

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXIV

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NO. 1

INDIVIDUAL CUPS ON THE TABLE

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

In the Nov. 4, 1999 issue of *Truth Magazine*, there appeared an article bearing the above title. The article demonstrates how the introduction of individual cups into congregations caused division and it also gives a personal account of how innovations are often forced upon brethren in an underhanded, unloving way.

The article is woefully inadequate in providing pertinent information. We are not told who the author is (or who sent it in for publication). We only know that it is "from an old preacher's journal." The church where this event occurred is not revealed. In fact, we don't know the names of any of the people referred to in the article--not the elders involved or the man and his family who were driven away and forced to worship elsewhere. Perhaps the above information was withheld to protect the guilty! I certainly would not want people to know that I dealt with brethren in the cowardly, conspiratorial way that these elders are said to have engaged in.

The article begins by telling about a congregation that was formed in 1911 that used "two silver goblets" in the Lord's supper. It is said that their observance of the communion began with "one silver pitcher," but then a single goblet was passed down each side of the auditorium. With a bit of sarcasm, the following observation is made: "Since the fruit of the vine started out in one silver pitcher, some in the church thought that made them 'scriptural one cuppers.' Now after many, many years some were clamoring for individual cups on the Lords table."

Does it seem strange to you that a congregation that was already using two cups would have difficulty convincing all of its members to accept individual cups? Perhaps it does, but with a little reflection it is not impossible to understand. Let us remember that the acceptance of innovations usually comes slowly and in stages. Those associated with *Truth Magazine* understand that when it comes to the subject of institutionalism. It is inconsistent for example, for a person to believe it is unscriptural to send money out of the church's treasury to the colleges but it is all right to send to the orphan homes. Both stand or fall on the same principle--the principle of whether the church can send money to another institution to perform its own work. That's why brethren in favor of institutionalism have exploited this inconsistency to persuade churches to not only accept the one practice (the support of orphanages), but to go ahead and accept the other practice (the support of colleges). Does one

unscriptural practice justify the introduction of another? Certainly not! The solution is to correct any inconsistency in doctrine and practice, rather than exploiting an inconsistency to lead the church deeper into error!

If "two silver goblets" were being used, there is no denial that the scriptural pattern for the Lord's supper had already been compromised. Let this be a good lesson for all of us. There is no such thing as a little digression and a loophole is all some people need to push their agenda. Also, it pains me to say that based upon the preacher's description of the elders and members of this church, this congregation wasn't exactly composed of spiritual giants! Why do I say that?

First, consider the following paragraph: "It was rather interesting to watch as the single goblet was passed down each side of the auditorium. Being more mindful of sanitary conditions than their forefathers, as each person took the goblet, he or she would turn it just slightly before sipping, in a vain attempt to find a clean spot." Can you imagine a more immature people than that? Instead of keeping their minds on what the sacred feast is all about, they were engrossed in trying to find "a clean spot" on the cup! Furthermore, how did the unknown author know that "each person" turned the cup "just slightly before sipping"? Somebody's attention and concentration was not where it should have been (I Cor. 11:27-28)!

Even though the article asserts that these brethren were "more mindful of sanitary conditions than their forefathers," such rationale provided no excuse for what they did: (1) They had no right to introduce an unauthorized practice into the worship of the church, and (2) brethren are never justified in being deceitful and discourteous in their dealings with others. When people have an inordinate fear of drinking from a common communion cup, as these people evidently did, what they need is more faith and better information!

Why do I say that more faith is needed? Well, since Christ created all things (including germs and diseases--John 1:1-3), surely it is a lack of faith for one to think that there is a great possibility of being hurt by observing the Lord's supper as Jesus instituted it. After all, such irrational thinking is shown by scientific studies to be unfounded. Did you know that? Researchers have concluded regarding the communion cup that "the risk of transmission is very small, and probably much smaller than that of contracting infection by other methods in any gathering of people"

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RETROSPECTIVE AND
PROSPECTIVE

By DON L. KING

Sixty years ago my father wrote an editorial titled the same as this one. The year was 1940. He looked forward to better times. He couldn't know that in a little less than two years the whole world would be involved in World War II. That brought some difficult times for the brethren and it was hard on the preachers. Almost everything was rationed including gasoline, oil and tires, I still recall the 35 mph speed limit imposed on Americans to save fuel, etc. Today, as we begin the new millennium, we cannot but wonder what lies ahead. Only the Lord knows. Will it bring war? We fervently pray that it will not. Will it be better for the church? We sincerely pray that it will.

As we reflect back over the nearly 24 years we have been involved in publishing the *Old Paths Advocate*, it is impossible not to recall some great things that have happened. This is perfectly proper, we believe. As Paul looked back over his life as an apostle he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness..." (2 Timothy 4:7,8) He undoubtedly remembered victories he had helped to win. So it is with us. We are grateful for the work we have been allowed to do. In fact, we appreciate the good accomplished by everyone. We thank God for the tool the *OPA* has been allowed to be. It now goes into nearly all the world. We suppose it does make an entrance into every major continent. What a thrill it has been for this writer to go into the most humble of homes around the world and see worn copies, even photocopies, of the *Old Paths Advocate*. We are grateful that the paper has had at least some part in the beginning of nearly every foreign work we know of today.

We are thankful too, for whatever good we may have accomplished within the good old USA. We take heart as we think of the many stalwart brethren and preachers who love the church and work so hard for her welfare. May God increase their tribe. We are profoundly grateful for those who continue to send subscriptions for *OPA*. Many of you have taken the paper for many years. Some write and tell us they have grown up reading the paper. One brother wrote just a few days ago and told us he reads the paper to his ailing mother now and that she looks forward to it every month. As we begin this 68th year of publication we beg your continued patience and loyalty, and ask the Lord's choicest blessings on all of us. May He continue to use the paper for His honor and glory!

We realize, however, that it is not wise to reflect on the past and make no plans for the future. The apostle Paul also wrote in Philippians 3:13,14: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: In I Corinthians 5 the church is told "not to eat" with the individual under consideration. Please explain what should be done if such a person is in attendance where church members have gathered to eat, like at the end of a gospel meeting? (CA)

Answer: The association we are to have with one who has been disciplined by the church, such as the immoral man in I Corinthians 5, is clearly restricted. We are instructed to "deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh," "not to company with," not even to "eat with such a person." If the congregation has executed the withdrawal process according to the scripture, there should be no doubt in the minds of the church or the one from whom fellowship has been withdrawn as to what actions will follow. However, this does not mean that the individual will not, at some point, attend a service of the church. I, personally, do not think we can bar such an one from entering the building. However any exchange we have with this person on such an occasion should be aimed at expressing our concern for his/her soul and the necessity of repentance and reformation of life. It is conceivable that one might even come to the congregational gatherings such as a dinner on Sunday or at other times. If this happens, it seems almost certain that someone has failed to impress upon the individual the seriousness of his/her sin and the disdain with which the church looks upon it. In such a situation we should make clear by our actions and words that we do not in any way condone what the individual has done. If this is done in the spirit of Christ, it in all likelihood, will not be necessary to ask the person to leave, for the individual will soon see that we are serious about our opposition to their behavior and that the reason for the withdrawal, which was to get them to see their sin and repent of it before it is too late, will not be relaxed but carried out to its fullest extent. What people cannot do, is welcome and company with the individual. We cannot do anything that in any way might give the person the idea that everything is all right, or that we are glad to have

them in our presence.

Question: What does it mean to cast lots? (TN)

Answer: Casting lots was common among the Jews. David divided the priests by lot in I Chron. 24:5, the land of Canaan was divided by lot Num. 26:55; Josh. 15-17, Jonathan, son of Saul, was detected as having violated his father's command and as bringing calamity on the Israelites by lot I Sam. 14:41-42, Achan was detected by lot in Josh. 7:16-18. "In these instances the use of the lot was regarded as a solemn appeal to God for his direct interference in cases which they could not themselves decide" Barnes. Proverbs 16:33 seems to give such a meaning "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord." The procedure for casting lots varied, but the one most generally used involved two markers (stones, pieces of parchment, etc.) each with a name on it. These markers were then placed in a vessel which was shaken until one came flying out. This indicated the choice. In Acts 1, we find the apostles casting lots in order to determine who would succeed Judas. The scripture tells us that they prayed "show whether (which) of these two thou hast chosen." Zerr directly addresses a question of concern when he asks why such a thing as a game of chance would be used in determining the selection of an apostle? He answers: "That was still in the period when the Lord used 'sundry times and diverse manners' to communicate his will to mankind. When He was pleased to use the lot on any matter he would see that the proper piece would come out." Jacobson expresses the same idea when he says "The only instance of appeal to lots in the New Testament occurs between the departure of our Lord and Pentecost. The church could dispense with them after the coming of the Holy Ghost, who was to guide into all truth..." Hence today we do not determine right from wrong by casting lots, nor do we decide matters of spiritual significance in such a manner. Our appeal is to the word of God in all things. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

THE INTERNET - PART 4

By GREG GAY

(This is the last article of a four part series written by Bro. Gay concerning *The Internet*. In this article he points out some of the irritations of electronic junk mail, issues warnings about so called Bible teachers that use the internet to spread their false doctrines, and offers some guidelines for using the internet.)

Junk Mail (Spam)

Instead of creating a web site and being content to let people come to their site, some individuals create documents and send them out in mass mailings to as many people as possible. In the world of regular mail service we call this junk mail. In the Internet world it is called Spam. Now I happen to like the meat product Spam so this is a horrible insult to a good product in my opinion, but be that as it may. Here is the danger: an E-mail sent by anyone can appear to be an official statement of doctrine of the church.

In my E-mail there have been several self-proclaimed town criers who feel an obligation to share their views through a barrage of E-mail messages. If someone sends me E-mail, my presumption is they know me and have something to share with me that they presume I am interested in. It is very presumptuous of anyone to write an E-mail to complete strangers, assuming the strangers will welcome the intrusion into their lives. For example: in the past year or so a man in Africa, G.K. Banda, assumes I want to know of differences he has with brethren in Africa and America. Mark Boutross, of I don't know where, assumes I want to know his opinion about wine in the communion cup. Andrew Ong of Malaysia, presumes I am interested in his views on a host of issues. Ray Downen, of Joplin, Missouri, assumes I want to know about his views about instruments in worship. None of these men are right in their presumptions.

Know them who labor among you.

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves (I Thes 5:12-13).

While this verse is in the contextual setting of the local congregation the fact still remains when someone gives us spiritual advice they are "labouring among us." Before we accept their word as truth we need to know who these people are. What do we do when strangers show up at our worship. We ask them, "Who are you, where are you from, who do you know, and who knows you? I believe that is a valid process. Hopefully no mature leader in a congregation would ask a total stranger to take part in their services or participate in the decision making process of the congregation. Why should the Internet be any different? Our first questions when we receive an E-mail from anyone should be: "Who are you, where are you from, who do you know, and who knows you?" In Acts 15 the Judizing teachers were claiming to be sent out by the authority of the church of Jerusalem, something that was not true. But that is obviously how they were introducing themselves as we can tell from the Jerusalem church's response in this correspondence,

And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment (Acts 15:23-24).

Knowledge of who is sharing information with us is very important in the church. That is in keeping with: And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also (2 Tim 2-2).

The publications that are among us are sent forth by brethren who are known to be faithful men. Bro. Don King and the editors he has, chosen for the *Old Paths Advocate* are faithful men, known throughout the brotherhood. Similarly, for the *Christian's Expositor*, Bro. Smith Bibens and the editors he has chosen are faithful men, known throughout the brotherhood. This is necessary to give validity to those who want to labor among us with their writings. The position of Editor and Publisher is a very responsible position. When anyone sends an article to one of our papers the publisher and editors are responsible for the content of their paper. We trust them to be very, very careful in this responsibility. When I submit an article to either paper I anticipate it will be examined. That is as it should be!

I have in my possession an old letter from my grandfather, Homer Gay to Homer King protesting that he had not published an article my grandfather had written. Was my grandfather right or wrong? That is not the issue. The issue is that Homer King as publisher and editor of the *OPA* had an absolute right to say "no thanks" to any article submitted to him by my grandfather or anyone else. Now it just so happens, my grandfather was also an editor of the *OPA* at the time. That is the degree of care that has

been exercised among us in the past.

Now, who is editing these E-mail writings from these men I have mentioned? No one. They are self-appointed publishers intruding in our lives via the Internet. I believe this is sowing discord.

These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren (Prov 6:16,19).

In today's world anyone with a computer and a little bit of knowledge can send article after article raising issue after issue around the world to hundreds if not thousands of people.

Young widows are condemned for being "tattlers" or gossips: And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not (I Tim 5-13).

As we can see there are things that just should not be said. And if said, should not be repeated. When anyone chooses to practice saying things that should not be said they are guilty of the same sin as the younger widows, of being tattlers or gossips.

Now brethren, next to the telephone, the Internet is the easiest way I know of to wander from house to house. So we have to be very careful there. I don't believe there should be any expectation of confidentiality in correspondence on the Internet. It is very easy to forward someone else's message on to a group of people. In fact, I believe we should presume whatever we send to others will likely be broadcast to others. If we don't want that to happen, we should add a disclaimer to our correspondence on the Internet to let the recipient know they are not at liberty to broadcast our message. Of course that is no guarantee, but it may prevent someone from broadcasting to the world what we intend to be a private message. I happen to know Bro. Taylor Joyce wrote G.K. Banda to be removed off of his mailing list and Bro. James Orten wrote Ray Downen for the same purpose. How do I know? Banda and Downen mailed Taylor's and James' letters to everyone on their mailing list and commented on the things they had to say. That was totally unnecessary.

Most congregations are very careful when selecting teachers for the congregation. We do our best to make sure individuals are living right before we put them up before the congregation to instruct us in God's word, When I first started teaching as a teenager I taught the first half of a chapter and an older man taught the last half and corrected anything I had missed in the first half. What qualifications are there for Internet teachers? Absolutely none. If a young man decides to teach on a subject on the Internet who follows him and checks him. I think this can be an issue among our young people. I don't want to discourage any of them from the study of God's word, but I don't believe the younger teachers have the wisdom to always know what is best in teaching on many various things.

Is a woman posting a message on a web page publicly speaking? The posting of messages on a site for the purpose of discussing the meaning of scriptures results in the blurring of men and women's roles in teaching. Each media must be carefully examined so we do not violate Biblical principles. A woman posting an opinion about a passage

of scripture on a web site that any and all can access appears to be doing public speaking to me. Let's put it this way-it has more of an appearance of public speaking than it does private speaking. Now, if my sister and I discuss a verse between us on the phone, or in E-mails back and forth that conversation stays private between us. But, if she posts her opinion on doctrinal issues on a web page, she is teaching the world in a very public forum in my opinion. I think this violates I Tim. 2:12 in that it usurps authority over the man. We do not publish articles from women in our publications, I believe a web page is the same situation.

Some Guidelines

I recommend the following guides for Internet use for God's people: For married people, stay out of Chat rooms. Period. Just leave them alone. If you and your family want to have one, do so, but be very careful even there. For unmarried people, stay away from Chat Rooms unless they only involve people you know. Even then be very careful. Do not chat with strangers. If you are married be as careful on the Internet with the opposite sex as you should be if you were seeing the person face to face with your spouse beside you. If you are not married be as careful on the Internet with the opposite sex as you should be if you were seeing the person face to face with your mother beside you. Don't seek privacy when you access the Internet. Don't use your computer when others in the family are not up and around. Don't stay on the Internet when everyone else has gone to bed. Position the computer monitor where it can be seen by anyone who might happen

to walk by. I would encourage families who have the Internet to have their computer in the same room where the family spends the most time. Usually that would be the kitchen area or the family room area. I think it would be most appropriate to have the computer that is used for the Internet in the same room with the TV, so that everyone is together and everyone can easily see what everyone is doing. I think husbands and wives and parents are playing with fire to do otherwise. Use one of the services that offer family friendly protection against profanity, sexual content, violence, or race related issues. There are many of these available. A service like this would be a good idea for everyone, but absolutely essential if you have children. These services are available at a small fee and they are a protection for everyone in the family. Bro. Brian Boek wrote me of the benefit, "What I like the most is, it doesn't allow you to go somewhere accidentally where you might be tempted to explore more than you should. Also if sites do come up, you can set your own preferences and/or submit a request to the Internet Service Provider and they will review the site."

Finally, like many other things in life, I think the Internet can be what we want it to be in our lives. It can be a blessing or a curse. I would hope with Joshua of old we would cry, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

Let's not put our relationship with God or with our loved ones at risk over the Internet.

THE NATURE OF MAN - PART 3

By RYAN CONNOR

The Spirit Of man

In the creation of man we have already seen that the LORD God formed man out of the dust of the ground. Yet, there was another formation in the creation of man that we must now notice. The Bible teaches that the Lord "forms the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1). David sings to the Lord in Psalm 139:13, "For you formed inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb." The Hebrew for "inward parts" is literally Kidneys. Don't think of what we usually think of as "kidneys" today; but rather "mind." This would be more in accordance with Jewish thought at the time David wrote this psalm. In Revelation 2:23, according to the KJV, the Lord says, "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts." Most modern translations (NKJV, NASB, NIV) render Revelation 2:23 as "I am He who searches the minds and hearts." The KJV renders the word "reins" which is the archaic English word of "kidneys" and stands for the "inner man"; his or her unseen part; the substance within us that makes us what we are (Hoekema, p. 147).

As to the idea that some may have concerning the reproduction of souls (i.e. spirits), we can safely say that the Bible teaches no such doctrine. Instead, we read that God is "the Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9), and that we are the "offspring of God" (Acts 17:28-19). There is no spirit bank up in heaven where spirits are stored, awaiting their earthly bodies. In fact, Jesus declared of Judas Iscariot, "Woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been

born." The clear message is that before you are conceived in the mother's womb there is nothing, seeing that nothing would be better than the final abode of the poor soul of him who would betray the Lord.

The spirit is the conscious part of man—the knowing part. Paul says, "For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11). The spirit feels emotion pain and joy. The prophet says, "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me" (Dan. 7:15). The Apostle Paul felt anxiety in his spirit: "I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus" (2 Cor. 2:13). It is the spirit of man that determines the course of life—which wills to do this or that. Jesus Christ explained. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Paul makes it clear that the spirit and the mind are essentially the same in Romans 1:9 and 7:25.

The spirit of man never dies. It is eternal in nature. James says that the body without the spirit is dead (Jas. 2:26). But he never said the spirit without the body is dead. Paul states. "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). The Apostle Peter adds to this in his explanation of the Christian woman's adornment. He says, "Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit,

which is very precious in the sight of God" (1 Pet. 3:3-4). The Greek word *aphthartos* rendered here incorruptible means imperishable, incorruptible, immortal (BAG, p. 125).

This is the part of man that is special to God. The spirit of man is why the Lord is mindful of him. The Lord does not form a spirit within the animals. The prophet Isaiah declares, "Now the Egyptians are man, and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not spirit." (Isaiah 31:3). Since man has a spirit it is possible for him to now God and ownship God (Jn. 4:24). No animal can do that. The significant difference between man and the rest of creation is that God made man in His image.

In The Image Of God

God made man in His image and in His likeness. The plural is given here for God, seeing that the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit were active in the creation of man as well as the father (of Jn. 1:3; Job 32:8). The word image is used in three different ways in the Old Testament: (1) in reference to a statue (2 Kings 11:18; Num. 33:52); (2) in reference to a replica or copy (San. 6:5; a wall painting, Ezek. 23:14); and (3) in reference to essential nature (Gen. 5:3).

The two words image and likeness are interchangeable and used simply for "literary effect," according to W.E. Vine. Kell and Kelitzsch agree, citing Luther's translation, "an image like Us." A comparison of Genesis 1:26; 5:1, 3 indicate that these two words (image and likeness) are used interchangeable. One might contend that the "image of God" refers to the bodily form of man, and the "likeness" refers to the personality or intellectual faculties of man. However, Barnes comments, "Image" is a word taken from sensible things, and denotes likeness in outward form, while the material may be different. "Likeness" is a more general term, indicating resemblance in any quality,

external or internal. *It is here explanatory of image, and seems to show that this term is to be taken in a figurative sense, to denote not a material but a spiritual conformity to God* (italics mine-RJC).

The divine likeness in man is not the outward, but the inward man. It cannot be the physical part of man. It cannot be the body, for the Apostle Paul writes, "Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man" (Rom. 1:22-23). The Bible declares that men "have been made in the similitude of God" (Jas. 3:9). yet, Moses says that the children of Israel "saw no similitude" of God (Deut. 4:12). If the divine likeness in man in his outward, physical body, then Moses could not have claimed that the Israelites "saw no similitude." Furthermore, the divine likeness cannot be the life-principle of man. It cannot be the soul, for "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). The word *psuchikos* is rendered here as natural. The natural man is literally the soulish man. Therefore, it is difficult to consider the soul of man as the part of man created in God's image, since it is unable to "receive the things of the Spirit of God." The divine likeness is the spirit of man. Since man is created in the Image of God, and "God is Spirit," according to John 4:24, then it follows that the spirit of man is in the image and likeness of God.

The spirit of man reflects what is the true image of God. It is said that the simplest way to understand God is in terms of PERSON and SPIRIT (Crawford, p. 271). God is a person. He has all the attributes of a person. God wills, speaks, creates and knows. God is not some impersonal force of energy. The Scripture states that "God Is Spirit." This is His nature. Man is most like God in that he is a person, a dhis is a spirit.—Stockton, CA

WHO SHOULD LEAD A SONG?

By KENNETH R. MIDDICK

Who should be used in the worship service of the church has long been an item of contention among the congregations of the Lord's church. What guidelines should be used? What criteria should go into determining this decision? Is every male member qualified to be used? Is a member qualified because he is male? Who should decide these questions and how are these questions to be decided? These type of questions plague our congregations today. However, this article will focus on capability. Who should be asked to take a leading part in the service of the church when it comes to song leading?

Among our congregations, we have many brethren who are incapable of leading. (It is not a mark against one's spirituality to be a poor song leader.) Some of those leading have made no preparation in learning to lead a song, yet they still attempt to stand before the congregation. If the speaker was as ill prepared as many song leaders we use, we would ask the leadership of the church to set them down or teach them. (Where is the command that says every male must lead a song?)

There is a time and place for a song leader to learn and expand on his capabilities. This can be done in the privacy of the home, during a Wednesday evening singing,

Wednesday evening service, or when no visitors are present. These opportunities are at the home congregation, not visiting at a gospel meeting. Most congregations have a Wednesday evening singing once a month. (If not, this should be incorporated.)

Often, the ones who need to practice the most don't even attempt to take advantage of these opportunities to lead a song at such singings. These singings should be considered an opportunity to practice better leading and prepare one for leading in the regular service. What would a coach think of an athlete that never practiced but always wanted to play in the games?

There are also resources to help in better song leading, such as brethren that are good song leaders, and music instruction books. Most good song leaders are willing to help anyone that has the desire to better their own ability. Some music rudiment books have a section on leading songs. One of the most important ingredients to better singing or song leading is practice, practice, practice (but not at a crucial time in a worship service).

Often a poor song leader just excuses himself by saying, "I'm just not a good singer." If one truly believes that to be the case, he should not accept the invitation to lead a

song. This one may need to speak to someone with the ability to assess singing capabilities. (Just being able to carry a tune does not make a song leader.)

While much of the responsibility for good song leading falls on the back of the song leader himself, part of the responsibility for having a poor song leader stand before us falls on the one who has asked him to do so. Why, is it that a visiting brother, or a brother that we want to encourage, has to lead a song? Do we have to have a poor song leader to lead the congregation just because we like to see a variety of leaders?

If a brother is not capable of anything in the worship service, we often still give them a song to lead. WHY? While we may think that we are doing the poor brother a favor, the congregation and the services suffer because of it. (Do we benefit one person at the expense of the whole?) Does the Lord's Church have to suffer because we think a brother who is incapable of leading a song has to take part? What would we do if a brother was a poor prayer leader? Would we continue to have him pray at every service, or would we consider offering some help and using him sparingly until improvement was made?

Is there a problem with using one brother to lead all of the songs if no one else is capable? Must the congregation suffer in worship because we have to use "Brother Poor Song leader?" "Why not use the song leader/leaders that are capable and have put some time and effort into learning

how to better serve God in this capacity?

The song service can make or break the whole service. When the songs are led well and the congregation has enjoyed their moment of praise, the speaker has a better opportunity to present his study to a receptive audience. It can invigorate the speaker and the audience and prepare both for a good study of God's Word. However, when the song leaders are poor, the singing is poor, the speaker is frustrated, the audience is left empty and the next 30 to 45 minutes are going to be a struggle.

A congregation takes great pains in choosing a qualified and capable preacher to come and hold a meeting. They spare little in getting the invitations out to the public and the neighboring congregations. The house fills with brethren and visitors from near and far. We can obviously see the efforts of the preacher and congregation. Then the one who lines up the service, uses poor judgement in selecting song leaders. The song service is less than impressive and then the preacher struggles to keep his audience. What is wrong with this picture?

Why not use a little more wisdom in choosing the song leaders? If you would like to lead the singing or are presently attempting to do so, make sure it is the best that you can do. If you do not attempt to better your song leading through the proper avenues, then it is not the best that you can do!

INDIVIDUAL CUPS ON THE TABLE

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[Hobbs, Knowlden, and White: "Experiments on the Communion Cup," *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 1967, pp. 37-48.]

Why were some "clamoring for individual cups on the Lord's table"? The article in *Truth Magazine* implies that it was not because of a desire to follow the accounts of the Lord's supper as meticulously as possible. No, that would have led to the use of one cup (Matt. 26:27). It was because of a concern for "sanitary conditions"--a concern that was totally groundless. If the use of one cup is as unsanitary as some think, "one cuppers" (as the article calls us) would have died out a long time ago from infectious diseases. However, I challenge anyone to prove that we as a group of people are not as healthy as any other group of people!

Let's now take a look at the elders and see how they handled the situation. I have used the following terms to describe the conduct of these men: Underhanded, unloving, cowardly, conspiratorial, deceitful, and discourteous. I know that is a harsh assessment, but I believe the facts will show it to be an accurate one. The conduct I am referring to is their dealing with a man in the congregation who had "declared that the day individual cups came in, would be the day he and his family would leave." This is the only criticism given of the man. As far as the article points out, there is not a hint of any accusation against the man's character and it does not appear that he was generally a problem to the congregation except in this area; notice how the article puts it--He was "a man with strong convictions that the 'one cup' was a matter of faith."

The man who opposed individual cups was married to the granddaughter of the oldest of the elders. That produced

a real dilemma: "Of course, the old brother hated to think that his decision would cause his granddaughter and several great-grandchildren to go elsewhere. But finally, at the insistence of the other elders, a new communion set was ordered with two trays of individual cups." What do you think happened next? Surely those elders dealt with the man in an open and honest way and informed him of their decision to use individual cups the next Sunday! After all, to do otherwise would put the man in an awkward situation: (1) He would either have to stay in that assembly and worship in a way that violated his conscience, or (2) he would have to risk embarrassment to his family by walking out. I maintain that just common decency should have compelled those elders to let the man know what was going on.

Guess what? The facts show that the man and his family were caught totally by surprise: "Then the fateful day arrived! Someone--I suspect one of the other elders, came early and set up the communion with the two trays of individual cups. What would happen? Shortly before time for the service to begin, the 'one cupper' with his wife and children came in...All eyes were on them as the other members awaited the outcome. And then it happened! The man caught sight of the trays on the communion table. And true to his word, after a brief conference with his wife, they began to hurriedly jerk the coats and hats back on and with a child under each arm they stormed out of the building to never return. The old elder was bitterly saddened; but the rest of the congregation heaved a sigh of relief that an obstacle that had been there for years had finally been overcome. The individual cups were on the Lord's table to stay. And so it is till this day!"

What if this incident had involved an organ instead of individual cups? Do you suppose that several articles would

appear in *Truth Magazine* condemning the discourteous and cowardly tactics of those elders? Who caused the division over individual cups? Read the following quotation for the answer. "Who drove the wedge of missionary societies and instrumental music in worship among brethren? Those who advocated and defended them; those who fallaciously argued from and twisted the scriptures to try to make the scriptures uphold their

innovations; and those who finally pushed the societies and instruments into congregations and meeting houses over the protests, consciences and convictions of sincere and faithful brethren; these are the ones who drove the wedge, divided the body of Christ, alienated brethren, and departed from the faith" [Bill Cavender, *Truth Magazine*, May 29, 1980]. Amen!

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

As we begin the year, 2000, we are aware that so many are so involved with the things of the world. Attendance of church services are at an all time low in some places. Undoubtedly this is due, at least in part, to church members being too much involved in things other than the church. It has become an accepted thing, in some places, for a few of the congregation to gather on Lord's day evening and midweek and carry on the work of the church in the absence of many who are just too busy playing games. This is sad, and it is wrong. Every member needs to feel the responsibility to hold up the blood stained banner of Christ in the community. We have gone places to hold meetings and found that some picked that time to take vacations and go away. Unbelievable!

What can be done to awaken the church to the needs of the time? One thing that can be done is for teachers and preachers everywhere to be awake themselves! Remind the brethren of their duty. Another thing is for all of us to be more involved and excited in the work of the church. People who are involved and excited will not want to miss a single service for any reason. I'm reminded of the true story of a brother who suffered a heart attack on Wednesday

evening. When the doctor demanded that he be hospitalized, he said, "Oh no, what will the Lord think?" Compare that commendable attitude with the one manifested by so many today who miss for recreation and fun things. Brethren, we need to wake up!

Of course, there will be obstacles in the way. There will be new enemies to overcome and heartbreaks to deal with. However, we do not have to deal with these things alone. Jesus said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." That is the difference between the world and us. Everyone has to weather the storms of life. However, they must do so without the Lord while we know He is always with us.

Let us resolve to do more than ever for Him. Let every congregation resolve to do more than ever before to build up the Cause of Christ in your area and in the world beyond. Don't forget the preachers. They must often go under difficult situations and with inadequate support. With the high cost of automobiles and gasoline, why not consider raising the support you plan to give to the preachers this year. The cost of travel is high whether by car or public transportation. Support him well. If he isn't worth it, then get one who is. The Lord has blessed most of us with affluence unknown to our parents. Let us put this money to work and resolve to see the church grow and prosper in the New Year. Think on these things.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A New Tract

In July we printed a special issue called "What Is Wrong in Religion?" it was well received. Many asked that we put it in tract form. We have done that and it is now ready for delivery. The booklet is 20 pages in length and deals with such things as sprinkling for baptism, faith only, instrumental music, Bible classes, individual cups, etc. The editors of *Old Paths Advocate* cover a total of ten topics. Every congregation needs this tract in the rack at the back of the building. Every preacher needs it to use in personal work. Every member of the church will find the information useful. New members should find the material indispensable to their studies. The price is \$35 per hundred plus postage. Single copies are 50 cents each in quantities less than 100. When you order, look at the postage on the package and send it to us, please. Order from *Old Paths Advocate*, c/o Kendall Cook, 1978 N. Farm Rd., 89, Springfield, MO 65802. We have gone to considerable expense to provide this for the brotherhood. Let us hear from you soon, please. DLK

50th Anniversary

Harold and Mary King were married on Jan. 22, 1950.

They will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house reception on Jan. 23 at the Empire Bank in Nixa, MO. Harold and Mary are members of the church at Jamesville, MO. Their many friends across the brotherhood are invited to send them a card in honor of this happy occasion. Their address is: 506 N. Cherry Cr., Nixa, MO 65714. Marriage should be held in honor among men (Heb. 13:4), and we rejoice that this union has been a blessing to their family and the church for 50 years!—Billy D. Dickinson

Send Materials To Ronny Wade During January

Since we will be out of the country during January, please send your materials intended for publication to Ronny Wade. He will be publishing the February issue and will need your materials by the 13th of Jan. for the Feb. issue. My sincere thanks to him for filling in for me.

Church Directory Changes

Tukwila, Washington is moving to Pacific, Washington as of the 1st of January. New Address: 100 3rd. Ave. S.E. in the Senior Citizen Center which is located next to the City Center. For contacts remove the name of Reynolds and replace it with Dennis Crawford 6119 72nd Ave. Court East, Puyallup, WA 98371 Phone 253-435-8621.

1999 Church Directories

My supply of the 1999 directory are getting low. We do not plan a directory for at least another year. If you have not ordered the most recent directory, do so today. The price is \$2.00 each plus postage. Send all orders to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, MO 65808.

OUR DEPARTED

McGOWAN—Services for Ollie (Baney) McGowan were conducted August 10, 1999 in Mtn. Grove, MO. Ollie was born November 25, 1905 near Bendavis, MO and married Hayward McGowan on July 24, 1925 in Hartville, MO. She passed away August 6, 1999 in Cabool, MO. Ollie was a member of the Bendavis Church in Christ near her home and attended services until her health no longer permitted. She was confined to a nursing home for the last eight years of her life. She is survived by her sons, Bud, Wes, Ronni, and Pat McGowan from Mountain Grove, MO; her daughters, Nadine Cantrell from Springfield, MO, Jaxie Merchant from Graff, MO, and Charlene Smith from Mtn. Grove, MO; one sister, Esther Shelley from Walla Walla, WA; numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great, great grandchildren. The writer conducted the service with burial at Rock Springs cemetery near Bendavis.—Edward Williamson

HUTSELL—Services for Margaret Hutsell, long-time member of the Bendavis, MO congregation were conducted September 4, 1999 in Mtn. Grove, MO. Margaret (Boykin) Hutsell was born December 4, 1917 in Thayer, MO and married Donald Hutsell January 3, 1936 in Hartville, MO. She passed away on September 1, 1999 in Houston, MO following a long illness. Margaret faithfully attended the services of the church until her health would not permit it. She kept in touch with her brothers and sisters in Christ and was loved by all. Margaret is survived by her sons, John from Kingston, AR, and Rex from Kennewick, WA; her daughters, Donna Franklin from Walla Walla, WA, Doris Allen from Graff, MO, and Pat Smart from Weston, OR; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Services were conducted by the writer with beautiful singing provided by members of the Houston and Mt. Grove congregations with burial in Friendship cemetery near Dawson, MO—Edward Williamson

BRINEGAR—Charlotte Brinegar, daughter of Baron N. and Eva Clarendia (Doub) Crum was born Oct. 4, 1904 and passed away Nov. 23, 1999 at the age of 95 years. She was a homemaker and member of the Harrodsburg, IN Church of Christ. She was baptized in 1922. Survivors include two sons, one daughter, one sister, three half brothers, 12 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Quince Brinegar, one son, two sisters, one brother, and one half brother and one grandson. Services were held at Harrodsburg Church of Christ conducted by Brother Andrew Lowery and burial at Cloverhill Cemetery.

WALKER—Genida I. Walker was born, July 21, 1919, at Sebastian County, Arkansas to Grover Cleveland and ~~Hattie Jane Steele~~ Hobbs. She passed away Thursday, Nov.

4, 1999 at the McAlester Regional Hospital in McAlester, Okla. at the age of 80 years, 3 months and 13 days old. In 1938, she married Arthur Walker. In 1971, they moved from Arkansas to Kiowa, OK. She is preceded in death by her mother in 1976, her father in 1980 and her husband in 1983. She is survived by two sons, Robert T. and Homer; two daughters, Jane Brown and Donna Grimes; ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Service was held at the C & Tyler church building in McAlester at 10 p.m. on Saturday, November 6, 1999. For many years, she was a faithful member of the congregation at C & Tyler. Congregational singing provided the music. The writer assisted by Bro. Morgan Stripling officiated.—Jack A. Cutter.

SHARP—December 10, 1999 at about 2 a.m. our dear sister, Lola Sharp, of the Fair Oaks Congregation, Fair Oaks, California, departed to be with her Father, God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The past month and a half had been hard for Lola and her family. Then, out of her pain, she looked up into the eyes of her loving daughter, Janice, as if to question and Janice softly said, "Mother, just let go. God is with you." And she departed. Her family was in attendance. Her loving husband, Howard, though tired for the ordeal, was as well as could be expected under the circumstances, and the family remains near him. The funeral was Tuesday, December 14th at 10 a.m. at Mount Vernon Cemetery on Greenback Lane, Sacramento, California. Brother Richard DeGough conducted the service.—Raney Butler

ROGERS—Oleta Dovie Rogers, daughter of Samuel and Sarah Nevill, was born Sept. 21, 1906 near Elk City, OK and departed this life on Oct. 24, 1999 at St. John's Regional Health Center in Springfield, MO. On March 23, 1931 Oleta was united in marriage to Price Rogers. They made their home for more than 50 years in eastern Douglas county, MO. Three children were born to this union, Allen, Lovonne, and Albert. She was preceded in death by her husband Price, two sons, Allen and Albert, two brothers and eight sisters. Oleta is survived by her daughter, Lovonne and her husband, Cliff Thomason of Peculiar, MO; six grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. She and Price were long time pillars in the Fieldstone Church of Christ. If there was a gospel meeting in the area, you always expected to see Price and Oleta as long as their health permitted. Oleta had lived at Landmark Villa in Cabool, MO for the past two years because of ill health. Unable to go to church, she still sent money to various preachers each month to help with their work. Even when suffering with her illnesses, she still lifted your spirits each visit with her cheerful attitude and contagious smile. Oleta will be missed by all who knew her. The writer was honored to speak a few words of comfort, assisted by Don Pruitt.—Ron Alexander.

TRIPLETT—Esca B. Triplett, daughter of William E. and Minnie Lee Schuette Sutherland, was born April 7, 1942, near Norwood, MO. She departed this life Sunday, October 31, 1999 in St. John's Regional Health Center in Springfield, MO from injuries received in an automobile accident. Esca was 57 years of age. On Oct. 21, 1960, in Mountain Grove, MO, she was united in marriage to Vernon Neil Triplett, and to this union one daughter and one son were born. She was preceded in death by her father.

Esca is survived by her husband, Vernon, of the home; a daughter, Teresa Davis, and her husband, Rick, of Conway, MO; a son, Phil Triplett, and his wife, Missy, of Springfield, MO; four grandchildren, Kara and Jared Davis and Samantha and Cross Triplett; her mother, Minnie Sutherland, of Mountain Grove, MO; two brothers, Wayne Sutherland, and his wife, Frances, of Mountain Grove, MO; and Tommy Sutherland, and his wife, Barbara, of Branson, MO; two sisters, Anita Krewson, and her husband, Don, of Licking, MO; and Mary Loretta, of Springfield, MO; and a number of nieces and nephews; as well as a host of other relatives and friends. Esca was a long time member of the church and was a member at Niangua, MO at the time of her passing. Esca was a devoted homemaker to her husband, to her children and grandchildren. She enjoyed growing flowers and making floral arrangements and was a talented decorator. She will be missed by her family, the church at Niangua and by all who knew her. If death takes us gradually or suddenly snatches us from life, thanks to be God for the hope we have in Christ. The writer offered words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

STALCUP—Flora “Shorty” Stalcup, was born in Estelline Texas, Dec. 7, 1911, the daughter of Arthur and Cora DeGough. She passed away Oct. 23, 1999 in North Hollywood, Calif. She was married to “uncle” Jack Stalcup, July 3, 1931 in a double wedding with her brother and Jack’s sister, Carl DeGough and Leslie (Pat) Stalcup. Aunt Shorty was a member of the Lord’s church for 70 years.

The home of Jack and Shorty was open to all God’s people, and especially to gospel preachers. The church was their life, and they never were ashamed of the Lord, His church nor the gospel, a salwart example to all. Their marriage lasted for 58 years, until death claimed uncle Jack. Their vows were made in the heart of the depression, times were hard but they weathered every storm of life, and there were many that brought sorrow to their hearts. Preceding her in death were a dear daughter and son-in-law, Carol and Paul Mackey, her mother, father, seven brothers, one sister. Surviving loved ones; daughter and son-in-law, Lyndell and Don Rowland, a son and daughter-in-law, Tom and Peggy Stalcup, a brother and sister-in-law, L.A. Dawson (Duke) DeGough and Eileen; seven grandchildren, four step-grandchildren; fifteen great-grandchildren; and eight step-great-grandchildren; along with numerous nephews, nieces, and brethren. Aunt Shorty was like a precious mother to me, taking care of me for two years. While living with Jack and Shorty I was as one of “their children”. I loved them in life and death. Along with a grandson, Mark Mackey; great-grandson, Matt Trent, I was privileged to have a part in the memorial service attended by brethren and friends of long standing. The singing was beautiful and fitting, rendered by young relatives. Aunt Shorty is buried with uncle Jack, just a few hundred feet from their home of nearly fifty years in North Hollywood. Precious memories will continue in our hearts of this precious soul, and her works will follow her.—Richard DeGough



Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621 November 20, 1999—We were in a meeting at Harrisonville, Missouri near Kansas City October 27-31, 1999. I was among many old friends there. Although the congregation is young it has many positive attributes: a good building, location, leadership, many strong families and a good balance of older and younger members. Brethren from other congregations were kind to attend and I enjoyed seeing Mike Crisswell. I enjoyed the hospitality of John and Glenda Pruitt and could not have been treated better. Our work at 64th. St. in Sacramento continues with some new studies to add to our schedule recently. Our meeting with Ronny Wade went very well and was thening to all.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt.1 Box 717, Mt. Vernon, KY 40456 — (606) 256-8148 -hawkins@kitimet, December 7, 1999—The year has almost lapsed which is difficult to accept in itself. We have finished all of our meetings for the year and are looking forward to the next few months at home. Our T.V. program continues to generate interest. We make 2-3 contacts on average just about every week.

My deepest thanks and appreciation is extended to Richard Bunner for his invaluable help in managing the correspondence for the program. We have visited several of the leads and will continue to do so as new ones develop. While here at home this winter, I will be preaching at Blue Springs. I thank them for their continued support financially and morally. As we begin this new year, this new century, and this new millennium, may the Lord bless us and watch over us.

Miles King, Rt. 1 Box 115, Scotland, AR 72141 (501) 592-3956; E-Mail-mtking@cei.net Dec. 9th, 1999—The Fall meetings have been good. I have been with the brethren at Paducah, KY and Flintville, TN for weekend meetings and a 5 day meeting at Birmingham, Alabama (Crescent Ridge). Greetings for a New Year—2000! I hope we can all be busy in the Vineyard of the Lord and have more zeal than ever for his Cause and Kingdom! At Scotland we are looking forward to a Summer meeting with Doug Hawkins and are in process of arranging other week-end meeting. I’m looking forward to a meeting in Aurora, Mo in April. Recently we heard Bro. Taylor Joyce during his meeting at Dardanelle, Arkansas.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@compworldnet.com, Dec. 7—Don Pruitt, Joe Hisle, and I just completed the annual Anniversary Meeting at Seminole, OK For about twenty years we’ve conducted this weekend meeting during the first week of December and it has grown into a really nice meeting. We had excellent attendance and one man was restored to the church. In October, I had the pleasure of conducting a

meeting in Fremont, CA. I always enjoy the time I spend with Don King. There were no visible results from the meeting, but we had good crowds, including preachers Alan Bonifay, Raymond Fox, Ron Jordan, Bennie Cryer, and Rod Watson. My next meeting was in Covina, CA. Don McCord remains a powerful influence for the Lord's cause in that area. Our meeting was well-attended, and we were glad to have preachers Brett Hickey and Tommy Jackson in attendance. We also had a good meeting in Tyler, Texas, which resulted in two confessions of faults. I enjoyed my association with preachers Terry Baze and Glenn Ballard during the meeting. I preached three services here at home last week which also resulted in two confessions of faults. I am now preparing an Old Testament survey on Jeremiah and Lamentations for the annual Preachers' Study in Arlington, and we hope to wind up the 1900s by attending the Oklahoma New Year Meeting. May God bless us all as we strive to glorify Him.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, Dec. 13, e-mail old_paths@juno.com—It will soon be time to make the annual trip to the Philippines again. I look forward to having Brother Richard DeGough with me this year. If I am not mistaken, this is the 20th trip I have made over there. The work seems to be doing pretty well. We will have a report after our return. During the month of January, please send your materials for publication to Ronny Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808. Continue to send your subscriptions to our address as usual. Remember that the paper has now increased in price to \$10 per year. We are continuing to offer a free years subscription to anyone who sends us ten subscriptions. Preachers don't forget the paper when you hold meetings. Please announce it from time to time and offer to send their subs in for them. Our thanks in advance. Also, send us your regular field reports and an article now and then. Just because we have contributing editors does not mean that we do not continue to need your writings. Please type and double-space them. If you don't, we have to do that for you. It was our pleasure to preach at the Sanger, CA congregation Sunday before last and at home last Lord's Day. We are looking forward to the California New Year's meeting at Lodi, Your prayers are always needed.

Brett Hickey, P.O. Box 6506, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 658-7850; e-mail:brett.hickey@juno.com; Dec. 9—Since last reporting Several months ago, we have had appointments at Modesto, CA, Planz Rd. (Bakersfield, CA) and Gardena, CA. Over the summer, our travels took us to Mt. Home and Hartwell, AR. This was a long anticipated reunion with our good friends and faithful brethren at Mt. Home. Mike and Pat Kemp took good care of us at Mt. Home. Preachers Jimmie Smith, Bruce Roebuck, and their wives continue to be pillars in the area. Cullen Smith is developing early as an effective preacher. Jeff and Tam Williams graciously opened their homes to us at Hartwell - great group of brethren in that area. While we were on the road, we preached at the Tyler and Allen congregations in Texas. This fall it was good to be back with the Marion, IA brethren. This was their first eight-day meeting in nearly twenty years. Their zeal in attending and inviting outsiders

made this an exciting meeting. I believe we had outsiders at every service. It was good to have Richard Reed with us. Rich and Jess Toomsen took great care of us. With their wealth of warmth and energy, we expect them to make great strides for His cause. Enroute, we enjoyed our brief visit with Paul and Wilma Nichols at 79th and Kansas. The church at Ventura recently had two restorations. One is very enthusiastic about developing as a leader. We love the Ventura brethren and are glad we could grow with them over the past three years. We are in debt to the Bakersfield congregations, Marion, LA, Broken Arrow, OK, and Covina, CA for making this effort possible. When we arrived at Ventura three years ago, there were twenty on Sunday morning. With baptisms and restorations, we now have about 40 meeting regularly. We trust we leave behind "gold, silver and precious stones." Ventura had a great weekend meeting with Don King and look forward to a repeat in February. In August, we accepted the invitation to begin working with the church at Tyler, Texas in March. We pray for the faithful everywhere!

Bob Johnson, 8078 Whitewing Dr, Frisco, TX 75034 bj7@home.com—We are happy to report that all is well on the home front. Next month marks my sixth year with the church here. Two of our male members have been developing their skills to be teachers and have taught for us during the mid-week service. It is so very important for the local church to encourage those among us to use their talents as given to them by God. In August, I was in Deer Park, TX conducting a gospel meeting. One brother made confession of faults. We enjoyed staying with our good friends Chuck and Martha Morris. It was also good to visit with fellow preacher Jerry Dickinson and his family, and to be with brethren we had not seen for some time. My meetings are few and far between, so it was truly a special treat for me. In September, our congregation hosted the 53d Annual Texas Labor Day Meeting. All of the participating preachers did an excellent job, presenting their material. Lord willing, the Allen congregation will host it next year. In October, I was in San Angelo, TX for a two day meeting. We were made sad due to the serious illness of sister Vicki Morrison of that congregation. She was flown to the Methodist Hospital in San Antonio the week following my meeting there. Since that time, she has been making remarkable recovery, and is now resting back at her home in San Angelo. We are most grateful for answered prayers in her behalf. We just ended a weekend meeting here with brother Taylor Joyce. We had visitors every service but one. Taylor did an outstanding job in all of the lessons he presented, we can say without a doubt that we were blessed with his presence. We enjoyed very much having him in our home, and it also gave me a chance to get better acquainted with him. We look forward to having him back again sometime in the future. This week I gained a new study with a local husband and wife that attended services with us this past Lord's Day. The wife is from the digressive group, and her husband is a Baptist, but apparently is not practicing his faith. He was very open and seemed eager to learn. We hope to attend a portion of the Annual Preachers Study next month at Arlington, which will start December 20th and go through the 23rd. The city of Frisco where we live is ranked as the second fastest

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growing city in the U.S. It is conveniently located, with a major tollway that goes into Dallas in about 30 minutes. A good place to relocate for employment, and most of the congregations in the Dallas area are within reasonable driving distance of each other. A young man, for example wanting to develop as a preacher could easily find employment and help in the work here as well, something to think about. The unemployment rate here is very, very, low. We still continue to door knock, and brother Melvin Blalock and I have been assisting one another in that effort. We solicit your prayers as we continue to labor for His cause.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, Nov. 30—We have had sickness in the congregation at Stony Point, Kansas City, Kansas but most seem to be better now. Tomorrow I leave for a meeting at Columbia, MO, which will close Dec. 5. Then next weekend, Dec. 10-12, I am scheduled to be at Tulsa, OK. Wilma and I would like to thank all of our brethren and sisters in Christ and all our relatives for the many phone calls, beautiful cards, notes and letters we received acknowledging our 50th Wedding Anniversary, November 28th. The congregation here at 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas City honored us with a surprise get-together after service that day with food, a beautiful cake, cards and gifts. The outpouring of love and respect was very touching. Thank you all. This is my last report for this millennium. We all need to take a look backwards and see what we have done for the cause of Christ and what we have failed to do. It is too bad that people are not as concerned with the condition of their souls as they are the “Y2K bug” and make as much preparation for the return of Christ as they are for what might happen in their everyday affairs. The Lord help us all to begin the new millennium with the resolve to be more dedicated and more spiritual than we ever have been before. It may be later that we think. May the Lord bless us all in our efforts for Him. We baptized another precious soul recently here at Stony Point.

Andrew Weaver, 1800 Hwy. 72E, Apt. #4; drewmaniac2000@hotmail.com—This is the first time I have submitted a report for the OPA. I have always enjoyed reading the various reports from brethren working out in the field. I believe they can at times be a great source of encouragement. In November, I was able to go to Paducah, KY and assist Bro. Miles King in a meeting there. He was gracious enough to allow me to give a lesson and to give all of his readings. His willingness to speak to anyone and everyone about the Bible and the church has always been encouraging to me. I thank him for opening the door of opportunity for me to both gain invaluable experience in personal work, and in allowing me to preach at the gospel

meeting he was holding. I definitely want to thank Gene and Nancy Anderson for opening up their home to me. I have known both for what seems to be most of my life, and they have always been more than hospitable. I also want to thank Isaac and Geeta Bunner for their kind hospitality while I was there. It was a pleasure to meet Shelby Taulbee while I was there, it was obvious he is a help to the Paducah congregation, as well as with his home congregation. Aside from my regular preaching appointments here in Rolla, I have been preaching at many of the different congregations in the surrounding area for the past year or so. The brethren at Brumley, MO have been very supportive of me, having me come once a month to preach for them. Others such as: Lebanon, Eldon, Neosho, North Springfield, and Miami, OK have allowed me the opportunity to preach as well. It was a pleasure to be able to hear Don King at a gospel meeting in Lebanon. It turned out to be a very fruitful effort. One night I was there, Don baptized two young girls and one young man. The following day I heard that their father had been baptized as well. At present, I am beginning to prepare for the annual New Year's meeting in Oklahoma. I always enjoy the worship and fellowship which abound in a meeting such as that. The work here at Rolla has been doing fairly well. I have been talking to a Baptist preacher who works where I do, and he has expressed interest in studying with us. He seems to be very open minded, and throughout his life he has become more and more conservative. Hopefully, through God's Word, he will see the error of his ways. As always, pray for me and all those within the body of our Lord.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXIV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, FEBRUARY 2000

NO. 2

WHAT ABOUT THE RAPTURE?

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

The term "rapture" comes from the Latin word "*rapere*" which means "to carry away, snatch away." Although the term is not found in the Bible, it expresses the essence of the doctrine. It teaches that Jesus is going to come and silently snatch away the righteous, living and dead, which will be the first resurrection.

There are variations among those who hold the theory of "The Rapture." All do not agree. However, in spite of these disagreements, those who subscribe to the basic doctrine do not let denominational lines make a difference. Because it is so popular many have just blindly accepted the theory without serious investigation of the Scriptures to see if the doctrine is true.

There are bumper stickers which say, "In case of Rapture this car will be driverless." Driverless cars will collide in the streets. Airplanes will crash because their pilots will be snatched away. Righteous husbands and fathers will not return home from work. Wives going about their domestic duties will suddenly disappear. Children will come home from school to empty houses. That is, if the rapture theory is true.

According to the "rapture doctrine" after the righteous are secretly snatched away then will be "The Great Tribulation" which will last for seven years. During this time the wrath of the Lord will be poured out upon the unrighteous because they rejected Him. Also, the Antichrist will be revealed.

At the end of "the Tribulation" Christ will return to the earth with 10,000 of His saints to fight "The Battle of Armageddon." The Lord and His army will be victorious and will execute judgment on the ungodly, and Antichrist will be destroyed.

After the great victory, according to the theory, Christ will set up His kingdom, with headquarters in Jerusalem, and sit on David's throne and reign with His saints for a thousand years.

At the end of the one thousand years reign of Christ there will be a second resurrection, and all who remain in their graves from Adam on will then rise from the dead and "The Judgment" will take place and all will receive their just deserts. The wicked will be raised and punished and the saints will return to heaven with Jesus where they will live forever.

What Does The Bible Say?

1. Neither the term "The Rapture" nor the doctrine is found in the Bible.

2. The return of Christ will not be secret. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God... (1 Thes. 4:16). The heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10). "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Rev. 1:7). The coming of Christ is going to be obvious to all people everywhere. It is going to be heralded with loud sounds and conspicuous sights, and everyone in the world will be aware of it.

3. The Tribulation of the "rapture theory" is based on a misinterpretation of Matthew chapter 24. The tribulation spoken of by Jesus was associated with the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 and was given in answer to the first question asked Him by the disciples (Matt. 24:1-2). The tribulation did indeed take place before that generation passed away (Matt. 24:34).

4. According to the word of God there is going to be but one resurrection. It will include the righteous and the unrighteous. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28,29). "...There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15).

5. Based upon the Bible the kingdom of Christ is not going to be established in the future, as the rapture doctrine would have us believe, but has been in existence for nearly 2000 years. Furthermore, it is spiritual: It is not an earthly kingdom. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). Christ gave to the apostle Peter the keys to the kingdom (Matt. 16:18,19). On the day of Pentecost, AD 33, Peter opened the kingdom to the Jews (Acts 2), and to the Gentiles a few years later (Acts 10). Then John later stated that he was in the kingdom (Rev. 1:9). The Colossians had been translated into the kingdom (Col. 1:13). Also, the apostle Paul taught that the Christians had received a kingdom (Heb. 12:28). All of these things were written in the first century, and the kingdom was referred to as being in existence then. In Mark 9:1 Jesus made it quite clear that the kingdom would definitely come during

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Editorial

THE OLD PATHS ADVOCATE AND CONTROVERSY

By RONNY F. WADE

The other day a friend was recounting to me how he had been trying to get people to subscribe to the *Old Paths Advocate*. One brother had responded to him by saying that he wasn't interested because he felt there was too much controversy in the paper and that, in his opinion, was negative. We certainly believe that this brother has every right to choose not to take the paper, however, I wonder if he is going to give up the Bible for the same reasons. Now I am not suggesting that the Bible and the *Old Paths Advocate* are on the same footing. However, the Bible is full of both controversy and negativism. In fact exactly half of the ten commandments are negative, and with reference to controversy think about this—Jesus, himself engaged in controversy almost daily. His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23 is a classic example of the refutation of error and hypocrisy so prevalent then. Paul disputed on a daily basis, challenged the "scholars" of his day in Acts 17, resorted to name calling on a number of occasions i.e. in 2 Timothy 4:10 charged Demas, by name, with deserting him, identified Alexander the coppersmith as an enemy, and charged Hymenaeus and Alexander with blasphemy. John identified Diotrophes as a dictator in III John 9. In the First Corinthian letter the apostle Paul discloses their sins of refusing to deal with immorality (Chap. 5), going to law against each other (Chap. 6), espousing false ideas about the resurrection (Chap. 15) etc. Talk about negativism, controversy, and name calling, the Bible is full of it. Yet when something of that nature is done today in a religious paper, some complain "I can't stand the controversy" or "It's wrong to call names," or "I just don't want to read stuff like that." As I have already said, people who wish not to take a certain religious journal have that right for whatever reason. However the idea that we "don't like controversy" really needs to be looked at in depth. What is that saying? Do we fear controversy? Are we afraid to confront people who teach false doctrines? Have we reached the point that we think "love" is going to solve all our problems? Did you ever wonder why Paul did not tell the Corinthians to just love that man who was living in incest? Why didn't Paul just say "Demas has left, and I can't judge him?" or why not say "Alexander and Hymenaeus got off track just a little bit, but I think if we love them and treat them with respect they will eventually come back?" Brethren, have we gone soft? Have we reached the point that the only thing we can stand are "soft sounds" and "preaching that pleases and condemns no one or no thing?" I truly hope not. The *Old Paths Advocate* has stood firmly against digression, sin, and innovations for over seventy years. God willing, it will continue to do the same as long as we

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: If a Christian wife becomes ill, or has a long or short term disability, should the Christian husband help or do the duties that his wife ordinarily does? (AR)

Answer: Marriage is a partnership. The Scriptures declare that "two become one flesh." This one flesh relationship involves much more than a fleshly bond. When most of us married we promised to "love and honor each other, in sickness and in health as long as both should live." That being true, it seems obvious to this writer that when one party of the marriage is incapacitated the other will do whatever necessary to see that the load is carried. The Scriptures speak of the husband as the head of the wife (Eph. 5:23); and the primary support of the family (Gen. 3:19; 1 Tim. 5:8). The wife is an helpmeet who is domestically responsible for the family (Titus 2:4-5, 1 Timothy 5:14). In most situations it will be necessary for the husband to continue working in order to provide the necessities of life. It may be that at times he will be forced to either hire or receive help from others in order to take care of the domestic duties his wife is unable to perform. However, when possible for him to do so, it is not out of line or unreasonable to expect the husband to step in and assume the work that his wife, when able, would do. One thing for sure, an illness or disability, short or long term, is not an excuse for a husband terminating a marriage, abusing his wife, or claiming that the work that needs to be done is not his responsibility.

Question: May a husband put away his wife for adultery after he has forgiven her and accepted her back into the marriage? (CA)

Answer: If I understand the querist, the situation is as follows: two Christians are married. One commits adultery, and is forgiven before a divorce takes place. Later after accepting and forgiving the guilty party, the innocent decides to get a divorce based on the adultery that had been previously committed. I do not believe that he/she can. Jesus taught "And I say unto you, whoever divorces his wife, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." The divorce, in this case, has

to be for adultery. However, it is not mandatory that the innocent party divorce the guilty immediately. He/She may plead with the guilty to repent and be reconciled to both God and the marriage. If successful the guilty may be received back by both. However once the guilty has been received and forgiven, the innocent cannot go back and get a divorce based on a sin that has been forgiven. God doesn't deal this way with us, nor should we with one another. It is the personal conviction of this writer, that in all cases where a spouse commits fornication, reasonable time should be given for repentance. There should be no rush to divorce and end a marriage that might be salvaged. May God help all couples who find themselves in this unfortunate circumstance to so act.

Question: Explain the thin line between fornication in the heart and physical fornication. May a guilty spouse be put away for either or both? (CA)

Answer: First of all let me say that I don't think the line between fornication of the heart and physical fornication should be described as "thin." There is a vast difference in what one does in his heart and what he actually does with his body. Now it may be correctly argued that one usually does something in his heart or mind before he actually commits the act, however the two situations are far from being the same. Jesus said in Mt. 5: 27-28 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." In this situation a man does in his heart what he otherwise cannot legally or scripturally do. Such is sin, says Jesus. However, in v. 32 as well as Mt. 19:9 Jesus uses the word fornication to refer to an act of the body, not an act of the mind. In 1 Cor. 6:15-18 Paul declares that the body is not for fornication. Fornication is a perversion of God's intent for our bodies. One may be lost for sins of the mind, however divorce may not be scripturally obtained because of them. Only when the physical act is committed may a divorce be sought.

(Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, MO 65808)

KEEPING THE ORDINANCES

By BRETT HICKEY

Why are worshipping errors perpetuated? Is it because people are unaware of the divine pattern?

Sometimes this is the case. However, others recognize New Testament examples for worship, but do not feel restricted by it. Once the pattern is specified, those worshipping scripturally and regularly may fail to emphasize the principles that bind those examples. Details are essential, but details alone will not necessarily convince the gainsayer. Recent discussions with seemingly knowledgeable, yet erring brethren revealed a gaping hole in defense of their departure. Although from different backgrounds and generations these brethren share a common oversight: the weight of the New Testament principle of "keeping the ordinances."

Did Jesus Take Away All Ordinances?

When discussing the common confusion in the religious world over the proper use and relationship between the Old and New Testaments, we have little anxiety for members of the Lord's church. Christians should get this straight on one of their early Bible studies with an evangelist, elder or teacher. This truth is then reinforced repeatedly from the pulpit. How could this trip us up? The Sabbatarians effectively elevate the Old above the New. Our denominational friends pull their practices indiscriminately from the Jewish and Christian systems. As disappointing as it may be, members of the church of Christ are struggling here too. The basic difference between the testaments is an unexplored or misunderstood subject

even among some educated Christians. A case in point: one brother writes repeatedly and disparagingly about how unscriptural it was to emphasize "ordinances". He said, "The middle wall of partition was taken away. That wall of ordinances that separated man from man, and man from God...What do the preachers spend 99.9% of their time preaching...? THE LAW OF COMMANDMENTS CONTAINED IN ORDINANCES! How many times does Jesus have to die to accomplish something?"

Three Types of Ordinances

Certainly, any of our preachers emphasizing "the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. 2:14-16) needs to be instructed about "the way of God more perfectly." The real issue though, revolves around "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). More specifically, some are unaware that there are three types of "ordinances" spoken of in the New Testament: those delivered by Moses, those developed by man and those revealed in the New Testament by Jesus and the inspired writers. Back to our brother's protests: What *exactly* was taken away? What did Jesus die to accomplish? We can be sure that he did not die to take away the "doctrine of Christ" (2 Jn. 9-11) or "all truth" as delivered by the Holy Spirit to the apostles (Jn. 16:13). Those who claim Jesus died to remove His own ordinances and those delivered by the apostles will find themselves wrestling with the indispensable doctrine of inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16)—an unenviable position for sure!

What Kinds of Ordinances Do Not Bind?

W.E. Vine says the word "ordinance" means ... a handing down or on' ... (It) denotes 'a tradition,' ... 'the teachings of the rabbis,' interpretations of the Law..." This word (also translated "traditions") is found eight times in Jesus' memorable rebuke of the scribes and Pharisees (Mt.15; Mk.7) for binding human traditions. The disciples were criticized for not washing their hands (Doctrines designed from sanitary concerns go back to ancient times). Jesus' response: human traditions or ordinances are not obligatory. Of course, the same is true today.

Jesus further reprimanded these religious leaders because they used these human traditions to excuse themselves from keeping "the law of commandments contained in ordinances" then binding upon God's people. Paul did plainly and repeatedly teach that Christians are no longer bound to ordinances (Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 2:14-16; Rom. 7:1-7). Christians have no authority for binding either the ordinances of man or the ordinances of Moses. Unfortunately, some have failed to distinguish between the ordinances to be disregarded and the New Testament ordinances consecrated by Christ and delivered by the apostles.

What Was Paul Talking About in 1 Corinthians 11:2?

Paul certainly could not be blamed for the confusion here. In fact, no one would be more surprised than Paul himself to learn that he taught against all regulations and ordinances. He wrote in 1 Cor. 11:2, "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." The NKJV translates it, "keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you." Other translations render this verse:

"holdfast to the traditions, just as I handed them on to you."

"follow closely the teachings just as I gave them to you."
"maintain the traditions just as I handed them on to you."

"hold firmly to the traditions just as I delivered them to you."

"retain the observances as I delivered them to you."

Paul says, in effect, that praise is in order for those who retain the ordinances just as he delivered them. Some of our friends tell us that such intolerance is unkind. They say that it is uncharitable to discriminate against other religious groups merely on doctrinal grounds. To hear them, tell it, those who *do not* hold firmly to the ordinances are worthy of equal praise and commendation. This cannot be. The prophet of old denounced this kind of "equity" in Is. 5:20. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" There is nothing scandalous about saying as did the shepherd-King, "I hate every false way" (Ps. 119:104, 128). In fact, one of Corinth's weaknesses appears to be their extreme moral and doctrinal tolerance (1 Cor. 5, 11,14). Moreover, Paul makes it painfully clear that this tolerance should not be confused with maturity (1 Cor. 3:1-3) nor did it indicate their superior understanding of love (1 Cor. 13).

What Ordinances Must We Keep?

Clearly, Christians are obligated to strictly observe some ordinances. Now we need to determine what ordinances are under consideration in 1 Cor. 11:2? Vine's definition further enlightens us. He places ordinances under the general heading "apostolic teaching." He adds, with reference to 1 Cor. 11:2 "...of instructions concerning the gatherings of believers (instructions of wider scope than ordinances in the limited sense); in 2 Th. 2:15, of Christian doctrine in general, where the apostle's use of the word constitutes a denial that what he preached originated with himself, and a claim for its divine authority (cf. paralambano, "to receive," 1 Cor. 11:23; 15:3); in 2 Thess. 3:6, it is used of instructions concerning everyday conduct." In light of this explanation, only the most cunning and creative individual could talk his way out of his widespread doctrinal responsibility. This definition seems to encompass every doctrinal matter "handed down" or delivered by the apostles.

The Ordinance of Love

Inarguably, given these parameters charity or love is an ordinance we are bound to keep. Shortly after introducing the subject of ordinances, Paul confronts Corinth with the emptiness that exists when a knowledgeable and gifted "Christian" does not have charity. This is a pitiful state! Lamentably some choose the other extreme. They claim that if one possesses true love for his brother and his fellowman nothing else really matters much. These men quote numerous scriptures on love from 1 John, but 1 John 2:3-5 mysteriously eludes their conversation.

Ordinances Bound By Love

As much as we learn from John on the preeminence of love, the beloved disciple never commends love as a substitute for other divine ordinances. Instead, he binds them together as inseparable elements of New Testament Christianity. Hear the profound message of 1 Jn. 5:2: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments."

A man may say that he loves his brother, but how can we know for sure? The Holy Spirit through John tells us, "when he loves God, and keeps his commandments." This scripture is perhaps the clearest, most succinct refutation of love as the only New Testament command. Must we love the children of God? Yes! Must we love God? Yes! But there is more. We demonstrate the sincerity of our love by keeping *all* the commandments or ordinances. A host of intelligible scriptures (2 Jn. 9; 1 Cor. 14:37; Mt. 28:19; Jude 3) teach the same truth.

Back to 1 Cor. 11:2 and ordinances. Did Paul have anything specific in mind when he spoke of "keeping the ordinances just as they were delivered"? It would certainly be difficult to exclude the teachings he discussed at length in the same chapter. Count him a bold man indeed who would treat verses 3-16 as idle chatter.

Regulations Established for Proper Procedure Nelson's topical Bible index says ordinances are "regulations established for proper procedure." Other sources single out the Lord's Supper and baptism as New Testament ordinances. Under the heading "Abuse of ordinances," Nave's Topical Bible refers to 1 Cor. 11:22 and 1 Cor. 14. A careful comparison of 1 Cor. 11:2, 17, 22 and 23 support

the claim that Paul had the Lord's Supper in mind when he introduced the idea of "keeping the ordinances." Paul praises his Corinthian brethren for keeping certain ordinances just as they were delivered. However, he introduces his discussion on the ordinance of the Lord's Supper by saying, "I praise you not." Before he details the observance of the Lord's Supper as delivered by Jesus in the Gospels, he says in effect, "I cannot, I will not praise you."

The Lord's Supper: An Ordinance to Be Kept

Interestingly, Paul writes in verse 23, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you..." The identical phrase is used in verse 2: "Keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you" (verse 2). These are more than mere coincidences. Paul deliberately focused on the importance of keeping ordinances—the traditions, the rules and regulations—just as delivered by these earthen vessels. As additional safeguards from accidentally overlooking the details of 1 Cor. 11:24-25, the Holy Spirit tells us, "This do" or "Do this in remembrance of me." As J.W. McGarvey wrote, "If it is wrong to change in the slightest degree the ordinance of baptism, it is still worse, if possible, to change the ordinance of the Lord's Supper."

THE WADE-KNOWLES DISCUSSION REVISITED

By *BILLY D. DICKINSON*

A written discussion between Ronny F. Wade and Victor Knowles on the number of containers to be used in the communion appeared in the *Old Paths Advocate* in the January to June issues of 1978. That exchange came about as the result of a book Knowles had written, *The One Cup Faith*, and a series of articles Bro. Wade had written in reviewing the book.

In the opinion of this writer, Bro. Knowles failed miserably in that debate to prove that individual cups may be used in the Lords supper without violating scriptural precedent. In fact, Bro. Knowles demonstrated an attitude of disdain for biblical authority when he referred to commands, examples, and necessary inferences as "that hackneyed trio." Bro. Wade gave the following reply, and I must say that he did so with great precision and clarity: "He virtually throws command, example, and necessary inference out the window; calling them 'hackneyed trio' men have devised. If this be so,, then pray tell how does he go about establishing scriptural authority? He then has the audacity to tell us that we should use 'good old common sense' as a measuring stick to interpret the scriptures in question. I wonder if he would be so kind to define 'good old common sense'? Good old common sense (as defined and used by man) has led to every innovation and departure from truth conceivable to the human mind." As you can see, Bro. Knowles had his hands full in that discussion.

If you are wondering why I am writing about a written discussion that took place over twenty years ago, the reason is that I have recently become aware that there is more to this story that needs to be told. In their exchange, Bro. Wade posed this question: "Do you believe we must use unleavened bread in the Lords supper?" Notice the reply Bro. Knowles gave to that question: "The Bible does not say we 'must'; since that is what was evidently used, we use it." It doesn't take a Philadelphia lawyer to see that

Bro. Knowles did not give a straightforward answer to the question! In fact, he answered with such ambiguity that the reader is left to draw his own conclusion about what is meant by his reply. Actually, Bro. Knowles answered a question that was never asked! The question was not whether Jesus used unleavened bread. The question wasn't even if Bro. Knowles uses unleavened bread when observing the Lords supper. No, the question was whether the use of unleavened bread is a "must." The only reply that was given to the actual question was that the Bible does not say we "must" in regard to this matter.

Do you suppose that the ambiguity of Bro. Knowles' reply was by design or by accident? Well, recently I was reading the following magazine in the library of a nearby university: *AMG International Pulpit Helps* (April 1999, Vol. 24, No. 4, P.3 1). Guess who had a sermon outline on The Lord's Supper in this magazine? Yes, that's right, none other than Victor Knowles! Would you believe that in his outline he condemns leavened bread in the communion in unmistakable language? First, in discussing bread as an element in the communion, he writes the following: "Bread, to represent His body, (Matt. 26:26). Unleavened (without yeast) bread because of the Passover (Matt. 26:17). (See Exodus 12:15) Leaven represents sin (1 Cor. 5:7,8)." Also,, under point six in his outline, where he deals with The Abuses of the Lord's Supper, he places the use of leavened bread in the same category as observing the communion with an improper spirit, closed communion, and the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation.

If Bro. Knowles held this position at the time of the written debate, why did he give such a wishy-washy reply in his exchange with Bro. Wade? Surely the answer is obvious! He saw the handwriting on the wall and he felt the force of the argument before it was fully developed against him. Eventhough Jesus commanded all of His

disciples to drink of the one cup that He handed to them (Matt. 26:27), Bro. Knowles reasoned in his discussion with Bro. Wade that— "The purpose is important; the procedure is left to our discretion." However, Bro. Knowles in his outline placed the use of leavened bread in the same category as eating the communion with an improper spirit! That shows that Bro. Wade was right on target when he made this observation: "Now notice carefully how our respondent contradicts himself. In my last article I asked him Would it be scriptural to use Coca-Cola as a drink element? He replied 'It would not be scriptural to use Coca-Cola because what was used was the fruit of the vine.' But if the purpose is the important thing, as you claim, then please explain to the readers why a change in the drink

element would make that much difference. The minute you demand fruit of the vine instead of Coca-Cola because Jesus used fruit of the vine, just that quickly will I demand cup for the same reason."

Bro. Knowles is not the first to feel his inconsistency on this issue and he will not be the last. What a blessing it is to simply stand upon a "thus saith the Lord" and to have the courage to declare your convictions and let the chips fall where they may! Unless Bro. Knowles learned new truth since his written exchange with Bro. Wade (Who knows? Perhaps he learned something from the exercise), why didn't he answer the question about unleavened bread with the same degree of conviction that his outline demonstrates?

A FORGOTTEN GOD

By RICK MARTIN

We are living in a day and age when it seems as if people have forgotten God. Today our society is struggling with drugs, broken homes, child abuse, sexual misconduct and every other kind of sin imaginable. This is accompanied by fear and distrust and a loss of direction. What we have is a society in chaos.

After immigrating to the United States, a Russian novelist and philosopher was asked for his observation concerning the moral state of America. His response was, "The problem with America is that it has forgotten God."

This same tragedy was addressed by God to apostate Judah in (Jer. 2:31-32) "O generation see ye the word of the Lord, Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? A land of darkness? Wherefore say my people, We are lords: we will come no more unto thee? Can a maid forget her ornaments or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number.

Judah was a nation that practiced the formalities of her creed while living in immorality (Jer. 5:8-9). Judah also lived in greed (Jer. 6:13). The nation of Judah also practiced deceit (Jer. 9:3-6). The only cure for Judah or any other people is to turn decisively from sin to God. We should be concerned about the moral state of our country, but our major concern should be with the Church. The question that we are concerned with is not has America forgotten God, but have we forgotten God?

One of the things that God demands of us is obedience. Long ago Judah was disobedient to God. In fact in Jer. 2:31-32 we see that they felt they had no need for God. They said, "We are lords we will come no more unto thee." They believed that they were preeminent and that their own will was the most important thing. Many today believe that their own will is preeminent. Many follow the thinking of the rich fool. He wanted to know what to do, since he had no place to store his crops and then he answered his own question.

Self-seeking humanity has forgotten God and his demands. The rich fool was so wrapped up in himself that he totally left God out. His self-centeredness led him to look only at the physical side of life. In doing so he ignored the fact that God also has a stake in our lives. We have a responsibility to recognize God and include Him in the plans for our lives. Many times we forget God and do things in our own way. Sometimes we know what we are supposed

to do, but we just decide that we don't care what God's will is and we are just determined to have our own way about a certain thing.

Our life is not a matter of what we want or what our rights are. We must recognize and respect God's existence and strive to obey His will. The rights of God must come before our own rights.

God demands obedience from us. He expected Adam and Eve to obey the first command ever given. When they did not obey, He punished them. When Cain failed to worship God in God's way, he was told, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shalt be his desire and thou shalt rule over him" (Gen. 4:7). God destroyed a whole generation because of their disobedience, sparing only Noah and his family (Gen. 6:8). God's own people were punished for disobeying and a whole generation perished in the wilderness.

The New Testament continues to emphasize the need for man's obedience. Paul warned that Jesus is coming some day to render vengeance to those who do not obey the Gospel (II Thes. 1:8). James urges us to be doers of the word (Jas 1:22) and John warns us that to be right with God we must abide in his teachings (II Jn. 9). Many people have forgotten that God demands obedience.

The center of man's problems is the self-centered heart. Jesus said "If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt 16:24). Many people today don't want to deny self in almost all cases when there is a problem in a congregation, a marriage, or a family it stems from someone thinking only about self. In other words, they are interested in pleasing self and they have forgotten God.

Some have forgotten God when it comes to worship. Some have never learned the lesson that God must be worshipped in His way and that anything else is perversion. Some have made other things supreme in their lives and given top priority to other things, rather than to God. Like the Israelites, even God's people today can long to be like the nations about them. We must realize that the object of our worship must be God and not the things of the world. It is imperative in this day and age that man return to God. In these days of a forgotten God, it is important that we come to know Him.

Christianity is not for people who set on the fence. Because we were bought with a price we should have a relationship with God that is intense and full of zeal. The church at Laodecia was rebuked for its luke-warmness. Apathy is repulsive to God. God loves us so much and he expects us to love Him. His love should define our morals and keep us from becoming worldly in our actions and attitudes.

God has a desire for his people to know Him intimately and personally. Think of all the people who have had a deep relationship with God. Abraham was called the "friend of God." Enoch and Noah also enjoyed a close relationship with God. In fact the scriptures tell us that they both walked with God. Moses had a special relationship with God and David is described as a "man after God's heart." As Christians today we have the opportunity to be intimate with God (Jas. 4:8), "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you." This is an appeal for God's people to return to Him and renew their devotion to Him.

We need to understand that God loves us, we need to admire that love and reciprocate. It would be impossible to forget God, if we truly understand how great and marvelous the Father's love is to his children.

Many years ago a wealthy couple lost a dear little 7-year-old girl whom they loved very much. As you can imagine, the mother was devastated over the loss and she even became physically ill. Her husband took her on a trip to Europe, to a world famous psychiatrist and to some of the finest medical doctors money could buy, but she got no better. Finally, the doctors told him she would get no better. They suggested that they go to an orphanage and find a child and let her lavish all her affection on it. At first the wife was reluctant but finally her husband was able to persuade her and they went to an orphanage and

began their search. As they walked through the orphanage, they saw a little girl who was blond and blue-eyed-who reminded them of the little girl they had lost. The lady asked to be left alone with the little girl and when all the others left the room, she began to talk. She said, "I had a little girl whom I loved very much and she died a few months ago. You remind me so much of her, won't you come and live with me?" The little girl stood still with her head bowed. The lady said, "We will do anything for you, we will give you anything you want, we will meet your every need. Please come and live with us." The little girl continued to stand with her head bowed and the lady was sure she had been defeated. Finally the little girl looked up and she said, "Ma'am, if you do all that for me, what will you expect me to do for you?" And with that, the lady gathered the little girl up into her arms and she said, "Darling, all we ask is that you love us." This story reminds me that I have a Father and a Savior who loves me. Who can answer my every need. They offer me everything I need in this world and they offer me a home in heaven in that world which is to come. They have done so much for me and what do they ask in return? Simply, that I love them. Jesus declares in John 14:15, "If you love me, keep my commandments." That's how I reciprocate the love of God and Jesus by keeping their commandments.

In light of all that God and Jesus have done for us, it is incredible to think that people can forget them. God through the prophet Jeremiah expresses this in Jer. 2:31. How incredible it would be for a maid to forget her ornaments or a bride her attire, you would never expect that to happen and so it should be with God's people forgetting Him. It is incredible to think that would happen and yet God says, "My people have forgotten me days without number." God has done so much for them and yet they had forgotten Him. What about us? Have we forgotten God?

HOLDING FAST OUR CONFESSION

By EDWARD WILLIAMSON

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote the following words in Hebrews 4:14-16, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (all scripture quotations from the New King James Version). It is imperative that we who are Christians persevere, hold fast, and continue faithfully. This course of action is possible only with the help of Almighty God. The end result is achieved because of what Jesus Christ has done for us. How can we hold fast our confession? I believe there are several attributes found in the word of God which, if implemented by Christians, will enable us to hold fast our confession.

1) Be diligent- We are instructed to be diligent by the Apostle Peter in 2 Peter 1: 10, "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble," The result of Christians following these instructions is found in the

following verse, 2 Peter 1: 11, "for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." The message is clear, if we will be diligent regarding our call and election we will not stumble and we gain an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus. Certainly those elect pilgrims to whom Peter wrote his first epistle understood the necessity of being diligent. They were faced with trouble and persecution on every side. During a time of trial they were instructed as we find in I Peter 1:3-5. In this passage, Peter reminds them that they have been begotten again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus (verse 3); that this hope is toward an inheritance reserved for them in heaven (verse 4); and that they are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation (verse 5).

With these teachings in mind, the Apostle Peter continues with the words of I Peter 1:6-9 where he acknowledges their present period of trials (verse 6); pointing out that these trials prove the genuineness of their faith (verse 7); reiterates the joy which should be manifest in every Christian life because of our faith in Jesus (verse 8); and finally reminds the readers that the end of their faith is the salvation of their soul (verse 9). We must hold fast our

confession, or as the KJV renders the word in Hebrews 4:14, hold fast our "profession." By being diligent to make their calling and election sure even in the face of trials these Christians would receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their soul.

2) Take heed—The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Tim. 4:16, "Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you." To take heed is to carefully consider, especially in spiritual matters. The singularity of doctrine is also manifest in this verse. There is only one true doctrine concerning Christ, only one gospel, only one entrance into the Kingdom. Paul previously instructed in 1 Tim. 4:13, "Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." The implication is clear, we must take heed and give attention to the doctrine of Christ. The result of the faithful disciple following these apostolic injunctions is the salvation of both their own soul as well as those who hear. The Christian walk is one of continued faithfulness. Paul instructed the Corinthians, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). Over and over again we find warnings and exhortations to take heed. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews likewise warns us, "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away" (Heb. 2:1). Let us not suppose that a haphazard approach to the message of Christ will suffice. We must give earnest heed! Indeed, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation (Heb. 2:3)? How many have neglected the salvation in Christ because they failed to take heed?

3) Stand fast—Another attribute which enables us to hold fast our confession is that of standing fast. The Apostle Paul commanded the Thessalonians. "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle" (2 Thess. 2:15). One of the marks of a faithful Christian is the ability to stand fast and hold. We should be appreciative of those old soldiers of the faith who weathered the storms of conflict and controversy, those who have stood like towering rocks while the waves of change and compromise have crashed over the land. But let us never forget that each generation must likewise stand fast and hold. The result of our standing fast and holding the traditions is found in 2 Thess. 2:13-14, "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory

of our Lord Jesus Christ." Salvation and glory, sanctification by the Spirit, the love of the Lord. These all come as a result of standing fast and holding.

These three characteristics, diligence, taking heed, and standing fast must be cultivated in every Christian. The result of these characteristics is the salvation of our souls. Let us find some practical applications of this lifestyle in Hebrews chapter 4.

We have the promise of rest (Heb. 4:1). This is conditional on belief (Heb. 4:3, 7, 9). The response to the preaching of the gospel must be faith. Faith is the bedrock upon which our obedience and subsequent faithfulness must be grounded. Without faith the preaching of the word is useless to us (Heb. 4:2, 5, 6). The promise of rest is reached by diligence to enter that rest (Heb. 4:11). Don't be disobedient, rather take heed, stand fast, and be diligent to enter that promised rest. We are not following the advice of men but rather the Word of God (Heb. 4:12-13). We must all give account (Romans 14:12), nothing is hidden from God.

The Christian who is diligently entering that promised rest finds great comfort, strength, and hope in the words of Hebrews 4:14-16 and the allied passage of Hebrews 10:19-26. We can come boldly to the throne of grace for the purposes of obtaining mercy and to find grace. The mercy and grace of God will help us, indeed are the only things which will sustain us in time of need. We cannot rely on our own intelligence, strength, or abilities. We can however, depend on God. Indeed we have the opportunity to enter into the Holiest through the blood of Christ (Heb. 10:19), but we must draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, and in a saved condition (Heb. 10:22). The idea of being diligent and holding fast our confession is likewise enjoined in this passage. We must hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering (Heb. 10:23). This holding fast without wavering is made possible by being diligent. We are diligent because we know that God is faithful and His promises are true (Heb. 10:23).

Being diligent is not accomplished easily by the individual Christian. We need our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We must consider one another to stir up love and good works (Heb. 10:24). We must exhort one another to join in the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25). One of the great needs of the church as we approach the new century is that of considering one another and exhorting one another. If we would truly take this message to heart we would find stronger more vibrant congregations composed of diligent faithful Christians.

THINGS TO AVOID

By EDWIN S. MORRIS

There are many things taught in the Scriptures that we as Christians are to avoid and shun. We shall notice a few of these things that are set forth so that we may learn more of our duty and live closer unto the Lord. The first we shall consider is found in Titus 3:9 and 2 Tim. 2:23. In Titus, Paul says, "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain." Many today contend and strive about these things that Paul says is vain. Let us notice this passage of scripture and analyze it. **Avoid**—(G.

peristemi) Thayer says: "to turn one self about, for the purpose of avoiding something, hence to avoid, shun." These things he is about to name we are to turn away from for the purpose of avoiding. **Foolish** (Gr. *Moros*) is empty, useless, dull, sluggish, stupid. Questions asked us which are empty and useless certainly we should avoid them. **Genealogies** is a record of descent or lineage. **Contentions** (Gr. *eris*) strife, wrangling. **Strivings** (Gr. *mache*) of persons at variance, disputants, etc., strife, contention about the law. **Unprofitable** (*anopheles*) useless. **Vain** (Gr.

mataios) devoid of force, truth, success, result; useless, to no purpose. Connected with these contentions and strivings about the law were many foolish, frivolous, unprofitable questions not taught in the Scriptures and bringing no good to men. The questions, genealogies, etc., lead to no attainment of godliness. There was no advancement in Christian growth in these things. Often that is true today. Brethren, and even congregations, begin to wrangle over things that are foolish questions and contentions; and strifes arise and they forget the weighty matters.

Jesus said in Matt. 23:23, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." Brethren, let us not be guilty of this. Many times we overlook the weighty matters; attend the lesser matters and then strive and wrangle over the foolish questions, etc. No wonder we do not progress as we should. No doubt we all have opinions about different matters that are matters of indifference, but let us keep them to ourselves and not gender strife over them. In 2 Tim. 2:23, Paul says, "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid knowing that they do gender strifes." **Unlearned** (Gr. *apaideutos*) Thayer says: "without instruction and discipline, uneducated, ignorant, rude; stupid questions." These questions were those of an untrained mind and carried away from novelties. They were questions that did not come from any trained habit of thinking. **Gender** (Gr. *gennaō*) metaphorically to engender, cause to arise, excite, Paul teaches us that these, as all questions of human reasoning, are unprofitable and vain. These disturb and embitter feelings; they lead to the indulgence of a bad spirit; they are often difficult to be settled; and they are of no practical importance even if they could be determined. Things not taught by the Bible are to be avoided, because they breed strife and division. Paul correctly says that the effect of such disputes is to engender harsh contention and strife.

The second thing we shall notice that we are to avoid is that of evil. In 1 Thess. 5:22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." **Abstain** (Gr. *apechomai*) to hold one's self off, abstain. **Appearance** (Gr. *eidōs*) form, kind: i.e. from every kind of evil or wrong. The meaning is to avoid evil in every form. Adam Clarke is helpful: "Sin not, and avoid even the appearance of it. Do not drive your morality so near the bounds of evil as to lead even weak persons to believe that ye actually touch, taste, or handle it. Let not the form of it (*eidōs*), appear with or among you, much less the substance. Ye are called to holiness; be ye holy, for God is holy." What Mr. Clarke says accords with: "Let not then you good be evil spoken of" (Rom. 14:16). Again in Rom. 12:9, "**Abhor** (Gr. *apostugeō*) to dislike, abhor, have horror of. Weist gives this information. "**Miseo** speaks of a concealed and cherished hatred, **stugeō**, of a hatred which is expressed. The prefixed preposition **apo** which means 'off, away from,' shows separation. **The Christian is to express his hatred of evil by a withdrawal from it and a disgust of it.** Evil must be repulsive to the saint. We are to avoid and shun evil by separating ourselves from it. Let us see again in Eph. 5:11, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Not only are we not to have fellowship with the

works of darkness, but we are to reprove them. We are to silence the adversary by convincing him of his error. Christian friend, are you indulging in sins and worldliness? Are you afraid to bring to light sins of others because it might expose your own? Are you shunning all evil? Dearly beloved, let us heed the admonition of God and live close to Him—"Denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12; See also James 4:4; 1 Juno. 2:15-17).

The third thing we will notice that we are to avoid is found in Rom. 16:17, where Paul says: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" I beseech you or "I beg of you, please." **Mark**—(Gr. *Skopeō*) to look at, observe, contemplate; to fix one's eyes upon, direct one's attention to, anyone. Keep an eye on one so as to avoid. It is a warning against false teachers. Give them no countenance, and have no religious fellowship with them. **Division** is dissension, disunion. **Offences** (Gr. *skandalon*) an impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble and fall. Metaphorically, any person or thing by which one is drawn into error if sin. Doctrine (didache) teaching, viz that which is taught. **Avoid** (*ekklineō*) to turn away from, keep aloof from, one's society; to shun one. Not only keep out of their way, but remove from it if you fall in with them. It is worthy of notice, that the apostle desires the faithful to mark them who cause divisions, that they might avoid their company, lest by conversing familiarly with such they might have been infected with their errors and vices. Paul told Timothy, in 2 Tim. 2:17, "And their word will eat as doth a canker." This application will apply today. We are to avoid those who bring in doctrines contrary to the true doctrine which we have learned and been assured of. In 2 Tim. 3:14, "But continue thus in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." Notice also 2 Jno. 9:11. All doctrines not taught in the word of God, we are to shun or avoid. Many doctrines today we have to shun or avoid because they are contrary doctrines. Such things as individual cups, classes, fermented wine, instrumental music, infant baptism, total depravity, many churches, etc.

We are to love the person's soul, but must not endorse his error. We can love them and do our utmost to convert them to the truth in the Spirit of Christ and still, at the same time, not endorse them in what they do and practice. We will have much more influence over one in error if we will show him love and show interest in him and at the same time stand by our convictions. Even people of the world respect a man of conviction. Many times, no doubt, in the past our brethren have had the wrong attitudes in dealing with those in error. Many times the wrong methods have been employed in trying to teach them out of their error. This by no means indicates that we can not stand firm in our convictions and convert them to the truth. We do not have to be radical to uphold the truth; neither do we have to be liberal to reach those in error. We can have a happy medium and be firm in the Spirit of love and of Christ. Let us all unite our forces and march forward in the cause of Him who loved us and died for us, contending for the Old Paths; earnestly contending for the faith. Let us work while it is day, "for the night cometh when no

man can work." May God bless you, fellow-saint. OPA— April, 1960

WHAT ABOUT THE RAPTURE?

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the generation of those who heard Him speak. "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."

6. The book of Revelation, as recognized by all Bible scholars, is highly symbolic, and to literalize a 1000 year reign of Christ on the earth is a gross misinterpretation of the highly figurative context of Rev. 20:1-7. It is not an earthly reign, but one that is spiritual with victorious saints (Rev. 20:4). In Rev. 6:9-11 the souls of the martyred saints were under the altar, but in Rev. 20 they are pictured on thrones reigning with the Lord. This is a prophetic indication that Christianity will be triumphant over its enemies. The 1000 years symbolizes the completeness of that victory.

Conclusion

Scores of passages in God's word are contradicted by the Rapture Theory. It is a doctrine based on nothing more than a misinterpretation of the teaching of the Bible.

Jesus will come "at an hour when ye think not" (Luke 12:40). "For ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matt. 24:42). "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son-but the Father (Mark 13:32). But when He comes, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God will be heard (1 Thes. 4:16). "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible (1 Cor. 15:52); "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise" (2 Pet. 3:10). "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"

(Matt. 24:27). "...Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him..." (Rev. 1:7). The coming of Christ will be obvious to all.

Right now Jesus is "the blessed Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16). He is reigning over His people right now, and He will continue to reign "till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:25). "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:58). The apostle Paul teaches that when Christ comes, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (I Cor. 15:23, 24). His last great act of supreme authority will be to "judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31). "...Who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing" (1 Tim. 4:1). (Not a thousand years later.) "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels...And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:32-34, 41,46) "...And so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thes.4:17).

EDITORIAL

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are given the opportunity to do so. Will people continue to

take the paper? I hope so. But if they choose not to do so, that will not deter those of us who are committed to stand firmly in the "old paths, wherein is the good way." P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BROTHER GREGORY GAY TO PUBLISH THE CHURCH DIRECTORY

At my request Brother Greg Gay is taking over publication of the Church Directory. Greg is a very capable young man with outstanding talent, and is held in high esteem throughout the area where he lives and works. I have personally known him from his youth, and have utmost confidence in his faith and stability. The directory is a valuable aid to many as they travel throughout the United States and the World. Its publication, however, requires a great amount of time, time that I currently would like to re-direct in other projects. Please make a note of Greg's address etc. and communicate any changes, additions, or deletions you may have for the next directory. There will probably not be a new directory until the year 2001. His address: Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Drive, Citrus Height, CA 95621, Phone (916) 726-8507. You may e-

mail him at: papagreg@aol.com. I'm sure that you will give him your complete cooperation as you have me. It has been my pleasure to serve in this capacity for the past ten years, having taken the directory from Brother Bob Strain who faithfully served the brethren for several years. For copies of the current directory send all orders to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808.

A NEW TRACT

What Is Wrong is the name of the newest tract published by the *Old Paths Advocate*. This is a reprint of the July 1999 issue of the paper. Our supply of 5,000 is nearly exhausted. Currently we have just a little over 1,000 copies left. Order yours today. There will be no reprint. The tract deals with such topics as sprinkling for baptism, the doctrine of faith only, instrumental music, Bible classes, individual cups etc. Send all orders to *Old Paths Advocate*, c/o Kendall Cook, 1978 N. Farm Rd. 89, Springfield, MO 65802. The price is \$35.00 per 100 plus postage. Single copies are 50 cents each in quantities less than 100. Order soon.—RFW

OUR DEPARTED

KNIGHT—James LeRoy Knight, a longtime member of the church, passed away August 4, 1999 at his home in Holyoke, Colorado. He was preceded in death by his wife Laurine in May of 1985. They left three children, who he baptized. Roy and Laurine established the Holyoke Church in 1945 where it is still going today. His leadership in family, community and the church never went unnoticed. Living the Christian life was his first practice in life and to see that his family obeyed the gospel early and would remain a strong influence in the church. For many years, Roy did all the teaching. As the congregation grew and shrank with so many moving around, he remained stable and unmoved. Roy and his son Pete became elders of the church in 1993. The strength of the church in Holyoke has grown stronger in faith and courage to always press on to that road to perfection. Roy's son Pete and his 2 sons Kendall and Kameron and his son-in-law Roger Gordon will continue with the good work that Roy started so many years ago. While we all miss him each day, we know we will all be together at the appointed time.—Pete Knight

SHARP—Sister Lola J Sharp was born November 14, 1914, in St. Louis, Missouri, and passed away December 10, 1999 at 85 yrs. of age. She leaves at her passing, Howard, her dear husband, three sons, Howard Jr., Warren, and John. One daughter, Jan Maudlin, many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, other relations and a multitude of brethren. Lola was a precious person, mother, wife, grandmother, a friend to all who appreciated the Lord and his church. She was a homemaker, and very talented with various needle work. She never put herself in the forefront of anything, but simply took her place as a humble wife and Christian mother. In her memorial service several remembrances were read giving tribute to her life. These were written by sons, grandson, and niece, along with her husband Howard. A large crowd of brethren and friends came to the memorial service held in Mount Vernon Mortuary, Fair Oaks, Calif. The singing was beautiful, led by Brother Greg Gay. Along with Mike Fox and Max Butler, I was asked to have a part in the service. Lola was very sick for a time, but patient in suffering. Howard stood by her side during those trying times. The family wishes to express their heartfelt thanks to all the brethren and friends for their love and concern by cards, prayers, and words of encouragement. Lola was a long time member of the Fair Oaks congregation and will be missed. Our love and sympathy goes out to Howard in his loss, being married to Lola in excess of 65 years. What an example for us! May the family take comfort in the fact that she was a Christian, now in safe keeping with our God. We shall meet again on the other side is our hope.—Richard DeGough

WHITEHEAD—Brother Chester Whitehead a member of the church in Lexington Oklahoma passed away on December 11, 1999 at the age of 82. He was born October 12, 1917 near Maysville Oklahoma to Cletus and Nellie Lynn Whitehead. On August 3, 1951 Chester married Mildred Gilley of Lexington. Mr. Whitehead worked as a shop supervisor until his retirement in 1980. Chester was a member of the Westside Church of Christ in Lexington. Survivors include his wife Mildred, two daughters Gayla Suenis and Beverly Keys, and one son Randy Whitehead. The funeral was in Purcell on Dec. 14, the writer attempted to speak words of comfort and warning.—Vaden Morgan

HOLLOWAY—Mary Odell Holloway, daughter of Franklin and Zylphia Adams, was born May 10, 1910 and passed away January 6, 2000. She was a long-time member of Chapel Grove Church of Christ near Ethridge, TN. Odell was preceded in death by her husband Henry, along with two brothers: Luther and Thomas Adams, and five sisters: Lillie Davis, Rosie King, Louise Collier, Mae Belle Butler, and Cleo Powell. Odell struggled with cancer for the last part of her life, and wasn't able to worship for several months prior to her death. She expressed to me many times her strong desire to be at worship services. She is now resting in the security of living a life acceptable to God, and no longer has to worry about pain or anything else. Services were conducted on Saturday, January 8, 2000. Johnny Fisher and I had the privilege to speak a few words of comfort.—Christopher Enos



Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mtn. Home, AR, 72654, broebuck@mtnhome.com, Jan. 17—1999 was another good year for us. We were blessed to conduct meetings over the country, making new friends, and rekindling old friendships. Of course the highlights of the year were assisting people in obeying the word of God. Here at Mtn. Home we had 2 restorations and 1 baptism in the fall alone. Too we bid farewell to dear loved ones in 1999. We hope to see them in that land that knows now parting. All in all it appears that for every defeat we win a victory in another area. 2000 is shaping up to be a busy year. March 8-12 we plan to be in Springfield, MO (Northside) and then Walnut Grove, KY April 16-23. Please keep us in your prayers.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069—My wish is for all to have a happy New Year, praying the Cause of the Lord's will be greater than the previous 100 years. In November, it was my pleasure to be with the congregation (Fossil Creek) in Ft. Worth, TX. It had been a number of years since being with them. I hope it will not be so long until my next visit. Then I was near Huntington, WV (Spring Valley) for the first time. This too, was a pleasurable time for me. Next, I will be with the church at Paris, TX Mar. 1-5. Apr. 2-9 will find me at Harrison, AR and Apr. 19-23 at Birmingham, AL. If you are near these places during these times, please plan to be with us. Any help will greatly be appreciated. If you are in driving distance, be assured you will be welcomed. Your prayers are always desired.

Wyn R. Baker, P.O. Box 745, Lavalette, WV 25535, (304) 429-4483, email: wynl@ezwv.com—Greetings to all in the brotherhood! It is our prayer that this report finds all doing well and prospering in the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our work here in Wayne County WV, continues and due to some recent developments we are beginning to see some workable interest in this area of the country. Since October of this past year, we have had 5 baptisms and 5 restorations between the congregations of Garretts Creek and Radnor, with the prospect of several more conversions in the near future. Our present goal is to do all we can to stabilize these converts in the Faith, by teaching the fundamental doctrines surrounding the gospel and the Lords church, and to encourage them as well as all members of the church to reach out to their friends and neighbors that

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they know, who may be subjects to obey the gospel. By way of community outreach, we are currently running in the county paper a 4 by 5 inch weekly ad, which consists of the following items; a weekly Bible message in article format; a picture of and directions to our meeting house; the times we meet for worship; and also a phone number that may be used to call in and listen to a 3-4 minute discussion about the subject in the article. At the conclusion of the article, we offer a free 6 lesson Bible correspondence course, for any that may be interested and we give an address and three separate home phone numbers where anyone can contact us, with comments, questions, or requests for free materials. At this point, it is hard to evaluate just what this weekly ad has done for our influence in the community here. We have 4 currently enrolled in the Bible correspondence course, and several now that have completed the course. From the weekly article, we now carry a regular audience in the community who follow the subjects we present every week and it is clear that this medium of advertisement has helped to further and secure our identity in this community. Our long range goal is to use these kinds of mediums, with the expectation that the more seed we sow from our local congregations, the more we can expect for a harvest that can be seen throughout the world...One final item to report...We are privileged to hold a meeting in the last few days of October with the congregation in Eldon, MO. Our time spent with these brethren of whom we worked with just a few years ago was a true joy, and it was an honor to be with them during this meeting. We had good crowds at every service, with several community visitors present and the hospitality they extended to us was outstanding. It was good to see Brother Dan Wissinger again. Dan works with these brethren, and it is evident that he works very hard, and is doing a great job. We look forward to being with the Eldon brethren again this year in the fall. In closing, we want to sincerely thank all who support us, and we solicit your prayers, that all we may do in this work, will be fitting for the Master's use.

Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015—In November I was with the churches in Arlington and Allen. I had a good meeting in Arlington, staying with Tommy and Beverly Crouch who were gracious hosts. In Allen I stayed with Bruce Caskey and had a great visit with him and all the good folks at Allen. In December I enjoyed the Study hosted by the Arlington congregation. The preachers I heard did their usual superb job on their assigned Old Testament book. I was in McAlester to perform a wedding and preached at the C and Tyler church December 19. It was good to see the church doing well since I was last there in June. Brother Morgan Stripling is working with the church and I enjoyed getting to visit with him again. Morgan does especially good work with the young people of the congregation, encouraging them to study and participate in the Lord's work. I am looking forward to a meeting at Hoyte, TX in January and Wichita Falls in February. Here at home we have had two restored to duty, including my son Derek, for which we thank the Lord. May the Lord bless us as we enter the year 2000! I

thank Him for every day and for every opportunity to proclaim the message of salvation found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@Juno.com - January 12. - We have launched into a new year and a new millennium. Of course, with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (2 Pet. 3:10). Time itself is unimportant with God, but what is important for us Christians is to realize that the door of mercy is still open, and there are many souls who are yet unsaved, and they need the Gospel. We are happy to report that we have had one restoration, two confessions of fault, and four baptisms in the past few weeks at Stony Point, 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas. In the congregation we have many young people as well as middle aged and older members. We are so blessed and the future for the church here looks very bright. We continue to plant and water, and God continues to give the increase. To Him we give the glory. May the Lord bless the faithful throughout the brotherhood all over the world and may we produce much fruit to His honor and glory this new year.

Richard L. Frizzell Sr., Rt. 5, Box 376, Ada, OK 74820. (580) 332-3673. December 28, 1999—It has been some time since my last report to OPA. 1999 has been a busy year for me. January and February I did some missionary work for the church in Paducah, KY. Then in April, I went with James Orten's tour group to Israel for one week, this was an awesome experience. Then three days in London, and about five days in Edinburgh, Scotland. Where I was privileged to preach to them. While here at home, I have preached one or more times in KY, TN, AR, TX and here in OK. One was baptized at Jacksboro, TX. Then the first two weeks in December, I was in Hawaii, were I was privileged to preach for Bro. Bayani in his home in Hilo, (on the big island). I am now visiting the homes of my brethren here in OK. Trying to strengthen and encourage them. I look forward to doing the Lord's work in the year 2000. I need your prayers please.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@compworldnet.com January 7—I enjoyed the Old Testament survey at the annual Preachers' Study and profited from it very much. We also enjoyed the annual Oklahoma New Year Meeting hosted by the Edmond congregation. It sure is good to be home for awhile. As Joe Hisle says, "It seems like the highway gets longer every year." I'm thankful to the Good Lord, however, for every opportunity to preach the gospel. The following is a partial list of the meetings I have scheduled for this year: Sulphur, OK (Feb. 25-27), Nashville, TN (Mar. 8-12), Lodi, CA (Apr. 1-9), Orange, CA (Apr. 10-16), Ash Camp, WV (June), Marietta, GA (July 8-16), Red Oak, TX (July 23-30), New Salem, MS (Aug. 4-13), Deer Park, TX (Aug. 20-27), Lexington, OK (Oct. 1-8), El Cajon, CA (Oct. 11-15), Jamesville, MO (Oct. 25-29), Edmond, OK (Nov. 3-5), and Seminole, OK (Dec. 1-3). Please remember us in your prayers, and may God bless you richly.

Our purpose is to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,” and to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

“To continue speaking the truth in love,” “endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” “keeping the ordinance as delivered.”

“Thus saith the Lord, ‘stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.’ (Jer. 6:16) “And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in.” (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 3

REDEFINING TOLERANCE

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

I used to think I knew what people were talking about when they used the word “tolerance.” I have come to realize, however, that this word has been redefined in recent years; it carries a lot of emotional firepower, and has become a potent weapon in our current culture wars.

Webster’s New World Dictionary defines “tolerate” as, “to recognize and respect [others’ beliefs, practices, etc.] without sharing them,” and “to bear or put up with [someone or something not especially liked]” (1407). Although the word *tolerant* is not found in the New Testament, Paul expresses its essence in I Corinthians 13:7, when he says, “charity endureth all things.” The word tolerance derives from the Latin *tolerare*, meaning to *endure*.

During my college days I had classmates and co-workers whose lifestyles were clearly ungodly. I did not endorse their sinful activities and I did not participate in them. I was never tempted by these associations to forfeit my belief in God or my hope of heaven, and when I had opportunities I explained to them my faith and my hope. While I did not approve of some of their activities, I did my best to get along with all my classmates and coworkers, treating them with courtesy. Paul says, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12:18). Again, he says, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10).

Based on the traditional meaning of the word, I exercised tolerance toward these people. Traditional tolerance values, respects, and accepts the individual without necessarily approving of or participating in his or her beliefs or behavior. Traditional tolerance differentiates between what a person thinks or does and the person himself. In brief, tolerance means we hate the sin, but love the sinner—a soul created in the image of God (Gen. 2:7), worth more than all the world (Matt. 16:26), and therefore in need of saving.

There is a new definition of tolerance, however, that is being foisted upon us through our schools and the media that is vastly different to the traditional definition. The new definition of tolerance says that if you don’t *approve* and *endorse* a person’s beliefs and lifestyle, you don’t love the *person*. This definition works on the false assumption that “what I do represents who I am.” To accept and respect someone, therefore, you must approve and endorse that person’s values, and lifestyle. If and when you don’t, you are considered insensitive, intolerant, and bigoted.

Josh McDowell says, “I would estimate that 80 percent of the time when you hear the word *tolerance* used outside the walls of the church today—by schoolteachers, news anchors, government officials, activists, celebrities, perhaps even your own children—it almost never refers to traditional tolerance but to what we are calling the *new tolerance*” (*The New Tolerance* 18).

This new definition is based on the premise that there is no such thing as moral absolutes—moral laws that apply to everybody.

A high school sociology text discussing homosexuality practices says, “Everything is right somewhere and nothing is right everywhere.”

The authors of this text take the clearly observable fact that we have a multitude of views, values, and practices in the world—pluralism—and draw the illegitimate conclusion that there is no justifiable way of choosing among them. Truth is merely opinion, goodness only what the majority says it is.

Thomas A. Helmbock, national fraternity executive, explains: “The definition of new...tolerance is that every individual’s beliefs, values, lifestyle, and perception of truth claims are equal...There is no hierarchy of truth. Your beliefs and my beliefs are equal, and all truth is relative.”

Such relativism is the very spirit of our age and is therefore deep in our own bones. It is no surprise, then, that intolerance is our society’s greatest sin. The intolerant person is the one thing that cannot be tolerated, the one person who must be shamed or silenced.

Dr. Frederick W. Hill, a school administrator says, “It is the mission of public schools not to tolerate intolerances.”

Philosophy professor Leslie Armour adds, “Our idea is that to be a virtuous citizen is to be one who tolerates everything except intolerance.”

According to the United Nations “Declaration of Principles of Tolerance.” “Tolerance...involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism.”

According to the above definition, anyone who believes dogmatically in anything—and especially in absolute truth—is guilty of intolerance! You don’t even have to say anything; if you don’t *reject* the idea that some beliefs and behaviors are right and others are wrong, for all people, for all places, and for all times, then you are intolerant.

It is precisely because we Christians cling to strong convictions that the proponents of the new tolerance have

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Editorial

ERRANT BRETHREN

By DON L. KING

It has long been a matter of great wonder to me that those who have divided the Lord's Church over the innovations profess such dismay that the church is divided and experiencing problems. This seems to be a surprise. In reading the various papers among them one often finds references to the sin of division, etc. and the many resulting troubles with numerous remedies being suggested. (except, of course, getting rid of the innovations which caused the division in the first place.)

In the January, 2000 issue of *The Spiritual Sword* the editor makes some interesting observations. He points out that Paul warned of those who would "... depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." (I Timothy 4:1) He also mentions that: "...Churches of Christ are known to stand for Bible authority and "a thus saith the Lord.' we have given 'book, chapter and verse' for what we believe and teach. We need to recognize, however, that some have changed things that should not be changed. The Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, where Max Lucado is the preacher, recently announced 'After many months of careful study and consideration, the elders unanimously concluded that there is no Biblical prohibition of the use of musical instruments in worship.' (emphasis supplied). Those who have followed the preaching career of Max Lucado should not be surprised at this announcement." After mentioning another group in Nashville who have begun working with the Billy Graham people, he says, "One cannot help but think of the warning of the apostle Paul to the Ephesian elders: 'Take heed therefore unto yourselves...For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.' (Acts 20:30)"

As I read the above words, I couldn't help but recall an illustration my father used to make about allowing innovations into the church. He said, "You know, down on the farm when we would finish with the garden we would sometimes allow the animals to come in and graze on the leftovers. We would take down the bars (from a rail fence) to allow a calf to walk over them; and do you know, we found that if we lowered the bars low enough for the little calf to come in the old cow could walk right in too." The country moral was simple: *all* innovations come in the same door. Either we keep them *all* out or there is no way to keep any of them out!

The problem began when they allowed the first innovation to come in. Little wonder they are beginning to see some who wonder why the instruments of music should not be used. The same door the individual cups and Sunday schools entered through will allow the organ as well. There is no more Bible authority for them than there is for the

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: If a Christian divorces his/her Christian mate for reasons other than adultery, may the "put away" spouse remarry, based on the idea that God always protects the innocent person? (OK)

Question: If one of the divorced Christians (mentioned above) should later remarry or commit fornication, does that allow the other spouse to now remarry, based on the idea that adultery has been committed? (OK)

Answer: Questions about divorce are increasingly being asked, because divorces are on the increase, both in the world as well as in the church. We might like to think that the church is not affected by what happens in society at large, but unfortunately that is seldom the case. We live in an age of easy divorce, no fault divorce, and throw away marriages. Some churches are filling with situations that are regrettable, often questionable, and in some instances wrong. Adulterous relationships must be addressed by the church. Those who choose to turn their head, hoping that the problem will go away, or who simply ignore what is real, are making a grave mistake. We must remember that individuals who are in sin, live in jeopardy of losing their soul, while the church risks being exposed to the leaven that can potentially destroy it. Another problem exists when a church takes action, and part of the membership refuses to honor and/or implement it. Such behavior could contribute to the destruction of a person who might otherwise be saved if they were to heed the discipline handed down by the church. This is a very serious mistake that should give all, reason for concern. In the first question the querist is interested in the situation of the one "put away" where no adultery has been committed. Jesus said "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." In other words if "A" divorces "B" because he no longer loves her, Jesus said if "A" remarries he will commit adultery and whoever marries "B" commits adultery. So the answer is simply in a situation where no adultery is involved neither party is free to contract another

marriage without committing adultery. The second question deals with a situation where "A" divorces "B" because he no longer loves her. Later "B" gets married, (which she had no right to do) may "A" then marry, based on the fact that "B" has committed adultery. The answer is no. Jesus did not say "Whoever divorces his wife, and then waits for her to commit fornication, may marry again." In fact in Mt. 5:32 he said the very opposite: "But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery." Notice that the Lord says this person actually "causes" the "put away" spouse to commit adultery. This person certainly cannot say "well, after I put her away she committed adultery, so now I have a right to remarry." Not at all. It was because of his unscriptural action that she became an adulteress when she remarried. After an unscriptural divorce, people cannot play the waiting game and expect to remarry and be accepted by the Lord. Nor should they be accepted by the church. Notice that Paul plainly said in I Cor. 7:10-11 "Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord; A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife." Two options exist for those involved in an unscriptural divorce. The first: reconciliation with their spouse. The second: remain unmarried. Someone might say, "but that is unfair, surely you would not expect a person to live alone for the rest of their life." I admit that the situation is difficult. But remember that Jesus said in Mt. 19:11-12 that some become "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." There are situations where people must live alone. The scripture leaves them no choice. Brethren, its time we stopped looking for loopholes, and stopped trying to get around what Jesus taught. It's time we faced the reality of sin and warned people of the wrath to come.

(Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, MO 65808)

PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT US

By EDWIN S. MORRIS

From the beginning no doubt there have been problems that have faced the Church in its growth and work. Even in the early days of the Church when the Apostles were preaching, there were problems. The same is true in the Church today. I am sure that we could not begin to name all the problems, or give a solution to many of them, but we would like to consider some of our problems.

The first we consider is that of *Indifference*. Many members of the Church today are very indifferent toward the Church. They are careless in attendance, in visiting, in teaching, in working, in studying, and in general careless about their whole duty. They are unconcerned as to whether the Church has a meeting, spreads the gospel to the lost, or even if those that preach the gospel are kept busy. They seem not to care whether the Lord's work goes on or not.

You ask them to take part, or their opinion of some work, and they will reply, "Whatever you brethren want to do is alright with me," and that is just about as far as it ever gets. Jesus said in Rev. 3:16, "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The word, *cold* is "sluggish, inert in mind; of one destitute of warm Christian faith and the desire for holiness." The word *hot* is "of fervor of mind and zeal." And *lukewarm* is "of the condition of a soul wretchedly wavering between an inactive and a fervor of love." *Spue* is to reject with extreme disgust. There are so many indifferent, lukewarm, in the Church that are wavering between the inactive and the great fervor of love. Jesus will spue them out of His mouth. Paul says in Rom. 12:11, "Not slothful in business." *Slothful* is "sluggish, slothful,

backward." *Business* is "earnestness, diligence: univ. earnestness in accomplishing, promoting, or striving after anything" (Thayer). It denotes the moral earnestness with which one should give himself to his vocation. In this Christians are not to be backward. Slothful implies excessive and sluggish indolence. Luther says, "In regards to zeal be not lazy." We are to be fervent in spirit, enthusiastic, not indifferent. I feel perfectly sure today that we have the truth in the plan of salvation, worship, etc., yet I am concerned over the indifference that exists among our brethren instead of being zealous in the Lord's work. Fellowsaint, let us consider these things carefully. In the Revelation letter some of these people had become indifferent and cast off their first love (Rev. 2.4). Let us not become careless, cold, indifferent, but let us labor harder with more love to further our Lord's precious work.

The second problem I consider is *Able Teachers*. Let me say in the very outset that I oppose what is commonly referred to as the "pastor system." I also want to emphasize that I believe in "mutual edification." On the other hand I want to say that I oppose "no system at all" and "mutual deadification." It was never the Lord's plan for all to be evangelists, elders, deacons, or teachers. Some brethren for some unknown reason, get the idea that every male member should be a public teacher. Sure, we are to have a number of teachers if possible, but by no means does it mean that all are teachers. Paul teaches to the contrary in 1 Cor. 12:29. Paul says in Eph. 4:16, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the *edifying* of itself in love." Thayer's definition of the word edifying is "(the act of) building, building up—in the N. T. metaph edifying, edification, i. e. the act of one who promotes another's growth in Christian wisdom, piety, holiness, happiness." Then, there is a need for able and capable teachers in order that the Church might be built up. Let us notice 2 Tim. 2:2, "And the things thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be *able* to teach others also." This teaches that the man must be faithful and *able* to teach others. *Able* is sufficient in ability, i. e. meet, fit, worthy, able" (Thayer); Competent (Strong) Capable, qualified (Robertson). Vine says: "Sufficient; when said of persons it means competent." Expositors says: "Qualified; expresses capability as proved by experienced." We can readily see then that we are to have *able teachers*. We are faced with the problem today in many congregations, of a lack of teachers who are able, qualified, and have the ability to edify the church. Many congregations are losing ground and becoming spiritually weaker because they receive not enough spiritual food. Often the only time they hear preaching is during a meeting once a year. This is not enough. Jesus says: "Teaching all nations and baptizing them" and then "teaching them to observe all things." Brethren who desire to teach and do teach, should be willing to qualify themselves to teach. They should be willing to devote time to study that they may gain a knowledge of the Word of God and teach it to others. Too many times brethren will take the pulpit when they have done very little preparing. I was told of one of the Presidents of the United States that before he was elected president

he was a preacher of the church of Christ, and when he was elected to the office he made a statement to this effect: "I step down from the pulpit to the Presidency." Yes, to teach the gospel of Christ and preach it is the greatest work a man can do. Why should we not be willing to prepare ourselves for this great work? I realize that a man in beginning must have the opportunity to teach, and as some have put it, must practice. Remember this though, we are not to be always practicing on the congregation. It seems some congregations get nothing more. We are faced with this problem and should correct it by all studying harder, encouraging brethren to prepare themselves and never satisfied, but always striving to do better.

The next problem I would like to consider is the *lack of knowledge*. In Col. 1:9, "for this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." The word *knowledge* is "precise and correct knowledge; with genitive of the thing known." His petition is that they might be filled with a thorough knowledge of God's will. *This would be the best security against false teaching, and an assurance of a faithful life.* Knowledge today of the Scriptures is the best weapon we have against false teaching. Today, if Christians had a knowledge of God's Word, by that I mean a *deeper knowledge of the true teachings of the Bible*, it would be a good weapon against all kinds of digression, denominations, all kinds of liberalism, worldliness, etc. With a good knowledge, people would not be deceived and led away with false teachings. They would not be tossed to and fro as children with every wind of doctrine. We are to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. We are to desire the sincere milk of the word that we might grow thereby. Hosea 4:6 says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Paul told Timothy to "study to show thyself approved." *Study* is to hasten, make haste, to exert one's self, endeavor, give diligence. We need to study for ourselves and not depend upon man. We must be careful in condemning the denominational world for following man and then in our own ranks be guilty of thinking man is right and cannot be wrong. There is none among us that is infallible or indispensable. We must study, grow strong, contend for the truth and stand for right regardless of what any brother or preaching brother does.

Let us now consider another problem we are confronted with—*worldliness*. In 1 Jno. 2:15-17, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Things that were sinful over 1900 years ago are sinful today. The numerous works of the flesh enumerated in the N. T. are still sinful. One filled with the Spirit of Christ certainly has no desire to be filled with these things. Even today our children are not being taught against worldly pleasures. Parents say, "Well, everyone else is doing it." Children are being allowed to go to dances, to watch things on the screen at home and away from home that are sinful. Worldliness has crept in. We have drifted with the tide. We are faced with the problem as to how to stem the tide.

Many who used to stand up boldly and cry out against worldliness have slowed up or completely stopped. I hear some, sometimes, mention worldliness yet participate in

many worldly things. I would like to hear them preach a sermon on it. Brethren, let us live close to Him who died for us, and make Heaven our eternal home.—*March 1960*

GOD'S THOUGHTS ARE HIGHER

By BRETT HICKEY

I imagine that most Christians can sympathize with the man who said, "When I go through the Bible, I feel like someone going to the ocean with a teaspoon. There is so much to get and so little to get it with." We feel inadequate. We are overwhelmed by the mass of information stored in the sixty-six sacred books we call the Bible. Sometimes Christians are so intimidated by how much they do not know, that they find it hard to develop the habit of daily Bible study.

At other times, we are like the high school student who protests his geometry assignment, "What good will this ever do me? I'll never need this stuff." God wrote to Israel through Hosea, "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." (8:12) Similarly, in weaker moments, Christians sigh and may even voice their frustrations with their ignorance of God's word. They know the Bible says "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable" — they shudder at the curse for "adding to" or "taking away from God's word" — but their humanity wins out. The "unlearned or unstable" may question the relevance and importance of genealogical data, historical information, lengthy salutations and a list of other misunderstood matters. Entire "Bibles" have been designed with the idea that unnecessary elements of scripture should be condensed right out of God's word. The work of the Holy Spirit, however, needs no editing. And with patience, humility and continued maturity, what seems like "unnecessary filler," is discovered to hold truths that Christians have died for.

The Seed of Abraham

After obeying the gospel, a Christian may make the noble decision to read through the entire New Testament. On the first page, the Christian will find about forty-two names (many of which mean nothing to him) and nearly as many "begots." Reasoning with his finite mind, he is tempted to question the importance of this first chapter. If he continues in faith, he will later learn how critical it was to trace Jesus lineage back through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David. This was one proof of his Messiahship. If this could not be demonstrated, he could not legitimately call himself the Christ. Finding Rahab the Harlot and Ruth the Moabitess in Jesus' family tree also gave Jewish Christians a closer look at the forgiveness of God and God's love for all nations.

Historically Accuracy

Another example of the superiority of God's wisdom is found in Luke 3. Already disappointed that the Bible records nothing about Jesus in his teens and twenties, the carnal mind is confronted with two verses loaded with a list of seven government leaders. The shallow human mind usually prefers the more entertaining reading of a novel to a march through ancient secular history. The "foolishness of men" craves a day with Jesus at Joseph's carpenter shop, but the "wisdom of God" reveals facts profitable for

doctrine".

In days gone by men have denied that Jesus was a genuine historical figure. We can pinpoint the date of Jesus' ministry and confirm it historically through these six public officials in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar. This is one of many profound examples of God fulfilling his promise to "destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

What about all those salutations — the greetings and good-byes in the Epistles? They can fill several verses at a time. Do you remember the last time you read Romans 16? Nearly the entire chapter is devoted to giving farewells to individual brothers and sisters at Rome.

Name after name is mentioned — more than two dozen in all! What possible benefit could be found in this extended closing? Did all of this really need to be preserved for us to read in the United States in 1999?

Was Peter Ever at Rome?

Actually, this chapter presents a powerful argument against the "papacy." Remember that Roman Catholics consider Peter the first "pope." Not only does the Bible omit any positive instruction about the papacy, but it is also silent about Peter ever being at Rome. Peter made his home in Jerusalem (Acts 8:14; 15:3-7; Gal. 1:18) with little recorded travel compared to the apostle Paul.

Some propose that Peter wrote his first epistle from Rome. This conclusion is based on the assumption that when Peter sends greetings from Babylon in 1 Peter 5:13 he is referring to alternatives. Brother Wayne McKamie writes in the *Contending for the Faith Commentary*, "The basic rule of interpretation requires that we rely upon the obvious. Peter wrote this letter while in Babylon upon the Euphrates. The people of Pontus would have so understood it." (118)

If Peter was the first "pope" and resided at Rome, why do the Scriptures say nothing about Peter being at Rome? More specifically, if Peter was the first "pope" residing at Rome why would Paul need to write a letter to the congregation at Rome. Surely if Peter is ruling as head of the Roman Catholic church, he can easily manage the affairs of the local church.

There are more good questions than good answers on this subject. Since Paul did write the letter to the church at Rome, why did he not mention the "pope" either by title or by his supposed name — Peter? Certainly, if Paul spent an entire chapter greeting over two dozen Christians at Rome, he would say "hello" to Peter. This glaring omission may be intentional.

The Holy Spirit is giving one more signal that the idea that the apostle Peter was ever a "pope" at Rome is only a popular myth.

There is an important lesson stored within these obscure truths of God's word. God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts. His ways are past finding out. Though we may

not see the significance of a scripture that does not mean we should think it unnecessary. God has a plan and His greatest tool for working that plan is His word, Hear Isaiah relay this relevant message: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Sir Walter

Scott was not inspired, but the following words display the wisdom he possessed.

"Within this ample volume lies the mystery of mysteries; happiest they of human race, to whom God has given grace, to read, to fear, to hope, to pray, to lift the latch and force the way; and better had they ne'er been born, who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS

By MICHAEL LOWERY

The beginning chapters of Matthew and Luke trace the ancestral heritage of Jesus either through or to King David. Although both write of the same line, Matthew's account lists 77 names while Luke mentions a far less number (see Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-28). How odd! What seems more awkward is that the many of the names do not compare with one another. Carl Sagan and other Bible critics have attempted to explain these lists as attempts to "fit the Isianic prophecy after the event—cooking the data." Unfortunately for Sagan, he was only a distinguished astronomer, not a Bible scholar. His words are simply part of an improper ideology which slams religion in order to expand interest in space exploration.

Scientists, in times past, looked for every avenue to disprove the Bible. In fact, Russian scientists, during the early stages of Sputnik I, declared, "We did not see God in the heavens therefore God does not exist." Searching for God does not require astronomical measures. Scripture consistently states that God is not flesh in form, but of a spiritual nature (Genesis 3:7-12; Job 38:1; John 4:24). There must be a reasonable explanation for Matthew and Luke's so-called contradictory accounts if God's Word is true.

Because Christianity is a religion of history, we must search the Old Testament to understand these lists of ancestral heritage. Clearly, the names of family members were recorded either according to nature or law: By nature in the succession of biological birth, by law when a man begat children in the name of a brother who had died childless in order that the name of the dead brother would not fail to remain on the earth (see Deuteronomy 25:5-6).

As for the "two families" of Jesus, one descended from Solomon and the other from Nathan, and they were

connected with each other by deaths of childless men and second marriages which allowed different lines of descendants to be raised. The result was that some persons were correctly regarded as children of different persons at different times. Thus both accounts are strictly true in coming down to Joseph, husband of Mary, in a manner that is complicated to us but perfectly accurate.

Joseph was legally the son of Eli but biologically the son of Jacob. A further complication was that Eli and Jacob were only half brothers. They were the sons of the same mother, Estha, but Eli was the son of her second husband, Melchi, who descended from Nathan, the son of David. Jacob was the son of her first husband, Mattan (also called Mattat), who descended from Solomon, the son of David. Thus Matthew, giving the physical descent of Jesus, traces it through Jacob to Solomon. Luke, on the other hand, gives the legal descent (which he shows by avoiding the word "begat") and traces it through Eli to Nathan.

Since this was the nature of the genealogy of Joseph, it is potential proof that Mary belonged to the same tribe as her husband, Joseph. According to the Law of Moses, it was unlawful for tribes to mix, for the command was given to join in marriage with one of the same people and same family, in order that the inheritance of the race might not be changed from tribe to tribe. This law does not apply to our day and time, but gives proof of the never changing line from Adam, the son of God, to Joseph, who was espoused to Mary at the time of Jesus' birth. The Bible can be understood if we do our homework and study the Scriptures in a contextual manner.—*Reprinted from SEASONS bulletin of the Oakwood Church of Christ Edmond, Oklahoma. Submitted by James Orten*

THE HEART OF MAN

By GERALD R. BARRETT

The heart of man is written about many times within the Scriptures. We realize that the physical or fleshly heart is a vital organ to our existence in this life and much importance is placed upon it by the medical authorities and rightfully so. When one has a heart problem it is of critical concern. We don't treat lightly this type of illness. However, the Bible speaks of a much more important heart, a spiritual heart, an organ so vital to us that our spiritual life is dependent upon every beat that it supplies. And yet, we see so many with a heart so critically ill and yet so unconcerned that they may never recover from its inevitable consequences — spiritual death. If only they would come to the Great Physician or we as a concerned and loving

people would lead them to Him. He could heal their heart completely so that they would have a grand and beautiful spiritual life.

The heart of man, no doubt is a very broad topic in itself. In the Scriptures the heart is spoken of 868 times. There are many points that could be brought to our attention but space will not allow for this particular article. However I would like to share with you from Holy scripture some points that will help us to be pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. Jesus said in His sermon on the mount, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8) Surely this conveys to us not only the sight of God within our hearts through faith but one day we will be able to

behold the Father of heaven face to face as we will be allowed in His presence if we have and keep a pure heart.

Jesus in Matthew 11:26-30 says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." In this particular scripture there is a request by Jesus, there is an action that must be taken by the hearer and there is a blessed promise given to those who comply. Notice the request: "Come unto me..." Jesus says you must come to me. How do I get close to Jesus? After all He's been in heaven for nearly two thousand years. So how is it that I'm to get close to Him. Coming to Jesus is accepting the words of Jesus by taking them into our heart and obeying them. Listen to the apostle Paul in Hebrews 10:22, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Paul told these people how to draw near to God. It was with the Heart. Not just a heart but with a true heart. It was with a specific type of heart. The word *true* here means sincere and honest. That means with a heart unaffected by false motives. God has always been concerned with the heart of man and especially when it is rendered in subjection to Him. Notice in Deuteronomy 5:29 what God expected as He reveals His will to Moses concerning the children of Israel, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" Man has never been forced to do something against his will but was made with the capacity to decide for himself. What a great love that God manifested to His people when he conveyed to Moses His concern for their hearts. This fear that he speaks of is a reverential fear; a condition of heart that enthrones the God of heaven above all other things within our heart. And our God is still that loving and concerned about our hearts as we read in John 3:16-17.

The heart is to be used to learn of the Master. Jesus knows what's best for us and He came to this lowly place to give us that instruction so that we might have all things that pertain unto life and godliness. Jesus condemned those who did not draw near to am with there hearts, Notice how close they got to Him in Matthew 15:1-20. Quite an interesting story. No doubt, these individuals thought they stood pretty close to God.

Can we think the same way? Sure we can! We can go to worship three times a week and do all that is necessary in the worship service to fulfill the command of God. Praise Him with our lips and honor Him with our tongue and still have a heart that is far from Him and subsequently fail in drawing near to God. Our service and our love is based on following His will and not walking in our own willful way. Many seem to think that by only going to worship three times a week and then live to ourselves the rest of the week is enough to get us into Heaven. Many think that just attending Sunday morning worship is enough to please God. Where do we draw the line? Here's the line, "And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27) The Lord is uncompromisingly honest about how

we are to serve the God of Heaven. Every second of every minute of every hour of every day we better be engaged in living for the Lord. Our love for Him has the responsibility of obedient action to His commands (John 14:15, 23). It was required of God's people in the Old Testament and it is required of God's people in the New Testament, And in our service to the Lord our neighbor is going to benefit. In fact the whole world is going to benefit.

Notice again, we are to learn of the Master because of the condition of His heart. Jesus is a true example of what our hearts are to be like. His heart we would say is a heart of gold. More precious, in fact, than gold. His heart was a heart after His Father's own heart. And he spoke the Father's word to us as revealed in John 12:44, "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. 45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. 46 I am come a fight into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. 47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. 49 For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." He was consumed with the Father's will for Jesus said "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34) and so He spoke.

He was meek and lowly in heart, Before we can learn of Him we must take His yoke upon us.. The yoke was a symbol of submission and as we submit our heart and being we then come near to him. We are to be meek as He is meek and we are be lowly in heart or humble as He is humble and we continue in that characteristic all the days that we live as we follow Him, A requirement in being able to learn and do what He bids us to do, The promise is that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Our Lord is not saying that all is going to be "peaches and cream" as we travel along life's pathway. But what is commanded of us is not hard for us to accomplish. We all must go through the trials of life which at many times are very difficult. We can either go through the trials of life with Him in which he will help us or we can do it on our own in which we'll suffer the worse without His help. What a great love this man had for us to come to this low ground of sin and sorrow and be our example, yea, our Savior in how we might approach our God acceptably. People who are rebellious against God are high minded and self-centered. But Jesus says its going to take a meek and humble heart to approach God. And if we learn to be meek and humble as the Lord we will find rest unto our souls. That condition of rest can only be given by the Master. No longer will a man be at variance with the God of heaven but he will have a rest and peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7).

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THE PHILIPPINE WORK

By DON L. KING

We returned from a very successful trip to the Philippines on Jan. 24. Brother Richard DeGough was my partner this year and he was a very hard worker indeed. It was a pleasure to travel with him. We have known each other nearly all of our lives and had much to talk about. We visited many of the congregations preaching as often as conditions allowed. Bro. Virgilio O. Danao met us in Manila and worked along with us as a preaching partner, guide and translator. It would be difficult to imagine a more compatible companion than he has been for about twenty years now. The work, overall, is progressing very well. There were 48 baptisms, if memory serves me correctly, and also seven who took their stand for the truth from digression. Also, we preached for at least two congregations who had taken their stand from digression last year. Where ever we went we were met by enthusiastic brethren who did all they could to make us comfortable and welcome.

One of the greatest problems remains the lack of a meeting house in Baguio City and Manila. Those cities are more westernized and some prefer not to attend services in a private home. The church continues to struggle in those places while it has prospered in others. We plan to begin perhaps two new radio programs in central Luzon which will allow us to cover most of the Island. If your congregation is interested in supporting this great work, we need to hear from you right away. Both programs can be aired for less than \$300 monthly (total cost to air both) and it really needs to be done. If you can help, let us hear.

We wish to express our thanks to all who have helped in the work through the years. Those who have supported preachers, paid for radio programs, car rentals for us (Lodi, CA has paid this expense for several years by themselves) or helped in sending us to the Philippines, we certainly thank you. Your money is being well spent and is paying huge dividends in terms of souls saved. The Fremont congregation has faithfully, without complaint, backed this work in every way since its beginning. They support me to go, send support to preachers until others can be located to do so, and see that records are kept regarding the work. It is often a thankless job and they deserve appreciation for all they do. The Philippine work is a major one and has been done onsite by the local Filipino brethren. They take care of their own problems and we often know nothing of it until it has already been taken care of. There are over twenty local preachers who are, many of them, well educated and grounded in the Word of God. They have truly done a great job and we pray God's blessings upon them all.

Again, if your congregation is interested in being a part of this work. Let us hear from you. If you support a preacher, your support will go directly to him and he will communicate with you as to his work. If you support a radio program it will either go directly to the station or the preacher who is doing the broadcasts. Remember, the fields are while unto harvest. DLK

REDIFINING TOLERANCE

continued from page 1

no problem being intolerant toward us. The Bible makes it clear that all values, beliefs, lifestyles, and truth claims are not equal. It teaches that the God of the Bible is the true God (Jer. 10:10), that all His words are (absolutely) true (Psa. 119:160), and that if something is not right in God's sight, it is wrong (Deut. 6:18).

Naturally, our convictions about these teachings offend the proponents of the new tolerance. Today, consequently, Christians are viewed as the greatest sinners in our culture; committing the only serious sin left in our world-intolerance. Sometimes even murder has its mitigating factors, but not this one. It is the pariah sin, the charge that makes you untouchable without need for further explanation. America is sick of intolerant people and it's not going to tolerate them anymore!

One tactic of the new tolerance is to label anyone who disagrees with or objects to its agenda as being "phobic."

Debra J. Saunders, writing in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, reported the reaction of one "old-fashioned" father who protested the content of the sex education his son was receiving in public school. "When I complained that my elementary school son was too young to understand homosexuality," the father said, "they called me a 'homophobe.' [They] wouldn't listen, they just called me names."

This tactic of name-calling, or labeling any opposing view with words like "hostility," "hatred," "cruelty," and

"bigotry" has repeatedly proven effective for the proponents of the new tolerance.

A newspaper article praising a documentary on gay activism on college campuses notes that some might fault the film for not interviewing anyone who sees the homosexual lifestyle as "sinful." The author concludes, however, that "anyone who tried to make that argument after the poignant stories of Gary and others would look stupid or heartless or both."

"Stupid" or "heartless"—not much of a choice, but the only one afforded those out of step with the moral climate of our times.

In addition to name-calling, the proponents of the new tolerance are not above quoting scripture in order to silence the "judgmentalism" of Christians. Their favorite passage is in the eighth chapter of John where Jesus admonishes those who want to stone a woman caught in adultery with the words, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (verse 7). In the oft-cited passage critics almost always leave out the end of the exchange, when Jesus tells the adulterous woman, "Go, and sin no more" (verse 11). Jesus wasn't providing a pardon, to be granted easily, cheaply, without cost or repentance. And the point surely wasn't that wrongdoing should be tolerated or that sin is inconsequential. The most casual study of the Bible makes it incontestably clear that while God loves the sinner (Rom. 5:8), He hates sin (Rev. 2:15).

Paul, who wrote the beautiful exposition on love in I Corinthians 13, chastises the very same church in Corinth

because it had accepted immorality in its midst. He even urges members to expel a man who is an adulterer. Throughout the entire Bible, good conduct is praised, and sin is denounced.

It would be one of the great spiritual tragedies of our time if we allow ourselves to be seduced and corrupted by the spurious new definition of tolerance. This definition, however, is fast becoming "institutionalized"—accepted by the vast majority through constant exposure and influence.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

unscriptural music. They all stand or fall together. The Bible says in 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." Are their individual cups read within the "doctrine of Christ?" Nay, verity! Where can we find them? We must read after the "Rev." J. G. Thomas, in Ohio, in 1894. Not Jesus, not Jerusalem, not AD 33. What is the problem? Wrong man, wrong place, wrong time! Are their Bible classes found in the "doctrine of Christ?" Nay, verily! One must turn to Robert Raikes in England in 1783. Not Jesus, not Jerusalem, not AD 33. What is the problem? Wrong man, wrong place, wrong time! May we read the instrument in the "doctrine of Christ?" Nay, verily! We must look to the Pope of Rome in 666 AD—Not Jesus, not Jerusalem, not 33 AD What is wrong with it? Wrong man, wrong, place, wrong time! We say, again, they *all* stand or fall together. *Thank God for brethren who still reject them all.*

Interestingly, many of the brethren who have insisted on the innovations even to the point of division, realize that they are not necessary for the church to worship and please God. In an article titled *Danger Signs To Heed*, (same paper as before mentioned) the writer says: (page 30) "...There are some things that are fundamental; without them the church of Christ would not and could not exist. There are numerous things that are important, *but not essential, such as our meeting houses, our Sunday schools, our publications, and our Christian colleges. The church could exist and has existed without any of these...*" (emphasis mine DLK) This brother places the Sunday schools and colleges on the same plane as a meeting house or religious journal. He saw no difference in changing God's divine pattern of worship and assembly and a private endeavor such as a privately owned and operated journal

Whether you know it or not, this deceptive doctrine and the accompanying idolatry it fosters—is all around you, seeping not only into your mind, but into the minds of your children and other loved ones; and, if we are not careful and alert, it could destroy us all. Peter warns, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

like *OPA*.

In the same paper, another writer under the title: *Looking Back - Looking Forward*, on page 9 says: "Bible based and determined resistance to various *false* doctrines, religious hobbies, and extremism bent on dominating individuals and churches (such as *premillennialism opposition to individual communion cups, opposition to located preachers*) (emphasis mine DLK) steadily prevailed over such *flawed* views. By the mid-1950s, however, brethren were bracing to resist new extremes...." Our "views" are "flawed," you see, *though we can read our worship right from the Book*. Whatever happened to the "Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent" slogan?

At the end of the article under "*ENDNOTES*" the writer mentions Ronny Wade's book *The Sun Will Shine Again Someday*. Apparently, he has this work as most of us do. He says it "traces many developments among these *one-time* strong churches (that's us-DLK) which have undergone *significant decline* and *steadily eroding influence*. As the title suggests, there is a bitter-sweet longing among these churches for the return of the former days of this *troubled and troubling movement, but the future does not bode well for these errant brethren.*" (Emphasis mine-DLK)

I have not recently counted the number of congregations listed in our directories. However I feel sure that a count will certainly reveal that we are *not in decline* and we are *not eroding*. We are growing and that's a fact. They may wish for our demise but we have no intention of going away. We also deny in the strongest possible terms that we are errant. Take your Bible, my friends, and turn to any page. Whatever it says is what we believe. That is where we have always stood, and in the past many of you have admitted that our way of worship is Scriptural, We, at least, have the luxury of simply turning to the Scripture and reading our worship exactly as it is found in God's Holy Book. *Errant? We think not*. Think on these things. DLK

services and to brother Taylor Joyce for his assistance. Thanks so much.—Larry and Brenda Combs and Family

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Note Of Thanks

Brenda and I wish to thank everyone who called, sent cards, e-mails, support (physically and financially), and all the many prayers that have been offered up on our behalf during the recent loss of our precious daughter Tiffany. Also we wish to thank all those who continue to send cards and call, as well as those who continue to pray for our family. We also want to thank both brother Miles King and brother Morgan Stripling for their conducting the

50th Wedding Anniversary

On December 24, 1999, J.T. and Jonette Phelps celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Shortly after being married in 1949, they moved to Cincinnati, OH where they made their home for the next forty one years. While living in Ohio they attended the Sharronville congregation. Moving once again to Rockcastle county, KY in 1991, they attend services faithfully at the Blue Springs congregation. To this union has been born one son and three daughters. We celebrate this milestone with them

and their family. We also wish them many more years of happiness together.

Do You Need The New Tract?

Time is running out to order the new tract *What Is Wrong?* Most have been sold. However, there are some left. Topics include: Sprinkling for baptism, Instrumental music. Faith only, etc. Every congregation needs these in the rack for visitors. Every preacher will find them useful in conducting Bible studies, etc. This tract is a reprint of the special July issue. We had several thousand extras printed at that time which quickly sold out. We reprinted and promptly sold out. Now, it has been put into tract form and is, again, nearly sold out. We do not plan to reprint this again. Order from: *Old Paths Advocate*, c/o Kendall Cook, 1978 N. Farm Rd. 89, Springfield, MO 65802. The price is \$35 per hundred PLUS POSTAGE. (Just note the amount on your package and send the money to us) Single copies are 50 cents each in quantities less than 100. We hope to sell them all this month, order soon. DLK

Sermons And Writing Of Homer L. King

This book of sermons and writings of Homer L. King is like a trip back in time. The book contains 221 pages and over 100 of his sermon outlines. In addition there is a biography and about 30 essays randomly selected from the more than thirty years he served as Publisher of *Old Paths Advocate*. It is hard bound and at \$7.00 plus postage, a real bargain. Order from Helen King, 1061 N. Pilgrim St., Stockton, CA 95205

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

JERNIGAN-DRUMMOND—Heather Jernigan and Matt Drummond exchanged vows in a beautiful ceremony in McAlester, Oklahoma on December 18, 1999. Heather is the daughter of Ralph and Diana Jernigen of the C and Tyler congregation in McAlester. I baptized Matt this summer when I was in McAlester and I was honored that they asked me to officiate at the wedding. The church was wonderfully decorated and the acapella singing was beautiful. I believe that Matt and Heather will be a great asset to the church in McAlester. I pray that their home will be a pillar in the community and a positive force for the cause of Christ. God bless this new home!

PERRIN-MESSER—On November 20, 1 1999 Staci Jennifer Messer and Todd Hunter Perrin united in a beautiful evening ceremony at the University of Houston Chapel in Houston, TX. Staci is the daughter of Jay and Elaine Messer of the Fairbanks Houston Congregation (formerly Aurora Street Congregation.) Todd is the son of Glenn and Della Perrin and Gene and Loreen Hoffman. A large number of brothers and sisters in Christ, friends, and relatives gathered in the presence of God, to witness the union and establishment of this Christian home. The joy expressed by those present exemplifies the love and respect of this young Christian couple by their home congregation. I considered it a tremendous honor to be asked to officiate at this ceremony. Staci has held a special place within my heart for quite a number of years. May God's grace always shine upon this fine young couple, and may He richly bless

their home. It is our prayer that they always be guided by His word.—Arley Fancher

OUR DEPARTED

BRITT—Bernice. Sister Burnice Britt was born July 11, 1906 and departed this life January 17, 2000. She was the daughter of Josie and T.E. "Nong" Smith, and the aunt of M. Lynwood Smith. She obeyed the gospel around 1922 under the preaching of N. L. Clark, and had been a member of the New Salem church of Christ ever since, never having held membership in any other congregation. Bernice was an unassuming person, going about her duties without fanfare. She was widowed early in life and forced, with her two children, to move back in with her parents. Later she married again, having four additional children. All her children are Christians, quite an accomplishment in this day and time. The great loves of her life were the church, her family, and her garden. She was a homemaker, a mother to her children, and in this capacity set a godly example for all to see. Her children truly rise up and "call her blessed." She was ill the last eight years of her life, and it troubled her deeply when she was no longer able to attend church services. She leaves to mourn her passing two sons, four daughters, one sister, one brother and a number of grandchildren as well as a host of brothers and sisters in Christ who will miss her greatly. Unfortunately people with her determination and dedication are few and far between in our world today. A number of years ago, she asked me to conduct her funeral. I considered it an honor to do so. The beautiful singing was rendered by members of the New Salem church. The large floral offering attested to the esteem in which she was held. A nephew, Jimmie Smith, led the prayer at the grave.—Ronny F. Wade.

My Position On Carnal Warfare

I cannot participate in military services in any form, directly or indirectly, in combatant or noncombatant service because:

1. My duty and obligation to my God is superior to all other obligations (Acts. 5:29; Matt. 22:37).
2. My God in the Bible forbids that I engage in carnal warfare in the following references:
 - "Put up thy sword." "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52)—Jesus.
 - "My Kingdom is not of this world" (Jno. 18:36).
 - "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Cor. 10:3, 4).
 - "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44); "Turn the other cheek" (Matt. 5:39).
 - "Recompense to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17).
3. To enter any military branch or service, combatant or noncombatant, I would be compelled to "swear" (take an oath), but the Bible forbids that I do so ("Swear not at all"—Jesus, Matt. 5:34).
4. To enter any military service I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden—"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14).
5. To be in any branch of military service in anyway, I would be a part of the organization and would therefore have fellowship in the service, but such is prohibited; thus: "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).
6. To serve in anyway in the military service, I would be

deprived of obeying the command to assemble on Lord's day to worship God in the Bible way, at least part of the time, hence would disobey God (Heb. 10:25; Acts. 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1,2).

Therefore, I cannot conscientiously engage in carnal War in any form or branch, and for the above reasons, I authorize my name to be listed in support of the above principles.

*Allen Devoll Johnson, 122 Carol Lane, Red Oak, TX 75154
Scott Holland, Rt. 1, Box 117A, Ada, OK 74820
Anthony Alexander Domeniqoni, 180 Vermont St., Gridley, CA 96948*



Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail, old_paths@juno.com, Feb. 10—We returned from the Philippines on Jan. 24 (see report this issue) safe and sound. I thank Richard DeGough for going with me this year and rendering valuable service. It is always wonderful to come home and be among the most familiar brethren again. Too, it was our pleasure to preach both services at Stockton, CA recently and to see all there once more. We are currently among the brethren in Fort Worth, Texas (Fossil Creek congregation) in a meeting. So far, crowds are pretty good with some visitors from other congregations and more are expected as the meeting progresses. We are enjoying the hospitality of Randy and Rhonda Cantrell, a great place to stay. It was our sad opportunity to attend the funeral of Pat Cutter yesterday. A large crowd was in attendance from many places. Undoubtedly the worst day in the life of any husband is to lose his mate through death. My sympathy for Jerry, a preaching pal for many years, and the family is beyond my ability to put into words. We have made many trips together to various parts of the world and I remember how we both missed our wives. She was simply the love of his life. My prayers go out for them all in the coming days of sadness. We also ask your continued prayers for us as we continue our work.

Douglas T. Hawkins Rt. 1 Box 717 Mt. Vernon, KY 40456 (606) 256-8148 hawkins@kih.net Feb. 3, 2000—During these winter months I have preached primarily at Blue Springs. This month we plan to hold a meeting in Lexington where the church has been meeting for close to two years now. The congregation continues to enjoy visitors from the community. Richard has done and is doing an outstanding job. We have advertised this meeting for 6 weeks on the T.V. program and are anxious to see what sort of turn out we have. I am also looking forward to being in LaGrange, GA later this month where Bro. Alton Bailey lives. This will my first visit and will also begin our stint of meetings for the year. In March we will be with the congregation at Pleasant Grove, IN (March 11 -19). Lord bless you all.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS, 66012 (pon.wjn.ks@juno.com), February 4—It is hard

to realize that over one month of the new year, 2000, is already gone. We need to ask ourselves what use of the time have we made for the cause of Christ. Or, on the other hand, must we admit we have used all the time for our own selfish interests and we have borne no fruit for the Master? As the old song says, "the harvest time is coming on." God continues to bless our efforts here at Kansas City. At present I am studying with a young man who was recently restored to the Lord and a young woman who was raised Catholic. Both look very promising. The man has lots of potential and is already leading singing and dismissing services, and has expressed a desire to teach. The young woman seems very interested, and comes to every service. I think it is just a matter of time until she obeys the gospel. The Lord willing, we will be at Lexington, Ok in a meeting in their new building, March 19-26. I have held many meetings here in the past and look forward to this one also. May the Lord bless all our righteous efforts everywhere.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Hughson, CA 95326—During the month of January, I traveled with brother Don King to the Philippines. To say the least it was profitable and encouraging to me in many ways. It was my first ever to that country where so many faithful brethren live and work. I was impressed with the dedication of the brethren and preachers who seem to have the cause of Christ and his church foremost in their hearts. We were privileged to preach and study with them every day, with several gathering for each occasion. At each service, with few exception they responded to the call of the gospel. Brother Virgilio Danao Sr. was an excellent translator for Don and me, and his influence among them is great. It became apparent to me that they love and appreciate Don for his love and concern all these twenty years for their work and well being. We were received with enthusiasm from them, and hospitality of both sisters and brothers was excellent. I have learned to appreciate the work in the Philippines more than ever before. Every effort extended and every dollar spent, has produced fruit in the Lord. Yes, there are some setbacks in every work, but they are so insignificant when compared with the souls that are saved. I thank Don for asking me to go with him. He is a good man and an excellent preacher. We were in my estimation compatible in the work, and in our stand for the truth on each issue. I was encouraged and built up by this good experience with Don, brother Danao and just being among and working with the brethren. Brethren if you can assist in that work, please, may I encourage you to do so. As congregations of God's people we can with the Lord's blessings take care of this work and all of the good work throughout the world. While there, we witnessed 48 respond for baptism, and 7 restored, coming from the "cups" people. Our prayer is for all God's people.

Reggie Kinser, 4407 Georgetown Drive, Columbia, MO 65203; (573) 446-5934; rkinser@email.msn.com -January 20, 2000—The work at Columbia continues to prosper. Since my last report we have baptized four people into the body of Christ. After a series of home studies on the church of the NT, Zenie Nfills obeyed the gospel. Zenie is a middle-aged man and 15-year resident of the community. I first became acquainted with him after I was given his name by a sister from a "cups" church in California. He now attends our congregation. Kristen Simpson was also

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baptized recently. She is a teenage girl who lives next door to Dennis and Teresa Nilson. Although her parents have never attended our services, Dennis and Teresa have been bringing her to worship for more than a year. Some of our sisters have also studied with her on a regular basis. Her conversion is the result of the continual efforts of devoted brethren. Another recent conversion is Dick Ainsworth. Dick first responded to a TV series we did on denominationalism about one year ago. He and I have been studying on a long-term basis for several months. Dick was raised in Catholicism and has been engrained with its doctrines for more than 58 years. He still has many misconceptions about serving the Lord. However, with time and dedication we believe he will become a valuable asset to the cause. We are committed to helping him grow in the knowledge of the Lord. Please pray for Dick and for us as we labor on his behalf. Tiffany Long was also baptized recently. She was introduced to the Lord's church through Sean Johnson. He and Tiffany work together at the local Pizza Hut. Sean is also responsible for setting up the Bible study that led to Tiffany's decision. We are so thankful for brethren like Sean who are not afraid to share their faith with those around them. Last but not least, a preacher from the "cups" church has also taken a stand with us. Kevin White and his family are now worshipping with us in Columbia. I first met Kevin three years ago at a gospel meeting sponsored by a local digressive church. The topic of discussion was "The Restoration and Divisions in the Church of Christ." During a question and answer session I posed several questions about the division over communion. Although a friendly and somewhat lengthy discussion ensued, there were no apparent benefits at the time. However, Kevin was listening and he recognized the fact that the visiting preacher was attempting to dodge the obvious truth. Almost three years later, on a Saturday night, Kevin unexpectedly phoned my home and asked to study the Lord's Supper. The rest is history. In his own words he had stored the things that were spoken that night away in his heart. He pondered them off and on for three years before he acted upon them. Now, he and his family are worshipping with us according to the NT pattern. We welcome Kevin and family into our fellowship and look forward to laboring with them in the Lord's vineyard. It goes without saying that we at the Rice Road Church of Christ are excited about the good things that are happening in our congregation. Our hope is that those who read this report will also be encouraged and motivated in the work of the Lord. We thank God for the power of his word.

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4, Box 188, Ada, OK 74820, Jan. 30—Greetings to all the brethren everywhere. Hope you are having a good new year in the Lord's work. We are looking forward to another year, the Lord willing, in the effort to preach the gospel. I have already had the opportunity to work with the church at Rogers, AR. I must say the association with the brethren there was truly a treat. This congregation is blessed with several young families as well as a number of older Christians. They have a lot of zeal and

plan to accomplish much for the cause of Christ. We were glad to have preaching brethren Taylor Joyce, Roy Criswell, and Dennis Smith in the audience one or more times. We expect good things from this congregation. Following is a portion of my schedule for this year, if you are in the area we would be glad to see you: Levelland, TX Mar. 8-12; Fieldstone, MO Mar. 19-26; Bandy, KY May 21-28; Corsicana, TX June 4-11; Columbus, GA June 18-25; Cassville, MO July 7-9; Grand Rapids, MI July 13-16. Please remember us when you pray.

Kevin W. Presley, 105 Montrose Ct. #45, Dothan, AL 36305, (304) 678-8999, letthebiblespeak@mciworld.com, February 14, 2000—The past few months have been very busy and productive in the Lord's work. When I last reported to the paper, I was in a meeting at Longwood, FL with one having been baptized. That effort closed with two baptisms in all and a host of community visitors. It was a great week and I enjoyed so much the association with the good brethren there. I made my home with the Dennis Bumbalough family. Also in November, it was thrilling to be with the church at New Salem, MS for their annual Thanksgiving meeting. The crowds were great, the singing real good, and the hospitality unsurpassed. We were glad to assist a young man from the Methodist denomination in obeying the gospel. There was also one confession of fault. It is the long time home of Bro. Lynwood Smith who is our good friend and one of our most admired preachers. We attended a few nights of the Southern New Year's Meeting where we enjoyed seeing a good many people and heard some tremendous singing! The New Year has already proven to be a good one for the cause in the area. In January, a former Mormon missionary contacted us through our television program and said that he had been watching for a couple of years. He had studied himself out of Mormonism and had become convicted that we presented pure New Testament Christianity. He immediately obeyed the gospel after we went to study with him and has been faithfully worshipping with the brethren at Florida, AL. Also, just a few weeks ago, an older sister who had been worshipping with the digressives for several years, made a confession and returned to the truth. She meets with us at the Dothan congregation. She was also contacted through our television work here. We have been so blessed to have this medium for the past 3 years. We have converted several and our viewing audience has over doubled since we began. We have between 10-12,000 who watch each Lord's Day. I have recently been in short meetings with the brethren at Robertsdale, AL and Oyster Bay, FL. Two confessed faults at Robertsdale. The Lord willing, my schedule for the next few months takes me to the following places: Marieta, GA Feb. 26-27; Edmond, OK Mar. 5-12; Hilltop, KY March. 27-Apr. 2; Springfield, MO Apr. 19-23; Sharonville, OH April 26-30; and Spring Valley, WV May 14-21. Don King is to hold our March meeting in Dothan and Wayne McKamie will be at Earlytown in April. Come be with us if you can.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 4

DISFELLOWSHIP (1)

By BENNIE CRYER

The word "disfellowship" is not found in the KJV, and, to my amazement is not found in my *Webster's New World Dictionary*. However, I think it is a good word that all of us can understand. If you cannot, Webster's can offer help. The prefix dis- means to deprive of, expel from, the opposite of, the lack of. So, disfellowship means to deprive one of fellowship, or to expel one from fellowship. It is the opposite of fellowship and results in the lack of fellowship. I finally found a larger dictionary with the word "disfellowship" in it. Its definition is true to what we have just said. It means "To refuse to associate with: used especially in reference to church fellowship or communion." Even my computer would not recognize the word "disfellowship." Each time I wrote it the computer would underline it in red. Finally, I grow tired of this and added it to the computer's vocabulary. After that I had no problem with it. Generally speaking, our congregations are like the lexicographers and my computer. They leave the word and the practice out except, of course, we know we do not fellowship those who use cups, classes, and instrumental music. Each congregation and each member that makes it up should understand that one of the marks of a New Testament church is *it practices disfellowshipping certain of its members and it is one of the practices that makes a church strong and fruitful*. The practice is not designed by God to weaken a congregation but to strengthen it.

There are different kinds of fellowship. In this study we are interested in the special fellowship mentioned in I Corinthians 1:9.

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus has a fellowship. These who have obeyed the gospel are the ones called into it by God. Since God is ultimately responsible for a person being in the fellowship of Christ we have to give careful consideration to those we extend it to. Owe a person is in this fellowship we have to be extremely careful should it become necessary to deny him fellowship. This cautionary approach is important because all of us are human beings with finite minds and we cannot know certain things such as motives or the state of another's head in the absolute sense as God does. On the other hand, God plainly reveals how to enter into the fellowship of His Son, how to maintain that fellowship, and how one might lose that fellowship. He has made the church, the body of Christ, and those who direct her affairs

responsible for bringing people into the fellowship, helping them maintain that fellowship, and to exercise discipline when it becomes necessary. The church cannot afford to neglect these responsibilities, disciplinary actions included, for in doing so she would lose one of the characteristics of the New Testament church.

Scriptural discipline is necessary for many reasons. Among the more important reasons is the necessity of maintaining the glory and holiness of the church, to keep sin from contaminating other parts of the body, and to help prevent the erring one from going to hell. A congregations motives for withdrawing fellowship from an individual should be to bring that person to repentance, protect the church from evil influence, and to protect the influence of the church in the community where it is located.

In this and a following article to be published next month I shall consider the following questions: 1. Is it right to withdraw from every Christian for every sin? 2. For what reasons should a congregation withdraw fellowship? 3. How should the congregation respond to such discipline? 4. How does the disfellowship of a man affect his immediate family? 5. Can individuals disfellowship others? 6. Does each congregation need to consider disfellowshipping a person who has been disfellowshipped? And 7. What should happen when people who have been disciplined leave one congregation and go to another?

IS IT RIGHT TO WITHDRAW FROM EVERY CHRISTIAN FOR EVERY SIN?

No. Every sin does not require a formal withdrawing of fellowship. However, each sin must be properly and scripturally dealt with. Any unforgiven sin will keep a person out of heaven. Therefore every sin must be dealt with to keep it, from endangering the erring Christian's chance of entering into heaven. The Scriptures, however, seem to teach, there are degrees of sin. Jesus told Pilate, *Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin*. If one sin is greater than another is perhaps God's plan of discipline is different as well. This seems to be the case, in Luke 12:47-48:

And that servant, which knew his Lords will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of

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Editorial

PRINCIPLES

By DON L. KING

There are often biblical principles overlooked by many honest people. In Ephesians 6:4, Paul said: "And, ye fathers; provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Again, in Colossians 3:21 he wrote: "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." Most of us understand that we must not provoke them to wrath. That is, we must not use such severity that we manage to harden them and make them even more desperate in their disobedience. It has been our observation that cruel parents usually have bad children. A father who really loves his children will feel every blow on his own heart that he inflicts on the child. Why is this the case? Because he loves his child and really does not want to hurt him in any way. However, because of love, he does what must be done and does it in love. On the other hand, some discipline children so haphazardly that they manage only to make the child angry. A child who receives only casual discipline and without any consistency is not likely to grow up feeling the need to be obedient.

However, Paul said to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) This literally means to nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Parents have the duty to nourish their little minds with wholesome discipline and instruction in much the same way as their bodies must be cared for with proper food and medical attention. Too, this is to be done according to the Word of God. In other words, they must be raised in obedience, not only to obvious commands of God but according to His *principles* as well. Here is where so many fail.

For example: most of us understand the obvious command given in Hebrews 10:25 not to forsake the assembly. We just don't miss unless we are sick or in some way providentially hindered from attending. We wouldn't think of missing for work or to go fishing, etc., (would we?). However, suppose a child wishes to go with his school class or friends to some place where no church is located. A parent sometimes reasons that since the child is not yet a member of the church he will violate no command by missing. Is that bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) How can it possibly be proper training to allow the child to do what he should *not* do? When he obeys the gospel he must not forsake the assembly. How can it be right for a parent, who is given the charge to bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to allow him to do what God said not to? What are we thinking of?

In I Corinthians 11:2-16 Paul teaches the need of women being covered. Most of us understand that means to be

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Please explain Ex. 20:4. What is meant by graven images? Is it wrong to have figures of Jesus sitting around? What about wearing crosses etc.? (GA)

Answer: The passage in question reads: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them..." This prohibition clearly is against idolatry. There were three forms or classes of idolatry: (1) man-made such as those carved out of gold, silver or wood; (2) invisible or imaginary such as Baal, Ashtoreth, or Tammuz; (3) and natural such as animals, trees, rivers or planets. Verse four discusses idolatry in the form of likenesses made out of wood, stone, or gold. (Common at that time among the Egyptians.) To worship or pay respect to any such image is clearly forbidden. God makes it clear that He must have first place in the lives of His people, and will not tolerate their worshipping anyone or anything else. To argue that the image merely reminds one of God or Christ does not lessen the sin. Such images or figures have no place in the life of a Christian. Idolatry is a horrible sin. We are told in I John 5:21 "My little children guard yourselves from idols." The futility and danger of worshipping idols is clearly seen in Psa. 115:1-8 "Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, But to Your name give glory, Because of Your mercy, Because of Your truth. Why should the Gentiles say, So where is their God? But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. Their idols are silver and gold, The work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell; They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat. Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them." What a revealing verse of scripture. These idols described by David cannot see, hear, talk or smell. In no way can they compare with God.

People who worship idols become like the idol they worship, even so everyone who trusts in them. This is a lesson borne out by history. People who worship the gods of war, greed, lust, vengeance are no better than the gods they serve. Ancient fertility gods were worshipped through fornication and adultery. Such behavior carried the participants to the depths of degradation and shame. No wonder God said, "Keep yourselves from idols." "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things" Romans 1:23. In Isa 40:25 we read "To whom then will you liken Me, or to whom shall I be equal? says the Holy One." God is in a class by himself. There is no one or thing with which to compare Him. We can compare a man to another man. We can compare a car to another car. But to whom or what shall we compare God? We can't for there is none like Him. He has no equal. Catholicism is filled with idols and images. It is not uncommon to see people driving around with a small image on the dashboard of their car. Often people will wear a cross around their neck or carry one in their pocket. When questioned they say "Oh, I don't worship the image or cross this just reminds me of the God or saint or Christ that I really do worship. Suppose my wife were to walk in on me and find me with my arms around another woman. When I see her enter the room I say "Oh, honey I didn't realize you were here. You surely know that this woman means nothing to me. I saw her and she reminded me of you, so I put my arms around her." I don't know about your wife, but I can tell you right now that my wife wouldn't buy that for a minute. Neither does God. We can claim the idol, image, carved figure, means nothing and is merely a reminder, but God says "I won't have it." As Christians we should reject all such objects. Idolatry is sinful and must not be tolerated by God's people, if we are to please him, (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

WWW.PARENTS/LEADERS BEWARE

By ALAN BONIFAY

Computers and the world wide web are gradually becoming more and more important in our lives. One can shop, do banking, and send mail electronically and instantly on-line. He can research any topic. He can discuss any issue with people all over the world in real time. And who knows what advancements Silicon Valley yet holds for tomorrow? Despite its dark side (see Greg Gay's articles October, November, December, 1999; January, 2000-*OPA*), much that is good and worthwhile can be gleaned from the Internet. However, as technology advances, we must be sure that its gains are used in scriptural ways and for scriptural purposes. We must be sure that we use the advantages of the Internet for the good of the church at large and not to its hurt, either locally or universally. To that end I would like to voice a deep concern that impacts brethren across the United States and endangers the young people of many of our congregations.

Many of the young people of the church frequent a web page emanating from southern California. On the open forum section they discuss any and all Bible issues. The author(s) of this page are well-meaning upstanding young men whose sole interest in providing this web page is to further the cause of Christ and to raise the level of Bible knowledge among the youth of the church. What could possibly be the problem with such an endeavor? Isn't it a good thing for our kids to be discussing the Word of God? Well at the risk of raising the ire of numerous defenders of such an open forum, I would like to suggest three areas of concern. I believe the impact of this web page discussion may be very detrimental to the cause of Christ however well-intentioned its provider(s) and contributors might be.

The Danger of Private Bible Studies

First of all we need to understand that private Bible studies have the potential to be seedbeds of false doctrine

and division (Acts 15:1-2; Gal. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:18-20; 5:13; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; Jude 3-4, 16-19; 2; Sam. 15:1-6). Please do not misunderstand. I make no charge against anyone as being like the men discussed in these passages. The point is that those who conduct private Bible studies without proper supervision can foment rebellion and sometimes have.

Yes, it is scriptural to discuss the Bible in private situations comparable to house-to-house gatherings (Acts 20:20). Small group discussions can be a very effective method of teaching the local congregation (Acts 18:24-28; 21:8-14). However, two keys are critically important. The first is the local congregation. The local congregation is the medium through which God intends for the church to function—publicly and privately. When one begins to broaden his work beyond the borders of local congregations all manner of confusion and wrong are likely to be the result (e.g. missionary societies; city-wide discipling churches). In the New Testament all of the approved work designed to spread the gospel or to provide benevolence to needy saints was conducted through the local congregations. It is true that sometimes churches worked together, but when they did, their works were done concurrently and individually. There is no functioning institution in the New Testament larger than the local congregation.

The second key for effective and beneficial small group studies is members is the teacher. Congregations have a responsibility to ensure that what is taught to the members is the truth. To that end, teachers, whether they function publicly or in house-to-house studies, are to be faithful men who are able to teach others (2 Tim. 2:2). They are to be men who are capable of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-12). They are to be men who have mastered the first principles, who are skilled in the word of righteousness, who are mature and whose experience has enabled them to adeptly discern both good and evil (Heb. 5:12-14). They are to be men whose wisdom is from above—“first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality or hypocrisy” (James 3:17). Of course, young men and new believers are by definition novices when they begin. But they are to exercise their talents and hone their skills under the direction and tutelage of the leaders of their home congregation(s) (Acts 16:1-2) and within the confines of local congregations.

The number one problem with open forum discussions on a web page is that there is no way to control the input because anyone in the world who obtains the proper keywords to enter can contribute his comments. There is, further, no way to measure the faithfulness of the contributor. In the case I have in mind there are contributors who are not even in the fellowship. Many, if not most, of the “teachers” involved are inexperienced young people who need to be talking about these issues with their parents, their congregational leaders, and their preachers. They do not need to be representing the church to the world as instructors. Besides all of these problems, there is no discernible way to learn in such a format because there is no closure gained for any topic. There is always one more person with one more different point to make.

Web Pages and Women Teachers

The fact is that any web page which is available to contributors on a basis larger than a “house-to-house” level of privacy is not a private study anyway. The question immediately arises as to the point of the previous discussion if such a web page is not private after all. The answer is first that even if it were possible as per Acts 20:20 (i.e. house-to-house) such discussions are very liable to be seedbeds of false doctrine. Second, the users often consider them private and therefore it was important to make the observations given above.

However, when Paul spoke of private teaching he used a term much more confining in terms of both numbers and circumstance than private. He said, “I have taught you publicly and from house to house” (Acts 20:20). Any group of people that is larger than what one might expect to find in a private home setting is considered public by the scriptures. Just how many people that might entail is open to some discussion but it is certainly less than fifty - in fact, it is probably considerably less than twenty. What that means is that when our wives and daughters contribute comments to a web page forum potentially open to hundreds, if not thousands, of contributors from all over the world they are violating 1 Timothy 2:11-12:

Let a woman learn in silence with all submission And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.

Some of the most voluble contributors are women or girls on the aforementioned web page. This is a flat violation of 1 Timothy 2:11-12 and must be stopped. Christian women who are motivated by the principles of modesty (not to mention the authority of God’s word) do not voice their comments about the teachings of God’s word publicly.

Attitudes of the Teacher of God’s Word

Paul describes the attitudes with which the servant of the Lord is to instruct his fellows in 2 Timothy 2:24-26. The “servant of the Lord” refers to Timothy (i.e. the evangelist) as well as those “faithful men” to whom he imparts Paul’s instructions that they may be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2). In other words, the reference is to teachers and preachers. How are these men to conduct themselves as they impart their instructions?

A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God will grant them repentance so that they may know the truth and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will (2 Tim. 2:24-26). James describes responsible faithful teachers in similar terms (James 3:1, 17). Paul elsewhere instructs all Christians to be “kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.”

I mention these passages because the attitudes displayed by some of the self appointed defenders of the faith on the web page mentioned above are not a forty-second cousin to those Paul demands of every Christian — not to mention teachers of God’s word. Hatefulness is not an appropriate tool for turning brethren who are in error (if, in fact, they are in error) away from their error. Self-righteous Pharisaism which attempts to preserve orthodoxy at all

costs closes off all discussion and often at the cost of truth.

When Nicodemus, asked, "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?", the Pharisees replied, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee" (John 7:50-52). They were not interested in shutting off discussion. They did so in a harsh and disrespectful manner and besides that they were wrong (Jonah was from Galilee). Much of the argument and counter-argument that I have seen from that web page is of this very nature. The airing of such attitudes is precisely why inexperienced young men are

not to be unsupervised in their efforts to preach the truth. Some of the argumentation presented there is not particularly hateful; it is just wrong. Of course, some of what is written there is true, but because of these sinful attitudes, because of the error being taught, because Christian women are teaching in a public forum and because of the total inability to control the discussion for good or settle any issue by the scriptures this is a very dangerous format. Parents and leaders and preachers need to be aware of these problems and take appropriate steps to remedy them.

DISFELLOWSHIP (1)

continued from page 1

him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

Withdrawal of fellowship is not the only kind of discipline the church may employ. There *is instructional discipline* that must be used on newborn babes in Christ and immature members. Paul employed this in his epistles to the church in Corinth, I Corinthians 3:1. Then there *is corrective discipline* that was to be used by the *spiritual* in order to restore a member who had *been overtaken in a fault*, Galatians 6:1.

For a study of these two types of discipline within a congregation, see Roy F. Cogdill's book, *New Testament Church*, page 85. So, I think we may safely conclude that a congregation is not to practice disfellowshipping its members for every sin. However, each sin in a person's life must be dealt with in one way or another.

For What Reason Should A Congregation Withdraw Fellowship

The church of Christ is not a social organization where you can believe anything you want to believe and act any way you want and still maintain fellowship in it, (See Jim Jividen's book, *Koinonia*, page 179). What you believe and do does affect your standing in the church. If this were not so there would be no reasons for the church to exist. We do not have the divine ability to discern a member's heart but we do have some directives from the Author of the Bible about how to deal with a brother or a sister who has sinned and refuses to repent. Here is a list of scriptures in the order they occur in the New Testament that will help us understand some things that are necessary when the church has no other alternative other than a withdrawal of fellowship from an impenitent member.

1. Matthew 18:15-17.

¹⁵ Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, ¹⁶ But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. ¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

In this case one member has trespassed against another member. Let us say that you have missed the mark with me for that, is the meaning of the word translated *trespassed*. In other words, you have sinned against me. You have offended me. It is my responsibility as the offended party to go to my brother and tell him his fault. This means that I must go to him, call him to account, and

require an explanation for, according to Vine's, it is more than just telling a persons his fault. Note the emphasis on "me" and how the responsibility is laid on "me". When there is trouble between me and another church member God is interested in what I do and not just what the other brother does. Whether I am the offended or the offender I have the responsibility of going to my brother. I may sit around smoldering and building up a grudge against someone that has wronged me. God is watching me and expects me to go to him and deal with the matter. But suppose am the one that has trespassed against my brother. Does God want me to sit around and wait for my offended brother to come to me? No! In Matthew 5:23-24, He requires me to go to my brother that has "aught" (anything) against me.

²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, ²⁴ Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Now, I am the alleged offender. God is interested in what I do in this matter. He says I must go and be reconciled to my brother before I can make offerings to my God in heaven. It would be a wonderful thing if both the offender and the offended would make haste and try to be reconciled to each other. If the trespasser will not repent then I am to take two or three witnesses with me and if he will not hear them I am to *tell it to the church*. If he, refuses to bear the church in this matter then he is to be to me as a *heathen and a publican*

2. Romans 16:17

Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned are to be *marked* (watched; observed) and *avoided* (turned away from). Paul had written to them about justification and righteousness. He had instructed them in many of the practical duties of Christianity. They had even received teaching about how to handle indifferent matters such as eating of meats and observance of days. If anyone caused a *division* (a standing apart, dissension) or *offended* (put a stumbling block in front of and became a cause of spiritual ruin) about these matters they were to be disciplined. What this discipline consisted of may be learned from considering the following texts: (1) Titus 3: 10.

A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject, A *heretic* is one who creates and fosters factions or divisions. When it is determined that the man

is a heretic after two attempts of instructional discipline he is to be rejected. This is what *mark and avoid* means. (2) 2 John 10-11,

¹⁰ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed

¹¹ For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Now we have additional information about what we do to *mark and avoid* a false teacher. We do not give him a welcome into our homes and we do not do anything to encourage him in his false ways. We also learn that we have to be careful lest our conduct signals to God that we are partakers of his evil deeds. But that is not all. (3) 1 Timothy 6:3-5

³ If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness,

⁴ He is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

Paul instructs Timothy to *withdraw* himself from men, who have such characteristics in their lives. So we must add withdrawing to rejection, not welcoming the false teacher into our homes, not encouraging them in any way nor doing anything that God would recognize as sharing in their evil deeds. (4) Similarly, we can add 2 Thessalonians 3:6.

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

Disorderly describes a brother who exhibits irregular conduct in relation to the traditions they had received from the apostles.

3. 2 Thessalonians 3:10-15.

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

¹¹ For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

¹² Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread

¹³ But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing

¹⁴ And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed

¹⁵ Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Note, in verse 14, literally means to mark, inscribe marks upon. But here it means to mark for one's self. In other words, it means we must consider such a person enough where we recognize he is the member that we should have no company with.

4. 1 Corinthians 5:11

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat.

In the strongest of terms Paul admonishes the members of the church to do something about the incestuous man in their midst

1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 12-13

⁴ In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

⁵ To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the, spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

¹² For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?

¹³ But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore pit away from among yourselves that wicked person.

Plainer language could not have been used. They were trying to save the man's soul and that required discipline. We can do no less today.

The Lord willing, in the next issue we will study How Should The Congregation Respond To Such Discipline? How Does Disfellowshipping A Man Affect His Immediate Family? May Individuals Disfellowship Others? Does Each Congregation Need To Consider Disfellowshipping A Person Who Has Been Disfellowshipped? And, What Should Happen When People Who Have Been Disciplined Leave One Congregation And Go To Another?

Please note that this and the following article next month are from a study presented at the Fair Oaks, California Church of Christ in August, 1999.

EDITORIAL

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with their long hair as per verse 15. Our preachers either *teach, or need to teach*, that biblical command. We believe it is a sin for a Christian woman to cut, or in any way alter, the natural length of her hair. Is there a principle here as well? Of course there is. Parents often reason that since the little girl is not yet old enough to be a member of the church, it will violate no command for them to cut her hair. Is that bringing the little girl up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Is that training her in the way that she should go so that when she is old she will not depart from it? (Proverbs 22:6) Folks, think of how absurd such reasoning is! In what way are you training her in the right way by doing what God will not allow her to do once she is a member of the church? True, the command

does not apply to her yet. However, *you* certainly have a God given charge to bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). Be fully aware, parents, that if you do not obey God in that charge, you have sinned!

In 1 Timothy 2:9, 10 Paul commands that women adorn themselves (make themselves attractive) in modest apparel. We all understand what that means. Women (and men) must dress in clothing that properly covers them. It must not be designed to show off the body in an immodest manner. This can be done by either allowing too much of the body to show or by covering it so tightly that little is left to the imagination. If the attire in any way causes the opposite sex to be attracted in a lustful way (because of the attire) he or she has not dressed in *modest* apparel. The same principle applies here also. Just because the child is not yet a member of the church does not mean that the

parent has the right to dress it immodestly! The God given charge to bring the child up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to train it up in the way that it should go so that when it is old it will not depart from it, absolutely applies. We say again: when a parent does such things as the above, in what way have you obeyed the command to bring the child up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? In what way are you training the child in the way it should go? If you disobey and fail to heed the commands of God here, don't insult the rest of us later, by complaining that you can't *imagine* what went wrong, when the child has become an adult and has no desire to be obedient to the will of God. If you allow your children to forsake the assembly now, don't be surprised when the adult, *that you trained as a child*, is not mindful of Hebrews 10:25 later. If you cut your little girl's hair now, don't be surprised when the adult woman, *that you trained as a child*, is not willing to let her hair grow in obedience to I Corinthians 11:2-16. If you allow your children to go to public swimming pools now and dress immodestly, don't be

surprised when the adults, *that you trained as children*, care nothing for Paul's commands in Timothy 2:9, 10, etc.

We must keep in mind that the Bible is not proscriptive but prescriptive. That is, it does not single out every possible sin, name it and forbid the same. Rather it teaches us in a prescriptive manner. In other words, we are told how to live and be pleasing to God by a series of commands as well as principles. If your doctor prescribes a certain drug for your illness, he does not have to forbid every other drug. The druggist knows he must fill the prescription exactly as the doctor has written it. That is why we are told to "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." (1 Thessalonians 5:21) The word "prove" in that verse means to examine carefully so that we may approve all things. We simply must know what we are doing and why. Parents simply must know what they are doing as they train their children. Yes, we all make mistakes. However, we need to remember that some mistakes can come back to haunt us many times over. If we lose our children we have lost it all. Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Together 50 Years

Jim and Pat Loudermilk of Nixa, Missouri recently celebrated their 50th Anniversary with their family and brothers and sisters in Christ. A large group attended the reception given in their honor on January 22. The celebration included the renewal of the vows., the cutting of the cake, and a skit planned by their family to reminisce on a few of the highlights of their marriage. They were married in Wichita Falls, Texas on January 21, 1950. They are members of the Mission Hills Church of Christ in Springfield, Missouri. Their mailing address is 4408 Congressional Circle, Nixa, MO 65714. "Marriage should be honored by all" (Hebrews 13:4) and we are thankful that this union has been a blessing to the family and the church for 50 years!—Bob Loudermilk

San Angelo, TX

The church in San Angelo, TX is interested in having a preacher come there and work with them in spreading the gospel. This congregation is at peace and interested in reaching out to the lost. If you, or if you know of anyone who would be interested, contact Dwain Morrison, 415 Cauley Ln., San Angelo, TX 76903, (915) 653-7996

In Need Of Help

The Church at Depauw, IN is in need of your help. Few in number, they are interested in reaching out to new prospects. If you know of anyone in the Louisville, KY area that we might be able to reach, please send us their name and address. Or if you know of anyone looking for work or a place to move, have them contact us: Joel Cole, 3520 E. State Road 64, Marengo, IN 47140, (812) 365-2957 or Walter Hunter, RR2 Box 325, Heltonville, IN 47435, (812) 834-5806

Would You Be Interested?

The church at Council Hill, OK currently supports 3 radio programs, however they are going to have to

discontinue one of them unless they receive help. If you would be interested in helping them support these works, please contact Larry Combs, P.O. Box 44, Council Hill, OK 74428, (918) 474-3692, lcombs@galstar.com or Tommy Herron, 427 East E St., Jenks, OK 74037, (918) 299-3727

Congregation Looking For Preacher

The congregation at West Chester, Ohio is looking for an evangelist to come and work with them on a full time basis. This congregation has recently experienced growth and renewed interest, which indicates that a profitable work may be done. Many years ago, we lived and worked among these folks. The church grew and prospered. Later, problems came about and the church languished. Now, it appears that once again a good work can be done. They wish to get started as soon as possible. Can you help them? For more information contact: Ivan Mink, (513) 733-1965 or R.H. Renner, (513) 777-3031.—DLK

Sermons And Writings Of Homer L. King

This book of sermons and writings of Homer L. King is like a trip back in time. The book contains 221 pages and over 100 of his sermon outlines. In addition there is a biography and about 30 essays randomly selected from the more than thirty years he served as Publisher of *Old Paths Advocate*. It is hard bound and at \$7.00 plus postage, a real bargain. Order from Helen King, 1061 N. Pilgrim St., Stockton, CA 95205

If You Wish To Pay Social Security

Here is updated information regarding the opportunity for ministers who opted out of social security can elect back in. Quote from *The Kiplinger Tax Letters*-dated March 3, 2000 – "Starting this year, members of the Clergy have an opportunity to rescind their originally irrevocable decision to decline social security coverage, Form 2031 must be filed to rejoin the social security system, according to the service...plans to release the form within a few weeks. Filers will owe self-employment tax on their net earnings from then on...will never be allowed again to elect

to be exempted from social security. The ability to reinstate coverage will expire on April 15, 2002 or later if the filing deadline for the 2001 Income tax return is extended".-L. Melvin Crouch

Directory Update March 11, 2000

The next planned publication is Summer 2001. Till then, please continue to send your updates to me at: Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, email: papagreg@aol.com or call me at (916) 726-8507. I plan to do a mailing this summer to all listed congregations to confirm their listings. The directory is being kept up to date on David Risner's web site: <http://www.newtestamentchurch.org>

Congregations:

Add - Eustace, Texas: Big Rock Church of Christ (call for directions) 133 Purts Creek, Estse, Eustace, TX 75124 Sunday Morning 10:30 a.m. Mitchell Hurt (903) 887-0154, Charles Usery (903) 887-3540, K.H. Curley (214) 363-1329

Springfield MO, North Area: Kent May's street name should be Marks Court

Ada, OK: remove Roland Hisle. Add: Ken Holland, Rt. 1, Box 117A, Ada, OK (580) 436-0436

Moore, OK: David Gilley zip should be 73107

Sentinel, OK: Address should be Third & Lincoln Streets-On Highway 44

San Angelo, TX, 19th St: remove James F. Smith. Add: Mike Howard, 419 W. Ave. H,

San Angelo, TX 76903-7306, Phone (915) 659-4396

Preachers:

Bennie Cryer's address is 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953 phone (530) 790-7151

Add: James Kees, 3136A Halliday, St. Louis, MO 63118 (314) 664-5183 also correct Bro. Kees' information in the St. Louis, MO Shenandoah listing.

There has been no change as to who will be listed in the directory. It would appear some have been confused on that. It will still be a listing for the one loaf of unleavened bread, one cup containing fruit of the vine, undivided assembly, a cappella singing brethren. And, like others before who have published the Directory, I do not intend to knowingly list any congregations where the leaders do not draw the line of fellowship against digression and denominationalism. Some want to ride the rail of fellowship and pretend they are with us and everyone else at the same time. The only thing riding a rail ever gets anyone is splinters. So, to the rail-riders I've heard from and to others I haven't, but presume I will, grow some backbone and take a stand so we can "walk by the same rule and mind the same thing (Phil 3:16). Then, I'll be happy to list your congregation.-Greg Gay

OUR DEPARTED

SIMPSON-Brother Owen Simpson was born February 23, 1915, near Orla, MO and departed this life on January 28, 2000 in Springfield, MO at the age of eighty-four years. He was a member of the church in Lebanon, MO and a long standing friend and brother of this writer. The first

time I ever went to Lebanon to hold a meeting my family and I stayed with Owen and Lucille. They were kind, generous and always hospitable. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, Lucille, two brothers, a sister, and a granddaughter. He is survived by two sons and two daughters as well as a number of grandchildren, and three sisters. He had been in failing health for sometime. Saying "good-bye" is difficult but "far better" than remaining in a body racked by disease and pain. The writer and Brother Ron Alexander conducted the memorial service.-Ronny Wade

CUTTER-Pat Cutter was born January 31, 1937 and departed this life on Lord's Day morning February 6, 2000 around 1:00 a.m. following a two year battle with cancer. She drew her last breath at her home with her husband, one of her sons (Jimmy) and her daughter (Denise) by her side. On July 20, 1954, Pat was united in marriage to Jerry Cutter. She is survived by her husband, her three children: Jimmy Cutter of Oklahoma City, Rick Cutter of Tulsa, Oklahoma and Denise Loudermilk of Wichita, Kansas and her five grandchildren - all of whom she loved dearly. Pat Cutter touched many lives as was evidenced by the crowd of approximately 300 people who attended her funeral on February 8 in Crescent, Oklahoma. Over 75 flowers and plants were sent from all over the world. The service was conducted by Ron Courter and Bob Loudermilk along with comments from her son, Jimmy. Singing was beautifully rendered by Lester Dougherty, Karen Dougherty, Missy Clifton, Glen Bray, Cammie Nelson, Tim Shaw, Joquita Shaw, and Mike Whitworth. Pat set an example for all of us. First and foremost, she was a Christian. She loved Christ, the church, and the Bible, She was baptized around the age of sixteen by a young preacher who would later become her husband and lifelong companion. Pat loved her family and was always busy doing special things for her children and grandchildren - cooking, sewing, quilting. She loved company and will long be remembered for the wonderful hospitality that she extended to literally hundreds of people throughout her lifetime. Pat showed great character and strength in her role as a preacher/missionary's wife. She was willing to sacrifice so that her husband, Jerry, could be about the Lord's business - not just in America but all over the world. Jerry and Pat spent all of their 45 years of marriage in the full-time work of the Lord. Their work with the church took them to numerous cities in America and into Africa, Australia, and Russia. Pat Cutter will be greatly missed by her family, by The Village congregation in Oklahoma City where she was a faithful member, and by brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the world who knew and loved her so very much.-Bob Loudermilk

IN MEMORY OF MY WIFE, PAT

By JERRY CUTTER

Pat was a beautiful lady that loved and created beauty everywhere she went. She had a natural inclination for beautiful things, or as some might say, that was her talent. Early on in our marriage we did not have much in the way of material things, but this did not matter. It does not take much to make things better, more beautiful, more pleasant, more spiritual.

Early on in our marriage Pat showed an interest in sewing, and in time became an accomplished seamstress, eventually sewing designer dresses for the Miss America Pageant.

Pat was a very good cook and had good taste and ability in this area. She was very hospitable and considered it an honor to be able to cook for her guests.

Anyone who ever visited our home knows she was a person of great ability in the field of decorating. When we lived in foreign countries and had little materially, she could always take what little she could come up with and change everything. Even today when I visit some of these places I see things in use that were created by Pat. Everywhere she ever went she left the world a little prettier.

And, then, Pat loved flowers and beautiful flower gardens. All over the world she tried to grow flowers, and this, of course, is something that can be done on a modest budget. Later in life, and when we settled on the farm, she had flowers on all sides of the house. She always was an early riser, and she would leave for work every morning at 6:30, only to return in the evening to her flowers, or to working in her home, endeavoring to make it more beautiful. While Pat was confined in the terminal stages of her illness, her friends never forgot her. She was surrounded by beautiful flowers every day and they brought light and beauty into her life.

Strangely, she did not like to travel, but ended up living on four continents, and helping in church work on the fifth. She lived in Malawi and Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. She lived in Australia and Russia. She traveled with me into Malaysia and lived and traveled with me into more than 35 states in America. Pat was naturally friendly and made friends everywhere she went. The result was, when she became ill, she received cards and letters from around the world. When she was diagnosed with cancer over two years ago, she received over 400 cards and letters almost immediately. In the last couple of months she received untold hundreds more.

In my shorter trips away from home, Pat was often left alone. This was not easy for her, but she did not complain. In the early days she took care of the children, and later on, while working in Oklahoma City, she did what had to be done to keep things going on the farm.

But above all else, she loved the Lord and his Church. She would not give ground on any principle or command that the Lord had given. In this respect, she did not endear herself to some people. The hope of eternal life was her most treasured possession. She cherished natural beauty, and enhanced it, but she lived only for one thing and that was the hope of going to heaven. When she was too weak in the opinion of others, she went to the worship and continued going until three Lord's days before dying, having to be lifted into the car, wheelchair, and helped into the building. She worshipped her Lord the last full Lord's day she lived, not giving up for a minute that it would not be that way. And then, she died on the Lord's day, fully intending, if she lived, to worship him again.

When she first became seemingly too ill to attend the services, she would get up sometimes at three or four in the morning and start getting ready, and would go anyway,

She made me promise that if she went into the hospital and became too ill to talk, that I would read the Bible to

her. However, she did not die in a hospital. She died in her beloved home. She was conscious until a short time before she died but could not communicate. In the distress of the moment, I had forgotten her request. However, her daughter, Denise, remembered. Jimmy began reading Psalms to her. She soon became very quiet, slowly stopped breathing, took on the look of an angel and without a gasp, stopped breathing.

I have now lost my most treasured earthly possession. Her greatest desire is that we will all live to be where she hoped to go, and that is that place of not natural beauty, that is fleeting, but into heaven itself, a place of eternal beauty, free from all the conflicts and troubles of life. Pat, in my judgment, fully qualifies as the virtuous woman described in Proverbs 31. In loving memory of my dearly beloved wife, Pat.—Jerry

PS - My children and I have been touched beyond measure by the overflowing love show to us during my wife, Pat's, illness. Everyone has his own unique way of showing concern and it matters not how it is done. However, in our case, it has been done by a kind word, a concerned look, a touch, the bringing of flowers, food, and by personal visits and calls. It is important for me to let you know that in every case your love and concern has been received into warm and grateful hearts. Our sincere thanks and love go out to all of you.—Jerry Cutter



Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@compworldnet.com, March 3—Our twenty fourth Annual March Meeting got off to a good start last night. We probably had our largest Friday night crowd ever, beautiful singing, and two very good sermons. We're looking forward to the rest of the meeting. Since my last report I've preached at Ada, Tulsa, Broken Arrow, Healdton, Sulphur, and Galey, OK. The preaching resulted in two baptisms and several confessions of faults. Next week I am to begin a meeting in Nashville, and from there my schedule includes: Lodi, CA (Apr. 1-9), Orange, CA (Apr. 10-16), Ash Camp, WV (June 25-July 2), Marietta, GA (July 8-16), Red Oak, TX (July 23-30), New Salem, MS (Aug. 4-13), Deer Park, TX (Aug. 20-27), McAlester, OK (Sept. 10-17), West Point, GA (Sept. 20-24), Lexington, OK (Oct. 1-8), El Cajon, CA (Oct. 11-15), Jamesville, MO (Oct. 25-29), Edmond, OK (Nov. 3-5), and Seminole, OK (Dec. 1-3). We ask for your continual prayers on our behalf.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 108111, Springfield, MO 65800, rf Wade@juno.com, March 9—The work of the Lord is progressing, in our part of the country, in an encouraging manner. The TV program that originates here in Springfield is currently being aired in San Angelo-Abilene, TX, Nashville, TN, Puducah, KY, and Little Rock, AR. The Lord willing we are to be in meetings at the following places in the near future: Tulsa, OK (Eleventh St.) March

10-12; Richmond, IN March 24-26; Columbus, OH March 26-29; Blue Springs, KY April 9-16; Seneca, MO April 26-30; Jamesville, MO May 3-7 and London, KY May 14-21. We look forward to working with brethren in all these places. May the Lord bless everyone, especially those who have been and continue to be so sick.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, papagreg@aol.com, March 11-March 3-5 we were at Placerville, CA to deliver a series of sermons on Leadership in the Home and Church. Even though we live close we stayed with dear friends Joe and Vicki Connor and enjoyed visiting with them. The meeting closed with one confession of fault. Many came from surrounding congregations including preachers Alan Bonifay, Greg DeGough, Carney Briggs, Rich Lechner, and Ryan Connor. Placerville has been blessed with finding an affordable small building to purchase, which is a rarity out here. I missed having Matt Hayes there. He has worked with Placerville the last few years but has recently moved to work with El Centro, CA. We continue to preach at area congregations and to work with 64th. St., Sacramento. In January we started our annual winter study one night a week with the men using the Study Guide For Leadership on 1st. Timothy by Bennie Cryer, Alan Bonifay and others. It is excellent material for a series of studies.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95963, March 10-We continue to work with the Oliverhurst, CA congregation. We enjoy working with the leadership and the members who have a mind to work. We have several young men who are participating in the services and they are growing in their abilities. We will be in Neosho, MO for a meeting, March 31-April 9, and in Chapel Grove, TN April 12-16. Don King and I will be working with the Fair Oaks, CA congregation in the second annual study which will be conducted by several of our faithful preachers August 23-25. Last year we had a good study there along with great attendance from surrounding congregations. We are looking forward to this study. My new telephone number is 1-530-790-7151. God bless all of you.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt.1 Box 717, Mt. Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, March 6, 2000-I recently closed a five day meeting in Lagrange, Ga. It was my first time to be in that area. I appreciated the brethren's wonderful hospitality and thoroughly enjoyed being with them. It was a thrill to meet sister Miller and spend a few hours visiting with her. I felt like I was able to take a brief stroll through history. Bro. Joe Hisle, my mentor and friend, has spoken so highly of Bro. Miller for many years. I have always felt a connection to him through Joe. Of course, Bro. Miller had preached in KY many years and is still talked about in these parts. I also enjoyed my stay with bro. Alton Bailey. He and Florence are very gracious hosts and work tirelessly for the Lord. I want to say a word of thanks to all the preachers that were present. We had several full time preachers and more men that lead in their home congregations and preach locally. It was especially good to see old friends, bro. Kevin Presley and his lovely wife Bethany and Don Jackson and family. Bro. Bill Ferguson held us a very enjoyable weekend meeting

the last part of February. Ronny Wade will be with us at Blue Springs Apr.9-16. I'll be at Chestnut Ridge, KY Apr.5-9; Ada, OK Apr. 14-23; and Kansas City, MO (85th and Euclid) Apr.26-30. Lord bless his faithful children.

Alan Bonifay, 523 Jessie Ave., Manteca, CA 95337, abonifay@aol.com-Greetings to all the faithful in Christ Jesus. The work here in Manteca continues apace. In December I was privileged to preach at San Angelo. I had a very enjoyable visit there with Mike Howard, Jack Jones and, of course, Curtis Morrison. It was good to see Dwain and Vicky also - especially since Vicky was doing so well after her serious illness. I also enjoyed the Preachers Study at Arlington. That is always a highlight in my year. Here at home we are looking forward to the coming of spring and the gospel meetings in this area. Last weekend we heard Greg Gay at Placerville. At home I continue to have 7 or 8 studies a week. We continue to work together on church leadership. I have preached recently at the Atwater and Escalon congregations. The work in Tula, Russia and St. Petersburg, Russia also continues to go well. George Battey just returned from there and it seems that the brethren are doing as well as can be expected in such a difficult place. Keep us in your prayers. Take care and God bless.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, March 7-The congregation at 79th and Ks Ave, Kansas City, continues to show signs of progress. The teaching by our local teachers becomes better and better. We appreciate these men who will take the time to study so they can edify the church. We seldom have guest speakers from outside the congregation, but are developing the local abilities like the Lord intended. We now have a number of good speakers, and prospects of more in the future. Kenneth King, who has been fighting cancer for quite sometime now, continues to be in need of prayer. He is in the hospital now recuperating from his latest surgery. At present I am studying with a young man who recently came back to the church who has good potential of being very useful to the church, and with a young woman who seems very interested. We expect her to obey the gospel in the near future. The Lord bless the faithful everywhere.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, March 1-We haven't had much of a winter this year and it is already beginning to feel like springtime in the Ozarks! Bruce Roebuck will be with us for a meeting in a few days (March 8-12). We are still having good outside interest and our prayer is that we will reap a harvest of souls in the near future. We had 47 visitors from the community to attend our meeting last fall and I believe that Bruce will also have an opportunity to preach the gospel to a variety of prospects. I am eager to commence my meeting schedule for this year: March 19-26 at Tulsa (Broken Arrow), OK, April 7-9 at Kansas City (36th & Everett Streets), KS, June 11-18 at Yakima, WA, July 28-Aug. 6 at Manteca, CA, and Nov. 1-5 at Niangua, MO. Brethren, let's keep preaching the oldtime gospel of Jesus Christ! After all, it's the only thing that can save the souls of men and meet all of their spiritual needs.

Phillip G. Prince, 12025 Turkey Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32221 e-mail: philpgp@cybermax.net—The work in Jacksonville continues to go well. The Lord is constantly giving us leads to follow up. The members of the congregation are doing all they can to further the cause of the Lord, always willing to do whatever is asked of them. They are a wonderful group of people with which to work and labor. Over the past year, we have seen 6 precious souls baptized into Christ, 3 restorations, a number of confessions of fault and just recently, a man has come out of digression to take his stand with us. All of this we give God all the glory and praise. We are working with some others of the cups and classes persuasion and we're hopeful that they too will come to the knowledge of the truth. If you know anyone in this area that we could possibly reach, please let us know. At this writing, we are looking forward to a meeting with Aaron Risner, March 22-26. If you are in this area, make your plans to stop by and worship with us. Lord willing, I will be in a meeting in Lowery, AL June 9-11; singing school/meeting in Whitebluff, TN June 18-25; Mission meeting in Walterboro, SC July 9-16; singing school in Shreveport, LA July 23-30; singing school/meeting in Conway, LA Sept. 10-17. I would appreciate your presence if you are in any of these areas. May God bless the church everywhere. Please pray for us as we strive to further the cause of our Lord.

Brett Hickey, 5105 Old Bullard Rd., #M-3 Tyler, TX 75703, (903) 534-8466; brett.hickey@juno.com; (Please note new address and phone number.) March 8—Our work with the Ventura congregation ended on a high note with Don King's weekend meeting. The sermons were as fitting as if Don had been living among us. We had our highest attendance of our three years with crowds in the mid-sixties. We also had twenty-two different visitors from the community — some attending more than once. There were six confessions of fault. Several others have since committed to drive over an hour to attend Wednesday night services. We look forward to rejoining the Ventura brethren the first week in August. We will miss some of our dearest friends and family. The Tyler brethren welcomed us warmly to Texas on March 3rd. We look forward to working closely with Terry Baze as we get acquainted with area leads and members until his move in May. Glenn Ballard and Randy Ballard will also provide valuable assistance and encouragement. We look forward to upcoming meetings in San Angelo, TX, April 8-9 and, Conway, LA, May 28-June 4. Tyler is hosting meetings with Smith Bibens, April 5-9 and Don McCord, June 18-25. We expect these to boost the work. We are encouraged to hear of new congregations in Cuba. May the borders of the kingdom continue to increase.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA, 94539, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, March 13—The meeting at the Fossil Creek congregation, Ft. Worth, TX, closed with no visible results but we believe and pray that good was accomplished. We made our home with Randy and Rhonda Cantrell and family where we were treated in a grand way. Crowds were only fair at the start but improved as the week went along. The last Saturday evening the building was full with a few extra chairs having

been put out. We thank those who traveled a distance to be with us and help out. There were several preachers who came; among them Jim Hickey and Melvin Blalock, and we were grateful for their help and encouragement. We recently preached twice at the Placerville, CA congregation in their new building to a good crowd. They are located in a beautiful area. Since then, we held an enjoyable weekend meeting at Ventura, CA where Brett Hickey had been working for several years. Several came from afar, including Don McCord, to help us for which we were extremely grateful. Ventura is a promising place. Crowds were very good and there were a number of outsiders from the community. There were six who confessed wrongs and asked for prayer. We stayed with Sister Brancato whose hospitality is outstanding, to say the least. We enjoyed our time together. Lately, we have preached at Yuba City, congregation and here at home to good crowds. Lord willing, we are to begin at Dothan, AL next Lord's day. Pray for us.

P. Duane Permenter, 4315 Moulder Drive, Midland, TX 79707, e-mail: wtpermen@aol.com, March 8—Please note my change of address from the Post Office Box. My recent trip to work with the church in Waipahu, Hawaii was enjoyable. It was good to see the brethren again. It had been six years since I was there, and it was a treat to see several continuing faithful who were there before. Some that I worked and studied with in 1994 who had not yet come to the Lord are now faithful in the Kingdom. During the week, I preached several times and held some studies and meetings both with brethren and some outsiders. Both Sunday mornings we had visitors from the community, do to the past work of some of the Brethren. It was a pleasure to work once again with brother Virgilio Danao. It has been my privilege to work with him and Don King on five trips to the Phillippines. The church in Hawaii has a bright future, and I am grateful that I was privileged to have a small part in it. Brother Bayani is now back in Waipahu, and is laboring in the church as well. It was a great honor to work along side brother Bayani, also. While laboring in 1994, he and his wife were in the Philippines and I did not have the opportunity to work with him very much. Some of the younger men are developing in the congregation as well, much to my encouragement. The work here at home continues to move forward. There are several individuals that are currently being worked with the community, and it is our earnest prayer the harvest will soon come to fruition. Our summer meeting here at Midland this year will be with Ron Courter June 11-18. I am to be at Stockton, CA April 21-30 and Sentinel, OK May 19-21, if you can assist in any of these efforts it would be appreciated. I extend my love and gratitude to the brotherhood for all the good you accomplish. My constant prayer is that God will give us all what we need to get to heaven. Please pray for my family and I.

Virgilio O. Danao, Sr., 94-371 Ikepono St., Waipahu, Hawaii 96797; Telephone & Fax No. (808) 680-0249 March 2, 2000—Greetings to all faithful everywhere! The annual preaching itinerary of Bro. Don L. King--accompanied this time by Bro. Richard DeGough of Hughson, California--every January of the year resulted

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to 48 baptisms and 7 restored, conducted in different places; Makati City - 2 and 7 restored; Isabela - 14, Quirino - 2; Santiago City - 3; Ilocos Norte - 17, Tarlac - 5, Pangasiana - 5. Although this was Bro. DeGough's first visit to the Philippines, he was able to cope with their tight and hectic preaching itinerary. He left a lasting highly esteem impression to the entire brotherhood in the Philippines. The brethren continue to show love and appreciation to Bro. Don L. King because of his continued concern toward the work there. They were challenged to continue to be firm and steadfast in the faith by the preaching of Bro. King and Bro. DeGough. I was their interpreter. They departed back to the U.S. on January 24th. I was left behind to go to Dipolog City in Zamboanga City (Mindanao) to help Bro. Conrado Libertino who works there, I was accompanied by my brother, Bro. Eduardo O. Danao. Three were baptized during our stay there, and a preacher, Bro. Nemesio Lomocso, who used to preach, with the Premil Church of Christ, made public his acceptance to the truth, together with the entire congregation at Liloy, a town about four hour drive south of Dipolog City. We flew to Dipolog City on January 27th and back to Manila on January 31st. I arrived in Roxas February 1st very tired; but I was able to attend to the study arranged by the preaching brethren in Isabela but our co-workers from other places were invited, on February 2-3, held in Roxas. I arrived back here in Hawaii on February 8th very weak and sick that I could not preach the first Sunday I was here. Bro. Duane Prementer came to help us in our efforts for evangelism and to primarily assist us to stop some efforts to resurrect the problem which has been buried several months ago. I do pray and hope that what have been said and promised again will now, once and for all, lead us to a better situation before God, and that the Church is now safe, because the "hurricane which has been approaching in the past"--and which could have inflicted serious and cruel whippings to some precious souls --has deviated its path, hopping towards the ocean of oblivion. We appreciate and thank Bro. Permenter for his sacrifices and efforts he shared us. He arrived here February 19, and departed back to Texas on March 1. Please mention us in your prayers! God bless!

Report On Trip To Diplog City

My brother, Eduardo, and I arrived in Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines in the morning (7:30 A.M.) of January 27th. We took our plane back to Manila on January 31st (5:30 P.M.). I went direct to Roxas, Isabela, while my brother was left there for he lives in Makati City. Our stay there assisting Bro. Conrado Libertino in the Lord's work resulted to three (3) baptisms, and we witnessed the conversion of an entire congregation (in Liloy, Zamboanga del Norte) to the truth regarding the biblical observance of the Lord's Supper, including her preacher, Bro. Nemesio Lomocso. We stayed in the home of Bro. Libertino and his family, where we were treated the Filipino hospitality way, for which we are very grateful.

In the morning of January 8th, Bro. Nemesio Lomocso—who was a preacher of the digressive Church of Christ, identified in the U.S. mainland with those who subscribe to the teaching that endorses the 1,000 years literal kingdom of Jesus Christ on earth--came and studied with us about the issues, particularly the Communion. He said he was convinced of the scripturalness of the use of one loaf and one cup in the Lord's Supper, after he read the booklet written by Bro. Ronny Wade entitled, *12 Reasons Why You Should Investigate The Church Of Christ*, which Bro. Libertino gave him. He said he immediately implemented it in his congregation in Liloy. We asked him how they implemented the use of one loaf and one cup. He explained that a cup/bottle of the "fruits of the vine," and individual communion cups--where its cups has the initial of the communicants--are set on the table. After praying for the bread and the cup, then the grape juice is poured out into the mini cups. We explained to him the Biblical way. He immediately accepted it. We also talked about the other issues, such as Sunday School, etc., which he again accepted and believed our sides to be biblical, After our study, we asked him if he has anymore questions on the issues and he said he is satisfied, and is ready to implement them. After a word of prayer in his behalf was said, we agreed together, that we will worship with them in Liloy on Sunday afternoon (we have to worship first in the morning in Dipolog City).

Upon reaching Bro. Lomocso's place in Salug, Zamboanga del Norte, after about three hours ride on a van along the seacoast, we were brought to Liloy by Bro. Lomocso's grandson on his motorcycle, one at a time with two passengers its time, and we have two trips, consuming about, one hour ride per trip. True, we saw that the bottle of grape juice and individual mini cups with initials and one bread were set on the table. After explaining to them--the congregation assembled--the biblical teaching of the observance of the Communion, they set aside the set of mini cups and a drinking glass was taken where the "fruits of the vine" was poured, and each of them drank it from the glass, during the Communion. Thus we witnessed the acceptance of the whole congregation this simple biblical teaching. They said they are determined to do what was taught them. We prayed for them for the forgiveness of past mistakes. They are still young in the faith, and we need to earnestly pray together for them that they may continue to be true and firm to the truth they have known. We made studies also Saturday afternoon at the house of Bro. Nonoy and Iking Gumanggad, parents-in-law of Bro. Kevin Traylor, where a good crowd were present in response to the invitation of the brethren there. We baptized three, (3) in the morning of January 31st,

Bro. Conrado Libertino, so far as I know, is doing a commendable work there. Just as in other works, there are some minor problems he encounters, but they are not so serious that they become threat to the serenity of the congregation. Bro. Libertino and his family are physically sound and healthy.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXIV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, MAY 2000

NO. 5

DISFELLOWSHIP (2)

By BENNIE CRYER

How Should The Congregation Respond To Scriptural Discipline?

This question assumes that the congregation has a role in the disfellowship of one of its members. In order to discipline successfully the entire congregation must be involved and respond in a scriptural way, 1 Corinthians 5:4-5.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

There probably was a minority in the congregation that still supported the immoral man as is suggested in 2 Corinthians 2:6-8.

Sufficient to such a man is the punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

Many in verse 6 refers to the majority. So, in the discipline of a member the majority is to respond by supporting fully the decision that was made and the action that was taken. In 2 Corinthians 7:11 the members exhibited these characteristics:

For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Note that they exhibited a *godly* type of sorrow. Their sorrow could have been for their negligence in not quickly disciplining their fellow member and thus allowing the cause of Christ to be evil spoken of by outsiders. It could also include the sorrow they had for having to discipline one of their members and the loss of their fellowship. In other words, it is not a joyful thing to have to discipline and erring member. *Carefulness* refers to the speed, dispatch, eagerness, and earnestness that they manifested after learning what they were supposed to do. This is a proper response today also. *Clearing* suggests that they feared doing wrong in such way that they would be a partaker of that man's evil deed. They had examined themselves and as a result acted in such ways that they

were in the clear. Galatians 6:1 offers a comment on this action...*Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* There is always the temptation to gloat and be puffed up when we discipline someone. We must make sure we do not sin. *Indignation* was the emotion they experienced when they learned that such sins in their member had committed disgraces the church. This is a good response for a congregation to have it. It will spur us on to properly discipline a sinning brother. *Fear* evidently refers to the warnings they had received from Paul about his coming to them with a rod in 1 Corinthians 4:21. They wanted to make sure they obeyed his instructions. *Vehement desire* suggest that they had an extreme desire to rectify anything that was amiss in this matter. They were anxious to make corrections even in their own lives if that were necessary. *Zeal* was manifested in them for Paul and the truths he had written them. *Revenge* has to do with the punishment they inflicted on the evil doer. They cleared themselves in this matter. God has said, *Vengeance is mine*, Romans 12:19. God has used the church there to bring this about. We can clearly see that the majority of the members of the church in Corinth respond correctly in this matter. See Barne's commentary on these verses.

How Does Fellowshiping A Man Affect His Immediate Family?

The immediate family is affected in different ways than the other members of the church. Our natural ties are not established by the church though when one becomes a citizen of the kingdom they are regulated by kingdom laws. A person is a husband, wife, child, brother, or sister before they are members of the church. When we become members of the Lord's church spiritual ties are then established. A husband might be covetous or an extortioner. If the church withdraws their fellowship from him, his wife still has to company with him, perform her wifely duties, etc. The duties God has imposed on each family member must continue to be performed. They take some precedence over the withdrawal of fellowship. That action cannot be an excuse for a child disobeying her father or the wife submitting her body to her husband. However, because of the disfellowshipping, that relationship will exist in an abnormal way. The family members might be the very means of bringing the disciplined member to repentance so they will remind him of what he needs to do in a loving way. The family members also have to watch out about

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Editorial

SOME THOUGHTS ON DEUT. 22:5

By BILLY DICKINSON

“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.” The above passage of Scripture is obviously a controversial one, especially as it relates to the propriety of women wearing slacks. However, it is a passage that should be researched and pondered upon by serious students of the Bible. What is the passage actually saying? What was the intent of that commandment? Does Deut. 22:5 deal only with a practice that had no application beyond the scope of the Jews and their religion, or does it set forth a *principle* that is reinforced in the New Testament? After doing some research on the passage, I’ve been thinking long and hard about these matters. I would like to share some of my thoughts and concerns with you.

Commentators advance at least three major explanations with reference to Deut. 22:5. I will briefly state what each of them are and then consider their credibility: (1) *Moses was condemning a practice that was associated with the religion of Canaan.* Some suggest that the action being referred to was where women appeared in male garments and men wore women’s clothes when the Canaanites worshiped their pagan deities. First, I have no doubt that Deut. 22:5 condemned that kind of behavior, but it seems to me that this interpretation is too narrow in its application. Deut. 22:5 is actually saying that a woman is not to wear *anything* that pertains to a man. The word that is translated “pertaineth” refers to a variety of things in the Scriptures, including weapons and clothes. That is why the *Revised Standard Version* renders the verse like this: “A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman’s garment; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

Are we to believe that the only time God condemned transvestism among His people was in a context of worship? Surely not! I must conclude that Deut. 22:5 is a blanket condemnation that covered all circumstances. (2) *Moses was dealing with a circumstance of war.* It is believed by some that the passage is saying that a woman is not to put on the trappings of a soldier, or dress like a man, in order to gain admission into the army; nor were men to attempt to avoid the military by dressing as women. This interpretation seems palpably false to me for the reasons already cited. Again, Deut. 22:5 is too broad a statement to be limited only to the armor of a soldier or to a circumstance of war. There can be no doubt that the verse is concerned about men and women wearing apparel that belongs to the opposite *sex*. Notice how the *Septuagint Version Of The Old Testament* renders it: “The apparel of a man shall not be on a woman, neither shall a man put on a woman’s dress.”

The third explanation offered by commentators is the,

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: To what "day" does the phrase "as you see the day approaching" in Hebrews 10:25 refer? (CA)

Answer: A number of different explanations have been offered in response to the above question. Among them: (1) it is the day of judgment or day of the Lord spoken of in 2 Peter 3:10-12, (2) the day of the destruction of Jerusalem Mt. 24:31-34, (3) the first day of the week upon which Christians assemble to worship Acts 20:7, (4) the day of one's death, and finally (5) some feel that it, in the short term referred to the destruction of Jerusalem and after that event points to the final judgment. Everyone of the above positions have honest and noteworthy advocates. A study of the context, however, seems to eliminate several of them. For example, the exhortation spoken of in the text is to be accelerated the more one sees the day (mentioned in the verse) approaching. One, however, cannot see the day of judgment approaching. There are no signs of its eminent arrival (Mt. 24:36, 42; 2 Peter 3:10). The Lord will come as a thief in the night i.e. unannounced and unexpected. So one could hardly be expected to see "that day" coming. Regarding the first day of the week, it is true that one could see it approaching. But, what about the phrase "but exhorting one another and so much the more, as you see the day approaching"? Is the writer saying that we ought to exhort more on Tuesday than we did Monday? Would we be required to really exhort with earnestness on Friday, more so than we did on Thursday? Surely not. The exhortation under consideration here is the exhortation that takes place in the assembly. While it is always good to invite and encourage people to attend the services of the church, the exhortation here was not for the purpose of getting people to come to the assembly. While all should be concerned about being prepared for

the day of death, it seems to this writer that such a meaning just does not fit the context of this verse. Many espouse the idea that "the day" refers to the time of Jerusalem's destruction in A.D. 70. Verse 37 seems to indicate that the "day" under consideration was at hand i.e. near. The judgment of Verse 37 is apparently a reference to the Lord coming in judgment on Jerusalem. The book of Hebrews was largely written to show the superiority of the "new order" over the "old order." Some of these people, however, were still holding on to the law and its ordinances. The destruction of the Jewish State would be a definite sign that the "old order" was gone forever. The approach of Jerusalem's fall could surely be seen by signs foretold by Jesus in Matt. 24:3-43. "When therefore you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains (Mt. 24:15-16). Milligan says "To me at least it seems perfectly obvious that the Apostle refers here to a day which both he and his brethren were looking for as a day that was then very near at hand: a day that was about to come on that generation, and try the faith of many. And hence I am constrained to think with Macknight, Scott, Stuart, and others, that the reference is most likely to the day of Jerusalem's overthrow." It seems to this writer that Milligan is correct in his view. The view that originally the writer intended the "day" to be the destruction of Jerusalem but after its occurrence, then the final judgment, is a view that is untenable in the opinion of this writer. The very nature of the context would preclude such a conclusion.

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HOW TO SPEAK THE TRUTH

By GLEN OSBURN

"On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. The people kept crying out, 'The voice of a god and not of a man!' And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died" (Acts 12:21-23 NASB).

The Jewish historian Josephus corroborates this historical event stating that it happened the second day of the sports and games held in Ceasarea in honor of Claudius Ceasar in 44 AD (Antiquities, XIX. 8.2.). Josephus elaborates on Herod's "royal apparel" describing it as a robe of silver tissue that would blaze as the rays of the morning sun reflected off of it.

As the 54-year-old Herod was embracing the people's flattery, he was "immediately" struck down, collapsed and was carried out of the assembly. He painfully lingered for five days being "eaten by worms" before his merciful death.

What can we learn from this inspired account of stolen glory?

Herod becomes a graphic example of a man who took

for himself glory assigned to God. God's reaction to Herod's self-exaltation was to inflict a painful lingering death.

One thing we can learn is when a preacher or teacher is instructing another in God's way, he must be careful to represent God, not himself. The teacher must make sure that God gets the glory, not the speaker. Even though the speaker may share and agree with the word of God, it is the Author of the word of God that is to receive the glory, not the speaker. Thankfully, in the Lord's faithful church, most of my fellow preachers and teachers acknowledge this responsibility and strive to have it govern their teaching.

We understand that when we are in the pulpit, we are not there to tell others what we think but what God thinks. Unfortunately, however, some speakers can't tell the difference. A teacher of God's will, in or out of the pulpit, must take seriously the responsibility of speaking "for God" and giving God the glory, for to do otherwise is sin. Evidently God is not impressed when a preacher gets himself in the way of God's glory.

Strong Preaching?

Today, there is certainly a need for “strong,” biblically based preaching and teaching. The need for “sound,” basic, foundational teaching is critical because we know that “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths” (2 Timothy 4:3-4 NASB). Because of this turning away “from the truth” we are charged to “reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction” (2 Timothy 4:2 NASB). We must speak God’s word boldly, reverently and with the authority that is inherent within its nature. “Whoever speaks let him speak as it were the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11).

Some, however, mistakenly believe their preaching to be “strong” because it is offensive. They believe that they are not preaching “strongly” unless they are offending those who disagree with them. These teachers need to understand that others may indeed be offended by the truth, but they should not be offended by the way that truth is presented. Even though our obligation is to “reprove, rebuke, exhort,” it is to be done “with real patience and instruction” (2 Tim. 4:2).

I have seen young preachers encouraged to be mean spirited in their delivery, urged to get out there and “fight the good fight” with the haughtiness of a worldly fighter (I’m going to let them have it, beat them up!) Some enjoy a feeling of superiority when condemning others. (Note, “He who rejoices at calamity will not go unpunished” Proverbs 17:5.) Some are even learning to create controversy, not bring peace. Their ambition seems to be getting a bunch of “amens,” discovering some “new” sin or doctrine, making a splash at a big meeting, impressing the young sisters, etc., but not glorifying God. Remember Herod, young teacher! God is not impressed when teachers, young or old, take His glory.

We are aware that Jesus is the “Prince of peace” (Is. 9:6) and yet His teachings did not always bring peace (Matt. 10:34-36). Peace was His aim, but not always the consequence of His teaching. Paul, aware that the truth might offend, asked the Galatians, “have I become your enemy by telling you the truth” (Galatians 4:16)? Inevitably, conflict will come when we preach the truth, but conflict and controversy should not be our objective. Our warfare is with Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44). Our weapon is “truth” (John 17:17), the “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17). We are to “contend” (Jude 3) with false teachers, but in all this we are not authorized to speak hatefully, sarcastically, rudely, or in any way that would NOT faithfully represent Christ, who was “gentle and humble in heart” (Matt. 11:29).

How To Speak

The Lord has given teachers of His word specific instructions as to how to deliver His word. These instructions must be taken seriously and obeyed for it is not our words but God’s we are speaking. We are instructed to teach “the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15; note also Phil. 1:15-16). Those who refuse to follow this particular directive disobey the very word they are trying to honor. Note, however, being accused of not “speaking the truth in love” is one thing - actually not “speaking the truth is

love” is sin.

Since love is never unkind or rude (1 Corinthians 13:4), our teaching should not be unkind or rude. Even “righteous indignation” has limits. “Never take your own vengeance leave room for wrath of God” (Romans 12:19).

We are never authorized to speak “the word” insensitively, never. Listen: “Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (Colossians 4:6 NASB).

“Always?” “Always!” (Note also Eph. 4:29.) “Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity” (1 Timothy 5:1-2 NASB). When the Bible says “do not,” our obligation is to obey.

After James tells us “the tongue ... is a restless evil and full of deadly poison” (3:8), he states, “the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace” (James 3:17-18 NASB). Remember, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1 NASB).

Smooth Things?

Some who would try to justify preaching offensively may see a possible conflict of principles between the instruction of the preceding passages and Isaiah 30 which says that we are not to be teachers that focus on “smooth things” (KJV). “For this is a rebellious people, false sons, sons who refuse to listen to the instruction of the LORD; Who say to the seers, ‘You must not see visions’; and to the prophets, ‘You must not prophesy to us what is right, speak to us pleasant words, prophesy illusions’” (Isaiah 30:9-10 NASB).

Please notice that the “pleasant words” or “smooth things” of this passage are put in contrast to “the instruction of the Lord” and “what is right.” A false teacher would replace or substitute the “instruction of the Lord” with pleasant words” and “illusions.” A teacher expounding on the amazing love of God, the nature of grace, the wonders of hope, the joy of salvation, etc., does not fall under the condemnation of this passage. They are giving “the instruction of the Lord” and teaching “what is right.” To classify informative and exhortational teaching as “weak” while reproofing and rebuking teaching as “strong” is to draw an unbiblical line. A teacher is responsible for teaching ALL aspects of God’s word (Acts 20:27), not just the reproofing and rebuking” parts.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 we read: “We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people” (NASB). Here we find three different Bible prescriptions for three differing spiritual illnesses. To “reprove” not only the “unruly” but the “fainthearted” and the “weak,” is NOT obeying the instruction of this verse. It says to “admonish” someone unruly,” but “encourage” those who are “fainthearted, help the weak,” and “be patient with everyone.” Unfortunately, all some teachers know how to do is “reprove.” This is like a parent who knows how to

express his love to his children only through "correction." It's not that correction is a wrong way to express love. It is one way of expressing loving concern for our children (Heb. 12:4-11). When it is the only way, however, it is unbalanced and shows a lack of parental skill (Eph. 6:4). Likewise, a speaker who can only focus on what he considers to be evil, needs to get some balance. The Bible says, "He who has a crooked mind (lit. "heart") finds no good" (Proverbs 17:20 NASB). Some speaker's inability to find "good" betrays a "crooked mind." Remember, even though one of our obligations is to "reprove" it is to be done "with great patience and instruction" (2 Tim. 4:2). We must "handle accurately the word of God" (2 Timothy 2:15 NASB), and not hesitate "to proclaim the whole will of God" (Acts 20:27 NIV).

Disobedient Speakers

The Bible speaks of those who would refuse to allow the Word to govern their speech. "If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless" (James 1:26 NASB).

There will always be some mean spirited speakers who, in the name of "strong" preaching, use the pulpit to attack, punish and demean others (Phil. 1:15-17). They are full of anger and hate "...for the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart" (Matt. 12:34 NASB). Others do this because, as Paul explains, "they wish to shut you out so that you will seek them" (Gal. 4:17 NASB). Some preach for personal or congregational power, like "Diotrephes" (3 John 9). Some are out to get followers (Acts 20:30) for their own ego, or for personal financial support (Micah 3:11). A preacher may even attack those who would threaten his financial base.

Congregation Response

The Bible instructs the church to deal with disobedient teachers that either do not have the truth or have an improper attitude when teaching. The word says, "Reject a factious man after a first and second warning" (Titus 3:10 NASB). The Greek word here defined as "factious" or "heretic" (KJV) can be translated "divisive" (NIV) or schismatic (Thayer's). This Greek word is identifying an opinionated person who would create a division or separation based upon their opinion rather than truth (W.E.

Vine, p. 547). The Bible instructs us to "reject," meaning "shun" and "avoid" (Thayer's), those who restrict their fellowship based upon an opinion rather than plain doctrine.

Because some teachers do not stay within the parameters established by the word of God, hearers are encouraged to "take the things (taught) home and study to see if they are so" (Acts 17:20 NASB). In obedience to the scriptures we are to "examine everything carefully" (1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB). The Holy Spirit inspired word (2 Timothy 3:16) tells us to "test the spirits to see if they are of God" (1 John 4:1 NAS13). When we do this we will be able to discern whether someone is teaching doctrine or opinion.

Arrogant, schismatic teachers/preachers must not only be marked or watched (Romans 16:17) but also avoided (2 Thes. 3:14-15, 2 Tim. 3:5) to please God.

Do not give them a platform. Do not allow yourself to be entertained by their provocative, haughty sarcasm, inconsiderate attitude or schismatic brotherhood politics. Show them you believe in strong Bible teaching by humbly (Gal. 6:1), kindly, yet firmly correcting them. Show them that, of all people, they should exhibit the fruits of the Spirit, which are "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23 NASB).

Warning: If you attempt to correct a teacher who has an impudent attitude, you could be labeled as not supporting "strong preaching" or wanting to "soft soap" doctrine, etc., even though you are using your Bible in correcting them. Ironic, isn't it?

Concluding Thoughts

"But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another (Galatians 5:15 NASB). "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Romans 12:18 NASB). "When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Proverbs 16:7 NASB). "He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord" (Proverbs 17:15 NASB). We must get ourselves out of the way and let God through His word have His place of honor in our teaching. Remember Herod.

BABIES IN THE KINGDOM

By Brett Hickey

Protesting a host of Roman Catholic abuses, Martin Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses and ignited the Protestant Reformation. Ironically, four hundred eighty-two years later to the day, Catholic and Lutheran leaders signed a pact undoing nearly five centuries of hostility. Professor Joseph Komonchak of Catholic University called the compromise "one of the most important ecumenical moments of the century." (Dallas Morning News, Nov. 1, 1999). Cardinal Edward Cassidy (the Pope emissary), and Christian Krause, president of the Lutheran World Federation, signed an agreement stating that "both churches believe that the salvation of individual Christians is justified by God's love alone, not by human efforts." No comment was offered on Jas. 2:24, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

Reveling in the pomp and pageantry, the pope's ambassador informed the assembly that they were all baptized into one body. But had they all really been baptized? What an excellent place for a serious attempt to restore unity! If "Christendonf" would agree to preach "one baptism" (Eph. 4:5) into one body, the walls of division would begin to crumble. But where religious leaders will not recognize this one baptism, Babel unity (Gen. 11), not Bible unity, is promoted. Where the rallying cry is not in harmony with scripture, God is not pleased and Jesus' prayer remains unanswered.

Silence of the Scriptures

For the sinner seeking salvation and for the babe in Christ it is always best to focus on the authentic faith of the New Testament. The Acts of the Apostles present (upon first

freely confessing their faith in Christ and turning away from sin) examples of *men* being baptized, *women* being baptized, *men and women* being baptized, but *never* babies or even little children being baptized. This fact and the Holy Spirit's assurance that the scriptures "...thoroughly furnish unto every good work," are adequate admonition against baptizing babies.

Convincing the Gainsayer

At the same time, there is a place for sifting the counterfeit doctrines of man. When convincing the gainsayer, understanding why error is so palatable enables the mature Christian to more effectively "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ". How do our religious friends respond? One common response is, "Well, that is your opinion, but our preacher defends our position with Bible too." This challenge is accepted on the subject of infant baptism.

Joachim Jeremias' *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries* is a valiant attempt to defend the practice. From a historical perspective, the German scholar impressively documents the existence of infant baptism prior to the fifth century. His failure, however, to trace the practice back to the apostles explains Dr. Jeremias' retreat from the title of his original treatise, "Did the Primitive Church Practice Infant Baptism?" The evidence simply did not merit his original thesis.

First "Express Mention" of Infant Baptism - 200 AD

The lack of Biblical authority for infant baptism should be enough to exclude it from the Christian system, but there is more. Dr. Jeremias begins his book with an overview of 40 sources from 54-430 AD. He qualifies his list of sources with the comment; "Texts which expressly mention infant baptism are marked with an asterisk." Unfortunately for infant baptism proponents, no asterisk is found until Tertullian pops up as source #13 in AD 200. If baby baptism began with the Apostles, why can the most experienced and well-read theologians find no "express mention" of the practice before the third century? For those desiring Bible for their belief, the tacit admission that *there is no "express mention" of infant baptism* in the Scriptures is no small matter. No doubt about it, if brilliant scholars like Jeremias and his panel of esteemed reviewers cannot find it, infant baptism simply cannot be found. This should be sufficient, but let us explore this defense further.

Suffer Little Children To Come Unto Me

What about this first "express mention"? Tertullian responds to infant baptism advocates, "let them come when they are bigger (*dum adolefcunt*), they may come when they can learn, when they are (able to be) instructed whether they should come, they may become Christians when they can know Christ." So, the first source on the existence of infant baptism verbalizes the same commonsense resistance to infant baptism that many Christians express today.

Tertullian was reacting to the argument made from

parallel passages Mt. 19:13-15; Mk. 10:13-16; Lk.18:15-17. Since Tertullian's day, the infant baptism folks have tried to squeeze Jesus' approval of infant baptism out of passages where parents bring infants and small children to Jesus "to be blessed." There is no mention of baptism in any of these passages.

Later, Dr. Jeremias produces a chart comparing the Greek of Mt. 18:3; Mk. 10:5 and Jn. 3:5. From this, he suggests that each passage refers to baptism. But why would Jesus instruct an infant or even a small child that he must undergo a great transformation in order to...*become like a little child*? Obviously, a little child is already like-in fact, exactly like-a little child.

Jeremias' diligence in affirming his position is admirable, but his defense is most impressive, not on account of compelling evidence, but because of its creativity and resourcefulness. For instance, the word "hinder" (*koluo*) is associated with baptism in the conversion of the Ethiopian (Acts 8:36) and Cornelius (10:47; 11:17), so Dr. Jeremias asks the reader to believe that though the word baptism is *nowhere to be found* in Mt. 19:14, Mk. 10:14 and Lk. 18:16, since Jesus said "forbid (*koluo*) them not," he indirectly authorized the baptism of infants and little children.

Infant Baptism In Parental Gratitude?

The most cunning attempt to slip baby baptism in before the third century involves the phrase "thank God." Jeremias says in those days the phrase referred to baptism, but does not bring forward convincing evidence to that effect. From this assumption he unearths infant baptism in this second or third century sentence: "And when a child is born to them they thank God, and if it die in infancy, they thank him exceedingly, because it departed this life sinless." Jeremias dismisses the view that an "infant departing this life sinless" points to the innocence of children. Instead, he counts the phrase "thank God" a reference to baptism and attributes the child's sinlessness to his baptism. What Christian would not thank God for the blessing of a healthy child?

It is true that we live in a free country and that "Everyone is entitled to their own opinion," but with eternity weighing in the balance, it is no less evident that "Everyone is entitled to the truth." The truth on baptism cannot be found in a fourth century council nor a third century archaeological find. Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He also spoke of God's word as truth. Baptism is the beautiful beginning of the Christian's life. If God's people choose to continue in the word, they will be sure the baptismal candidate can make a meaningful commitment through faith in Christ and repentance toward God. This identifies the subjects of the one baptism taught and practiced by the apostles. Any other "baptism" will only perpetuate the deplorable divisions among professing believers.

DISFELLOWSHIP (2)

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encouraging him with misplaced sympathy. They cannot indicate by words or actions that the church should not have disciplined him and they (the church) should have

manifested more love and tolerance than that. The family needs to manifest concern and distress over their spiritual condition. They need to convey to him the idea that even though their family relationship continues, their spiritual relationship has been severed and needs to be restored. Therefore, he needs to repent.

Jesus gave us a lesson we must all consider in problems like this in Luke 14:26: If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

In whatever situation we are in we must exhibit a greater love for God than we do for our nearest and dearest family members. There may come a time and a situation when we have to forsake them for God. Jesus had this in mind in Mark 10:29-30.

And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or fathers, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's. But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.

There may be times when we have to leave them for God's sake. If we do this statement of Jesus promises us tremendous blessings for that kind of sacrifice.

One other thing I might add: If a husband or wife is disciplined for adultery and they will not repent but keep sinning in that way, the faithful mate cannot give their body to their mate without defiling herself according to 1 Corinthians 6:15-16.

Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

My fervent and earnest prayer is that you never have to personally face such situations.

Can An Individual Disfellowship Other Members?

Not in the same sense as we have been studying. You can only exercise this kind of discipline when you have authority over the sinful individuals. We must also keep in mind that the church is God's instrument in exercising this kind of vengeance. So Jesus taught that the individual was to attempt to solve the problem between a man and another individual. When this proved impossible then it was to be taken before the church. This was God's plan for that type of sin. However, when the church will not scripturally discipline a sinning member I believe I have the right to refuse their company, 1 Corinthians 15:33.

Does Each Congregation Need To Consider Disfellowshipping A Person Who Has Been Disfellowshipped?

No. We need to *honor* the actions of a sister congregation

who has disfellowshipped one or more of their members. The only ones we have authority to discipline are the ones who have voluntarily placed their membership with us. When they do this they agree to the discipline of that particular congregations alone. We need to be extremely careful about taking actions against someone who has not voluntarily placed themselves in a congregation.

What Should Happen When People Who Have Been Disciplined Leave One Congregation For Another?

Unless the right thing is done church discipline will lose its power. Remember, it is a natural thing for someone about to be disciplined or who has been disciplined to begin seeking a congregation that is more compatible to their beliefs, feelings and spiritual mentality. It can be a comment on a congregation's maturity if they receive them without the proper repentance. And remember this: They are carrying their unresolved problems with them and their new congregation more than likely will soon experience the same thing. Now, do not misunderstand me. We have the right to become a member of any congregation. However, we do not have the right to become a member of another congregation when we have unresolved problems and feelings that make us unable to go back there. I know of one brother who left a congregation. He was open and above board in every move he made. He explained his situation to the congregation he was leaving. He did not just jump up and leave. He then explained his situation to the congregation he was going to. He received the blessings of both congregations. When the congregation he left has special service he goes back there and helps them in every way he can. He does not just say he can go back there and worship. He proves his love for them by his actions. He has feelings in the matter about the congregation he left but does not let these feelings interfere with his fellowship for these brethren. On the other hand, I know individuals who left a congregation and have gone to another. They have such hard feelings about the congregations they left they cannot go back there and have fellowship in their work. Some of them say they "could" go back. They did not do it though and their actions show their heart is not in it. Something is wrong with this. Even those being disciplined should have such interest in the church that they would not do anything to weaken this important tool in the Lord's church.

Church leaders should also take note that they can handle things in such way that they turn *judgement into wormwood*, Amos 5:7.

EDITORIAL

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only interpretation that makes sense to me: (3) *Moses is discussing the distinction between the sexes*. Matthew Henry offers the following explanation: "The distinction of sexes by the apparel is to be kept up, for the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, v 5. Nature itself teaches that a difference be made between them in their hair (I Cor. xi. 14), and by the same rule in their clothes, which therefore ought not to be confounded, either in ordinary wear or occasionally." T.E. Espin in *The Bible Commentary* (F. C. Cook, Editor) agrees: "The distinction between the sexes is natural and divinely established, and

cannot be neglected without indecorum, and consequent danger to purity." Also, Ellicott connects Deut. 22:5 to the principle set forth by Paul in I Cor. 11: 14.

Any way you want to look at it, Deut. 22:5 is teaching that the distinction between men and women in dress is to be maintained and not violated! That's why transvestism is wrong. That's why men and women should not try to conceal their sexual identity by dressing like those of the opposite sex. God made males and females differently. Men and women have different physical attributes and are assigned different roles by the Creator. Yes, we are dealing with a *principle* that was established from the very beginning because it has to do with God's order of creation (I Cor. 11:3,14-15).

Does Deut. 22:5 apply today? The *principle* still applies because it is a principle that is found in the New Testament. I want to go back to the statement made by T.E. Espin, because the observation made by him is accurate and timely: "The distinction between the sexes is natural and divinely established and cannot be neglected without indecorum, and consequent danger to purity." I want to give my concerns about women wearing slacks and why I fear the practice is having far-reaching consequences, more so than some realize or want to admit.

When I first started preaching in the early 70's, the issue of women wearing pants was a hot issue. I can recall conversations in people's homes, perhaps those I was staying with during meetings, as I was questioned about where I stood on the subject. However, the arguments that were made then were very different from the arguments made today! Back then, the argument was that women's slacks were not men's apparel. After all, women's slacks had zippers on the side, not in the front, and many of the sisters in the church only wore pantsuits. It was argued that men don't wear pantsuits, therefore, pantsuits aren't men's apparel. Well, how often today do you see a woman in a pantsuit? Do the pants women wear nowadays have zippers on the side or does it matter?

When discussing this issue with those I disagreed with years ago, I would ask them the following question: "Do you believe it would be all right for a woman to put on a pair of man's Levis and wear them?" I cannot recall a single time when someone would answer in the affirmative. Instead, the argument was that the pants women wear nowadays are not mens apparel for the reasons already given.

We've come a long way on this issue—and we're headed in the wrong direction! I am under the impression that

people today think that the principle in Deut. 22:5 has no application today, and if a woman wants to wear a pair of man's Levis, it is perfectly acceptable. Brethren, if it holds true with the woman, it will also hold true with the man. What passage of Scripture would a man violate if he were to wear a woman's dress to town and made that part of his weekly attire? If you don't have a quick and ready answer to that question, you are living proof of Espin's observation: "The distinction between the sexes is natural and divinely established and cannot be neglected without indecorum, and consequent danger to purity." Once you neglect a Bible principle there is no stopping point.

But someone says, "Pants are no longer considered to be men's clothing." If that's true, how do you know which rest room to use in a restaurant when one door simply has a figure with pants on it and the other door has a figure with a dress on it? Ladies, would you go through the door with pants? Why not? Pants don't have any masculinity attached to them, do they? Also, what does this statement mean: "The man should wear the pants in the family." If the wearing of pants isn't a male thing in our society, how did that expression find its way into our vocabulary?

Somebody concedes, "All right! What I meant to say is that pants are no longer considered to be men's clothing exclusively." Are you admitting that one time they were? If so, did women sin when they first started wearing pants? In fact, when did the sinning start and when did it cease to be a sin? Or is it all right for me sex to wear an item that is specifically intended for the opposite sex? That's why the practice was opposed from the very beginning and we still oppose it today. It is questionable at best, and we would do well to avoid anything that has helped to obscure the distinction between the sexes that God would have us to recognize.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Series By Homer A. Gay To Begin Next Month

In the February, 1946 *OPA* Brother Homer A. Gay began a series of twelve articles on the Christian Home. It was later put into tract form which is difficult to find now. We believe a reprint of the articles are valuable for the brethren in our modern world. Brother Gay was a talented and colorful writer. He served as an editor of *Old Paths Advocate* until his death in 1958. His "Timely Suggestions" which appeared monthly for a time, were a favorite of many. In the future, we may reprint some of those also, if the readers wish. Let us know what you would like for us to do. Our files are rich wells of information from most of the preachers since 1932. To read the field reports are like reading a history of our brotherhood. If you would like to have writings from one of your favorite preachers reprinted, let us hear from you.—DLK

Annual Southeastern Gospel Meeting

We just closed a great gospel meeting at Valliant, OK. We plan to make this an annual event. The time will be from the first Sunday through the second Sunday of April. We plan to speak of it as the "Southeastern Oklahoma Spring Gospel Meeting." We had folks from MO, ARK,

TX and OK attend this meeting. We used nine different speakers and plan to use more in future meetings. Please mark your 2001 calendar April 1 - April 8, 2001 and come and be a part of this meeting.—Ed Bullard

Meet Brian Elliott

The Church at Brundage Lane, Bakersfield, California would like to introduce to the brotherhood brother Brian Elliott. Brother Elliott has been working with the Brundage Lane congregation for about three and half years. He was born February 26, 1963 and obeyed the gospel on August 28, 1976 at the age of thirteen. He has studied with Bennie Cryer, a faithful gospel preacher and his uncle. His parents are Doyle and Nancy Elliott of Bakersfield, California who have raised him in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He is the grandson of the late Verlin C. Elliot, a faithful and respected gospel preacher in California and Missouri. He is married to the former Miss Leanne Smith and has two children, Zachary and Benjamin. We recommend Brian Elliott to the brotherhood as a faithful and capable gospel preacher. You may contact brother Brian Elliott at 2013 Bradley Ave., Bakersfield, California 93304. His telephone Number is (661) 833-6818



or by Internet at bnlelliott@netxn.com.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone for their prayers and cards while Leo was recovering from triple bypass surgery. He's doing well and attending church. We are very thankful.—Leo Baldwin and Family, 2669 Kevin Rd., San Pablo, CA 94806

Annual Meeting

Sulpur Oklahoma's 62nd Annual Camp Meeting will be held Monday, June 26 through Tuesday, July 4, 2000. Evangelists Duane Permenter, Midland, TX and George Battey, Jonesboro, GA. Make your plans now to attend. For more information contact: Bob Shepard at 580-622-3950, George Hill at 580-622-2779 or Don Stehr at 580-622-5556.

New Song Book Ready June 1

The new song book published by Bro. Lynwood Smith, Tuneful Tidings, should be ready the first of June. The price will be \$3.00 per copy plus postage. Send all orders to M. Lynwood Smith, 2789 Loyd Star Ln. Northwest Wesson, MS 39191. You may reach Lynwood by phone at 601-833-2560.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

OWENS-DOTSON—On Saturday afternoon January 15, 2000 in Lebanon, Mo. Roger Lee Owens and Amber DaNell Dotson were joined together as husband and wife. The wedding was performed in the presence of over three hundred guest and family members. The grand host was graced with no less than a dozen preachers of the Gospel and teachers of great number. The wedding party was one of beauty mixed with laughter and tears as they each made their way to the podium. Lee and Amber are very well known as young Christians who hold strong convictions to the Words of Life. It is my belief that it is this conviction that will secure them as they begin their lives together and establish their home upon The Faith of our Lord, Jesus, Christ. Sue and I, along with Doug and Dwanza, Amber's parents, are thrilled with our children and their decision to become husband and wife. Their home will be in Neosho, Mo. They plan to attend worship at the West Hwy. 60 Church of Christ. It was my pleasure to assist them in performing the ceremony of love and sweet joy. Our prayers of hope and love will always follow them throughout our lives and theirs. May God bless this marriage with all the happiness that any two could possible have both now and forever. AMEN. I want to thank them for asking me to conduct their wedding ceremony though it was difficult to hold back the tears at times. Your brother in Christ, Roger Leon Owens.

OUR DEPARTED

SNOW—Johnny Snow was born in Dublin, Texas, March 29, 1927, to John and Laura Snow. He grew up in Stamford, Texas, and moved to Abilene in 1948. He and Ouida Kilpatrick were married in 1950. He owned and operated

Johnny Snow Painting for over forty years until his retirement in 1998. Johnny passed from this life February 16, 2000, at an Abilene hospital after a two-year battle with cancer, which was complicated by heart disease. He is survived by his wife Ouida; two sons Johnny Randall and Ronnie; three sisters Jane Davis, Muzette Jernigan, and Juanita James; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild, and nieces, nephews and a host of friends. I knew Johnny for over twenty years and had come to love and appreciate him during the many times I've conducted meetings in Abilene. I was honored to speak words of comfort and warning to the overflow crowd at the Elmwood Funeral Home in Abilene.—Carl Johnson

HOBGOOD—Susie Hobgood was born May 20, 1909, in Ada, OK. She passed away September 20, 1999, at the age of 90. She was married to John Edward Hobgood in 1928 in Ada. He preceded her in death October 14, 1965. She is survived by three sons: Kenny, Jerry, and Gary; five daughters. Ruth Clark, Margie Matthews, Barbara Hobgood, Janet Noble, and June Reavis; twenty-seven grandchildren, 51 great grandchildren, and 20 great, great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by two sons Jack Hobgood and J.C. Hobgood. Sister Hobgood was a longtime-resident of Oklahoma City and was a member of the Capitol Hill congregation. I offered words of consolation and warning from the scriptures and Brother Glenn Bray organized and conducted the singing.—Carl Johnson

CREECH—Ruby Mae Creech stepped through the veil of eternity on January 21, 2000. She was born on August 7, 1919 and lived most of her 80 years as a faithful child of God. She was a devout member of the Earlytown Church of Christ near Samson, AL. She was constant in assembling with the saints until several physical ailments debilitated her. Her life and demeanor was sweet, modest and Godly. She leaves behind her husband of 62 years, Bro. Luke Creech, also a Christian. They raised three sons and one daughter. All who know and loved her will miss this wonderful woman. Sister Creech loved the church and she believed in old-fashioned Christianity. The writer officiated the service and her body awaits the resurrection in the peaceful cemetery outside of the Earlytown church.—Kevin W. Presley

COMBS—Tiffany "TIF" Dawn Combs died on the afternoon of January 12, 2000 as a result of a terrible auto accident. Tiffany was the daughter of Larry and Brenda Combs who live in Council Hill, Oklahoma. She was 18 and a graduate of Midway High School at Council Hill. She was baptized into Christ at age 12 and was a member of the church of Christ at Council Hill. A large crowd gathered in the Midway High School gymnasium for the funeral. Tiffany was survived by her parents Larry and Brenda Combs of the home; two sisters Kathy Jones of Muskogee and Peggy Martin of Council Hill; five nephew and nieces; grandparents Harvey Staton of Council Hill; Robert and Charlotte Combs of Muskogee and many aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. The writer assisted by Bro. Morgan Stripling, read Scripture and gave words of admonition and warning about death and the Judgement-

"it is appointed unto man once to die and after this the Judgement (Heb. 9:27)." The singing was beautiful and so were the flowers.—Miles King

SMITH—On Aug. 13, 1923 Paul Smith was born the 8th child in the family of the late Fulton and Dell (Starms) Smith. As of now, only Lucile, Robbie and Jean survive. Paul died Jan. 20, 2000. Paul was born and raised on McCall Creek in the Friendship Community. He attended school at the old Friendship School and later graduating at Loyd Star. On Oct. 8, 1943, he was wed to his longtime sweetheart, Wessie Smith, who survives. To this happy union four children were born: Paul Curtis, Jimmie, Proby Lee, and Fay Alice Callender. These all remain to grieve deeply his passing and who so faithfully cared for and attended him in life and in death. Also he has 13 grandchildren, 3 step grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. On Aug. 12, 1950, he and Wessie were baptized into Christ and became members of the Church of Christ worshipping at New Salem and remained a faithful member until his death. Paul was a successful, hardworking businessman. All his life he excelled. He was well known and highly respected in the business world. "A good name is rather to be chosen." On a light note, I remember that he was the champion cotton-picker. He carries the honor. I know he was always held up to me as an example. "Why can't you learn to pick like Fulton's Paul?" I just never could. I think my folks still think it was just unadulterated laziness with me. Case closed. He is missed at New Salem. — Lynwood Smith

BAILEY—Uklet Bailey of Woodland, AL, son of John and Laura Bailey was born July 9, 1927 the second child of a large family of eight children. He grew up in Randolph County, attending school at Napoleon. He was married on Oct. 24, 1937 to the love of his life, Ellie Mae Langley. They were a close and devoted couple remaining sweethearts, buddies and helpmates down to the moment of his death which was Dec. 24, 1999 at the age of 82. He leaves to mourn his passing three sisters, three brothers, many nieces, nephews and loves ones. He served in the United States Army. Brother Uklet obeyed the gospel many years ago and remained true and faithful to the Church. He was a long time respected and very highly regarded member of the congregation at Napoleon. He was always punctual and on time, usually the first to open the doors. He was a good neighbor and friend. The Bible tells us something that we would know by experience and that is "He that hath friends must show himself friendly." If Uklet Bailey had an enemy in the world, no one knew it. His disposition was quiet, gentle, kind, retiring, almost shy, yet firm in his belief and conviction. He was always pleasant and enjoyable. His home was a place of hospitality and love. It was especially dear to me. Many are the long visits we have shared there. For 42 years, I spent the first Sunday night in May with them, and these memories will abide with me forever. Uklet was one of a kind. As someone said, "Eagles don't fly in droves." He soared high. "A good name, never sought for worldly fame nor acclaim." He was contented in his circle, his home, his family and the church were his concerns. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—Lynwood Smith



Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Tupelo, OK 74572—It has been sometime since I reported to the *OPA*. We have been busy, we speak every Lord's Day and every other Wed. night. We still have our radio program and are busy with some other things regularly. We just closed a good meeting at Valliat, OK using the following speakers: Buck Thetford, Ewell Byrd, Buddy Dismuke, Tim Byrd, Gene Hopkins, John Tidmore, William St. John, Ed Bullard and Eddie Bullard. Bro. Wayne Sanders was scheduled, but his father, Bob Sanders, passed away and his priorities changed. We appreciate all the help and especially Glen and Roberta VanStavern for coming.

Brett Hickey, 5105 Old Bullard Rd. #M-3, Tyler, TX 75703, (903) 534-8466, brettickey@juno.com, April 11—Our first month with the Tyler congregation has gone better than we expected. We have been able to be acquainted with most of the local brethren over dinner. Their warmth and the potential for growth encourage us. I have personally benefited from the association with Terry Baze. Beyond that, Terry has greatly expedited our setting in time so we could begin reaching out to the lost. Smith Bibens recently closed our five-day meeting. Smith did an excellent job for us despite his son's ruptured appendix in the midst of the meeting. Wayne Fussell preached for Smith the first night Nate was in the hospital. He preached an excellent sermon on Jesus. Our crowds were excellent with a good number from Irving supporting our meeting. We had at least 22 visitors from the community. I was impressed with the brethren's ability to make these outsiders feel welcome. One of our neighbors was baptized during the meeting. We look forward to Tyler's meeting with Don McCord, June 18-25 and our meeting at Conway, LA May 28-June 4.

P. Duane Permenter, 4315 Boulder Dr., Midland, TX, 79707, April 10—I just completed a short meeting on "Final Things" among the three area churches, Andrews, Odessa, and Midland. We had some visitors from the community which we were grateful for. We continue to move forward in the work here at Midland. I am presently working with about twelve different people from the community and pray that some may come to fruition in the near future. I still have several studies a week, and the brethren continue reaching out to friends doing all they can to win the lost. It is an honor to labor among such fine brethren as here in Midland. June 9 will complete the time of our original four-year agreement, and it has been a pleasure to labor in this area. The Lord has blessed my family and the church in Midland in many ways for which we are grateful. Please continue to pray for the work here in Midland and everywhere. May God bless you is my prayer.

Kevin W. Presley, P.O. Box 762, Dothan, AL 36302 (334) 678-8099, April 7—We have enjoyed some good meetings in the area as of late. Bro. Don King held us a fine meeting at Dothan last month. The services were well attended and we had a number of visitors. Don's sermons were well delivered and right on target. Bethany and I enjoyed having

him stay with us. We have been attending every night of Lowery's meeting in progress with Lynwood Smith. He preached one his old type and shadow sermons tonight about the pilgrimage of the Israelites toward Caanan. It was like stepping back in time. His preaching has been top notch. Wayne McKamie is to begin at Earlytown this coming Lord's day. My meetings have gone well this spring. In February, it was good to be with the church in Marietta, GA for a short meeting. We had a great crowd on Saturday night and it was a real pleasure to spend the weekend with Ricky Martin and family. In March, I was with the brethren in Edmond, OK for a meeting. The church there is doing well with a large number of young people who show great interest in the Lord's work. Edwin Morris is to be commended for his long-term work with this congregation. The meeting was well attended by area congregations and other preachers. Two confessed faults. I returned this past Sunday from Liberty, KY (Hilltop) where I hope we accomplished good for the cause. Several brethren from the area came to help us out and we ended up having some good crowds. The church there has suffered some serious setbacks in recent months, but by the end of the meeting things were on a brighter note with one being baptized and three confessing faults. The work at home continues to go well. Our television program continues to reach thousands every Sunday. Most of the visitors we see at our meetings are the direct result of the television broadcast. At Earlytown, we were happy to assist three women in baptism a few weeks ago. They and their families have been attending recently and we are glad to have them. Lord willing, I begin in Springfield, MO on the 19th and then one to Sharonville, OH on the 26th. In May, I plan to be with the church at Spring Valley, WVa. We look forward to hosting a Memorial Day singing in Dothan, AL on Memorial Day Monday. Come if you can! God bless his people!

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Ca. e-mail old_pathspjuno.com; April 14—We recently held an enjoyable meeting at Dothan, AL. Brother Kevin Presley works among those brethren and has done a good job. The folks had worked hard to get ready for the meeting and there was outside interest all the way through. Several from the community came as well as some from the digressive churches. Too, there were brethren who came from several states and areas which helped our crowds a great deal. It was a pleasure to stay with Kevin and Bethany. I could not have been treated better. There was one confession of wrongs. I appreciated Kevin taking me to Sneads, FL one day where we located Brother H.C. Harper's old home spot and grave. We talked with some who remembered him also. He started the paper we call *Old Paths Advocate* under the name "*The Truth*" in about 1928. It has remained through the years as an advocate of truth and right. Next we were with the congregation at Escalon, CA for a week's meeting. My first meeting was at that place in about 1967 and this was number eleven if I counted correctly. We enjoyed being there again and visiting old friends. It was our pleasure to stay one night with Jim and Shirley Vaughn and enjoyed their hospitality while there. The rest of the meeting, we drove back and forth. Preachers, if your material didn't get in the paper this month, we apologize. My study is dismantled during some renovation (painting, etc.) we are doing. Lord willing, all will be back in place by next month. If you haven't sent a field report lately, please do so as the brethren everywhere appreciate reading of your work. That is an encouragement to them to do all they can also. Pray for us.

Richard De Gough, 1907 Tully Road, Hughson, CA 95326—I recently returned from Nashville after a weeks work with the brethren there. We were trying to connect with people who wrote 'in with requests about the T.V. program they sponsor. Brother Ronny Wade preaches on it weekly and it has produced a lot of leads from various communities near and far. The brethren in Nashville are working hard to see that people have the gospel and are informed about the true worship. I enjoyed the time there and hope some good was done. They are fine people and certainly have the cause in mind. I enjoyed preaching three times. My trip to the Philippines with Don was beneficial to me and I hope it was to the brethren. The preachers are admirable, very conscientious, hard working, and lovable men. In fact all the brethren are loving people. They are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ and seek every opportunity to proclaim it. It was a joy to be with Don and brother Danao, fellow preachers who have a strong, good influence with the church. At home we continue to work as opportunity presents itself. We have a weekly newspaper article entitled "Let the Scriptures speak." Our prayer is that people will search the scriptures concerning the subjects we are writing. I enjoyed hearing brother Elias Rodriguez in Salinas one night. He is a great preacher. Raymond Fox is a diligent hard working preacher in many places. May the Lord bless the brotherhood and a his people with unity and for the same cause.

Elias Rodriguez, Mexico/Southern CA—The church in El Cajon, California is supporting the work of Brother Elias Rodriguez as he preaches the gospel among the Spanish-speaking people of Southern California and Mexico. The church here would like to take this opportunity to update you on this work and the results during the past 2 1/2 years. If you are familiar with the work of Brother Elias Rodriguez then you will understand the challenge in attempting to summarize his work in this short text. Since July 1997, Bro. Rodriguez has worked with the Spanish-speaking people in San Diego, Los Angeles, and certain parts of Mexico. When I approached Bro. Rodriguez a few weeks ago and requested his permission to submit a report on his behalf, he readily consented. His meticulous record keeping has made it easy to summarize the 7,629 doors that he has knocked in the past 30 months. And, a brief review of his schedule reflects the average of 23 Bible studies per week that he consistently holds with both Christians and nonChristians. But, most importantly, praise be to God for the 56 baptisms among the Spanish speaking people since Bro. Rodriguez began his work back in July 1997. Through God's grace, the San Diego Spanish-speaking Church of Christ now has 43 members. The average attendance is 50 adults plus children. The record attendance is 71 adults and 31 children. Following one year of work in Tijuana, there is now a congregation in that city numbering 12 members. In addition to the work here in San Diego and Tijuana, Bro. Rodriguez has also extended his efforts to Los Angeles. There, he recently baptized four souls into Christ, some of which were previously members of a Pentecostal church. In recent weeks, 16 members from a Pentecostal church in Sinaloa, Mexico accepted the truth and were baptized for the remission of their sins. That group is now a faithful congregation serving the Lord. It is interesting to note that following the conversions in Sinaloa, Bro. Rodriguez was labeled the "anti-Christ" by several local religious leaders. When Bro. Rodriguez is not knocking doors and holding Bible studies, he currently has several projects that he has devoted himself to. Here in San Diego, he is holding training sessions with the male

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members of the Spanish-speaking congregation to better equip them for service in the worship. As a result of that work, two more capable teachers are able to preach on Sunday morning and nearly all of the men can lead a song and/or a prayer. He is also working with Bro. Raymond Fox to publish a letter, in Spanish, intended to strengthen and build up faithful families in their service to God. Additionally, he has committed himself to helping Bro. Randy Tidmore construct a web page in Spanish about the Church of Christ. For this task he is writing articles, assisting with the Spanish, and answering e-mail: This project has led to contacts in Mexico and both Central and South America. Finally, Bro. Rodriguez has recently created three more tracts, and presently has two more in progress, that he utilizes as he knocks doors and studies the Bible with new contacts. These records reflect the efforts of Bro. Rodriguez from July 1997 through January 2000. However, there is much that these records simply will not demonstrate. By only reading his reports, most of us would never know about the number of Bible studies that have extended sometimes until 2:00 A.M. Nor will his reports show the hundreds of miles that he will drive every Sunday between Tijuana and San Diego to transport Christians to the place of worship. I can assure you that Bro. Rodriguez is putting in far more working hours each week than the average 40 or 50 that most of us are accustomed to. In addition to his admirable work ethic, Brother Rodriguez is one of the most humble men you can ever hope to meet. In the closing lines of his most recent work report, the final two sentences are typed in large font and read, "If you have any questions or any suggestion to do better work, please let me know. We are always open to learn how to do better the work of the Lord." Just as Bro. Rodriguez does, we give all the glory to God. Our prayer is that God will continue to bless this work and all those who endeavor to win souls to Christ.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797, Telephone & fax (808) 680-0249, March 29, 2000—Greetings to all the faithful everywhere! The Church here in Waipahu seems to have been enjoying peace for the past several weeks. Last Sunday, there were seven persons from the community or state, who are not yet baptized present in our worship service. We have with us from the area/state during Sundays acquaintances who are not yet baptized. Our Sunday attendance is affected because some of the brethren, at present, are vacationing in the Philippines. On March 12th, Bro. and Sis. Byron/Susan Franklin, with their children, from Stockton, Ca. worshipped with us; and on March 19th, Bro. and Sis. Curtis/Pam Freeman from Basher, Kansas. Because of their jobs, our studies with the relatives of my wife in Wahiawa are not regular, but we are persistent, and were glad that last Saturday evening they--four of the place and one from Kunla--were present in our private study. Aside from conducting studies with prospects, printing religious tracts and distributing copies in public places, such as in "open markets," I have to spend time also preparing my scripts for our Radio Program. I still believe that preaching

through the radio is one of the fastest means to disseminate the gospel of salvation, if you desire to know more information about the work here, feel free to write; or contact Bro. James Mason, an elder of the Church at Stockton, California. We urge you to please mention us always in your prayers. May God bless us all!

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, April 18—The meeting at the Eleventh St. church in Tulsa closed with two confessions of fault. Next we were at Richmond, IN for a very enjoyable meeting which resulted in one being restored to the church. From there we went to Columbus, OH where good crowds greeted us at each service. It was a pleasure to be with these brethren again. April 9-16 we were at Blue Springs near Mt Vernon, KY. This is where Doug Hawkins lives and works. It was a blessing to have him present for most of the meeting. Due to the illness of his and Lori's new born son, he was unable to be present for some services. We had large crowds with numerous outsiders present at most services. The cooperation of surrounding congregations was outstanding. In addition a van load came over from West Virginia one night which also helped greatly. Bruce Roebuck, who began a meeting at Walnut Grove on the 16th attended two services of our meeting which was appreciated. The Lord willing we go next to Seneca, MO April 26-30, Jamesville, MO May 3-7, London KY May 14-21, Goshen, OH May 28-June 4 and Hillcrest near Brookhaven, MS June 11-18. We look forward to working with brethren in all these places. May the Lord bless all the faithful as they strive to serve Him.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, email: pon.wjn@juno.com, April 5—We had a wonderful meeting at Lexington, OK. The congregation has constructed a new church building which is very nice, but not elaborate. Good financial judgment was used and the building is paid for - no long indebtedness handing over their heads. According to their records, it was fifty years ago (this July) when I first held a meeting there. Since then I have held several meetings there. It was good to be back again. During the meeting we had good crowds, with cooperation from other congregations and several fellow preachers who encouraged us with their presence. There was one baptism of a man raised in a denomination, and one restoration. We are saddened by the passing of Harold Ham of the Washington congregation during the meeting. We are back home now. Just this week we have paved much more of the church parking area to accommodate the increase in attendance. The young woman I have been studying with says she is about ready to be baptized. She attends all the services of the church regularly - better than some of the members. We have lots of younger members in the congregation now, and they are an encouragement to each other. My next meeting will be at Turlock, CA - their annual Memorial Day meeting, May 21-28. We look forward to it. Let us continue to "plant and water" and God will "give the increase."

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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LEBANON, MISSOURI, JUNE 2000

NO. 6

BUILDING A CHRISTIAN HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

I believe that one of the most neglected things in the world today is that of building Christian homes. In the beginning, God saw the need of a home and established the first one - as a pattern to be followed down through the ages. In Genesis 2:21-24 we read: "And the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Thus we note a relationship between husband and wife that is sublime - they are ONE flesh.

God's decree was that this male and female should become one, and thus establish a home here on earth. The choosing of a mate, someone to be one's partner through life is no small thing. In Old Testament times the parents were very careful to see to it that their sons chose the right kind of companions. In the 24th chapter of Genesis we see quite a lengthy search made for a wife for Isaac. The Jews were not to marry those of another nation. (Deuteronomy 7:3,4) "For they will turn away thy sons from following me, that they may serve other gods." This was many times proven true, that when they would marry outside the nation, they would drift away from God. That same principle is true with us today. We are a "nation" (1 Peter 2:9), and I believe that God is just as much interested in us as He was in Israel. This is shown in 1 Corinthians 7:39 where He says "the woman is bound to her husband as long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; ONLY IN THE LORD."

These and other like scriptures, should be carefully considered by every Christian boy and girl when they contemplate marriage. The only way to have a Christian home is for those in the home to be Christians, and a boy or a girl has a poor chance of converting a sinner husband or wife after they have married them. The sinner knows that the Christian is giving undue ground when they consent to marry them, and that weakens their confidence in them as a Christian. It also weakens the chances of converting them to the Lord.

I believe that if it is wise (and all agree that it is) to consider the background in selecting a cow, pig, horse, or

chickens, then surely some consideration should be given when choosing the one to be the father or mother of our children. Too many young couples today look only at the car the boy drives, or the dress and makeup the girl has on while they are courting. Only to find out that the car was borrowed or bought on credit and the payments not kept up; and the makeup is easily washed off and that cheaper dresses might not look so appealing.

The Lord intended for young folks to marry, but marriage is for the purpose of building the right kind of homes. It certainly should be considered more seriously than it is by the masses of people today.

A Christian boy should stop and ask these questions: Will this girl suit me when she is old? Will she help me to bring the children up to be Christians, or will she want them to go with her to the Methodist or some other sectarian Sunday school? Will she be willing to get by on my salary, or is she used to spending far more money than I will have for her? A girl should also ask some questions. Will this young man work? How will he look in overalls? Can I love and adore him when he is old and broken? Is he interested in going to worship, and will he help me to raise the children for the Lord? Or will he set before them an example of drinking, cursing, etc.? These are not just idle questions. They should be pondered well. Many homes have been wrecked all because these questions have not been considered before marriage.

Christian boys and girls should be very careful as to the kind of company they keep. If they keep company frequently with worldly or sectarian boys and girls, the first thing they know they are in love and wanting to marry. So, the proper way to stop that is to never let it start. Just seek the proper kind of company.

I am constantly being confronted with this objection: "Brother Gay, there are no Christian boys here for my girl to associate with." Or "There are no Christian girls here for my boy to go with." Well now, that is something to think about. But, I have already mentioned where considerable search was made for the right kind of a wife for Isaac. I believe there should be something done about that now. If I lived off where my children could not go to school, regardless of how much I liked my work or job the folks would advise me to move. They would tell me to get somewhere so those children could have educational advantages. That would be good advice and I believe we

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Editorial

"I REMEMBER"

By CLOVIS T. COOK

Some time ago Brother Don McCord wrote an article for the *Old Paths Advocate*. It was written under the title of *This and That*. There were many good things written in that article with which I agree and, obviously, more could be said. Don pointed out many things that members of the church do (preachers being no exception to the rule) that he perhaps did not completely understand. He mentioned some matters dealing with consistency and inconsistency which has been of great concern for many of us.

I would like to document, to the best of my memory, some things written in the article, which was quoted from Brother Homer A. Gay years ago. The statement was: "As long as a church has the worship scripturally, I can worship with them." Others have also quoted the statement and the context needs to be made clear.

If my memory serves me correctly, I believe I know when and where, as well as in what context, Brother Gay made the statement. When trouble on the marriage question began to arise there were five preachers from the old Lee's Summit congregation, near Lebanon, Missouri, who agreed to come together and study the question. Those preachers were H.E. Robertson, Charles H. Lee, Homer A. Gay and Homer L. King and myself, Clovis T. Cook. I am the only man still living who was at that meeting. It was during that meeting that Brother Gay made the statement: "As long as a church has the worship scripturally, I can worship with them."

Brother Gay and Brother Robertson disagreed about the fellowship angle. Brother Gay, in making the above quoted statement, had reference to those with whom he disagreed about the marriage question. The reason this matter was under discussion was because we had been talking about a well-known preacher who had held a meeting for a digressive church. The digressive brethren had agreed to have the worship scriptural during this meeting. At that point I had asked the question: (since after his meeting they went right back to their unscriptural practice) were they not as much digressive after, and during, the meeting as they were before the meeting? There was agreement on this point by all of us. Brother Gay then made it very clear that he was talking about the marriage question. This was consistent with his "no exception" position. He felt he could worship with those who differed with him as long as the worship was scriptural. To take his statement and apply it in general is to take Brother Gay's words out of context. He made it very clear that he had reference only to the no exception brethren and I am a living witness. It is possible, I suppose, that he may have made this statement elsewhere and at another time, but if so I am unaware of it.

In Ronny Wade's book *A Good Soldier* written in memory of him, Ronny quotes Brother Gay on this

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: What procedure should be followed when it is necessary to withdraw from a brother who has sinned? (OK)

Answer: There are two types of discipline taught in the New Testament. The first is instructive and the second corrective. Instructive discipline involves teaching and training individuals to live godly lives. Such is the responsibility of preachers, teachers, and elders. In Acts 20:28 Paul instructed the elders to "feed the flock." In 1 Pet. 5:2 they are charged with tending the flock over whom they exercise oversight. Hebrews 13:17 teaches that these shepherds "watch for souls." Paul told Timothy to "preach the word" and to reprove, rebuke, and exhort" (1 Tim. 4:1-4). These and many other passages point to the necessity of instruction from the Scriptures in order to keep people from sinning. When one commits certain sins, and continues in them, even though they have been admonished, it then becomes necessary to correct them in the spirit of love. Corrective discipline is taught in 1 Cor. 5:1-5 where an immoral man was continuing in that sin, in 2 Thess. 3:6 where one rebelled against teaching, in 2 Thess. 2:11-15 where one would not tend to his own business, and in Rom. 16:17 where one was guilty of division. The design of corrective discipline is to save the church, and the individual involved (1 Cor. 5:5). It should never be used out of spite or "to get even" with someone. It is used as a last resort in an attempt to rescue both the individual and church from sure harm. Just what steps should be taken in the withdrawal process? In Mt. 18:15-18 the scripture deals with one who has been sinned against by a brother. This party is to go to the brother and discuss the matter. This may, in fact should, remedy the situation. However if not, he then should take two or three with him and try and resolve the matter. If this fails it should then be brought before the church. In the event he refuses to hear the church, he should then be rejected, or marked and avoided. Before one is rejected or withdrawn from, I would suggest the steps listed in Roy Cogdill's little book *The New Testament Church* as a guide: (1) pray for the brother 1 Jno. 5:16, (2) try to convert him James 5:19-20, (3) restore him if possible Gal. 6:1, (4) admonish him 1 Thess. 5:14, (5) if this does not result in repentance, then proceed with the withdrawal, (6) since the withdrawal is congregational

in nature, it becomes the responsibility of the entire church to honor the withdrawal. It is not necessary for other churches to withdraw from the individual, however, they should honor the actions of the disciplining church. A failure to do so threatens the purpose for the process and places both the church and brother, in question, in jeopardy. The querist also wanted to know if it would be permissible to withdraw from someone without their knowledge. Such would be unthinkable. Remember the purpose is to save the individual or bring them back to the church. Underhanded dealings only add to the problem and solve nothing.

Question: What are women or widows to do when an issue or problem arises in a congregation which causes them concern? (TX)

Answer: The Scriptures are clear as to the position women occupy in the leadership of the church (1 Cor. 14:34-35, 1 Tim. 2:11-12, 1 Tim. 3:1-5, and Titus 2:5-9.) Women cannot lead the church, nor should they try and lead the church through their husband or any other man. However, women often have legitimate concerns. Women deserve to receive input from the leaders of a congregation as to the work and plans the church may have. Any group of leaders or elders that fails to take such needs into consideration is asking for trouble (see Acts 6:1-6). For this reason, if a woman whose husband is not a Christian or if a widow has a concern, they should go to one of the elders or church leaders and in a meek and submissive way express that concern. If the leader is wise, he will do what he can to address the concern within reasonable and scriptural bounds. If the request is unscriptural, obviously he cannot violate the law of God to please the sister. If the request is unreasonable, he may try to reason with her, but if unsuccessful, then he must do what is best for the church. When something unscriptural is being practiced and the leadership refuses to address such a problem, then the sister might appeal to some preacher, privately, in an attempt to get him or someone to reason with the church about its unscriptural practices. If this is rejected, as I see it, the sister cannot continue to participate in unscriptural practices and be right with God.

(Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT SUNDAY SCHOOL AND WOMEN SPEAKERS

By KEVIN W. PRESLEY

Any informed person knows that the winds of change are blowing amongst digressive churches of Christ. Even in the traditionally conservative deep south, the Sunday School brethren are having internal struggles with the proponents of change and rank liberalism. Indulge with me as I relate a recent experience. In the city of Dothan, Alabama where I reside there are a number of digressive churches, the most liberal of which being also the largest. With over 500 members sharply at odds over things such as handclapping in worship, baby dedications, female leadership in worship, and other issues, a split is perhaps

looming on the horizon. I personally know of some who have left that congregation to begin worshiping with other digressive churches in town. They left in hope of being a part of a more conservative platform. I have heard them make comments such as "what is the church coming to?" or "where will they stop making changes in the church?" A favorite pearl of inconsistency being "they just don't want to go by the Bible anymore!" However, these so-called conservatives need to pull the beam from their own eye. A few that have left the congregation mentioned afore have traveled about a mile down the street to the

“conservative” church where they do not support orphans homes, church colleges, or cooperative evangelism. However, they do practice women speaking in the church!

A few months ago I received an invitation to attend a Gospel Meeting being held there. Their handbills and the sign out front simply read, “Gospel Meeting, Weekdays at 10 A.M. and 7:30 P.M.” I happened to be in the neighborhood one morning and decided to drop in and sit on the back row as a spectator. The service began in much the usual way. Singing took place, a prayer was worded, and the visiting evangelist took the platform. After teaching for about 30 minutes, he began to field questions from the congregation. A number of brethren inquired about a number of aspects of the lesson and some made additional comments on related topics and verses. Then, much to my amazement, a female member raised her hand and asked a question and followed up with her own comments about the meaning of a passage. A few minutes later another lady spoke up and contributed her views about the subject at hand. I was appalled by what flagrant disregard for the Scriptures that I had just witnessed. When I discussed the matter later with one of their members, I was informed that this morning service was not really considered a “service” but a Bible Study period just like their regular Sunday School classes. Had I known this, I would not have been present.

For many years, we have sat through debates in which the Sunday School advocate contended that their classes were not public assemblies of the church. We have had explained to us that these gatherings are not governed by the rules of I Corinthians 14 because they are private, informal, and not considered worship. I didn’t accept their claims then and I especially do not now! This whole episode raised a number of questions and contentions in my mind. Most obviously, if the service I witnessed was “just like” their Sunday School classes, then how can they claim that their classes are not public assemblies? The only two ingredients missing from their normal Sunday worship hour, were the Lord’s supper and the collection. This gathering was obviously called by the leaders of that church. It was publicly announced and advertised as a “Gospel Meeting,” not even as a Bible class. It began and concluded with prayer and singing. What is the difference? Is the distinction simply that all five avenues of worship were not practiced? Are we thus to conclude that as long as communion is not distributed that a woman may speak or even preach in the assembly? I ask, dear reader, what other inference are we to draw from such? What then would be wrong with a woman holding a gospel meeting for the church there as long as she does not preach on Sunday morning? I am quite confident, though, that should such be suggested you would see trouble in that congregation. Yet no one seemed to be bothered by the women who stood during the assembly that I witnessed and explained their

biblical views. They cannot say that the location of the assembly determines whether the Bible rules apply because this assembly was in their auditorium, and remember, it was “just like their regular Bible classes.” If location made a difference (divided Sunday School rooms or the general auditorium) then they could hold their annual Gospel meeting at the local conference hall and invite women to do the preaching.

Let us be honest. It really boils down to the fact that when these brethren want it to be considered an assembly regulated by I Corinthians 14, then it becomes such. When they desire to convene a Sunday School class or a “Bible study period,” they can magically wave their hand, change the nomenclature, and it becomes an assembly where it is permissible for women to ask questions and speak, even though the very same ingredients are present. That is exactly the type of sophistry and mental gymnastics that one must engage in to attempt to justify an unscriptural practice. This is precisely why Jesus condemned the Pharisees of his day. They robbed themselves in divine authority and substituted their own desires and opinions for the written law of God. (Mark 7:9-13) A modern translation renders verse 9 as saying, “And he said to them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!” They honored the law of God when it was theologically convenient for them. However, they twisted and disregarded it when they wanted to honor their tradition.

Sunday School is a man-made tradition that has no basis in the word of God, old or new Testaments. Women are strictly forbidden from speaking, teaching, or asking questions when the church assembles for edification. (I Corinthians 14:23-40; I Timothy 2:11-12) Her activities in teaching the word of God are limited to the private sphere and never is she to publicly teach! If these brethren are going to try to defend their Sunday Schools as private assemblies where “let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto to speak” doesn’t apply, they are going to have to be a lot more careful. The fact of the matter is, both the assembly described in this writing and their weekly Bible classes are just as public as Sunday morning worship. They are both advertised publicly, overseen by the elders of the church, and the public is not only invited but ENCOURAGED to attend. How inconsistent it is to bar women’s vocal participation from one but not the other!

Brethren, we had better “examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith” (11 Cor. 13:5). Our goal should be to do God’s will at all times instead of picking and choosing when we want the regulations of divine authority to be binding. These brethren who left the “liberal” church to attend the conservative” church need to think about the inconsistency of the conservatism” that they have now embraced, and truly return to the old paths (Jer 6:16).

TIME

By JOHN SMITH

One of the most valuable possessions we have in this life is time. How much emphasis do we place on it? What are we doing with it? Do we as individuals spend even as much time in direct service to God and working for the

Church as we waste; as the Church are we taking advantage of each opportunity time presents us with?

Jesus recognized the value of time when he said, “I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; (Jno.

9:4). Realizing how quickly the night of death could come, what a great lesson he was seeking to convey. A lesson we fail to fathom the depths of many times. Though in social life and work one is commended for the extraordinary efforts put forth, when it comes to the work that is for the One who is most interested in us, without doing injustice, the term laziness could sometimes be used. Does this please God? The Apostle Paul wrote, "Redeeming the time for the days are evil". In general, his writings explain activity in service for the Master and lash out against idleness. Idleness predominates in many lives where it is not suspected, for, being a vice which terminates itself, it may be enjoyed without injury to others and, therefore, is not watched like fraud which endangers other's property, or like pride which naturally seeks its gratification in other's inferiority.

Idleness is the bane of body and mind, the chief author of all mischief. The devil reposes upon it, for the mind is naturally active, and if it is not occupied about some honest business, it rushes into mischief or sinks into melancholy. There is nothing half so wretched as a lazy man, one who does not regard his time as being important. It has been said that the Turks say the devil tempts everybody, but the

idle man tempts the devil. Sinful opportunities seem to present themselves when we care not about using our time on the immediate needs. A loafer does not go far until there is everything of ill repute lurking his door.

If you want to be nothing, just wait to be somebody. That man, who waits for an opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wishes and finally regret his useless intentions. While we have time, let us get busy and do something - develop what we have, even if it is only on talent.

The days of our years are swiftly running out. Minutes fast move into hours, hours into days, days into weeks, then months and years have flown. Ere long a life is far spent. Will it, with you, be a life well spent in service for the Master or one 'in which your days, weeks, months and years slipped by carrying wasted opportunities? In regarding your time, substitute for your idle moments a work well pleasing to Him who loved and died for you.

Benjamin Franklin once said, "If time of all things be the greatest, then wasting time is our greatest waste." But one far greater than Benjamin Franklin said, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." (Psa. 90:12)

THE RIGHTEOUS

By EDWIN S. MORRIS

The word righteous comes from a Greek work *dikaiois* which means "righteous observing divine and human laws; one who is such as he ought to be; in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God." It is those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ and are keeping His commands of whom we speak in this writing. There are several things we want to notice about the righteous briefly.

First, "**The Righteous powerfully influenced God.**" This is very evident in Gen. 18:23-33, where God had said that He would destroy the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham, a righteous man of God, came to God and ask Him in verse 24: "Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city; wilt thou also destroy and spare not the place for fifty righteous therein?" Then he came to God again and asked for forty five's sake, and then forty, thirty, twenty and then down to ten, God told him if there were even ten He would spare the cities. In this, we see the influence of this righteous man. Today the righteous can likewise have influence upon God. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We, as righteous people do not realize how much we can influence God by our godly lives.

Second, **God succors and supports the righteous.** In Prov. 2:7, 8: "He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the ways of the saints." God will always help and support those who are His. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous. In 1 Pet. 3:12: "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous." He is ever watching, protecting, helping and caring for His own. Paul desired to be found in Christ. In Phil. 3:9: "And be found in Him." The word "found" means discovered or proved to be. Paul wants his life to demonstrate that he is in Christ. "In Him," that is in Christ as part of Christ, as a

member of His body. His desire was that he might demonstrate or prove by his life that he was in Christ. Should Christ come at any moment that he would be found in Christ, living a righteous life. With these few thoughts in mind let us proceed and learn some characteristics of the righteous.

How can we know whether or not we are righteous? Are there any evidences that will assure us that we are righteous? Let us now consider some evidences of **righteousness**. The first evidence I shall notice is that we "Are dead to sin" (Rom. 6:1-7). In verse 7, Paul says, "For he that is dead is freed from sin." The word dead means "to be wholly alienated from a thing, and freed from all connection with it." "For he that hath died is released from sin." If a slave died, he was free from service to his master. He has no further connection or obligation to his master, but has been completely severed from him. This term is used to show that when we die to sin we are severed from it completely. Sin rules us no more. When we become dead to sin we should give it up completely. So many today, though, have never severed themselves completely from sin. If we have severed ourselves completely, that is evidence we are freed from sin. If we still indulge in sin that is evidence that we are not righteous. God requires us to give up all and serve Him and when we do we are righteous. We cannot go along with the great mass of mankind and be righteous. We cannot participate in the worldly pleasures and be righteous. We are to sever ourselves from sin just as the slave was severed from his master at death. Sin is no longer our master. We live righteous lives for the Lord. Christian friend, many are deceived in thinking they can continue to countenance and participate along with the world and still be righteous. To be righteous we are to keep God's commands, (1 Jno. 2:15-17).

Next evidence of righteousness is that **we are fellow-citizens with the saints**. In Eph. 2:19: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." The word "fellow-citizens" means possessing the same citizenship with others. We are of the same household, of like precious faith. All of us living a godly, consecrated, Christian life. We are not of the kingdoms of this world but of the Kingdom of God. We possess like citizenship, and all enjoy the same privileges in Christ.

Our next evidence of being righteous is that we are **New Creatures**. In 2 Cor. 5:17, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." The word **creature** here is used of a man regenerated through Christ. Thayer remarks on the word "new;" "all things are new, previously non-existent, begin to be far different from what they were before." It is sad but true that many make very little change when they are supposed to be "**new creatures**." How can we claim to be new creatures, when our lives are very little different from the world? If our hearts are filled with envy, strife, hatred, jealousy, self-will, malice, etc., our desires and affections are on things of this world, and we participate in all kinds of worldly pleasure, are we "**new creatures**?" I fear not. A **new creature** minds the things of the spirit and desires the things of the spirit.

We are imitators of Christ. In Phil. 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ." Let his thought be in you; Be constantly thinking this in yourselves. We are to have the mind of Christ and mold our lives after Him. As

Peter said in I Pet. 1:14, "Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance." We are to fashion our lives and minds after Christ and not after carnal things. In all things we are to have the mind of Christ. In our dealings with sinners and each other, we are to have the mind of Christ. In our service and in sacrificing we are to have the mind of Christ. We are to think Christ, live Christ, work for Christ, dedicate our whole body, soul, and spirit to Christ. We are to imitate Him and look to Him as our Master, King, Ruler, Saviour, Leader, Guide, and Counselor, at all times. We are to obey His precepts, commands, and examples without murmuring or complaining. As He obeyed His Father, we are to obey Him.

The last evidence I shall notice is that we are **Servants of Righteousness**. In Rom. 6:19, "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity; unto iniquity even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." The Revised Version reads, "I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification." The word **yield** means to place beside or near; to present or show. Now, as children of God they were to prove by their lives that they were servants of righteousness. Let us all exhibit these evidences of righteousness.—*OPA 1960*

THE INDIVIDUAL "COMMUNION" CUP

By CECIL E. SMITH

The expression "individual communion" cup is a strange contradiction of terms. It is not easy to see how a thing can be "common" and "individual" at the same time. The substitution of the individual for the common cup is as great and radical a change as putting sprinkling for immersion. Contrary to Scripture, it originated as a supposed hygienic measure, in the minds of some it is endorsed from motives less worthy. Happily the idea is not spreading, for people are attached to this beautiful service and will not change it without some thought. It is gratifying to note that the Methodist Episcopal general conference has just voted down a resolution to approve of this form of serving the communion. (The preceding was taken from *The Christian Century*, May, 24, 1900. It shows a little bit about the history of "individual cups." Contrary to what many say today, individual cups had their beginning in the late 1800's among the denominations of the world. They caused

division among the Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Methodist Episcopalians among others. This happened before they were adopted by many in the churches of Christ. This can all be documented in history. A number of people have mentioned the need for historical pieces such as the one above to be recorded in tract form. Those who advocate the use of more than one cup per assembly will often say that the instrumental music advocates are the cause of the division for they introduced such at the expense of division. The same is true when it comes to more than one cup on the Lord's Table. If you have anything of interest that may have happened in your area please make a note of it and mail it to me. I am especially interested in old newspaper articles and the like showing who caused the division that exists this day.

Please send all information to Cecil E. Smith, 1285 Lucky Lane NW, Brookhaven MS 39601.

BUILDING A CHRISTIAN HOME

continued from page 1

owe it to our children to see that they have a chance at a fair education. But I believe it is far more important that we see to it that they have an opportunity to meet other Christian boys and girls to associate with, and from among whom to choose their companions for life.

Boys and girls should consider the background, religion, reputation, health and temperament of those with whom

they contemplate marriage.

Editor's note: This was the first of twelve articles Brother Gay wrote beginning in the February 1946 issue of *OPA*. Each succeeding month another one was published until all twelve were in print. Later, a tract was printed by Bob Strain containing them. That is difficult to obtain now and so we plan to reprint one each month until all have been reprinted. Be sure your subscription is up to date so that you don't miss an issue.—DLK

EDITORIAL*continued from page 2*

statement and shows it was in the context which I have shown. I spent many hours studying with Brother Gay and I know what he believed. I have written this to exonerate him about this statement and put it in proper perspective. Brother Gay should not be quoted as though he upheld the idea that it is all right to go to places where they use digressives in their worship services, as long as they will worship scripturally while we are there. He certainly did not believe that.

As Brother Don McCord said in his article, "There are many things I do not understand." He meant, I believe, our inconsistency in teaching one thing and doing something else. (Romans 2:21, etc.) Brethren, we are consumed with ambiguity. There is one thing we need to learn and practice as teachers and preachers and that is: the Bible means the same thing to everyone. It is wrong to say the Bible means one thing to this fellow but something

else to another. The Word of God is clear and understandable and if we do not take it for what it says (abiding by the same) what kind of future does the church have?

I hope what I have written as clarification will help to make it plain what Brother Gay said and meant. Otherwise, well-meaning and sincere men could take his statement out of context, no harm intended, but do an injustice to Brother Gay and what he once said.

I personally do not believe that we can scripturally go to congregations where they call on digressives in their worship knowingly and justify it by saying: "We had good intentions." Paul said, "And we beseech you brethren, to know them that labor among you..." (1 Thessalonians 5:12) All men who abide in the doctrine of Christ can have, and should have, good intentions. However, good intentions do not establish the law of Christ. Those who do not abide by what is written, in the work and worship of the church, have no place in our pulpits!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In Memory Of Lauren Johnson

In memory of their precious daughter, Lauren Johnson, we would like to thank the family for their generous donation to the *Old Paths Advocate* in honor of her memory. We deeply regret their tremendous loss and sorrow and continue to remember them in our thoughts and prayers. Again thank you for your help and concern for the paper. It was truly an act of kindness to remember the welfare of others at such a difficult time.—DLK

Looking For A Preacher

The church of LaMarque, TX has a need for a full-time preacher with the ability to meet people in reaching out to lead them to become Christians. We are looking for a long term commitment in getting the Lords' word to the people. If interested contact Dr. J.B. Barfoot, 13531 28th St., Santa Fe, TX 77510 or call 409-925-8869.

In The Footprints Of Pioneer Preachers A Summer Retreat

This event will be held in Lexington, KY July 31-Aug. 5 and will be conducted by Brother Richard Bunner. Places to be visited will be Cane Ridge where Barton Stone preached. Broadway Church in Lexington where J. W. McGarvey preached as well as the site of the Campbell-Rice Debate. There will also be house to house visits offering a bible correspondence course. Each evening will be spent discussing how to be effective in evangelism. If interested contact Richard Bunner at (859) 268-8608 or write him at P.O. Box 22774, Lexington, KY 40522.

A Star In The Fast

A summary of the history of the past 50 years of the Eastern Labor Day Meeting 1948-1998. Only a few copies are left. The book contains 322 pages of photographs. Price is \$6.50 including postage. Send orders to Carl R. Diamond, 722 Coal River Rd., St. Albans, WV 25177.

New Songbook Is Ready

We understand the new book is now available. It is called *Tuneful Tidings*. Our information is that the price is still \$3.00 each plus postage. Order from M. Lynwood Smith, 2789 Loyd Star Lane, Northwest, Wesson, MS. When you receive your books verify that the order is correct and send Lynwood a check for them adding the amount of postage you see on the box. It will be appreciated if you will mail the payment the same day you receive the books.

Sermons and Writings Of Homer L. King

We understand that many have been ordering the book of sermons. If you have not yet sent for one of these, why not do so now. The price is only \$7.00 each and for a hardbound book in today's world, that is a bargain. Many of Brother King's sermons are contained in the book in outline form. Also included are several selected articles he wrote during the more than thirty years he served as publisher of Old Paths Advocate. If you remember him, you will enjoy reading this book. Please order only from Helen King, 1061 N. Pilgrim St., Stockton, CA 95025.

Directory Update April 21, 2000

Please send Directory updates to Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, (916) 726-8507. Email: papagreg@aol.com

Dothan, Alabama. New building under construction on Hwy. 52W. Add: Charles Marsh, 1471 Hubbard Road, Newton, AL 36352, (334) 692-5756. New address & phone: Kevin Presley, P.O. Box 762, Dothan, AL 36302, (334) 678-8999 (also correct in Preachers List)

Caldwell, Idaho. Now known as the Canyon County Church of Christ and is located in Nampa, ID. Contact information is the same. Call ahead for services. They are currently meeting in the schoolhouse until their new building is completed

Shreveport, LA. 3200 Bert Kouns Industrial Loop. Add name of church: Midway Church of Christ. Correct last words of directions: remove "out turn West." Add "and turn West." Remove G.B. Futch. Add Jerry Tettleton, 9125 Blom Blvd., Shreveport, LA 71118, (318) 686-5198

Doniphan, MO new location: Town and Country Church of Christ. Town & Country Subdivision. Country Road 142-E 20-A, Doniphan, MO 63935. Old 142, 2.5 miles East of Ripley County Courthouse. Sunday 10 AM. Contact information is the same except correct Bro. Mock's phone # (573) 354-2587

Manassas, VA. North Virginia Church of Christ. No longer meeting due to the death of Bro. Brown. How sad.

Are You Interested?

Clergy who opted out of social security can elect back in, starting this year. Coverage under social security will be prospective. Those who want to rejoin the system must do so either this year or next.

OUR DEPARTED

FIELDS—King H. Fields was born September 29, 1914 in the Bell Center Community to John Wellington Fields and Lucy Jane (Mason) Fields. He passed away April 10, 2000 at the National Healthcare Center in Joplin, Missouri following a lengthy illness. He was 85. He was a member of the Leawood congregation in Joplin and was a life long resident of the Newton-Jasper County area. He married Fern Shuey on August 21, 1938 in Girard, Kansas. She preceded him in death on January 26, 1999. One son, Bob Fields, rural Neosho; three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren survive him. Members of the Leawood congregation provided the singing. The writer officiated. (The recent passing of Sister Fields and now the passing of Bro. King Fields bring back vivid memories that extend back to the mid-sixties when we lived in Joplin. Norita and I will always remember and treasure the "quick wit" of Fern (Brownie) and the stable and consistent leadership exemplified by King.)—Jack Cutter

BROWN—Joseph Brown of Manassas, VA was the son of Brother Elbert R. Brown, Jr. and Sister Margie Cobb Brown of East Gate Church of Christ, Roanoke, VA where the family of four sons was raised and obeyed the gospel. Survivors include his beloved wife of 54 years, Myrtle Louise Brown, one daughter, Linda Lawler and two sons, James K. and Ronald, three brothers, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. I was honored to fulfill the request to speak for this beloved brother in Christ and exhort the family to continue in the faith and look for a grand reunion some day. Brother Joseph has gone to a beautiful place. His absence will be felt a long, long time. He was a great friend, a well armed soldier standing tall in the duties of a Christian. With an abundance of beautiful flowers and a host of family and friends gathered at the funeral home in Manassas, VA, we bid farewell to this dear, kind, gentle husband, father and brother in Christ on April 7, 2000. Burial was at Stafford Memorial Park, Stafford, VA.—J. W. Kornegay

RENIER—Minnie Marie Lager Renier was born March 16, 1911 in Fort Scott, KS. She passed away February 3, 2000 at a Rogers, AR health care facility at the age of 88. Fred & Minnie Renier were married in Springfield, MO, March 25, 1932. Fred & Minnie lived in Joplin, MO from

1961 to 1993. After Fred's death on December 25, 1993, She moved to Wichita, KS to be near her granddaughter, Michele Hanchett. In 1997, her granddaughter & husband moved to Rogers, AR taking Minnie with them. Besides her husband Fred, she is preceded in death by her parents Claus Oscar & Carrie Pearl Lager; a son, Don Reiner; a daughter, Leona Schultz; an infant daughter, Shirley Ann Renier; two brothers, Lawrence and Marian Lager and a sister, Helen Taylor. Survivors include a daughter, Evelyn Bond of Joplin; ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Minnie was a member of the Leawood congregation in Joplin. Leawood provided the singers for her funeral service and comfort to the family. Interment was in the Burkhart Cemetery near Racine, MO. Larry Dahnke was in charge of this service. (In the mid-sixties, we lived three years in the Joplin area. During this time, Fred & Minnie Renier were a part of the nucleus that comprised the Joplin congregation (later Leawood). My wife & I have memories we will always cherish resulting from those days many years ago.)—Jack Cutter

SANDERS—Bob Sanders was born on April 11, 1914 and departed this life on April 6, 2000. Brother Bob was a member of the Church in Denison Texas. He was born in Indianola Oklahoma and passed away in Denison Texas. On Oct. 20, 1934 Bob married Lina Foreman. Brother Sanders was a Gospel preacher. He worked with the Orange Cove and Porterville congregations in California, the McAlester congregation in Oklahoma, and the Denison congregation in Texas. I must say that Bob Sanders stood firm for the truth. Survivors are children Wayne Sanders of Colbert, Waymon Sanders of Denison, John E. Sanders of Kingsburg, CA, Louise Sanders, and Larechia Ellen Wood; sister Maggie Batchelor of Tupelo, OK; brother Basil Sanders of Stonewall, OK; 11 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; and 1 great-great-grandchild. On April 10, the body was laid to rest in the Cedarlawn Cemetery. Writer attempted to speak words of encouragement and warning.—Vaden Morgan

REEVES—Cecil Howard Reeves of Kinston, AL entered this world on December 12, 1946. He lived in south Alabama for many years of his life, worshipping with the church at Lowery. He was a dedicated child of God. He stepped onto eternity's shore on Saturday, February 19, 2000 at the age of 53, after a brief period of illness. His death came as a shock to many of us. He married Linda Martin in 1965 and spent the 35 years until his death as a faithful and loving husband. He and Linda had two children, Anthony Reeves of Kinston, AL and Melissa Bowden of Prattville, AL. One only had to be present at the visitation or at the overflowing funeral service to know what people in this area thought of Howard. He was a fine man who garnered the respect of anyone who knew him. Howard was not a very vocal person in the church, but in his quiet way, was a great leader and source of stability. He was always working behind the scenes to try to bring peace between troubled brethren. The pew that he leaves vacant now seems so empty and conspicuous. The church will sorely miss him. Our sincere sympathy to the Reeves family. This writer conducted the service.—Kevin W. Presley

JACKSON—Loman “Scott” Jackson was born on January 2, 1923 to George and Elsie Jackson in Mt. Judy Arkansas. Scott was the sixth of nine children. Scott was married to Joanne L. Baker Hossack Smith on August 7, 1978, his wife of 21 years. Scott is survived by his wife Joanne of Bakersfield, his son and daughter-in-law Dennis and Joanne Jackson of Sumner, Washington, stepson and daughter-in-law Steve and Betty Smith of Bakersfield, stepson and daughter-in-law Stanley and Nancy Smith of Lancaster, Texas, brother Ashley, sisters, Hazel Dyer, Bonnie Johnson, Hildred Childers and Mildred Forest, grandchildren Ashley Jackson of Buckley, Washington, Mark, Ambria and Michael Smith of Bakersfield and Joshua and Jessica Smith of Lancaster, Texas. Scott was preceded in death by his parents George and Elsie Jackson, his sisters Clara Hefley and Helen Campbell, brother Odell Jackson, stepson Billy Smith and grandson Justin Jackson. Scott was baptized along with his wife Joanne in 1974 and remained a faithful member of the Church of Christ until he passed away on Monday, February 21, 2000 at the age of 77. A memorial service was held at the Planz Rd. congregation in Bakersfield, CA on Saturday Feb. 26th where Scott regularly attended. Beautiful congregational singing was conducted by Bob Smith and Aaron DeGough and this writer conducted the services. Scott began to get sick about seven years ago and suffered every day till his death. We all knew there was something wrong but didn't know how to help him other than to pray for him. Scott always prayed for the Lord to make him better and ease the pain. Although there is a void in our hearts now, we are at peace with ourselves knowing Scott no longer suffers with pain and that he is awaiting Judgement day. Scott will certainly be missed by all.—Terry W. Osburn

HALLET—In memory of Dave Hallet. Dave was born to his parents, Julion and Alice Hallet on May 19, 1951 at French Camp, California. Dave grew up in Manteca, California and in 1969 he graduated from East Union High School. After joining the Air Force in 1970, he married his high school sweetheart, Jeanne Garoutte on December 26, 1970. This past December would have been their 29th wedding anniversary, a union that was blessed with the birth of one daughter, Reneea. I don't remember when it was, but Dave said that his daughter Reneea was the sweetest gift of his life. It was no secret; anyone who knew Dave, knew him to be a man in love with his wife and family. Dave did many wonderful things in his life, most of those things were for others and for many he had been like a bridge over troubled waters. I know the greatest thing Dave ever did was to yield himself over to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Dave was a faithful brother in Christ. He was an active gospel teacher and song leader in his home congregation of Albany, OR. Dave loved to study the bible, and gave good gospel lessons. Dave loved the church; that fact was evidenced by the way he cared for his fellow Christian and fellow man. One of the greatest things Dave passed on to others was a genuine work ethic. Dave could always be depended upon to take care of the church building. You have heard the saying, “If it ain't broke, don't fix it.” Well around Albany, Oregon they said, “If it is broke, call Dave!” There are many more wonderful things I could say about this soldier of Christ. He will be missed. On

November 30, 1999, George David Hallet passed from this life after a long struggle with cancer. He was 48 years old. Dave was my buddy and my brother in Christ; it was my privilege to preach his funeral service.—David A. Stands

PERRY—Sister Corrine Perry was born in Everton, MO on February 23, 1914. She passed from this life on February 10, 2000 in Modesto, CA. She is survived by her husband, Kenneth, two sons and two daughters. She also leaves one sister, 14 grandchildren, 36 great-grandchildren and 8 great-great-grandchildren. She had been a member of the church all her adult life. For about the last 30 years she and Kenneth attended the church at Modesto, CA. For the last several, her health was on a continual decline and it was so sad to see her body waste away. At the same time it was an inspiration and an example of her faith to see her present at the services. She can now rest with the hope of the resurrection to be with the Lord. Bro. Richard DeGough and I were honored to assist the family in this difficult hour.—Rod Wilson

LOWRANCE—Alta Faye Lowrance, 85, long time member of the 19th Street church in San Angelo, TX passed away Monday, February 14 after a lengthy illness. She was a homemaker and is survived by her husband David Lowrance. She was a good Christian woman and wife. Although her body was slowly destroyed by the merciless disease of diabetes, she never lost her faith and her patient attitude. She will be greatly missed.—Dwain Morrison

SMITH—Richard M. “Smitty” Smith was born March 9, 1920 and departed this life February 27, 2000 at his home in Enterprise, AL. Smitty obeyed the gospel late in life, and brought a breath of fresh air to the church where he worshipped. His dedication, convictions, and exemplary life were instrumental in leading others to Christ. I counted him among the dearest of my friends. It is so hard to give up someone who seems to be so needed. But such decisions are not ours to make. He is survived by his wife Mary Bedsole Smith, two daughters and sons-in-laws Jane and Ricky Martin, Jennifer and Abel Rodriguez, one son, Jack Smith, one brother, and five sisters along with several grandchildren and a host of friends and brethren. The memorial service was held from the new church building in Opp, AL with burial in the Lowery Cemetery. The beautiful floral offering was a tribute to the esteem in which he was held. This writer conducted the service assisted by Rick Martin and Kevin Presley.—Ronny F. Wade

HAM—Harold Ottis Ham passed away on March 20, 2000 at Norman, OK. He was born at Goldsby, OK on January 25, 1929 to Otis T. and Mesia Mae Ham, and was 71 years of age at his death. He was a member of the church at Washington, OK for many years. He put up a valiant fight against cancer. Doctors did everything they could to prolong his life, but to no avail. Harold had a friendly outgoing disposition and could visit and talk to strangers as if they were old friends. It was his practice to go to Norman to the restaurant of a morning and sit and visit with people who were there. He got acquainted with several highway patrolmen. The conversation was sometimes on the Bible. Harold was not connected with law enforcement,

but at his funeral to show their respect there were several Oklahoma Highway Troopers in their state patrol cars, two plain clothes detectives, and the McClain County Sheriff. Harold left behind a wife of over fifty years, Zexia Dean, of the home; two sons Harold Dean and Howard Otis, and a daughter, La Fa Johnson, all of Goldsby, OK as well as a daughter-in-law, a son-in-law and two grandchildren. He was the brother of Bob Ham of Joplin, MO; Neva Heath of Norman, OK; Faye McAlister of Washington, OK; and Darlene Roberts of Cole, OK. Harold was brother-in-law to Minnie Ham, Popeye Heath, Mark McAlister and Jim Roberts. He also left behind other relatives and friends. Members of the church provided the singing and Brandon Stevens and I officiated at the memorial service. Harold's remains were laid to rest in the Washington cemetery.—Paul O. Nichols.



James A. Hickey, 805 Sandy Trail, Allen, TX 75002, 972-396-8968—Since last report I have preached in Mexicali, Baja Calif., Mexico, Garland, TX (Spanish), Duncanville, Weatherford, Glendora St., San Antonio, Tyler, and Fossil Creek, Ft. Worth, as well as other congregations in Texas and Oklahoma. I continue to do personal work at the local church in Allen. It was with great joy that we were able to lead our neighbors; Charles and Jean Hamby to the Truth in Worship. I also performed the wedding ceremony for two recent converts; Chris and Dominica Tittle. The month of June I will be working with the church in Mexicali, where 2 souls were baptized into Christ in December. Our International radio broadcasts continues to get responses. Lately I have received positive letters from Mexico, North Carolina, Wyoming, Nigeria, Arkansas, and Oklahoma City, OK. Council Hill, OK supports the broadcasts over WWCR Nashville, TN. The Spanish program is at 15.685 MHZ on Fridays at 4:30 p.m., The other programs are on Sat. 10:00 am over 15.685 MHZ, and Sun. at 1:30 p.m. over 12.160 MHZ. We would welcome any assistance with this evangelistic effort. The broadcasts cost \$ 50 for each program. The 100,000 watt broadcast has an effective radiated power of 2.5 million watts. We are happy to have our son, Brett, and his family preaching in Tyler, Texas. May God bless all of those congregations that continue to support our efforts to strengthen the work in Mexicali.

Andrew Weaver, 1800 Hwy. 72 E. Apt. #4, drewmaniac2000@hotmail.com—This is the first time I have submitted a report for the *OPA*. I have always enjoyed reading the various reports from brethren working out in

the field. I believe they can at times be a great source of encouragement. In November I was able to go to Paducah, KY and assist Bro. Miles King in a meeting there. He was gracious enough to allow me to give a lesson and to give all of his readings. His willingness to speak to anyone and everyone about the Bible and the church has always been encouraging to me. I thank him for opening the door of opportunity for me to both gain invaluable experience in personal work, and in allowing me to preach at the gospel meeting he was holding. I definitely want to thank Gene and Nancy Anderson for opening up their home to me. I have known both for what seems to be most of my life, and they have always been more than hospitable. I also thank Isaac and Geeta Bunner for their kind hospitality while I was there. It was a pleasure to meet Shelby Taulbee while I was there; it is obvious he is a help to the Paducah congregation, as well as with his home congregation. Aside from my regular preaching appointments here in Rolla, I have been preaching at many of the different congregations in the surrounding area for the past year or so. The brethren at Brumley, MO have been very supportive of me, having me come once a month to preach for them. Others such as: Lebanon, Eldon, Neosho, North Springfield, and Miami, OK have allowed me the opportunity to preach as well. It was a pleasure to be able to hear Don King at a gospel meeting in Lebanon. It turned out to be a very fruitful effort. One night I was there, Don baptized two young girls and one young man. The following day I heard that their father had been baptized as well. The work here at Rolla has been doing fairly well. I have been talking to a Baptist preacher who works where I do, and he has expressed interest in studying with us. He seems to be very open minded, and throughout his life he has become more and more conservative. Hopefully, through God's Word, he will see the error of his ways. As always, pray for me and all those within the body of our Lord.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, May 6—Things are going well in the work of the Lord here at Kansas City. The young lady with whom we have been studying obeyed the gospel recently. She was raised as a Catholic, but when introduced to the teaching of the Bible she immediately saw the difference. She attends all the services of the church and is very eager to learn. Our crowds have grown to the point that we saw the need to add more parking spaces. We have paved and striped a large section of the property in addition to what we already had, more than doubling the parking spaces. The Lord has been so good to bless our efforts. We continue to plant and to water and God continues to give the increase. The Lord willing, we will be at Turlock, CA for the annual Memorial Day meeting (May 21-28). I feel honored to have been asked to do the preaching, and we look forward to it. The Lord bless all our righteous efforts.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, E-mail: old_paths@juno.com. May 12, 2000—Since last report we have preached at home several times and in Santa Rosa, CA where the small church is struggling to maintain herself. Presently, Brother Wayne McKamie is holding a meeting for us at Fremont and doing a good job, as usual. It is a pleasure to have Wayne and Jean with us.

The Lord willing, we are to hold a meeting at LaGrange, GA June 3-11 and on to Greenville, SC June 12-18. We look forward also to Ft. Smith, AR, Fairview, LA and Nashville, TN later. We anticipate attending the 4th of July meeting at Lebanon, MO this year and hope to see many of you there. Please, pray for us.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, May 9—The meeting at Seneca, MO closed with two confessions. Crowds were large throughout the meeting with excellent cooperation from nearby churches. Our stay with Gary and Marie Green was enjoyable. Next, we were at Jamesville near Nixa, MO for an enjoyable meeting. I have been going here for many years. The church has made great strides and continues to grow both in number and strength. Brother Dan Paulson is now working with them and doing a good job. A number of gospel preachers attended and encouraged us in both meetings. The Lord willing we go next to London, KY May 14-21, Goshen, OH May 28-June 4. Hillcrest near Brookhaven, MS June 11-18, June 26-July 3 (Annual 4th of July meeting in Lebanon, MO) and July 9-16 San Angelo, TX.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt. 1, Box 717, Mt. Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, May 3—Since last reporting to the OPA I've been with the churches in Pleasant Grove, IN and 85th and Euclid in Kansas City, MO. It was delightful to be in both places. Both meetings were well attended. While in IN, I made my home with sister Wanda Fagg, a more gracious host couldn't have been found. Then in Kansas City, I stayed with Mike and Beth Criswell, very dear friends. I thank both places for their invitation and both homes for their hospitality. Bro. Ronny Wade just finished a meeting for us at Blue Springs the middle part of April. As you would expect, his sermons were timely, to the point, and very uplifting. Due to our child's heart condition, I was forced to cancel the meeting in Ada, OK. I regretted that deeply, as I was looking forward to seeing everyone at my old home. I owe the brethren at Ada so much for all their continued support, morally and financially, since I started preaching eight years ago. I also want to thank the brethren for your calls, concern, and most importantly your prayers during our recent scare with the baby. My experience has made me appreciate what others, even very dear friends, have gone through and the great losses they have suffered. I'm looking forward to meetings

in Bloomington, IN June 4-11; Anderson, MO June 12-18; and Scotland, AR June 21-25. May the Lord bless us in his service.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd. Live Oak, CA 95953, May 6—We just arrived back from a spring trip back east. I preached Sunday, March 26 at the congregation in Broomfield, CO where I enjoyed being with Jim Crouch who is working there with them. There we traveled to Missouri for a meeting at Neosho, MO which proved to be very enjoyable. It was so delightful to work with Roger Owens and the congregation there. He is excited about the Lord's work. It was a pleasure to stay in Roger and Sue's home. Their hospitality is something to note. Not only did they take care of us they also welcomed into their home a great number of young men and women who came over for part of the meeting. Glen and Roberta VanStavern and Jim and Pat Loudermilk brought their motor homes down and spent the first weekend of the meeting, helping us get the meeting off to a good start. They have blessed many meetings with this practice. Doyle and Nancy Elliott (Nancy is my niece) from Bakersfield, CA congregation were on vacation in their camper and were there for most of the meeting. Surrounding congregations blessed the meeting with their attendance. I want to thank John Scott and John Anderson from the Burkhardt congregation for helping so much. A number of preachers attended the meeting including Clovis Cook, Roy Lee Criswell, Billy Dickinson, Richard Frizzell, Miles King, Ken Middick, Nelson Nichols, Dennis Smith and Ronny Wade. From there we went to the Chapel Grove Congregation in Tennessee and enjoyed another great meeting. The building was full every service. The elders and deacons have been working and the attendance and spiritual interests show it. It was good to visit with Fred and Zula Orten once again. At the age of 96 Fred must be our oldest living elder. He has served well. It was good to work with Johnny Fisher and Paul Walker again. Chris Enos, a young preacher there was a delight to be around. Mark Deatherage also got to come over for two nights of the meeting. On the way home I preached at San Angelo and Midland, TX. Also I attended the last weekend of Wayne Fussell's meeting in Bakersfield, CA. We are back home and working with the Olivehurst congregation. The brethren here have done well in leading this group of wonderful Christians. God bless all of you.

THE WOMEN'S BIBLE REVISTED

By BRETT HICKEY

A hundred years after Elizabeth Cady Stanton published *The Woman's Bible* the feminist movement prepares for the centennial celebration with the ultimate victory - a "gender-accurate" translation put out not by feminist organization, but by a recognized Bible Version. With this type of error now infiltrating the NIV, it is hard not to think about lesbian Virginia Mollenkott's relationship with the NIV.

In *KJV Only Controversy*, James R. White quotes Dr. Kenneth Barker (NIV Executive Director) in defense of the Mollenkott fiasco.

It is true that in the earliest stages of translation work on the NIV... Virginia Mollenkott was consulted briefly and only in a minor way on matters of English style ... Nothing was known of her lesbian views ... But it must be stressed that she did not influence the NIV translators and editors in any of their final decisions.

Those who have skimmed through Mollenkott's books' may still be concerned that the NIV is subconsciously catering to Mollenkott's views. While Mollenkott may not have directly influenced the NIV, the similarities between her views and aspects of the NIV are striking.

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The NIV improves on the KJV rendering of "gay clothing" (Jas. 2:3) with the translation "fine clothes." With that in mind some wondered why a translation striving for clarity would be so ambiguous in I Cor. 6:9? Why put "homosexual offenders" instead of "homosexuals" for the Greek word *arsenokoites* in I Cor. 6:9? "Offenders" is not found in any Greek text that I am aware of.

Miss Mollenkott dismisses Lev. 20:13 as ceremonial law. She believes consensual homosexuality is not sin. She says any version condemning homosexuality is in error. She says the NIV reading can be taken as "homosexuals who offend (rapists)" and so is acceptable in her eyes.

Another Mollenkott view apparently shared by the NIV is the need for a gender-neutral Bible. Her books advocate the very corrections found in the *New International Version Inclusive Language Edition (NIVILE)*.

Athenian Philosophy Or The Old Paths In contrast to the wisdom conveyed by Jeremiah (6:16) is the Athenian pastime confronted by Paul in Acts 17:2 1. As Pagans, they were right to listen to the "new doctrine" of Jesus Christ. However, for Christians to "spend their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing" is less than commendable.

Zondervan Publishers' "13 million" headquarters building is a modern day Mars' Hill. In fact, Zondervan is so enthralled with being on the cutting edge that they have gone too far too fast even for the progressive mindset of the denominational world.

Dr. D.A. Waite of the Dean Burgon Society reports,

On March 29, 1997, The World magazine printed what they termed an "EXCLUSIVE" on THE STEALTH BIBLE. By this term, they meant, "The popular NIV Bible is quietly going 'genderneutral.'" The "cover story" article was... "*The Feminist Seduction Of the Evangelicals.*"

Another article appeared in the April 19, 1997 of *World* magazine defending their previous article. This article included a picture of the NIV Inclusive Language Edition piloted in England. The picture was provided in response to denials from Zondervan and criticisms from the NIV's copyright holder (International Bible Society).

Dr. D.A. Waite cites 136 examples of the new, "gender-accurate" NIV published in England, but indefinitely postponed for U.S. consumption. Here are a few comparisons between the KJV and the 1995-1996 NIVILE:

Psalm 8:4 – What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him. (KJV)

What are mere mortals that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? (NIVILE)

Psalm 34:20 – He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. (KJV)

He protects all their bones, not one of them will be broken. (NIVILE)

Matthew 4:4 – Man shall not live be bread alone... (KJV)

Men and women do not live on bread alone... (NIVILE)

Acts 10:2 – Stand up; I myself also am a man. (KJV)

"Stand up," he said, "I am only human myself." (NIVILE)

I Corinthians 2:11 – For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? (KJV)

For who knows the thoughts of another human being except the person's own spirit within? (NIVILE)

Hebrews 7:10 – For he was yet in the loins of his father... (KJV)

Levi was still in the body of his ancestor. (NIVILE)

James 1:8* – A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. (KJV)

They are double-minded and unstable in all they do. (NIVILE)

Many of the gender changes in the new NIV are disturbing because they are unwarranted. Other changes are inflammatory because they are blatant mistranslations.

For instance, in I Cor. 2:11 by changing "man" to "human being" the beauty of this familiar passage is destroyed. Here, at least, the Greek word *anthropos* could support either rendering. But why add unnecessary confusion?

Meanwhile, in James alone, the NIVILE inserts four gender "corrections" unsupported by Stephens (1550) or the Nestle Greek text [Jas. 1:8*, 12; 2:2; 3:2].

In each of these scriptures the Greek word for "man" (*aner*) is ostensibly lost in translation. *Vine's Expository Dictionary* says, "*Aner* is never used of the female sex; it stands in distinction from a woman ... in general, 'a man, a male person.'" Strong concurs, "*Aner* — a man (properly as an individual male): —fellow, husband, man, sir."

What must the modern versions do before Christian leaders become skeptical? It is high time we seriously investigated the tainted history behind most of the modern versions.

¹*Women, Men & the Bible, The Divine Feminine, et al*

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"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXIV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, JULY 2000

NO. 7

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

By EDWIN MORRIS

It is said that there are nearly as many divorces as there are marriages today in this nation. In Oklahoma it is said there are more divorces than marriages. This indicates to us why sin is so rampant in this society. The sad part is that this trend is beginning to creep into the church. There is only one scriptural cause for divorce and remarriage that is given to us in the word of God. Jesus taught in Matt. 5:32 "But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. And in Matt. 19:9 "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

When both husband and wife are Christians and divorce for any other reason than fornication can they scripturally marry again and continue to live with the second partner and please God? What does the word of God teach that they must do when they divorce the partner for other reasons than fornication? The answer is found in 1 Cor. 7:10-11 "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain *unmarried* or be *reconciled* to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. This is the two choices they have, (1) remain unmarried, (2) be reconciled to her husband. Often times today couples cannot get along and break up for other causes than fornication and later play a waiting game until the other remarries and then claim the cause. This does not fit the scriptural teaching. They have not obeyed the one of two choices they have. Regardless of how long they remain in this adulterous marriage time does not change their condition and the only thing they can do is to obey 1 Cor. 7:10-11. Some might say why cannot they repent and make a confession and have the prayers of the church and be o.k.? It is simple, they have to obey what they were told to do remain unmarried; be reconciled to the first and they have not done that.

What are we, the church, to do after we have talked to them and taught them what the word teaches and they continue to live together and remain married. The answer is found in 1 Cor. 5:9-13 "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to keep *company* with fornicators: Yet not altogether with fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or an idolater, for then must ye needs go out

of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep *company*, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such one no not to *eat*. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore *put away* from among yourselves that wicked person." They are told not to keep company with this one; not to eat with them and put away from among yourselves this person. Notice in verses 10-11 that there is a difference between those in the world and those in the church as to our association with them.

Who is responsible in carrying this action out? The answer is found in vs. 4 "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when *ye are gathered together*, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This is the church "gathered together" and vs. 13 "from among yourselves." So this is not individuals but the church. Now In 1 Cor. 5:1-8, it is to the one who had taken his father's wife which would be his stepmother according to Lev. 18:7-8. In verses 9-13 it includes all fornicators and the other sins that are named.

What is the purpose of this discipline. vs. 5 answers this; "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Someone says we cannot deliver such an one to Satan only Christ can do that. The command is in vs. 4 "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" which means "by his authority" and he gave the church the authority to take this action and when they did Christ delivers them to Satan. Notice John 4:1-2 "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples." The church had to do what they were commanded to do and then Christ does what man cannot do. The act of excommunication for sin when administered according to the will of the Lord, is not merely man's decision, but will be executed by the power of the Lord.

When the Church carried this out did it have the desired results. In 2 Cor. 2:6-7 "Sufficient to such man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many, so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." Someone might ask the question that since it was

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Editorial

THOUGHTS ON FELLOWSHIP

By DON L. KING

The subject of fellowship is quite large and some areas of the matter can be involved. However, there are some things that are obvious.

In 1 John 1:6, 7 the Bible says, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Notice that John speaks of "the truth" as something we "do," it is, then, something more than merely knowing the truth. That is important, but it obviously must be put into practice in order for us to benefit eternally. It is more than simply having intellectual cognizance or recognition of what the truth is. It is unfortunate that many seem to know what the truth is but fail to practice it in worship or life.

What are the grounds for fellowship? Based on 1 John 6, 7 it is pretty obvious. The grounds are "walking in the light." To walk in darkness would be to "walk" or conduct our lives and worship out of the light. Can we agree on that? Surely all could find agreement that far. What does it mean to walk in the light? John says "HE" is in the light (Verse 7) as he refers to God the Father. Can we agree then that to walk and worship in the light would be to do thus according to God's will? Surely we can all agree that far. How do we abide in the light, then?

In second John 9 inspiration caused John to say, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." This passage has been abused tremendously! The reason appears obvious. If we take it for its stated meaning there is no room for one to accept false doctrine (that which can not be found in the Bible). Consequently, one finds various explanations on every side. We still hear of some who insist that the "doctrine of Christ" refers just to those teachings about the deity of Christ. Others insist that it refers only to those things Christ personally taught, or perhaps those things taught about Him, etc. There is little question why these "explanations" abound. Those who wish to either worship according to the doctrines of men or fellowship those who do, have to explain away the impact of John's statement. When one considers what Peter said in 2 Peter 1:3: "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness....," second John 9 becomes at once more clear. John tells us that we can have the Father and the Son, that is, their approval, ONLY when we abide in the doctrine of Christ, or the teaching of Christ.

How do we abide in the "doctrine of Christ?" Let us suppose by way of illustration that we have a corral or pen where one might keep animals, etc. Suppose a farmer tells a fellow, "you may have any animal in that corral as a gift from me." You look around and see an animal you really

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

BY RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is it scriptural for a congregation to have its treasury on interest at the bank? If it is, can a church invest in CD's or other interest bearing accounts to make money for church use? Can a church own land or houses in addition to the church building?

Answer: The above questions have been the subject of much discussion, as well as significant disagreement. Such questions were probably unknown in New Testament times for two reasons: (1) banking, as it is common to most of us, was unknown then, and (2) the churches of that day probably did not have large sums of money building up in their treasures. In addition, it would appear that many early churches met in the homes of Christians and did not own real property. This is not to say that owning a church house is wrong, for it is not. In Heb. 10:25 we have the command to assemble. Though a place is not specified, it is implied. In other words we must have a place in which to come together. Inherent in the command to assemble is authorization to provide a place for that gathering. In answering the above questions, we need to first establish the scriptural way for a church to acquire and accumulate funds. In 1 Cor. 16:1-2 we have the divine blueprint for the church collecting money. On the first day of the week each Christian is to give in proportion to the previous weeks income. We are told in 2 Cor. 9 that God loves a cheerful giver and that we are not to give grudgingly or of necessity. On other occasions we read of the disciples bringing their abundance or gift and laying it at the Apostles feet. Never do we read of any kind of fund raising that parallels so much of what we hear about today i.e. cake walks, pie suppers, rummage sales, bingo games, and investments of all kinds. Since the scriptures furnish us with the Lord's way of raising money in 1 Cor. 16:1-2, may we in addition to this raise money by putting the treasury in an interest bearing account or buying CD's or investing in real estate? If not, why not? Perhaps a parallel will help us here. There are those who, in addition to meeting in an undivided

assembly to observe the Lord's Supper, also use the class method for purposes of teaching. These classes constitute another arrangement other than the undivided assembly taught in the scriptures. Classes are an addition not found in the bible. Would not then, any other arrangement for raising money, except the one given in 1 Cor. 16:1-2, be an addition just like the classes are? If not, why not? Some, in an effort to justify putting the treasury in CD's etc. point to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. Aside from the fact that the parable has nothing to do with Christian giving or the church treasury, the comparison raises several problems for the one using it. For example the man with one talent was rebuked for not using his talent. Would that not then mean that a church would be wrong if they did not invest the treasury in an interest bearing account or CD? Also the man with five talents gained five more and the man with two gained two more. If this is a parallel with the church treasury it seems to me that we would be obligated to gain as much as we can. How could we justify the often small amount that an interest bearing checking account pays when we could make other bolder investments and gain much more? The truth is that there is no parallel at all between this parable and the subject of raising church funds. Another problem with investing in CD's is the fact that the money is tied up for a specified period of time. The only way that the money can be withdrawn during that period is to pay a penalty. Surely no one could believe that it is scriptural to tie up the Lord's money so that it cannot be used for the purposes for which it was given. Think about this: if a church can raise additional money by putting the treasury into an interest bearing checking account or certificates of deposit, what scripture would be violated if that same church rented out the parking lot to a nearby business during the week and raised money that way?

Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

UNTIL DEATH DO US PART

BY RICK MARTIN

The problem of divorce and remarriage has had a profound effect upon our society today and suffice it to say it has not been for the good. There are very few families that have not been touched by divorce. Today easy divorces can be had for almost any reason. In some cases all it takes is for one spouse to decide they want a divorce and there is little if anything that the other spouse can do. Divorce and remarriage have produced some terrible results in our society today. The results are broken homes, abused and abandoned children, and shattered dreams.

Our opinion of divorce cannot be colored by the world's thinking on the subject. We need to know what God has said on the subject and follow his guidelines. Jesus tells us that divorce was never in the original plan of God. In Matthew 19 a group of Pharisees came to Jesus and tried to trick Him. Jesus tells them about God's law regarding marriage in Matthew 19:4-6. In Matthew 19:8, Jesus tell them that Moses allowed divorce because of the hardness

of their hearts, but God did not intend for it to be that way. He then proceeds to tell them that there is only one lawful cause for divorce in Matthew 19:9 "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

This same principle is stated in Matthew 5:31-32. "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall nut away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

It is extremely clear that there is only one scriptural reason for divorce and remarriage and that reason is fornication. Fornication is any form of illicit sexual intercourse.

We also need to understand that only the innocent party is free to marry. The guilty party or people who divorce for any other reason are not allowed to remarry. The person who marries a guilty party or marries a person who has divorced for any cause is also committing adultery. A person put away for any reason other than adultery cannot remarry because this would cause him/her to commit adultery.

The importance of the marriage commitment is expressed by the prophet Malachi in Malachi 2:14, "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth against who thou has dealt treacherously: yet *is* she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant." The wise man also speaks of marriage as being a covenant in Proverbs 2:17 "Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God." Here the adulteress is condemned for leaving the "guide" or companion of her youth. These passages make it plain that marriage is a covenant and God is the witness. God instituted marriage and He witnesses the vows. The marriage vows are made before God. God hates "putting away," Malachi 2:16 "For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for *one*

covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously."

We live in a world in which a divorce is easy to obtain. Christians need to realize that marriage is a lifetime commitment. The concept of a lifetime commitment is seen in the words of Jesus, Matthew 19:6, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The Apostle Paul also addresses the issue of marriage being a lifetime commitment in Romans 7:2, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband is dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband." The marriage vows usually say "until death do us part" and these verses give credence to that time-honored phrase.

The Bible's teachings on divorce and remarriage seem very difficult when it comes to the standards of the world. People of the world will not have something so restrictive placed on them. Christians cannot be influenced by the world's thinking on the subject. We must respect the authority of God and Jesus and abide by their teaching.

THE MANNA FROM HEAVEN

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage and their subsequent journey to the land of Canaan is a story that provides us with many important lessons. An interesting event pertaining to that story is how God miraculously fed His people with manna from heaven. In fact, inspiration records that the children of Israel ate manna for forty years until they finally came into the borders of the Promised Land (Ex. 16:35). What was this strange food? How did God provide them with it? How were they expected to gather it and eat it? Also, did the manna from heaven have a greater spiritual significance than what the people were aware of at the time—a significance that has found fulfillment in Jesus Christ?

In the narrative found in Ex. 16:13-36, it is revealed that one morning when the dew on the ground around the host of Israel melted away, the people discovered "a small round thing." To everyone's amazement and delight, it was edible and nourishing to the body. It seems that the dew fell first and then this substance fell on the dew; perhaps the dew was intended to cool the ground so that the manna might be preserved. That seems to be the case because when the sun heated the ground, the substance evaporated and disappeared until the next morning.

What was this "manna"? Well, that's exactly what the Israelites wanted to know. Actually, that's what the word manna literally denotes: "What is it?" or "What a strange thing it is." Notice how the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV) renders Ex. 16:15: "And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flakelike thing, fine as hoarfrost on the ground. When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was."

It must first be understood that the manna was something miraculously provided by God. Moses explained to the people in Ex. 16:15: "This is the bread which the Lord

hath given you to eat." There have been attempts to explain this as a natural phenomenon. It is argued, for example, that the Tamarisk bush in the Sinai region produces a sweet substance thought to be secreted in the early summer. Others have suggested that two kinds of insects that feed on the sap of this bush produce a sweet substance through excretion. However, the amount of substance that this process would produce would fall considerably short of what Israel's need for daily bread demanded. No, this provision was the result of a miracle from God!

A fair consideration of all the facts in the case prove that the manna was miraculous in origin: (1) It is obvious that the manna was the only thing of its kind; it had never been seen before and it has never been seen since. Deut. 8:3 makes that very clear: "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know. . ." Also, they were instructed to keep a sample of it for future generations so that they might know of this miraculous provision (Ex. 16:33). As Heb. 9:4 explains, in the ark of the covenant there was the golden pot containing the manna. (2) The Bible explains that this heavenly substance was like "coriander seed" (Ex. 16:31). Furthermore, it was "white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." The coriander, a plant that grows in Egypt, Persia, and India, has a round tall stalk and bears white or reddish flowers from which arise round, grayish, spicy seed corns. My point is that if the manna came from the Tamarisk bush (or another natural source), why doesn't the Bible just say that? (3) The manna was not found on the sabbath day (Ex. 16:25). Surely if the manna had a natural explanation, it would have fallen on the seventh day just like it did on the sixth!

Yes, the manna was a heavenly provision provided by the hand of God. It surely had a pleasant taste and a sweet

fragrance (the coriander seed is in the class of mints); it is called "the corn of heaven" (Psa. 78:24). However, we must understand that God gave the people specific instructions on how the manna was to be gathered; all of this had a greater spiritual significance: (1) It was necessary that the manna be gathered early in the morning because when the sun waxed hot, it melted away (Ex. 16:21). (2) They were to gather only enough for each day's use. Moses instructed the people in Ex. 16:16 to "gather of it every man according to his eating." Thus they were not to gather more than they needed and they were to consume all they gathered (Ex. 16:19).

However, Ex. 16:20 shows that some violated this by leaving some manna for the next day's use. They had gathered too much or perhaps they had purposefully saved some for the next day. As a result, the Bible says "it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them."

What is the underlining principle here that we need to take to heart? Well, Deut. 8:16 says that God fed them manna to *humble* them—i.e., to help them learn to trust in God's daily provisions. Although they had no food in their tents for the next day, the Lord expected them to believe that they would have their daily needs provided. Didn't Christ teach that very same principle? Jesus taught that faith in God's providential care is the antidote for worry: "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the days own trouble be sufficient for the day" (Matt. 6:33-34, RSV). Also, Christ taught that we should pray for our "daily bread" (Matt. 6:11).

(3) The people had the responsibility of gathering the substance and then it was prepared for food by grinding it and baking it (Num. 11:8). I had the misconception as a child that when God provided them with manna, loaves of bread literally floated down from heaven and all they had to do was gather it and eat it. Not so! Here is another principle that we need to understand: God provides, but we must also be willing to do our part. It is true that we are to pray for our daily bread and trust in God to provide for our needs, but it is also true that God expects us to do our part in working and providing for our families (Eph. 4:28). (4) Moses said in Ex. 16:26: "Six days ye shall gather it;

but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none." To make up for no gathering on the seventh day, the people were instructed to gather up twice as much on the sixth day (Ex. 16:29).

Incidentally, some think that this is proof that the sabbath was kept from the beginning of creation and before the law of Moses was given. However, it actually proves the opposite! If the people had been keeping the sabbath all along, why did Moses have to give them instructions about it? Why did Moses go into great detail in explaining what the sabbath was all about (Ex. 16:23-26) unless this was a new experience for them? In fact, why did some of the people still not understand as they went out on the sabbath to gather the manna (Ex. 16:27)? It is obvious that the sabbath was a *new ordinance* to the people and it was given on this occasion in anticipation of the law that would soon be given to them from Mount Sinai (Neh. 9:1314). Let it be remembered that the sabbath was a sign between God and the children of Israel (Ex. 31:17).

The manna from heaven was a type of Christ. The Apostle Paul calls it "spiritual meat" (1 Cor. 10:3) because it was typical of Christ and the spiritual blessings that flow from Him. Just as manna was given to preserve physical life, Christ was given to preserve the spiritual life of man: "*I am that bread of life*. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die" (John 6:48-50). This great declaration of our Lord shows that just as the manna had to be received and gathered, so we must believe in Christ and be partakers of His sacrificial death. Also, just as there was manna enough for each soul in the wilderness, so in Jesus there is complete sufficiency; we must learn to look to Him daily and feed on His word. Deut. 8:3 says that God fed the people manna that they might learn that "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord..." That's the passage that Christ quoted to the devil in Matt. 4:4! Finally, just as the people had to seek the manna early in the morning, so we need to seek Christ early in our lives while we have the time and opportunity: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Isa. 55:6).

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

A house does not always mean a home, and yet there must be something, some place that we think of as home. I realize that I may be "old fashioned," but I believe that before a couple marry they should make some kind of arrangement for a place to live to themselves. Marriages have gone on the rocks because the young folks did not consider God's words to "leave father and mother" and cleave to one another, and moved in on the old folks,

Young folks will have to get adjusted and acquainted after they marry and they need to be off to themselves, leaving their parents out of it, and start from the beginning to build for themselves a CHRISTIAN HOME.

The flowers bloom in clusters and have their homes; the beasts and birds have their nests to raise their young and for their home have often given their lives. With the human race, the making of one's own home is the supreme

earthly fascination to which all youth look forward and upon which old age looks back. "Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home."

Mr. Guest says, "It takes a lot of living in a house to make a home." But when a house is thus lived in, and made a home, it seems sacred. When I see a worn out, discarded old home it makes me think of Joyce Kilmer's poem:

"But a house that has done what a house should do, a house that has sheltered life, That has put its loving arms around a man and his wife,

A house that has echoed a baby's laugh, and held up its stumbling feet, Is the saddest sight, when left alone that ever your eyes could meet."

However, though a house alone does not make a home it still remains that the most satisfying conception of a

human home involves some kind of a rather permanent place. A place with a family centered for its every day life, for its growth, its loving, its learning,

One of the greatest sacrifices which the Son of God made for us seems to be summed up thin: "And they went every man to his own house: but Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives." (John 7:53-8:1) Remember, the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.

The home place should be used to the glory of God, Lydia's home place enabled her to care for Paul and Silas while they preached the gospel in Philippi. (Acts 16) Aquila and Priscilla turned their home into a meeting place for the church. Mark's house, alive at midnight with praying disciples, was ready to receive Peter from his prison deliverance. On and on we could go with Bible records, but these are enough to show us that God wants the Christian home to be in good order. No wonder that Paul said for the old women to teach the young women to "be keepers at home." (Titus 25) I do not understand that the apostle means that the wife should just STAY at home, but that she is to be a home keeper. In 1 Timothy 5:14 he says, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." The woman is the home

keeper according to God's arrangement, and parents should train their little girls to be such.

Many birds have been lost out of a faulty cage, and many husbands have been lost because of an unkept house. No amount of paint, powder and perfume will atone for unwashed dishes, dirty floors, and half-cooked meals.

I understand that when God said to Adam: "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread," that he meant to place the responsibility of making the living on the shoulders of the MAN, and no amount of ability to drive his father's car, play pool, or entertain will make up for an empty four bin. The husband is the head of the family. (Ephesians 5) and as such he should take the responsibility and see that his wife and children are properly cared for to the extent of his ability. If it is the duty of the wife to keep the home, it is first the duty of the husband to see that she has a home to keep.

Though this home may be just a cabin or tent, if the husband does his best to be the provider and the wife will do her part of the keeping, and they both trust in God and abide by His word, in their old days they will look back to this home place as the happiest place on earth.

Next month: Children in the Home.

CHANGING A LITTLE AT A TIME

By JIM WINCHESTER

Many do not seem to fully understand the wisdom and power of Satan. The devil has something for everyone. He roams the land looking for the right time, place, and way to tempt God's people. In 1 Peter 5:8 we read, "...your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He knows not all people will yield to the same temptation and he knows that through little changes he is able to overcome the majority of people. Our warfare with Satan is continuous. He seeks to infiltrate our lives, weaken our defenses and make simple changes in the way we think. He knows a word here and a word there will not catch our attention as quickly as major changes. Changes in the way we worship, think or live do not occur over night.

Satan, will use deception and doubt to destroy our relationship with Christ. In Gen 3:1 Satan said, "...Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Here we can see that Satan will create a doubt or use deception as a weapon against God's people. If we believe all versions are acceptable, Satan will have achieved his goal. Satan knows he will never be able to completely destroy the Word of God. He also knows a word added or removed will alter the meaning of a verse of scripture or destroy a doctrine and produce false teachings. In Gen. 2:17 God said, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In Gen 3:4 Satan changes the statement of God by adding the word "not" when he said, "Ye shall (not) surely die": This is a clear example of how an added word altered the meaning of a direct statement of God. Change that alters the meaning of God's word must not be tolerated.

There has been a continuous attempt to find faults with the Bible. A statement reflecting doubt in the truthfulness

of God's word pleases the devil and undermines our faith. The critics have always said that there are mistakes in the Bible. This belief does not take into account the protection God has promised and provided for his word. Jesus, in Matt 24:35 said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Shall we conclude by the reasoning of the modern mind that Jesus cannot do what he has promised?

With each new generation of bible scholars there are those who believe that the knowledge they have is superior to the knowledge of those before them. Apparently they feel that they must find something new, different, or better than the older generations.

The addition of new translations and the continual revisions of existing translations represents a danger to God's people. The attitude used by those who are responsible, for these translations will present major problems for those who believe as we, The Church of Christ, do.

For example, Paul states in 1 Tim. 2:12, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. Some of those who are involved in the translating and production of the study bibles are taking the position that the Greek phrase used in these verses of scripture actually means, "reserved or to recognize her position unto man." They do not believe it to mean that she cannot teach in the assembly. How long do you think it will take before they will include this definition in one of the newer translations?

The annual sale of bibles is estimated around one half billion dollars. With the large amount of money involved, it is understandable why so many different companies want to produce their own version or translation, The development and promotion of these translations are in

the hands of "Bible Societies" who have developed their own communications theories about how they should make the Bible relevant to the consumer. This creates a total disregard for the accuracy of the word. The business world is only concerned with making money. They are not concerned with converting souls for the Lord.

There are about 150 versions of the bible on the market today with each one having their own copyright. Recognizing that each has their own copyright, one needs to understand that in order to have a copyright, there must be radical or major differences between the versions. The question in our minds should be, "*what have they changed?*" Subtle changes are noted throughout the newer versions. With each change a red flag should pop up reminding us of the subtle ways of Satan. A little change today and then another tomorrow will plague God's people,

There are those who would have us believe that in order for people to fully understand the Word of God they must be able to read and understand the "Greek text." This sounds like the Gnostic of the first centuries, This is the same teaching that took the Bible away from the common people and put the interpretation of the Word of God in the hands of a few.

Under the Reagan administration a commission reported that the nation's education level had dropped. Out of this study came the term, "written down." This was a tactic used by publishers to lower the reading levels to meet the market demands. They have used that same reasoning in producing the new versions of the Bible. Today we have bibles that have been custom designed to fit every modern situation—primarily for marketing purposes—but always under the guise of "needing to communicate." One publisher alone has excelled in this endeavor aiming for every consumer group imaginable. This diversification is out of control. In the mail I have received an advertisement announcing more than 900 different styles and types of bibles. There are more than 150 different translations on the market today. They range from the Extreme Faith Bible to the African Heritage Study Bible.

The need to "Communicate" involves actually altering what, in the past, was regarded as inspired biblical content in order to reflect the cultural concerns of an ideological generation. They do not make the adjustments in the interests of legitimate translation procedures. These changes have been made to pander to a cultural prejudice. The desire of these people is to be politically correct and the subtle changes in these modern translations made by them should be considered the work of Satan,

The theory of "best possible meaning" is used commonly in the newer translations. This means that a translation of a verse of scripture could be chosen because of the denominational influences and their need to prove their beliefs. When this method is used, the translation becomes a thought translation, rather than a word translation.

The NIV translation, in its preface, admits that they chose the "best thought available" for the passage of scripture that they had under review, The NASB preface says, "When it was felt that the word-for-word literalness of the ASV was unacceptable to the modern reader, a change was made in the direction of a more current English idiom." Jesus took a direct shot at Satan in Luke 8:12, "...then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest

they should believe and be saved." Shall we entrust our souls to the men and women of some board room?

We must remember that Satan can and will work on the Christian's life through their needs and wants. We live in an age where people want everything immediately. This feeling affects both our physical and spiritual lives. Many of the new study bibles are nothing more than commentaries with false teachings interwoven within them. They are influenced by various denominations. Are we willing to accept versions that are influenced or controlled by man?

The following verses of scripture are examples of changes that have been made in the newer versions. You will see how these changes affect some of the basic doctrines or beliefs of the Church of Christ. There are hundreds of verses with subtle changes in all of the newer translations.

The plan of salvation, through the changing of words, has been altered in the new versions. Roman 10:10 reads, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (KJV) The NIV reads, "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." The RSV says, "For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved." There is a vast difference between, "unto righteousness" and "are saved." Notice how far off the TLB is, "For it is by believing in his heart that a man becomes right with God; and with his mouth he tells others of his faith, confirming his salvation."

Luke 24:51, "... carried up into heaven." (KJV) "...He parted from them." (NAS) Some use this change to teach that Jesus did not die and ascend into Heaven, but moved to France, was married, had children, and has descendants today.

In the following example, the word "the" has been changed to "his" in the NAS version. Acts 9:25 "the disciples" (KJV) "his disciples" (NAS) The meaning is changed from the Lord's disciples to Paul's disciples. From this subtle change comes the base for the Crossroad or Disciples Ministries.

In Isa 53:5 we read, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (KJV) Isa 53:5 (NAS) "But He was pierced through for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being (fell) upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed." They used the word crushed as a substitute for bruised, A crushed body will have broken bones. This is a subtle change that contradicts other verses of scripture.

Most people believe the new versions are just "harmless" updating of words and made easier to understand. Nothing could be further from the truth! The new versions "take out" and "add" thousands of words. It is all done very subtly. The average reader would never know the difference!

There are verses of scripture found in manuscripts and used in the King James Version that are left out of the newer versions. Two of the many verses that have been left out of newer versions are Acts 8:37 and Mat. 18:11. The NASV has added 3,561 words and omitted 17 verses while the

RSV has deleted 6,985 words and 25 verses of scripture. The NIV has removed 16 complete verses and 5,219 words. In the NIV, portions of 147 verses have been removed. The NIV has removed, words like remission, regeneration, impute, Jehovah, Godhead, propitiation and marry others. They modify verses leaving the name of Jesus out or substituting his name with other words. Verses using blood are often deleted or the phrase using blood is taken out of the verse. According to Dr. Mollenkott, a literary consultant for the NIV translating committee, homosexual behavior as a sin is not under consideration in 1 Cor. 6:9, rather the attitude of the heterosexuals who abuse the homosexuals rights or homosexuals who abuse homosexuals. In the new versions many doctrinal issues we under attack such as, the virgin birth, the Deity of Christ, sinlessness of Jesus, hell, heaven, and the judgement.

Some will argue that the newer versions are easier to read or understand. A couple of examples of word changes are found in Mat. 2:16 "coasts" to "environs" and Mat. 10:10 "coats" to "tunics." Many people will need the dictionary for the two words in the new versions. A child will be able to provide the definition for the two words used in the King James. Recent research by the Flesch-research company's Grade Level Indicator stated that the

King James version ranks easier in 23 out of 26 comparisons. The lowest reading level, wording to them goes to the King James version.

I believe there could be other English translations, but they must be free from the influence of money and denominational teachings, To change the Bible for marketing purposes is unacceptable. The businessman love of money and their sales tactics have distorted the truth. There is a real concern by many that the Bible we know today and the truth that sustains us will become so polluted by the subtle changes of Satan, working through the minds of men, that the word of God will be difficult to recognize in generations to come.

Inspiration is not the issue, all true Christians accept the primary premise that the scriptures are inspired of God. The issue we are discussing is one of "preservation." The Bible says, "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever." (Psa. 12:6-7) The word of the Lord has been preserved through the ages. If we do not believe in the preservation of the word of the Lord, we do not believe God,

Do not be deceived, all versions are not God's Word.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

continued from page 1

inflicted of "many" what about the few that would not go along with it? The answer is found in 2 Cor. 7:11 "For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what *clearing* of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved *yourselves clear in this matter.*" The many means majority but does that mean that the few are under no obligation to obey the command. If

there were 100 members and 90 took part and 10 did not, did the 10 that did not clear themselves? No, because they violated what they were told to do.

Is the church today doing what the scriptures tell them to do? Generally they tell the guilty party you cannot take part and you cannot attend business meetings and that is usually as far as some go. This is not doing what they were told to do: Purge out, keep no company; no not to eat; put away from among yourselves. Many times today members will eat with them, keep company with them, and being among them you would never know but what that they are in good standing. Fellow Christians do not take this Bible command lightly.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

like but he is not in the corral. May you also have him? No because he is out of the corral, in like manner, we may believe, practice as an act of worship, etc. any doctrine which is revealed or contained in the doctrine of Christ. May we also use those things not found? The answer is immediately seen, we cannot. What about the doctrine (teaching) relating to individual cup & Bible classes, instrumental music, etc.? Can we read about these things as an act of worship in the "doctrine of Christ?" The answer is no, of course. What to do with them? We must reject them if we wish to have the approval of the Father and the Son. Since they cannot be found in the teachings of the Scripture we cannot use them without incurring the disapproval of both the Father and the Son.

Someone says, "how do we know what the doctrine of Christ is?" Hear Jesus: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (John 15:26) Again, "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear,

that shall be speak: and he will show you things to come." (John 16.13) We can deduce from these passages that what the apostles were inspired to say and write were also the doctrine, or teaching, of Christ. Can this be demonstrated? Hear the apostle Paul: "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." What is the point? Simply this: the New Testament contains the doctrine of Christ. Paul says that what he wrote were the commandments of the Lord! In other words, the "doctrine of Christ" and the "commandments of the Lord" are synonymous, they are one and the same. If your doctrine and practice cannot be read therein beware! If your worship fails to conform to the doctrine contained in the New Testament, You have neither the Father nor the Son. If not, why not? Since everything that pertains to "life and godliness" has been given us by God through His Word (2 Peter 1:3) it follows that my worship needs to be found within as Holy Will. If I can't read it, it can't pertain, or have any bearing on life and godliness.

What about fellowship? Dare you extend fellowship to me when I am worshipping in a way not found in the Doctrine of Christ? How can you when I have the approval

of neither the Father nor the Son? How can you do right by so doing? The answer is: you cannot. If God is in the light and you are walking in the light (1 John 1:7) you have fellowship with God. If I am also walking in the light, I have fellowship with God and must also have fellowship with you. The triangle is complete, if you will. However, if I step out of the light (and I do if my worship is out of accord with the doctrine of Christ) I also make void my fellowship with you. Why? Because I am not walking in the light, am out of fellowship with God, have neither the Father nor the Son, and if you fellowship me while I am in darkness you will also be out of fellowship with God. If not, why not? Is it permissible to use digressives in our services then? To ask the question is to answer it. We must

not because they are not in the light and not in fellowship with God or anyone who is also in the light.

Where, then, does the idea come from that we can fellowship a man who worships wrong as long as he will worship right while he is with us or we with him? Where ever it came from, it didn't come from the Word of God. The doctrine of Christ teaches no such thing. Remember, the truth is something we do as well as believe. (1 John 1:6) Brethren, we must not allow such liberal ideas to take root among us. This idea is a false doctrine and anyone who teaches it is a false teacher and needs to be refused access to the pulpit or our homes where he might teach it privately. Remember, false teachers always precede false doctrine and worship. Think on these things.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU

To all my brothers and sisters in Christ who have been so kind and loving to my family and me. I would like to thank all of you for the prayers, donations and financial support you offered up for us after a fire destroyed our home. The amount of support has been overwhelming and truly appreciated. God has truly blessed us through the Church. Again we thank you. May God bless each and every one of you abundantly. Love in Christ, Chad Cochennic & family

SEND INFORMATION BY JULY 18

Send information for the August *Old Paths Advocate* to Ronny Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808.

LABOR DAY MEETING

California 2000 Labor Day Meeting will be hosted by the Stockton, CA Church of Christ, September 1st, 2nd and 3rd. California has a long tradition of great Labor Day meetings, and we hope to carry on with a great meeting this year. Various Speakers from all over the State as well as Oregon, Oklahoma and Louisiana are scheduled. Please come and help make this a great meeting! Call Ryan Connor (209) 478-7889 or Gene Youngblood (209) 952-5356 for more information.

NEW SONGBOOK IS READY

We understand the new book is now available. It is called "Tuneful Tidings." Our information is that the price is still \$3.00 each plus postage. Order from M. Lynwood Smith, 2789 Loyd Star Lane, Northwest, Wesson, MS. When you receive your books verify that the order is correct and send Lynwood a check for them adding the amount of postage you see on the box. It will be appreciated if you will mail the payment the same day you receive the books.

SERMONS AND WRITINGS OF HOMER L. KING

We understand that many have been ordering the book of sermons. If you have not yet sent for one of these, why not do so now. The price is only \$7.00 each and for a hardbound book in today's world, that is a bargain. Many of Brother King's sermons are contained in the book in outline form. Also included are several selected articles he wrote during the more than thirty years he served as

publisher of *Old Paths Advocate*. If you remember him, you will enjoy reading this book. Please order only from Helen King, 1061 N. Pilgrim St, Stockton, CA 95205.

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Congregations

Florida, Panama City. Church address should be 1902 Michigan Ave. Remove Albert Noles. Add: Woodrow Dolin, 11919 Fountain Park Ave., Fountain, FL 32438 (850) 722-4173, Raymond O. Ledfern, 13222 Webber Rd., Fountain, FL 32438

Hawaii: Keaau (on the island of Hawaii) recently not meeting regularly. Recommend call Bro. Danao (on the island of Oahu) at (808) 680-0249 for up-to-date information about the congregation on Hawaii meeting at Keaau.

Hawaii: Waipahu (on the island of Oahu) add directions and change contact information. 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, HI 96797 phone (808) 678-2919. From Airport and Waikiki hotels take Highway 1 freeway West. Turn right on exit 8b to Waipahu and stay on Farrington Hwy. Turn right on Waipahu Depot Rd. Turn right on Waipahu St. Turn right on Ikepono St. Sunday: 9:30 AM, Wednesday 6:00 PM. Contact: Virgilio Danao, 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, HI 96797, phone (808) 680-0249

Michigan: Wyoming: delete Dale Tortellet (deceased). Add Charles Tepen, 2413 Revere Dr., Goshen, IN 46526 (219) 533-1429

Missouri: Seymour, change directions and contacts: 224 N. Division St. - Take the Division Street exit off Hwy. 60 and go south 3 blocks. Sunday 10:30 AM. Dallas Howard, 1315 Hackberry Lane, Seymour, MO 65746, phone (417) 767-4236, Randall Howard, 147 Fair Oaks Lane, Fordland, MO 65652, phone (417) 753-7769.

Texas: Round Rock. Delete-congregation merged with Wells Branch in Austin.

Texas: Wells Branch. Correct Lindley Fowler phone (512) 832-5140

Preachers:

Change Duane Permenter address to 4315 Boulder Drive, Midland, TX 79707.

Please continue to send me your updates at 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, phone (916) 726-8507, email: papagreg@aol.com

Dennison, TX - Please remove Bob Sanders and add Jerry Byrd, Rt. I Box 6, Mead, OK 73449, (580) 924-6255.



Kevin W. Presley, 105 Montrose Ct. #45, Dothan, AL 36305, (334) 678-8999, June 10, 2000—Our spring meeting at Earlytown ended in good fashion. Wayne McKamie did some good preaching and it a pleasure to spend time with him and Jean. In April, it was my pleasure to assist the churches in Springfield, MO (Mission Hills) and Sharonville, OH in meetings. In Springfield, the crowds were good and the association was uplifting for me. I appreciate Ronny and Alfreda Wade for showing such kind hospitality. In Sharonville, I enjoyed staying with Barney and Bea Owens. We had an enjoyable time together and hopefully a profitable meeting. This was their 40th year of meeting at their present location. They continue to hold forth the word of life faithfully, which is commendable. In May, I was with the church at Spring Valley, WV. I made my home with Harland and Willa Dean Allen. You will never be treated with more hospitably. We had some visitors during the meeting and we closed with one baptism. The brethren from Wayne and St. Albans were good to help us out. However, there were several brethren from the area whom we missed. The church has a lot to compete with today which is a tragedy for the sake of the cause. Here at Dothan, we recently had Bruce Roebuck for a short meeting, which went very well and Jimmie Smith just closed at Florala. Both preached fine sermons and it was good to associate with them. Our television program continues to reach new people every Lord's Day. A few weeks ago, we begin airing on WCTV Channel 6 in Tallahassee, FL. This is a powerful CBS affiliate which has a potential viewing area of 600,000 homes. The brethren at Oyster Bay have already been receiving response and they are excited. This summer, I plan to be with the churches at Lawrenceburg, TN (June 23-25), Walterboro, SC (July 10-15), Modesto, CA (July 23-30), and Norman, OK (August 4.13). Come if you can!

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, June 6—We were at Turlock, California, May 21-28, where we had a wonderful annual Memorial Day meeting. I was honored to do the preaching. The crowds and interest were great and the singing was outstanding. On Saturday morning four young men gave good edifying lessons. One man present was at the first meeting I ever held—about 58 years ago. Others were there whom I have known nearly all my preaching life. We had three confessions of faults. I consider this one of the strongest congregations in the brotherhood. It was good to see all the preachers who were present for one or more services. We made our home with Richard and Glenda DeGough, two of the most hospitable people in the world, and dear

friends of ours for many years. We are back home now attending the meeting with the congregation at 79th and Kansas Ave. Bruce Roebuck of Mt Home, AR is doing the preaching. He is "laying it on the line" without fear or favor, which it appreciated by this congregation. So far the crowds and interest have been good. My next meeting will be at Sentinel, OK, July 16-23. It would be wonderful to see a lot of our friends and loved ones attend and encourage the meeting by their presence. May the Lord bless the righteous efforts of brethren everywhere.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 93439, June 19, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com—We just arrived home last evening from two meetings. We were with the congregation in LaGrange, GA June 3-11 where we enjoyed a good meeting. Crowds were pretty good with visitors from area congregations and a few from out of state coming to help out, one confessed wrongs. It was a pleasure to stay with Alton and Florence Bailey where we have been a number of times in the past. I thank Matt Martin for picking me up at the Atlanta airport and getting me to LaGrange in good order. We enjoyed visiting among the brethren while there as usual. We began in Greenville, SC on the 12th (Monday night). We appreciated the transportation there by Don and Josie Snow via their home near Atlanta. They are old friends and we enjoyed the visit. Don preached in my place the last Sunday evening, as we had to catch an early flight out. Several attended the meeting from other congregations which we appreciated. It was good to be with Rick and Jane Martin again as they attended from Marietta, GA and I appreciated Rick for preaching the first Lord's day of the meeting (June 11) while we closed in LaGrange. While in Greenville, we made our home with Roger and Sherry Knight, whose hospitality is certainly commendable, as was the case with several others as well. It was an enjoyable time and our prayer is that good was accomplished. Several have reported not getting their paper. Our sincere apologies! We are working on it. At this point we are trying to figure out if the problem is on our end or at the printers, or both. We thank you for your patience.

Johnny Herrera, 7904 S. Cooper, Arlington, Texas 7600—Greetings to all in the brotherhood! It is our prayer that, this report finds all doing well and working in the vineyard of the Lord. Our work here in Ft. Worth and Waco continues to go very well. Since last reporting we have had several who have been baptized. Our goal is to stabilize these converts in the faith by teaching the fundamental doctrines in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Another goal is to encourage those who are already members to also work in the vineyard of the Lord. Our attendance in both congregations is: Waco about 50 (average) and Ft. Worth 25 (average). We invite you to come and visit with us when you are in the area and also worship with us. Continue to pray for us that we may continue to work for Him. May God bless all of you richly.

Miles King, P.O. Box 51, Scotland, AR 72141 (501) 592-3950 E-mail: mtking@cei.net—Thanks for Brother Clovis Cook's Editorial in the June Issue of the *Old Paths Advocate*. We have been ask about this matter of

"fellowship" so many times and Clovis' writing should settle what so many people quote as Bro. Homer Gay's position. I have been trying to make trips to Texas (Houston area) each month to see my dad (age 91) who is now living in a nursing home in the Woodlands. My sister Joyce lives nearby and visits him on a weekly basis. In this area I have preached at LaMarque and also had visits and home studies at Beaumont. Summer is here and as usual we are real busy. This week Bro. J. W. Konegay is at Witts Springs and later Doug Hawkins will be with us at Scotland (June 21-25). We look forward to the 4th of July meetings. I would love to attend at Sulphur, OK and Lebanon, MO also. July 13 thru 17th Gene Grant and I plan to be with the brethren at Kingston, N.Y. Brother Brian Burns will be in our area in August. Cedar Creek (Jerusalem) Aug. 6th thru 9th & Scotland on the weekend (Aug. 11-13). Pray for us brethren and may we always have the attitude of the apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13).

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Hughson, Calif. 95326—Paul Nichols just closed a meeting in Turlock. It was our annual Memorial Day meeting we plan every year. The preaching was as we expected from Paul, straight from the word and without favor. We had excellent cooperation from neighboring congregations and a fine spirit prevailed throughout the meeting. The young people that gave their assistance conducted themselves as Christians, and we appreciated them for their fine example. It was great to have Paul and Wilma in our home again for the entire meeting. We were sad to learn of Paul's brother, Ray, who suffered a stroke at the beginning of the meeting. At this writing he is in a serious condition, paralyzed, unable to speak, and in a coma. We pray for him and the family in this trying hour. We enjoyed having Ron and Carolyn Alexander make their home with us during the meeting at Atwater. Ron's preaching was very good and also without favor. He also held a meeting in Oakdale, where we heard him two times. Don King was at Escalon earlier and we enjoyed Don's preaching straight from the word. We are growing at Turlock, and are at peace. I am writing a weekly article for the Turlock paper entitled; "Let the Scriptures Speak." We have some good contacts that we hope will bear fruit in time. We especially enjoyed having brother Chris Freeman from Kansas City come with the Nichol's to be with us in the meeting. Chris is very talented, a good song leader, a great help during the meeting. We always love and welcome such young men that have the cause of Christ in their hearts. I plan to be home all summer, working with the Church here and wherever I am needed in the near vicinity. We enjoyed the articles in the O.P.A. May God bless the brotherhood, the preachers, and his word as it goes forth in a lost world.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt. 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, June 2, 2000—As is probably the case for everyone, the summer is going by too rapidly. Recently I was with the congregations in Pansey, AL and Jackson, MS. Both of these churches are small in number, but have a very upbeat spirit. Due to the passing of Sister Ruby Cook, several of her great

grandchildren and their families were able to spend the week with us at the meeting in Pansey. We enjoyed seeing the family, but was sorry it was under those circumstances. While there, Lori and I bunked at Kevin and Bethany Presley's house. We appreciated the hospitality and fine accommodations very much. In Jackson, the brethren work in peace, so it seemed to me. Bro. Scott Smith provides balance and dependable leadership for the congregation there. It was my first time to really get to be with him and his family in their home and I have come to appreciate them very much. Our next meetings will take us to Henryetta, OK (July 16-23) and Galey, OK (July 24-30). If you're in the area, plan to join us!

P. Duane Permenter, 4315 Boulder Dr., Midland, TX, 79707, June 2—"Since last reporting, I am happy to say that four precious souls have been added to the Lambs book of life here in the church at Midland. The church is working hard and getting ready for our summer meeting with Ron Courter. Of late we have had a couple of young men teach for us. Brother Joel Blalock of Cleburne, TX and Garret Lorton of Chapel Grove, TN. both of these young men did a fine job. While I was at Stockton, CA. in April, Brother Bennie Cryer preached for us. During the meeting at Stockton, we were blessed with several outsiders and in spite of all the recent meetings in the area the crowds were excellent. Many of the area preachers attended the meeting and their presence was very much appreciated. My summer schedule is as follows: Sulphur, OK, June 26-July 4, Glen Ellyn, IL. July 5-9, DePaw, IN July 12-16, Allen, TX, July 21-30, Clovis, CA., August 6-13, Waipahu, HI., August 16-20, Tucson, AZ., August 24-27. If you are in any of these areas, both the brethren and I would be honored by your presence. In September I will be at Washington, OK, 17-24 and then in October I will be in Fossil Creek, TX., 18-22. My final for the year will be at San Angelo, TX, December 9,10. It is a great honor to serve the Lord in His vineyard. Please continue to pray for me and mine in the service of Almighty God. May the peace of God rule in our hearts.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Dr., W. Chester, OH 45069—Since last reporting to *Old Paths Advocate* I have been with the church at Paris, TX (March) where Wm. St. John has lived many years. There was good interest with some confessions of faults. It was a pleasure to be with William and to be in his and Denise' home. The first of April I was with the faithful at Harrison, AR. It had been several years since I'd been there. Visitors from digressive churches and others attended, as the work by Jimmie Smith was obvious. It was a joy to be with him and be graciously received in his and Cindy's home. Then on to Birmingham, AL to assist in their Meeting which has been held for many years at this time. Crowds were good. I again made my home with Gene and Dot Berry. Always it is good to be with them and Sister Morgan. We at Sharonville were blessed to have Kevin Presley preach during our regular Spring Meeting. My next will be May 26-28 Mitchell, IN. June 11-18 Huntsville, AK, 19-25 Valliant, OK. July 21-30 Duncanville, TX. I look forward to being with these all.

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Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

Ryan J. Connor, 1549 Black Oak Drive, Stockton, CA 95207, June 3rd—The church here in Stockton continues to grow and develop. We enjoyed our spring meeting, held by brother Duane Permenter. We had good attendance and brother Duane provided great preaching. My work here with the congregation is going terrific. A new family from the community is attending our services. Last week I baptized the mother and one daughter. I have been studying with them on a weekly basis, and we are praying that the husband will soon obey the gospel as well. I have had the opportunity to preach at several of the area congregations so far this year—Atwater, CA; Auburn, CA; Clovis, CA; Escalon, CA. I also enjoyed preaching meetings in Ceres, CA and Wilsonville, OR. Lord willing, I will be back at Wilsonville, OR, to hold the annual Thanksgiving Meeting November 17th through 26th. Our local teachers here at Stockton are continuing to develop, and some of our men who have not been teaching publicly are starting to use their talents in teaching. I conducted a short series of lessons on expository teaching here in February. Several were in attendance. We agreed to study through the epistle of James on Wednesday nights. The local teachers here have done a great job in their lessons, applying many of the principles of expository teaching. The congregation is so pleased with this kind of teaching that several have requested that we continue on after the epistle of James to another New Testament book. The congregation here at Stockton is looking forward with much planning to hosting the California 2000 Labor Day Meeting (Sept. 1, 2 & 3rd). Please make plans to come and be with us in making this a great meeting! We have many good speakers lined up to preach. So don't miss it! May God bless us all.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com—My meetings at Broken Arrow, OK and Kansas City, KS (36th & Everett Streets) were well attended and I had the privilege of preaching to attentive audiences. Jack Cutter was unable to attend the first Sunday and Monday night of the meeting at Broken Arrow, but from Tuesday night on he didn't miss a service. Although Jack had just been released from the hospital, it was with great fortitude and sheer determination that he somehow mustered the strength to attend most of the meeting. Thank you Jack for your inspiring example of commitment and dedication to the Lord's work! This congregation has many young couples and the future looks bright for them. There was one confession of faults. The meeting in Kansas City provided big crowds with good outside interest. The building was practically filled to its capacity Friday night. We stayed in the home of Barney and Rose Davis, dear friends who know how to make you feel welcome! The rest of my meeting schedule is as follows: June 11-18 at Yakima, WA, July 28 - Aug. 6 at Manteca, CA, and Nov. 1-5 at Niangua, MO. Bruce

Roebuck held our meeting here back in March and thrilled us with edifying sermons. Our crowds are consistently good each Sunday and we usually have one or more in attendance who need to obey the gospel.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mtn. Home, AR 72654, roebuck@mtnhome.com, May 16—The work here at Mountain Home continues "steady by jerks." Over the winter we had a restoration and several confessions. We've also had several regular visitors from the community. May 7-14 we had a meeting with Don Pruitt. Though the crowds were not large there were visitors at most every service. The preaching was appropriate and powerful. We have conducted several meetings thus far this year and are looking forward to those yet ahead, March 8-12 we were at Northside in Springfield, MO. The meeting went very well with good interest shown most every service. While there we made our home with Billy and Judy Dickinson. This was the first time we had spent any amount of time with them and we enjoyed it immensely. We relived debates and "talked Bible" making the stay all the more enriching. I was especially thankful to spend time with brother Ervin Barnes. Next we conducted a three day meeting at Odom near Dora, MO. Brother Jeff Howard lives there and does personal work in that area. Since Odom is only a few miles from our home we are glad to have a man like Jeff in the area. April 16-23 we were in Walnut Grove, KY. The meeting was enjoyable, as always, with large crowds attending. We closed with two confessions. Presently, we are looking forward to being in Dothan, AL May 26-28. Our next meetings will be Kansas City, KS June 4-11 and Bedford, TN July 28-Aug 6. Please remember us in prayer.

On Going to Church:

A "Christian" wrote a letter to the editor of the newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me I can't remember a single one of them. So I think I'm wasting my time ... and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all." This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher: "I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall what the menu was for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: they all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me those meals, I would be dead today." No comments were made on the sermon contents anymore. "The lips of the righteous nourish many..." Proverbs 10: 21a (NIV)

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXIV

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NO. 8

PLEASING GOD

By JOHNNY ELMORE

We live in a society dominated by what one writer described as "me-ism," i.e., ruled by our own desires. What I want and what pleases me is thought to be the most important thing in life. Many spend their entire lives in the pursuit of pleasure and ease. In view of the pervasive hedonism around us, it is not surprising that the same philosophy prevails in religion.

As an example, consider the "worship services" seen on any current religious television program. The audience applauds when something occurs that "pleases" them, just as they do when being entertained at the theatre or circus. Choirs and soloists, accompanied by bands and orchestras, sing songs resembling those of the pop culture about us. The preacher's "message" may be a combination of jokes and self-help psychology, but will almost certainly be devoid of serious biblical instruction. His "routine" will include exhortation, but very little, if any, reproof and rebuke (2 Tim. 4:2). It will be politically correct, also, with no references to error in religion, unless it is to put down "legalism" or "intolerance."

There is one big question that should be considered. Is God pleased? Isn't pleasing God the object of our worship and our service? It seems to me that pleasing God should be the paramount consideration in all of our efforts. The apostle Paul wrote: "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:0). If, in our efforts to please God, men are pleased, that is well and good, but pleasing God should be the motive of all of our service, songs, praise and prayers.

When talking with a lady one time about the lawfulness of instrumental music in worship, she remarked, "Well, I like instrumental music!" Her statement implied that I did not like instrumental music. Of course, that is not the question. The question is: Has God authorized instrumental music in worship in the New Testament? Who is to be pleased—God or man?

On another occasion, I was explaining to another woman why we do not have Bible classes when she said, "Oh, I love Sunday School." That statement was meant to be the end of all controversy. I.e., "I love Sunday School, so don't bother calling it in question. I love it, therefore, God must accept it."

The Rich Young Ruler who inquired of Jesus about eternal life would have been pleased, no doubt, if Jesus had told him to do something that met his approval, such

as building a synagogue, a leprosarium, or an orphans' home, but when Jesus' command did not please him, he was ready to give up his quest. He was willing to please God until it reached the point that it did not please himself

Selective Obedience

What about us, dear reader? Would we be willing to make a sacrifice if we discovered that what we were doing did not please God? Have we asked ourselves the question: Is what I am doing pleasing to God? And what if, upon self-searching and a study of the Scriptures, we discovered that we were not pleasing God, would we change? What if we discovered that the observance of pagan holidays, the clothes we wear, the amount we contribute, and the places we go were not pleasing to God? Would we make a drastic change or would we condemn the preacher who dared to call our practice in question?

Our obedience to God's will cannot be selective. We cannot determine which commands we will obey and which we will reject. When we do that, we are pleasing only ourselves. James said, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2: 10). To update an old illustration on this passage, let us envision a father who tells his son, "While I am at work today, I want you to put the trash out to be picked up, wash the family car, and sweep off the front porch." The son puts out the trash and sweeps off the porch, but doesn't wash the car because it is too hot. Which time did he obey his father? At no time did he obey his father. He observed two of the commands because it pleased him to do so. In the same way, our selective obedience may please us, but it also convicts us as transgressors in God's eyes.

How Do We Know When God Is Pleased?

How may we determine when God is pleased? In the days of Elijah, God showed his approval when "the fire of the Lord fell" and devoured the sacrifice that Elijah provided (1 Kings 18:38). An angel spoke God's approval when Abraham was willing to offer his son upon the altar in Moriah (Gen. 22:15-18). In our time, however, we must rely upon God as He speaks to us through his Son (Heb. 1:2). Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). How much of God's will must we do? Jesus said, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20). We cannot practice

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Editorial

DO YOU ENJOY FIRM PREACHING?

By DON L. KING

There was a time when firm preaching was what one could expect to hear from any gospel preacher. Now, it isn't always that way. Why is this, we might ask? Perhaps no one can answer positively. However, it might be because we once had to fight hard. The battle against digression and sectarianism was a hard fight. Likely, those battles were a great strengthening factor. The issues were in the forefront. Church members knew it would not be acceptable to simply answer that it is "against my religion," when asked why our women don't cut their hair or why the churches of Christ use one cup and no Sunday school. All brethren, including the preachers, knew they must know the Bible well when they met the opposition. The Bible was once discussed as a common topic even on the street corners in times gone by. On Saturdays one would often hear the sidewalk preachers as they preached to anyone who would stand for a moment. The townsfolk would sit and argue the Bible for hours. It simply wouldn't do to be ignorant of the Scriptures. Consequently, when one went to services it was expected that the preacher (or teacher) would say it like it is and prove it with the Scriptures. If it didn't happen that way, brethren were disappointed.

Notice some passages we once heard regularly. Jude 3, "...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." We used to know that the word "contend" meant to be as a combatant. The Word was preached firmly, boldly, and plainly. The gospel was never preached apologetically. Yes, it was preached in the spirit of love for the souls of men, but preached nonetheless. Remember Philippians 1:17?

"But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel." Every member wanted to be ready to defend the truth. Again, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Ephesians 4:14) Another passage we heard regularly was the words of Paul found in Ephesians 6:14-17, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Brethren loved that old firm ring when we were reminded that we must "put on the whole armour of God, that ye (we) might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11) That's right, the idea is to stand fast, firm, steadfast and unmovable, etc. We cannot do it, friends, unless we wield the mighty sword of the Spirit, the word of Almighty God! We ought to be ashamed if we do not love and insist on firm preaching! Paul knew that

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EVERY MAN STOOD IN HIS PLACE

By DOUGLAS HAWKINS

Accomplishing the objectives in war effort requires the full cooperation of each branch of the armed forces. Even though job descriptions may vary throughout the military, every person contributes an important part to the effort nonetheless. In the seventh chapter of Judges, the Bible relates the inspiring story of Israel's triumph over the Midianites. This great story impresses us with the tremendous odds that Gideon and his special force of three hundred men overcame. The Bible says about them in Judges 7:21 that "every man stood in his place." From this one statement, we learn a very timely lesson.

Like in Gideon's case, today the armies of immorality, denominationalism, and digression outnumber the Lord's people considerably. Given the odds, the only way for us as Christians to make a real difference in the world is by uniting in our local bodies for a common purpose, toward a common goal, for the common good of all. Division and strife, on the other hand, weaken a congregation and leave it vulnerable to defeat. Jesus said "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand." (Matt 12:25) Whether the statement applies to the nation, the home, or the church, division always leads to desolation and we desperately need to learn that. Despite Paul's instruction against "divisions among you" (1 Cor. 1:10), sadly, division is ever so common among us. Instead of working charitably, brethren sometimes act cantankerously. And through criticism, suspicion, rumors, and envy, mixed with other volatile emotions, people fragment the body of Christ and cause it to be polarized. Such actions, as these, only destroy the church from within, when the real enemy lurks without. Just below my house is state highway 461, also known in Rockcastle County as the David M. Smith memorial highway. In the county courthouse in Mt Vernon, hangs a picture of Private Smith with an article about his heroism. It states "...after the enemy had lobbed a grenade into his emplacement, Private Smith, without thinking of himself, shouted a warning to his comrades, and fell upon it, smothering the explosion with his body. Although he was mortally wounded, he shielded five other men from death or serious injury in this heroic act." How strong would the church be if everyone were willing to make a sacrifice like that for the brethren and the cause of Christ? The Bible says of early saints, "they did not love their lives to the death" (Rev. 12:11), and it commands "we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16) As you probably would agree, like sticks are stronger in a bundle, the church multiplies its strength by standing together. And we can, by far, accomplish so much more by coordinating all of our efforts toward the same end and by "every man standing in his place." Let me briefly mention a couple of things that we seriously need to consider.

First, I believe that every faithful man needs to stand in his place doctrinally. For the church to be true and faithful for the next generations, men today are going to have to hold the line on doctrinal matters. The time has definitely come again "when men will not endure sound doctrine (2 Tim 4-3). Even some of our own brethren and preachers

can't seem to endure it for long. A while back, I saw a circular advertising a sermon topic that asked, "When does the church of Christ cease to be the church of Christ?" Was I ever glad I already knew the answer. (Like women, preachers reserve the right to change their minds sometimes. He did and not for the better I might add.) The answer though? The church of Christ ceases to be the church of Christ when it departs from the faith or transgresses the doctrine of Christ (2 Jo. 9; 1 Cor. 16:13). In short, the unity and faithfulness of all believers depend upon their adherence to the word of God and their fidelity to its eternal precepts (Eph. 4: 3-6). Bluntly put, faithful men don't arbitrarily ignore doctrinal divisions and opt to worship with people that practice error, like some have done lately. Despite its sadness, many doctrinal differences now separate brethren. Over time, men have abdicated their doctrinal posts of duty. When Paul said, of his day, there would come a "falling away," he knew some defectors and deserters would abandon the truth. Nothing's changed about that. Along with those mentioned by Paul, others are going to be court marshaled for desertion and treason. In recent years, issues involving instrumental music, missionary societies, Bible classes, individual cups, a plurality of loaves and such like have lead to division and to different "fellowships" within the churches of Christ. And as unfortunate as it is, regardless of how long the world stands, new innovations will definitely come along, and similar issues will surely crop up. When they do, however, "Every man has to be standing in his place, doctrinally." But if we are not, the armies of digression and error will overrun us and division will once again beset the cause. (LISTEN TO WHAT I'M SAYING!!!) Though some men deem these issues as petty, they are more than just minor disagreements. These issues are battlegrounds over truth and it's the duty of every faithful man to "earnestly contend for the faith, once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Paul said, "I am set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1: 17), and as long as there is the possibility of men "departing from the faith" (1 Tim. 4: 1), we are going to have to be set for its defense too. In light of this duty, can faithful men ever stop asking "by what authority?" Can they ever grow weary of doctrinal preaching? Or can they ever tire of rehearsing the first principles? To ask is obviously to answer.

Secondly, every man needs to be standing in his place evangelistically. Amazingly enough, some denominations grow every year in size and strength, despite their bizarre doctrines. Why? Primarily, these organizations actively involve most of their membership in reaching others. While we pine and whine that things aren't what they used to be, they march up and down the streets of America, en masse, distributing literature and inviting people to their services. Naturally, the greater the force, the more impact any group will have. To us Jesus says, "Behold, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" (Jn. 4:35) Can you imagine the real difference that could be made in a gospel meeting if everyone actually worked and prepared for it? Can you imagine how our

congregations would grow if every person worked to convert a friend or neighbor? Now is the time for us to lift up our eyes, lifting them from indifference, negativism, defeatism, and criticism and look on the fields. There are cities without churches here in America and nations where the truth has never gone. The question is, what are we doing to change that? How seriously are we taking the responsibility of spreading the gospel? How much money are we willing to invest in the Lord's work? How much time are we, as individuals, willing to spend? Who has the initiative and who will stand in his place? Don't tell me

that gospel meetings aren't effective anymore. Tell me how many people you personally invited to the last one and tell me how many services you personally attended. Then we'll know if we are standing in our place evangelistically. As the Lord said, nightfall comes and no man can work (Jn. 9:4). We better get busy, while we can.

Brethren, doesn't it make more sense to work together, instead of working against one another? Don't let the folly of pride destroy the cause we love. Stand in your place, do your duty, and uphold the cause of Christ!!!

CHILDREN IN THE HOME (#3)

BY HOMER A. GAY

Many wonderful homes are entirely without children, and there are some children who have come to a useful maturity without home. But homes need children and children need homes. The influence of the child is one of the most ennobling and developing influences that can be exerted upon an adult life. Baby opens up a world of meaning and sympathy to the heart it knows.

Childless homes have always seemed empty to me. "Marry, bear children," is the instruction of the Lord. The elder, who is to be an example to the flock is to have "believing children" (Titus 1:6). He must have his children in subjection with all gravity (1 Timothy 3:4). In as much as the elder is to an example to the flock, it follows then that the other families of the flock should also have children, faithful children, and I believe that when it is reasonable and possible a home must have children to be a Christian home. One of the good works mentioned for the woman in 1 Timothy 5, is: "if she have brought up children."

Children in the home are a wonderful blessing, and if young people do not want to be "bothered" with children, they should never marry. The men or women who have not had the experience of raising children are not qualified for overseers in God's work, according to His word.

It is possible that where a couple cannot bring children into the world, they may adopt children and have about the same experience as with their own. But, I doubt if God smiles upon a childless home.

I am just old fashioned enough to believe that God meant "children" when He said "children." I doubt the wisdom of trying to bring up a child by itself. My observation is that the child that is brought up alone is usually petted, spoiled; and is selfish, overbearing, and hard to get along with. This shows up in the home when other children come to his home or when he goes into the other children's homes. They are usually a problem in the schoolroom and on the playgrounds, in the church, and a lot of times are troublesome neighbors and citizens. It is not giving a child a fair chance in life to bring it up alone.

God's instructions to the first pair were to "be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth." (Genesis 1:28) But, the qualifications of these parents were "very good," (Genesis 1:31) and God expects us as parents today to be very good. That is why I mentioned in my first article that certain qualifications should be seen in both the boy and the girl before they agree to marry. The little babe that is born into the home is just what its parents make it. There

certainly is a grave responsibility placed upon the parents, so, it is well that they study closely just what kind of folks they should be and determine to work under the guidance of God and direct and shape the destinies of these immortal souls entrusted to their care.

Parents need strength in body, mind and soul, and every effort should be made to develop all the powers we have for good; both for the good of the parents and for the good of the children. Usually, the parent who cares the most feels the least capable, but God can and will accomplish wonders with us if we will cooperate fully with Him. Too many parents today try to raise their children by the clock rather than by the help of God.

"Woe to him who smiles not at the cradle and weeps not at the tomb. He who has never tried the companionship of a little child, has carelessly passed by one of the greatest pleasures of life, as one that passes a rare flower without plucking it or knowing its value. The gleeful laugh of happy children is the best of home music. We are all kings and queens in the cradle, and each babe is a new marvel, a new miracle. The perfection of the providence for childhood is willingly acknowledged by all. The care which covers the seed of the tree under tough husks, and stony cases provides for the human plant, the mother's breast and the father's house."—*The Royal Path of Life*

Children will not trouble you for long. They grow up so fast; nothing on earth seems to grow faster than children. Jesus touched the little children while He was here, but some folks today seem almost afraid to touch one. Jesus also said, "suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:16) Again, He said: "...except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3) The converted person will learn many good lessons in honesty, frankness, and purity from the little child. "...Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." (Matthew 18:5)

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord..." (Psalms 127:3)

Next month, "The Father's Place in The Home."

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MAKING LIFE MORE LIVABLE

By J.D. SMITH

INTRO:

There is a vast difference between existing and living. Life is to be lived rather than endured. One may exist four score years and never really live. Living is an art and the person who masters it has accomplished something greater than the work of an artist or sculptor. Every essential of successful and happy living is also a specific requirement of the Christian life.

Reason with me now on sonic essentials in making life more livable.

WORK :

Employment is essential to happiness. The unhappiest people in the world are those who have nothing to do but have a good time. Idleness explains the discontent and bitterness of many - both rich and poor. Idleness permits the imagination to run riot, and expose a person to all kinds of worry and tear. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." It is a Christian's duty to work and earn a living. Does this sound strange in this day and age? "Work with your hand, even as we charged you" (1 Thes. 4:11).

Christians are commanded to discourage indolence and begging by refusing to feed those who are unwilling to work for a livelihood. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, if any will not work, neither let him eat." (2 Thes. 3:10). This encourages an industrious society among the Christians.

LOVE:

Man must have someone to love. This is a part, of our nature and to go against this principle makes us less than happy people.

The Lord has taken into consideration man's need to love and has commanded us to love: GOD (Matt. 22:37); NEIGHBOR (Matt. 22:39); COMPANION (Eph. 5:25); BROTHERHOOD (1 Pet. 2:17); ENEMY (Matt. 5:43-47). Without the love in all these considerations the Love of God is not in us. All too often, there is vast room for improvement in our love life.

ACCEPTANCE OF SELF:

We must accept the fact that different people have different talents and degrees of ability. (Matt. 25:14-30). God has given us the ability to perform good works for Him and develop that talent that he has given. He has given with certain expectations; we need to fill those expectations. Don't try to be someone else; use what you have and see the difference it can make in both you and others. No two people are exactly alike. He who has little, develop it.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk. 16:10).

Man's unwillingness to accept the inferior in life often prevents his reaching the higher goal. We all usually know ourselves better than anyone knows us, we just stay blind to certain parts we don't like.

Conceit is a devastating enemy. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. 16:18).

We should be content with what we have but not with what we are. Paul said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I'm in to therewith be content." (Phil. 4,11) But, not content with self. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In the acceptance of self we must accept our handicaps; to reconcile self to our limitations. Many times proper attitude can turn adversity into victory.

EXAMINE SELF:

This is something we don't like to do. It usually shows up soiled spots in one's life. Paul said, "Examine your ownelves whether ye be in the faith". (II Cor. 13:5)

Each day we should pull back the curtain of life and ask God about the day. This guards against egotism and bitterness.

Another blessing of self-examination is to focus criticism on self instead of others--the mote and the beam situation (Matt. 7:3). So many are critical--"I thank thee that I am not as the rest of man..." (Lk. 18:11)

CULTIVATE AN INTEREST IN OTHERS:

"Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you to the things of others." (Phil. 2:4). "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2). "Rejoice and weep with others." (Rom. 12:15).

A teacher asked a small boy what lesson he got from the story of the good Samaritan. In Lk. 10:30-37. He replied, "The lesson I got from it is that when I'm in trouble, my neighbors ought to help me." All too often this is our own attitude. Think in terms of helping and serving others.

KEEP SELF FIT TO LIVE WITH:

Man must live with himself. Why not keep self pure and enjoyable rather than just "endurable." "Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23).

Live up to the knowledge and honor possessed. Paul is a good example—he at one time persecuted God and His church, believing it to be righteous. When he learned different he did differently.

LIVE LIFE ONE DAY AT A TIME:

This is very hard to do, consequently, most of the people let the past and the future destroy the great potential of the present. Take things as they come—they will come and go and all will usually be well.

If only we lived life as God designed and gave it, we would be worth so much more to Him and to ourselves and "LIFE WOULD ALWAYS BE MORE LIVABLE."

BRIMSTONE FOR THE BROADMINDED

By CARL M. JOHNSON

I recently saw an article in a religious journal with the above-mentioned title. The article points out that the main

objection modern, secular people make to the gospel message today is its teaching about hell. It also poses the

question, "Can we seriously preach hell in a tolerant age?"

We have been conditioned by our popular culture to believe that it's wrong to judge and condemn any kind of behavior; consequently, when secular people hear of God's condemning the lost to a fiery hell to be punished forever, they dismiss the words as being "intolerant" or "ignorant."

A luncheon conversation between a preacher and a poised and polished English woman perfectly illustrates the mindset of today's secular people. At one point she leaned across the table to the preacher and said, "...You seem so intelligent, so well read. You're not one of those who goes around doing hellfire and brimstone preaching, are you?" Of course, the obvious inference to be drawn is that only the stupid and ignorant would be guilty of that kind of preaching. This woman, however, expresses what may be the main objection contemporary, secular people make to the gospel message—the idea of final judgment and hell.

Furthermore, while our tolerant world vehemently objects to the preaching of hellfire and brimstone, its senses have been so numbed by the entertainment media that ironically, the preaching of hell has little impact upon it.

Movie makers use computer-enhanced special effects sensationally to portray hideous monsters, mayhem bloodshed, destruction, mutilation, and death. Vincent Camby of the *New York Times* says, "If you have the impression that movies today are bloodier and more brutal than ever in the past, and that their body counts are skyrocketing, you are absolutely right." Add to the movies the 26 hours of TV and the ten hours of music a typical teenager consumes each week, and you can see the entertainment industry exerts a profound influence upon society. Movie critic Michael Medved says, "Evidence already abounds as to the results of that influence. For one thing, the public has been dramatically desensitized by the overwhelming accumulation of violent images; it is far more difficult to frighten or disgust an audience than ever before" (*Hollywood VS. America* 186).

Medved is absolutely correct. The doctrines of Judgment and Hell should serve as an alarm to awaken and frighten those who are lost in sin. After having been assaulted by the continual parade of carnage and gore served up by the entertainment media, however, today's audiences hardly raise an eyebrow when they hear the apocalyptic descriptions of hell from the NT. While Felix trembled when Paul warned him of the Judgment (Acts 24:25), today's audiences can barely stifle a yawn.

You can see the dilemma facing us as we attempt to preach the gospel in this age of entertainment and so called tolerance.

Objecting to the Bible's teaching (Matt. 25:46; Mk. 9:44, 46, 48; Lk. 12:47-48; Jno. 5:25-29; Heb. 10:29; Rev. 20:10-15) that the lost will suffer unending conscious torment in hell is certainly not a new phenomenon, and it is not an objection found only among secular people. Since the third century this teaching has been repeatedly challenged by groups such as "universalists," who believe that in the end, everyone will be saved.

From February 1837 until July 1839, Alexander Campbell engaged in a written debate on everlasting punishment with universalist Dolphus Skinner. During the debate, Campbell concedes that Skinner is on the popular

side of the question. Campbell acknowledges that regardless of how devoted to the truth of God he may be, he is going to appear "malevolent" contending for the doctrine of eternal punishment. By contrast, Skinner, contending for universal salvation would appear as the more benevolent and charitable disputant. Skinner knew "the proper game to play," and repeatedly referred to this doctrine with such inflammatory rhetoric as "the horrid doctrine," "the soul-chilling, the diabolical doctrine of endless misery" (*Campbell-Skinner Debate* 207).

One simple example by Campbell, however, illustrates the absurdity of universal salvation. Quoting and commenting upon Mark 16:16, Campbell says, "'He that shall believe and shall have been immersed shall be saved; and he that will not believe shall be damned, or condemned'-no figure can have authority to make it mean '...and he that will not believe shall also be saved'" (*Campbell-Skinner* 13).

A sour-tempered Scotsman protesting against the idea that a sinner he has in mind should be "owed to escape the consequences of his sins captures the absurdity of universalism when he says, "What's the good of being good, if things are to turn out that way?" What's the good, indeed?

Another effort to soften the doctrine of hell is "annihilationism." This view emerged in the religious world after the Reformation, and was included in the 1660 confession of the General Baptists, the Seventh-Day Adventists, and several other groups in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916), reared by Presbyterian parents, then later a member of the Congregational Church, was distressed by the doctrine of eternal punishment at an early age. By the age of 17 he became a skeptic and abandoned his former church, saying he could not believe the Bible if he had to accept the doctrine of hell. He subsequently found solace in the Seventh-Day Adventists' teaching of "annihilationism," and this doctrine became a major plank in his founding of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Annihilationists believe the Bible teaches the end of the wicked is destruction, not eternal torment, and their belief is a growing trend. Building from the OT (Ps. 37; Mal. 4), they point to how Jesus declared the wicked will be cast into the smoldering garbage heap of Gehenna (Matt. 5:30), where they will be burned up (Matt. 3:10-12) and destroyed in both body and soul (Matt. 10:28). Similarly, Paul spoke of the fate of the lost as death (Rom. 6:23) and destruction (I Cor. 3:17). Peter also used such language (2 Pet. 2), likening the destruction of the ungodly to the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah. And John anticipated the wicked being consumed in the lake of fire, which he called the "second death" (Rev. 20:14-15).

Whatever its appeal may be, this position has many problems. One is that the Bible teaches the wicked will suffer an "eternal" fate. Annihilationists argue the word eternal refers to the permanence of the results of judgment and not to the duration of the act of punishment. The Bible uses the word eternal, however, to refer not only to the punishment of the lost but also to the bliss of the righteous (Matt. 25:46), suggesting a parallel that goes beyond the permanence of the pronounced judgment. The unending

of joy of the redeemed stands in contrast to the unending torment of the reprobate.

Also, several NT texts indicate the lost will suffer varying degrees of punishment. Jesus declares those who have received greater opportunities will suffer more severe condemnation (Matt 10:15; 11:20-24; Lk. 12:47-48). While many annihilationists believe in different degrees of torment before extinction, they anticipate only one ultimate destiny for all the wicked—mere nonexistence. But can a righteous Judge pronounce the same sentence of destiny upon the most despicable villain of human history as upon the seemingly moral pagan?

In spite of the efforts to discount or soften the doctrine of hell, it remains an integral part of the gospel. The preacher who talks lightly of sin and punishment does a work strikingly analogous to Satan's, who told Eve, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). Such a preacher lets men go on "the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire."

It's only when we understand something of the horrors of hell, that we can begin to see the seriousness of sin in God's eyes, and we can appreciate the brilliant and astounding sacrifice of Christ that allows us freedom from sin and eternal punishment.

THINK ON THESE THINGS

By ANDREW WEAVER

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 4:4-8)

Sometimes we have difficulty dwelling on those things that are most important. Often we allow the things of this world, whatever they may be, to govern our thinking process and even our actions. This simply should not be. We should always be thinking and dwelling upon those things which are from above. If we simply gave more time to study God's Word I think we would soon find it almost natural to be thinking about those things that are praiseworthy and virtuous.

Note these following passages:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15)

"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4: 13-16)

God instructed Joshua so long ago in Joshua 1:8, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

A great deal of importance needs to be placed upon the reading of the doctrine of Christ. Let's try to meditate upon his word day and night. Let's strive to know more about the perfect law of liberty. We need to be people who are knowledgeable of the Scriptures. Ignorance is never a good thing. Especially when dealing with the word of God.

Hosea 4:6 says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..."

I have never understood why some of us as Christians place our Bible on the shelf and never touch it again until the following worship service. Why can't we find time to read and study His word? We often don't have a problem finding time for our recreational activities.

So why can't we find time to learn His law? Do we not delight in His commandments? Brothers and sisters, it's time we wake up and realize that if we don't study God's word as we should, Satan is receiving an invitation to lead us astray.

May we learn to put out of our minds unrighteous thoughts. Study, study, study. By doing so we will become more knowledgeable of the Scriptures. Of course, we must "rightly divide" the scriptures when we study. It won't do us any good if we study God's word and yet come to errant conclusions. No Scripture is contradictory, and all is given by the inspiration of God. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16)

We should never allow the world to distract us from our first and foremost goal. Living a life that is pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. Never forget that if we truly live a righteous life, Heaven will be our eternal home.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

Remember the words of David:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." (Psalms 1: 1-6)

PLEASING GOD

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selective obedience and please God.

In the apostolic age, the evidence of God's approval resided in inspired men. The apostle Paul said, "But we have this treasure (God's revelation) in earthen vessels (inspired men)" (2 Cor. 4:7). We learn from Acts 15 that all questions were settled by an appeal to apostolic authority. That is still the way to settle questions of right and wrong and good and evil, but now the revelation of God resides in an inspired book-the New Testament. Every

religious practice is either right or wrong. If it is right, it meets God's approval and has His blessing, and if it is right, it is approved in God's revelation to modern man-the New Testament.

None of us would think that a friend would be pleased if we continually offered him something that he did not like or something that did not meet his approval. How does God feel when men and women continually offer him practices and worship that he has not authorized? Jesus answered that when He said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9).

EDITORIAL

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was the only kind of preaching that would really get the job done. That must be why he told Titus "...rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." (Titus 1:13) Today, some might have told Titus, "you better try to get a study with those folks who are in sin so you can influence them to do better. Be careful what you say, don't hurt their feelings with the truth." No, indeed, Paul said, "rebuke them sharply." That is just the opposite of what some would advise, isn't it? There is a liberal tendency in some circles that defames firm teaching and preaching, even scoffs at it. However, God knows best and the Bible still reads, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Timothy 4:2-5)

Can you really imagine an apostle trying to explain away the inspired teaching found in 2 John 9-11? "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." There are men who are fervently trying to explain this away. They would have you believe that this only means the teaching about the divinity of Christ, etc.! As the old timers used to say, "if you can see through the rungs of a ladder, you can see that." You see, if they can explain the passage away, then their new doctrines and liberal ideas will seem to have more validity.

Brethren, we had better learn from the past. Apostasy came soon after the writings of the apostles were made. It came because men did not believe and obey plain scripture. During the last two centuries digression reared its ugly head again and again because the old motto, "Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent," was forgotten and trampled underfoot. What goes around,

comes around! Some of us recall when brethren began teaching a liberal fellowship idea. Churches were divided; young people discouraged and quit the church. Even a few preachers were led astray.

Only the Lord knows how many souls the devil won with liberalism. It was wrong then and it is still wrong. Amazingly, it is still alive in some quarters. Be careful whom you put in the pulpit. If their preaching sounds strange and perhaps a little denominational, if they call into question doctrine, which has been proven over and over through the years as biblical, they need to be left alone.

One final word of caution: Some of these fellows who are not able to get in the pulpits are writing it and sending it out over the Internet. It is shameful to admit, but one may find articles on the Internet (by members of the church!) insisting that it is scriptural for a woman to cut her hair as long as it still looks long! Did you think that battle was won? Preachers had better be preaching the Bible about the hair! Several years ago, this writer preached a sermon on the hair at a certain place. An older sister approached me after services and sweetly asked, "Brother King, do you really believe that junk?" I am told of other things being taught also by some young people who may only be ignorant of the truth. However, the fact remains that when false doctrine is taught the devil wins souls regardless of how well intentioned the teacher may have been.

We need to be preaching the gospel in plain language. The story is told of President Wilson who attended a church service on Sunday when his wife was too ill to go. When the President returned home, she asked how the service was. He said, "fine." She said, "What was the preacher's sermon about?" He said, "Sin." She said, "What did he say about it?" The President answered: "He said he was again it." That was that. He had remembered nothing of substance about the service at all.

The Bible and religion are out of style today in the world. Sadly, they are out of style with some church members too. If we want to make a difference by our preaching, it is obvious we are going to have to say it plainly. Sin is going to have to be named and shown to be what it really is the doctrine of the devil. Yes, I certainly do enjoy firm preaching. How about you? Can you afford not to?

Think on these things. DLK

Our troubles would seem insignificant if we could forget them as soon as we do our blessings.

An egotist is a person who is ME-DEEP in thought and conversation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Directory Updates as of June 27, 2000:

Congregations:

Alabama, Gadsden. Lowell Hurst address change: 3500 Brock Hill Dr., Hokes Bluff, AL 35903, (256) 492-5700

California, Sacramento. 64th Street. Earl Helvey's address change: 5310 64. St., Sacramento, CA 95820

California, Stockton. Change midweek service to Wednesday, 7:30 pm.

Michigan, Detroit. Harry Motley address change: 45866 Bonaventure Dr., Macomb, MI 48044, (810) 465-3564. Remove Grady Blair. Add: Anthony Motley, Jr., (313) 624-9146

Mississippi, Jericho. Contacts: Fred White address change: 662 Brant Trail NE, Brookhaven, MS 39601 (601) 833-0592, Add: Curtis Tyner, 2124 Cade Lane NW, Brookhaven, MS 39601, (601) 835-1855

Missouri, Houston. Change Sunday evening service to 5:00 pm.

Oklahoma, Chouteau. Change Sunday evening service to 3:00 pm. Ron Green address change: Rt. 2 Box 23 1, Adair, OK 74330 (918) 785-3416

Oklahoma, Sweet Home. Remove W.R. Lambert. Add Thomas D. Coberley, 612 SE. Ave. L, Idabel, OK 74728 (580) 286-3293

Pennsylvania, Flemington. Mahlon Garrison address change: P.O. Box 287, Avis, PA 17721-0287

Oklahoma, Ada. Congregation will be as follows: Sunday morning, 10:30 A.M. Sunday evening, 4:00 P.M. & Wednesday services at 7:30 P.M.

Preachers:

Add Robert Adams Jr., 2899 James Dr. NW, Wesson, NIS 39191 (601) 823-3719.

Change Clyde Lamkins address: 16973 Oleander Ln., Lebanon, MO 65536

Correct email addresses:

Michael Fox: bldprnt@pacbell.net

Richard Lechner: twins@gotnet.net

Randy Tidmore: bro_randy@yahoo.com

Please continue to send updates to:

7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621,

Phone (916) 726-8507, email: ppgpagreg@aol.com

Texas Labor Day Meeting

The Exchange Parkway congregation in Allen, Texas will host the 54th annual Texas Labor Day Meeting. The dates are September 1-4 and the theme is ~Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. ~ (Ephesians 3:21). There will be a theme for each lesson that ties to the theme of the meeting. Services will be held at the Irving Arts Center in Carpenters Performance Hall located at 3333 N MacArthur Blvd (excluding the Lord's Day morning service). Friday services will begin at 7:30 p.m., and the speakers are Bob Johnson and Melvin Blalock following these themes, "God deserves glory in the church" and "the glorious gospel." Saturday services begin at 6:00 p.m. and the speakers are Glenn Ballard and Gerald Hill following these themes,

"God receives glory in the church" and "God receives glory in the church by Christ". Sunday evening services begin at 6:00 p.m. and the speakers are Terry Baze and Jerry Dickenson following these themes, "the glorious second coming" and "the glorious resurrection". The meeting will conclude with the Monday morning services beginning at 9:30 a.m. with speakers Brett Hickey and Wayne McKamie with the following themes, "God will receive glory at judgement day" and "the glorious home in Heaven". For more information contact Gary Robinson at 972-562-1026 or Bruce Caskey at 972-359-8902.

Eastern Labor Day Meeting

The Eastern Labor Day Meeting will be hosted by the Church in Goshen Ohio this year. Our theme is based on 1 John 5:11 focusing on blessings "In His Son". Several area preachers will preach at each service on related subjects and blessings surrounding this theme. The meeting will begin on Thursday night August 31 at 7:30 pm at the usual meeting place for the congregation. Friday night the services will move to a larger area facility and will remain there for the rest of the meeting through Sunday afternoon. Please make plans to be with us. We will keep as many brethren in our homes as possible and have information for other accommodations also. For information call Eric Lutz (513) 722-3650, Jim Rogers (513) 722-9499, or Brian Burns (513) 722-0728.

Church Pews Needed

The church in Detroit Michigan is in need of some church pews. If you have any you can spare or know of someone who does, please contact Brother Anthony Motley at (313) 624-9146.

Missouri Labor Day Meeting

The Labor Day meeting will be held at Neosho, MO this year, beginning Sept. 1 and continuing through the 3rd. Services will be held on the campus of Crowder College in the Elsie Plaster Auditorium. There will be services Friday night, Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon and night. Regular services at the West Hwy. church in Neosho will be held Sunday morning and that afternoon at 4 p.m. Speakers to be used during the meeting include: Jimmy Smith, Billy Dickinson, Paul Nichols, Reggie Kinser, Roy Lee Criswell, Ron Alexander, Richard Reed, Dan Paulson, Johnny Elmore, Ronny Wade, Edwin Morris, Miles King, Gary Weaver and Taylor Joyce.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

COGGIN-LEAR—Stacey Lear and Seth Coggin were united in Holy Matrimony on April 22, 2000, in Kimberling City, Missouri. A large crowd of family and friends gathered on this beautiful Saturday afternoon in the Ozarks to watch Stacey and Seth exchange vows. Since I had the privilege of baptizing them both into Christ, I was greatly honored they asked me to officiate their wedding. They are members of the Jamesville, Missouri, congregation. It is our prayer that God will bless them both richly, and help them to keep the vows of life-long love and loyalty they have made to one another and to Him.—Carl A. Johnson

OUR DEPARTED

WOOD—Sadly we announce the death of one of our oldest members here at the Ada congregation. On April 29th Lora Mae left this world for one that we trust is far better. Lora Mae was what might be called a second generation member here at Ada. For most of us she had just always been here. She is the mother of Sis. Glynda Hudson and the grandmother of Sis. Kathy Holland, Sis. Beverly Deering and Bro. Jay Hudson. She also left seven great-grandchildren. Bro. Carl Johnson and I fondly reflected on the good life of our sister and attempted to remind the living of this inevitable appointment that awaits us all.—Joe Hisle

CAFFEY—Bernell M. Caffey, daughter of Joel Albert and Mina B. Marshall Carden was born December 27, 1915, in Green Forest, Arkansas. She departed this life, Thursday, October 28, 1999, in her home, at the age of eighty-three years, ten months, and one day. On February 1, 1936, she was united in marriage to Floyd G. Caffey, and to this union two sons were born. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Floyd; a son, Jerrel, and three sisters, Thelma Ennis, Gladys Stout, and Dorothy Caffey. Bernell is survived by one son, Dennis Caffey, and his wife, Beth, of Marshfield, Missouri; five grandchildren, Steve Caffey, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Becky Hatcher, of Dothan, Alabama, Carmen Dutschmann, of Valley Mills, Texas, Resenda Patterson, of Mullen, Texas, and Larissa Caffey, of Marshfield, Missouri; two sisters, Glennis Foust, of Phillipsburg, Missouri, and Neta Carden, of Kansas City, Missouri; and a daughter-in-law, Jean Roe, of Tyler, Texas, as well as a host of other relatives and friends. Bernell was a loving mother, grandmother, sister, and was a caring neighbor and friend. She will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by all those who knew and loved her.

CATE—Gertis Cate was a life long member of the church in San Angelo, TX. She departed this life Friday June 9, 2000 in a local nursing home. She had been in poor health for several years, and we are confident that her many years of faithfulness has earned her a much needed rest. She will be greatly missed.—Dwain Morrison

THOMAS—Orville M. Thomas of Appleton, Arkansas was born February 7, 1907 in Conway County, Arkansas. He passed away June 1st at the age the of 93. Orville is survived by his two sons Richard Thomas of Appleton, AR and Larry Thomas of Dallas, TX.; two daughters Norma Haulmark of Hattieville, AR and Linda Utley of Powderly, Texas; two brothers, Benton Thomas and Joe Thomas both of Jerusalem, AR. and four grandchildren, Jason M. Thomas, Traver Thomas, Brandon Utley and Aldon Utley. I had visited Orville several times the past few years and baptized him less than two years ago. Some of the brethren would pick him up a time or two for church services but even if he was past 90 he would drive to the church services on Lord's Day morning. He was a member of the church of Christ at Cedar Creek, near Jerusalem,

Arkansas. I was glad to speak from God's word to comfort the family and friends gathered. One of the children ask that the lesson not be real short - so we gave a sermon on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (John 11:23-26) and Job asking the question, "If a man die shall he live again?"—Miles King

COX—Jessie Pauline Brumley Cox was born October 5, 1927, in Jester, OK, and she died May 23, 2000, in an Oklahoma City hospital, at the age of 72. She is survived by three sons: Wayne Lee Brumley, Doug Wadley, and Rusty Wadley; one stepson Buddy Cox; one daughter Sherrie Miller; and one stepdaughter Carolyn Cox; two brothers Buddy and Kenneth Brumley; and one sister Margaret Nelson; four grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and nine step-grandchildren. Pauline's death came with shocking suddenness. She appeared to be fine at church services Sunday night, and then we received word of her death Tuesday afternoon. Because of her reserved, non-complaining nature, we did not know how sick she really was. We are really going to miss Pauline. I have known the Brumley family all my life and I was honored to be asked to speak words of comfort and warning at the funeral.—Carl M. Johnson

PRITCHARD—Yvette Toiana Moore Pritchard was born January 18, 1975 in Montrose, Colorado to Leland and Shirley (Corson) Moore and departed this life on July 5, 2000 at the Wyoming Medical Center in Casper, Wyoming after a long struggle with Asthma. On July 18, 1995 she was united in marriage to Mike Pritchard, her faithful and devoted husband. She was a faithful member of the Lord's Church in Casper. She is survived by her husband, and a 6-month-old son, Kaleb of the home. Also her parents Leland and Shirley Moore of Casper, Wyoming, three bothers and one sister as well as nephews, nieces, aunts, uncles, and cousins. She was preceded in death by both sets of grandparents. Both of whom were well known to many of us. Her grandfather J.D. Corson preached a number of years before his death. Yvette was laid to rest in the Wyoming Memorial Garden just outside of Casper. I considered it a honor to conduct the service as I had been a friend of the family for over 41 years.—Roy Lee Criswell

BOLING—Fred James Boling, 97, a member of the Church of Christ for more than seventy years. He had been a leader of the Jamison St. Church for many years, as well as a leader of the Berea Church of Christ, Greenville, S.C., for the last thirty years. Brother Fred was born Oct. 6, 1902, and passed from this life into eternity on the 23rd of May, 2000. Brother Fred was a kind, Christian man who loved the Lord and always put Him and the church first in his life. He was the husband of one wife, Lena Mae Upchurch Boling. Brother Boling is survived by three children: Mrs. Thomas (Evelyn) Owens, Mrs. Jack (Elezabeth) Yellis, and Mr. Thomas Fred Boling. He had seven grandchildren, 14 great grandchildren, and 15 great-great grandchildren. Brother Fred was loved by all in the church who were fortunate enough to have known him. And he was respected by those out of the church with whom he came in contact.



Roy Criswell, Cassville, MO, July 18—We continue to be busy serving the Lord here in Aurora, Mo. Last night Bro. Jerry Dickinson closed a weeks meeting with us. He preached some much needed sermons and did an excellent job. Our crowds were good, especially toward the later part of the week. We were happy to have some from the community to attend. Also we were happy to have several preaching Brethren from the area. Bro. Dan Paulson was of great help to the meeting by helping me to do door to door personal work. The Lebanon Meeting was outstanding. The preaching, singing, and fellowship was wonderful. We encourage you to make plans next year to attend. I greatly enjoyed the last issue of the *Old Paths Advocate*. There was some much needed articles. I especially enjoyed the article by Brother Edwin Morris. It needs to be endorsed and put into practice. Please pray for the Lord's work here in Aurora and when traveling feel free to come and worship with.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, July 17—The meeting in London, KY closed with one baptism and one restoration. Crowds were large throughout, with a number of community visitors attending. Next we were at Goshen, OH where we were privileged to stay in the home of brother and sister Brian Burns, whose hospitality was outstanding. We had good cooperation from surrounding congregations, with several preaching brethren in attendance including Richard Bunner, Barney Owens, Bill Ferguson, and Brian Burns. One was baptized. We then went to Hillcrest near Brookhaven, MS. It was a joy to work with these brethren once again. I was especially glad to be with my long time friend Sam Smith. Sam has served the church at this place for many years. Though growing older, he is still strong in the faith. John Smith also lives and works among this congregation. Preachers in attendance included Brother Lynwood Smith. The churches at Pearlhaven, New Salem, and Collins were good to help us out. There were three confessions. The July meeting at Lebanon this year was very enjoyable. Brother Jerry Dickinson was good to work with. Our crowds were large, eight hundred plus, several nights, allowing us to see and visit with brethren from many different places. We just closed a good meeting in San Angelo, TX last night. We had thirty-eight visitors from the community. One was baptized, and a number of interested contacts were made which we hope will produce results in the future. Brother Cullen Smith was with me and rendered valuable service. He was well received by the brethren. The Lord willing we go next to Temple, GA July 23-30, Napoleon, AL August 6-13, Houston, MO August 14-20, Mountain, AR Sept. 10-17 and Hartwell near Huntsville, AR Sept 17-24. We look forward to

working with all these brethren in order to advance the cause of Christ.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, July 17—My meeting in Yakima, WA closed with one confession of faults. It was good to be associated with Claude and Ann Barnes again; I count them as not only brethren, but dear friends, and I always enjoy their hospitality. I will be leaving on July 28 to conduct a meeting at Manteca, CA. It has been many years since I've held a meeting at Manteca, and I am eagerly anticipating a great meeting! My big trip for the year, however, will take place on Sept. 8-25. Lord willing, I will be traveling with my son, Chris, and Maurice Chandler (both of Little Rock, AR) to Malawi, Africa. We are to arrive in Lilongwe on the Sunday morning of Sept. 10, and from there I'm sure that we are going to have the opportunity to meet many brethren and visit with several congregations in that area of the world. I am looking forward to being with Jim Franklin who labors in Malawi. I have known Jim since I was sixteen years old, he was a great source of encouragement to me as a teenage boy who had a burning desire to preach the gospel. Jim is a tireless worker and I have no doubt that a busy schedule awaits us when we arrive in Malawi. We solicit your prayers for a safe and successful trip! I appreciate the fact that I am getting to see a lot of my brother Jerry this summer. Jerry and Ronny Wade held the Lebanon meeting this year. Incidentally, the fourth of July meeting at Lebanon this year was everything you would expect such a meeting to be--great crowds, wonderful preaching, and beautiful singing. Also, Jerry just finished a meeting at Aurora, and he starts a meeting at Ozark this coming Sunday (July 23). Although Jerry is my brother, I don't think it is prejudice that causes me to say that he has developed into a great preacher.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr. Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail old_path@juno.com—By the time this reaches our readers, we should be in Ft. Smith, AR in a gospel meeting, Lord willing. We are to close there on Wednesday, July 12 and then go on to Fairview, LA closing there on July 23. My thanks to Ronny Wade for putting the copy together for the August issue and seeing that the printers get it on time. Preachers, we still need to hear from you with your field reports and articles, etc. Try to get it to me by to 10th of the month and remember that we publish a month in advance. If you wish a writing to be in a certain month, send it the month before. Please, type it and double-space it. Please don't send materials written by hand as it has to be typed before we can send it. We appreciate it if you will mention the paper when you are in your meetings and offer to send in subscriptions for brethren. You will be doing a good work. Pray for us.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, July 6, 2000—Would someone please slow down the clock? Can you believe it's this late in the year already? Most recently, I've been with the congregations in Bloomington, IN; Anderson, MO; and Scotland, AR. Each meeting was fairly well attended by the area churches and the folks seemed to

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show a great deal of interest. It was a pleasure to be associated with preaching brethren Floyd Harris, a dear friend, Nelson Nichols, John Anderson, and Miles King. These men have preached the gospel for a number of years and are appreciated for it. I wanted to also make a special

mention of thanks for Nick (A.K.A. Carl) and Sally Nichols keeping me in their home during my stay at Anderson. Presently, I'm scheduled to be in Strong, AR (Aug. 6-13) and Columbia, MO (Aug. 23-27). Lord bless your efforts for his cause!

WHEN YOU THOUGHT I WASN'T LOOKING, BY A CHILD...

By ANDREW WEAVER

A message every parent should read, because your children are watching you and doing as you do, not as you say...

"When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator, and I immediately wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw you feed a stray cat, and I learned that it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make my favorite cake for me and I learned that little things can be the special things in life.

When you thought I wasn't looking I heard you say a prayer, and I knew there is a God I could always talk to and I learned to trust in God.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make a meal and take it to a friend who was sick, and I learned that we all have to help take care of each other.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you give of your time and money to help people who had nothing and I learned that those who have something should give to those who don't.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I felt you kiss me good night and I felt loved and safe.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you take care of our house and everyone in it and I learned we have to take care of what we are given.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw how you handled your responsibilities, even when you didn't feel good and I learned that I would have to be responsible when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw tears come from your eyes and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it's all right to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw that you cared and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I learned most of life's lessons that I need to know to be a good and productive person when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I looked at you and wanted to say, Thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking."

Each of us, parent or friend, influence the life of a child.

"O GOD MAKE ME A CHILD"

Children often demonstrate the Christ-like qualities that we all need to have in our lives. Even our Lord one time used a child to teach a valuable lesson *Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."* The following poem illustrates a truth we all should take to heart.

Last night a little boy confessed to me
 Some childish wrong;
 And kneeling at my knee
 He prayed with tears,
 "Dear God, make me a man
 Like Daddy--wise and strong.
 I know you can."

Then while he slept
 I knelt beside his bed,
 Confessed my sins,
 And prayed with a low-bowed head,
 "O God, make me a child
 Like my child here--pure gulkeless,
 Trusting Thee with faith sincere."

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXIV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, SEPTEMBER 2000

NO. 8

"...MEDDLE NOT WITH THEM THAT ARE GIVEN TO CHANGE"

BY PAUL O. NICHOLS

The title of our article is taken from Proverbs 24:21. This is the sound advice of the wise man Solomon. We are also told by James "...He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed" (Jas. 1:6). Nadab and Abihu, priests of God in the tabernacle service in the Old Testament were given to change and it cost them their lives (Lev. 10:1,2). Like people today, they probably thought it would make no difference.

All through the history of mankind changes have taken place - some good and some bad. As Christians, there is little that we can do to deter trends among the people of the world. But the apostle Paul says, "... Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2) "Be not conformed" means "do not be formed with" the world. In other words Christians are to be different from the world and from the changes which are made that are contrary to the will of God.

The church of Christ should be the trendsetter for the world - not the world for the church. Yet we have always had a problem with Christians being affected by changes in society. Many want to think and dress like the world, including immodest apparel, bizarre styles that identify them as rebels of society, or slovenly and inappropriate dress at worship services. I witnessed a man lead a song with a tee shirt on that said "Coors Beer." Others have been used in church services and even officiate at the communion table with a shirt advertising "I'd rather be golfing" or "I'd rather be fishing." They are not as concerned with what the Bible teaches as they are with what their peers think. They want to be popular with their worldly friends more than they want to be right with God. Some begin smoking and drinking because the people they associate with do those things, and thus they destroy their Christian influence. And sometimes the younger members do these things because they see older members setting a bad example and they know these people are nothing but hypocrites - some even leaders in the church. But preachers don't you dare say anything about these things or "we will brand you as fanatics and we will cut off your support, or refuse to have you for a meeting, because, you see, we are 'in control.'" The apostle Paul predicted a long time ago, "...The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Tim. 4:3,4). That time has come, and such

brethren know who to call for their meetings, knowing the ones who will compromise or else keep silent because they do not have enough backbone to deal with the problems for fear they will not be asked back. What a shame! It has been said, "As the preachers go, so goes the church." One place where I was, from the pulpit I mentioned that it had been thirty-five years since my last meeting there. After the service one of the brethren told me it was because the main leader of the congregation was afraid I would preach on the women cutting their hair and immodest apparel. I saw the need so I preached on both.

Another trend that we face (again) is a tendency to relax the lines of fellowship. "Unity in diversity" is the popular cry among liberals today. This is not something new. This was the siren song of digressives many years ago before some of our younger preachers were ever born. This was an argument being used when we lost some of our own preachers. Boys, this is not something that has been conjured up recently by scholarly students of the Bible. It is exactly the same old hackneyed argument made by liberals in years past and gone. Some preachers to whom we gave credit for having more sense bought the idea. And where are they now? Some are among the digressives; some in the denominations and some have quit the church and are in the world.

We can and do have unity in diversity in matters of liberty and judgment - matters of expediency. But this is not what "unity in diversity" liberals advocate when they use the term. They encourage fellowship with others who practice doctrinal error - things for which there is no scriptural authority; yea, things that violate the consciences of sincere and conscientious brethren who advocate and practice the truth. Brethren may sometimes be inconsistent in their effort to contend earnestly for the faith, but this does not justify opening the floodgates to the fellowship of those who blantly practice doctrinal error.

What about the modern trend toward immorality? Has that affected the church? Yes, we are faced with more cases of fornication and adultery than ever in nearly sixty years that I have been preaching the gospel. (And it is among the "no exception" brethren, too.) There are more and more cases of adultery that come to our attention in various parts of the brotherhood year after year. What a disgrace! People who are Christians know better, but apparently their consciences are seared, and for some reason they do not fear the damnation of the Lord. But don't condemn these

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Editorial

MORE ABOUT FELLOWSHIP

By DON L. KING

In the July issue we wrote an editorial about fellowship. We received several comments from individuals who are much more liberal (to say the least) in their understanding regarding fellowship. We believe it proper to notice some ideas sent to us.

It seems that one often encounters two kinds of individuals when dealing with fellowship. One believes he should fellowship just about everyone while another believes he should fellowship almost no one. We received some correspondence from those who believe fellowship extends to nearly everyone. Some of their beliefs were interesting.

In the previous editorial, we stated that the "doctrine of Christ" as per 2 John 9 means those things taught by Jesus and His disciples. We were aware that there are some that believe that the "doctrine of Christ" means only the teaching about the divinity of Christ. It appears pretty obvious why such a position would be appealing to those who wish to extend fellowship to church members who worship with cups and classes, instrumental music, etc. If only the divinity of Christ is involved, then what one believes with reference to worship, etc. would be of little consequence. In fact, it goes much farther than that.

We were told, in no uncertain terms, that the "doctrine of Christ," was in the objective genitive in the Greek text. That is an educated way to say that the "doctrine of Christ" means only the teaching about the divinity of Christ. If it means the teaching OF Christ and His disciples then it would be in the subjective genitive in the Greek. Some authorities were listed as being in agreement with that idea. We did some further looking, however, and found that most scholars seem to believe it is in the subjective genitive. In other words, that the "doctrine of Christ" is indeed the teaching OF Christ and His disciples. That is what we told you to begin with!

It was interesting to notice what Roy H. Lanier wrote in a book titled *Difficult Texts of the New Testament Explained*. Regarding II John 9 he said, "To see what the phrase 'doctrine of Christ' means, it is needful to see parallel constructions and their meanings. Notice several of these: 'apostles doctrine,' literally 'the doctrine of the apostles' (Acts 2:42); 'doctrine of the Pharisees and Saducees' (Matthew 16:12); 'doctrine of the Lord' (Acts 13:12); 'doctrine of Balaam' (Revelation 2:14); and 'doctrine of the Nicolaitans' (Revelation 2:15).

In each case, the Greek grammar is identical. If II John 9 means 'the teaching about Christ as the Son of God,' then Revelation 2:15 would mean the 'teaching about the Nicolaitans.' Such would be preposterous, totally out of harmony with the rebuke by John to the church in Pergamum. He rebuked them for *the teaching done by the Nicolaitans*. So it would be in II John 9: *the teaching done by Christ*, the entire body of truth as revealed by the apostles." (page 387) Following are some of the scholars he lists as being in agreement that the "doctrine of Christ"

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: When making the good confession must one repeat the words, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, or may they answer, "I do," when asked if they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? (KY)

Answer: The good confession is made prior to one being baptized into Christ. In 1 Timothy 6:12-13, the scripture says, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate." It is the good confession because Christ made it under oath, the same being the legal charge upon which our Lord was condemned to die (Mk. 14:62). When asked, "Are you the Christ the Son of the Blessed," he responded, "I am." Christ made it, and died for making it, in order that we might make it and live. It is the good confession because God himself made it, speaking out of heaven, on two different occasions: Mt. 3:17 at the baptism of Jesus, and Mt. 17:5 at the transfiguration. It is the good confession because Paul declares it to be "unto salvation" in Romans 10:10. It has been made by saints in all ages. Nathaniel made it in John 1:49: "You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel." Timothy made it according to 1 Timothy 6:12. Peter made it in Mt. 16:18: "... Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God..." Martha made it in John 11:27 "I believe You are the Christ, the Son of God." The Centurion in charge of the execution made it in Mt. 27:54: "...truly this was the Son of God." The Ethiopian made it in Acts 8:37, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The book of John was written in support of it: "... but these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." The answer to the above question lies partially in the definition of the word "confess." According to Vine, our English word "confess" is from the Greek *homologeō*. This word is comprised of two words

(*homo*, meaning "same") and (*lego*, meaning "to say or speak"). Hence the meaning is to say or speak the same thing. Vine says: "Lit, to speak the same thing to assent, accord, agree with, denotes either (1) to confess, declare, admit, (2) to confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what is accused of, the result of inward conviction, (3) to declare openly by way of speaking out freely..." If I am asked, "Did you rob that store?" and I reply, "Yes, I did," I have made a confession; I have admitted to the robbery. Such a confession would stand up in court. It would not be necessary for me to say, "I robbed the store," before it would be considered a confession. When you got married you were probably asked by the preacher: "Do you take this woman whom you hold by the hand to be your lawful, wedded wife?" You answered, "I do," Again it was not necessary for you to say, "I take this woman to be my lawful, wedded wife," in order for your statement to be considered an assent. In Acts 8:37 we have the Ethiopian saying, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." I personally accept this statement, even though some manuscripts do not include it, as being an accurate account of what happened at that time. Because of this, and because such a statement fulfills the requirement of the definition of the word confess, I believe that it is perfectly scriptural for the candidate to say, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." However, in Mark 14:62, when Jesus was asked, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" he responded, "I am." He did not need to. "I am" was an admission or confession. Look again at the definition of the word confess: "to admit, agree with, assent ... etc." Thus, if a preacher asks a person, "Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" and the candidate answers, "I do," he has made the good confession. To claim that the only way one can confess Christ is to say, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" is to demand what the Scriptures do not.

Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, e-mail rf Wade@juno.com.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

By RICHARD DEGOUGH

A Pharisee lawyer came to Jesus with a question about the law. "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" The Lord said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and Mark adds: with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." (Mt. 22:36-38, Mk. 12:30) One can quickly realize the Lord was instructing him to love God with the whole man. To love with the heart, is to love with the inner man, sincerely, truly. With the soul is to love from the seat of feelings, desire, affections, to love with the mind concerns our faculty of understanding, and to love with our strength means all of our ability, force, and might. This is the *whole* man, and demands our all. A question arises: Is it possible to keep this command, and did the lawyer have the capacity to do so? If the first great command is kept, then, the second will naturally be kept. The Pharisee often was inconsistent and hypocritical in his life, and tried to entrap the Lord. Yes, he lived under the law, and Jesus said, "This is the first and great

commandment." Further, the Lord declared that on the two hung all the law and the prophets.

DO WE LIVE UNDER LAW, ARE WE LEGALISTS?

In contrast to the law of Moses, Paul wrote of the "law of God after the inward man," and, "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." James wrote of the "perfect law of liberty," and said that we shall be judged by it. He also writes of the "royal law," saying; "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." (Jas. 1:25, 2:12,8) Perhaps this is "legalistic" to brethren who have adopted the ideas of modern day theologians, that write and preach of *unity in diversity*, and tell us this is the only unity we can have. Paul wrote the Corinthians, beseeching them in the name of the Lord Jesus to speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Cor. 1:10) The "law of the spirit of life" in Christ Jesus made Paul free from the law of sin and death. Did the law

of the spirit of life consist of any commandments? This law accomplished what the law of Moses could not do, which was justify men before God. Was it not the gospel, made known to us in the New Testament scriptures that is the "law of the spirit of life?" Paul wrote that the gospel was God's power unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Rom. 1:16) The gospel consists of commands that must be obeyed as the law of the spirit of life. But what if we obey the gospel commands, wouldn't that be "legalistic" according to some brethren and sectarians? Yes, but if we fail to obey the gospel we face the wrath of God in the last day. (II Thess. 1:8-9) (1 Pet. 4:17) The Lord is the "author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:9)

DOCTRINAL SYSTEM?

I read just recently a statement in part like this: "*God is not a doctrinal system.*" No, he is not, but the question we are concerned with is this; does the Lord have a doctrine? Is there such a thing as the *doctrine of Christ*? Not only the teaching *about* Christ, but the teaching *of* Christ. I read where the multitude "were astonished at his doctrine." (Mt. 22:33) Again, John writes: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the *doctrine of Christ*, hath not God." (II Jno. 9) When Paul and Barnabas went on the first journey together preaching the gospel they came to the country of Cyprus. While there They encountered Elymas, a sorcerer who was trying to turn away the deputy from the faith. He was dealt with severely by Paul and this impressed the deputy who, "believed, being astonished at the *doctrine of the Lord.*" (Acts 13:8-12) Do we have to pay any attention to the doctrine of Christ? I often hear that the doctrine of Christ in II Jno. 9 is just about the deity of Christ, and no more. No doubt there were agnostics that did not believe that Christ had come in the flesh, nor that he was the Son of God. The same is true of men today. If the passage has reference to the deity of Christ and that *only*, what of the "abideth not in the doctrine." There must be an acceptance of the doctrine once for a person to not abide in it. Once he was abiding in it, now he is not, and is warned that if he does not abide in it, he has not God. Jesus said: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not

see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (Jno. 3:18,36) The person that believes not, and confesses not the Christ never has to worry about abiding in the doctrine, for he never was in it in the first place. The doctrine preached by the apostles was the commandments of the Lord. (1 Cor. 14:37) Was the apostles' doctrine different from the Lord's. If so, they received and were guided by another spirit other than the Spirit of God. The promise to them was, "...the Holy Ghost...he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance what so ever I have said unto you." (Jno. 14:26) The doctrine was spoken of as a "them" according to Paul in (1 Tim. 4:16) admonishing Timothy to take heed unto it. Paul also asked Timothy to give attendance to "doctrine." (1 Tim. 4:13) Titus was to "speak the things that become sound doctrine." (Tit. 2:1) Paul also writes of the characteristics of doctrine, such as "according to holiness," "good doctrine," "sound doctrine," and told Timothy while he was at Ephesus in his letter to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine." (1 Tim. 6:3, 4:6, 1:10, 1:3) Yes, God has a system of doctrine, and it is to be taught, preached, received, believed, obeyed for it is a form of doctrine "that we obey from the heart, making us free from sin, and placing us in the number who are servants of righteousness. (Rom. 6:17-18) It interesting to note that the first Christians continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine." (Acts 2:42) No doctrine, no system, who can believe it? Only the perverter of truth would take such a position. How diverse can we be and still have unity? Would that include the diverse doctrines of denominationalism along with digressives who ignore the teaching (doctrine) so plainly outlined. I have learned that with many who are tired of the doctrine of Christ, that *any* restriction on them is tyranny. Brethren, if any man love God the same is known of him. "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "...continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (Jno. 14:23, 15:9-10) "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." (1 Jno. 2:4, 3) I think I can reasonably say that a commandment suggests law, and law is legality, so, we must be legalists that sense.

More to come.

THE FATHER'S PLACE IN THE HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

In the creation, God made man first and has always expected him to be the leader, the patriarch, of the family. In Ephesians 5, we learn that "the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church." However, Christ is not merely the "boss" of the church. He is the saviour, the leader, and the teacher of it.

The grave responsibility placed upon man by God should cause man to ponder well his steps. The father is to be the provider for the home. God said to the man "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." But even more grave is that responsibility of setting the right kind of example for the family to follow. Undoubtedly, it is intended that the father should voice the standards and govern the conduct of his own household. Paul's instructions that the bishop must be "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity" (1 Timothy 3:4),

was repeated immediately in the same chapter for the deacons also. As Paul put it, "ruling their children and their own houses well." It was the general principle for ideal Christian manhood wherever his household was involved.

I am made to shudder when I see fathers thinking nothing of the responsibilities laid upon them. What can parents be thinking about who do not try to mold their children's character for eternity?

We get the manner in which a father is expected to govern his home in the beautiful analogy which Paul had earlier used. "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how hoily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe: as ye know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying to the end that ye walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom

and glory." (1 Thessalonians 2:10-12 RSV)

We would gather from this that the father should live holily and unblamably before his children, and that he should exhort and encourage them. I believe that if fathers will look and see the good things their children do, and encourage the children in them, they will not have to scold them so much for doing wrong. One little boy told the preacher one time that his name was "Johnny Don't." The little fellow had heard "Johnny don't" so much that until he thought the "don't" was part of his name.

Fathers are told in Ephesians 6:4 to "provoke not their children to wrath, but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Notice that the fathers are to do this.

The father, too, should realize that his wife is a part of him. When they marry, it is there and then that they become: "one flesh." (Ephesians 5) The man is to love his wife as he loves himself, he is to love her as the Lord loves the church. If the husband has this kind of love for his wife, he will certainly not abuse her in any way. He will not be "bitter against her," but will try to bear and share her burdens and make life as comfortable and pleasant for her as he reasonably can. Peter says that the husbands are to dwell with the wives "according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." (1 Peter 3:7) Probably, because many men do

not heed this scripture is the reason for the old saying that "women age younger than men."

If a husband is the husband and father he should be, he will take more than half of the burden and responsibility in building a Christian home. He will take steps, or work, away from his wife and prove to her and the children that he is the patriarch.

However, this passage says that the husband is to consider that he and his wife are "heirs together of the grace of life." I believe this includes everything. They are partners. What is his belongs to her and what she has belongs to him. I think a divided bank account and keeping everything separate is the worst kind of a picture of a divided home. Some husbands treat their wives almost like they are slaves and just dole them out a few dimes now and then and that grudgingly. I have even heard some brethren argue that the women should not contribute on Lord's day "because they didn't make any money." But brother, half of that land, that money or whatever you have belongs to that good wife of yours. God says it does, and the law of the land says it does. The truth of the matter is if you would let the Lord balance the books, more than half of it might belong to her.

Fathers, take your place as the head of the family and live up to your responsibility and God will prosper you.

(Next month: The Mother's Place in the Home.)

NAME CALLING

By JERRY DICKINSON

It is rare for a preacher to call names in the pulpit these days, and that is probably the way it should be. I have seen preachers call names and usually the effect is to just embarrass and humiliate the person whose name is called. I do believe, however, that there are occasions when name calling is needed and necessary. If a church is disciplining a brother or sister, the name of that person needs to be called out so everyone understands the nature and gravity of the action being taken by the church. Depending on the circumstances, there are times when the names of false teachers need to be called out so every one understands clearly the danger imposed on the church by these men. There might even be a circumstance where the preacher feels compelled to call out the name of those in his audience who need to repent.

A brother in California told me about going to hear a preacher years ago who preached a fiery sermon to a congregation that had been experiencing some serious problems. He offered the invitation and when no one responded, he stopped the singing and started calling names. "Brother so and so," the preacher called out, "You know you need to get up here and make a confession. Come on down!" The preacher proceeded to call out the names of several others who likewise needed to make things right and they all, amazingly, came forward and made their confessions. I have certainly felt like doing that sometimes! It would be an extraordinary situation where that could be done successfully, but sometimes there is no other recourse but to call names.

Now, I know many of you reading this article are under the impression that it would never be appropriate to call names. I respectfully want to refer you to the fact that the apostolic writers, on occasion, called names. Note the following examples.

1. *Diotrephes* (III John 9, 10) This man, Diotrephes, was a man plaguing the church to which John wrote his short letter. He was guilty of three things. First, because he craved preeminence and power, John says, "He receiveth not us." The "us," I believe, refers to the apostles and their authority. Remember in I John 4:6 John says that those that know God "hear us" and those who do not know God do not "hear us." This is the way, he declares, that we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Preachers, even today, who claim to be led miraculously and directly by the Holy Spirit, but then refuse to follow the word of the apostles as revealed in the scriptures do not know God. John, the apostle, says they do not "hear us." Diotrephes was such a man. He claimed a place of leadership in the church, and relished his place of prominence, but would not receive and submit to the Word of God. Sound familiar?

As if that were not bad enough, he, secondly, prated against the apostles with malicious words. The word prate is defined, "to talk a great deal to little purpose; to babble" There are always those who prate against the leaders of the church and against all the church is doing. They constantly stir the pot and try to keep the church in upheaval and uproar. But thirdly, to top it all off, it appears Diotrephes was actually casting people out of the church. From the tone of John's letter it seems the brethren in the church where Diotrephes exerted his influence were afraid to challenge him. John admonishes them, nevertheless, to take a stand for that which is good. And, to make sure that no one misunderstands who he is talking about, John calls the man by name. Sometimes, brethren, it is not sufficient to be plain enough that folks can understand. We have to be plain enough that folks cannot misunderstand! Yes, sometimes name calling is in order.

2. *Jezebel* (Rev. 2:20) Speaking to the church at Thyatira,

Jesus, in strident and sharp language, castigates the leadership of the church for allowing a woman, whom the Lord refers to as Jezebel, to teach and seduce members of the church to sin. Two things, it seems, are involved. First the fact that the church would stand by while this false teacher seduced the congregation to commit such sins as those named is without excuse. Those who sat by and suffered this woman to teach such things, declared Jesus, would have to answer to the Lord when he came. But there is a second factor that is just as grave. Why in the world was the church allowing a woman to teach in such a capacity and role as described? There are some commentators, of course who believe that the name Jezebel is used in a purely figurative sense to stand for a faction of teachers in the church who were leading members astray. Other commentators, Albert Barnes for one, believe that although the name Jezebel may be an allusion to the wicked woman of the Old Testament, there was a woman who called herself a prophetess in the church at Thyatira who was causing the problems there.

The problem, in other words, was not only what the woman taught, but the very fact that a woman was a public teacher in the church at all! As Barnes puts it, "It is opposed to the whole genius of Christianity that a woman should be a public teacher in the church." I agree. 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 and 1 Timothy 2:11, 12 positively forbid a woman to be a public teacher in the church. If Jesus were to address some churches today (including some churches of Christ) he would rebuke them just as he did the church at Thyatira for suffering women to be public teachers. Never mind that we are living in the year 2000. Never mind that most people today could care less what the Bible says about the role of women in the church. The Bible still reads, "It is a shame for a woman to speak in the church." It was in the church at Thyatira, and it is in all churches of the saints to this day.

3. *Hymenaeus, Philetus, Alexander* (1 Timothy 1:20 & II Timothy 2:17) Here were three false teachers in the church who had overturned the faith of some. Paul describes them as having made shipwreck concerning the faith. Not only so, but Paul had delivered them to Satan, an expression that means they had been put out of the fellowship of the church, i.e., they had been withdrawn from. Obviously, if a man is teaching a doctrine that causes people to transgress the Lord's commands and fall out of duty, that teacher needs to be marked and avoided. In Romans 16:17 Paul says to mark them that cause offenses and divisions contrary to the doctrine of Christ and avoid them. How do you mark such a person if you do not call or publish his name? Oh yes, I am sure there may have been some (as is the case today) who cried, "Paul, leave brothers Hymenaeus, Philetus, and Alexander alone. So they are preaching that the resurrection is past already - it does not amount to that much. What we need is more unity in diversity in the church!" But, dear reader, these men were teaching doctrines that were causing some to lose their moorings and their faith. They were dangerous men. Paul marks these men and publishes their names so that their influence will be squashed and the church spared. If it was necessary back then, it is still, at times, necessary today. If not, why not?

4. *Euodias and Syntyche* (Phil. 4:2) "I beseech Euodias and beseech Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord." The church at Phillippi held a special spot in Paul's heart. After all he had established this congregation. The first converts were Lydia and the jailer, who was baptized after

the midnight earthquake, and their households. This church had continuously supported Paul as he preached the Gospel. In fact, at times, the church at Phillippi was the only church to send to Paul's necessities. We can see how dear they are to him from the tone of the Phillippian letter. This is one epistle in which there is virtually no word of rebuke or warning. In fact, the only reprimand given is the gentle admonition to two sisters who were having some kind of a disagreement. Paul beseeches them to quit their squabbling and be of the same mind in the Lord. There is no way to know what the argument was about, whether it was petty or serious, but whatever it was Paul was pleading with them to put aside personal considerations and, for their own good and the good of the church, be of the same mind in the Lord. This is what Paul was talking about in 1 Corinthians 6:7 when he asks the provocative question, "Why do you not rather take wrong?" That is still a good question. If a person loves the church as they ought to they will put aside personal considerations and desires and do what is best for the church and the cause of Christ.

I have always appreciated brethren who set aside their personal preferences rather than cause conflict in the church. I have seen brethren stress out over such personal matters as the color of the carpet or curtains, the style of brick on the exterior of the building, or even which songbooks to use. I appreciate those who, after stating their preference, defer to others rather than cause a stink. Too, I appreciate those who are in situations, marital or otherwise, that are questionable in the minds of some in the congregation where they worship. Instead of throwing a fit and demanding they be used in the services, these brethren defer and take their seat. If because of my own sin and indiscretion I damage my influence, I hope I would have such a love for the church that I would just take my seat and stay there until everyone (including myself) was convinced my participation in the worship services would not be a detriment to the cause of Christ. If I knew my preaching or even song leading would cause a problem I would not force the issue. Really (I am speaking for myself only here) I would not participate even if the brethren asked me. I hope I would say, "No, I don't want to do anything that will hurt the church. If it is all right with everyone I will come and worship, but for the time being at least, I will not participate in directing the services."

It is sometimes suggested that we cannot be of the same mind in the Lord, as Paul entreated. "You have your mind, or opinion, and I have mine!" it is often stated. "There is no way we can all see things alike." Of course, when it comes to matters of doctrine it does not matter what your opinion or mine is - the Bible is the final authority. But, in matters of judgement and opinion there can be unanimity if, and only if, we are willing to defer our preferences for the good of the church and the cause we hold dearer than our lives. Paul gives the formula for the resolution of every problem that can arise in the church in Phillippians 2:2-4. "Fullfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

The names we have considered in this article were the names of men and women who had caused problems in the church and there was a need for brethren to know who these people were. These people were named, in other

words, because of trouble. But, there are a host of men and women whose names are also called out in the epistles because they were fellow workers with the apostles and encouragers of the brotherhood. May my name, and your

name, be called out, not because we are troublers of the brotherhood, but rather because we are among those who refresh the saints and give all we are and have for the good of the cause of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

YOU WHO FOLLOW AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS

By JIMMY VANNOY

Since it is the desire of most who read the *OPA* to follow after righteousness, I feel it is appropriate to consider the message of Isaiah 51 for those "who follow after righteousness, You who seek the Lord." (Isa. 51:1)

The first message is to "look to the rock from which you are hewn, and the hole of the pit from which you were dug." (v. 1) Isaiah told them to consider where they came from; their heritage. Specifically, he asked them to look to Abraham and Sarah. Abraham was the first about whom it was said that his faith was accounted for righteousness (Gen. 15:6), and we are said to be sons of Abraham if we are "of faith," whether we are Jews or Gentiles. Abraham demonstrated throughout his life that the faith that pleases God is an obedient faith. Sarah is listed in Hebrews 11, the great chapter containing those ancient people who were faithful to God. Abraham and Sarah are still great examples for us today, and it is wise for us to do as Isaiah through the Spirit encouraged the faithful of that day to do. Isaiah said that we need to look to Abraham, because God "blessed him and increased him." (v. 2) God will also bless us physically, spiritually and eternally if we will follow the great example of Abraham.

The righteous were told to look to the skies above and to the earth beneath. God says "The heavens will vanish and the earth will grow old like a garment." It is foolish to put our trust in the things of this world, because they will soon disappear. God then says that all who live on the earth will die. However, He declares, "But my salvation will be forever." (v.6) All physical things will be destroyed, but God will save our souls for eternity if we are found among the righteous.

The righteous of that day were receiving persecution, and Isaiah 51 was written to encourage them to remain faithful. God tells them not to be afraid of the ridicule or insults of men, because God would destroy them like a

moth cats wool. In contrast, God reminds them that His salvation is forever.

The righteous are then reminded of the strength God showed in the past so they would not be discouraged concerning their present persecution. He reminds them first about the conquering of Jericho; whose mighty walls fell down by the power of God. He next caused them to recall that He parted the Red Sea by His power so that the Children of Israel passed through on dry ground. We also need to be reminded of God's great power by recalling these and many other great events of history so that we will know that God has the power to help us through difficult times. "I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and of a son of a man who will be made like grass?" (v. 12) God will comfort the righteous and cause things to work out in the way which is best for us. There is no reason for us to worry or be afraid. We must simply trust God and His great power and providence to take care of things for us over which we have no control. "And on My arm they will trust." (v. 5) We need to trust the arm of God. It is strong enough to handle anything the righteous may encounter.

"And you forget the Lord your Maker." (v. 13) This admonition was to the righteous for forgetting God. Fear and worry come to us when we forget God. We forget how strong He is and how much He cares. But God "stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth." (v. 13) The God who created the earth can certainly handle any circumstance we face.

The message of Isaiah 51 is for the righteous, those who seek the Lord. The people of that day needed these words of encouragement, and still today the devil tries to pull us away from our faithfulness, but God has a message for us through Isaiah which can help keep us strong.

"...MEDDLE NOT WITH THEM THAT ARE GIVEN TO CHANGE"

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things, preachers, because it might upset some that are good givers to the church, or because they are prominent members of the congregation. Listen, the Scriptures teach, "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons" (Col. 3:25). Even elders need to be rebuked when it is proven they have sinned, and Paul told Timothy to do all things without showing partiality (1 Tim. 5:20, 21). And James teaches, "If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin..." (James 2:9).

Another dangerous trend among us is the ordaining of men as elders and deacons who are not scripturally qualified. Some preachers have specialized in church government, and all one has to do is to look at their track record and consider how many of those they have installed have gone "haywire" — either quit the church, or gone digressive, or resigned their office. In some cases it later

caused trouble in the congregations because they were not qualified to begin with. We need to "stop and smell the coffee," brethren. It is not unscriptural for a congregation to exist without elders or deacons where no one qualifies, but it definitely is unscriptural for men to be ordained to these offices who do not meet the qualifications of the Lord. It is wrong, brethren! Don't let a preacher stampede you into doing something just to "put another feather in his cap" in his effort to make a record for himself in church government.

Another trend is the unscriptural and unprecedented practice of requiring a contract between a preacher and the brethren to do a scriptural work. This smacks of distrust, to say the least. But how ridiculous can brethren get. Think about it. Brethren sign an unenforceable contract with each other in an effort to force each other to do what they agree to do. Such a contract is unenforceable because the scriptures forbid brethren to go to law with one another (1 Cor. 6:1, 7). If the word of a Christian is not to be trusted, he cannot be forced to do what is right by getting him to

sign a contract which cannot be enforced by the law. How do brethren hope to enforce their contract — make an unfaithful, or dishonest, or an untrustworthy preacher keep his word? Or how can a preacher force unscrupulous and conniving brethren to keep their promises to the preacher? If brethren are not honest because they are Christians and fear the Lord, a contract is not the answer. Conversion is the answer.

Also, among us there is the trend to experiment with various versions of the Scriptures. (Some are perversions, rather than versions. No use to argue the point, I have the proof.) These preachers can't even agree among themselves as to what version is the best or most accurate. And so one

preacher uses one version and another uses a different one. As a result, we don't know what we are going to hear when these men get in the pulpit. And don't expect to be able to follow their reading unless you use their choice of versions.

In conclusion, let us be reminded, "meddle not with them that are given to change." The apostle Paul says, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:57, 58). Again, Jesus promises, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

EDITORIAL

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means the teaching OF Christ (subjective genitive): *Arndt & Gingrich; Henry Alford; A.T. Robertson, Vincent's Word Studies in The New Testament*; etc. These are familiar names to all of us who study the Word of God. We're told that Lenski, Stott, Haas and perhaps several others also agree that the "doctrine of Christ" is the doctrine taught by Christ. Westcott says: "...the doctrine which Christ brought, and which He brought first in His own person, and then through His followers..." (p 230) *Macknight* says it means: "Whosoever goeth beyond, and doth not abide in the doctrine taught by Christ and His apostles..." (p 679)

It should not be too surprising that the very liberal Carl Ketcherside took the position that it was only the teaching about the *divinity* of Christ. He taught that God's unity is a unity in diversity and that every sincere believer in Jesus as the Son of God is a child of God and a "brother in prospect." He allegedly held the position that those who sincerely believe in Jesus are children of God regardless of whether or not they are immersed. He believed that members of the church of Christ should extend fellowship to those who use instrumental music the same as we fellowship those differing about the use of meats and herbs. What about that, brethren? You see, once one accepts the erroneous position that the doctrine of Christ is only the teaching about the divinity of Christ, the gate is open to fellowship everyone! Where does one call a halt? Don't be concerned about what the Bible says, just ask them to accept that Jesus is the Son of God and is divine. If they believe that, they are your brethren! Even the

denominations would be in full fellowship. If not, why not? They certainly believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Most have never been baptized into Christ because they are saved by faith only, but never mind, they are brethren in prospect!

How much more unscriptural could one become? You wouldn't even need to be "in Christ" where ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS are found (Ephesians 1:3). That is truly amazing. Think of it; one must be "in Christ" (baptized into Christ, Galatians 3:27) to enjoy any spiritual blessing. If all spiritual blessings are "in Christ" how many are out of Christ? That's right, none. Yet some that claimed membership in the church of Christ taught that one could be a child of God, enjoy the blessing of salvation and never be in Christ! No wonder, they had no problem fellowshiping those who use individual cups, Bible classes, instrumental music, etc. Carl Ketcherside is no longer living. However, there are those who espouse some of his ideas. Most are not among our brethren, but some among us have advanced some of his theories. May the Lord help us to stand on the Book and demand chapter and verse for anything we are asked to believe.

Brethren, the "doctrine of Christ" is what Christ and the apostles taught and we must abide in it if we are to have the sanction of both the Father and the Son. (2 John 9) Jesus said to the disciples, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me." (Luke 10:16) *Of course, the doctrine of Christ is contained in the Bible.* When you believe and abide in what the apostles wrote you are abiding in the "doctrine of Christ."

Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The New Songbook

The new book is now available. It is called *Tuneful Tidings*. The price is still \$3.00 each plus postage. Order from M. Lynwood Smith, 2789 Loyd Star Lane, Northwest, Wesson, MS. When you receive your books verify that the order is correct and send Lynwood a check for them adding the amount of postage you see on the box. It will be appreciated if you will mail the payment the same day you receive the books.

Sermons And Writings Of Homer L. King

We understand that many have been ordering the book of sermons. If you have not yet sent for one of these, why

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OUR DEPARTED

McLEMORE—W. M. "Mac" McLemore, known to many as simply brother Mac, was born October 5, 1914 in Fannin County, Texas. He died May 10, 2000 at Russellville, Arkansas. Brother Mac was a long-time

resident of Oklahoma City and had been associated with congregations in that city as well as in Mena and Fort Smith, Arkansas. At the time of his death he was a member of the Old Hwy. 7 congregation in Dardanelle, AR. He is survived by his wife, Thelma E. "Scotty" Rickard McLemore whom he married July 22, 1934; two daughters and sons-in-law, Nancy and Leon Fancher of Russellville, and Lynda and Bill Wright of Mena; and three sons and daughters-in-law, Bob and Carla Merideth of Oklahoma City, Buz and Gail McLemore of Guymon, Ok, and Mike and Janet McLemore of Moore, OK; 19 grandchildren, 24 great grandchildren and one great, great grandchild. The funeral at the Humphrey Funeral Service in Russellville attracted a large group of brethren from great distances, an evidence of the high esteem in which Mac was held by those who knew him. Singing was provided by family members, and the eulogy was delivered by the writer. Grandsons served as pallbearers. Mac was laid to rest in Pisgah Cemetery at Pottsville, AR. Moses, at a place by the same name, was only permitted to see the promised land. It is our belief that Mac will not only see the promised land from Pisgah but will be permitted to enter it as well. — Taylor A. Joyce

A TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

(A TRIBUTE TO W. M. "MAC" McLEMORE)

BY TAYLOR JOYCE

"Mac" was born October 5, 1914, just across the Red River from Oklahoma in Fannin County, Texas.

Four years earlier, on October 6, 1910, a girl was born in a small West Texas town near San Angelo. She was named Bonnie Parker. While yet quite young, Bonnie met and teamed up with Clyde Barrows and for three years they blazed a trail of bank robbery and murder from Texas to Indiana and points in between.

When Mac was 20 years old, he married Thelma "Scotty" Rickard on July 22, 1934, at Sulphur, OK. Two years later he obeyed the gospel, being baptized into Christ by Homer Gay.

Bonnie had no use for religion. She devoted her time to reading romance and confession magazines.

Mac devoted himself to the reading of the word of God and to faithful attendance at the meetings of God's people, both of which became life-long habits.

After having killed numerous people including nine police officers, Bonnie and Clyde died in a hail of gunfire having been ambushed by officers-of-the-law near Plain Dealing, LA.

Mac fell asleep in Jesus, dying peacefully in his own bed.

How do you account for the differences? What makes one person become a Christian and another become a criminal? What causes one person to devote his life to living righteously and doing good and another to spreading death and destruction wherever she goes? Would it be too simple an answer to say that Christ made the difference?

Mac was such a quiet and unassuming man that he would be embarrassed if we were to attribute any personal merit to him for the extraordinary life he lived. Now that he is gone from us we can perhaps best honor him and his memory by giving honor to the one who made all the difference, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is an evidence of the moral decline within our churches that a life such as Mac lived is thought to be extraordinary. That kind of life ought to be ordinary and normal for every Christian. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17)." When one has been with Jesus even his speech

betrays that fact (Acts 4:13). Paul described Christians as spreading a special fragrance wherever they went. "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ... (2 Cor. 2:14-15 NIV)." Clearly, one can no more hide the fact that he is a Christian than he can hide the fact that he has chicken pox. It shows on your face. It is reflected in your speech. It is evidenced in your behavior. Mac was just being an ordinary Christian living an extraordinary life because he allowed Christ to live in him.

It was God's eternal purpose that we should be like Jesus. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son ... (Rom. 8:29)." That means we ought to think like Jesus thinks, (Phil. 2:5); talk like Jesus talked, (Matt. 26:73); and act like Jesus acted (2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 2:20).

Jesus loved us so much that he died for us (Rom. 5:6-8), so not surprisingly, Mac wore the love as a badge of his discipleship (John 13:35).

Jesus habitually attended worship and publicly participated in the service (Luke 4:16). Mac did likewise. When we allow Christ to live in us and have his way we take seriously the admonition,

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25)"

Because he was following the example of his Lord Mac never missed an opportunity to speak words of praise, one of the most effective ways of edifying as we are instructed to do in Romans 14:19.

This, too, was something Mac learned from Jesus (Matt. 15:28).

The thirty-three and one half years of Jesus' life are summarized by Peter: "Who went about doing good (Acts 10:38)." One would expect that the "doing of good" would be a mark of identification of anyone in whom Christ dwelt. And that's exactly what we saw in the life of Mac McLemore. It was a very natural thing from him to follow the teaching of Gal. 6:10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." If all the good deeds done by Mac were compiled in a book it would be a volume of very large size. He touched many lives, and always for the better.

Students of the gospel narratives are impressed by one other attribute of Jesus, his faithfulness.

He had an unshakable commitment to the task for which he came into the world. Even the prospect of death by crucifixion could not deter him. While his disciples tried to prevail upon him not to go to Jerusalem where that fate awaited him, "He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51)."

Knowing that this was the Father's will was all the motivation he needed. Throughout his life he had never deviated from doing the will of God and could declare, "For I do always those things that please him (John 8:29)." In like fashion, Christ, living and working through Mac, enabled him "both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13)" and to be "faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10)."

If you had asked Mac, "What made the difference in your life?" He would have humbly and accurately said, "Christ liveth in me (Phil. 1:21)." Paul, the apostle, attributed the revolutionary change in his own life to exactly the same cause. Following his conversion he said that the disciples in Judea who were familiar with his former life had heard, "That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed

(Gal. 1:23).” And what had made the difference? Paul answers, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20).”

“Christ liveth in me.” That is how inspired writers account for the Christian life. Myra Brooks Welch, an uninspired writer also wrote with great insight about the transforming power of the Master. She pictures an auction in which an old violin is being offered for sale, and the highest bid is a mere three dollars. Then someone in the crowd comes forward, tunes the violin and begins to play “a melody pure and sweet as a caroling angel sings.” When the bidding resumes the price is now in the thousands of dollars. Welch then concludes:

And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.

A ‘mess of pottage,’ a glass of wine;
A game; and he travels on.
He is ‘going’ once, ‘going’ twice,
He’s ‘going’ and almost ‘gone.’

But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that’s wrought
By the touch of the Master’s hand.”

The touch of the Master’s hand! “Christ liveth in me!” That was Paul’s secret. That was Mac’s secret. So Mac could join with Paul in saying, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall (we) also appear with him in glory (Col. 3:4).”



Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, August 10 – The work in Olivehurst continues. We have several studies going on at the present time. The faithfulness of the members is noteworthy. Duane Permenter came by and preached for us at our Tuesday evening service and everyone certainly enjoyed his dynamic presentation of a good lesson. The last weekend in July we visited the Planz Rd. church in Bakersfield and preached Saturday night and Sunday. One man was baptized. We enjoyed being with the congregation there very much. We are looking forward to the Western Study that is being presented by the Fair Oaks, CA congregation. Don King and I assisted in arranging the study and will help host it. The congregation at Fair Oaks did a fine job last year taking care of the study and we have confidence they will do the same good work this year. The study will

August 24-26. God bless all of you and keep up the work.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mtn. Home, AR 72654, broebuck@mtnhome.com, August 6 – This summer has once again been an enjoyable one in the Lord’s work. In June we were with the 79th and Kansas congregation for a week’s meeting. While there we enjoyed working with Brother Paul Nichols. I appreciate his insight and

commendable work. Good crowds were present at each service and visitors were present several occasions. Next, we attended the 4th meeting in Lebanon. It was good to see many friends and hear so many good sermons. Today we closed an encouraging meeting in Bedford, IN. Good crowds filled the house each night. The interest of the neighboring congregations was encouraging and greatly appreciated. A number of preachers helped the meeting with their presence. While there we enjoyed the hospitality of Walter and Cindy Hunter, whom we number among good friends. We were in hog heaven. The meeting closed with one confession. Brother Hunter continues to do a good work and is justly loved for his work’s sake. We have two more meetings this year. Bandy, KY September 3-10 and New Salem, MS November 22-26. Our work in Mountain Home continues well. Recently we had two additions and one restoration and continue to have interest from the community. We are looking forward to our fall meeting with Brother Ronny Wade September 10-17. If you’re in the area plan to attend. We appreciate your prayers.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono St., Waipahu, HI 96797, Telephone & Fax Number (808) 680-0249, July 13, 2000 – I am glad to inform faithful brethren everywhere that the Church here continues her steady pace toward spiritual growth. Brethren are the more encouraged to participate in the efforts for evangelism. We continue to conduct home studies with prospects and the distribution of tracts and pamphlets in public places. Also, we are still having studies with prospects who are relatives of my wife every Saturday evenings at 6:00 to 7:00 in Wahiawa, about 25 minutes from Waipahu, our place. One from Ewa Beach, about 15 minutes drive from here who said he is an ardent listener to our radio program called me by phone and requested tapes of my broadcasts regarding the second coming of Jesus Christ. When I go and give him what he requested, I hope he will give me time to study with him. Please, mention us and all these efforts in your prayers that they may bear good results, bringing lost souls back to the fold of God. We continue to have non-member visitors from the community every Sunday. The other Sunday, Bro. Ben and Sis. Sharon Williamson from Columbus, GA, together with their daughter, Wendy, and her husband, Matt, and son worshipped with us. Wendy and Matt who are to stay in Honolulu for one year came again last Sunday. We are happy to have them with us. From information regarding the work here in Hawaii, please feel free to inquire from Bro. James Mason, one of the elders of the Church in Stockton, California; or if you wish, to me. May God bless us all everyday, as we continue to labor for Him in His “vineyard.”

Douglas T. Hawkins Rt. 1 Box 717 Mt Vernon, KY 40456 (606) 256-8148 hawkins@kih.net. Aug. 5, 2000 — I’ve just returned home from Oklahoma and at this writing am scrambling to get out the door to head to Strong, AR. The meetings in Oklahoma were very enjoyable, but I returned home with mixed emotions. At Henryetta, crowds were pretty good throughout the week. The church there has suffered real devastation over the years and it makes me really sad. Despite their losses, however, they remain faithful and true. As I think of those no longer there, I’m utterly amazed, like Paul in Galatians 1:6, at how far people can drift away from the Lord in so short a time. On a much happier note, a gentleman of several years obeyed the gospel during the meeting. This man had watched his wife’s faithfulness for many years and finally obeyed that form of doctrine himself. I applaud the faithful. At Galey, Ron

and Darlene Smith took very good care of me. These are very dear friends and it was so good to be back in the area where I have so many fond memories. During both meetings, we had a number of preachers in attendance and memory would fail me to mention every single one. The Lord knows, I know, and I hope they know how much they are needed and appreciated for their works' sake. This month we'll be in Beartrack, KY; Gadsden, AL; and Athens, AL.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Hughson, California – Of late I have enjoyed the preaching of Kevin Presley at Modesto and Billy Dickinson in Manteca. Both men are good preachers, declaring the truth with conviction and power. I really enjoyed having them spend time with me in our home. We need dozens like them. I preached in Fremont recently and enjoyed it as usual. I plan to be with the brethren in Salinas the tenth of September the Lord willing for one Lord's day. I have stayed in the area all summer, preaching in Modesto, Atwater, and Turlock. We continue to write articles for the Turlock Journal in order to teach the truth and get contacts for Bible study. We have had some individuals attend the service in Turlock, but are not sure if it was from an interest produced by the articles or drop ins. We are blessed with several teachers, and look forward to more when the young men grow more in the faith. Some have expressed their desire to be teachers which is encouraging to the church. The church is at peace, and has a mind to work. We are saddened by the death of brother Ray Nichols, and sister Clara Elliott, who were dear to our family and brethren. I was privileged to speak with others in their memorial services, and thank the families of both. They will be missed. May the Lord bless their family left behind. We will meet again in the afterwhile where sorrow is unknown, and parting never comes again.

Jimmie C. Smith; 5100 Rail Rd., Harrison, AR 72601; email-cjsmith@alltel.net — It has been some time since I reported to the paper. We were privileged to hold an enjoyable five day meeting in March at McGregor, TX where we enjoyed immensely our stay with Wayne and Jean McKamie. We had good attendance with visitors from afar and near. The congregation had made great strides since I was last with them in the spring of 73. Barney Owens held our meeting here in Harrison the first of April and we couldn't have asked for more than we got from him. His sermons were fresh, timely, winsome and upbeat from one who values "truth." We began our summer in Floral, AL where there is renewed interest and growth. We enjoyed the association with Kevin Presley who is doing a commendable work in the area and has a successful TV program. There are two new families in the congregation as a result of the TV program. Next we came home and heard Barney again for four nights at Hartwell before commencing for ten days at Capitol Hill (OK City). It was my first meeting at Capitol Hill and an enjoyable one at that. The congregation has numerous active young people and couples, several new converts, some in the twilight of life, and love unabounded for one another. Several local preachers were in attendance (the oldest in the area, Edwin Morris attended the most); and my nephew Daniel Smith was with us for half the meeting. We couldn't have been treated better or made feel more at home than at Dave and Paula Duke's and at Robert and Mary Harrison's. The Lebanon, MO annual meeting was uplifting. By the time you read this we will have concluded a meeting at Miami, OK and will be at Crestview in Wichita Falls Aug. 5-13. May God bless the brotherhood.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@compworldnet.com, July 6th — I just returned home from a meeting at Ash Camp, WV. We had an excellent meeting that resulted in a young man who had been reared as an Irish Catholic being baptized on the last Sunday. We had good interest from the community and I know at least two others have made plans to be baptized, and may have already done it since my departure Sunday night. Prior to going to Ash Camp we conducted a five-day meeting at Ardmore, OK There were no visible results in this meeting, but it was one I enjoyed immensely. It was good to spend some time with Johnny and Sally Elmore, who lived in Ada for most of my teenage years, and who will always have a special place in my heart. I shall always be indebted to Johnny for the training he gave me in the scriptures and rudiments of music during my youth. My meetings schedule for the rest of the year includes: Marietta, GA (July 8-16), Red Oak, TX (July 23-30), New Salem, MS (Aug. 4-13), Deer Park, TX (Aug. 20-27), McAlester, OK (Sept. 10-17), West Point, GA (Sept. 20-24), Lexington, OK (Oct. 1-8), El Cajon, CA (Oct. 11-15), Jamesville, MO (Oct. 25-29), Edmond, OK (Nov. 3-5), Norman, OK (Nov. 10-12), Wichita Falls, TX (Garden's Edge Nov. 17-19), and Seminole, OK (Dec. 1-3). Please continue to remember us in your prayers, and may God bless you all.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, July 9 – The past few weeks have been busy and hectic for us. In May we went to Turlock, California for the annual Memorial Day Meeting. I was privileged to do the preaching. The crowds were large and encouraging and there were three confessions of fault. It was great to see so many people with whom we are acquainted and some whom we have known for many years. We made our home with Richard and Glenda DeGough, who are known for their unsurpassed hospitality. We were shocked when during the meeting my brother, Ray, had a serious stroke. I am so glad we got to visit after the worship service on May 21, for he had the stroke that same evening. We visited him several times in the hospital at Sonora. After we returned home we were encouraged by reports we were getting, but all at once he took a turn for the worse and passed away, June 21st. We returned to California for the funeral, June 26. This was one week to the day after we conducted the funeral for brother, Kenneth King of the home congregation here in Kansas City. These were two very sad occasions so very close together. On July 2, I preached to a good crowd at Buffalo, MO. We attended a part of the annual Lebanon, MO meeting. The singing was inspiring and we had some excellent preaching. My next meeting is scheduled for July 16-23 at Sentinal, OK. Then I am to be at Ratliff City, OK, Aug. 13-20. May the Lord bless His people everywhere.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail:old_paths@juno.com, August 12 – We held an enjoyable meeting at the Ft. Smith, AR congregation which began on the Wednesday after the 4th of July and closed on Wednesday July 12. The brethren there are hospitable and at peace and we enjoyed being with them all. Dennis Smith lives and works among the congregation and seems to be doing very well indeed. He is working hard and we pray a good harvest will result. We enjoyed being with Dennis and Nancy as well as all the brethren. It was good to be with Taylor Joyce and family again also. We began in Fairview, LA on July 16. The first Lord's day evening the house was full to overflowing with visitors

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from too many places to mention. In fact, the house was full about all week with extra chairs out most of the services. One young man confessed his wrongs. Congregations nearby and several not so near cooperated splendidly. Several drove quite a distance night after night to be with us. There were visitors from several states and a number of preachers helped out as well. Among the preachers who attended were Wayne Fussell, Cecil Smith, and Markus Ayers who is now working among the brethren at Fairview. It was good to be with all of them. Pat and I need to extend our thanks to Rick and Mary Kay Lee and family with whom we stayed and whose hospitality was outstanding. In fact, everyone was hospitable to us. Also, we thank Jack and Jean Jackson for taking us from Lebanon, MO to the meeting at Ft. Smith, keeping us in their home during the meeting, taking us on to LA and staying for a good part of the meeting. They are family and we certainly appreciate their great hospitality and kindness. We are at home now for a short time. Our next will be Nashville, TN. Preachers, send your reports and articles for the paper. Pray for us.

Kostya Alekseev (Russia) – I pray that God continues to bless you in all you do to serve Him. I am sure you will share our joy. Another precious soul was brought into the family of God in Tambov recently. His name is Alexei, and he is about 50. He is a retired major in the Russian military. It was hard to work with him because he was influenced by eastern religions and philosophies, but God showed His power and the power of the Word. Now there are about 30 people in Tambov who meet regularly on Sunday. More people have begun to come on Wednesday when we have our Bible study. We regularly have visitors and some of them are considering baptism. The last months were very busy for me. I worked with American preachers who came to Tambov. I went to Michurinsk and Penza. I was also busy organizing the trip to Kamenka of Jimmy Vannoy (report attached). I went several times to Kamenka and Penza to make the necessary arrangements for accommodations. The Christians in Penza were very helpful. We have regular gospel meetings, where Christians come from all over Russia. Last time the meeting was in Tula, and Christians from Penza, Moscow, Michurinsk, Tambov and St. Petersburg were there. We talked about many things, but the main topic was Christian leadership. It was decided that the next meeting will be in Michurinsk. The congregation there is not large, so the Christians of Tambov have decided to help them to organize it and receive guests. I think the congregation in Tambov is very strong. One of the factors is that we have ten families in our congregation. We also have about ten men who participate publicly. The lack of registration is still a problem for Tambov and Michurinsk, but we continue our work. People are growing in Christ and more people in Tambov are learning about us. In Michurinsk, after almost two years of work, I managed to bring back one girl who was initially in the church, but then joined the Jehovah's Witnesses. In August, a group of Christians from Tambov plans to go to Michurinsk to hand out invitations to services in the streets and from door to door. We want to help them

every possible way. Four men from Tambov have agreed to take turns going to Michurinsk to teach for them. The Christians of Tambov and Michurinsk are trying to live lives of service to others. We have many problems, but our wish is to serve God, and He is stronger than our problems. God is on our side, and we also have your love and prayers.

Jimmy Vannoy – Kostya Alekseev and I spent most of July working in Kamenka, Penza Region, Russia. I was sent by the Corsicana, TX congregation, and the work was supported by the following congregations: Bridgeport, TX, Healdton, OK, San Antonio (Nacogdoches), Frisco, TX, Athens, TY., Harrisonville, MO, Waco (Monta Vista), Houston (Fairbanks), Jacksboro, TX, Joplin, MO, Arlington, TX and Cleburne, TX. Several individuals also helped. In my seven previous years in Russia, I have never faced so many substantial obstacles in doing the Lord's work. We had adverse restrictions from the city, pressure from the Russian Orthodox Church, family interference and a general fear that kept the people from obeying. Fifteen minutes into our first English lesson on the first day, city officials marched in and shut down lessons for the rest of the day. They told us to report immediately to city hall. The assistant city administrator was congenial, but suspicious. She was concerned that we might influence the people away from the Russian Orthodox Church. The administration ruled that we could not teach English using the Bible as text, but that we could teach only the Bible. They also said that we could teach only those eighteen and older. The Russians are attracted to English lessons taught by Americans, and many strong Christians in Russia first learned the truth in this way, including Kostya and his wife, Lena. Before these rulings, we had 154 students. Afterward, we had about 30. We were told to register in Kamenka after registering twice in Penza, but the registration office would not allow it until the next day after some phone calls. We were then told we could register, but we had to bring the owner of the apartment with us. Unfortunately, he lives in the south of Russia, so we had to check into a run-down hotel in order to be registered and had to stay there several nights. We were able to teach about 50 people, and I saw an interesting thing happen to many of them. They would become convicted that they needed to obey the gospel, and then they would disappear, never returning to the lessons. I believe fear was the major factor. Two women were baptized. Zhenia, about 20, was told the day after her baptism to choose between the family and the church. They threatened to literally throw her out of the house. She spends most of the year in Penza and plans to attend church there. Lilia, about 30, was also baptized, and she seems to be strong and committed to the Lord. She will travel to Penza to go to church. It was our intention to establish a congregation in Kamenka, but it seems the city judged themselves unworthy. We advertised in the newspaper, passed out advertisements and posted announcements throughout the city. Many came to be taught, but it seems hearts were not right. I believe that the two who were baptized made the entire work worthwhile. The Penza congregation was very helpful in the work, and the financial help is appreciated.

Our purpose is to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,” and to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

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“To continue speaking the truth in love,” “endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” “keeping the ordinance as delivered.”

“Thus saith the Lord, ‘stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.’ (Jer. 6:16) “And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in.” (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 10

“THE SINNER’S PRAYER”

BY BENNIE T. CRYER

Some of the denominational religious movements have developed a prayer for alien sinner’s to pray in order to obtain salvation. Here is an example of this prayer found in a book entitled *The Book of Hope*, Wheaton: Tyndale, 1998, p. 53, as quoted in the religious journal, *The Voice of Truth International*, Vol. 26, p. 30.

God, I’m sorry for my sins. Right now, I turn from my sins and ask you to forgive me. Thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. Jesus, I ask you to come into my life and be my Lord, Savior, and Friend. Thank you for forgiving me and giving me eternal life. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

One of the tragic things about this prayer is the sinner is then told, “If you prayed this prayer and meant it, you can be sure God has forgiven you and received you into his family.”

Apostle Peter’s Answer Was Different

In Acts 2:37 a large crowd of sinner’s were convicted of their sinful ways and asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter had a good chance to tell them to pray “The Sinner’s Prayer” and you will be forgiven. But he was inspired by the Holy Spirit and was acting under the great commission Jesus had given in Mark 16:15-16. So, his inspired answer is found in Acts 2:38: “...Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...” Then, of all things, the Holy Spirit inspired him to tell them the words found in verse 40: “Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized...” Why did he not use “The Sinner’s Prayer?”

Peter Knew There Are Prayers God Will Not Hear And Answer

He knew that praying to God has some conditions attached to it. Because of these conditions God will not even hear and answer the prayers of some of His children. A child of God wrote in Psalms 66:18, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Some of the conditions of successful praying are found in 2 Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.” So, even a child of God must be classed as one of God’s people. He must wear the name of God, humble himself, and turn from his wickedness. Then the Lord God promised to hear their prayers and forgive them. Peter well understood this truth

and expressed it plainly in 1 Peter 3:12: “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”

The point is, if God will not hear some prayers from his own children, do you think he will hear the prayers of an alien sinner for the forgiveness of sins who does not belong to Him and does not wear His name? I think the answer must be “no.” But that does not mean God has forsaken the alien sinner and made no provisions for his salvation.

What Has God Provided For The Alien Sinner’s Salvation?

God wants all men to become His children. He does not desire that any of them should perish. So, in addition to His revealed word He gave them witness to Himself. In Acts 14:17 Paul wrote of what God has provided to the nations that wanted to walk in their own ways instead of His. “Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with good and gladness.” Why did God bless these alien sinners in this way? In Romans 2:4 we are taught that this goodness of God has the purpose of causing sinners to repent. The problem was, this revelation in nature was so powerful the alien sinner was “without excuse,” Romans 1:20. And when he refused to be “thankful,” (verse 21), to God for these things they became greater sinners. So, it seems that God would hear thanksgiving from an appreciative alien sinner. But thanksgiving is not like “The Sinner’s Prayer” where he asks for forgiveness of sins and for Jesus to come into his life. God graciously provided a way for the alien sinner to call on the name of the Lord for his salvation.

How Alien Sinners Are To Call On The Name Of The Lord

In Acts 2:21 Peter preached, “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” At the close of his message many of his audience were convinced of their sins. They realized they were lost and needed to be saved. They asked the question in v. 37, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Remember Peter had just told them that in order to be saved they would need to call on the name of the Lord. They want to be saved so Peter tells them how to call on the name of the Lord in vv. 38: “Repent, and be baptized everyone of you

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Editorial

TO LET THE HAIR GROW LONG

By JERRY DICKINSON

I, like many of you, I presume, recently received a 22 page article by email on the subject of long hair. I offer the following observations in response to what I believe is a false doctrine being taught publicly via the Internet.

1. After reading the 22 page article it seems to me that the whole point the author is making is that long hair is hair that looks long. Length is all that matters. If it looks long, it is long. If it does not look long, it is not long. The way the author of the article would translate I Cor. 11:14,15 is: "Doth not even nature teach you that if a man's hair looks long it is a shame to him? But if a woman's hair looks long it is a glory to her: for her hair that looks long is given her for a covering."

The problem is that the Greek work for long hair is "koma" and is defined, even by the lexicographers the author of the article cites, as "to let the hair grow long, to have long hair, to wear long hair." The act of letting the hair grow long is inherent in the meaning of the word. In fact, Thayer defines the word "kome" in verse 16 as "hair, head of hair" and then indicates that the "notion of length is secondary and suggested." The primary thing under consideration, then, is the fact that a woman is letting her hair grow long, and not the actual length.

2. Do not misunderstand. Length is under consideration, but only secondarily. If a woman stops cutting her hair and begins to let it grow long, it will eventually look longer. But, when she begins to let the hair grow, she is then complying with the words of the Holy Spirit. For example, a young Christian woman, after reading the 22 page article on the Internet decides it is permissible to cut off her hair. She thinks she would look better if she had bangs and her hair was cut up to her ears. Even though she has been taught otherwise and has previously had a conscience against cutting her hair, the article persuades her and she gets a haircut. Later, however, she realizes she has done wrong, and confesses the wrong, vowing to let her hair grow long. At this point she is obeying the words of the Holy Spirit through Paul.

"But her hair does not look long," is the argument. Remember, length is only secondary and suggested. The important thing is she is letting her hair grow long by vowing not to cut it or even trim it any more. "But," it is again argued, "How can you say that woman with hair at her ears has hair longer than a woman with hair down to her shoulders just because the latter woman continues to trim her hair?" I am not saying, and Paul did not say, that one woman's hair is longer in length. Length is secondary and suggested! The woman who is letting her hair grow (not cutting it) is the woman who is complying with Paul's instructions. That is the point!

3. "If Paul meant for us to understand that a woman cannot cut her hair at all," the author asks again and again, "why did he not just use a Greek word that meant uncut.

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: In several churches there are Christians who are members of armed services such as city police, state troopers, and FBI. Some are given leading roles in the congregation. I am sure you are aware of the Church's historic and biblical stand on this matter. Has the Church changed its position when I was not looking? If the practice is still wrong, what action should be taken toward those who do it anyway? (MS)

Answer: Historically churches of Christ opposed participation in any type of military service from the earliest days of their existence in this country. A. Campbell's address on War represented a landmark treatise on the subject. During the days of the Civil War these issues surfaced creating some degree of disagreement as well as practice. David Lipscomb, in his book *Civil Government*, adamantly argued that the Christian should have no part in carnal warfare or any other involvement in civil government. In the early days of World War II there was general agreement that going to war and bearing arms were inconsistent with the principles of Christianity. James Bales wrote a tract on the subject that was considered a viable defense of the pacifist position. During the period of the middle forties Foy E. Wallace Jr. became a strong proponent for the view that Christians should participate in carnal warfare. He wrote and defended his position in the *Bible Banner*, which he published at that time. He also contended that Christians could have an active role in every aspect of civil government. John T. Lewis took the opposite view and in 1945 published his book *The Christian and The Government. An Examination of the Bible Banner's Position on Christians Going to War*. Later Bales recanted his original position, arguing that Christians could indeed go to war without violating the scriptures. Among those of us who use one cup in the communion and reject the idea of Sunday Schools, opposition to participation in carnal warfare has been almost unanimous. There were a few who at various times believed it was all right for men to go into the non-combatant area of service but no one to my knowledge contended that it was all right for Christians to kill for the government. Paul Nichols wrote an article for publication in the *Old Paths Pulpit* on the subject, and J. Ervin Waters testified as to our position in Washington D.C. The reason such a position has been characteristic of Churches of Christ is because participation in carnal warfare places one in a position to kill another human being, which is the purpose of warfare in general. The same would be true of a police officer, state trooper etc. Why carry a gun if you cannot use it? To use it is to possibly kill. To argue that one only intended to wound the individual would beg the question. If my life is in danger and I have a gun and the other fellow does also it will probably be necessary to kill him in order to protect myself or those committed to my charge. Is this wrong? I believe it is. Jesus said we should not kill or be angry with our brother Mt. 5:21-22. In Mt. 5:39 he said we "should turn the other cheek." In Mt. 5:44 we are instructed to "love your enemies and do good to them that persecute you..." Again in Mt. 26:52 Jesus told Peter, who was trying to protect him from physical harm:

"put up thy sword into his place for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Notice carefully Paul's writing in Rom. 12:17-19 "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." These verses make it clear that Christians cannot kill other people. Who then, is charged with maintaining order in this world. The answer is found in Romans 13. The civil servant, not Christians, keep order. It is he who "bears not the sword in vain." In Isaiah 2:4 the prophet identifies the character of the citizens of the kingdom when he says "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." The nations here do not refer to the nations of the world, for they will always war and fight. However the kingdom of Christ will not. Christians do not participate in carnal conflict. Our's is a kingdom of peace, led by the Prince of Peace. The querist wanted to know if the church had changed its position. I can only answer the scriptures have not changed and therefore, the church should not have changed. If some churches have changed their attitude and practice, they need to restudy this issue and rectify their stand. Since the practice is still wrong what should churches do who have members who carry guns and are in a position to kill someone? First of all these people need to be taught that such is wrong, and encouraged to get out of the situation they are in. In fact, the whole church needs to be taught what our attitude should be toward civil governments and the role Christians sustain to the "powers that be." Secondly, it is my belief, that they should not be placed in a "leading role," in the church. Such an individual cannot serve as an example of the believers while violating the very principles given by our Lord and Master. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO)

A MOTHER'S PLACE IN THE HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

I know but very little about a mother from actual experience, for my mother died when I was only five years of age, but I surely do know what it means to be without a mother.

Someone has said that the three sweetest words in the English language are "mother," "home," and "heaven." But, like many of the fathers of today, many mothers fail to realize and appreciate their exalted position in the home. It surely is sad, even disgusting, to see mothers with fingers stained with cigarette smoke, the smell of liquor on their breath, parading the streets, or maybe, in a car with another woman's husband, while the children are left at grandmother's or with a disinterested hired girl.

We are building a Christian home, and Christian mothers do not act like that. They want to be what God wants them to be.

Paul says that the married women should "bear children,

guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." (1 Timothy 5:14) In the 10th verse he says of the widow, "Well reported of for good works, if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." It is also said of the deacons' wives that they are to be "...grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." (1 Timothy 3:11) These qualifications show the importance of a mother in the home and the weight of her influence there. A mother is to be interested in her home and children. She is to be well reported of for good works, not merely for good looks. She is to be the home keeper, and should keep the home in such a way as to not be ashamed to have visitors (she is to "lodge strangers.")

Right here, I may get my red hair pulled out, but I say this from the bottom of my heart: I do not believe that a mother can hold down a job in a factory or anywhere else and do her part by the home, children, and husband that God expects of her. I have already shown (previous article) that it is the father's place to provide for the family. When women leave the home and children and get a job so as to have their "own money to spend as they please," (this is usually the reason given) they often begin to lose interest in their home, husband and children! I believe that if all of the wives, and especially the mothers, would go back home and take up their duty there as home keeper and the fathers would go to work, (they would have plenty of jobs) to provide a living for the family, the greater part of the so-called "juvenile delinquency" would be solved.

The woman being entirely out of her place has caused the "adversary to speak reproachfully" of them. Today, perhaps as never before, we need some "older women to teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Titus 3:4,5)

In I Thessalonians 2:7-8, Paul gives us an idea of how a mother feels, or should feel, and act toward her children. Hear him: "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children; being so affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us." The true Christian mother feels just that way about her children. There is no one on earth that can take the place of mother. Her lullaby soothes the baby's pain and quiets its fears. Her influence is so great that kings cannot overthrow it. She determines the destiny of souls and of nations.

There is tenderness in the love of a mother to her children that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by anger. It is not weakened by worthlessness nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort of hers for their convenience. She will glory in their fame and exult in their prosperity, and if misfortune overtakes them they will be dearer to her because of the misfortune.

Timothy, of whom Paul said, "I have no man like minded," was brought up in the faith of a mother and a grandmother. (2 Timothy 1:5) Mothers should realize what influence they can wield and be sure that they wield it for good.

I do not believe there is a more pure picture in this world than that of a mother, modestly dressed, with long hair, in a clean and well kept home, with her children about her knees as she teaches them reverence for God and His word.

There is not a more sacred spot on earth than the grave of a good Christian mother. "There sleeps the nurse of infancy, the guide of our youth, the counselor of our riper years, our friend when all others deserted us."

May God give us more Christian mothers!
(Next month: CHILD TRAINING) - OPA

THE GOOD CONFESSION

By IRVIN BARNES

One must confess Christ in order to be saved. Romans 10:9-10 teaches that confession is unto salvation. Jesus said, in so many words, that he who refuses to confess Christ before men, will be denied before the father, Matt. 10:32-33.

According to Acts 8:37 the confession that Jesus is the Son of God proceeds water baptism. Requesting baptism the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Phillip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Following this confession by the eunuch, both Phillip and the eunuch went down into the water and Phillip baptized him.

Now to the main focus of this short study: does the statement "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," constitute divine pattern for "the good confession?" Is it essential for the candidate for baptism to state the exact words of the eunuch? The question can be asked in another way. Should the penitent believer be asked, "Do you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" is it sufficient for him to reply, "I do," or give a simple one word reply of "yes."

While the statement of the eunuch is appropriate, it is not essential to state his exact words. In reply to the question, Do you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God? One may answer "Yes" or "I do." Such a response does indeed constitute the good confession.

This premise is true for the following reasons:

1. Thayer p. 446 defines confess "*homologeō*" as "to agree with, assent." When asked, "Do you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" a reply of "I do" or a simple one word answer of "yes" satisfies the meaning of the word confession.

2. When Jesus asked his disciples, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." What Peter said was totally acceptable, for Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona." Yet, Peter's words were not exactly the same as the eunuch's. The eunuch used the word Jesus. Peter did not. Peter used the words "living God." The eunuch did not. All must agree that Peter and the eunuch expressed the same thought or idea, both gave their assent to the fact that Jesus is God's son, even though their words were a bit different.

3. 1st. Tim. 3:13, "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession." The inspired apostle states that Jesus made the "good confession" before Pilate. How then did Jesus do this? Mark 14:61-62, "Again the high priest asked him, and said

unto him, Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am." The good confession of which Paul refers contains only 2 words: "I am." In this, Jesus assented to the fact that he was the Christ the Son of God.

4. That which proves too much proves nothing. If the words of the eunuch constitute a divine pattern for confessing Christ, then the candidate for baptism should be required to state the exact same words that the eunuch stated. He could not say, I believe Jesus is the Son of God. He could not say, I believe Christ is the son of God. He could not say, I believe Jesus Christ is God's son. While each one of these statements carries the same meaning, each one is slightly different in sentence construction.

Therefore, while the statement, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is certainly appropriate, the scriptures permit the good confession to be made with the word, "Yes" or any other compilation of terms that assents to, or agrees with, the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

"THE SINNER'S PRAYER"

continued from page 1

in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." That is the way an alien sinner is to appeal to God in order to have his sins washed away. Peter did not tell him to pray the so-called "Sinner's Prayer." He instructed him to appeal to God for salvation in the God appointed way that the Holy Spirit had revealed to him. There is another passage that connects baptism with calling on the name of the Lord. This is found in 1 Peter 3:21. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." What does the phrase "the answer of a good conscience toward God mean? Jack W. Cottrell interprets the meaning of this on p. 26 of *Baptism and The Remission of Sins, An Historical Perspective* that is edited by David W. Fletcher. He writes, "...The noun (answer, etc) itself (as used here) is best understood as an appeal or a request or a prayer. It is an appeal made unto God for a good conscience, for a conscience freed from the guilt of sin. As Greeven says, "It is to be constructed as a prayer for the remission of sins." This expression, then, is identical in meaning with Acts 22:16: In baptism the sinner has called upon God to wash away sins."

Our conclusion then must be that God gave baptism to the alien sinners as a means of praying to God and asking Him to forgive them of their sins. Dear sinner, if you will ask God to save you in this way you can be sure He has forgiven you and received you into His family. He will hear that kind of prayer from you and answer it. We say to you with Ananias, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

Why did he not just plainly say that it is a sin for a woman to cut her hair?" Well, why doesn't the Bible say, "Thou shalt not use individual cups or thou shalt not use a piano?" We understand that when the Lord tells us what to do, he does not have to specifically tell us what not to do. In I

Cor. 11 Paul says the woman is to let her hair grow long.

Surely the Lord does not have to specify every way a woman could stop her hair from growing long. Does he? Are we that spiritually dwarfed? Let the hair grow long means exactly what it says!

4. How long is long? If a woman cuts her hair at or above her ears, is that long hair? "I think it is obvious," some reply, "That if a woman cuts her hair at her ears that is not long hair." Obvious? Obvious to whom? Many women I work with at school believe their hair is too long the minute it starts touching their ears and they are off to the beauty shop to get another haircut. Is that the scenario we want to see in the church? When I was a boy, preachers in the digressive churches of Christ started advocating the same thing the author of the article is advocating. Women started cutting their hair and today if you walk into any digressive church you will find women with hair at or even above their ears, May the Lord help us not to follow in their footsteps. May the Lord help our women to resist the fallacious reasoning and pernicious doctrine that will lead us precisely where the digressives have gone!

5. At least, I have been thinking of late, one good thing may come out of this 22 page bulk email. I have really not heard much preaching or teaching of late on this subject, but perhaps this article will cause us to realize the danger of neglecting any doctrinal truth. I personally have not preached on this subject much in my meetings. I will now! The obsessive compulsion of some to spread their views by creating websites, writing 22 page articles, and spending countless hours corresponding with people in an effort to convince them the Bible allows women to cut off their hair may turn out to be a blessing in disguise. It will be a blessing, that is, if it causes us to take a firmer stand for the truth and a more vocal stance against those who would rebel against the old tried and true teachings of the church.

5. Lastly, let me say that I know how much trouble it is for women to let their hair grow long. That long hair is hard to wash, hard to manage, and time consuming. God bless our sisters who refuse to go along with the worldly trends, not to mention what would be more convenient for them personally, and let their hair grow long. It is your glory! God sees and knows, as do all those that read and understand the words of the Holy Spirit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Help Needed For Foreign And Domestic Subscriptions

The *Old Paths Advocate* is not a profitable venture. No one receives any pay for labor. This has always been the case. Though the price of a single subscription is now \$10 per year this price covers only the cost of printing the paper and mailing it to our paid subscribers in the United States. Costs are constantly on the rise. We have never tried to make money with the *OPA*. We are only trying to get the gospel to as many as possible while there is still time. In addition, we try to provide a brotherhood service by providing good articles, a place for all preachers to report their work, and also a way to announce important events, deaths, marriages, etc. We are convinced this is a good work. We need everyone to try to renew on time and tell others about the paper. We need someone in each con-

gregation to work for the paper. Ask for subscriptions and offer to send them in. Anyone who sends 10 subscriptions will get his free. We ask our preaching brethren to please mention the paper wherever you go. This would increase the number of subscribers dramatically. Send in regular field reports so that your brethren where you go will be able to know what you are doing and rejoice in the work with you. The more subscribers we have the more good can be done and the easier it is to meet our costs. There are many that need the paper in foreign countries. Most can not afford to pay the subscription price. However, so much good has been accomplished by the paper going overseas (and it goes all over the world today) that we have not been willing to refuse the paper to anyone who will read it. It has been our findings that, many who get the paper in other lands, photocopy it and send it on to others. The work in the Philippines, and other places as well, began because the *OPA* was sent there. We send it overseas at our expense. Thus the paper must absorb the cost of not only the subscription but the much higher postal costs as well. We have 63 foreign subscriptions to pay for. This means that the paper must spend \$630.00 to cover that cost. According to the post office, the average cost of sending the paper overseas is about \$1.40 per piece or about \$89.00 for the 63 subscriptions. (Note: the \$89.00 must be paid each month for foreign postage) This means the paper is paying \$1,068.00 per year just for postage on foreign subscriptions. There is no income to cover this because the foreign readers can not afford to pay for their subscriptions. This means that every year *OPA* is absorbing \$1,698 to keep the foreign subs going. In the past we have often absorbed the cost. We are no longer able to do so. Can you help in this good work? When you send help, be sure you plainly state what it is for. Thank you in advance.—Don L. King

Note Time Change

The Atwater, CA, congregation has changed its 4th Sunday of each month's evening services from the listed 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. We have all day services that day with lunch, followed by singing, and then the 3:00 p.m. service. We have several who live up to 40 miles away and the early service allows us to be together enjoying the day and the fellowship that we can share.

Directions for Hawaii

The Church of Christ at 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797, meets for worship services: Sunday - 9:30 A.M. & 6:00 P.M.; Wednesday - 6:00 P.M. Brethren from the mainland U.S. can easily locate the place. Please, follow this direction: From the Airport or any Waikiki Hotel, take and follow H-1 (Freeway) West. Turn right at Exit 8-B, then Take left lane to bring you to Farrington Hwy. Stay at Farrington Hwy. taking right lane. Turn right at Waipahu Depot Road, turn left at Waipahu Street. Follow Waipahu St., and turn right at Ikepono Street, follow it until you reach number 94-371. A sign board CHURCH OF CHRIST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, is posted in front of the building. Please, note that Waipahu Depot Road and Waipahu Street are two different streets. For further information, please call Bro. Virgilio O. Danao Sr., phone (or fax to) number (808) 680-0249. The announcement

supercedes and cancels previously announced telephone number and direction.

Can you help this couple?

Keaith and Rebecca Carver, both dedicated Christians, are interested in adopting a child. They attend the Laurel Hill church in West Virginia. If you know of any child that is or might be available, please contact them. They would be loving parents, giving the child a Christian home in which to be raised. You may address them at P.O. Box 428, Chapmanville, WV 25508.

Directory Updates as of August 31, 2000

Thanks to all who reviewed your information for corrections at the Lebanon meeting!

Send all changes to Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, 95621 (916) 726-8507 papagreg@aol.com

CONGREGATIONS:

Alabama, Earlytown: Change contacts street: Jimmy Coale, 648 Cassie Road. Donald J. Smith, 347 Cassie Road.
Alabama, Napoleon: Change Ronnie Prince street 18725 Co. Rd. 59

Arkansas, Dardanelle: Remove Kenneth Millard. Add: Jim West, Rt. 2, Box 1618, (501) 229-5598

California, Bakersfield Planz Road: Change Phil Kelly area code (661), Correct Darrell Brewer address & area code: 5009 Surrey Ln. Area Code: (661)

California, Clovis: Sunday evening service time: change to 2:00 PM effective October 1, 2000. Midweek service day: change to Thursday at 7:30 PM as of September 7, 2000.

California, Corning: remove, no longer meeting.

California, Olivehurst: Change Sunday PM time to 4:00 PM, Midweek time to 6:30 PM - Add: Chuck DeWitt, 2020 Pennington, Live Oak, CA 95953 (530) 695-8122

California, Placerville: 4729 Oak Hill Rd. Change Midweek service to Wednesday. Change Raymond Nelson address: 4121 Starkes Grade Rd., Placerville, CA 95667 (530) 647-1163

California, Tehachapi, New Congregation: 120 E. Tehachapi Blvd., Sun. 10:30 AM & 3:00 PM, Contact: Gerald Barrett, 22150 Old Well Rd., TehachapL CA 93561 (661) 822-4970

Colorado, Holyoke, remove Roy Knight (deceased)

Georgia, Jonesboro: Change Sun. Even. To 4:00 PM. Remove Don Snow and Mark Grant. Add: Roger Floyd, 298 Trestle Rd., Locust Grove, GA 30248, (770) 957-0884; J.C. Pressley, Jr., 3466 Hwy 81, Hampton, GA 30228 (770) 946-3117

Georgia, Marietta: Correct spelling should be Austell in name and directions. Add: 5th. Sunday 2:00 PM. Correct Charles Chandler area code (404)

Illinois, Chicago: Add Derek Darsey, 1723 W. 77 pl, Chicago, IL 60620 (773) 874-6191

Indiana, Depaw: Remove Sunday evening and Thursday evening services

Indiana, Harrodsburg: Correct Howard C. Heath's street: 2423 W. Thrasher Rd.

Kentucky, Bowling Green: Correct area codes (270)

Kentucky, Lexington: Correct Richard Bunner's phone (859) 266-8608

Kentucky, London: remove Finley Baker. Add: Arvil Baker, 400 Pistol Ck Rd., London, KY 40701 (606) 864-5370

Kentucky, Paducah: Add Sun. evening 6:00 PM. Correct Michael E. Anderson's area code (270). Add: Isaac Bunner, 2500 Adams St., Paducah, KY 42003 (270) 415-9042

Louisiana, West Monroe: Correct address & directions: 727 Wallace Dean Road-Exit off 1-20 at Well Road Exit 112 and go 1 mile north. Add Joel Albritton, 409 Arlington Pl, West Monroe, LA 71291 (318) 322-4695

Michigan, Pontiac: Correct Aaron Willis street: 7175 Mather

Missouri, Brumley: Remove Wed. service. Add Sun. even. 6:00 PM. Correct Dwight Humphrey's street: Sudhammer Rd.

Missouri, Buffalo: Correct Street: N. Hwy 73. Change Sun. eve. to 2:00 PM, Change Frank Sanderson's address: P.O. Box 1586

Missouri, Eldon: Correct Larry Henderson's street: 1102 Lawson Ave.

Missouri, Greenfield: Correct Randy Meents street: Rt. I Box 655

Missouri, Harrisonville: Correct John Pruitt's street: 2703 East Mechanic

Missouri, Jamesville: Correct directions: South on Highway M 7 miles to... Add Wed. 7:30 PM

Missouri, Lee's Summit: remove: "-Sun. 7:30 PM"

Missouri, Mtn. Grove: Correct Lyle T. Harrison's street: 1400 North Stonegate Drive

Missouri, Montreal New Congregation: 27 Miles north of Lebanon at junction 7 & E. Next door to Montreal Post Office. Sun. 10:00 AM & 7:00 PM Contacts: A.C. Brockman 2033 King James Rd., Lebanon, MO 65536 (417) 532-2530, Elmer Boggs, 23359 Hwy 32, Lebanon, MO 65536 (417) 532-4928

Missouri, Rolla: Correct directions: 1-44 to exit 189 (V Hwy), turn right, cross bridge, turn right, building is 1 mile on left.

Missouri, St. Louis (2701 Shenondoah): Correct directions: ... Exit on Jefferson Street and go South ... Correct Eddie Swanagan street: 2733 St. Vincent Ave.

Missouri, St. Louis (Chain of Rocks) Correct directions: ... 2 miles West of Mississippi... Correct Steve Meents address: 14784 Timberbluff Dr., Chesterfield, MO 63017 (636) 537-4806 Remove Gene Oneal.

Missouri, Seymour: Correction of correction: Randall Howard Street: 147 Fair Oak Lane

Oklahoma, Crescent: Correct Terry George phone: (405) 640-6264

Oklahoma, Sentinel: Sun. even. time 3:00 PM

Oklahoma, Washington: Correct Mark McAlister street: Rt. 2 Box 260

South Carolina, Greenville: Correct directions-remove "business." Remove Thomas G. Owens. Add Wayne T. Owens 311 Lockaby Rd., Pendleton, SC 29670 (864) 261-6346

Tennessee: Lawrenceburg: Remove (CST) 6:00 PM (DST)

Texas, Allen: Correct Bruce Caskey address: PO Box 141, Allen TX 75103-0003

Texas, Irving: Correct Area Codes: (972)

Texas, Lubbock: Correct George A. Hogland street: Rt. 2 Box 357

Texas, Red Oak: Change Fred Johnson street & phone: 122 Carol Lane, (972) 617-9044

Texas, Tyler: Add Wed. 7:30 PM. Remove Terry Baze. Add: Randy Ballard, 18389 Tall Pines Dr., Tyler, TX 75703 (903) 839-2226

West Virginia, Spring Valley: Remove church phone

PREACHERS:

Add: *Marcus Ayers* 175 Blair Rd., Farmerville, LA 71241 (318) 368-1776

Alton Bailey: Correct address 410 Ginger Circle, LaGrange, GA 30240 (706) 882-1114 abbailey@mindspring.co

Wyn Baker: New address: 229 Orchard Street, Wayne, WV 25570 (304) 272-9813 wyn@ezwv.com

Terry Baze: New address: 309 Academy St., Farmerville, LA 71241 (318) 368-0845 terrybaze@lwol.com

Smith Bibens: Change email: sbibens@cleanlink.net

Jonathan E. Bunner, Apartado Postal #319, Cuidad Victoria, Tamps 87000, Mexico. Phone: 001-52-131-35050job@cdvictoria.podemet.conLmx

Richard Bunner: Change phone: (859) 266-8608

Jimmy Cating: New address: PO Box 693, Sentinel, OK 73664 (580) 393-2337

Roy Lee Criswell: Correct street, Route 2, Box 2535

Brian Elliott: New email: bnelliott@ncinternet.net

Al Felder, 719 North Quigley Road, Marion, LA 71260 (318) 292-2957

Cecil E. Smith: New address: 872 North Quigley Rd., Marion, LA 71260 (318) 292-4101 cesmith@bayou.com

Dennis Smith: New address: PO Box 10868, Fort Smith, AR 72917 (501) 452-5896

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

STEPHENS-KINSER—On the evening of August 2, 2000 at Bedford, Indiana, Brandon Stephens and Kelly Kinser entered into the covenant of marriage in the presence of the Almighty God. It was a simple wedding by today's standards, and yet it was just as lovely and meaningful as any. The fact that these two young, Christian people had found what they were looking for in a Christian mate had been evident for some time. To those who know them well, it is obvious that their standards and goals are linked to Christ and his church. And so, having found the rare qualities that each of them possesses they were anxious to establish their Christian home. May God bless them for their commitment to Him and to each other. Brandon and Kelly will reside in Washington, Oklahoma where Brandon works as an evangelist. My wife and I are honored to have such a fine young man as our new son-in-law. It was my pleasure to perform the ceremony.—Reggie Kinser

OUR DEPARTED

McVEY—Ira D. "Mack" McVey was born February 15, 1905 in Morgan County, Ohio. He died May 4, 2000 at Muskogee, OK. Bro. McVey is survived by three sons, Wayne and his wife, Laverne, of Muskogee; Stanley and his wife, Karin, of Oscoda, MI, and Joe of Fort Smith,

AR. There are also nine grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren. Following the funeral service at Foster's Ivory Chapel in Muskogee, the body was returned to California for burial at Rose Hill Cemetery in Whittier. Although I was asked to conduct the service, I did not know Bro. McVey personally. The brethren at Muskogee informed me that he had been present for worship with them on the last Lord's Day of his life, demonstrating the kind of dedication which had evidently characterized him during most of his 95 years. Prior to coming to Muskogee five years ago, Bro. McVey had been affiliated with several congregations in California. Brethren who had known him there were lavish in their praise for him.—Taylor A. Joyce

HOWARD—Elisha Howard, son of the late William Henry and Martha Jane Luna Howard, was born October 3, 1912 near Dora, Mo. He departed this life on February 29, 2000 at the age of 87 years, 4 months, and 28 days. Elisha was baptized at an early age and was a member of the Odom Church of Christ at the time of his passing, although ill health had prevented his attending worship services for some time. In 1932, Elisha was united in marriage to the late Iola Elliott Howard, to whom two sons and three daughters were born. Iola passed away in January, 1966. In 1967, he was married to the late Vae Jernigan Howard. Vae preceded Lish in death in August, 1992. Lish, as he was called, was a good singer and always enjoyed going to services. He is survived by five children, Verlin Howard, and his wife, Lena, Dora, Mo.; Berniece Hopkins and her husband, Gene, Tulsa, Ok.; Loretta Jones, Broken Arrow, Ok.; Marlet Howard, and his wife, Thelma, Collinsville, Ok. and Rozetta Howard of Sapulpa, Ok; eight grandchildren; nine great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. Berniece wrote a "Tribute to Daddy" which I'm sure brought back many memories to the children and expressed her appreciation for the way they were raised. I never knew Iola, but have known the rest of the family for many years, and always enjoyed staying with Lish and Vae when I held meetings at the Odom. The writer offered words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

COOK—Ruby D. Cook was born March 3, 1904 and departed this life May 16, 2000, having lived to be just over the age of 96. For the greater part of her long life, she faithfully served the Lord. She was a Christian for 80 of those 96 years. Anyone who knew her was greatly impressed by her strong convictions for truth, convictions that never waned or wavered at any time. Over the years, many preachers have been entertained by this saintly woman and many brethren too. Her influence will live on for many more years in southeast Alabama. Gathered about her bedside at her passing were all of her daughters. Her legacy will remain in them, their children, and their children's children. Bro. Greg Jordan, her great grandson; Bruce Roebuck, her great granddaughter's husband; and I took part in the memorial service.—Doug Hawkins

MARTIN—Nana Mae Martin was born September 28, 1915, in Elsberry, MO, a daughter of Louis and Rosa Knollhoff Stewart. She passed from this life on June 28, 2000 in Pleasant Hill (IL) Nursing Center. She married Ervin C. Martin on March 22, 1934 in Pittsfield, IL. To

this union eight children were born. Nana Mae was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Ervin; one grandson, Jerry Martin; and one granddaughter, Robin Martin. She is survived by four sons, Jerome Martin, Pleasant Hill, IL; Carl Martin, Nebo, IL; Fred Martin and Sam Martin, Quincy, IL; four daughters, Elizabeth Smith, Quincy, IL; Mrs. Carolyn Summers, Quincy, IL; Mrs. Lillian Hannel, Pleasant Hill, IL; and Mrs. Sharon Campbell, Wood River, IL; one sister, Martha Jacobs, Banks, OR; and twenty four grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. Nana Mae was a long time member of the Mozier, IL Church of Christ. She and Ervin were pillars in the church. Those of us who visited or preached at Mozier or always found a warm welcome in Ervin and Nana Mae's home. She will be missed by all who knew her. The writer offered words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

WADE—Barbara Jean Wade, daughter of Jesse Mack and Audrey Montgomery Vinson, was born April 30, 1939, in Cookeville, TN. She departed this life June 29, 2000, in her home near Lebanon, MO. On May 25, 1961, she was united in marriage to Ervan Eugene Wade, and to this union two daughters and one son were born. She was preceded in death by her parents. Jeanie is survived by her husband, Gene, of the home; two daughters, April Muzik, of Warren, MI; Rebecca French, of Sterling Heights, MI; one son, Christopher Wade, of Hamtramck, MI; four granddaughters; one grandson; two brothers, Rick Montgomery, of Milford, MI; and Scott Montgomery, of Warren, MI; a sister, Betty Kevin, of the state of Florida; her step-mother, Marie Vinson, of Paducah, KY; Her mother-in-law, Lois H. Wade, of Lebanon, MO; and several nieces and nephews. Jeanie was a member of the Church of Christ. She had battled cancer for several years. The writer offered words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

AKEY—Paul Nelson Akey, son of Isaac and Vesta McCubbin Akey, was born February 26, 1923, near Conway, MO and departed this life September 15, 1999, in his home at Lebanon, MO. On February 21, 1942, he was united in marriage to Leoral Faye Massie, and to this union one daughter was born. He was preceded in death by his parents. Paul is survived by his loving wife of fifty-seven years, Leoral Faye of the home; a daughter, Pamela and her husband, Stanley Kasiske, of Independence, MO; a grandson, Stuart Kasiske; a granddaughter, Shelly Kasiske; a sister, Irene Durbin, of Lebanon, MO; and a host of friends and other relatives. Paul was a long time member of the Church of Christ and faithfully attended the Hayes Street Church in Lebanon, MO. Paul will be missed by the church at Lebanon and all who knew him. The writer spoke words of comfort. I deeply apologize for not sending this notice earlier.—Ron Alexander

RODEN—Sister Eunice Roden of the Norman congregation slipped away from this life July 31, 2000. She was born in Sentinel, Oklahoma, in the year 1911. She had the distinct honor of being both the daughter and the wife of gospel preachers. Her father was Isaac Harden Bills, who preached in the Sentinel area for many years. Her husband was Bill Roden, well known throughout the brotherhood, who also preached for many years. Eunice

traveled with Bill all over the United States when he went to conduct gospel meetings. They were married for over 60 years, with Bill preceding her in death in 1990. She was a good example for any young lady to follow when becoming a preacher's wife. For Eunice, her family was the center of her life. She loved to cook for them and have family get-togethers. She loved her grandchildren very much. Eunice was faithful to the Lord all of her life. She obeyed the gospel when she was 15 and never wavered. As she grew weaker and approached death, she continually expressed her confidence in the Lord. Just before she died, Eunice asked her daughter Dortha how much longer the doctor told her she had to live. Dortha told her that her remaining time was in the hands of God. Eunice expressed her confidence in the Lord's plans at that point. Eunice was an inspiration to the faithful in her last days. While her body grew weaker, her mind remained strong and alert. She was a living example of Paul's words "Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law Dortha and Charles Davis, grandchildren Lynne Neff and Mike Davis, great grandchildren Mandy Pfiel and Brandon Neff, and one great great grandchild Veronica Pfiel. Doug Edwards and Steve Martin spoke words of encouragement at her funeral service.

PARKER—Verna A. Zinn Parker was born June 27, 1925 in Bird City, Kansas and departed this life on May 27, 2000 at her home in Canon City, Colorado at the age of 74. Verna had been fighting cancer for a little over a year. At her passing, her children allowed no service or viewing of the body because they said that was their mother's request. She was laid to rest beside her husband at Mountain View Cemetery. Verna was married to William T. Parker on Aug. 31, 1947 in Wauneta, Nebraska. They moved to Canon City, Colorado in 1950. To this union no children were born but they adopted two children who survive, along with grandchildren, nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. Verna will be missed by those who knew her and loved her.—Mike Middick



Jerry Dickinson, 1308 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015, 713-455-8024, MisterJLD@aol.com—Since my last report, I have preached at Golden, OK, McAlester, OK, Lebanon, MO, Aurora, MO, and Ozark, MO. It was good to be associated, during these meetings, with fellow preachers, William St. John, Ronny Wade, Roy Lee Criswell, Billy Dickinson, Smith Bibens, John Anderson, Irvin Barnes, Dennis Smith, Dan Paulsen, and others I am sure. Working with Ronny Wade and the Lees Summit church made the annual Fourth of July meeting in Lebanon a great pleasure for me this year. Another treat for me this summer was being able to spend some time with my brother Billy as I

was coming and going to meetings. School is back in session, which limits my travels somewhat, nevertheless, I am looking forward to being in Ft. Worth (Fossil Creek) September 3, in Joplin (Leawood) September 29 - October 1, and San Angelo October 28 - 29. In November 1 and George Sears plan to meet Juan Rodriquez in Ciudad del Carmen, Mexico in order to see first hand the work the church here at Deer Park is supporting in the Yucatan Peninsula. May the Lord bless the church of Christ in all the far-flung corners of this old world!

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, E-mail: oldpaths@juno.com, September 14—We just closed a very enjoyable gospel meeting at Nashville, TN. There were no visible results and we are sorry about that. However, we pray that good was done and the church better for our having been there. It was a pleasure to stay with Kent and Becky Barnes whose hospitality was outstanding. The congregation has great potential to accomplish much in coming years. They are a young group, talented and anxious to work. We visited among them as much as time permitted. We look forward to returning some time. Presently, Joe Hisle is here and holding a good meeting. His preaching is right on the mark and crowds seem to be improving as the meeting progresses. In October, we look forward to holding a meeting with the Atwater, CA congregation. We have preached there quite a lot through the years and anticipate a profitable time together. Brethren, Satan is hard at work! False doctrine is everywhere and seems to be coming from all sides. In all my life, I have never seen more liberalism taught nor tolerated. Some people will believe almost anything. Let us work while it is day. Pray for us.

Carl M. Johson 1400 Northcrest Dr. Ada, OK 74820 carlmj@compworldnet.com, Aug. 7—I am currently in a meeting at New Salem, MS. This meeting that begins on the Friday before the first Sunday in August every year is over 90 years old, and so far we are having a great meeting this year. Crowds have hovered around 200 for every service. It is a pleasure to be associated with Lynwood Smith and an honor to be a part of this great meeting. Since my last report I have conducted meetings at Marietta, GA, and Red Oak, TX. We got off to a gloomy start at Marietta because Sister Martha Martin suffered a stroke the first day of the meeting. Phyllis and I made our stay with long-time friends Rick, Jane, Matt, and Ben Martin. Rick and Jane spent virtually every spare minute caring for Rick's mother Martha, but Ben hauled Phyllis and me around the Atlanta area for our appointed rounds. In spite of the demands on Rick he missed only one service of the meeting. We had good crowds and feel some good was done. It was good to have several preachers in attendance including Richard Nichols, Don Jackson, George Battey and Phillip Prince. Our meeting in Red Oak was also an enjoyable effort. We had good crowds throughout including preachers Allen Bailey, Julio Rodriquez, and Johnny Herrera. It was profitable to me to be associated with Gerald Hill during the meeting. I made my stay with John and Debi Sanders and could not have been treated better. My next meeting is in Deer Park, TX. Please continue to pray for our efforts and God bless the faithful everywhere.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt. 1, Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, Sep. 1, 2000—The past months have found us very busy in general. In August I was in Strong, AR and Columbia, MO. The meeting in Strong was well attended and a great joy to be a part of. Many of the folks in that area have become dear friends. While there, I stayed in the home of John and Marvene Saunders, These are some of the kindest people I know. Even though it was later in life, John was baptized two years ago and today helps as much as he can in the church. I truly believe the Lord has made a real difference to him. For example, he goes and gets one of the elderly ladies for services every Lord's day. Those are the small things that a lot of folks don't think anything about, but the Lord sees them. And I say Lord bless you John and be faithful unto death. Deaton Norsworthy is a faithful man to the cause of Christ and for many years has stood alone in Strong. After so long a time, he now has the help of several younger men, My prayer for all of them is to keep on laboring for the Lord. Afterwards, I went to Columbia, MO for what was probably the very best meeting of this year for me. Not on my part by any means, but on the church's part. In all of my travels, I have yet to see a congregation that functions any better than this one. They have a very strong fellowship, are very conscientious in their Christian living, and work tirelessly to spread the gospel in that area. During the meeting we had a number of outside visitors, a sure testimony to the work being done. He will be the first to say that he hasn't done it alone, but Bro. Reggie Kinser has done an outstanding job working with that congregation. I mean outstanding. He is a man whose work speaks volumes about his convictions and dedication to the cause of Christ. I don't think many sane people put a lot of stock in "pretty Christians" who can't drag their pretty bones to their own congregation's gospel meeting. To see a man's true metal through his work, on the other hand, is the real test. Well Brother, he and that congregation make the grade!!

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Sept. 6.—The meeting at Sentinel, OK, July 23-30, went very well, with visitors from other congregations. Even more importantly several digressives and members of local denominations attended. We were told it was the largest number of outsiders to attend a gospel meeting there in years. Jimmy Cating and Aaron Risner, who work with that congregation, deserve credit for their influence in getting visitors to the meeting. I have been asked to return for another meeting in 2002. My next was at Ratliff City, OK, where I found conscientious and sincere members of the church serving the Lord. The church is not large, but we had a good meeting, with several outsiders attending, as well as members of the church from other congregations. We attended the Labor Day meeting at Neosho, MO. where I spoke the first night, along with two others. It was estimated that there were about 400 present for the first service. I am back now working with the home church (79th and Kansas Ave, Kansas City). We appreciate the good people here and the opportunity to be a part of the Lord's work. We continue to plant and water and God continues to bless and give the increase. The Lord bless

the faithful everywhere.

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4, Box 188, Ada, OK, 74820, Aug 25—Well better late than never I guess! I can't believe how long it has been since I last reported. I don't know what it is but something is not working for me. I thought when you got old you got to sit on the porch and watch the grass grow! It is not working... Since last report we have been in meetings at: Levelland, TX where we enjoyed the hospitality of Jo and Melvin Hale. In Fieldstone, MO we enjoyed our stay with Ron and Judy Wood and his family. The meeting was well supported and closed with two baptisms. From Fieldstone we traveled to Bandy, KY for a most enjoyable time and a good meeting. Kentucky is a great place to preach, these good people are appreciative of good, plain, gospel preaching. This meeting closed with one young man obeying the gospel. Our next effort was in Corsicana, TX. We enjoyed the hospitality of Jimmy Vannoy and his family. After Corsicana it was on to Columbus, GA. I always look forward to being at Columbus to see many friend and enjoy their hospitality The fourth of July meeting at Sulphur was a treat, Bro. Duane Permenter and Bro. George Battey did a great job conducting the meeting. In July we traveled to Cassville, MO for and short meeting and then on to Grand Rapids, MI. Here we made the acquaintance of Frank and Arlene Willis and enjoyed our stay in their home. I was amazed at the efforts that the Michigan brethren put out to attend gospel meetings. Several brethren drove three hours one way every night to support the meeting! Bro. Ron Courter and his family were in attendance every service driving over one hundred miles each way. I wish brethren everywhere would put out one half the effort that these Michigan brethren did. This has become a real issue with me. Brethren call you to hold a meeting, the meeting dates are scheduled for months ahead and then they are off on vacations, or some other distraction and do not attend their own meeting! Gets pretty old. After the meeting in Mi we were in Springfield, MO at the Mission Hills congregation. It was great to see many of our old friends. The meeting was very well supported by congregations from all over Missouri. We enjoyed being with Larry and Wendy Ford and their family. They have a fine Christian home, their hospitality was wonderful. We look forward to being in Fremont, CA Sept 10-17; Cable Ridge, MO Sept. 24-Oct. 1; Blue Springs, KY Oct. 8-15; Covina, CA Oct. 29-Nov. 5. Please remember us in you prayers.

Brett Hickey, 5105 Old Bullard Rd. #M-3 Tyler, TX 75703, (903) 534-8466; brett.hickey@juno.com—I regret not reporting over the summer. We have recently benefited from preaching from Gerald Hill and Jim Hickey. Tyler had an uplifting meeting with Don McCord. Irving, Duncanville, Shreveport, Athens and Allen helped make the meeting with their presence. We had close to thirty visitors from the community. Besides studies with members and non-members, we are trying to impact the Tyler area with radio spots, a sizeable bimonthly newspaper article and a recorded Bible message advertised in the paper. We had one couple visit our meeting from our radio spots. A number of people in the community have commented on our articles and we are averaging twenty

responses per Bible message. We have several studies with inmates in jail and prison systems. We recently initiated mailings to newcomers to the community. We plan to follow those up with personal visits. Besides preaching at Ada and Tulsa, OK, Athens and Red Oak, TX, we were blessed to hold a five day meeting at Jonesboro, GA and an eight day meeting at Conway, LA. Numerous congregations supported our efforts at Conway. The Risinger's were exemplary hosts. Their deep love and concern for the church was refreshing. I was impressed by how much Bible discussion I heard in the area all week. A number of preachers graced Conway's meeting. It was especially good to spend time with Cecil & Lisa Smith. While at Jonesboro, we stayed with the Battey's. There was no doubt that Christ reigned in their home. George was able to help me with some challenging Bible questions. Temple, GA, Jasper, TN, Knoxville, GA, Marietta, GA and LaGrange, GA backed our efforts. We were thankful to preach to a number of outsiders the last few services. Some of these were interested in further studies. Seeing dear brethren over the fourth of July at Sulphur and Lebanon was a boost. We topped off the summer with the good spirit and excellent preaching at the Texas Labor Day meeting hosted by Allen. We look forward to being with brethren at Ventura, CA, Bridgeport, TX and Shreveport, LA over the next couple months. Be strong and of good courage!

Kevin W. Presley, 1604 Verde Trail, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, letthebiblespeak@mciworld.com, August 29—This summer has been a busy one at home and across the country. During the last of June, I was glad to go back and be with the brethren at Lawrenceburg, TN for a short meeting. I was very impressed with the progress the church there has made in recent months and years. I enjoyed staying with James and Terra Smith. July took me to Walterboro, SC and Modesto, CA. Walterboro was a mission type meeting in cooperation with Phillip Prince and Alton Bailey. It was encouraging to see the little church there work so hard for such an effort. We had some visitors and I feel as though it did the work in that area some good. In Modesto we had really good crowds all throughout. Brethren came from all over that area to help us out and it was good to see many old friends. We had a few visitors from the community and I hope the cause was furthered as a result of the meeting. I made my home with Rod and Murielle Wilson and also spent a night with Richard and Glenda DeGough. The hospitality was great in both places. Most recently, I enjoyed a good meeting with the church at Norman, OK. We had a very encouraging meeting with large crowds and a number of gospel preachers present nearly every night. This congregation is blessed with good leadership, a host of good young Christians, and a lot of interest. Doug Edwards does a fine work there. I enjoyed visiting with him as well as with Jerry Harris. On the way home, I got to stop and visit with my good friend Randy Cantrell of the Fort Worth congregation who informed me of the churches decision to scripturally organize. I commend their efforts and hope they will be an example for others. They are ordaining faithful and conservative men who will doubtlessly lead the church to even greater heights of service. Here at home, the work has been blessed

with two restorations and one baptism. Our television program continues to prosper. The brethren at Early and Dothan are so very supportive and I couldn't ask for better people to labor among. My next meetings are in West Chester, OH, Sept. 10- 17; Opp, AL, Sept. 20-24; St. Albans, WV, Oct 1-8; Birmingham, AL, Oct 18-22; and Napoleon, AL, Nov 10- 12. We would love to see you there.

Virgilio O. Danao, Sr., 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, HI 96797; Tel. & Fax (808)-0249, Aug. 22 - The Waipahu Church of Christ has been privileged to work with Bro. Duane Permenter during the period from August 16-20, this year. He was our speaker during our Wednesday evening and Sunday morning and evening services. One responded to the message of Bro. Permenter, and was immersed that same Sunday afternoon. We conducted personal studies with prospects previously contacted by the members of the Church here and followed-up listeners to our radio program. I continued to admire the dedication of Bro. Permenter to the Lord's work. This trip, he was accompanied by Sister Permenter. May God bless him and his wife as they continue to labor for Him. I am still working with our radio program, and continue to receive responses from our hearers, some of whom have requested copies (recorded tapes) of our radio broadcasts, opening the gate for us to personally contact them for further Bible studies. The Church here continues to be blessed by the continued presence of non-member visitors from the community and sometimes brethren from the mainland during Sunday worship services. As to the location of our meeting house and for further information, please feel free to call us at our telephone number mentioned above. I earnestly urge faithful brethren everywhere to please mention us, especially the Lord's work here, in your prayers. May God bless all everyday!

Virgilio O. Danao, 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797; Tel. & Fax No. (808) 680-0249; September 11, 2000 - Greetings to all faithful brethren everywhere! Through God's abundant blessings, the Waipahu Church of Christ continues to be at peace and is still alive, exerting efforts toward growth, spiritually and numerically. However, just as in other places where "ups and downs," so to speak, in the works are encouraged, the Church here is not spared. There were non-member visitors who used to attend our Sunday worship service, but stopped coming because of our use of one cup in the Communion, despite our efforts to explain to them that is what the Bible teaches. Be as it may, for the past several Sundays, we continue to have not lower than 4 non-member visitors from the community. We started a program primarily intended to train leaders to teach and preach behind the pulpit. Every Wednesday afternoon, before the start (at 6:00 P.M.) of our regular mid-week study, each of them (leaders) discusses the subject given him in advance. I appreciate the dedication and interest manifested. Also, every member is encouraged and challenged to look for prospects for personal studies. On September 4, two souls were immersed in baptism. Please, mention the Lord's work here in your prayers! God bless!

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Bennie [redacted], [redacted] Oak, CA 95955, Sept. 13 - The annual Western Study sponsored by the Fair Oaks, CA congregation was immensely successful. The speakers did an outstanding job as they dealt with questions relevant to our times. Bro. Don L. King and I assisted the congregation there in directing the study. The study is to be held, Lord willing, at the same congregation in 2001. Mike Fox and Ryan Connor will assist the elders there in coordinating the study. The California Labor Day meeting was one of the best I have attended. Ryan Connor helped the elders and the congregation at Stockton to put together a great meeting that was especially instructive to all those who attended. This meeting in Stockton brought together one of the largest crowds I have seen in California. The church there is to be commended for such a meeting. We continue the enjoyable work with the Olivehurst, CA congregation. God bless all.

Jerry Cutter, Rt. 1, Box 139, Crescent, OK 73028, 405-969-2440—This is a report concerning Buddy Brumley's and my visit to Russia in July. First, it was a real pleasure to be with Buddy who is such an inspiration to the work. Buddy had an heart attack and bypass surgery earlier this year, and was on antibiotics when we went to Russia. However, his going and his love for the work overcame any apprehensions that he might have had concerning his own health. When we arrived in Moscow we were able to visit with several of the brethren for an afternoon before leaving on the train that night for Penza. The brethren in Moscow are to be admired for their faithfulness and love for the church. Since May, when I was in Penza and this trip, five have been baptized in Penza. In May (see last report) two were baptized, and I was able to study with others. The two baptized in May were my daughter-in-law's grandparents. On this trip we were able to baptize a man that first came to our studies with his wife when Pat and I lived in Russia three winters ago. The man seemingly is a sincere man; his wife is also very interested but was not able to attend until the last of our stay due to working at night. Since Buddy and I left Penza I have heard two more have been baptized. One is my daughter-in-law's sister-in-law, and the other is a dear friend of Olga. (Olga is a Christian from Penza now married to an American Christian and living in the OKC area.) This intelligent and good lady came to our studies last May also, and really understands the church, I believe. Also, Olga's former mother-in-law attended the studies in May and all the studies and services in the recent trip, and we are hoping and praying she will soon be baptized. Marina's husband, attended the studies for the first time ever. Marina is my daughter-in-law's mother, whom I had the privilege of baptizing in the summer of 1995. I was able to go to Saransk while in Russia, a city located maybe 125 miles from Penza. Saransk was started in about 1993, I believe. According to

one of the faithful members at Saransk, over 100 persons have been baptized at Saransk, but only 4 remain faithful. Also, two members from Saransk live in America, in the state of Georgia. The church in Saransk almost died, but now there is a seemingly strong young couple there to lead the church. The man can lead singing well, reads well, and waited on the table well. This couple has a young daughter. Two other Christians are faithful to the church, both women, and both charter members of the church there in Saransk. One is related to the two Christians from Saransk now living in Georgia; she is about 25 with two children. The other Christian is about 35 with two children, I believe. Christians from Penza now visit Saransk monthly, and I believe that a work can be done in Saransk, but it will require time, energy and much patience. Buddy and I were able to visit a family out from Penza about 40 miles, and that I have reported about in other reports. The man and woman were baptized a few years ago, but the man had a drinking problem. However, he has now received treatments for the problem and is apparently not drinking. They have four young children. They fled from Kazakhstan into Russia a few years ago, leaving all possessions behind. When we visit this family we always try to take the children some candy, and the Christians from Penza help them with clothes and food, also. During the visit we sing, pray and read the Bible. The lady (a very dear Christian) sings well, and I noticed that she was following the notes with her finger. I asked if she knew music, and she said she did. She has had training in music, and especially likes the accordion. I would love to take her a good used, but small accordion. My thanks to all of you for your interest in the work in Penza as well as the many other places it is going on around the world. Please pray for me.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, Aug. 9—The meetings at Temple, GA and Napoleon, AL both closed with good crowds and interest. We enjoyed our stay at both places. Visitors from near by and far away came to encourage us and assist in the meeting. Several preachers were present at both places. The meeting at Houston, MO was a highlight for me. Working with Bro. Don Pruitt and the brethren in that area proved to be both enjoyable and highly rewarding. During the meeting we had a total of 79 outsiders. This was evidence of the work the congregation had done in preparation for our work together. Next we were at Fossil Creek in Ft. Worth, TX. This congregation has grown spiritually over the years. They are a beacon for the cause of Christ in that area. The Missouri Labor Day meeting was hosted by the church in Neosho. It was our privilege to participate with a number of other preachers during the meeting. The Lord willing we go next to Mountain Home and Hartwell in AR, then to LaGrange, GA Sept. 30-Oct. 8, North Hwy. H in Springfield Oct. 22-29 and Longwood, FL Nov. 5-12. We hope to see many of you at these meetings.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 11

"THE CHRISTIAN, POLITICS AND VOTING"

By TONY MELTON

Should Christians be involved in politics and voting? Many would tell us "yes" without relenting. They claim that God works through Christians to place men into positions of civil authority.

Since Christians are supposed to be followers of Jesus, we consider what He did. Did Jesus participate in politics during His lifetime? Did He try to obtain political prestige? Jesus explained to the governor Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world. . ." (Jn. 18:36). Jesus was not seeking political power or a governmental office. In fact, on one occasion when a group of men were going to make Him King, He escaped into a private place (Jn. 6:15). He had no desire to participate in or rule over some earthly kingdom.

The apostle Paul had many opportunities to introduce political views. He as well as the first century Christians lived under a tyrannical government. As Paul stood before kings and governors, he never spoke of amending or changing civil laws. He concentrated on preaching the gospel of Christ, and he never lost sight of his mission. When Christians and churches start using their time and energy promoting political positions, then they have lost sight of their purpose and mission on this earth. The gospel of Christ is the most powerful instrument for changing society. It changes men's hearts and produces repentance, and offers peace of mind to all.

The things written in the Old Testament were written for our learning (Romans 15:4). Therefore, we should learn from the mistakes of others. The Israelites had a desire to be like the nations around them, so they told the prophet Samuel that they wanted a king to rule over them. This displeased Samuel, but notice God's reaction: "And the LORD said to Samuel, Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). God resented the fact that the Israelites had made such a decision. He pointed out that the Israelites had rejected Him as their king. So because of their determination to have a king, God placed Saul as king over them (1 Samuel 9:15, 16; 12:19).

Later, when the Israelites realized what they had done, they told Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves" (1 Samuel 12:19). Even though God was not pleased with the Israelites request for a king, *He set a king over them*. Since the Israelites desired to trust in the leadership of some man,

God considered this as a personal rejection.

Today, many Christians are promoting some political party with all their hearts. They think that by their efforts in the political arena, they can make a difference in society. They spend hours promoting their party's propaganda, and then they tell others that if they do not vote, then they cannot complain about the individual who takes the presidential office. This is the same attitude of the Israelites. They did not recognize God as their king. They trusted in the human race to make their society better. They wanted a *man* to rule over them, so God provided them with such. Today, we also have men in authority over us, so what should be our attitude? What does the Bible teach? *The word of God teaches clearly that God himself places men in positions of authority and removes them from the same.*

The prophet Daniel declared that God "removes kings and raises up kings . . ." (Daniel 2:21). Also, he said, "...the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Daniel 4:21; cp. 4:17). In other words, if a man reaches the position of king or president, he arrived there for one reason and one reason only—*God placed him there!* The apostle Paul wrote, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God" (Ro. 13:1).

How can we as Christians have part in choosing our president and other political leaders? Not by spending our time and money supporting some frail human being! Not by voting and encouraging others to vote! How then? Well, since God is in complete control and places whom He desires in these positions of authority, we should spend our time on our knees talking with Him, The Bible tells us to pray for those in authority, but why? That we may "lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and reverence" (1 Ti. 2:1, 2). *This plainly shows that our prayers affect those who are in civil authority.*

Brethren, why not spend our time in the most effective way? It is the power of prayer that moves the mighty hand of God. The power of the "vote" moves nothing, although, we might find ourselves voting against God's will. If a man reaches the presidency, it is because God placed him there and no other reason. On one occasion a political leader thought he had some great authority. The governor Pontius Pilate told Jesus, "Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have power [authority] to crucify you, and power [authority] to release you?" Jesus answered, "You

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could have no power [authority] at all against me unless it had been given you from above. . ." (John 19:10, 11).

We, as Christians, must realize that although men are in authoritative positions, *God is still in charge*. We should not put our confidence in political leaders. The Bible says, "Thus sayeth the LORD: Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord" (Jeremiah 17:5). Political leaders have proven over and over that they cannot be trusted. They make all kinds of promises that they never fulfill. It reminds me of the little girl who asked her father, "Daddy? Do all Fairy Tales begin with 'Once Upon A Time?'" And he replied, "No honey, there is a whole series of Fairy Tales that begin with, 'If elected I promise...'" We must trust in God realizing that He is in charge.

Jesus and Paul did not propagate any political views, nor do we have any record of any other apostle or Christian participating directly in the problems of the State. They kept their mind on their mission, preaching the soul-saving gospel. They used the most powerful weapon that exists to change society—the good news of salvation. They changed problems in the civil government by praying for those in authority. Should we not follow their example?

YES, IT REALLY IS A SIN FOR A WOMAN TO CUT HER HAIR!

(A REVIEW OF RICK CUTTER'S ARTICLE)

BY GEORGE BATTEY

On September 4, 2000 an article from Rick Cutter entitled, "*Is it Really a Sin for a Woman to Cut Her Hair?*" was emailed en masse to a great number of Christians. Hundreds of people received this article either directly from Rick, or indirectly as it was passed on from hand to hand. The article is unappreciated for the following reasons:

- It teaches false doctrine that will lead people into sin.
- It was sent out by spamming on the Internet - an unethical, perhaps even illegal practice.

- It uses unnecessary, inflammatory language:

- 1) "It is the *dishonesty* of this latter position that many have unfortunately lowered themselves to" (p. 6).
- 2) "Frankly, I have rarely heard more *nonsense in my entire life*" (p. 6).
- 3) "'Uncut Hair' advocates should at least have the honesty to admit they don't believe the translators" (p. 6).
- 4) "To suggest that 'long hair' actually means 'uncut hair' is *dishonest and deceitful*" (p. 6).

The examples of this are too numerous to continue, but enough are presented here to show the inflammatory nature of Rick's article. Yet, after writing in this way, Rick pleads that any response should be done with a proper attitude. He praises some who have "disagreed agreeably" (second en masse letter sent out by Rick, Sept. 9, 2000).

- It raises more questions than it answers.

- 1) How long is long? (the subjective problem).
- 2) Why must a woman "put forth a sincere effort to grow her hair long rather than substituting an artificial veil indefinitely" as Rick argues on page 18?
- 3) Is "growing" hair part of any lexicographer's definition of the Greek word KOMAO?
- 4) Does the tense of the verb KOMA have any bearing on the issue of whether a woman may cut her hair?

- 5) What part does Numbers 6:5 play in helping us understand what it means to "let the hair grow long"?
- 6) When Samson's hair began to grow (Judges 16:22), was he "keeping on letting his hair grow" even though it was short in length?
- 7) Did the Bible say "LONG hair was given her for a covering" as Rick says, or did it say "her hair was given for a covering" (1 Corinthians 11:15)? What significance might this have on the subject?
- 8) When men look at a rope and say, "That is a long rope," is "a long rope" the same as something that grows?
- 9) If a child is instructed to "keep leaving the rope alone" and then trims off the end of the rope, did he act as he was instructed?
- 10) In the Greek is "have long hair" one word or more than one word? If it is one word, what kind of word - a verb or a noun? If a verb, does that describe something a person does, or does it describe the length of an object?

There are more questions raised than these, but this will suffice to demonstrate that Rick's article falls far short in dealing with the subject at hand. As mentioned already, his article raises more questions than it answers.

It makes several illogical and irrational statements.

- 1) "Today, the 'uncut hair' doctrine is unquestionably one of the most emphasized doctrines of the church. It is taught nationally and internationally, and is so embedded in the one-cup ranks that any preacher found to believe otherwise will almost certainly be ostracized and siphoned off financial support." (preface to the article, 2nd paragraph).
- 2) "... it is impossible for either a man or a woman to keep their hair from growing" (p. 9).
- 3) "Any Man who believes koma means 'to let the hair grow' is living in perpetual sin!" (p. 9).
- 4) "Remember, if a woman must let her hair grow, then a man must not let his hair grow at all or he is sinning" (p. 9).

The list could go on and on. All of these are illogical and irrational. The statement about preachers being "ostracized and siphoned of financial support" is unfounded. Let Rick give names and specific incidences of when any of this has happened.

- It misrepresents what the lexicographers said about the verb KOMAO.

The injustice to Thayer is the most notorious example here. Rick leads us to believe that Thayer did not say KOMAO means "let the hair grow" when that is exactly what he did say. Furthermore, our brethren have published tracts on this subject which do give Thayer's full definition (cf. "Honor and Glory, Shame and Dishonor," Richard Bunner, p. 7; "Let Her Be Covered," Don King, p. 9). No one is trying to deceive or be dishonest here. As brother Richard Bunner pointed out, brethren may be wrong, or they may be ignorant, but to charge them with dishonesty and deceitfulness is unfair.

- It continuously treats a verb as though it were a noun.

Rick's article throughout speaks of a woman's covering as being "long hair" (an adjective + a noun), whereas the New Testament speaks of "wearing" or "growing long hair" (verb describing action).

- It completely ignores the significance of the present tense of the Greek language.

If any sister in the church is looking for justification to trim or cut her hair, this article by Rick provides comfort in knowing that she is not alone in her thoughts and desires, but it provides absolutely no proof that trimming and

cutting are acceptable with God!

We now enter upon a critical examination of what Rick Cutter wrote in order to demonstrate its fallacy and its danger.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREEK PRESENT TENSE

We are about to discuss technicalities of the Greek language. Many complain that "all this technical Greek stuff is confusing." They argue, "If we have to know Greek to understand the Bible, then there's no hope of any of us being saved."

The problem with this reasoning is that it fails to understand that somebody has to know Greek or we would all be lost! The New Testament was not written in English, but Greek. Somebody has to know about Greek to translate it so the rest of mankind can understand and be saved. This is where those educated in the Greek language come into play. The following information is essential if you really want to know why "uncut hair advocates" take the position that it is sinful for women to trim the hair even a little.

There are three verbs in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 that are of importance in this study.

- 1) KATAKALUPTSTHO ("let her be covered" - v6) - present tense, passive voice, imperative mood, 3rd person, singular of KATAKALUPTO.
- 2) OPHEILEI ("ought she" - v10) - present tense, active voice, indicative mood, 3rd person, singular of OPHEILO.
- 3) KOMA ("s/he may have long hair" - v14-15) - present tense, active voice, subjunctive mood, 3rd person, singular of KOMAO.

You will notice that each of these verbs is in the present tense. The significance of this cannot be overemphasized in this study. The primary significance of the present tense is that it stresses continuous action. Dana and Mantey write, "The progressive force of the present tense should always be considered as primary, especially with reference to the potential moods..." (p. 181). Notice "especially with reference to the potential moods." This refers to the imperative and subjunctive moods above.

By way of explanation, verbs have "mood." There are several "moods" in the Greek language which indicate the relation of the verb to reality.

- 1) The "indicative mood" - means that the action is actually taking place. For example: "Jack sees Spot." This is action which is actually occurring. In 1 Corinthians 11:10, "she ought to have a symbol of authority on her head," the word "ought" is indicative. This means that right now the woman is actually in need of a symbol of authority.
- 2) The "subjunctive mood" - means that the action is not actually taking place, but is potential. For example: "if Jack sees Spot, he will kill him." The action of "seeing Spot" is not actually occurring, but is potential. This is why the Greek grammars call the "subjunctive mood" a "potential mood." In 1 Corinthians 11:15, "if she has long hair," the verb is subjunctive. The action is not actually occurring at the time of writing, but is potential. Whether the action ever will be performed will depend on what the woman does hence the "if."
- 3) The "imperative mood" - means that the action is not actually taking place, but is potential. This is used for commands - hence the name "imperative" - it is "imperative" or necessary that the action be performed. For example: "Kill Spot." The action of "killing Spot" is not actually happening, but it is potential and is given in the form of a command. In 1 Corinthians 11:6, "let her be covered," the action is not

actually occurring but is potential. This is a command.

Whether this action will ever occur depends upon whether the woman chooses to obey or not.

So then, because the Greek words KATAKALUPTSTHO ("let her be covered") and KOMA ("she may have long hair") are in potential moods and in the present tense, the "progressive force" is being emphasized. Literally translated, verse 6 says, "But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her keep on being covered." Literally, verse 15 is saying, "But if a woman keeps on growing long hair, it is a glory to her." (More about this word "growing" in a moment.) For emphasis' sake, let it also be noticed that verse 14 literally says, "If a man keeps on growing long hair, it is a dishonor to him."

In the indicative mood the point is still the same - continuous action is being stressed, though not so strongly as in the "potential moods" (i.e., the imperative and subjunctive). Literally, verse 10 is saying, "For this reason the woman keeps on oughting (i.e., "keeps on needing") to have a symbol of authority on her head because of the angels."

The present tense of these verbs points to something that a woman continues to do. Verbs describe action. The woman must keep on doing what? The apostle said she must keep on "growing her hair long." If she must "keep on" doing this, when can she stop and have it cut or trimmed? Rick Cutter did not tell us this. In fact, Rick treats these verbs as if they were nouns. He tells us in his article that "long hair" (an adjective + a noun) is the covering, but that is not the whole story. Actually the Bible says "her hair is given to her for a covering" and the divine qualification is that it must be hair that "keeps on growing long" (present tense, subjunctive mood). The Christian woman is told to do something (verb) with her hair. *What is she supposed to do???* She is to "let it keep on growing long!" (1 Corinthians 11:15). As you read that, remember this is a command of the Lord Himself: "if anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37).

Dana and Mantey are not alone in saying that the present tense stresses continuous action. Perschbacher writes the following under "Subjunctive Mood: Present Tense" "The tense does not indicate the time of the action, past or present, but the kind of action. The aorist tense refers to punctiliar or undefined action, whereas the present tense refers to stative, durative, or repeated (iterative) action" (p. 340). He makes a similar observation under the "Imperative Mood: Present Tense": "The present tense denotes progressive, iterative, or stative action, rather than temporal action" (p. 357). Robertson writes under the heading of "Subjunctive": "The rarity of the present subjunctive (and optative, of course) has already been commented upon. The aorist is used as a matter of course here unless durative action is to be expressed ... The subjunctive is very common indeed, but not in the present tense" (p. 889, emphasis mine - GB). Under "Imperative" he writes: "The present imperative was found to be regularly durative" (p. 890).

Perschbacher gives examples of the present subjunctive to help us see what is meant by the continuous nature of

the present tense. In Galatians 5:25 the Bible reads, "if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." This verse contains both the subjunctive and imperative moods in the present tense. Literally it means, "if we keep on living in the Spirit, let us also keep on walking in the Spirit." Is there any time when a person can stop "walking in the Spirit" and still be saved? Of course not. Again, Romans 15:6 says, "that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Literally, the present tense is saying to us, "that you may with one mind and one mouth keep on glorifying the God and Father." Is there any time a Christian may stop glorifying God - even momentarily? Of course not. One more example: the Lord Himself said, "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise" (Luke 6:31). Literally, "Just as you want men to keep on doing to you, you also keep on doing to them." Is there ever a time when we may momentarily stop treating people right? Of course not.

The point should be obvious by now. When the Lord said that a Christian woman should "keep on being covered" (1 Corinthians 11:6), that she should "keep on oughting to have a symbol of authority on her head" (verse 10), and that she should "keep on growing her hair long" (verse 15), there is never a time when she may momentarily stop growing her hair. Her hair (noun) is a covering and she is supposed to keep on doing something with that hair - "keep on growing it long."

Rick objects. He writes, "if 'to let the hair grow' were the proper definition of koma, why wasn't it translated that way - by anyone?" (p. 6). Perhaps Rick himself should answer these questions: (a) If Luke 6:31 meant, "Just as you want men to keep on doing to you, you also keep on doing to them," then why was it not translated that way - by anyone? If 1 John 3:10 meant, "Whoever has been born of God does not keep on sinning, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot keep on sinning," then why was it not translated that way - by anyone? If Matthew 5:28 meant, "whoever keeps on looking at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart," why was it not translated that way - by anyone? The list is endless. Why translators translated passages the way they did will have to be taken up with the translators themselves. However, that does not remove the fact that the present tense stresses continuous, linear, durative action. The woman is to "keep on letting her hair grow long" (1 Corinthians 11:15), and this is a command of the Lord Himself (1 Corinthians 14:37).

Jim Crouch makes the following pertinent point: Lexicographers do not delineate the meanings of verbs in all tenses and moods. They present the basic definition of the word, and then show how it is used within various contexts. That is why Thayer or Liddell or Gingrich can say that the meaning of KOMAO is, "to have or wear long hair." Rick, and others, can say, "But it does not say to continually grow long hair." True. That is because this is emphasized by the tense and mood of the verb-it is not inherent in the verb's definition. I believe this an important point to stress. Many people are unwittingly led down the wrong road in their use of Greek lexicons because (1) they do not know how to use them properly, and (2) though they may come up with a proper definition, they do not

know how to properly apply that definition to a specific context because they know nothing about Greek grammar. This is especially true in respect to Greek verbs. (Personal letter to me - GB Sept. 18, 2000).

"How The Experts have DEFINED *koma*"

Rick lists twelve experts in his paper who define the Greek word KOMAO. None of these experts help Rick's cause. They all define KOMAO as either "to wear the hair long," or "to have long hair," or "to let the hair grow long," or "to let the hair grow."

Rick tries his best to convince us that Thayer did not say "let the hair grow." He writes, "No reputable English translator agrees with this definition, nor apparently do any of the Greek lexicographers" (p. 8). This is false. Thayer did define the word, "let the hair grow." We have eyes. We can see for ourselves that a reputable scholar *did* translate the verb, "let the hair grow." In fact, Rick's list of "experts" contains no fewer than four "experts" who say either, "let the hair grow" or "let the hair grow long." How can our brother miss this point? When we add to this the significance of the present tense we have "*keep on letting the hair grow,*" or "*keep on letting the hair grow long.*" The "uncut hair" position is completely "untouched" by his list of experts. In fact, they all agree with the "uncut hair" position exactly.

To Rick's list of "experts" there are others who should be added:

- 1) Souter - "KOMAO, I wear the hair long, I allow the hair to grow long" (p. 137).
- 2) Pickering - "KOMAO, to let the hair grow long, to abound with hair; to have long hair" (p. 760).
- 3) Louw & Nida - "KOMAO: to wear long hair as part of one's attire - 'to have long hair, to appear with long hair, to wear long hair,' ...In a number of languages it may be necessary to translate KOMAO as 'to let one's hair grow long' or 'not to cut one's hair.'" (p. 527).

Notice carefully the last thing Louw & Nida say - "not to cut one's hair." Louw & Nida designed their lexicon to be used by translators and it is consulted regularly by the United Bible Society for guidance. If "to let one's hair grow long" did not even remotely carry with it the idea of "not to cut one's hair," then why suggest this possible translation? Obviously the idea is not as foreign to the text as some think. Unfortunately for Rick's position, there are scholars who take the position that "to let one's hair grow long" means "not to cut one's hair." Furthermore, the present tense of the verbs in 1 Corinthians 11 all point to continuous growth.

Questions People Will Ask

Rick anticipates objections and he tries to "head 'em off at the pass." Let us examine just a few.

1) Rick writes in his paper:

"You say that a woman must have "long hair." Well, how long is "long?" This is by far the most common question I hear, and the most ridiculous" (p. 14).

Labeling this as "the most ridiculous" argument that can be made is designed to cause us all to shy away from this question. After all, none of us wants to be guilty of making "the most ridiculous argument" known to Rick Cutter! But the label of "ridiculous" does not answer the question: How long is long? This is a valid question and one which Rick cannot answer. It is left in the field of subjectivism.

Rick continues to be plagued with the basic problem of

not being able to distinguish between nouns and verbs. The Bible did not say "long hair is given her for a covering." That is Rick's concoction. The Lord said, "hair is given her for a covering." What kind of hair covers the woman? Hair that "keeps on growing long" (present tense, subjunctive mood - stressing durative, linear, continuous action).

According to Rick's argument everything is subjective. The man subjectively decides how short to wear his hair and the woman subjectively decides how long to wear hers and on Judgment Day the Lord will decide if they were doing things well enough. Rick has God giving a command (a) to show respect for authoritative heads, (b) which affects one's prayer life, and (c) which involves eternal principles laid down since creation, but (d) draws the unwarranted conclusion that God left the entire matter subjective - leaving it up to each person to decide whether or not he has complied. This is false. God did not leave the matter in the realm of subjective decision based solely on a person's judgment.

Women are to "keep on letting their hair grow long" (1 Corinthians 11:15) - continuously (present tense, subjunctive mood). When God told the Nazarites to "let your hair keep on growing (long)" (Hebrew and English - Numbers 6:5), He meant, "no razor shall come upon his head." Is that not plain enough? The LXX has God saying that the Nazarites must "keep on nourishing the hair of the head." The noun KOMEN (used in 1 Corinthians 11:15) is also used here. The meaning is the same - "no razor shall come upon his head." The Scriptures seem to anticipate false teaching. It is as though God knew someone would come along some day and argue that "keep on letting the hair grow long" does not mean "do not cut the hair." So to prevent any misunderstandings, God recorded Numbers 6:5 so there would be no doubt as to what He expected.

Men, on the other hand, are not to "keep on letting their hair grow long" (1 Corinthians 11:14) - continuously (present tense, subjunctive mood). They are to interfere with the process of growth. They are to get a haircut on a regular basis. This command is not as subjective as Rick makes it appear.

God clearly said that if a woman is not going to cover herself (i.e., continue to grow her hair long), she might as well be "shorn or shaved" (1 Corinthians 11:56). What does this necessarily imply about the man then? Since he is not to be covered, it must be inferred that he might as well be consistent and be "shorn or shaved." What one (the woman) must do to be consistent, the other (the man) must also do to be consistent. When men begin to look like sheep at the end of winter, it is time to go get sheared or shaved. For emphasis, we say again, this command is not as subjective as Rick makes it appear.

2) Rick writes in his paper:

"Finally, it amazes me how that 'Uncut Hair' believers have no problems with women perming their hair, using hot blow dryers on their hair, using hot curling irons on their hair, dying their hair (which causes it to break off) or employing other techniques which often damage hair and cause it to break off. This seems to me to be grossly inconsistent. Is it ok to 'break off the hair' so long as we just don't 'trim it off?' Is it ok to 'chemically burn off' the

hair? Are these techniques perfectly acceptable, while trimming off dead-ends is gross sin? Is this not hypocritical? Yet many Christian women who claim to profess that trimming the hair is sin seem to have no problem with some of these other procedures of 'keeping the hair from growing.'" (pp. 15-16).

All Rick does here is point out an inconsistency in how people live their lives. He does not disprove anything about the need to "keep on letting the hair grow long" (present tense, subjunctive mood). Many of us agree with Rick on this point: It is inconsistent on the part of any Christian woman to remove her hair with chemicals or hot curling irons and then pride herself in the fact that she never used shears (1 Corinthians 11:6) on her hair. Some of us "uncut hair" believers do "have problems" with this behavior.

3) Rick writes in his paper:

"When a woman cuts her hair, isn't she cutting her 'glory?' ...The problem with this argument is obvious: It makes the assumption that 'hair' is a woman's glory. But this is NOT true. 'Hair' alone is not a woman's glory. Neither is 'growing hair' a woman's glory. LONG HAIR is a woman's glory." (p. 16).

Rick is actually confusing verbs with nouns here. This is somewhat difficult to see and explain, but here is an illustration that may clarify what is happening:

In 1 Timothy 2:12 the Scriptures say, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence." In the English, the four words "to have authority over" all come from one single Greek word AUTHENTEIN. In other words, there are two things which a woman is not allowed to do: (a) she may not teach (i.e., in public) and (b) she may not "have authority over" (one verb here) a man. Sunday School advocates borrow the word "over" from this verb to reconstruct the sentence and make it say: (a) a woman may not teach "over a man" and (b) she may not have authority "over a man." It is wrong and inexcusable to take the word "over" and place it wherever it seems convenient, because the word "over" is not a free-standing word that may be moved around. Sunday School people are treating "over" as if it were a preposition that can be moved around, whereas it is actually part of the definition of the verb.

Rick inadvertently does the same type of thing here. He writes that "LONG HAIR is a woman's glory." Actually, in the Greek, "long hair" is part of a verb. In the English the three words "has long hair" all come from one single Greek word KOMA. This is a verb that describes action. Action is something a person does. There is something that a woman does which is a glory to her. That is, if a woman "keeps on growing her hair" it is a glory. This is something that she does that brings glory to her. But in the same way that Sunday School advocates dissect the verb AUTHENTEIN in 1 Timothy 2:12, Rick dissects the verb KOMA. He borrows "long hair" - originally embedded in the verb - and essentially relabels it a noun phrase. Now he says that "long hair" (an adjective + a noun) is what is a glory to the woman. In other words, when Rick is finished with the verse, the glory to a woman is not something she is doing (verb), but rather an object (noun) which she is possessing.

If "LONG HAIR is a woman's glory" (as Rick contends), then some women are in trouble because their hair will

never grow "long" by Rick's definition. Try as they might, some sisters in the church just have hair that will not grow "long" when the tape measure is the standard.

God is not so much concerned about something (noun) a woman possesses. He is concerned about what women do. When women "keep on letting their hair grow," that is something they do. When God used verbs He was showing us that what women do is more important than what they possess (nouns). This is why when a woman makes a confession or is baptized, if she allows her hair to "keep on growing" (present tense, subjunctive mood), it does not matter how much hair (noun) she possesses. God punished Samson for allowing his hair to be cut off (Judges 16:19), but when he began to grow it again (Judges 16:22) God accepted him. God was more concerned with what Samson was doing (verb) than what he was possessing (noun).

In summary, the English Bible may leave the impression that "long hair" (an adjective + a noun) is a woman's glory. But in the Greek, the glory is an action performed by the woman (a verb) - she must do something to receive glory from God - she must "keep on growing her hair." Her "hair is given to her for a covering" (1 Corinthians 11:15). But she must do something with that hair "keep on growing it."

4) Rick writes in his paper:

"Clearly, an artificial covering is not needed when long hair is present - it is only required when long hair is not present on the woman (and she is in the act of praying or teaching the word of God). After all, the Bible is very clear (verse 6) that it is a shame for a woman to pray or prophesy when her head is shorn or shaved and not otherwise appropriately covered" (p. 17).

Rick assumes the "artificial veil" position which has been argued and debated for years. There is plenty of material that has been published to soundly demonstrate that the "hair is given to a woman for (ANTI - "in place of, instead of, for the purpose of") a covering" (1 Corinthians 11:15). But the woman must do something (verb) with that hair in order for it to serve the place of a covering - she must "keep on growing it."

First Corinthians 11:6 teaches that a woman must "keep on being covered" and if she does not do this, she should be consistent and be shorn or shaved. Since the covering is the hair (verse 15), it means that she must "keep on being covered by hair that keeps on growing." If she does not do this, she should be consistent and be shorn or shaved.

Rick completely misses the point and says, "No ... she should not be shorn or shaved. The woman in verse 6 is already shorn or shaved and because she's already that way, she should cover herself with an artificial veil." Read 1 Corinthians 11:6 for yourself. See with your own eyes. Read what Rick wrote above. He is saying that the woman is already shorn or shaved and should then be covered. The Bible says just the opposite. The Bible says if she is not covered, let her then be shorn or shaved. This is a serious mistake on Rick's part.

5) Rick writes in his paper:

"But how can women with short hair [eg., due to chemotherapy] be properly covered?" someone will ask. Obviously, long hair is provided instead of a covering (v 14-15). But sometimes a woman's hair is not long. If a woman must be covered, and long hair is given to her

instead of a covering, then of course she needs to have some sort of 'covering' if she doesn't have long hair. Otherwise, we violate the Scriptures which plainly teach that it is a shame for a woman to worship if she is shorn or shaven (in other words, to have a head which is 'uncovered'). Furthermore, we find ourselves trying to explain the dilemma of how a bald headed woman can be considered covered, while a man whose hair is visibly longer, is not" (p. 17-18).

Again, Rick makes the mistake of assuming the idea that long hair, as measured by a ruler, is the covering of verse 15. However, the Bible does not say this. Hair that "keeps on growing" is a glory to the woman and is given to her for a covering (1 Corinthians 11:15).

When a woman loses her hair due to chemotherapy, if she does not interfere, her hair will begin to grow again. Notice again what the Bible says about Samson's hair, "However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven" (Judges 16:22). In other words, Samson's hair began to "keep on growing again" after it was shaven off. God accepted this from Samson - who was to be a Nazarite from birth. We know He accepted Samson again because the Scriptures tell us so (Judges 16:28-30; Hebrews 11:32).

6) Rick writes in his paper:

"It is hypocritical to teach others to take the Bible literally and not add or subtract from it, while we completely ignore the literal reading of 1 Corinthians 11:14-15, ignoring not only how all the reputable translators translated this passage but also how most of if not all the Greek lexicographers defined koma" (p. 19)

We agree that nothing should be added to the Word of God, nor deleted from it. But who is the guilty one in this case? Who is adding artificial veils into the church when the Scriptures clearly teach that hair which "keeps on growing" is given as a covering? Who is taking away the force of the Greek present tense continuous, linear, durative action?

We are merely contending for what the passage literally says: "if a woman keeps on growing her hair long, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given to her for a covering." That is what the passage literally says. It agrees with the Greek grammars and it agrees with all the Greek lexicographers.

7) Rick writes in his paper:

"I cannot accept the 'Uncut Hair' doctrine because I will never agree that a woman with hair 5 feet long has shorter hair than a woman with hair 1 inch long." (p. 20).

Look at that statement carefully: "I will never agree..." Who is being dogmatic? Who has closed his mind? Who is being unreasonable? Who is "going to defend personal positions rather than plain Biblical passages in their unaltered state" (Rick, p. 19)?

"Uncut hair advocates" are not asking anyone to agree that five feet is shorter than one inch. A "straw man" has been erected and attacked, but the point is missed entirely. The Bible says that the woman's hair must "keep on growing long." If a person's head has been shaved (cf. Samson - Judges 16:19), yet his hair begins "to grow again after it has been shaved" (Judges 16:22), God will accept that because that is all He is asking. He is merely asking for hair that "keeps on growing" to be on a woman's head

to serve for a covering (1 Corinthians 11:15). Nothing more, but nothing less either.

8) Rick writes in his paper:

"I cannot accept the 'Uncut Hair' doctrine because its strongest arguments are weak." (p. 21).

The strongest argument for "keep on letting the hair grow long" is a literal translation of the present tense, subjunctive mood. Dana and Mantey said the durative, linear, continuous sense is stronger in the subjunctive mood than the indicative mood. This is not a weak argument. It is an argument which Rick apparently never considered and which he cannot successfully overthrow.

If the continuous, linear, durative force of the present tense can be overthrown, then all the grammars are wrong and all the passages which teach us to "keep on glorifying the Father" (Romans 15:6) are wrong. All the passages which tell us to "keep on walking in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25) are wrong. All the passages which teach us to "keep on doing righteousness" (1 John 3:7) are wrong. It is a completely futile effort to resist the Word of God. The Lord said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words will not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

9) Rick writes in his paper:

"I cannot accept the 'Uncut Hair' doctrine because cannot accept tradition over Truth." (p. 21).

Rick needs to be careful here, for there are divine traditions as well as human traditions. The Apostle Paul praised brethren because they "kept the traditions" as they were delivered (1 Corinthians 11:2). Sometimes tradition is truth! We must be careful not to "throw the baby out with the bathwater" so to speak. It was God who said, "keep on growing the hair long" (1 Corinthians 11:15).

Conclusion

Rick has written as though the brotherhood is intolerant of anyone who would disagree over the hair and the veil. He writes:

"Today, the 'uncut hair' doctrine is unquestionably one of the most emphasized doctrines of the church. It is taught nationally and internationally, and is so embedded in the one-cup ranks that any preacher found to believe otherwise will almost certainly be ostracized and siphoned of financial support. Local teachers who disagree with the 'uncut hair' doctrine are usually sought out and forbidden to teach their 'false doctrine.' Many are simply encouraged to leave congregations when their belief is exposed. Other teachers are demoted from their congregational teaching schedules." (preface to the article, 2nd paragraph).

This does not describe our brotherhood. Maybe Rick is writing of his own experience. We have had some differences on this issue among us for many years, and to my knowledge, I know of no one who was ever disciplined solely as a result of these differences. But when men begin to push their unscriptural beliefs onto a congregation they should expect opposition. If the unscriptural beliefs continue to be advocated, the opposition by those who disagree will increase. If a man makes himself contentious and a heretic, he may well find himself disciplined, not merely because he had different views from others, but because he made himself divisive and contentious and disturbed the "peace in Israel" (Galatians 6:16).

The position that a Christian woman must allow her hair to "keep on growing" is based upon the Scriptures

themselves, without any addition or subtraction. The idea of continual growth, without trimming of any kind, comes not only from the definition of the verb KOMAO, but also from its syntactical usage, the immediate context of the passage at hand, and the overall context of the entire Bible. Our brother is wrong in his conclusions: (a) that a woman may trim her hair so long as she still thinks it is long and (b) that an artificial veil is needed by some women who have extremely short hair. A wise man once said, "A person can be honestly mistaken, but when he is shown the truth, he either stops being mistaken, or he stops being honest."

Rick's article was sent out en masse in an unethical way - perhaps even illegally. And it is indeed false doctrine. This article was sent out to the email accounts of minor children. Think of this: It was sent, unsolicited and against the wishes of many godly parents, to children who are presently being taught the opposite of what Rick is trying to advocate. Rick has the right to disagree with people over any issue he wishes, but he has absolutely no right to try to indoctrinate minor children against the wishes of their parents. This is an unconscionable act on his part. One day, if Rick is blessed to have children of his own, perhaps he will understand the seriousness of what he has done.

CHILD TRAINING IN THE HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

I think it is generally agreed upon by all that the parents are responsible for their children. The laws of our country says so and God has always considered it so. In Deuteronomy 4:10 it is written: "Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children." Notice that they, the parents, are to teach their children. Again we read, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deuteronomy 6:7)

Solomon says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) There is some difference in teaching and training. The teaching is good and is commanded but the training is the important thing. This determines the future of the child's life both here and hereafter. People differ over what age in a child's life to begin training. I have heard parents say of a child three or four years old that they would be glad when so and so gets old enough to correct and train. I have noticed other children only a few months old that had already learned many good lessons. You need not try to fool the baby; you will only fool yourself. That little child is being trained from the beginning, and the parents are either training the child up in the way he should go or in the way he should not go.

I firmly believe what the Bible says about this and if my own children go wrong, I will frankly admit that I, not the Lord, failed in the work. I failed to train them, as I should have done.

That baby in the home is either being trained to be kind,

honest, truthful, good, etc. Or, it is being trained to be dishonest, hypocritical, cross, and so on. The sooner we discover this truth and begin to train the child in the way it should go, the better it will be both for parents and the children.

Little girls can be trained in the art of cooking, sewing, keeping house, etc., just as easily as they can be trained up to mimic some movie star. Mothers need to take the time and go to the trouble to train their little girls to be homebuilders. Regardless of how much book learning a girl may have, she must have the practical knowledge in order to be the kind of a home builder she should be. Shame on that mother who can spend two or three hours during the day reading a trashy novel and then doesn't have the time to teach her little girl how to mix a cake or sew on a button!

The same must be said of fathers and the boys. Ephesians 6:2 says for the fathers to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Fathers are duty bound to see to it that their children are nurtured in the teachings of the Lord. Furthermore, they must train them up in the way they should go. A boy can learn to sing and pray, and do good work just as easily as he can learn to smoke and swear, etc. I may be too old fashioned; but I would rather that my boy learn to ride a horse by riding me around the house when he is little, than to learn to shoot and kill his fellowman, by practicing with a toy pistol playing like he is shooting down his playmates.

When fathers have several hours during the day and evening to spend "down in town," but do not have time to show a little boy how to tie a knot in a rope or fix his toys, he is losing the confidence of that boy. Fathers and mothers should do those things that they will be glad for the children to follow in their steps. They should take special delight in showing the children how to do anything that they do. They may soon learn to do it better than their parents do.

Parents must see to it that they train their children to be honest, truthful, religious and Godfearing by being just that themselves daily before their children. Train them up to do honest and good work at whatever they do. Train them up in the fear of the Lord. Teach them how to pray, and how to read and understand the Bible. Teach them how to sing and then train them by singing with them. Teach and show them how to go to every meeting of the church. Teach them how to go in, sit down, and behave themselves.

Yes, fathers and mothers, live with your children. Turn your attention to them. Where will their souls spend eternity? That depends very much on how you train them. Remember that those boys and girls of YOURS will either be the thugs, prostitutes, thieves and gamblers OR the doctors, teachers, preachers and upright citizens of tomorrow. YOU are determining that, by the way you bring them up. Then, may God help us to "bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and to "train them up in the way that they should go." OPA 1946 - Next month "Discipline"

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

We are required by law to publish each year a statement of ownership of *Old Paths Advocate*. The paper is owned by Don L. King, who also serves as Publisher. It is a private endeavor, not a work of the church, hence not intended to be supported or subsidized by church treasuries, but by the paid subscriptions of our readers.

HELP NEEDED FOR FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS

In the last issue, we published an appeal for help in sending our foreign subscriptions. We pointed out that the total amount we must spend each year for the foreign subscriptions (most of which are unpaid) is \$1,698.00 for both the cost of the subscription and postage. The postage averages \$1.40 per paper per month. For complete information, see the appeal on page 5 of the October issue.

Brother Wayne Sutherland of Mountain Grove, MO has informed us that he will be sending us \$630.00 right away. This cuts the need to \$1068.00. If you can help us in this good work, your donation will be greatly appreciated. Your help will be duly noted in the *OPA* (unless you request that you remain anonymous) in which case only the amount will be reported.

We need to build the subscription list also. Please renew your subscription as soon as you become aware it is about to lapse. This will save the paper the cost of sending a card to remind you. Check the label on your paper. Also, please consider sending another subscription for a friend. If you can, please ask others in your congregation if they would like the paper. *If you can send us 10 subscriptions, yours is free for a year.* Preachers, please help us in this endeavor. Mention the paper when you can and offer to send the subscriptions in for them. We also continue to need your regular field reports and articles. What a great way to reach the world with the gospel on the printed page. We're counting on you. DLK

LET HER BE COVERED *By Don L. King*

This is the title of a 20-page tract first published several years ago and is now in the second printing. It deals with the subject of the woman's covering as found in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. The perspective is that the woman's hair is her covering rather than an artificial veil. It is also shown why the woman should not cut or in any other way alter the natural length of her hair. This tract was once sold at \$1.00 each. As long as our supply lasts, you may purchase them at .50 each plus postage. Just look at the package and send us a check for .50 each plus that amount. Order from *Old Paths Advocate*, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539 or by E-mail: old_paths@juno.com.

PREACHER'S STUDY 2000

The annual Preacher's Study be held by the 21st St. congregation in Oklahoma City, OK. Dates for the study are Monday, December 25, beginning at 9:00 A.M. through Thursday, December 28 ending after the morning session. The study will be on Difficult Texts of the Bible. All preachers and church leaders have a special invitation to

attend. For additional information you may contact Glen Osburn (405-392-4400), Duane Cutter (405-745-2581) or Cliff Arney (405-685-5437).

OKLAHOMA NEW YEARS MEETING 2000

The dates for this years meeting will be December 28-31. The meeting this year will be hosted by the 21st Street congregation, Oklahoma City, OK. The meeting will be held in the auditorium of Putman City High School, same as last year. The address is: 5300 N. W. 50th Street. Many of you are familiar with the area of Reno and Meridan. The school located 4 miles north of Meridan and 1/2 mile west on N. W. 50th Street. The meeting will begin Thursday at 7:30 P.M., December 28. Services Friday and Saturday will be at 10:00 A.M. and 7:30 P.M. Services Sunday morning will be held in the local congregations. Services Sunday evening will be back to the school auditorium at 7:30 P.M. A list of motels will be mailed to many congregations. If you desire additional information you may contact Duane Cutter (405-745-2581), Cliff Arney (405-685-5437), or Terry Scott (405-634-1836).

NEW YEAR MEETING

The West Hwy 60 congregation in Neosho, MO plans a New Year Meeting December 27-30. The meeting will be held at Elsie Plaster Auditorium on the Crowder College Campus. The times of service and dates are as follows: Each night at 7:30 Wed. through Sat. Sunday at 10:00 AM at the church building, and Sunday evening at 4:00 PM at the Elsie Plaster Center. For information see the 1999 church directory. Note: speakers are asked to use the King James Version and no computer presentations please. Everyone is invited.

OUR DEPARTED

LECHNER—Our sister in Christ, Bertha Louise Lechner, was born in Azusa, CA, Feb. 10, 1922; she passed from this life quite unexpectedly on May 12, 2000 in El Centro, CA. She was a long-time, faithful wife of Brother Floyd Lechner, pillar in the church, one of the best men this writer has been honored to know now for more than 50 years. I tell people where I go if they have never known Floyd Lechner, they have indeed missed something very special in this life. What Floyd is, is much to the credit of Bertha. Their home was the preacher's home at meeting time; it was "hospitality house" for "His pilgrims" along the way. Bertha's home was a model of superb interior decorating. At her funeral service, her children "rose up and called her blessed"; all they said and did was a noble monument to a mother and wife beloved by her husband, children and grandchildren, great grandson, Dylan O'Donoghue, a 5-year-old was among those giving moving tributes. The following was a part of the impressive memorial folder: "What touches us is the joy she brought; what comforts us are the memories we share. What lasts is love. She will always remain with us, for love itself lives on, and cherished memories never fade because a loved one's gone. She can never be more than a thought apart, for as long as we have our memories, she will live on in our hearts." Bertha leaves besides Floyd, her devoted

husband, daughters Loretta and Carolyn; sons, Richy and Charles; 8 grandchildren, 6 great-grandchildren; 3 sisters and one brother. It was indeed my great honor to officiate for this dear sister, and long-time dear friend, at the funeral on May 16 in El Centro. Some sweet day we will all meet again.—Don McCord



Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, hawkins@kih.net, (606) 256-8148, Oct 9, 2000 — As the year winds down, our meeting schedule does too. During the month of September, I was with the congregations in Beattyville, KY; Gadsden, AL; and Athens, AL. It was my first visit to both Beattyville and Gadsden and I enjoyed the hospitality of these places immensely. It was a pleasure to be better acquainted with Bro. Luther Rose and the brethren in Beattyville. In Gadsden, I stayed in the home of Lowell and Louise Hurst, fine folks indeed. The following Wednesday I began in Athens, AL. It had been several years since I was in that area so it was a real treat to see old acquaintances. My last two meetings of the year will be this month. Lately, I was privileged to hear Johnny Elmore at Walnut Grove and Joe Hisle at home for our fall meeting. Both men did an inspiring job.

Taylor A. Joyce, 1713 Savannah Dr., Fort Smith, AR, 72901, Sept. 29—During the month of August I spoke at most of the regular services at my home congregation (Texas Road in Fort Smith) and presented a series of 11 studies covering the entire book Ephesians. I have the lessons on Microsoft PowerPoint which enables me to project the text on a screen. I also printed note-taking handouts on each of the lessons for all in attendance. The first week in June I presented much of the same material at a week-long meeting at the Burkhart congregation in Missouri. In July I presented a study which I call "Pondering the Prepositions" at a Wednesday through Sunday meeting at Cleburne, TX. This study focuses on some of the prepositions linked to the name of Jesus in the New Testament and which describe some aspect of his mission and work. I will be repeating that study at 85th and Euclid in Kansas City December 1-3. Again, handouts of each study will be available to all who attend.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621, papagreg@aol.com, October 7, 2000—Since attending the Lebanon meeting in July we have stayed close to home continuing our work with the 64th Street, Sacramento congregation and preaching at area congregations with the exception of a trip to Texas for my niece's wedding. The end of August we enjoyed attending and participating in the study at Fair Oaks. Don King and Bennie Cryer did a good job planning the subjects and moderating the study. The Fair Oaks brethren were excellent hosts. We also enjoyed the California Labor Day meeting at Stockton this year. Most recently we have started working with the Manteca congregation on progress

toward an eldership. Much good work has been done there in the past toward this goal. Recent Internet mailings reveal how easy it is to spread information today. Unfortunately false doctrine is spread as easily as sound doctrine as we have seen from the mailings encouraging women to cut their hair. I am sad and upset to know a brother would encourage God's women to cut their hair. Dear sisters, please pay no attention to this false doctrine and let your hair grow! I encourage congregational leaders everywhere to talk to their members about this important issue. Don't let one wayward brother's email be the start of a sinful practice at your congregation!

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, Oct. 14—The meetings at Mtn. Home and Hartwell, AR were both enjoyable for me. I have labored with these churches for many years, and have seen them grow from small struggling bodies to strong influential groups in the communities where they exist. It was good to labor with Brother Bruce Roebuck who lives at Mtn. Home. Two were restored to duty there. Brother Jimmie Smith of Harrison attended both meetings and supplied much encouragement. His son Cullen, was with us at Hartwell every night, just prior to his leaving for San Angelo, TX to work with the church in that area. We pray the very best for him as he enters the field of full time evangelism. It was also good to have Brother Miles King come up one night of the meeting at Hartwell. Next we went to LaGrange, GA for a good meeting. Brethren came from many places to encourage and help us. One was baptized. Brother Alton Bailey, who lives here, was a great help to the meeting. We made our home with him and Florence and enjoyed our stay very much. Sister Zonie Miller (widow of Brother E. H. Miller) ninety years young continues to be an example of the believers. Still able to entertain the preacher, visit the sick, and drive her own car. The Lord willing we look forward to meetings at Springfield, MO (North Area) Oct. 22-29, Longwood, FL Nov. 5-12, and Burkhart near Racine, MO Nov. 22-26.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Dr., W. Chester, OH 45069—Since my last reporting, I was in a short meeting with the church near Mitchell, IN. Crowds were good with several attending from surrounding churches. It was good to have Walter Hunter attend. It was a joy to stay with Charles and Linda White as usual. Next, I went to Huntsville, AR. People came from near and far to assist us. William St. John, John Tidmore, John Scott, Jimmie and Cullen Smith came to aid the meeting. Paul and Wanda Gifford opened their hospitable home to me. My next was Valliant, OK where crowds were excellent. William St. John, Ed Bullard, and Gene Hopkins assisted the meeting as well as a van load from Lexington, OK one night. Then I went to Duncanville, TX. There were other meetings in the immediate area and I feared when told that ours might suffer. But it was the best sort of meeting, with the brethren in good spirit. Once more William St. John. was there several nights to help out. Allen Bailey also came one night. Finally I was with the faithful at Eldon, MO. Dan Wissinger works in the area and is doing an excellent work. It was good to have Clovis Cook and Reggie Kinser with us. My next is with the brethren at Harrodsburg, IN Sept. 30-Oct. 8. I look forward to the meeting and anticipate good to be done. Here at home (Sharonville) we have asked Richard DeGough to preach our fall meeting, as usual, the last of

October. The dates are 21-29. We are hoping for a great meeting. Lately, I have heard Kevin Presley and Ron Courter in nearby meetings. Also several at the Labor Day Meeting. God Bless All working to save the lost.

Jack A. Cutter, 12321 E. 14th, Tulsa, OK, 74128—As usual, it has been sometime since last reporting to the *OPA*. The church in Broken Arrow is continuing to do very well. Growth has been realized from conversions from the world, young people deciding to become Christians and families and individuals moving here from elsewhere. While there are a few older members, the congregation is basically made-up of younger individuals and couples. Earlier this year, my cardiologist, inserted two stints into my heart in an attempt to open up some blocked arteries. This failed. Bypass surgery soon followed. On May 25th, a team of surgeons bypassed three blockage areas in the left side of my heart. While there have been some postoperative complications, surgery has proven to be successful (no pain). During and after my surgery, I greatly appreciated your prayers, emails, phone calls, and visits. Like so many, we too received the article favoring a woman's "trimming" or "cutting" her hair as long as she permits it to grow long. I have known the author of this article all of his life. He is currently living in Tulsa and has been for almost two years. When he first moved here, we discussed his position on this subject several times. Also, I replied to a 27 page article that he had written on this subject. He has taken a solid position on this for more years than I know - 5 years or more. For a few months after he moved here, he attended services with us at Broken Arrow. I personally asked him not to teach publicly or privately on this subject. While he wouldn't agree not to do this, as far as I know at that time, he didn't. I did permit him to teach in rotation with the other teachers. When he stopped coming to Broken Arrow, he withdrew himself. We didn't discipline him or censor him in anyway. However, if he had taught on it - publicly or privately - we would have. Since then, I understand that he has been working on some of our members privately and has converted some to his position. Now that he has reached out and spread "false doctrine" to the "whole world," (as he has done in his mass, world-wide email send out), the counterattack that has already begun vigorously needs to continue. First, locally, we need to take care of business and take proper disciplinary steps. Second, at large, while some good articles and tracts have already been written and published, such as Jerry Dickinson's article in the last month's *OPA* and George Battey's treatise answering the article sent out via email mentioned above. Third, if we don't - for this generation and those to come - the struggle to uphold the scriptural pattern of "continuous growing hair as long as nature will allow it to grow" on women could be lost. Your continued prayers are requested.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, October 13, 2000, E-mail: old_paths@juno.com—Joe Hisle closed a good meeting for the Fremont congregation recently. We commend his straight forward preaching and we thank those who came from various places to help us in the meeting. Since then it has been my pleasure to preach once at Grants Pass, OR and three times at home. The Lord willing, we are to begin this coming Lord's day at Atwater, CA and continue for a week. We look forward to the meeting and pray that good will be

done and God's name honored. I was alarmed by the publication of what I believe to be false doctrine on the Internet recently. A rather long article was sent into the homes of many, teaching that it is scriptural for a woman to cut or trim her hair. The Bible teaches no such thing and we are, in this issue, publishing a lengthy article by George Battey in answer to it. We must say with Paul, "We have no such custom." (1 Corinthians 11:16) In coming months we will be printing more about it. We already have articles by Barney Owens and Paul Nichols and these will appear in due time. May we suggest, brethren that you insist the truth be taught by every preacher? Ask them to teach on it. Weak sisters and brethren everywhere are being encouraged in their desire to disobey the Bible here. There have always been sisters who cut their hair. However, they always knew it was wrong. Now, they have been given encouragement to continue in their disobedience. God forbid!

P. Duane Permenter, 4315 Boulder Dr., Midland, TX, 79707, Oct. 7—Our summer meetings were quite enjoyable and it was a pleasure to get reacquainted with many brothers and sisters in Christ. It was exciting to see first hand the work being done in various parts of the country. The Lord willing, we will return to many of these places in the future. Our thanks go out to all who assisted us in this work in any way. We witnessed some being baptized, others making confessions of faults, and one man, who had been away from the church for a long time, come back to the Lord. The church here at home just had a good meeting with young men conducting it this past weekend. The young preachers did a fine job preparing their material. The theme this year was, "The Mighty God," based on Psalm 50:1. Cullen Smith was in charge of the meeting and preached a great sermon on Sunday morning. He has begun a work in San Angelo, TX, and we pray that the Lord will bless his work in that place. The church here at Midland continues to grow both spiritually and in number. While we were gone in our meetings, the church gained three more people from the community. The elders and deacons continue to do their work and to lead others in serving the Lord as well. We just started airing Ronny Wade's program over CBS and this is a cooperative effort shared by Andrews, Odessa, and Midland. Please make a special prayer for this effort. Due to the false teaching on the hair over the Internet from 1 Corinthians 11, I want to state that we still believe women are to let their hair grow and men are not. When a woman trims, burns, pulls or any other way knowingly damages her hair she is violating God will; she has sinned and needs to repent. I would suggest that everyone get Don King's tract on this subject and send to George Battey for his reply to the Internet articles and study them very carefully to understand what the truth is. May God bless the faithful everywhere!

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Oct. 12—The church at 79th and Kansas Ave, Kansas City, KS had another meeting with several young men from various places doing the speaking. We had some good lessons and we were encouraged by the strong teaching. If they continue to stay on track, we are going to have some good preachers and congregational teachers come out of that group. During the meeting we had excellent crowds and outstanding

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singing. We have been concerned with the heretical teaching on the hair issue with which Rick Cutter recently bombarded the brotherhood, and what effect it is going to have on the spiritually weak members who are just looking for an excuse to do contrary to the teaching of 1 Cor. 11. The apostle Paul teaches for Christian men to cut their hair and Christian women to let theirs grow long. That is just what I believe and teach, and will continue to do so. Folks, if you are looking for loop holes, you are looking in vain. There aren't any. "Be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might" (Gal. 6:10). The Lord willing, by the time this comes out I will have had my 60th preaching anniversary. I am looking forward to it.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, Sept. 29—A few days ago I returned home from a trip to Malawi. What a memorable trip it was! I accompanied Chris Dickinson, my son, and Maurice Chandler. Knowing that Jim Franklin is a tireless worker, we assumed that a busy schedule awaited us. That assumption turned out to be correct. We were in Malawi for a total of 15 days. Every day, with the exception of resting up on the first Monday, we had a meeting to attend. There were some days we attended two meetings. There were 18 meetings in all and we spent about 75 hours in Jim's 4x4 Nissan Patrol, traveling down some of the worst roads imaginable. According to my calculating, a total of 8,107 people attended our services. 462 different congregations were represented in the meetings. A few of those congregations were from Mozambique. During our visit 21 people were baptized and there were many who confessed their faults. Something quite thrilling happened on Sept. 12. We were invited to preach at Wendewende. This was truly an historical event! Wendewende is where it all began. Paul Nichols lived there when he moved to Africa in 1952. Many years ago this congregation was lost to the digressives. My understanding is that it had been some 40 years since one of our preachers had stood in the pulpit at Wendewende. We used the opportunity to preach on what they needed to hear. Jim Franklin preached on the subject of fellowship, emphasizing that fellowship must be based upon the truth. He reminded them that we had not changed our stance on doctrinal issues. I talked about the importance of scriptural unity and how unity can be maintained only if we all determine to do what the Bible says. Chris spoke on the authority of the Scriptures and how that no part of God's word can be ignored. We believe that they got the point and we were cordially received by those present about 400 in attendance, including several congregations and many of their preachers. It was wonderful to see so many people with a burning thirst for the gospel. I want to thank Jim and Marlene for their gracious hospitality.

Bobby J. Pepper, 11800 Joe Bob Ln., 35611, Sept. 18—The congregation here at Sanderfer Road continues to enjoy the peace and unity in Christ in which we are so very

thankful. We have had five baptisms. To see them grow in the Lord is very rewarding. We continue to have visitors from the area that we have studies with, and have also been blessed with these traveling our way who stop to worship with us. If you haven't done that, we pray that you will in the near future. The work in this area has had my full concentration in the last several years, since my wife and I moved back from Alaska. I can't truthfully say that they have been the most enjoyable ones since we established the congregation here in 1970. Some have asked where have I been. I have been busy in the Lord's work in this area. I have been quietly trying to save the lost and strengthen the saved. Please continue to mention me in your prayers. I love the brotherhood!

Alton B. Bailey, 410 Ginger Circle, LaGrange, Ga. 30240. (706) 882-1114, abbailey@mindspring.com—Things continue well here in LaGrange. We continue to enjoy a number in the congregation who do a fine job preaching the gospel and edifying the church, some of which help out in other congregation within driving distance. Of recent date there has been one restored to the faith and one baptized. We have experienced three wonderful gospel meetings this year. "The preaching was done by brethren Doug Hawkins in February, Don King in June and Ronny Wade in October. Besides the work in my home congregation, my schedule this year is as following: Baton Rouge, La., Texarkana, Tx, Lone Rock, Ar., Greenville, S.C., Dardanelle, Ar., Lynnville, Oh., Walterboro, S.C., Dunnellon, Fl., Panama City, Fl., Wayne, W.Va. I have one more trip this year and, Lord willing, I plan to attend the preacher's study and the New Year meeting. If I live until Dec. 10th I will have preached 50 years. The brotherhood has been very good to me all these years. We solicit your prayers for us and our work. Pray for all brethren everywhere.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Hughson, Calif. 95326—We have had a good summer in the area churches, with good preaching by various ones, and seemingly a revival of interest in attending the meetings by the brethren. I look forward to hearing Don King in Atwater this week. We look forward to the meeting in Sharonville, Ohio beginning Saturday night. This is my first there, and I appreciate the opportunity afforded me. We begin a meeting in Tehachapi, Calif. the 5th of November. The church is new and this will be a mission effort. Brother Gerald Barrett, Joe Barrett and others live there. Gerald is a diligent worker and student of the Bible. We pray the Lord will bless every effort for the cause. Brother Brian Elliott, fine preacher of Brundage Lane congregation in Bakersfield I know will assist all he can. I know the churches in Bakersfield will support the meeting as much as possible. Here at home the church continues to work, and we know the Lord of the harvest will give the increase. May God bless his people everywhere.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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A CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFSSIONAL

BY RONNY F. WADE

In the year 1215 the Roman Catholic Church began its now famous "auricular (in the ear) confessional." Under Catholicism when a person sinned he was considered unfit to take the communion until confession was made. The confession might be followed by some requirement imposed by the priest, in order to impress upon the individual the seriousness of his guilt, thus turning him to righteousness. Once the requirement was fulfilled the sinner then returned to the priest for absolution or forgiveness. The basis of the Catholic confessional is couched in the idea that ordinary Christians are not fit to pray for forgiveness themselves, hence they must confess to a priest. Such a doctrine and practice overlooks the plain Bible teaching regarding the vital work of Christ as our High Priest. After atoning for our sins on the cross He offered His blood to God as our priest and obtained eternal redemption for those who believe. The New Testament teaches that this was done once for all time (Hebrews 7:27; 9:12; 10:10-14). Through the high priesthood of Christ all **Christians are priests**. We learn from Rev. 1:6 that we are a "kingdom of priests." The entire body of believers is designated as "a holy priesthood" (1 Peter 2:5) and a "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9). There is no special priesthood in the church of Christ. Every child of God has access to the throne of grace and is exhorted to "come boldly" thereto in order to find grace to help in time of need. Unfortunately today some preachers are sounding strangely like the Catholics in their attempts to get Christians to come down front and make confession of their sins. Such statements as "every Christian needs to make a public confession every now and then," or "it doesn't hurt anybody to make a public confession every so often," or "Christians should make a confession at least three times a year" (the Catholics said at least once a year) have absolutely no basis in Bible teaching whatsoever. For someone to intimidate an audience by suggesting that "everyone here must be perfect" since no one has come forward, is an indication that the preacher is way out of line. In most of our services the preaching is preceded by a prayer. In that prayer the brother usually prays for "God to forgive us of all our unforgiven sins." Did God hear that prayer? Did God answer that prayer? Then why the "high pressure" and "guilt trips" used when the invitation is extended? Someone may be thinking "you must not believe in anyone making a public confession." Wrong. I do believe in people making public confessions if they have committed public sins.

However, I do not believe it is right for people to come before the church and confess private sins, or sins against individuals, whom they have failed to approach, as the Scriptures indicate they should. When someone makes a confession before the church such as: "I just feel I haven't been as close to the Lord as I should have," or "I have had some bad feelings lately about some of the brethren," or "I just feel spiritually weak, and want the prayers of the church" they are confessing matters that should have been taken care of privately. I recently had an individual come forward to make a confession. After telling me that was their desire, I asked, "What have you done?" They replied, "Oh, that's personal." Well, if its personal then it should be handled on a personal basis, and not before the church. We are getting mighty close to Catholicism, when Christians are led to believe that the only way to handle personal and/or private sins is for them to come before the church and confess to a preacher, what they have done, and then have him pray for them. What sins must be confessed? The Bible teaches that all known sins must be confessed to God (1 Jno. 1:9). The only way we can be forgiven is to repent of our sins and confess them. But, to what extent should sins be confessed to the brethren and before the congregation? In Acts 8:18 we have the account of Simon who offered to buy, with money, the power given by the Holy Spirit. Peter's reply to him is straight and to the point: "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you." Peter did not say, "You need to come before the church and make a confession," but he said, "Repent and pray to God." Simon was a Christian, albeit a weak one. As a Christian he was a priest and had access to the throne of grace. Peter told him to use it. Why not a public confession before the church? Evidently Simon, the apostles, and God were the only ones involved in this matter, hence no need to bring it publicly before the church. The fact that Simon requested Peter pray for him only underscores the truth taught by James in 5:16 of his epistle i.e. that we should confess to one another and pray for one another in such situations. In Matthew 18:15-17 we read, "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he

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will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector." In these verses we see the journey from private to public clearly charted. At first had the sinning brother repented and confessed his sin, prayer could have been offered and the matter would have been ended. Secondly, had he listened to the two or three and repented and confessed, prayer could have been offered and the matter ended. Finally, however, when the sin was brought before the church and became public knowledge the only recourse was public acknowledgement with repentance, confession and prayer for forgiveness. Hence, sins known only to God should be confessed only to God; sins known only to one or a few, should be confessed only to the one or the few; public sin, sin known to all, should be confessed publicly and before the church. Consider carefully the words of Guy N. Woods in his book *Questions and Answers Volume II*, "The deplorable practice of establishing, in religious meetings, a "confessional," in which the purest and best and most faithful members of the church are prompted by contrived and emotional devices to respond to a public invitation to confess sin because of the shortcomings common to all of us, is a travesty of God's plan and a prostitution of the teaching of the New Testament touching the proper procedure in such matters." But what about the idea that it "doesn't hurt anyone to make a confession at church every now and then?" Is such an idea right? Only if the sin is public. There is simply no scripture that teaches such confessions are desirable or necessary for private, personal sins. If so, where is it? Brethren, we need to be careful that we do not demand, or encourage practices about which the Bible is silent. Playing on the emotions of sincere people in an attempt to get them to do something God has not required is serious business.



Editorial

SEEKING FIRST THE KINGDOM

By DON L. KING

What a time in which we live! In our American world many of us (most of us) live "the good life." Virtually nothing is beyond our grasp if we are willing to work for it and perhaps wait a short time. American brethren live well indeed. We live in the finest of homes, drive luxurious automobiles, maybe several of them, and wear clothes the finery of which our grandparents dreamed. Most of us will not be cold this winter nor too warm next summer. If we choose, we may watch all forms of entertainment on many channels on cable television. It is certainly not uncommon for one home to have several television sets along with a video recorder for each one. The majority of our homes will also have at least one computer. The worldwide Internet provides us with knowledge of virtually any subject on earth. We eat so well that our health is often at risk. If we want steak tonight, that is no problem, we simply

go to the freezer or nearby store and buy as we wish. We take it for granted that with a simple flick of the wrist a choice of both hot and cold water is at our immediate disposal. Isn't that wonderful? At no time since the establishment of the Lord's Church has her members lived so well. The Lord has blessed this country beyond most of the world.

Yet, the Church within America struggles today and must compete, yes compete, with various and sundry things in order to survive. In some places brethren must carefully plan gospel meetings lest vacations, school events, ball games or other sports and recreation conflict! A short distance from the church building or bad weather seems to give many all the excuse needed to miss Lord's day evening and mid-week services.

We have learned that too many refuse to put the Lord's Church and her needs ahead of such things. Brethren, let us go on record as saying: "We have come to a sad condition when the blood-bought church of the Lord Jesus Christ must compete with a ballgame!" No wonder we sometimes have trouble growing, we too often put nearly everything ahead of the church! In fact, the reverse should be true; the church should come before everything.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught many things. One of them was the concept of spiritual things taking preeminence over all else. He taught (Matthew 6:24) that we can not serve two masters at the same time. Eventually, one makes the choice to serve one over the other. Jesus said, "...Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Mammon" is a term from the Chaldee meaning "riches." This passage suggests that God will accept none of our service unless, and until, he has it all. Satan is, apparently, willing to accept a part from us because he knows that by getting a part he is really getting it all. Once we bargain with the Devil the contest is over. You may be sure that when you place a price on your affections the Devil will be glad to pay it, no matter how high the cost.

In Matthew 6:25 Jesus commands: "Take no thought for your life..." In the old English (which was used during the KJV translation) the word "thought" was often used to convey the meaning "melancholy." Hence, the expression "take no thought" simply meant that one should not go into a state of melancholy or despondency. The word "thought" assuredly expressed the act of thinking but also the state of feeling, or thinking, which results from a despondent view of the future. This seems to have been the meaning in the original word used in Greek. Jesus warned against one being overly anxious or too full of care about this life. Why was this the case? Are we not to care about ourselves? Of course we are. However, the idea is that God also cares about us and will see after us! We certainly have no cause to become melancholy. This is why He mentions the birds of the air, etc. in verse 26. They do not plant crops nor do they harvest; yet the Father in heaven feeds them. How does He do this? Through His carefully created system of nature. God has given us more intelligence than the birds. Hence, we need to sow, harvest, etc. and store it in barns without being overly anxious about it. God, our Father, is in control and as long as we put Him first, we have no cause for worry.

Then, in verse 33, Jesus said: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things

shall be added unto you." Here is the application of all the Lord had said about the matter of obtaining anything. We are to seek, and seek first, the kingdom of God, admission into it, and the righteousness God requires of us. If we do this we have the promise of Him that feeds the birds, and gives clothing to the lily in the field, that we shall have food and clothing as well.

Notice, however, that all of these promised blessings are contingent on our putting the Lord first. Albert Barnes wrote: "From all this, how evident is the propriety of seeking first the kingdom of God! First in our affections, first in the objects of pursuit, first in the feelings and associations of each morning, be the desire and the aim for heaven. Having this, we have assurance of all we need. God, our Father, will then befriend us; and, in life and death, all will be well."

We are often asked from place to place why our brethren in faraway lands seem to do so well? The answer is that generally, they put the Lord and the church first. Why do they do this? Because in most cases they have nothing else! They are too poor to be worldly, so the world holds little for them. They have seen little in the world except sickness, death, misery and unhappiness. When they are presented with the idea of heaven, where there is no death, no sorrow or mournful sounds and where all is peace, life, joy, wellness and bliss, they want to go! They are tired of making trip after trip to the graveyard to bury children because no medicine was to be had to cure them. They have no problem missing a ballgame; they likely couldn't afford to go anyway. They have no difficulty missing some social event either. What could be as important as going to heaven? Well, of course, nothing. So, all is neglected in order to be saved.

That, my dear reader, is what we must also do. Put it all away in order to find heaven. Seek the kingdom first. Seek it first always and begin now. Think on these things. DLK

THE TEACHING OF PAUL IN 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1-16

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

In 1 Corinthians chapter 11:1-16 the subject under consideration is **headship**. There is nothing hard to understand about the plain statements of Paul as to God's divine arrangement. It is some of the things he says in connection with the subject that creates problems for some people.

In verse one the apostle encourages all Christians at Corinth, both men and women, to follow his example as he followed Christ. In verse 2 he teaches them to keep the ordinances or commandments of God as he had taught them. Submission to the will of Christ is of utmost importance, and all need to learn that. "He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9).

In verse 3 the writer makes a statement of fact. He emphasizes what He is about to say, by declaring, "**But I would have you know...**" What he is about to say to them, he wants them to understand is important. Now he gives the divine arrangement of authority. "The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." No one in the world can change

this. Times and customs may change, but these facts can never change, whether we like it or not. No man or group of men have the authority to change anything God has said. "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar."

In verse four Paul makes another statement of fact. "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered dishonoureth his head." The head that man can cover is his own natural head, but in so doing he dishonors his spiritual head, that is, Christ. No one can alter this fact. What he is writing about has spiritual significance. Why is this the case? Because when a man prays or teaches, he does so through Christ the mediator and by His authority (1 Tim.2:5; Col. 3:17). He says, "No man cometh to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). But the man by the covering of his head signifies that is he circumventing Christ and going directly to the Father. By his action he dishonors or disgraces Christ his spiritual head and mediator.

In verse five the inspired writer says, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head." It is just the opposite for the woman as it is for the man. **The woman must have her head covered** when she teaches God's word (wherever she is scripturally permitted to do so) and she **must have her head covered** whenever and wherever she prays to God. These are statements of fact. Praying with her natural head covered signifies she is not praying through her spiritual head (man), but is praying through Christ, and her teaching is done in the name of Christ. It makes no difference what the customs of the day happen to be, or if times do change, God has not changed His mind nor His word. Man must pray with his **head uncovered** and the woman must pray with her **head covered**. Otherwise they dishonor their spiritual heads and disparage the divine arrangement of headship set up by God. The teaching of Paul must be understood within the context of his inspired writing.

Up to this point the apostle Paul has stated certain facts, and he shows what an important roll the covering plays when it comes to our teaching the word of God or when we approach the Lord in prayer. But he has not told us what the covering is. However, in the latter part of verse five he gives us some hint of a connection between the covering and hair. He says that if the woman does not have the covering when she prays or teaches "that is all one as if she were shaven". In other words, if she is not going to do the Lord's will and have the covering, the woman might just as well shave her head. It is the same thing.

In verse six Paul states it another way to emphasize the importance of the woman's covering. He says, "For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn." Shorn, according to Thayer's Greek Lexicon, is, "a shearing, or cutting short, the hair of the head." So whatever the covering is, if the woman does not have it when she prays or teaches someone the word of God, she might just as well shear her head. But then the writer reasons like this: "But if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered." Visualize a Christian woman (perhaps your wife or mother or sister) with her head shaved or sheared like a sheep. Yes, it would be a shame. Then "let her be covered."

In verse seven Paul says, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, for as much as he is the image and glory of

God." Whatever the covering is, Paul says the man ought not to have it. And the reason he gives is "he is the image and glory of God." Man was made in the image of God and for His glory (Gen. 9:6). And God decrees that when a man prays or teaches His word that his head must not be covered because of these facts. No man can change this.

In contrast with what he said about the man the apostle Paul says, "But the woman is the glory of the man." Then in verse eight he continues, "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man." Which refers to the fact that man was first created and the woman was made from the rib of the man (Gen. 2:21-23). Then he says in verse nine, "Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." This indicates why man was made, head over the woman and she is his help meet (Gen. 2:20).

Verse ten indicates, according to the will of God, that the woman, by having the covering the Lord requires, gives sign to the angels in heaven that she respects God's arrangements and man's headship.

In verses eleven and twelve we are informed that this teaching applies to all men and women who are Christians, whether married or unmarried, because it is of universal application. All women originated with the miracle in the garden when God formed Eve from the rib of Adam, and every man that has ever been born came as a result of a woman giving him life. The apostle takes from us any excuse for our not applying this teaching to ourselves.

In verse thirteen in the light of his teaching Paul encourages his readers to do a little thinking on their own. He says, "Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? The word "comely" means "fit, becoming, seemly." Of Course, in view of his teaching in the preceding verses, honesty demands that we answer, "No, it is not comely that a woman pray to God uncovered. It is a shame."

In verse fourteen the question is asked, "Doth not even nature itself teach you?..." We can learn some things just by observing nature. In this case what does nature teach us? Even nature teaches us "that if a man have long hair, it is shame unto him." Long hair on a man is not natural; It is shameful. Besides what the word of God teaches, even nature itself teaches that a long haired man is a freak of nature.

In verse fifteen the writer gives a contrast between the man and the woman. He says, "But if a woman **have long hair**, it is a glory to her." What is a shame to a man is a glory to a woman. Why? The reason Paul gives is, "**for her hair is given her for a covering.**" Now we know what the covering is. Instead of an artificial veil, the Lord has given woman a natural covering - hair. How can one who is honest deny this. But in the eyes of God is hair all it takes for her to claim to be covered? If so, then just so she does not shave her head or shear her hair all off, she would be scripturally covered. No, the word of God says her covering is **long hair** from the Greek word "*komao*." This word means "**Let the hair grow long.**" One does not let the hair grow long when he or she is constantly cutting it off. One cuts his or her hair to keep it from growing long. That is the purpose of cutting the hair.

In Eze. 16:9 God speaks to His wife (Israel) and tells her her hair is "grown." If a woman lets her hair grow long, it

becomes "grown hair." In Rev. 9:8 there is an expression, "they had hair as the hair of women." In submission to the will of God, if Christian men and women do as the apostle Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 11:16, there will be no doubt about their sincerity. But "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Sam. 15:23).

1 Corinthians 11:16, there is no refuge to be found for the person looking for a "loophole" in what Paul teaches in the preceding verses. He does not mean that if a person is contentious and refuses to accept what is taught by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that it is all right because the church of Christ does not believe nor practice these things. What the church did not do was practice nor sanction the things that he taught were wrong, and it did not make any difference if a person was contentious.

The desire of every faithful child of God should be to please our Father in heaven. Jesus said, "He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). If we want God to be with us, we had better try to understand His will and do the things that please Him.

DISCIPLINE IN THE HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

In the beginning, God realized that there must be discipline in the home, for He said to Eve, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Genesis 3:16) All through the ages God has expected the husband and father to be the head and ruler of the family. This does not mean that the wife has no say in things, for she is to "guide the house." (1 Timothy 5:14) A home without discipline is like a country without law.

With all of the teaching and training of children, there still comes a time when more stern measures must be taken. The new idea, that some smart people have, that punishment is the wrong way to handle children, is paying off now in the great surge of juvenile delinquency blanketing the country!

Christian parents, in trying to build a Christian home, should take the Bible as a guide instead of some man-made formula. The Bible says, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." (Proverbs 13:24) When you try to make yourself, and others, believe that you love your child too much to punish him when he does wrong, just remember that the Bible says instead that you hate him. As I said before, it is not love that keeps parents from punishing a child, it is cowardice. Again, let us read: "Withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." (Proverbs 23:13,14) When children are not taught in the home to obey rules, they are thrust out into society to give trouble. They will be disobedient in the schoolroom, and will disobey and dodge the "law;" be troublesome neighbors, and finally, spend eternity in hell. All this, because the parents "loved the children so much they could not spank them for not minding!"

If parents were the only ones who ever had to put up with the disobedient, spoiled, undisciplined child, it might

be different. But, remember that other people have to put up with that child for the greater part of his life. I have seen parents who were so ashamed of their child when they took it to church, or when the preacher came, that they could not get through apologizing for it. Still, they would go right back home and spoil that child even more, never seeming to realize that "the rod and reproof giveth wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." They didn't heed the admonition "correct thy son and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight to thy soul." (Proverbs 29:17)

How true it is that a "child left to himself" will bring the parents down to shame! The main trouble these days is that most parents "leave the child to himself" too long before they even try to correct him. When it is a baby it is so cute and sweet and as it grows up it does and says so many "cute things." They intend to make it quit saying and doing these things after awhile but they laugh at these things now. They even encourage the little one in things that are rude and unbecoming and think nothing of it. Finally, when the child gets so large that these "cute things" are ridiculous to everyone but the parents, and they begin to try to stop it, the child can never quite understand just why the change in his parents. He is losing confidence in and respect for them. They will allow him to do and say so many things, never obeying them all the week and then, when they take him out to the meeting and he takes in the whole place, disturbing everyone there and drowning out the preacher, they are ashamed of him and make excuses that he doesn't feel well and all of that; when in reality, they themselves should make a public acknowledgement for neglecting their duty. They need to take the child back home and begin in dead earnest to try to atone for their neglect and try to get that child under control before the next Lord's day.

To other people, these little "shut up...let me alone," "go jump in the lake," and other like "cute sayings" of the child are just plain disobedience, and it surely is a grand mistake for parents to ever teach or allow their children to try to pull such on them.

Of the elder it is said that he must "have his children in subjection with all gravity." (1 Timothy 3:4, 5) Remember too, that the elder is to be the example for the flock; hence, all the other members are to have their "children in subjection with all gravity," too.

It is true that "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11) This is certainly true in the correcting of children. Children should be made to understand that they are not just being beaten, but that they are being corrected for evil doing, and that it is because the parents want to save themselves and the children from shame and disgrace.

One final word about when a child is really corrected: too many parents just spank a child enough to make it mad and then let it go on to bawl and complain and fuss the rest of the day. I saw a young father trying to make a child pick up something that it had thrown on the floor, not too long ago. The child bitterly refused to do it, and the father spanked it a time or two, and took the child's hand in his own and picked the object up and put it on the table. That

was what he had commanded the child to do. He then turned the child loose as mad as a hornet, kicking, squirming and feeling assured that he had NOT minded his father. This child will be twice as hard to control next time. He should have been spanked until he was glad to do what his daddy told him to do and just because his daddy said to do it. The beating on the child is not what counts. It is the causing them to obey commands. -*OPA* (next month: "A Work for Two")

THE OLD IS NOT BETTER

By TAYLOR A. JOYCE

"No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better" (Luke 5:39). This comment by Jesus was made in response to some scribes and Pharisees who murmured against Jesus and his disciples because they associated with publicans and sinners and did not practice the ancient custom of fasting. The critics assumed that a religious ritual hallowed by many years of practice is approved of God and must not be abandoned. Jesus notes the gist of their criticism, but he does not agree that it is valid. He concedes that age improves wine. He denies that age is a suitable criteria for determining what is acceptable to God.

Jesus likened the Mosaic system of religion to an old garment or an old wine bottle. He clearly taught that he had not come to merely put a new patch on the old garment or to put the new wine of his teaching in the old bottles of form and ritual required by Moses. He had come as "mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises" (Heb. 8:6).

God had said through the prophet, "Behold, the days come ...when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8). From this prophecy the writer of the Book of Hebrews concluded: "in that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8:13). A new patch would have been useless, it could not have prevented either the decay or the vanishing.

The error of the Pharisees is often repeated even in the day in which we live. When our contemporaries are challenged to provide authority for one of their practices the best they can offer is that people have been doing it for a long time. Historians generally date the official introduction of instrumental music into the worship at 666 AD. Sprinkling was not officially substituted for baptism until 753 AD. The burning of incense was not authorized by the church of Rome until 795 AD. But does the mere fact that these practices are more than a thousand years old make them scriptural? It is not the age of a practice which makes it scriptural. The crucial question to be decided is not how long the practice has been in existence but did Jesus or his apostles authorize it? Did the Holy Spirit provide divine approval in scripture?

If a practice was not right at the beginning it will not improve with age. If there is no apostolic authority for it, it is just as unscriptural now as it was the first day it was practiced. The woman whom Jesus met at Jacob's well claimed this kind of authority. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain" (John 4:20). Indeed, that practice was a

thousand years old at the time of this conversation, having been started by Jeroboam when the kingdom of Israel was divided following the death of Solomon (1 Kings 12:28). The worship in the mountains was prompted by political expediency, not divine revelation. Jeroboam was concerned that if the people continued to worship at Jerusalem as God had directed the kingdom would be reunited under the leadership of Rehoboam. Hence, an innovation was introduced. The kind of worship in which the Samaritans engaged could never be right because it had been wrong from day one.

Perhaps without realizing it, this woman also identified another source of religious error when she declared, "Ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (John 4:20). Worshipping in Jerusalem was an even more ancient practice than worshipping in the mountains, having had its inception during the lifetime of Moses (Duet. 12:5, 11). But the fact that God required something a long time ago doesn't mean that He will always require it. When the thirsty Israelites were about to stone Moses, God said, "Thou shalt smite the rock" (Ex. 17:6). Twenty years later, there was another occasion when a miracle was required in order to provide water for the people. This time God said, "Speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them Water out of the rock" (Num. 20:8) The first time the command was, "Smite." The second time the command was, "Speak." In anger and perhaps in reliance on the earlier authority, Moses smote the rock and aroused the Lord's sore displeasure. The woman at Jacob's well said, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus leaves no doubt that she was wrong on both counts. "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father" (John 4:21). Any act of worship which is the product of human invention is unacceptable even when it has been around for a thousand years as the mountain worship had been. Worship, which was once authorized by God, may become unacceptable in a subsequent era just as the requirement that men worship exclusively in Jerusalem has become.

To rely on Old Testament authority for a practice in this New Testament era is a gross mistake. The old is not better, unless, of course, you are content to wear patched clothes. The Lord doesn't provide patches. He makes all things new!

THE UGLINESS OF SIN AND THE REMEDY

By JIMMY VANNOY

Sin is ugly for several reasons, and one is what it does to our memory. It causes us to forget who made us, who we belong to and who takes care of us. "The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know. My people do not consider" (Isaiah 1:3). The ox and the donkey have more understanding about who they belong to and who feeds them than the sinner. Sin is ugly because it causes the loss of memory of basic facts of life.

Sin is also ugly because of the ugliness it brings to the soul of the sinner. In Isaiah 1:5,6, Isaiah through the Spirit

depicts the ugliness of the soul by discussing the ugliness of a body which is sick, wounded and bruised. He speaks of a body which has a sick head and heart. In fact, it is said to be sick from head to feet. "From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it" (Isaiah 1:6). This sick and ugly body which represents the soul of the sinner is said to have wounds, bruises and sores from head to feet. The sores are said to be "putrefying." These sores have been on the body for a long time, and they have not been taken care of. They are infected, and they run with pus, yet nothing is done about them. They are not washed and no medicine is put on them. The body of Isaiah 1:5,6 is described in the ugliest possible terms to help us understand how ugly sin is to God and why it is that God can have nothing to do with us until we overcome sin. In II Peter 2:22, sin is compared to the vomit of a dog, to which he returns after regurgitation. This verse also compares sin to hog wallow. The Scriptures depict sin in the ugliest possible terms because that is how ugly sin is to God.

Sin is ugly to God because it caused Judah to be conquered and destroyed, and the people to go into captivity. "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; strangers devour your land in your presence; and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers" (Isaiah 1:7). Because of their sin, God was forced to stop helping, strengthening and protecting them, and so they were conquered. The same will happen to those who are in sin.

Sin is ugly to God because He stops accepting the worship of sinful people. Worship may be done in exactly the way prescribed in the Scriptures, but if the worship is done by one in sin, that which would be beautiful to God becomes very ugly. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me? I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you" (Isaiah 1:11, 13, 15). Anyone who mixes iniquity with the sacred meeting can be sure that God will not accept his worship. Also, God will not accept the spreading out of hands (prayer).

Sin is also ugly because it separates us from God and His blessings. "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). Sin causes God to turn away so that he will not have any association with the sinners, including bestowing of blessings, acceptance of worship, answering of prayers and the salvation of the soul. "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). "Death" means "separation." Physical death means the separation of the body from the spirit. This verse speaks of spiritual death, which is the separation of man from God. Sin is ugly because it places a wall of separation between us and God which we cannot conquer by ourselves.

Fortunately, there is a remedy for the ugliness of sin. "Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do good" (Isaiah 1:16,17). These words describe what repentance is. It is a determination to cease doing evil and start doing well. Repentance must occur before there is any hope of the taking away of sin. Jesus said, "I tell you no, but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

There is only one remedy for sin, and that is the blood of Jesus. The blood of the animals of the Old Testament could

never take away sin. The pure and innocent blood of Jesus is required for cleansing. Isaiah prophesied about this blood 750 years before Jesus came to the earth. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). This beautiful verse tells what the blood of Jesus will do. It will make us pure and completely cleanse us from the ugliness of sin if we meet the conditions set forth in the New Testament.

ETERNAL SECURITY

By BRETT HICKEY

John Calvin popularized the doctrine of "eternal security" in the sixteenth century. From a human standpoint, the doctrine of "eternal security," or, "once saved, always saved" has a certain appeal. According to "eternal security" advocates, once a man obtains salvation there is nothing he can do to fall from grace. A syndicated TV and radio evangelist for a mainline denomination wrote a book with this title *Eternal Security*. What if a saved man reached the point that, he no longer believed in God? This popular preacher goes so far as to say that he would still be saved by virtue of the faith he once expressed. Of course, there are variations to this position, but this shows, at least, where this position can lead. If the collective testimony of scripture bears this out, what Christian in their right mind would want to deny the comfort offered by this position? But what saith the Scripture?

Once we comply with the terms of the gospel (Gal.3:26-27; Acts 2:37-38), there is good reason to feel secure in Christ. Jesus promises the saved (Jn 10:28-29), "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand...and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Paul reemphasizes this truth in Rom. 8:33-39. In short, he writes that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." These Scriptures give the Christian blessed assurance. However, some have read more into these words than were intended. Clearly, no man, no woman, not even Satan himself can tear us from the Lord's side against our will. But this is not the same as "once saved, always saved." Does the Bible teach that the believer is incapable of defection? A host of passages and even entire books warn Christians of the danger of falling.

In Rev. 1:20, we are told that the seven candlesticks represent the seven churches of Asia. In chapter two, Jesus commends their strengths, but warns them that if they do not repent, they will lose their candlestick. Simply put, Jesus is saying that they will no longer be recognized as God's own. Do you remember what Jesus told the apostles? He said in John 15:6, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." "Here is a clear admonition against leaving Christ. The consequences are burning in fire. In Luke 13:24, Jesus says, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Jesus stresses that considerable effort and attention are required to please God. Even the apostle Paul realized the discipline involved in pleasing God. He exercised great caution and diligence, as he put it, "lest that by any means, when I have preached to

others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). Again he writes in Gal. 5:4, "...whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." There is an obvious truth interwoven through this series of scriptures. This truth does not harmonize with the Calvinist doctrine of "Eternal Security." (See also Mt. 25:31-46; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; Heb. 2:1-3; 10:29)

Thankfully, the Bible provides a formula for genuine eternal security in 2 Pt. 1:5-10, but it is conditional. After listing a series of qualities the Christian must possess and be growing in, he writes, "...if ye do these things, ye shall never fall..." Jesus offers a realistic hope of heaven for those who are "faithful till death" (Rev. 2:10). Salvation is not guaranteed to everyone who at some point believes in Christ. However, when a man obeys the gospel, with the determination to run the race set before him, Jesus issues the following words of assurance and victory, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, "

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REPORT OF DONATIONS FOR FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS

We recently reported that a need existed to cover the cost of foreign subscriptions. The paper has been trying to absorb nearly \$1,700.00 each year to cover the cost of those subscriptions for those who are not able to pay for themselves. The response has been wonderful and the need has been more than covered with a total of \$2,275.00 (including the \$630.00 reported last month). The amount exceeding the amount needed (\$1,698.00) will be used toward future needs. May the Lord bless you, brethren, we are grateful for your generous help.—DLK

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE PAPER

We are interested in increasing the subscription list for the paper. Naturally, we wish every family received the *Old Paths Advocate*. We feel sure that many would like to have it but have just let it expire and intend to renew soon. Please sit down and do it now! If you know of others who could benefit, give them a call today and ask them to subscribe or renew their subscription. At \$10 per year, it is a real bargain. However, if you, or someone you know, are unable to pay for your subscription let us know and you will receive the paper. When you subscribe *be sure you send us: the full and correct address including the correct zip code and the name you wish to appear on the address label*. When you move, tell us so we can change your address and you will not miss an issue. Can you encourage others to subscribe? Are you willing to send their subscription in for them? **Anyone who sends 10 subscriptions will receive theirs free for one year.** Please ask that the paper be announced regularly at your congregation and perhaps offer to send their subs in with yours. A great work is being accomplished through the printed page all around the world. May we hear from you soon? Thank you, Don L. King

LET HER BE COVERED *By Don L. King*

This is the title of a 20-page tract first published several years ago and is now in the second printing. It deals with the subject of the woman's covering as found in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. The perspective is that the woman's hair is her covering rather than an artificial veil. It is also shown why the woman should not cut or in any other way alter the natural length of her hair. This tract was once sold at \$1.00 each. As long as our supply lasts, you may purchase them at .50 each plus postage. Just look at the package and send us a check for .50 each plus that amount. Order from *Old Paths Advocate*, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539 or by E-mail: old_paths@juno.com.

NOTICE

The church in Fortuna, CA has purchased a building in Rio Dell, CA and plans to begin meeting in Rio Dell the first Sunday in December. Here is the address of the new meeting place: Monument Road Church of Christ, 375 Monument Rd., Rio Dell, CA 95562. Please make a note of this in your church directory. All other information remains the same.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

CUTTER-WORD—On Sunday afternoon of September 3, 2000, at the Green Oaks Church of Christ in Arlington, Texas, Jerry Lee Cutter and Linda Crouch Word, entered into the covenant of marriage in the presence of the Almighty God and a large gathering of Christians, relatives and friends. Jerry and Linda have been faithful Christians for many years, and both having lost spouses in the past, deemed it in their mutual interests to re-establish a Christian home and both together continue the work of evangelism. At the request of my daughter, Linda, and Jerry, I was asked to perform the ceremony. May God bless them in their commitment to each other and to their evangelistic work in the future. It was my great pleasure to honor their request to perform the ceremony.—L. Melvin Crouch

LITTLE-HOLT—August 12, 2000 Danny Little and Betsy Holt were married before a full house at the Irving, Texas congregation's building. Danny has lived in the Dallas area for the last few years and Midland before that. All who spoke to me of Danny praised his helpfulness and faithfulness. Betsy is the daughter of Dean and Vicky Holt (my sister) of the Irving congregation. Members of the Irving congregation were very generous in helping with the wedding. Dean Holt, the father of the bride, wrote a touching note that was read at the rehearsal welcoming Danny to the family. Special acappella singing was performed in the ceremony by Johnny Watson, Don Coon, Chris Gay, and Brandon Holt. I was honored last spring when Danny and Betsy called to ask me to perform their ceremony.—Greg Gay

BRADLEY-TIGERT—August 18, 2000 John Bradley and Lynnette Tigert were married before a crowd of several hundred in the beautifully prepared back yard of the Hodges of Escalon, CA. John was converted in 1995 and attended

the 64th St. congregation in Sacramento till moving to Oakdale shortly before the wedding. Lynette was converted the same year and has been a member at Oakdale the last few years. It was my pleasure to introduce them to one another a few Labor Day meetings ago and see their relationship grow. Singers at the wedding were Greg Branch, Ivan and Gina Costa, Staci DePonte and Brian Osburn. John and Lynette worked diligently in pre-marital studies and I was thrilled to perform their ceremony to unite them in marriage.—Greg Gay

OUR DEPARTED

HOLMES—Richard Lee "RICKY" was born in Birmingham, AL in 1966 and died in Clanton, AL July, 2000 at the age of 33. He is survived by his wife, Evelyn; his parents Brother and Sister Robert Holmes (Birmingham); four step-children; a grandchild; two sisters and one brother. Brother William St. John and Brother Miles King said prayers and I did the funeral message. We love the family and pray God's blessings to continue with each member of the Holmes family.—Paul Walker

CAFFEY—Earl Caffey, son of Arch and Elizabeth Caffey was born Sept., 1917 near Phillipsburg MO and departed this life on May 26, 2000 at St. John's Regional Health Center in Springfield, MO at the age of 82 years, 8 months and 18 days, Earl was united in marriage to Dorothy Carden in 1939 and to this union one son was born. He was united in marriage to Eleanor Burk on Feb. 21, 1948. Earl was preceded in death by his parents, his first wife Dorothy, one sister, Tressie Brown and three brothers, Floyd, John and Loran Caffey. He is survived by his wife Eleanor, one son Kenneth Joel Caffey of the home, and four brothers; Leslie and his wife Eula, Ray Caffey and his wife Elsie, and Toy Caffey all of Dunkirk, IN and James Caffey and his wife Jean of Muncie, IN. Earl was a long time member of the Church of Christ. After he and Eleanor were married, they moved to Kansas City and were a part of the first church started in that area. After other congregations were started in Kansas City, they met with the 85th and Euclid congregation until they retired and moved to Marshfield, MO. They have been a vital part of the church at Niangua, MO for many years. Earl had been unable to attend services for past few months because of rapidly declining health. He loved to go to church and missed going to all the meetings in the area. Each time he would talk about it, tears would always well up in his eyes. Earl will be missed by the church at Niangua and by all who knew him. Don Thomason assisted with the service and brought back many memories of Earl and the influence he and Eleanor had while they lived in Kansas City. The writer offered words of encouragement.—Ron Alexander

EARLY—Bro. Homer Manning Early was born in Geneva County, Alabama on February 12, 1910. He gently passed from this life on Friday, July 7, 2000 in his home surrounded by his loving family. He had been struggling with a difficult illness for five years. In 1933 he was married to the late Ethel Free and to this union were born four children, Billie June, Gloria, Paul and Alice. Theirs was a

devout Christian home. Bro. Early obeyed the gospel in 1935 under the preaching of Homer L. King. He was a longtime member of the church at Earlytown, AL. By trade he was a welder and a farmer. Homer lived a quiet, respectable, and hard working life and was well thought of in the community. He is survived by all of his children and their spouses, one brother, one sister and six grandchildren. He leaves yet another vacant seat in the old Earlytown building and an empty place in the hearts of his family and friends. This writer had the privilege of conducting the service. The church house was overflowing with those who came to pay their respects. He is buried in the Early cemetery where he awaits a glorious resurrection some day.—Kevin W. Presley

HARRISON—Ester Vera Harrison was born July 19, 1921 and passed away Sept. 7, 2000. A resident of Florala for the past 45 years she was a native of Lowery, Alabama. A faithful and loyal member of the State Line Church of Christ. She is survived by Edward and Peggy Harrison, Robert and Mary Harrison, both of Florala and by O'quinn and David Willis of Crawfordville, Florida. By three sisters: Lola Mae Jordan of Paxton, Fla., Myrtle Lee Kelly of Elba, Ala., and by Minnie Edwards of Auburndale, Fla. 7 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews. The funeral services was held at the Lowery church building, with congregation singing lead by her son-in-law David Willis. Vera was laid to rest in the Lowery Cemetery. The writer spoke words of comfort to the family, and large gathering of friends that assembled in honor and respect to Vera.—Bobby J. Pepper

BARRETT—Sister Alice Lorene Barrett was born April 10, 1936 in Yuma, Arizona, and passed from us on August 30, 2000, in Tehachapi, California, at the age of 64. Alice was the wife of brother Joe Dow Barrett for 47 years being married on September 22, 1953 in New Mexico. Alice was a Christian, a member of the Lord's church for over 37 years, being baptized by Brother E.H. Miller in a meeting at Arvin, California. She leaves at her passing her husband Joe, three sons, Gerald R., Joe D. Jr., James O. Barrett. Seven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one sister, Maudie Bolton, two brothers, John and Bill Wright, also numerous nephews, nieces, a host of brethren and friends. Alice lived the Christian life with joy. I never saw a frown on her face. She was smiling all the time, and loved to sing praises. Gospel preaching she loved, and stood for strong principles, striving to instill the same in her children. Her son Gerald, is a good preacher of the gospel, and recently began a congregation in Tehachapi with the assistance of the Brundage Lane, and Planz Rd. congregations in Bakersfield. Alice also was highly respected in the community, which was evident from the number attending her memorial service. Joe and the family will miss her, but time will heal the wound of sorrow they now experience. May God bless them in every way at the loss of this dear sister. She will be missed. Brother Brian Elliott led the singing in a fine way, also helping with the service. Alice is buried in the Tehachapi Public Cemetery Eastside, there to await the resurrection of the just. This writer tried to speak words of comfort and warning, using her life as an example.—Richard DeGough



Paul Walker, 833 Mahr Ave., Lawrenceburg, TN 38464—Several of our friends have recently passed into eternity. Brother Richard Sylvester and Sister Delcie Burdick (Chapel Grove, TN) and Brother Ricky Holmes (Birmingham, AL). All of these were special friends. Sister Delcie was preceded in death by her dear husband, Brother Cecil Burdick, a friend to many who read the *OPA*. From the Union Hill congregation, we have lost Sister Ruby Brown, a life-time member. We have recently enjoyed preaching by Don Pruitt, Don McCord, Ron Alexander, Ron Courter and Joel Smith.

Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Tupelo, Okla. 74572—We have just closed another gospel meeting where several speakers participated. Buddy Dismuke, Tim Byrd, John Tidmore, William St. John, Gene Hopkins, Ewell Byrd, Troy Gould and Ed Bullard spoke at least once. The meeting was our second one held at Denison, Tex. We had several visitors from our sister congregations in our area. We appreciate very much all the efforts made by everyone that helped make this a good meeting and a special thanks go to Glen and Roberta VanStavern from Springfield, Mo. They came and assisted in the entire meeting. I believe this was about the sixth type of these kind of meetings we have had. We believe this is just another good way to preach the word and have good fellowship.

Brett Hickey, 5105 Old Bullard Rd. #M-3, Tyler, TX 75703, (903) 534-8466, brett.hickey@juno.com, November 1—Since last reporting we have enjoyed being with dear friends and family at the Ventura, CA congregation. Despite significant adversity, the congregation is growing. The brethren had outsiders for us to study with while we were there. Some of them also attended our meeting. We had about a dozen outsiders over the weekend. We were thrilled to witness a baptism and see another return to the fold. The Covina and the Bakersfield congregations supported our efforts. It was also good to be with preaching brother, Brian Elliott. Our first visit with the Bridgeport brethren was uplifting. We look forward to spending another Sunday with them next month. The work at Tyler moves forward. We are gearing up for our meeting with William St. John, November 15th-19th. In addition to our regular lead list, we will be mailing postcards out to those who have recently moved to our area. We plan to advertise our weekly Bible message more aggressively with business cards and ads in the Thrifty Nickel. Special thanks to articles by Jerry Dickinson and George Battey for the sound refutation of the “okay-to-cut-your-hair” doctrine promoted recently. When all the facts are brought forward, there is no need for confusion on 1 Cor.11:3-16. May the Lord bless the faithful.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401,

November 5. I am sorry to have been remiss in reporting this year. It was certainly my good pleasure to be at Hillcrest, Brookhaven, MS March 5-12, Graham, TX, July 9-16, McGregor, TX, July 23-30, El Paso, TX, Sept. 20-24, Walnut Grove, KY, Oct. 1-8, and 64th Street, Sacramento, CA, Oct. 22-29. Our spring meeting here was with Carl Johnson, and Cullen Smith held our fall meeting, which ended with two baptisms. I was happy to baptize my oldest granddaughter shortly after the meeting. I have one more meeting this year at Houston, MO Nov. 12-19, after which I look forward to being at home for a while. I teach the women in my family not to cut, shear, or shave their hair, including bangs. Remember, as Fred Kirbo used to say, “That’s not Bermuda grass; it’s still hair.” I want all of our sisters in Christ to go to heaven and reap the handsome reward.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, November 13, E-mail old_paths@juno.com—We recently closed an enjoyable meeting with the congregation at Atwater, CA. No visible results but we hope good was done. In the past, we had been there several times and it was nice to be back again. We appreciate those who came from other areas and helped us. It was good to have Richard DeGough for a few nights before he left for Ohio. It has also been our pleasure to be at Yuba City and at home for several sermons. We recently enjoyed hearing Johnny Elmore preach a good sermon at 64th St., Sacramento during his meeting there. Due to the fact that we have lost the calendar on which we had my meetings scheduled for several years, I need to ask you to contact me and give me the dates if I am scheduled to be at your congregation within the next 5 years. We don’t know if it was simply lost or stolen (it looked like a checkbook). At any rate, I am in need of your help, brethren. May I hear from you soon? Please continue to pray for us.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Nov. 8.—The church at 79th and Kansas Ave, Kansas City has many young people, who are some of the most faithful to attend all the services of the church. Among them we have teachers and song leaders, and those who lead prayer in our assemblies. We are so proud and thankful for them, for we know they will be the strength of the congregation in the future. We have some good teachers in the church here, young and old, and the lessons are edifying. We are not in the practice of proselyting members from sister congregations as some do, but all people who attend our services, both saint and sinner alike, are made to know they are welcome. We “contend for the faith once delivered to the saints” as the word of God teaches. We continue to have private studies with those who are interested and give all faithful male members encouragement and opportunity to develop their talents in the services. May the Lord bless all righteous efforts put forth all over the world.

Bob Johnson, 8078 Whitewing Dr., Frisco, TX 75034, bj7@home.com, Oct. 12—It is with great joy that I send forth this report. A few weeks ago at our Lord’s Day morning assembly, an out of duty member stepped forward during the invitation and made repentance. He is the grandfather of a young man I had baptized earlier this year. The young man has a younger brother that now studies

with us during our weekly sessions. I believe soon he will be ready for obedience to the Gospel. We just ended a five day Gospel Meeting with Brother Smith Bibens of Ozark, Mo. We surely are better off for him having come our way, Smith is an excellent teacher, and did a masterful job each service in presenting his lessons. Prior to the meeting, several of the members here were good to help pass out invitations and door knock. Over 400 homes and apartments were knocked on, not counting the many personal invitations, to friends, family, co-workers, etc. A Baptist couple I invited attended twice during the meeting, along with another Baptist that came one night as well, the latter a brother-in-law to one of our members. I have one or two more prospects for future home studies, a result from the doors we knocked prior to Smith's meeting here. One Methodist lady has completed our 15 lesson Bible course. Though she is actively involved in her religion, she did seem somewhat open when I met with her recently. She has agreed to watch the 18 minute preview on VHS tape of the Jule Miller Bible Series, when she returns home from her vacation in November. The population here has more than tripled since our move here in December of 93. The job market is excellent here, they are not able to fill all of the job openings. For a young man who aspires to preach this would be an excellent area to help supplement his income. For further information I can be reached at: (972) 335-1005 or (972) 741-1163. Please pray for us as we continue to lead the lost to Him who died for all.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd, Live Oak, CA 95953, Nov. 12—The church here in Olivehurst is doing well. We have studies going on and visitors at our services. We have young men in the church that are making progress. It is a pleasure to begin another year of working with them. We worked with the church in Fortuna, CA in a weekend meeting last weekend. It had been a few years since we visited with the congregation. They have just purchased a building to meet in. They are currently meeting in a rented store front building. The building they have purchased is in Rio Dell, CA which is about seven miles south of Fortuna. They plan to begin meeting in the building in Rio Dell the first Sunday in December. They are very excited about the part of their growth. The address for the new building may be found in another part of this issue of the OPA. May God bless all of you.

Report on Trip to Tula and St. Petersburg, Russia September 7—October 5, 2000. On September 7, Bro. Jimmy Cating and I embarked from our respective homes on a journey to visit the churches in Tula and St. Petersburg, Russia. We were able to link up in London and travel together the last leg of the trip. The first two preachers to visit the city of Tula in 1993 were Jerry Cutter and Don Pruitt. Five of us have continued to work together in the Tula work for over seven years—George Battey, Max Butler, Greg Gay, Frank Harris and me. During that time numerous other preachers have traveled with us to visit these brethren and for their company, assistance and input we have been very appreciative. On this trip Jimmy was a great help to me and he did an excellent job in his preaching, which is not a surprise to those of you familiar with his labors for the cause of Christ, of course, but preaching through a translator for the first time is not an easy task, and Jimmy did well. I was happy to note this trip that the Russian

economy appears to be improving steadily. Free market enterprise is flourishing. The amount and range of goods available, toothbrushes to cars, is growing by leaps and bounds. People are working and being paid. Construction is underway around every corner. All of this bodes well for the church. Life is much less focused on survival and as a result folks can turn to other interests. Our task is to persuade both brethren and strangers to focus their energies on living for the Lord and His Way.

Tula—The church in Tula continues to grow in maturity. It only numbers about 10 members, but all of them appear to be very committed to the Lord. The congregation at Tula is blessed with several male members who are capable of conducting the public worship. During the second week of our visit, Boris, who is our translator and a preacher of the gospel, went with Jimmy and me to St. Petersburg. The same weekend Tula sent two brethren, Valery and Valdimir, to a weekend meeting in Mechurinsk. And on Sunday, Yaroslav and Oleg conducted the worship in Tula. Having so many options in male leadership is a great blessing and a testimony to the extended works in Tula by Max Buttler and George Battey. Our first week Jimmy and I were able to conduct studies from 2:00 in the afternoon until about 6:00 in the evening. We generally had two studies each day with small groups of the members. We spent our time discussing the teachings in 1 John and answering various Bible questions. Several in the congregation are avid readers of the Word and consequently had numerous questions. One day Nora asked us to explain the meaning of Joel 3:1-2. Her questions revealed diligent study. Boris continues to work diligently with these brethren. He is maturing into a very capable and doctrinally sound preacher of the gospel. In my experience and opinion, he is practically peerless as a translator. He is always searching for new materials in English which he can share with the others through translation. Valery also seems to be growing as a leader. He and his wife invited us to their home for dinner, which was an experience Jimmy will probably never forget. Valery asked us to provide funds to reprint all of the tracts that we have had translated into Russian over the years. This we were happy to do. The day we left Valery picked us up in his route taxi and took us to the train station. He escorted us onto the train and led a prayer for our safe journey home.

St. Petersburg—The second week of our trip we took the train to St. Petersburg. We have only been working with these brethren about 18 months. Until we arrived we thought we were going to hold a meeting at Gatchina, a neighboring city where one of the brethren resides. However, we were not to be so fortunate. Our time in St. Petersburg was not so successful as our time in Tula. The preacher working with these brethren is a Ghanaian named David Owen. In the past he has done a great work of building a congregation, although his Russian is very limited. Much of his work and preaching has been conducted in English. Unfortunately, the week we visited, David was embroiled in several traumatic personal problems, including his wife's desertion for another man, and his problems with the immigration people and the tax police. As a result, we were unable to accomplish much in our limited view, at least. We did have a couple of Bible studies with David and on Wednesday evening a study with him and two of the members of the congregation. On

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Lord's day we had it very enjoyable multicultural, international worship service. Ten Christians and three young children assembled for worship. They were from three different continents, representing five countries and nine different cities. Two brethren were from Ghana; one was from Tanzania; one from Nigeria, four were from Russia; and two from America. The power of Jesus Christ and the gospel to bind together men and women from all over the world into one body is truly amazing to witness! We hope and pray that David's personal problems will soon be eased and that he can continue his good work. The third week of our stay Jimmy and I returned to Tula and picked up our studies where we had left off.

Moscow-On our way out of the country, Boris, Jimmy and I met Brother Sergei who is the leader of the church in Moscow. Sergei was baptized in Tambov by Gary Barrett. I was in hopes of setting up a preachers study with Boris, David and Sergei, but such was not to be. Rather than discussing this, we had a disturbing conversation with Sergei, who has come to the conclusion that it is not wrong to use instrumental music in worship. He proffered all of the standard arguments employed by mechanical music advocates and refused to be moved at all by the scriptural answers we provided. In addition, he is convinced that we are adding church laws to God's Word. After about two hours of discussion we parted ways. I was reassured to note that Boris was visibly distressed by these false doctrines. His understanding of these issues is firmly in line with the Scriptures. In conversation with him after our discussion with Sergei, he said he recognizes that such developments are a part of the "downside" of the effort the Russian churches are making to forge a brotherhood. However, he also recognizes that forging such connections between the congregations is worth the cost of having to guard the truth and weed out the false teachers. Boris and Valery plan to return to Moscow soon to try to change Sergei mind. When I returned home I apprised Bro. Jimmy Vannoy of this sad development. He said he would also send Kostya, a preacher working with the church in Mechurinsk, up to Moscow to try to reclaim Sergei for the truth. We hope and pray that these brethren will be able to turn Bro. Sergei from the error of his way,

Conclusion-The work in Tula was a joy to be around I am reasonably confident that twenty years from now the cause of Christ will still be heard there. The work in St. Petersburg needs time and patience and labor, but we have strong hopes for its progress. Also we have several leads to start works in both Tanzania and Nigeria when brethren return home once their schooling in St. Petersburg is finished. It is good that faithful churches in Russia are beginning to work together and build a brotherhood. This work should be encouraged. However, care must be exercised that digression does not result from such efforts. It was a great privilege to have Bro. Jimmy Cating as a

companion and assistant in the work. He did a great job and was a trooper through several new and somewhat unpleasant experiences. He is a trustworthy and capable preacher of the gospel. We appreciate the support of our families. They make great sacrifices in order to allow us to do this work. We also appreciate your financial support of this work. Thanks for making it possible for us to go and participate in this great work. If you have any questions please feel free to contact either of us. May God bless you in all your labors for cause.—Alan Bonifay

Supplemental Report of Russia Trip: Jimmy Cating

It was a great privilege and wonderful opportunity for me to travel into Russia with Bro. Alan Bonifay. The objective of our trip was to strengthen the brethren in Tula and St. Petersburg and I feel that we accomplished our goal. We were also able to evaluate the progress that the brethren were making. Because this was my first trip, I could not compare the condition of the church with that of previous visits. However, I was very encouraged with the level of maturity of the church in Tula. In spite of the economic difficulties, the brethren are spiritually minded and are interested in growing in the Lord. The Bible studies we held throughout the week were well attended. We stressed the importance of Bible study and Bible discussion. The church in Tula understands what many brethren here don't and that is the importance of getting together to study the Bible. This is reflected in their two weekly Bible studies besides their Sunday morning and Wednesday night services. Alan and I saw the church in Tula as a doctrinally sound congregation with a bright future. We were not able to accomplish all that we had hoped and planned with the church in St. Petersburg. However, there are several positive potentials that we were made aware of because of our visit. Because some of the members there are planning to return to their home countries in Africa in the near future, they provide the church with the opportunity of starting new works in these places. The church in St. Petersburg is faced with many obstacles; nevertheless, the cause of Christ, with continued support, has good potential in that area. Again we are thankful to the brethren for the financial support for this trip. We appreciate the faith you demonstrated in sending and supporting us. We pray and trust that our efforts were beneficial to the cause of our Lord. This was my first time in Russia so the trip for me was filled with new opportunities and experiences. I not only was fortunate to work with these brethren but I was thankful to be with Alan, of whom I have lots of respect. His knowledge and experience provided a great learning environment. Although it was a long journey and difficult at times, I am glad that he asked me to accompany him. May God bless the work, and let us remember that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.