Lockhart is not just one link removed from Rubel Shelly? Below is the link:

Shelly – Rushford – Lockhart

The link does not have to be just these three men. It could be said Shelly (and those like him) are linked to Rushford (and those like him), who are also linked to Lockhart (and those like him). Is no one worthy of guilt in such associations? Again, this is only one example. Pages could be filled with names that would illustrate this point.

Let us put this situation in a Biblical setting. Jesus warned of false teachers (Mat. 7:15). Can anyone imagine Jesus going to a conference of wolves unless it was to expose

the deceit and treachery abundantly present? Jesus exposed the Pharisees on three counts in Matthew 6 (giving, praying, and fasting to be seen of men). Later, He excoriated them, along with the scribes (Mat. 23). Would He appear on a lectureship with someone who also fellowshiped Caiaphas?

Paul delivered Hymenaeus and Alexander to Satan, meaning that he withdrew fellowship from them (1 Tim. 1:18-20). If Timothy, then, appeared with them on a lectureship somewhere, would Paul speak alongside of Timothy in another location? To ask the question is to answer it. One is supposed to mark false teachers—not fellowship them (Rom. 16:17-18)! Have we forgotten the fundamental truths of the New Testament? We’re no longer drifting—we’re sinking!

Still, someone might pay attention to those who would say, “You’re stretching the principle concerning fellowship.” However, even those in the world recognize this principle. When John Fitzgerald Kennedy was President, there was a period of time when he became chummy with Frank Sinatra. In fact, the singer wanted to host a fund-raiser for the President’s re-election campaign, which would be kicking off soon. It was Peter Lawford’s job to arrange this event. The President backed out, and according to sources, Sinatra never spoke to Lawford again. But why did Kennedy not want to take advantage of the offer? The answer is that he was advised not to because Sinatra was known to be close friends with Sam Giancana, a Sicilian American mobster who ran the Chicago Outfit. In other words, Kennedy’s advisors did not want the President to be one link away from Organized Crime. In the minds of Americans, the connection would have been as shown below.

Giancana – Sinatra – Kennedy

That is a link that the President’s people did not want to have in the minds of the American people. One wonders why so many brethren don’t get it—especially when they formerly had no problem understanding it. Have things changed? It may be worse to have a direct connection, but being only once removed is problematic. Jehoshaphat is said to have allied himself by marriage with Ahab (2 Chr. 18:1). He did not personally marry someone from the evil Ahab’s household, but his son, Jehoram, married the daughter, Athaliah, of Ahab and Jezebel, thus forming a very close tie between the two kingdoms.

This close association eventually caused Jehoshaphat (an otherwise righteous king) to unite with Ahab to take Ramoth-Gilead—a battle in which Jehoshaphat would have died unless God had rescued him. On his return, the prophet Hanani rebuked the king for that association. Speaking for God, the prophet asked the king: “**Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord? Therefore the wrath of the Lord is upon you**” (2 Chr. 19:2). Has God somehow changed His attitude towards voluntary associations with evil in the past few millennia?

Some have not forgotten that we should forego having earthly links with worldliness and sins of the flesh, but what about spiritual fellowship with those who do not love the Lord? Someone might recoil with horror and ask, “Are you saying that false teachers do not love the Lord?” Congratulations! That is the point! Did Hymenaeus and Philetus, who taught that the resurrection was already past (2 Tim. 2:17-18) love Jesus? Did the Judaizing teachers love Jesus? Those who oppose the truth that makes men free do not love the Lord! When they denigrate the Lord’s church, when they compromise on God’s plan of salvation (as Shelly and others have done), when they give up correct worship (as Acappella has done), when they invited denominational personalities to speak on lectureships, they do not love the Lord!

A Plea of Innocence

Anyone, even a careful individual, might be invited somewhere once and not know the kind of congregation it is or what the beliefs of other speakers are (in the case of a lectureship). A plea of ignorance cannot be offered time and again, however. A few almost seem to pride themselves on speaking in certain locales—not even desiring to know anything about those who invited them. A few have even been warned by well-meaning brethren, and they become part of the event anyway.

In the 1960s, Tom Paxton wrote a number of songs which were recorded by many popular artists. The song, “We Didn’t Know,” was a Viet Nam protest song that includes a few other recent situations that people ignored. The third verse (omitted below) challenged US involvement in Viet Nam, but the other two verses should continue to haunt mankind.

As the main point of the song is considered, brethren should think of those who today are trying to justify their actions with this same philosophy. Does it work? Do we really want to begin using this rationale to shirk our God-given spiritual responsibilities?

“We Didn’t Know”

Tom Paxton (Words and Music)

We didn't know, said the Burgomeister,
About the camps on the edge of town.
It was Hitler and his crew,
That tore the German nation down.
We saw the cattle cars, it's true,
And maybe they carried a Jew or two.
They woke us up as they rattled through,
But what did you expect me to do?

Chorus

We didn't know at all,
We didn't see a thing.
You can't hold us to blame,
What could we do?
It was a terrible shame,
But we can't bear the blame.
Oh no, not us, we didn't know.

We didn't know said the congregation,
Singing a hymn in a church of white.
The Press was full of lies about us;
Preacher told us we were right.
The outside agitators came.
They burned some churches and put the blame,
On decent southern people's names,
To set our colored folks aflame.
And maybe some of our boys got hot,
And a couple of _____ and reds got shot,
They should have stayed where they belong,
The preacher would've told us if we'd done wrong.

Chorus repeated

—5410 Lake Howell Rd.
Winter Park, FL 32792-1097

WELL, NOW I’VE HEARD IT ALL

Gary L. Grizzell

“You messed up!” These were the words which a big name preacher, whatever that is, spoke to a faithful gospel preacher when he discovered that he had (a number of years ago) lost salary and favor with some as a result of preaching the truth and standing for the truth on fellowship (2 John 9-11). What I am about to say may offend some but from my personal experience some of those “who seem to be somewhat” (Gal. 2:6) in our brotherhood should wise up and begin to practice what they so eloquently preach. While the individual mentioned above stated in his opinion that the preacher had gotten in over his head while fighting some

liberals (and he conceded they were “liberals” to use his very own word) the brother had supposedly “messed up” since the controversy backfired into a greater degree of persecution than he thought a preacher should experience in our day. My question for him and his kind is, why preach one standard of faithfulness for a gospel preacher and then turn around and unhesitatingly apply a totally different standard to preachers in our generation?

On one hand this type of preacher will preach that New Testament preachers are to be bold, willing to sacrifice, and

willing to take the lumps of persecution like the first century preachers in the Book of Acts, but then absolutely refuse to say and do the necessary thing if it appears it might bring on a great degree of persecution. Also, after preaching the true standard of evaluation turn around and condemn, possibly because of political expediency and protection of cherished career goals, the faithful preacher who dares to take a strong stand for truth. To this type of “preacher” may I say, Brother, just because you are unwilling to do your duty does not give you the right to condemn the brother who is willing to do his.

WHEN WILL THIS LIP SERVICE CEASE?

This faulty evaluation of faithfulness is of the devil. It is characteristic of the hireling preacher; and keep in mind that one doesn’t have to preach error in the pulpit to be a professional hireling. Many times it is what is left unsaid that reveals the true identity of the hireling preacher. The matter of “You messed up!” is a false accusation that galls any faithful elder, deacon, member, and gospel preacher when understood in its full context and import. The reason it boils my blood is because it implies a humanly devised standard of judgment which establishes an unscriptural cut off level in regard to persecution (don’t we all wish this could be true?). The philosophy says that a preacher must preach the unadulterated gospel at all costs, but at the same time refuse to stand strong on an issue if a great degree of persecution is inevitable. This contradictory, unscriptural thinking is arrogantly depicted as wisdom and longsuffering. Evidently, according to this false concept, the Holy Spirit’s admonition to **“Be thou faithful unto death”** no longer applies (Rev. 2:10).

Who is to decide just what constitutes the proper degree of persecution to be rightfully suffered and the proper degree of persecution to be avoided lest one “mess up?” Based on this unwritten law seemingly burned into the thinking of those who are like the Judaizing teachers in Galatia, our Lord himself was in error since he “got in over his head” while fighting those liberals of his day (the reader may recall that the Judaizers of Paul’s day behaved in a convenient manner lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ, (Gal. 6:12-13). Yes, he must have “messed up” (to use the expression of our brother). After all, if Jesus had just been “wise” like some who preach today, he could have avoided messing up and getting killed. God forbid such a pragmatic mentality! According to this standard the apos-

tle Paul “messed up.” If he had just played his cards right, he could have preached the truth and yet never have been stoned at Lystra! (Acts 14:19). And what about Stephen? If he had only known how to do it right, he could have called the rebellious Jews **“stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears”** and yet have avoided being stoned (Acts 7:51, 58).

Let us ask our brother, did Stephen “mess up?” Perhaps Stephen should not have gotten in over his head in this fight against liberalism without the assistance of others. Did he not know he was not to fight for the souls of men against such odds? If only he had possessed the “wisdom” to have done it differently. Boy, did he mess up! (Obviously, I am using sarcasm). And we wonder what is wrong with the church today?! With this type of thinking going on in the minds of some of our preaching brethren, how can we wonder any longer? Is the foregoing a sample of the thinking of one who views preaching as a courageous work of love regardless of the cost, or is this the thinking of one who views preaching as a glorified secular career? Does this intellectual snobbery of a stance reflect the concept of fighting a selfless **“good fight”** (2 Tim. 4:7), or does this reflect a self-promoting, half-hearted fight? Now, those of you who have been unfortunate enough to work only under sound elders will not have experiential knowledge of this issue, but those who have worked among the smaller churches without sound leaderships and where the office of the eldership is almost unheard of will know exactly whereof I speak.

CONSEQUENCES OF THIS FAULTY PERSPECTIVE

One of the sickening consequences of this false philosophy is the resulting lofty commendation of cowards and the hateful condemnation of the faithful (cf. Isa. 5:20). Perhaps guilt of personal neglected duty explains the mean-spirited zeal of this type of critic or maybe it is just the attitude exhibited by all those who insist on riding the ever swirling merry-go-round of church politics. Some remind us to King Saul who obeyed most of what God commanded but not all. He killed most of what God commanded to be killed but he refused to kill all God had desired (1 Sam. 15:22). Today, all error in a given controversy needs to be killed (exposed regardless of the cost.) Do you believe this, fellow preacher?

THE CRYING NEED TODAY

The crying need today is for these hirelings and self-

FREE CD AVAILABLE

Contending for the Faith is making available a CD-ROM free of charge. *Why is this CD important?* **ANSWER:** It contains an abundance of evidentiary information pertaining to Dave Miller’s doctrine and practice concerning the re-evaluation/reaffirmation of elders, MDR, and other relevant and important materials and documents directly or indirectly relating to the Brown Trail Church of Christ, Apologetics Press, Gospel Broadcasting Network, MSOP, and more.

To receive your free CD or make a financial contribution toward this important CD’s distribution you can reach us at **Contending for the Faith, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77383-2357**, or request the CD by emailing us at dpbcftf@gmail.com.

promoters in pulpits to repent like Saul and say, “**I have sinned...because I feared the people and obeyed their voice**” (1 Sam. 15:24). If repentance is not forthcoming, then faithful brethren should disregard the outward show of long resumes of achievement and put them out of the pulpit of God. Saul could add the impressive “King” on his resume ,but his behavior canceled out its importance in the mind of God.

THE POINT OF THE MATTER

Yes, we are to speak the truth in love, strive to preach a balanced gospel, practice longsuffering, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, know the difference between contentious and contending, but if great persecution, follows this is not to be termed “messaging up.” (Eph. 4:15; Acts 20:27; 2 Tim. 4:2; Eph. 4:1-3; Jude 3; Phi. 2:5). After all is said and done there is a price to pay (2 Tim. 3:12). Paul told young Timothy, “**endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry**” (2 Tim. 4:5).

Hopefully, the degree of persecution one will receive will be minimal. But there are no guarantees in that it will depend on the spirituality level of the leadership of the church along with the integrity level of the area. Due to the present apostasy among us, the faithful gospel preacher will dutifully face the consequences even if it means “making tents” in order to continue to preach the true doctrine of Christ. The existence of the present apostasy implies some will be persecuted to a great degree. Let us boldly refuse to live out of the consciousness of the hirelings among us. Let us place such hirelings in the category that brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr. has courageously described when he has continuously told us, “You just can’t warn some brethren.” There are some who

preach some sound doctrine in pulpits who simply refuse to admit the true condition of the churches of Christ in certain areas of the country. There are still some among us who are in eternal denial as to the great degree of ignorance and rebellion to the Word of God in some areas. Brother preacher, when you truly preach the needed truth, you can expect Diotrophes (if there is one) whose toes are smarting from your preaching to backbite you to others with faulty characterizations. Do not expect to remotely recognize these characterizations when you finally hear them. This will happen when it is even perceived that the preacher strongly believes what God’s standard teaches about: the sinfulness of all drinking of alcohol for recreational purposes, hoarding the Lord’s money from God’s designed purposes, the inordinate love of money, the sinfulness of mediocrity, the recreational use of tobacco, indirectly upholding false teachers, the sinfulness of dancing, immodest dress, and other pet sins of some. Be it known that preaching all the counsel of God will bring the true colors out of the pious appearing unconverted types. Paul knew what it was like to have the truth twisted and therefore suffer “trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds” but he said the Word was still not “**bound**” (2 Tim. 2:9).

So trust in God during the times of persecution and continue seeking to be a God pleaser (Gal. 1:10). Rest assured, in spite of the fact that you refuse to be a party to the good-ole-boy-network of the self-serving among us, you will receive the crown of life on that day (Jam. 1:12). While we may have the utmost and profound respect for the meek, faithful, dedicated, impartial, hardworking, sound preacher, the day that “contending for the faith” is messaging up is the day the accuser has messed up. (cf Jude 3). [*Originally published in the **Defender***]



Not Almost, Not About, but That’s It an Interview with N. B. Hardeman (Deceased)

Prepared by Willard Collins (Deceased)

[*At the age of eighty-six, N. B. Hardeman, was known throughout the brotherhood as “the prince of Preachers.” At his advanced age he continued to preach the Gospel. The interview was conducted by Paul S. Houton, Vice President of the Gospel Press, and Violet DeVaney, Secretary to B. C. Goodpasture, Editor of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, on Saturday, September 10, 1960 at brother Hardeman’s residence, 3482 Walnut Grove Road, Memphis, TN. In this interview, we have the insights of a man concerning the state of the church then, a man who knew the church as well as any man. However, his observations concerning man traveling to the moon was not completely accurate. But that is not the reason we have printed this interview.—Editor*]

Q. Brother Hardeman, when did you decide to become a gospel preacher?

A. “In 1898.”

Q. How many preachers have you had a part in training?

A. “About 2,000.”

Q. What advice would you offer young men now preparing themselves to preach the gospel?

A. “Christ spent thirty years getting ready for three years’ preaching. Most young men today want to spend three years

in preparation for thirty years' preaching—just the reverse.”

Q. What do you believe was the greatest accomplishment of the Hardeman Tabernacle meetings?

A. First, making brethren conscious of our strength and of our sure foundation. Second, holding forth the church of Christ over the institutions of men. Third, emphasizing the gospel versus the doctrines of men. I think those are the outstanding features of the meetings.”

Q. What do you think of the Herald of Truth and the Gospel Press as media for taking the gospel to a large number of people?

A. “They are fine so long as kept simple and free from over-ambitious men. That they are means that could be corrupted, I doubt not.”

Q. Was there a time in your life when a number of those who now oppose the orphan home supported it?

A. “Yes, several of them.”

Will There Be A Division?

Q. Do you believe there will be a division in the church over these issues, and if so, how large do you think this group will be?

A. “I’m afraid there will be a division. The Christian Church and the Premillennialists are concrete examples. The division will be relatively small. Those whom we call ‘antis’ have made all the arguments they know and the only thing left is to go over the ground again. They have no plan or suggestion for carrying out the church obligation.”

Q. Brother Hardeman, do you think that these debates with the “antis” ought to be stopped? Don’t you think Guy N. Woods and others have threshed out all of the arguments?

A. “I think so. I told Guy that I wouldn’t unless they would affirm some kind of an affirmative proposition.”

Q. Do they have anything to affirm?

A. “No, that is the reason that they will never do it.”

Q. According to your knowledge of the scriptures, do you

believe that there is one scriptural pattern excluding all others that the church must follow in caring for the orphans and widows?

A. “No, I do not. If such could be found that would end the controversy regarding orphans and widows. The whole matter belongs in the realm of expediency, good judgment, and common sense as determined by the seniors of the congregation.”

Q. How many meetings have you held in your lifetime?

A. “About 550, I guess.”

Q. How many do you hold a year now?

A. “In 1959 I held thirteen meetings and in 1960 so far I have held six. It is my purpose to preach only on Sunday after this year.”

Value of the Gospel Advocate [What bro. Hardeman said about the *ADVOCATE* in this interview cannot be said about it today or in recent years—**EDITOR**]

Q. Brother Hardeman, as a long-time reader and contributor to the *ADVOCATE*, what do you think it has meant to the church in the past century?

A. “I have been reading the *ADVOCATE* for about fifty years. Next to the Bible it has been the greatest factor in teaching the truth, encouraging brethren, in warning against dangers, and in preserving unity. It has ever fought error and has never compromised any point of faith.”

Q. As you near the sunset of life, what is your greatest comfort, and what warning would you give to those who follow after you?

A. “The exceeding great and precious promises of our Lord. That’s that. Now, what advice? Set your house in order. The Lord requires of us ‘to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.’

‘Show thyself a man.’ Measure success by CONTRIBUTION rather than by ACCUMULATION, that is, what you have done instead of what they have done for you.”

Q. In your judgment what are the four greatest dangers facing the church today?

A. “First, a lack of Bible knowledge and a light regard for what it says. Second, a tendency to make the church a social club for entertainment. Third, a disposition to compromise the truth and to discourage its preaching. Fourth, a love for the praise of men more than the praise of God, lest they should be put out of the club or some social organization.”

Q. What do you think of this “going to the moon” movement?

A. “In the first place I don’t want to go there. No, I doubt very much anybody’s ever doing a thing of that kind.”

A Message to Elders

Q. Don’t you agree, Brother Hardeman, that most of our problems in the church today stem from elders and preach-

**2011 CFTF SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST
LECTURESHIP BOOK**

PROFILES IN APOSTASY #2

\$20.00 PLUS \$3.00 S&H

SEND ALL ORDERS WITH PAYMENT TO:

Contending for the Faith

P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357

Texas residents add 7.25% tax

ers? What would you like to say to the elders, for example, of the churches today?

A. “Well, first of all to STUDY the Bible and learn just what God has said regarding elders. I am sorry to say that as a rule they are just about as ignorant as anybody else in the church. And it has come to pass since they have the located preacher that they depend on him for everything. And the result is that elders hardly know anything at all about what they should.”

Q. Do you think that perhaps there has been more emphasis on the number of children they should have, than on the other qualifications?

A. “Yes, I think so. They know something about what it means to get married, have children, and divorce. They can talk about that. But in leading the church and challenging it to do work that God intended for it to do, some of them fall short. They should be able to defend the church. Charles Houser, Sr., of Paducah, Ky., is about the best elder I ever saw that fulfilled my idea along that line. If, for instance, you dropped in as a stranger, at Nineteenth and Broadway church, and wanted to preach, he would say, “We don’t know you. What about you?” And you would have to tell him all of your background and what he considered the proper thing or else you couldn’t preach there. And if you got up and preached something that he didn’t believe, he would say, ‘Hold on there, that’s not the way the Bible teaches that.’ He would just call a fellow down. Well, I kinda like that.”

Q. The church is growing more than ever before in numbers. Do you think we are growing spiritually?

A. “You had better put a period right there—in numbers. No, I don’t think so. I think the church is weaker today than it has been in years. I don’t believe a church in Memphis knows as much Bible nor is as much devoted to the cause, as the church was fifty years ago. Now the reason is there is too much money in the country—too many automobiles and too many entertainments. An elder was talking to me yesterday and he said, ‘You know we can’t have a crowd for a protracted meeting at our church.’ Neither can they at any of the others. Now WHY? Well, there’s something on hand—the club meeting today or something to do tonight and so on. And members of the church are taking to that. They love pleasure more than anything else. I think the church is weaker spiritually than it has been in years but stronger by far numerically. The only way to make it stronger is to go back to the old paths.”

Q. Brother Hardeman, do you think that the boys are putting too much emphasis on education? Are we stressing the “How” rather than the “What” in preaching?

A. “I certainly do. Just like the boy who went to old Brother Lipscomb and asked him, ‘Brother Lipscomb, do you think that I ought to take expression?’ He said, ‘No, son. You ought to get something first to express.’”

Love For His Horses

Q. Brother Hardeman, tell us about your horses. What did

you do with them?

A. “I had to sell them. When we moved to Memphis I knew that I couldn’t keep them. At Henderson I had a nice barn and a good place to ride, but reluctantly I sold them all. You can’t keep a horse here for less than \$100 per month, plus the shoeing and vet’s service. And I decided that I was old enough to quit. I had never had an accident and I had better quit, so the night when I rode ‘Son of Midnight’ (a black stallion) in Germantown, Tenn., and won the blue ribbon, I got down and bade him goodbye.”

Q. When did you ride? Early in the mornings?

A. “No. For twenty years or more I had a class that met at 7:30 every morning and I don’t think that I was ever late over a dozen times during the whole time. If breakfast was ready all right and if it wasn’t I went right on to my class. I rode in the afternoons. My last class was always over around 2:30. Then I would go home and ride for quite a while. I had a little farm about two miles out of town and I would go down there and kinda superintend affairs.”

Q. Brother Hardeman, had there ever been anything as far as you can remember like the Tabernacle Meetings before that time?

A. “No, I don’t think so. This was one time when all or nearly all of the congregations in Nashville cooperated.”

Q. Do you think such meetings would be productive of good now?

A. “With the issues that now prevail I doubt very much good would result. I would not advise such a course at present.”

Q. If you had your life to go over would you choose to preach?

A. “Yes, I think so.”

Q. What has Sister Hardeman meant to you during these years?

A. “She has been beside me in most all of my efforts. Her judgment has been good. She has commended and criticized to my profit.”

Q. Brother Hardeman, don’t you believe that the command to preach the gospel demands the necessary expense in order

SIGN UP NEW SUBSCRIBERS TO *Contending for the Faith*

To receive a *free PDF version via email*, go to
www.cftfpaper.com and sign up.

Also visit our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/cftfpaper>.

*The new site is made to fit multiple
internet browsing platforms.*

to get the job done?

A. “Of necessity, yes. One person couldn’t go all the world, and preach to every creature. You just analyze that thing, ‘into all the world.’ Now whether that meant the world as known then or now, I am not able to say. Paul said ‘every creature under heaven’ in Col. 1:23. Well, I am inclined to think that meant the world that they knew which was very limited. The word ‘world’ will cover that part that we do know.”

Q. Do you think the Lord didn’t mean for people to go to the moon?

A. “Well, the earth was given to us for our habitation.” In Acts 17: 26 Paul said, ‘. . . **he hath made of one blood all nations to dwell on the face of the earth . . . determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds and habitations thereof.**’ Well, I am inclined to think that is this earth. And further if we have got the data right regarding atmospheric conditions and climatic affairs, no man could live on the moon. It would destroy him at once.”

Q. Brother Hardeman, so many of our young preachers are giving up. Is this because they have no sense of security? Is there some way to overcome this problem? Parents are not encouraging their daughters to marry preachers and they are not encouraging their boys to become preachers.

A. “No, they are rather making light of them. Well, that is due first to the preacher that wants to quit preaching; he has become conscious of the fact that he doesn’t know enough—has about preached out. Second, there is so much money in the country, ‘I can get more pay at something else.’ This possibly guarantees their continuance whereas preaching for this church here doesn’t or any other.”

Q. Is it a false sense of values?

A. “Yes, I think it is. Sometimes the parents instill in their boys a false sense of values—to make money.”

Q. You have learned, Brother Hardeman, that there are things in life more important than making money.

A. “Yes, if you could impress one point that I got from William Jennings Bryan, and that was ‘Put the value of life’s success on contributions rather than upon accumulations.’ That’s where the Lord puts the emphasis. That needs emphasizing as but few things do. And then when I did what they call ‘graduate’ John R. Farrar of Alamo delivered the class address. His subject has always stayed with me. I thought it was silly at the time. He said, ‘Young men don’t get too smart too soon.’

Now that is the best advice I ever had. And he told all of us in the class that and enlarged on it with emphasis and I think that’s one trouble today. Why, who is it dividing the church now and causing all of this confusion? The older men? No, it is the younger men. And they know little about it and don’t have a general conception of the church.”

Disturbances in The Church

Q. Brother Hardeman, don’t preachers need to think for themselves?

A. “I am glad that you called attention to this. Nearly every preacher is either wrapped around some other preacher and believes just what he says and does what he says or he is connected with some paper and he will swear by it or some college, and we classify ourselves accordingly, all of which is wrong.”

Q. Now, Brother Hardeman, that is not saying that the paper or the school is wrong?

A. “No, not at all. It is just saying that we need to think for ourselves. Just like some members of the church today. Why, they worship the preacher more than they do the Lord, by far! Well, that’s it.”

Q. What are some of the systems, for example, that you used in teaching young men to become preachers that they are getting away from today?

A. “First of all, try to make them realize the solemnity of such a work. Boys ought not to become preachers if they can help it. That’s one way of expressing it.”

Q. Did you emphasize more Bible study and memorization than they emphasize now?

A. “Oh, by far.”

Q. Is there any way that we can overcome the feeling of insecurity that young preachers have today? For example, someone has suggested taking out a retirement insurance policy on the young preacher and just let that policy follow him wherever he goes.

A. “Could you, in the first place, frame a policy that would be like you want in that? You say ‘to go with him.’ Well, suppose he would say, ‘I’m going to be a carpenter; I have a good policy of insurance’?”

Q. Then he would have to pay for it. Of course, if he ever gave up preaching, he would lose his policy or he would have to pay it himself.

A. “I have never thought a word about that.”

Q. Brother Hardeman, I haven’t thought of it either, but I’m just wondering if there is any answer. That seems to be the main objection to becoming a preacher—there is no security; they can cut my salary off and I’m without any income whatsoever.

A. “Well, now if a preacher feels that way about it he ought not to preach anyhow.”

Q. That is right, but my question is how can we instill in that boy the desire so that he will preach in spite of these things?

A. “Well, put this point to him: you can’t find a boy or girl either prepared for the work that he wants to do and is reliable that is out of a job. Now, I heard somebody say that a long,

long time ago—I guess Bryan, because I was wild about him. He started out with these ads that you find ‘Wanted (generally a criminal) \$5,000 Reward’ and so on. And from that he went on to this other idea that ‘Wanted-young men and young women that are sold on their job; that are anxious to reach the topmost round.’ No, if a boy has to be paid to carry on a work, I don’t think that is worthwhile. I mean if he has to be guaranteed, that makes the salary the main thing.”

Q. Do you think that shows or would show a lack of real faith?

A. “Yes, I think that it would. Paul spent his time working to supply his need.”

Q. Brother Hardeman, what do you think the answer to our juvenile problem today is?

A. “Well, the woodshed is one.”

Q. Well, when the parents don’t provide the woodshed what is the next best solution?

A. “That’s about all that is needed. I think that would just about cure all the problems. I heard a judge of Circuit Court sentence a boy to the penitentiary. I rarely ever go to the courthouse but that time I knew the judge quite well and he invited me to come up to the trial and I heard him sentence this boy. And he said, ‘Now this boy is not the one that ought to go to the penitentiary, but that thing sitting over there (pointing to his daddy and mammy).’ He said, ‘They are the

ones responsible for all of this.’ He then said ‘If my mother had had this boy to raise as she did me without a father, she would have turned him over a barrel and worn him out and never would have had to appeal to the courts or any sheriff to help her.’ And I think that is the solution to your problem.”

Q. It seems that some of our modern teachers are pushing the idea of “steal an audience” with your oratory. What do you think of this?

A. “Well, I never was much on teaching of speech. If a fellow gets full of it why just let it come out, and it will come out in a natural way. If he tries to make it artificial, it lessens the force of it always. I never took a lesson in speech in my life.”

Q. What is your secret?

A. “Well, I learned the English grammar and figures of speech and rhetoric and all that, but not all the gesticulations and emphasis here and there and the other. That’s natural to come as can be and it will come naturally. But if I were to get up and try to put the emphasis and wave the hand at the right place I would make a mess of it. Like Bob Smith, he would have his brother outline a sermon and somebody found it and he had his subject up there and a point down there, and way down at the bottom it said, ‘Cry here.’”

—*Truth Magazine*,
V:5, pp. 7-9
February 1961



DEVIATIONS FROM THE TRUTH

Roelf L. Ruffner

AND THE “NONES” HAVE IT!

“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel” (Jud. 2:10).

A recent religious survey from the liberal Pew Research Center shows that since 2008 the number of people who claim they are non-religious or “nones” has grown significantly in the United States. They do not claim to be atheists; though the number of atheists has also grown significantly. These are folk that do not identify with any religion.

America once prided herself on the religious nature of her people. “Freedom of religion” has always been touted as one of the main draws for immigrants to our land. But we are now in a “post-Christian” era. Like Europe, our society is becoming increasingly secularized and religion is no longer a factor. Why is this? Here are my thoughts.

THE TRIUMPH OF SELFISHNESS

Many in our materialistic, self-centered nation think they no longer need God. Many depend on the government and science to satisfy and supply their needs. Man is now the center of all things. Our forefathers understood that what they needed and consumed for daily existence ultimately came from the providential hand of God. To depend totally on God rather than self is to know true liberty.

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Mat. 4:3-4).

THE RELIGION OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

For many years, the media and even the American educational system has taught the false doctrine of religious pluralism. It is the idea that there are many ways to God, so all religions are equal. The only “sin” in this religion is to

believe that there are absolutes in the realms of religion, ethics, and morality. Of course this flies in the face of authentic New Testament Christianity. **“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”** (John 14:6). The “none” will take such an approach because it is intellectually and spiritually easy. For them if they accept absolutes then there is the reality of personal accountability and the prospect of eternal punishment. **“And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee”** (Paul before Governor Felix and his wife Drusilla, Acts 24:25).

THE TYRANNY OF RELIGIOUS LIBERALISM

For over two generations, religious liberalism has ruled the roost in our society. Liberals in word and deed deny the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible and corresponding authority and replace them with a syrupy subjectivism or “feel-goodism.” Pulpits no longer condemn sin and extol virtue by strong Bible preaching and teaching. They are mostly silent about sin, even in the body of Christ—the church of Christ. The soul-saving Gospel teaching the necessity of the repentance of sin has been exchanged for agnosticism and hand holding. The end result is a generation which does not know God and does not care to know Him—the “nones.”

THE ANSWER IS THE TRUTH

Experts claim that “nones” cannot be reached with Bible based preaching/teaching. It turns them off. Rather they must be cajoled by entertainment and a salesman’s pitch. There is a good ole word for this approach – BALDERDASH! The 2,000 year old Jerusalem Gospel may not pack the pews anymore, but it can save a soul from Hell (Acts 17:30,31; Rom. 1:16). When the righteous Judean King Hezekiah tried to restore his northern “none” cousins to God, here was the reaction to his plea:

So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem (2 Chr. 30:10).

Likewise today, the 21st Century Christian must reject the temptation to pander to nones and **“gird up the loins of thy mind, be sober...”** (1 Pet. 1:13). The way to save souls is not to compromise and retreat but to **“fight the good fight of faith”** (1 Tim. 6:12).

For the last 2,000 years, whenever the Gospel is preached in it fullness, the reaction is the same. Let us take courage and be like Paul. After a whole day of teaching the Truth and pleading from the Scriptures to a crowd of his stubborn kinsmen, Luke records, **“And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not”** (Acts 28:24).

[<http://www.religionnews.com/2015/05/12/christians-lose->

[ground-nones-soar-new-portrait-u-s-religion/](http://www.religionnews.com/2015/05/12/christians-lose-ground-nones-soar-new-portrait-u-s-religion/) as of May 14, 2012]

CONTEMPORARY VERSUS TRADITIONAL

Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream (Amos 5:22-24).

As you may know our society has gone insane in recent years. It has gone overboard in an emotion-driven, search for “meaning” and “purpose” in life. Objective truth is cast aside for the new and the titillating. Biblical truths and commandments are seen as unnecessary in one’s selfish quest for meaning. “Does it work for me?” has become the mantra. And if an absolute of old does not “work,” then many will cast it aside for something different. It is a rebellious attitude which seeks its own way rather than God’s way. The prophet Samuel told King Saul after he rebelled against the word of God, **“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king”** (1 Sam. 15:23). Saul’s sin was boiled down to unbelief. The same often goes for many today.

Recently, I was looking at a denominational church’s website which listed two worship services on Sunday. One service at 8:30 a.m. was designated as “traditional.” The second service at 11:00 a.m. was marked as “contemporary.” By “traditional” they mean following the liturgy and ritual in worship of their denomination. By “contemporary” they mean following a departure from their denomination’s definition of “traditional worship.” Usually it involves the use of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM), which inculcates an almost rock music concert setting with a band and popular music. CCM is now part of the abysmal music “industry” with its “stars” and following. This pop religious phenomenon is sweeping through American churches upsetting some mainline denominations. The use of CCM is to attract more young people (especially young families,) to assemblies. Unfortunately, it has also captured the imagination of some of our liberal brethren.

What is allowed in the worship of the living God since Calvary? When asked about worship, Jesus said, **“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”** (John 4:24). “Spirit” refers to the sincerity of the worshipper (cf. Jos. 24:14). “Truth” is the truth of God’s Word (John 17:17). My feelings or preferences may change with the wind but God’s Word is changeless (Psa. 119:89; John 10:35; 1 Pet. 1:23-25). In the New Testament there are five acts of worship mentioned and given divine approval: Teaching or preaching (2 Tim. 4:1-4), Praying (1 Tim. 2:8), Singing (Eph. 5:19), Observance of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26) and Giving of our means (1 Cor

16:1,2). When we “**go beyond what is written**” (1 Cor. 4:6, ASV–1901), we forsake the authority of the Scriptures (Col. 3:17; 2 Tim. 3:16,17). Our worship, however “heartfelt” to human eyes, can become “**vain**” (Mat. 15:9) in God’s sight.

Contemporary worship usually centers around an individual, though this is often denied by its advocates. They may be the “worship leader,” or a solo singer or a performer. Often it includes hand clapping and the use of mechanical instruments of music. Unaccompanied, congregational singing is often forsaken. Contemporary worship breaks down to a matter of entertainment, with lights and sound equipment. Advocates of contemporary worship often reject the “traditions” of their elders. In “Christian worship” many man-made traditions (i.e., mechanical instruments of music, humming, with the voice mimicking mechanical instruments, choirs, and solos) need to be rejected (cf. 1 Peter 1:18). The God-given traditions of the New Testament should not be rejected but embraced and practiced. “**Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle**” (2 The. 2:15). These “traditions” are 2,000 years old but they are still ordained by Jehovah.

In churches of Christ contemporary worship vs. traditional worship is a pretext for apostasy. The excuse is often, “We can use modern songs and a more relaxed setting to bring in the younger generation.” You end up with two congregations under one roof. The second service becomes the haven for “change agents” and liberals. My experience is that it is all subterfuge. These rebels do not want to alienate the older generation too much and lose their financial support. They figure they can outlive the more “traditional” generation and take over when the time is ripe. Yet these rebels forget who is observing our worship and is the ultimate audience.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting (Gal. 6:7-8).

GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF CONFUSION: SEXUAL OR OTHERWISE

Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering (1 Cor. 11:13-15).

Behind the teaching of this verse is a universal standard of God, given societal order—men and women are separate sexes, not to be confused. It was a shame in Paul’s mind for a man to have long hair like a woman and a woman to have short hair like a man. It was unnatural or against the God approved natural order of things.

I thought of this verse recently when it was revealed that the former Olympian and reality T.V. star Bruce Jenner wants everyone to accept that he is now a “she” or transgendered. He has gone so far as to take hormone treatments, have plastic surgery to change his body shape and has grown his hair long. He may even have surgery someday to anatomically look like a woman. He claims he is not a homosexual but a woman trapped in a man’s body.

Who or what determines whether a person is male or female? Is it heredity or environment or choice? Granted there are extremely rare cases where individuals are born hermaphrodites or containing both male and female genitalia. But this is a medical condition which can be corrected. But I refer to individuals, like Jenner, who are of one gender and make the CHOICE to live their lives imitating the opposite gender. They wear dresses and makeup like a female. Or they wear male clothing. They may go so far as to surgically mutilate their bodies to conform to their choice. This is all utter and complete sexual and moral confusion. Until recently it was considered in the psychiatric community as a form of mental illness.

But what does God’s Word say about this unnatural, deviant behavior. Jesus makes it clear that a human being is either a male or a female. Answering a question regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage He said,

And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? (Mat. 19:4, 5).

We may correctly infer from these verses that God intended for one to live one’s life in the gender in which one is born, not men deciding to live as women or women deciding to live as men.

The Law of Moses reflects this same standard of separation between the sexes. “**The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God**” (Deu. 22:5). God is not the author of confusion.

In ancient times it was not unheard of for a man to become a eunuch, either willingly or unwilling (a slave), to serve in a king’s household. Among the heathen some perverted men even tried to alter their anatomy by surgery to appear female like many transgendered do today. The Law commanded that such a person was to be excluded from tabernacle/temple worship. “**He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord**” (Deu. 23:1). A male member of the priestly tribe, the tribe of Levi, who was a eunuch was excluded from the priesthood (Lev. 21:20).

What about sinners today who are following the trans-

gendered lifestyle? The push is on in our society for acceptance of all sexual perversion or aberrant lifestyles. But those who realize their mistake (and some do!) should repent of their sins and obey the gospel. I believe there were Christians in New Testament times who had done that very thing (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11). They put their past transgression and fleshly desires at the foot of cross and were **“crucified with Christ”** (Gal. 2:20). Likewise Christians should recall that they also have been forgiven by God and accept these men and women as brethren in spite of their past. **“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another”** (Tit. 3:3).

New Testament Christianity restores that balance to our lives; whether it is spiritually, emotionally, religiously, socially, or sexually. **“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints”** (1 Cor. 14:33).

WHAT IS THE GLORY OF OUR NATION?

“In the multitude of people is the king’s honour: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince”
“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Pro. 14:28, 34).

I love to teach and preach from the Book of Proverbs. It was written essentially as a guide for young men in this life (Pro. 1:8, 9). But I also find it of great value as a guide to “less than young men.” Solomon, the wisest man who had ever lived, includes his inspired thoughts on government and ethics as well in this book of wisdom. I imagine rulers such as Asa, Hezekiah, Josiah, Daniel, and Nehemiah found great guidance in its pages.

In my notes I prepared for a Wednesday evening Bible study a couple of years ago, I put these two verses together with some other verses from Chapter 14 under the heading: “The Morality of a People and a Nation,” with the sub-heading: “What is the glory of our nation?” Solomon and the Holy Spirit knew what the glory or “honour” of a king was—a multitude of righteous, virtuous people to rule over in his kingdom. This contrasts with the pomp and pageantry of the typical Eastern monarch who had to rule over an unrighteous, immoral people with an iron fist. Such a monarch feared every day for his life from subterfuge and revolt. He longed for a happy, prosperous people and the resulting tranquility of rule they exemplified in a kingdom. Without a virtuous people (“the want of people”) he faced only the possibility of destruction and had no glory.

These verses also cause me to think upon my beloved nation. Its founders saw virtue or righteousness as essential elements of the republic they had created. Notice these quotes:

“[V]irtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government.”—*George Washington*

“Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become more corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.”—*Benjamin Franklin*

“It is certainly true that a popular government cannot flourish without virtue in the people.”—*Richard Henry Lee*

“Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”—*John Adams*

“Public virtue cannot exist in a nation without private, and public virtue is the only foundation of republics.”—*John Adams*

Where is our nation now on the virtue scale? Our politicians have little if any virtue, which only breeds cynicism in the citizenry. Our popular “culture” is filled with violence, profanity, sexual perversion, and moral filth. It is a joke and a reproach to much of the world. From the upper crust of society to the lowest level, there is no glory, only moral and ethical decay. Americans were once looked upon as hard working, honest, God-fearing folk but not anymore. One cannot help but wonder, “Are we entering a new Dark Age?” As God told Belshazzar, arrogant grandson of King Nebuchadnezzar, after his drunken profaning of the most high God, **“Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting”** (Dan. 5:27).

When faced with this reality are we to just withdraw into ourselves and give up? Should we advocate violent separation, revolution or civil war to regain our nation’s virtue (cf. Mat. 26:52)? NO! We must continue to serve the Master and our fellowman (1 Cor. 15:58). Our goal should be to bring as many as possible into Christ’s kingdom. Only He can make a sinner into a righteous person (Rom. 6:16-18). Only the Gospel can purify men’s souls (Rom. 1:16). In the world of the First Century A.D. the Gospel did that very thing. **“For WE ourselves also WERE sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another”** (Tit. 3:3 Emphasis mine—RLR).

Christians can also make it their goal to be more virtuous. Using the Word of God, we can root out sin in our lives and exchange it for righteousness (2 Pet. 1:3-9). We can be **“the salt of the earth”** and **“the light of the world”** (Mat. 5: 13,14). The world is watching. We will never be able to reform Satan’s domain (1 John 5:19), but we can make him miserable. **“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven”** (Luke 10:17,18).

[<http://www.liberty1.org/virtue.htm> as of April 16, 2014]

—2530 Moore Court Dr.
Columbia, TN 38401

How is Pepperdine Any Different? (Thoughts On Avoiding Doctrine)

Johnny Oxendine

Pepperdine University, a California college affiliated with the Church of Christ, announced Tuesday that it would begin accepting applications for a scholarship to be awarded to students “whose academic or personal involvement has demonstrated a commitment to the health of the LGBT community,” according to a press release.

These were the words on the pages of the February 14, 2013 edition of Advocate.com, a prohomosexual publication, describing what has become the last stone to be pulled from the cornerstone of what had been thought of as a church of Christ affiliated university. The rest of the article says what one might expect, and none of this is a great wonder as Pepperdine University has, for decades now, pranced with the devil through the acceptance of false teachers, false doctrine, and denominational concepts and practices.

We mentioned earlier this year of their invitation extended to a now openly declared denominational lesbian who had been a former student. She now wears tattoos and curses during her “sermons” for her “church.” Is it any wonder that the school is now offering a scholarship in promotion of the homosexual community lifestyle?

The question is not how it all went wrong, but rather, how is it any different from congregations today that continue to dabble in this stream of error without any consideration of the resonant effects and consequences. Worse are those brethren who don’t know any better than to engage in fellowship with these people, seeing no real distinction between truth and error. Those who think words and actions mean nothing are going to be right there with Pepperdine on the Day of Judgment, wondering how it all began.

We recently got an email from a sound gospel preacher telling of the oddest invitation he had received in some time:

to become a deacon under elders whom he and his son were in the processing of correcting (or, attempting to correct) on the subject of marriage, divorce, and remarriage. They (the elders) did not see the differences on that doctrinal matter as a detriment to their, or any one else’s, salvation. It just seemed to be something they could let go, one way or the other.

Senator Ted Cruz chided the GOP members of the US Senate and possible GOP presidential candidates for not taking a more forceful stance for freedom of religion in the recent cases involving laws passed in Indiana and Arkansas. The governors of those states walked back the laws that would strengthen those freedoms because of economic pressures from companies and the vocal mobs of the left-winged fascists. Only Senator Cruz voiced an angry response to the mob mentality that has come to represent “tolerance” in today’s world.

Brethren who do not see any difference between the Lord’s church and the Christian Church, or who think that intent in marriage is a valid defense to allow for divorce, or who teach the baptism of the Holy Spirit (or Holy Spirit baptism) as a contemporary doctrinal position are driving down the same freeway as those early pioneers heading to Pepperdine. The thrill of accreditation meant much more than any defense of the truth.

We need to be “set for the defense of the gospel” (Phi. 1:17), not sitting on the outside wondering how it all came to pass, as no doubt some at Pepperdine are now doing.

— P.O. Box 5026
San Mateo, Ca. 94402

ONE GOSPEL

John Rose

The word *gospel* is the English translation of the Greek word εὐαγγέλιον. This Greek word means glad tidings or good news. The fact that Jesus came to seek and to save that which is lost (Luke 19:10) is indeed good news! That there is but one Gospel is emphatically proclaimed by the apostle Paul in his letter to the brethren in Galatia, “**I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ**” (Gal. 1:6-7). Verse six contains the phrase, “**unto another gospel,**” and verse seven has, “**which is not another.**” No contradiction exists between the two verses, for the word *another* is a different Greek word in each verse. The apostle says in verse six that he marvelled that the Galatians were so

quickly moved away from the Gospel which had been preached to them and to which they had been obedient (Gal. 3:1-2) unto another gospel. The “**another**” found in verse six is ετερος and means separate and distinct in quality and kind. The gospel to which Paul makes reference in verse six is only a so-called gospel that is not the same as the Gospel of the Christ. Paul says in verse seven that the gospel of verse six is not another Gospel. The “**another**” of this verse is αλλος and means a second or another in number. Paul is declaring that the so-called gospel of verse six is not a second Gospel. Not only does this gospel not have the marks of identity that the Gospel of God possesses but it is not an additional nor substitutionary gospel. The conclusion? There is but one Gospel of Jesus the Christ and all so-called gospels are but frauds and can never save any man.

—1770 18th Ave. NE.
Naples, FL 34120

(Continued From Page 1)

nal departures. Merely registering objections is insufficient. Verily, as long as one is a member of an apostate church he is endorsing its apostasy. For this reason, John forbade extending any indication of encouragement or endorsement to false teachers; to do so is to have fellowship with their evil works (2 John 10–11).

“Come Forth”—The Danger Factor

The Lord stated a second significant reason His people must exit “Babylon”: He was going to bring plagues upon her, which those—good and evil alike—who remained in her would also suffer. One dare not assume that God will hold only the leaders in today’s “Babylons” responsible. While their responsibility is greater, their supporters are likewise culpable, and will suffer the same judgment rendered against their leaders. Even the apostles would have been “rooted up” or would “fall into the pit” (i.e., be lost) had they followed or supported erroneous leaders (Mat. 15:13–14).

Had Lot, his wife, and his daughters not fled Sodom, God would have destroyed them with that wicked city. The Lord urged their hasty departure to escape God’s judgment (Gen. 19:12–17; cf. 2 Pet. 2:7). Likewise, the Lord would have His faithful ones to “come forth” from corrupt congregations to escape the “plagues” that God will surely visit upon them (Rev. 2:20–23; 22:18–19).

One who remains in an unfaithful congregation also runs the risk of becoming “desensitized” to error. Though at first he might strongly object to the departures he sees, by staying in such a church one may be lulled into complacency toward them—the “boiled frog” syndrome. He may begin to rationalize the errors and to exalt sincerity over Truth.

Further Motivations to Move

Revelation 18:4 furnishes two reasons, but there are additional sound reasons why saints should flee modern “Babylons.”

• **To Support Truth and Righteousness:** One who remains in a digressive church not only supports error, but he robs God and His faithful people of the fellowship and support due them. Not only should one not want to support false doctrine, he should greatly desire to support only sound doctrine. As long as one remains in a liberal church, he robs God (and His faithful people) of time, talents, money, and every means of his support and endorsement. This reason alone should be sufficient to cause one to “come forth” from an apostate group.

• **To Save One’s Soul: One should flee a liberal congregation for the sake of his own soul.** Remaining in a “Babylon” church makes one subject to God’s eternal judgment against it. As already noted, although Lot objected to Sodom’s sins, had he remained in it he would have perished with its perverted populace. Similarly, for the sake of spiritual survival, every Christian who objects to the errors in his

“home” congregation should leave it. We all need to be in a congregation that constantly urges us to honor God’s Word in everything we do. We need to hear error identified and refuted. These things will help us to serve Christ faithfully and reach Heaven at last. In a liberal church, not only are none of these found, but their opposites abound.

• **To Save One’s Children: Parents of small children who remain in an apostate congregation are very unwise and short-sighted.** They (especially fathers) have the responsibility to nurture their children “**in the chastening and admonition of the Lord**” (Eph. 6:4). Parents who stay in a liberal congregation fail in this duty, even if they teach their children correctly and provide a good example at home. Their influence will likely not be able to counteract the acceptance of “social” drinking, dancing, unscriptural marriages, theistic evolution, instrumental music in worship, fellowship with the denominations, worship innovations, and such like. Also, the “peer pressure” of other children will work against the parents. Lot lost at least two daughters and their families in Sodom’s destruction. Although he urged, “**Up, get you out of this place,**” they had been so influenced by their surroundings that they refused his plea (Gen. 19:12–14). Lot sacrificed them by foolishly rearing them in Sodom. Some today are as obstinate as Lot—even if it means the loss of their children to error. They, as Lot did, continue to linger when they should have fled (vv. 15–16). Otherwise good parents in liberal churches may at home point out the errors the children are encountering in “Bible” classes and worship assemblies, but eventually those children will figure out that their parents are being hypocritical to stay in such a church. If parents want their children to grow up with any semblance of strong convictions in the Truth, they dare not linger in a liberal congregation.

Excuses, Excuses

In spite of the numerous compelling reasons why Truth-loving brethren should have nothing to do with an apostate religious body, a large number of them continue to do so, offering various excuses.

• **We Can Help:** “We don’t agree with what’s going on, but we hope we can correct these things by staying.” Admittedly, some congregations have not reached the “point of no return” in their digression. In such cases, those who are zealous for the Truth should stay and “**contend earnestly for the faith**” (Jude 3). However, when congregational leaders have obviously succumbed to liberalism, it is practically impossible to reclaim them. To them, those who criticize erroneous doctrine or practice are just pesky “troublemakers.”

Most of the larger urban congregations are either well on their way to, or have reached, the “point of no return” doctrinally. Their leaders have taken a leftward course. As the consuming flame draws the moth, so the “**broad way**” that ends in destruction has enticed them (Mat. 7:13). They have money, power, and worldly ambition, and they roll

over any who get in their way. One is terribly naive who believes that he can redirect them. To stay with them is to contribute to tearing down that which the Lord wants us to build. In doing so, one only wastes effort, time, influence, and money on a lost cause—and will lose his soul in the bargain. The Lord’s command concerning hardened apostate religious leaders is: **“Let them alone: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit”** (Mat. 15:14).

• **Family and Friends:** “Although I don’t approve of this congregation, I can’t leave my kindred and best friends.” We should all possess “natural affection” (Rom. 1:31). However, all other affections must be secondary to one’s affection for the Christ and His Word (Mat. 6:24, 33; 10:34–36; 22:36–37). We correctly appeal to members of denominations to come out of those sinful institutions, even if it means sacrificing family and friends. It is no less appropriate to appeal to brethren whose family ties and friendships bind them to digressive “churches of Christ.”

• **Too Much Invested:** “I have been a member of this congregation for years, and I have invested too much money and time to walk away from it.” It is painful to lose investments, but it is sometimes necessary. Spiritual issues far outweigh mere material ones. That one is so concerned over money or time is a “dead giveaway” that the priceless treasure of Truth and one’s eternal destiny are not one’s priorities (Mat. 6:21). One whose house is in the path of a raging flood is a fool if he tells would-be rescuers he has invested too much time and money in it to leave. In both cases, these folk have already lost their “investments” whether they go or stay. The member of the liberal church has lost his “investments,” and by remaining in it, he compounds those losses. He had better be concerned with the far greater loss of his soul if he continues to support error and sin (Mat. 5:30; 16:26; 2 John 9–11). Some cannot bear to leave behind the building their money and/or hands helped to build. A brother once asked me what he should do about the liberalism in the church of which he was a member, which had earned its well-deserved reputation over several years. He told me many sad details about their departures. I knew he had at one time been an elder there, but he told me he had resigned some time earlier because his objections were repeatedly ignored. I had assumed he agreed with the liberalism because he had continued to stay there. When I asked why he stayed he said that he (and some others) did not want to “give up” the building. He failed to comprehend that the liberals long before gained control of the building (as his resignation indicated). In such cases, it is folly to think that one is “saving the building” by staying.

A building is only a building. It can be replaced, but a soul that stays in a digressive church may be lost and never recovered—for the Truth or for eternity. As I would unhesitatingly urge a man to flee his fire-engulfed house as a lost cause, so do I counsel brethren who remain in liberal-infest-

ed churches in their vain attempt to “save the building.”

• **Fear of Division:** “I don’t approve of the corruptions and innovations I see in this congregation, but I might cause division if I leave.” One should be cautious and concerned about division, but one dare not favor a false “peace” or “unity” above Truth and godliness. Liberals have falsely accused many a devoted saint of “causing division” when all they did was stand for the Truth and object to unauthorized doctrines or deeds. I confess to encouraging division when the Truth is at stake. Our Lord is “the Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6), but He rules with a “sword” that is often divisive (Mat. 10:34; Luke 12:51–52; Eph. 6:17). When some in a congregation refuse to submit to God’s Word and others are determined to do so, division is inevitable. The Lord anticipated such divisions, and they have His blessing (1 Cor. 11:19). Those who have abandoned the Truth are the culprits in such cases, regardless of accusations to the contrary. Brethren should not let the “church divider” charge intimidate them.

• **Nowhere to Go:** “I don’t agree with the preaching and practices of this congregation, but where can I go?” This problem especially perplexes those who live where the only congregation designated “church of Christ” has apostatized. In such cases, it is time to begin a new congregation. Brethren in hundreds of places did so a century or more ago when digressives forced the instrument and the missionary society into almost every congregation. Many sacrificed greatly as heartless heretics, operating as religious bullies, forced them to choose between compromising or leaving.

Those faithful spiritual ancestors understood the spiritual application of Solomon’s words: **“Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith”** (Pro. 15:16; 16:8). Some of these godly folk began congregations in their homes with only their own family unit as members, but they were determined to be faithful to God. The time has come again to demonstrate such grit and character for those in unsound churches who would “worship in spirit and truth” and maintain a “good conscience” (John 4:23–24; Heb. 13:18). While the modern innovations are more varied than those of the past, they represent the same kind of rebellion against New Testament authority. God-fearing brethren who live in areas where sound congregations exist have no excuse for remaining in unsound congregations. They cannot sincerely ask, “Where can I go?”

• **We Like the Youth Program:** “Many of the things being done in the church here are unscriptural, but it has a large group of children the ages of ours.” As I suggested earlier, having children should be a compelling reason for leaving, rather than for staying in a liberal church. What parents “gain” in peers and programs for their children they more than lose to the harmful influence, emphasis, and teaching, as already enumerated. It would be far better for one’s chil-

dren to be reared in a congregation that provides wholesome doctrine and spiritual emphasis with only one or two others (or even none) their ages than in a congregation with a multitude their age where Scriptural teaching and example are absent. Remember Lot's folly—and losses.

• **No Perfect Congregation:** “I know this congregation has many problems in doctrine and practice, but so did the church in Corinth, and Paul still called it a ‘church of God.’” Liberals have so often repeated this prattle to justify their apostasies that some otherwise sound brethren now parrot it. Such is a classic illustration of comparing “apples” with “oranges.” True, Paul addressed the defective Corinthian brethren as **“the church of God”** (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1), but this is hardly the end of the matter. The principal aim of Paul’s letters to them was to correct those errors and their purveyors. He believed—correctly—that the church was salvageable. Most of the Corinthians were penitent (2 Cor. 7:5–16), and Paul warned the few who were not that he would deal with them when he arrived (12:20–21; 13:2–10). Had the church refused his reproofs, he could not have continued in fellowship with them and been consistent with his own teaching (Rom. 16:17–18; 1 Cor. 5:11–13; Eph. 5:11; Tit. 3:10; et al.) or with the Lord’s (Mat. 7:15–16; 15:13–14; 16:6, 12; et al.). One who concludes that Paul’s address of the Corinthian church as **“the church of God”** somehow justifies a congregation’s apostasy is sorely mistaken.

Paul dealt with these errors as soon as he learned of them—before their perpetrators had become entrenched and had gained unbreakable control. Unlike many present-day error plagued congregations, the Corinthian errors did not represent a long-standing pattern of liberalism and disregard for the Truth. Numerous faithful brethren have again and again exposed and rebuked the errors of modern apostate congregations, only to see them resolutely march further into radicalism. Unlike the Corinthian church, there is no realistic hope that they will return to the Truth. Anyone who would appeal to the Corinthians as an excuse for apostasy and/or for remaining in an apostate church should be ashamed.

Conclusion

In appealing for good brethren to leave bad churches, I am not encouraging “sheep-stealing.” I am simply encouraging godly men and women to have the courage of their convictions and to make Truth their priority. Although it may require sacrifice, the Lord’s command to them is: **“Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues”** (Rev. 18:4).

—908 Imperial Drive
Denton, TX 76209



Visit Scripturecache.com...

Exposition, Exegesis, and Commentary on a variety of Bible Topics and Passages



Over the past half-century-plus I have had the opportunity to write hundreds of articles and manuscripts. My late beloved wife, Lavonne, and our son, Andy, have written a considerable body of material as well. These documents treating various Bible and Bible-related subjects total several thousand pages.



Dub McClish



Lavonne McClish



Andy McClish



At the urging of others, we are making these materials more widely available than possible by printed media. Through our Website, these are accessible at no charge to Bible students everywhere. If the things we have written help even one person to a better understanding of the Sacred Text and to a closer relationship with its Divine Author, we will feel amply rewarded. Please visit scripturecache.com soon. —Dub McClish

Like Dogs And Pigs

Sonya West

During the Nazi Germany concentration camp era, many innocent people were held captive under extremely harsh conditions. Only a fraction of those who entered the camps survived to tell about it later. Stories and horrific pictures of child labor, rape, mass murders, and children being snatched from their families have been handed down for more than 70 years since the end of these dark days in history. Anyone who did survive this terrible ordeal would in no way want to return to this tragic time. Once released, these survivors would want to press forward to better times and better places.

The same sentiments should be felt by those that have left the life of sin to become a newborn babe in Christ. Several Biblical passages speak of the joy of being in Christ and out of bondage of the world (2 Pet. 2:2-4; 1 John 1:3-7). However, Paul writes in 2 Peter 2:20-22 of some that had escaped the world through obedience but had returned again. Notice his analogy:

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Picturing a dog licking up his own vomit or the clean pig (sow) rolling around in the mud is grotesque to most. For this very reason, Peter, through inspiration, penned the above passage. God wanted to show just how horrible it is for one who has escaped sin and the bondage of the world, to willingly return. Just like one escaping the Nazi concentration camps would be thought a lunatic to return willingly, one who returns to the world of sin has also lost good judgment.

Many do not realize that they are in this situation until it has gone too far and they feel they cannot come back. The key to the situation is to recognize the warning signs and heed them before it is too late. In order to do this, you must take time to self-evaluate. Answer the following questions to determine if you are “returning” to your old life of sin:

Do you find more enjoyment being around those who are of a worldly mind? James 4:4 likens being friends with the world to one that has committed adultery. **“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”** No longer is the Christian faithful in his relationship with God; he has committed adultery with the world. This does not mean that you cannot have friends that are not Christians; however, it does instill in you, the Christian, the realization that you cannot love companions of this world more than God, nor can you expect to remain in a faithful relationship with God while allowing yourself to be caught up in the actions of “old” friends. Why would you want to return to friends that do not care about Christianity, or, in some instances, even ridicule it?

Do you find yourself using a different language in everyday life than you do at worship services? It is amazing the control over the tongue that some seem to have when they are in the worship services of the saints, but yet lack this same control when in their everyday lives. The Bible does teach that the tongue is a hard member to tame (James 3:8), and those that come out of the world must work daily to keep it under control. This is part of buffeting **“your body to bring it under submission”** that Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 9:27. Therefore, when you have a different type of language for the services of the Lord than for your everyday life, backsliding is occurring. As a Christian, your language should be pure in the sight of God. Speaking as the heathens speak is only allowing yourself to be caught up in the ways of the world.

Who are you trying to impress? It certainly is not God.

Do you find yourself making excuses for missing the assembly of the saints? When one begins to “backslide” into the world, it is not an action that occurs overnight. This person starts finding convenient ways to be absent from the assembling of the saints and eventually has no problem satisfying self with these excuses. Many lessons, sermons, manuscripts, etc., have been presented on the sin of forsaking the assembling of the saints. Certainly every faithful Christian understands the importance of giving God the homage due him through the worship services of the church; however, some do not understand that when they are forsaking the opportunity to worship God, they are also forsaking their own need for fellowship with the saints (Heb 10:22-27). This passage states that if those **“sin willfully after”** they **“have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.”** They only have the hope of **“judgment and fiery indignation.”** Would it not be better to “recharge” your battery for facing the wiles of this world by being in fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ? How are you going to get support when you do not even “show up” for services? If you are letting things of a worldly nature (job, sickness, athletics, friends, etc.) take you away from meeting to worship with the saints, you are returning to your old life.

Do you find yourself belligerent towards those that try to approach you about your sin? No one enjoys being corrected. Parents must instruct children when they make incorrect choices, just like God corrects Christians through His Word. When a brother or sister in Christ sees another Christian falling, it is their duty to reach out to that fellow Christian. Galatians 6:1 states: **“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”** Love for your soul, prompts others to approach you. However, if you do not care about your own soul, you may take offense to someone pointing out your sins. When you have reached this point, you must take a look in the mirror and realize you are no longer following the precepts of the Word of God. Instead of being angry with those trying to help you, you should be grateful that they love (agape) you enough to not want you to be lost. Many in the church have such a warped view of love that they do not see that true love, as the Bible teaches, is so strong a love that the Christian does not want to see someone else lost; therefore, they take the steps necessary to keep their brothers and sisters out of the pits of hell. Those today that view Christian love as this “mushy gushy” kind of love contend that if you love someone you do not want to “hurt” their feelings, therefore, you do not tell them the truth about their sins but allow them to feel comfortable enough that they remain in them and ultimately die lost in those sins. If someone is comforting you in this way, they **“serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple”** (Rom. 16:18). They are satisfying you and giving you a false hope.

Many Christians allow the world to pull them back into the pitfalls of sin. It is no different than that dog returning to its vomit, nor the pig rolling around in the mud after a bath. It turns the wonderful joy of being free from the bondage of this world into the sorrow that comes from being entangled again. The prisoners of the Nazi concentration camps had no desire to return to the horrible conditions of the camps, and neither should you want to return to the imprisonment of this world. If you find yourself “looking back,” remember our hope lies in Galatians 5:1, where it states: **“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”** and run back to the Lord before it is too late.

—3901 Aspen Dr.
Montgomery, TX 77356

*Truth is truth and always will be truth
regardless of what men think or say about it.*

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

DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES

-Colorado-

Denver—Piedmont Church of Christ, 1602 S. Parker Rd. Ste. 109, Denver, CO 80231, Sunday: 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. www.piedmontcoc.net, Lester Kamp, evangelist. (720) 535-5807.

-England-

Cambridgeshire—Cambridge City Church of Christ, meeting at The Manor Community College, Arbury Rd., Cambridge, CB4 2JF. Sun., Bible Study--10:30 a.m., Worship-- 11:30 a.m.; Tue. Bible Study--7:30 p.m. www.CambridgeCityCoC.org.uk. Keith Sisman, Gospel Preacher. Contacts: Keith Sisman [By phone inside USA (281) 475-8247; Inside the U.K.: Cambridge (England): 01223-911243]; Alternative Cambridge contacts: Joan Moulton - 01223-210101; Postal/ mailing Address - PO BOX 1, Ramsey Huntingdon, PE26 2YZ United Kingdom

-Florida-

Ocoee—Ocoee Church of Christ, 2 East Magnolia Street, Ocoee, FL 34761. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. David Hartbarger, Evangelist, (407) 656-2516.

Pensacola—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Michael Hatcher, evangelist, (850) 455-7595.

-Montana-

Helena—Mountain View Church of Christ, 1400 Joslyn Street, Helena, Mt. 59601, Sun.: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Matt Bidmead (406) 461-9199.

-Oklahoma-

Porum—Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, evangelist, email: allenlawson@earth-comm.com.

-South Carolina-

Belvedere (Greater Augusta, Georgia Area)—Church of Christ, 535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841, www.belvederechurchofchrist.org; e-mail belvecoc@gmail.com, (8-3) 442-6388, Sun.: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Evangelist: Ken Chumbley (803)279-8663

Texas-

Denton area—Northpoint Church of Christ, 4224 N. I-35 (Greenway Plaza, just north of Cracker Barrel). Mailing address: 4224 N. I-35, Denton, TX 76207. E-mail: northpointcoc@hotmail.com. Website: www.northpointcoc.com. Sunday: 9:30, 10:30, 1:00; Wednesday 7:00. Contact: Dub McClish: (940) 387-1429; dubmcclish@gmail.com.

Evant—Evant Church of Christ, 310 West Brooks Drive, Evant, TX 76525. Office: (254) 471-5705; Jess Whitlock, evangelist (254) 471-5717.

Houston area—Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, (281) 353-2707. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, evangelist. Home of the Spring *Contending for the Faith* Lectures, and the internet school, Truth Bible Institute. www.churchesofchrist.com.

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

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