

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, JANUARY 2001

NO. 1

DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE AND DIVISION

By RONNY F. WADE

There is likely no issue that has created more disagreement, unrest, uncertainty, and division among brethren than that of divorce and remarriage. I grew up in north-central Texas, and in the late forties and early fifties, this was the "hot topic" of discussion. At that time, there were very few cases of divorce and remarriage in the church. There was, however, a lot of talk about what should be done should someone get a divorce. Hollywood was grinding out its usual fare of illicit love, and the silver screen was definitely having an impact on the morals of the nation. Slowly but surely, everyone seemed to believe, the church would be faced with what the world was coming to condone as acceptable behavior. They were right. The question essentially boiled down to whether or not there was any ground upon which a Christian could divorce his/her companion and scripturally remarry. Brethren were divided in their views, some claiming that there was no scriptural reason for divorce and remarriage, and others believing that Matthew 19:9 gave one ground upon which such a divorce could be secured. The disagreement was not new. For many years it had existed. In fact disagreement over such matters precipitated the situation recorded in Matthew the nineteenth chapter. During this time, brethren who disagreed, worked together. There was no hint of division or withdrawal of fellowship because of such a disagreement. Some, however, began to push the issue. Ever before problems (real cases of divorce and remarriage) emerged, they wanted to withdraw from the other side. Cooler heads, fortunately, prevailed and such a division was avoided, at least for the time being. In the ensuing years, things would change dramatically. Some brethren not only reached the conclusion that Matt. 19:9 did not apply to the church today, but they also decided that they could no longer fellowship those of us who accepted the teaching of the passage. Lines were gradually drawn, and in time became hardened. Churches were divided, and a separate fellowship established. A paper heralding their views was circulated, and tracts dispensing their doctrine distributed. The division was over "belief," not just cases of divorce and remarriage. I know that to be a fact. When I moved to Springfield, MO in 1966, I approached one of their preachers about working together and was told "the only way is for you to change your belief on divorce and remarriage." Since that time, churches have been alienated and divided where no cases of divorce and remarriage exist. In fact division has been fostered and promoted in the Philippines where divorce is illegal. A place where no reason for division existed. I believe

division is a sin. And that those who cause division should be "marked and avoided" Romans 16:17. Now, the question I would like to address is simply: *What has the division accomplished?* Did it safeguard these people, their families, their churches from the evil of divorce? Have they been able to prevent the tragedy of divorce by keeping preachers like me out of their pulpits? By refusing to call on me to pray or lead a song in their assemblies? At a recent "preachers, teachers, leaders meeting on evangelism" these brethren proposed to discuss and I quote: "Some sort of planned schedule for a pair of preachers to be sent out to set up studies with other Church of Christ brotherhoods such as "two cupper," "non Sunday-school," "the wine element," or even "divorce and remarriage brethren" just to mention a few to see if we can't be all drawn to the truth and be of the same mind and judgment." This indicates that they equate those of us who accept Mt. 19:9 on the same level as those who use cups and classes, and that they consider us a "separate brotherhood." First of all, let me say that I resent being labeled a "divorce and remarriage brother." I fight divorce as hard as any of them do. I have been married for forty-five years to the same woman, and have no plans for getting a divorce. If I am a divorce and remarriage person, so was Christ. I merely believe and teach what he affirmed. But the real question is: have these brethren, by the division upon which they insist, eliminated divorce? The answer, unfortunately, is no. I personally am aware of a number of divorces among them. Some being divorced two and three times. I certainly get no pleasure out of that, however, it shows that the division in the church did not solve the divorce problem. The division only compounded the tragedy. The things accomplished by the division were broken relationships, hard feelings, divided families, and a host of other unfavorable circumstances. But, perhaps, all is not lost. There are a number of younger brethren, among them, who are wanting to know why it is necessary to withdraw fellowship from those of us who hold differing views than their forefathers on this subject. They want to know why it would be wrong to worship at congregations that do not hold the "no exception" view. They cannot understand why it is permissible to worship at a place far from home that accepts the teaching of Mt. 19:9; yet, it is wrong to worship or have anything to do with a church nearby who holds the same belief. Not all among them believe in dividing the church over this issue. In fact some of them (even a few preachers) will have fellowship with brethren who believe Mt. 19:9 applies today. Perhaps in the near future,

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 1



A D V O C A T E

ANNOUNCEMENTS 7-9

Divorce, Remarriage & Division 1

Editorial 2

A New Year 2

A Work For Two 3

The Message & The Messenger Pt. 1 4

God Strictness 5

Make Full Proof Of They Ministry 5

My Position On Carnal Warfare 7

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536
A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.

these younger brethren will recognize the mistakes that have been made in the past, and will no longer be bound by the foolish decisions that brought about the division of the present. May God help them to renounce it. May God help us all to heal the wounds of the past and work for a brighter, better future.

Note: Having been invited to add a few words to the foregoing, I wish to say first of all, "amen." Also, it seems a proper time to set the record straight about the division that took place in the Philippines several years ago. It was an occasion of great sadness. I can promise that none of us ever taught publicly or privately about marriage, divorce and remarriage until trouble arose over reading materials (tracts, etc.) sent in the mail by no-exception brethren. There was no need. **It is illegal to get a divorce in the Philippines!** The very last place in the whole world to have had division over the marriage and divorce question was, and still is, the Philippines. The subject is actually moot because no matter what you believe one cannot get a divorce for any reason if he lives in that country.

Division is always shameful, heartbreaking, tragic and sad. It is all of this because sin is always involved. The truth is, the division had no reason to occur, and should not have. In some small villages there are now two small buildings located, in at least one case, within walking distance of each other. These little buildings each say Church of Christ on the sign. Each worships the same while refusing fellowship of the other. God forbid! The Lord above has been crucified afresh in the eyes of those who live nearby.—Don L. King

A NEW YEAR!

By DON L. KING

With this January issue of *Old Paths Advocate*, we begin our 69th year of publication. Few publications survive this long, and we thank the Lord for any bit of good the paper has accomplished. It is gratifying to realize that several mission efforts around the world began because someone sent *OPA* into the area. In some cases, we don't even know who it may have been. It was almost like a seed blown by the wind into a fertile field that grew and multiplied.

We recall with great sentiment seeing worn and battered copies in bamboo houses in the Philippines. The paper went there long before we did. We recall seeing the paper lying about in African homes as well. How gratifying to realize that many years ago a good sister in Christ sent my father a single dollar and asked that the paper be sent to a certain man in what is now Malawi. We noticed it also in Malaysia and various other places.

It is amazing how the printed page makes its way into places one would scarcely imagine. A number of years before our brethren went to Russia; a letter was delivered to our business office address in Lebanon, MO. It was from a man in Moscow, Russia and was addressed to churches of Christ, in care of *Old Paths Advocate*. The writer must have been looking at a copy of the paper because the Lebanon, MO business address is found only at the bottom of the masthead on page 2. No, we do not claim that the Russian work is a result of the paper (as far as we know, it is not) but one is made to wonder who sent *Old Paths Advocate* to that man and his family? Though we had some communication with the letter writer in later months, we never learned how he came by the paper.

Another interesting fact about the printed page is this: Unlike a sermon that is perhaps heard and then forgotten, an article, tract, or religious journal will often be copied over and over while it is sent from one place to another. Like a seed blown in the wind, the truth of the gospel preserved in print may be read, studied, believed and obeyed by generations yet unborn when penned by some unknown writer. (as with the Bible)

A man who perhaps is unable to deliver an oral lesson or sermon may leave a simple tract, containing facts of the gospel, on the doorstep of a family chosen completely at random. He may never see the man. Yet, his small investment of time and effort may bear great fruit. We recall speaking with a man who was an elder in the church. He had raised his family in Christ. When asked how he was converted, he remarked, "Someone left a tract about the church on my doorstep." When asked who had left it, he replied that he had no idea. Do you recall the words of Paul? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." (I Corinthians 3:6,7)

Brethren, we must not allow ourselves to think that in some way, WE are the important ones. Paul says we are not "anything," but God that giveth the increase. This year, let us all resolve that we shall put forth the effort to simply sow the seed. God will give the increase. That is His part while ours is to plant and water. Remember that Solomon advised, "Cast thy bread (seed) upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." (Ecclesiastes 11:1) Spend the money to preach the gospel, brethren! Preach it everywhere, among all nations (Matthew 28:19,20) and in the entire world (Mark 16:15).

Don't be discouraged if we see no results right away. Remember, Solomon said, "thou shalt find it after MANY days." Think on these things. DLK

A WORK FOR TWO

By HOMER A. GAY

The discipline that is needed in building a Christian home is certainly a work for two, and these two must be sure and cooperate in the task if they hope to succeed. This reminds us of the passage: "nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord." (I Corinthians 11:11) In the seventh chapter of I Corinthians the apostle gives us a good lesson, showing the relationship that should exist between the husband and wife along these lines. Please read the chapter and save me the space for it here. Also, in the fifth chapter of Ephesians there is given another fine lesson on husbands loving their wives and wives obeying their husbands. All of these things are so necessary in order for them to work together in the disciplining of the home.

1 Peter 3:7 speaks of the husband and wife being "heirs together of the grace of life," which shows that the Lord wants them to be full partners in everything. When the children can get their parents to disagreeing on something and arguing in the presence of the children, that is as good as they want. So, parents, you may not always see the thing just as the other one sees it, but by all means don't object in the presence of the child.

With two grown married Christian people, prayer and the ability to be open minded joined with quiet discussion

ought to solve most any problem between them. It may be necessary, at times, for one or the other to yield on some point or perhaps a manner of procedure. However, this yielding is not a sign of weakness. Sometimes it is a sign of a person who is fair-minded and willing to cooperate. A thorough trial, honestly given, may really prove that one was wrong and the other right where it had not seemed possible before. Both should be filled with the wisdom that is from above as we read in

James 3:17. "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be untreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." How well does this passage fit into the lives of Christian parents in disciplining their children? Each parent should strive to be easily entreated, remembering that they are only human. Above all, parents should never be hypocritical with their children. A father may forbid the child to do a certain thing and the mother later arranges for the child to do it without his knowledge. The child partakes of such a scheme and violates a dozen laws of character and truth. Certainly he has lost respect to some degree for both parents, and will soon learn to practice deceit himself.

The wrong kind of discipline, the lack of it, or a disagreement between parents about it can spoil the whole outlook of the future of our boys and girls. The truth is that discipline has to begin within the parents themselves. Many times corrective measures can be wholly avoided if the parents will look ahead and plan for the children's safety. The child, well trained by patient and consistent parents and provided with the necessities for comfort, happiness, and satisfaction at home, presents fewer problems than one not supplied with the means of normal happiness.

Not long ago seven young men, in a hotel room, were up until a late hour discussing the problems they were facing. Someone asked them what their conclusions were. One replied: "we concluded that the problems facing us are greater than at any other age of the world, and therefore, it is going to take greater men with greater characters to face them; and that, God being our helper, we will be some of those greater men."

The great task before Christian parents today is to build from their children those greater men and women needed by the world to save it from chaos.

A father should consider well the answer he gives to his child. The mother then should respect it. Likewise the mother should think and pray before she says yes or no to a child. The father, then, should never, NEVER tell the child differently. Fathers must be careful to see that the child always minds the mother. The wife also should see to it that the child minds the father. These are rules that must be observed if the parents expect to bring their children up to honor themselves and the Lord. Any relaxation of these rules will surely cause trouble in the home and cause a break that may never be mended.

I do not even hope for all to agree with me on these thoughts. However, if only a few fathers and mothers will "awake to righteousness," and begin NOW to build Christian homes it will not be long until we can see a great difference.—OPA (next month "Religion in the Home")

Subscribe To The Old Paths Advocate
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94536 • \$10 Per Year

THE MESSAGE & THE MESSENGER

By JEFF THOMPSON

PART I

God has entrusted the message of eternal life to mortals here on earth (2 Cor 4:7). He has also charged those mortals with the responsibility of preaching that message to the world so that others might be saved (Mark 16:15-16). We would do well to understand that if any one is ever saved, it will be the direct result of the plain unadulterated preaching of the word of God and the sincere obedience to it. People are not saved by angelic intervention, the indwelling of the holy spirit, heavenly visions, or miraculous or mysterious occurrences. Neither are people saved by anecdotes, yarns, fables, or heart wrenching stories from some magazine. The Scriptures teach that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). While this may not make for exciting or emotional testimony, it is the infallible promise of God concerning salvation.

From the beginning, God saw a need for capable men to teach his will to others. God said to Moses:

"I will be with your mouth, and teach you what you shall say." (Ex 4:12)

To Ezekiel God said: "I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from my mouth and warn them for Me." (Ezekiel 33:7)

Jonah was sent to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh. (Jonah 1:1-2)

John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way of the Lord by preaching. (Matt 3:3).

Jesus sent his disciples to preach the Gospel to all people (Matt 28:20).

Phillip was sent to preach the gospel to a single individual (Acts 8:26-35).

There are many other scriptural examples of the importance God places on preaching his word.

With the tremendous importance God places on the preaching of the gospel, certainly he would not entrust this task to just anyone. Surely if the gospel is God's treasure, he would be very particular about where he places it. We find upon searching the scriptures that God was indeed very selective about whom he entrusted with the awesome responsibility of telling the world what he says.

The Bible says that the word of God is to be taught by men who are first and foremost faithful to it themselves (2 Tim 2:2). It is not enough to know the word, quote it, or eloquently expound upon it; but it is imperative that the preacher live it. His life should show evidence that the will of God is written on the "fleshy tables of his heart" (2 Cor 3:3). That he is not only a conveyer of the message, but a believer of it as well. His primary goal must be to please God, part of which includes teaching the gospel to others. Jesus told Peter: 11 ... when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:32). Certainly, there would not be much credibility in his words until he was converted! Nothing convicts like conviction! If the hearer sees sin and error in the life of the messenger, he is not very likely to be converted by the message. Furthermore, because of such carelessness on the part of the messenger, the chances of that hearer ever being saved have decreased tremendously. Because of sin present in the life of the messenger, the hearer will logically assume that there is

consequently, the organization that promotes it. When trying to convert someone to Christ, what we are carries more weight than what we say.

I once knew a person who was struggling with a home business to supplement the family income. She carried a line of health food supplements that claimed to offer dramatic weight loss benefits. She ran advertisements in the local paper, printed and distributed flyers, and even had a magnetic sign made and attached to her car which read: "Lose Weight Now, Ask Me How!" and listed her phone number. In spite of all her efforts, she never had much success selling her products. I remember thinking that it probably had something to do with the fact that she was herself very obese.

If we can understand this concept in business or other worldly pursuits, why do we not see or at least not act on such things when they occur in the church. We can preach the gospel until we lose our voice, we can utilize radio, television, print media, we can evangelize the whole world; but all these efforts will be a grand exercise in futility unless we live the gospel! If people are taught the truth and understand it, they will quickly see through pretenders. This was what the apostle Paul was emphasizing when he wrote "We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed" (2 Cor 6:3). The point is that if the world we seek to convert finds in us the same evil from which we seek to deliver them, they will never be converted. After all, what is the point? 1 Samuel 2:17 gives an account of the sons of Eli who caused the people to abhor the worship of God because of their hypocrisy. The same thing can happen today. The first thing a prospective Christian looks for is some inconsistency in the message and the messenger; they easily see the things that we may choose not to see. Good salesmen are trained to overcome possible objections to the presentation of their product. We overcome objections by practicing what we preach.

Jesus Christ commissioned his disciples -not sinners- to preach his gospel (Mark 16:15).

Paul admonished Timothy to "continue in the things which you have learned... 11 (2 Timothy 3:14).

Paul wrote to Titus: "In all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed having nothing evil to say of you." (Titus 2:7-8).

Furthermore, the rigid qualifications outlined in the scripture for elders and deacons, demand that they be above all else, blameless in character. It is inconsistent with the will of God to find men who are, for one reason or another, scripturally excluded from being elders or deacons approved both locally and by the brotherhood to be "church leaders". An obvious question arises: If one is not suitable in the sight of God to be a "church leader" should he be acceptable to us? I think not! If we lower the standards for church leadership, and also for preachers of the gospel; can we really suppose that we are pleasing in the sight of God? Again, the answer is a resounding "NO". Titus was ordered to ordain elders in every city. What does it say about a congregation of the Lord's church that has been around for many years and still has no one qualified to be elders and deacons among them? For one thing, it says that the congregation has not been what it should be in the development of church leaders over past years. If developing church leaders had been a priority in the past, we would have elders and deacons today. If developing

leadership is not a priority today, we will not have elders and deacons in the future either. The problem (and it is indeed a problem) will not just fix itself. Since it is the Lord's will, it should be a priority to develop qualified leaders even if some members neither want them nor believe we need them.

GOD'S STRICTNESS...

BY VIRGILIO O. DANA O

The slogan "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent, we are silent," the guiding principle of the leaders of the Restoration Movement in their desire to restore New Testament Christianity, free from religious pollution--endorses the strictness of God in the execution of His commandments. This principle is still applicable to us today! Briefly but simply stated, we subscribe to this religious aphorism.

At the outset, let me say that God's stringency has already been manifested since the Old Testament times (Deut. 4:2, 11:32). This rigorous imposition of His will continues up to, and we are present within, the New Testament times. After the establishment of the Church of Christ when Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, he clearly conveyed the understanding that they should not go beyond that which is written (1 Cor. 4:6). And we are bound to submit ourselves to this restriction. When we are driving, we see signs, such as: SPEED LIMIT: MAXIMUM 60, MINIMUM 40. This immediately reminds us of the SPEED LIMIT we must follow. We are not allowed by law to go beyond the prescribed speed limit. The same is true with our compliance with the laws of God written in the Bible.

In truth, through the Apostle John, our Lord rigorously warns us, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the worst of the prophecy of this book. If any many shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19). Here, we are clearly reminded of the danger of adding to, or taking away, from the teaching we read in the holy Scriptures.

How can we add to that which is already written in the book of God, the Bible? The answer is: if we teach, in the name of religion, a doctrine or teaching which could not be authenticated in, and could not be substantiated by, the word of God. For example: To teach that a local church can use individual communion cups in the observance of the Lord's Supper, is an addition to that which is specified and written. Why? Because what we can read in the Bible is the use of ONE CUP. This can easily be proven in Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 10:16, 11:25. The use of individual communion cups was introduced into the religious world in 1894 through the efforts of its originator and inventor, J.G. Thomas, a Presbyterian Church preacher. Therefore, it is clear that the use of mini cups is an addition, because long before 1894 the Bible was already written completely. Every local congregation of the New Testament Church Of Christ uses one cup in the communion because she does not desire or intend, in anyway, to add any teaching foreign to the word of God.

Now, how can we take away from the teaching written in the Bible? We are taking away, if we

do not accept, believe, and obey them. For example: the steps of salvation the Bible teaches are: First, one must believe in the saving power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this he acquires by hearing the word of God, or the Gospel (John 3:16; Romans 1:16, 10:17). Second, he must repent of all his sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30). Third, he must confess his faith in Jesus (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:8-9). Fourth, he must be baptized, or immersed in water for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38, 22:16; Mark 16:16). Fifth, he must continue to be faithful to the end (Matt. 24:13). Now, if we say that faith alone can save us, we are taking away, or subtracting from the other steps of salvation written in the Bible. What are those we have taken away, or subtracted? We have taken away, repentance, confession baptism and continued faithfulness in the faith. Therefore, faith alone is not the only prerequisite of salvation. If we insist that faith alone is the only requirement, then the warning recorded in Revelation 22:19 falls upon us. But we do not want this to happen, that is why we are exerting all efforts to simply follow and teach all Bible teachings applicable today, without addition, subtraction or religious adulteration.

Any doctrine, practice or teaching that can not be authenticated in the Bible originated from man. Our Lord Jesus explicitly stated that the teachings of man make worship vain (Matthew 15:8-9). And the Prophet Isaiah reminded and admonished all God fearing people to always speak "according to this word" (Isa. 8:20). So, the surest way that leads us to heaven and life eternal is to follow simple New Testament teaching. The Church of Christ we read about in the New Testament strictly adheres to the absolutely authority of the Scriptures. She believes that adding teaching to, and subtracting or taking away from, those things which are written in the Bible are not permitted by the author of our salvation, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Beloved, does the Church of which you are a member, teach absolutely what the Bible teaches? Does your church believe, obey and teach without addition and subtraction, teachings of the word of God? If not, right now, if you desire to be saved. We invite you to, please, make a serious self-examination. Remember, God is inviting you to go back to, and follow strictly, the Bible--to simply "speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent."--OPA

MAKE FULL PROOF OF THY MINISTRY

BY BARNEY OWENS

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebucke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they shall 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. (II Tim. 4:1-5)

If there is any passage that every boy wishing to be a Gospel Preacher must commit to memory, it is this sacred charge given by inspiration to Timothy. Obviously some did not take to heart the work of serving others by teaching truth in the days of Timothy. Was there a fear in Paul's

heart that he might neglect or abandon this trust? Such is not so far-fetched as numbers have done so since then. It is necessary then, that the charge be restated in every generation. I wish to make some remarks regarding the passage along with some observations in reference to preachers nowadays

THE ADMONITION OF PAUL TO THE PREACHER

To Timothy, and every preacher that has followed, the Apostle reminds of the sacredness of preaching. The charge is of the most "solemn nature," as it is before the Creator and Father of all, as well as the judge of those who are alive and those who have died, when He returns. Every preacher would do well to remember this admonition when he arises to address an audience on each occasion. Account will be given, not to men, but before heaven.

The slippery-tongued orator wishing to speak words of aggrandizement is without respect from Deity. While such are sought by men to tickle the ear, this is not the purpose of preaching. If the praise of men is sought, then one should enter the political arena rather than the field of preaching.

PREACH THE WORD

Expressions applying to the word of inspiration are several in the New Testament, all of which refer to the same thing. The word is the truth (Jn. 17:17), which is the gospel (I Pet 1:25), or the doctrine of Christ (Rom. 6:17). The word, truth, gospel, or doctrine of Christ, is God's testimony to the world, the way of salvation. Paul practiced preaching the word himself. "And I, brethren, when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you; save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (I Cor. 2:1-2). Paul didn't preach what was needed in one place and overlook it in another. He wasn't intent on pleasing men, rather preaching in order to their salvation. Where would you look to find a man to preach the Gospel without fear or favor? Flowery words or, worse yet, sermon selection based on filling one's pocket or purse, is a discredit to the truth.

Preaching is to be done "in season and out of season." There are times when men are receptive to truth; at such times it is to be preached. Any man can fill the pulpit under such circumstances. It is a joy to be in a situation where that is the case. However, there are times when the opposite is true, the truth is rejected and error is wanted rather than the gospel. The ranks thin considerably in such an atmosphere. It is time for a man to be a man of God.

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort" demands that error be faced and exposed, while righteousness is encouraged. Sin is to be brought to the face, those teaching it are to be rebuked allowing all to see the difference in error and the doctrine of Christ. Faithful disciples of Christ are to be uplifted by preaching the good way. Sometimes a preacher leaves his audience in a fog, as there is no distinction made between right and wrong.

"To make full proof of thy ministry" means to be faithful and loyal to all obligations without shrinking in any way; but be devoted fully to this work of preaching. This requires: (1) a watching in all things lest error creep in and lest one allow personal or family difficulties to bring temptations to slant the word. (2) to endure afflictions carries with it physical discomforts, as brethren will declare, "We want preachers to be supported so they can live as well as we." Most of the time it doesn't happen. Mental distress is included, as a preacher worth his salt will stand alone often. Other hardships are his, which he shares alone

with the Lord. (3) He must do the work of an evangelist, which again is to preach the gospel. Preaching is work. It is not a means through which men can be on an extended vacation or have a trip around the country paid for, nor a time which others are expected to be a slave to the preacher. There are Christians and preachers as well who haven't the slightest idea what a preacher's work is. We need to get our information from the word of God and not from the pastors in denominations.

A PREACHER'S HANDS ARE TO BE PURE

Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. (Acts 20:26-27)

The blood is the scabbard of the life of every earthly being, therefore Paul means he is free from the life (lost) of them all. Why could he say this? Because he had not failed to instruct them in the purpose, design, will, direction and commands of God. There is little doubt but that the Apostle referred to the Old Testament passage, Ezek. 3:18-21, where the prophet was told how he would either deliver his own soul or condemn it. If a wicked man was told of his wickedness, even though he failed to respond. The preacher (prophet) had done his work and thus would not be held accountable. However, if he kept silence, then the blood of the wicked would be required at his hand.

Every man does not have to preach. If a man decides to preach, then he must not fail to preach what is needed. The Lord is not asking us to be above human nature and know things we do not or cannot, as it is possible that facts may be revealed after the opportunity. He does however, expect preachers to deal with what is known unto them.

One can follow the schedule of certain preachers and determine what has and has not been preached. There are calls from congregations to various preachers because they want a speaker rather than a preacher. You may ask, what is the difference? Quite simple. A speaker may talk but never preach the truth, that is, the whole counsel of God. A preacher will speak all right enough, but he will remember to whom he is accountable for what he does.

The Internal Revenue recognizes a preacher as a self-employed person. One must remember that is for tax purposes only. A preacher is not self-employed, nor is he to think of himself as employed by a congregation; he is strictly employed by God, and it is He who must be pleased, "for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (Gal. 1:10).

THINGS TO CONSIDER

As a preacher, one should be thankful for each opportunity to preach the gospel, as he is using the power of God to save the souls of men. Prayerfully he must exercise himself to "tell it like it is" unless he thwart the very power of the Lord.

As a preacher, one must not allow his hands to be tied by making agreements that cannot be kept as they hinder what must be done. If a congregation requests him to preach, then hands him a list of subjects to be addressed, he must ask himself the question why this? If the circumstances warrant it of course he should proceed. Nevertheless, if such is done in order to handcuff him, then he should refuse. Being deceitful and agreeing to follow the list and then fail is not right the preacher must determine up front. But to agree just to have the work (a meeting, etc.), knowing all the while the real intent does not relieve one of the responsibility of preaching the whole

counsel of God.

As members of the body of Christ, we should want the truth fully preached without favoritism. If we are aware of a preacher failing to nourish us as needed, then we ought to oppose his being called among us.

ONLY A PREACHER CAN KNOW

There are difficulties connected with preachers that are very difficult to be explained, so, only a preacher can fully grasp these. One of the hardships that bring heartaches to those who preach is to have people oppose you because you preach truth, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16). Worse yet, is to have a brother or sister turn from your friendship, even though they believe as you, but don't want the truth told. Add to this that fellow preachers mock and make fun because they lack courage to preach what is needed.

If there is anything lacking, yet sorely needed, it is men who have backbone to preach all God's will. If there is anything the world does not need, it is preachers who wish they had a backbone. May God bless faithful preachers everywhere.

MY POSITION ON CARNAL WARFARE

I cannot participate in military service 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; Matthew 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" (Matthew 26:52) Jesus; "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 19:36); "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," (2 Corinthians 10:3.4); "Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:44); "Turn the other cheek," (Matthew 5:39); "Recompense to no man evil for evil," (Romans 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, (Matthew 5:34).

4. To enter any military branch or service I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." (2 Corinthians 6:14)

5. To be in any branch of military service in any way, I would be a part of the organization and would therefore have fellowship in the service, but such is prohibited. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Ephesians 5, 11)

6. To serve in any way in the military service, I would be deprived of obeying the command to assemble on the Lord's day to worship God in the Bible way, at least part of the time, hence would disobey God. (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2)

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

1. Louis C. Stands, 728 S. Rainer St, Kennewick, WA 99336

2. David Edwards, 104 N.E. 8th, Moore, OK 73160

3. Jonathan Edwards, 104 N.E. 8th, Moore, OK 73160

4. Bill Kime, RR. 6 Box 290C Fairmont, WVA 26554

5. Kimberly Kime, RR 6, Box 290C, Fairmont, WVA 26554

6. Matthew Kime, RR 6, 290C, Fairmont, WVA 26554

7. Justin Kime, RR 6, Box 290C Fairmont, WVA 26554

8. Scott Holland, Rt. 1, Box 117 A, Ada, OK 74920

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAN YOU HELP?

A few weeks ago the calendar in which all my meetings were scheduled was either lost or stolen (it looked like a checkbook). If you have me (Don L. King) scheduled for a gospel meeting within the next five years, you need to contact me and give me the dates, please. I apologize for the inconvenience! DLK

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The congregation at Atwater, California has changed the time of their Lord's day evening services to 3:00 P.M. Please make the necessary changes in your directories. Thank you. Atwater brethren

SUBJECTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ

If you have a subject you would like information on, let us hear from you. We may be able to encourage one of the editors to write about it.

SEND FEB. ISSUE MATERIAL TO RONNY WADE

Since we plan to be out of the country during the month of January, please send your materials intended for the February issue to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808. Try to have all your materials to him no later than January 13 if you intend it to make the February paper. Subscriptions and renewals should continue to be sent to my address as always. DLK

REGARDING OBITUARIES

Some have questioned the reason why obituaries they submit are sometimes late in being published? At various times, we have quite a large number of these. When the number is as great as it presently is, it creates a space problem for the printers. There are sometimes just too many of them to fit into a given issue. They are returned to me and we send them again the next month. Sometimes this procedure is repeated over and over. We sincerely apologize to those who are unduly upset. We hope this explanation may help you realize we do not pick and choose one over another. We presently have at least seven obituaries on file. We hope to publish all of them this issue. We would suggest, please, that when you send us an obituary you keep it as brief as possible. Try to edit names of various relatives, etc. this will shorten the article and make it easier for us to use them in greater number each month. If the preacher sending it will carefully edit it, we are spared the task. DLK

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE PAPER

We wish to make 2001 a year that *Old Paths Advocate* enlarges the number of subscribers. If brethren do not object, ask that the paper be announced on a regular basis at your congregation. If a brother in each congregation would help in this way, more people could have the paper. Offer to send the subscriptions in for them. Anyone sending

us 10 subscriptions will get theirs free. Consider subscribing for a friend. You will be doing a good work. We ask the preachers to please announce the paper as you go from place to place and be kind enough to send the subscriptions in for those who ask. Too, please send your field reports on a regular basis as well as articles you believe will be helpful. We need the help of everyone. On with the work!

OUR DEPARTED

KING—Warren Tinsley was born Feb. 12, 1909 in Morrison, TN. He passed from this life on August 17, 2000 at age 91. He was preceded in death by a son, Edwin "Neal" King and his wife, Gladys Miles King. Survivors are two sons Miles King of Scotland, AR and Charles King of Troy, TX; a daughter, Joyce Lane of Conroe; TX, ten grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren. Papa King as he was known by his family preached the gospel of Christ for many years. He was known by some as one of the best personal workers in the church. The memorial service was held in the meeting house of the Hoyte Church of Christ outside of Cameron, TX with burial in Saledo, TX. This writer was honored to have conducted the service.—Morgan L. Stripling

HOWARD—Thelma Beatrice Howard was born to Dortha D. Houlcomb Richards and Bill H. Richards, on Feb. 10, 1940 at Mannford, OK. Thelma departed this life on Aug. 15, 2000 at Tulsa Regional Medical Center, Tulsa, OK. Thelma was married to Marlet L. Howard on Aug. 9, 1959. To this union three sons were born. She is survived by her parents; Bill and Dortha Richards, Collinsville, OK; Her husband, Marlet Howard of the home; three sons and two daughters-in-laws; Dennis and Tina Howard of Broken Arrow, OK; Kenneth Howard of Tulsa, OK; and Donnie and Leeann Howard of Tulsa, OK; three grandchildren, Kevin, Cale, and Emily Howard; three brothers and their wives, Clovis and Vivian of Owasso, OK; Billy Joe and Betty of Collinsville, OK; and Ricky and Lou Ann of Tulsa, OK. Thelma had severe medical problems for the past 15 years and had been on dialysis for the past year. Thelma was baptized in 1958 and had been a long time member of the 11th Street Church of Christ in Tulsa where she attended until her death. Thelma will missed by all that knew her. The writer offered words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

VERNON—Oleta Vernon, daughter of Hughlett Earl and Dollie Pearl King Robertson, was born July 27, 1921, in Long Lane, MO. She departed this life Nov. 11, 2000, in the Broken Arrow Medical Center, in Broken Arrow, OK at the age of 79 years, three months, and fourteen days. On May 19, 1941, she was united in marriage to J. P. Vernon, and to this union one son and one daughter were born. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, J.P., on March 25, 1999; a brother, Luke Robertson; and a sister, Iris Robertson. Oleta is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Gary and Cathyrn Vernon, of Springfield, MO; a daughter, Marsha Forsyth, of Shawnee, KS; four grandchildren, Sean Forsyth, Melanie Sinclair, Dallas and Enzo Vernon; two great-grandchildren,

Caya and Noah Sinclair; the mother of Melanie Sinclair and Dallas Vernon, Jane Larsen, of Long Beach, CA; a brother, Larry Robertson, and his wife, Wanda, of Springfield, MO; two sisters, her twin, Loreta Hendrickson, and her husband, Leonard, of Tulsa, OK, and Lois Howard, and her husband, Harvey, of Springfield, MO; a sister-in-law, Helen Robertson, of Greenfield, MO; a number of nieces and nephews; as well as a host of other relatives and friends. Oleta was a long time member of the Church of Christ and attended the Mission Hills Church of Christ in Springfield, MO. Oleta was well known and will be missed by her family and by her brothers and sisters in Christ. The writer offered words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

ROSE—After an extended illness sister Lucille Charles Rose of the Bear Track, KY congregation departed this life at home on November 27, 2000. She will be deeply missed by her faithful companion, Luther Rose Jr and her devoted children. Lucille demonstrated great courage in her struggle against cancer. Though weak and very sick, she still managed to attend services and gospel meetings in the area up until her death, a true saint to the end. We mourn her passing.—Doug Hawkins

LEWIS—Harland Lewis, age 56, passed from this life November 16, 2000, at the Indian Haven Nursing Center, Indiana, PA. He was the son of Harland C. and Evelyn Lewis. He was born December 11, 1943, at Spangler, PA. Harland had been confined to a wheel chair for several years due to a crippling muscular disease, for which there is no cure. His father passed away many years ago with the same disease. Harland was a member of the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ, Indiana, PA. He loved people and he loved to come to church. Through the untiring devotion of his mother and his sister Melissa, he was there until he was no longer capable of coming. He always had a good attitude, a great amount of courage, and he held his hopes high, because of these traits, I believe he was an inspiration to all who knew him. I know he was to me. His mother Evelyn, his sister Melissa and her husband Donald Dunlap, deserve a tremendous amount of credit and praise for their untiring love, devotion, and care for Harland through the many years they cared for him. I am sure God will reward them. He was loved by all who knew him and will be sadly missed by all. I was honored to have been asked to speak words of comfort and hope from God's precious word to the family and friends who had gathered at the funeral home to pay their respect.—Eugene Lockard

COCKRUM—Elaine Joyce Cockrum was born June 3, 1954. For the last several years she had resided in Columbia, Missouri with her husband, Ray Cockrum. It was through Ray that Elaine was first introduced to the Lord's church. When I first met her, she was a very self-sufficient, independent person. But after she was diagnosed with cancer she came to realize that there were some things that she could not do herself. It was my privilege to baptize her into the Lord's body. Her obedience to the gospel caused great rejoicing among the members of the Church of Christ at Rice Road. Elaine often struggled with her health over the last few years, and yet she always had a

way of brightening up a room. Although our tendency is to question why God allows such suffering, I am convinced that Elaine's suffering was not without value. For it appears that through her suffering she came to the understanding that she must trust in the Lord. She departed this life on May 24, 2000. I was honored to conduct the service. Elaine is sorely missed by her husband and family, and by her brothers and sisters in Christ.—Reggie Kinser.

BROWN—Sister Estelle Brown was born October 12, 1910 in Moulton, Alabama and died June 19, 2000 at Little Rock, Arkansas. She was the daughter of William Freeman and Hadgie May (Crov) Jacobs. Estelle was a member of the Church of Christ in Little Rock which meets on Mabelvale Pike. She is survived by 5 children; Mrs. Melvin Styers (Billie), Mrs. Bob Crain (Betty), Elizabeth Brown and Joe Brown, all of Little Rock and Johnny Brown of Benton, AR. She was preceded in death by her husband, Earl and one daughter, Juanita; also one sister and 5 brothers preceded her in death. This writer along with Bro. Cris Dickinson spoke words from the Word of God and offered prayers to comfort to the the family and admonition to all who attended he funeral. We had the pleasure of knowing Sister Brown for a long time, visiting in her home and also knowing her children.—Miles King

PERKINS—Bro. Raliegh Perkins was born in Elk City, Oklahoma January 31, 1915 and passed away on June 29, 2000 in Texas City, Texas. He was survived by his wife of almost 59 years, Inez Perkins; three children, Dr. Ralleen Barfoot. Mrs. Carol Willmon and Dr. E. M. (Buddy) Perkins; also one sister, Mrs Doris Surber; 8 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. The writer assisted Bro. Wayne McKamie who did a very good job in giving words of comfort to the family and friends gathered. His children and grandchildren had written wonderful words of tribute which was read during the funeral service. The singing was beautiful being sung by a group of members of the Lord's church in attendance. Bro. Raliegh was no stranger in our brotherhood. He has been a very good leader in the church; his teaching from the Bible penetrating our hearts as they were plain and to the point. Many of us remember him also in San Antonio, Texas where so many of us accepted and enjoyed the hospitality of Raliegh, Inez and children. I cannot say it all in this short report but what an encouragement to me and a lot of others thru the years!—Miles King

KING—June 14, 2000, Kenneth King ended his long and valliant fight with cancer. He was born April 10, 1961 and was 39 years of age at his passing. He was an inspiration to his brethren and sisters with whom he worshipped at 79th and Kansas Ave. in Kansas City. He was the son of Dale and Hazel King of Kansas City, Kansas. Although he had had numerous surgeries, chemo and radiation and was in the hospital many other times, he passed away at home with his wife, Sherry, his mother and father, one brother and a very dear friend at his bedside. At the the day of visitation before the funeral hundreds of Christians and friends and acquaintances passed by the casket from 5:30 until 9:00 PM. And the day of the funeral the crowd was so large all could not be seated and many were left standing

during the service. Kenneth was a man of many talents both in the church and out. One of the songs that was sung was written by Kenneth himself. Kenneth leaves to mourn his passing his dear devoted wife, Sherry of the home, three small children, Kyle, Kaylee, and Kendal; his mother and father, Dale and Hazel King; four brothers, Kevin, Kerry, Krag, and Kirby and their families, all of the Kansas City area. He is missed in the congregation by the members. Brother Keith Sifford and I conducted the service and the beautiful singing was done by fellow Christians.—Paul O. Nichols

ELLIOTT—Clara A. Elliott was born near Cassville, MO to Ben & Lillie Stumpff July 1, 1912. She entered into rest June 16, 2000 in Bakersfield, CA at the age of 87 years and 11 and one half months. She had lived in the Bakersfield area since 1944. Her husband Verlin, preceded her in death in 1973. Verlin was a gospel preacher and church leader and Clara proved to be a very good preacher's wife. Her home was a home away from home for many gospel preachers as well as other members of the Lord's church. She was a dedicated home maker with many talents, She is survived by three sons, Doyle, Carl, and Dennis all of Bakersfield. One daughter, Marsha, also remains. Marsha is an invalid and required special care. Clara provided this special care for Marsha for 32 years as only a loving mother could provide it. Her family tried to return some of their mother's love as they faithfully cared for her during the last few years of her life. She was a faithful member of the Church of Christ for 74 years and was a member of the Brundage Lane congregation in Bakersfield. Jimmy Winchester, Richard DeGough, and I attempted to speak words of comfort and warning. Beautiful congregational singing was led, by her grandson, Brian Elliott, as she had requested. She was among my favorite people and we will miss her.—Bennie Cryer

NICHOLS—Raymond Nichols was born Aug. 20, 1925 in El Paso, TX and passed from this life June 21, 2000 in Sonora, CA. His parents were Carl and Henrietta Oliver Nichols. He is survived by his wife, Wilma R. Nichols of Columbia, CA. Brothers, Paul of Kansas City, KA, Nelson of Anderson, MO, Eddie of Oklahoma City, OK, and Richard of Birmingham, AL. One sister, Betty Jean Middick of Canyon City, CO. His surviving children are Ann Leonard of Columbia, CA, Duane Nichols of Eureka, CA, and Gloria Bradley of Austin, TX. One daughter, Brenda Joyce Barrett preceded him in death. The Nichols name is well known in our brotherhood and Raymond was no exception. In his early years he worked with several congregations in this part of the country and was a real asset in his teaching and song leading ability. The later years of his working life were devoted to his real estate business. He had been retired for several years and lived in Columbia, CA. For the last several years he had been attending the conegagation at Cress, CA. The respect that Ray deserved was shown by the large gathing of family, brethren and friends at his service. Beautiful singing was done by members of local churches of Christ. The final song was sung by the congregation. The writer was honored to assist Bro. Richard DeGough in an effort to speak words of memory and encouragement.—Rod Wilson



Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt. 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, December 10, 2000—Our meeting schedule is over for the year 2000 and we welcome the time at home for a while. Since my last report I've been with several congregations. I was in Orange, CA in October and Holyoke, CO and Fieldstone, MO in November. I enjoyed my time in each place. The brethren were very hospitable and I pray that some good was done. I solicit your prayers.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@juno.com, December 10—Since last report we have conducted meetings here in Springfield at the North Area Church where Irvin Barnes and Billy Dickinson live and work. The meeting was well attended and being with them was a real pleasure. Next we were in Longwood, FL for a week. The brethren here certainly know how to prepare for and have a good meeting. The hospitality was outstanding. We had visitors from several places in the state which helped a great deal. One was restored and another confessed sins. Our next effort was at Montreal, MO, a mission effort, begun just a year ago. Good progress has been made by those meeting there. Bro. Ron Alexander and I worked together in this meeting. It was a privilege to be associated with Ron who is highly regarded in this area. The building was full for most every service. Prospects for future growth look promising. We were unable to hold the meeting at Burkhart, near Racine, MO, due to my mother's recent stroke. The brethren graciously consented to allow Ron Alexander come in my place so I could go to Texas and help out with the situation there. At this writing mother is stable but prospects for much improvement are not very good. Please remember her in your prayers. I have been honored to work with brethren in twenty gospel meetings during the year 2000. I am still convinced that I that I live and work among the finest people in the world. What a joy to be a part of such a dedicated brotherhood. God bless them all.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, papagreg@aol.com, December 1, 2000—We were in Oakdale, CA in a ten day meeting November 3-12 using the theme of The Ten Commandments. The congregation attended their own meeting, which was refreshing, and was helpful in inviting people to the meeting. We had several visitors from the community at one or more services. The support from surrounding congregations was wonderful. The hospitality of the congregation was very good with meals and visits. Matt Trent works with Oakdale and is doing a fine job. We stayed with George and Cheryl DePonte, who are dear friends, and solid in the cause of Christ. We also enjoyed visits with area preachers who

attended the meeting: Alan Bonifay, Ryan Connor and Ron Jordan. While there were no visible results we trust there will be lasting good from the meeting. Our work continues with the 64th St. congregation in Sacramento. We had Johnny Elmore for our fall meeting October 22nd through 29th. He did an excellent job and we were glad to see the congregation and area members support the meeting quite well. Mike Wells, one of our new members, brought Jeff, a friend from work, to the meeting. After the meeting Mike continued to study with Jeff and he was baptized Nov. 19. The gospel works brethren; we just need to keep on using it.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, E-mail old_paths@juno.com, December 13—It has been a pleasure to be home for a few weeks. Fremont congregation is at peace, for which we are thankful. We have a real wealth of young people and children. It is sobering to think of the monumental responsibility so many little ones entail. It will soon be time for the annual trip to the Philippines. By the time you read this we should be there and hard at work, Lord willing. Brother Ryan Conner, of the Stockton, CA congregation, is to go with me this year and we anticipate an enjoyable and profitable time together in the work. We are scheduled to depart January 3. If I am not mistaken, this marks the 21st trip I have made to the Philippines. The Lord has been good to us in every way. The work has grown and matured. In at least one congregation, there are now elders and deacons. Preachers have been developed and are growing in stature. To God be the praise! It is wonderful to realize that there are members of the Lord's church in that country now who do not remember ever worshiping any other way. We ask your prayers for them and for us as we make the trip. **NOTE: Please send your material intended for publication in the February OPA to Ronny Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO, 65808. Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to me as always.**

Andrew Weaver, 1800 Hwy 72, Apt. #4, Rolla, MO. 65401; (573)341-2779—It has been some time since I last submitted a report. I hope to write them with more regularity in the future. I have been blessed to be able to preach before a number of congregations herein the midwest. I thank the brethren for giving me these opportunities. As I work toward my goal of becoming a full time evangelist, these opportunities give me much needed encouragement and experience. I also thank all the brothers and sisters who have opened their homes up to me while I travel. Your hospitality does not go unnoticed. It brings me great joy to be able to announce that we have had two baptisms here in Rolla in the past few months. One was a young girl named Jennifer Williamson, whom my dad baptized. I have known her pretty much all her life, and her family has raised her up in the way that she should go. The other was my sister Sarah, who now has become my sister in Christ. I was honored that she asked me to baptize her, This was my first baptism, and truly one that will forever be embedded in my memory. I too have been disturbed by the recent e-mails sent out on the subject of women cutting their hair. May we as Christians strive

to be a "light unto the world" and do everything that is possible to "make our calling and election sure." Don't be discouraged or led away by such rabble rousers! For those of you who may not be aware, I would like to announce that Chris Freeman of the Stony Point congregation and I have been sending out an e-mail newsletter for a just a little over a year now. It is called **Back To The Bible**, and it is free to the public. Brothers Gary Weayer, Paul Nichols, Wayne Fussell, and Billy Dickinson are Advisors for **Back To The Bible**, and they have been a great asset in helping us get it started. The internet can be used to help the further spread of the gospel if it is done correctly. We now have some 360-400 who subscribe world wide, and many are in digression or denominationalism. If any wish to subscribe they can do so by e-mailing me, or just sending a blank e-mail to **Back To The Bible**-subscribe@egroups.com.

Gerald Barrett, c/o Church of Christ, 120 E. Tehachapi Blvd, Tehachapi, CA 93561—This is our first report of our efforts in Tehachapi, California. We give God the glory for all the accomplishments thus far. Since we began meeting here on August 13, 2000 we have had two restorations and one confession of fault. My mother, Alice Barrett, was thrilled when plans of establishing a congregation in Tehachapi came to fruition. It was her hope that two of her sons would return to the faith. One of her sons did. James Barrett as well as her granddaughter Christina Schuyler repented and began to serve their Lord once again. On August 30, 2000 Alice Lorene Barrett went home to be with her Lord. Our hearts were made heavy and sorrowful but we have the promise of our Lord we'll meet again some glad day. We were thankful to brother Richard DeGough for preaching the funeral. Please pray for my father Joe Barrett during this time of sorrow. The Brundage Lane congregation supports the work both financially and by attending the services as each can. The Planz Road congregation also supports this work with members attending our worship when they can. This is commendable and appreciated by us. We've had several from the community attend and hope they will continue to come and hear the gospel. It is the "power of God" according to the Book. Brother Richard DeGough held our first meeting here and did a wonderful job of preaching the truth in this community. We appreciated him and his wife Glenda for coming our way. It was a privilege and an honor for Starlene and I to have Richard and Glenda in our home as well as others who came from through out the state to support this mission effort. Bobby and Billye Morrow of Manteca, Glen and Von Neil of Turlock, Larry McElroy of Atwater, Al and Virginia Smith of Orange, Mike DeGough of Turlock, Glen and Joyce Herrin, Edra and Laura Byrd, and Esther Smith of Covina and David Mackey of Ventura. All of these brethren came a long distance to support this meeting and we were encouraged by their efforts. Our sister congregations in Bakersfield helped out tremendously. If anyone is passing through the Tehachapi area please feel free to call us and plan to stay for worship. We solicit the prayers of the faithful every where in this effort of broadening the borders of Zion in this community.

Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015,

MisterJLD@aol.com—On Sunday, November 5, I baptized a man and his wife who had been attending services at Sandgrove for about a year. I preached a sermon about scriptural baptism and they told me after services they had not been baptized for the remission of sins. In fact, the woman said she was saved one Sunday, and then baptized the next Sunday. Realizing that they had not been baptized scripturally, they decided to be baptized for the remission of sins as the Bible teaches. May the Lord give others in this same predicament the courage to follow their example. Make your calling and election sure! November 18-21 George Sears and I met Juan Rodriguez in Mexico City and then traveled on to Ciudad del Carmen and Campeche to visit our brethren there. The church at Deer Park is supporting Eduardo Salinas and Quintin Morales in these places and sent us to visit and encourage the brethren. I was impressed by how devoted and dedicated the brethren are and we were warmed by the gracious hospitality that greeted us. I preached in both places and Juan translated. I have known Juan for thirty-two years and have complete confidence in him. He is tireless in his efforts in Mexico and he was a joy to work with again. George was a great travelling companion and co-worker and all the brethren (especially the kids) enjoyed his presence. The worship services in both places were inspiring and we were encouraged as much, if not more, than the brethren were. I do want to commend Juan for a situation he handled so well at the church in Campeche. During the first part of the service some of the women were saying amen and glory to the Lord (in Spanish of course) out loud. When Juan got up he told them in no uncertain terms that this was unscriptural per I Corinthians 14:34, 35. Women, he told them firmly yet lovingly, are not to speak out in the assembly. That did it! The women stopped speaking out after that. I told Juan later, "You nipped it in the bud! They quit speaking out after you showed them what the Scriptures say." We talked to the preacher, Brother Morales, after services and he said that many of these people were new converts from Pentecostalism and he was glad Juan had said what he did. I appreciate Juan. He did exactly the right thing. Brethren, when we are confronted with something contrary to the Scriptures we need to meet it head on, whether in foreign or domestic work. Nip it in the bud! We exhorted the brethren in this new work to stick to the Scriptures and keep on working for the Lord. May the Lord bless this work, and all of us in the states who are willing to help spread the Gospel everywhere men will receive it.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd, Hughson, CA 95326, November 28—I enjoyed being at Sharonville, Ohio in October. The meeting was well attended by the brethren and 17 outside people as well. The preachers Bro Brian Burns, Bill Ferguson, and Richard Bunner, supported it well. This is the home church of Brother Barney Owens, a dear friend, brother, gospel preacher, whose influence is apparent to all. We made our home with Barney and Bea, whose hospitality was wonderful. They are some of our dearest friends. Barney and I shared some biblical thoughts that really encouraged me, enlightened me, and I feel strengthened my faith. Barney is a diligent worker for the cause, and a powerful preacher, worthy of every

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

If the date near your name and address reads 1-01 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

appreciation expressed of him. We really appreciated the goodness of all the brethren there who made us feel at home. I hope we preached things that will encourage and strengthen the Church and also warn the lost. Brother Russell Owens attended every service, putting off taking care of a serious heart ailment until after the meeting. May God bless him and sister Owens. We also held a meeting with the new church in Tehachapi, CA this month. I am happy to report the good work being done by the brethren. Gerald Barrett and Starlene, his wife, are very busy in the work. Gerald's influence with the family has already produced good. Two have come back to the Church; and in time with these diligent workers, the cause will grow in spirit and in number. There was excellent co-operation from the churches in Bakersfield and others from the south land. Bobby and Billy Morrow, Glen and Vaughn Neal, Larry McElroy, Richard and Bernice Arnold came 200 miles and more to support the meeting. The hospitality of Gerald and Starlene was wonderful. They cared for so many I can't remember the number. We had outside interest because of personal contact and advertising. Brian Elliott, gospel preacher and beloved brother, gave his support in everything. His help in the future will encourage them. I love this young man because he loves the cause. Doyle and Nancy Elliott, Edna Becker, came every service. Doyle and I are life-long friends. It was a good time just to see the interest in a new work by the brethren. Brethren, we can preach in some community where the church is not located if we will dedicate ourselves to it. I must mention the good preaching of Don King at Atwater. When he preaches, the Bible is his text book, and simplicity is his way. I love Don, and regretted having to miss most of his meeting in order to go preach elsewhere. I hope I can do more in this coming year for the cause. I look forward to a good New Year's meeting in Lodi. I recently heard Wayne McKamie in Lodi and enjoyed the short time I could visit with him. I missed two good meetings being away from the area, Johnny Elmore at 64th St. and Greg Gay in Oakdale. The church at home is doing well and at peace, determined to keep working and supporting preachers. May God bless the brotherhood, the preachers, and the sick of the household of faith. I pray that we will be united in the

cause of saving souls, and more of the lost will be saved in the coming year. Preach the word!

Cullen Smith, 86 E. 19th St., San Angelo, TX 76903, Dec 4— The first day of October marked my entry into full time work with the congregation here in San Angelo. I'm excited and optimistic about the work and the possibilities that are present here. This congregation has a number of good leaders and brethren supporting the efforts and they are a constant source of encouragement. I love my parents and the home we left but the brethren here have made it easy to move so far. I was privileged to come here this past summer with Brother Ronny Wade who held a fantastic meeting for the congregation. He did some outstanding preaching to an audience consisting of more than 35 digressive brethren and outsiders. Many of the visitors came nearly every night. I can't recall hearing him preach harder and one was baptized. A television program with Ronny doing the preaching is broadcast here and in Midland and has a large audience. I appreciate this congregation and others who commit themselves to such efforts. This year has been a busy one for me. We have been in meetings at the Pearlhaven congregation at Brookhaven, MS, Dora, MO, Ada, OK, Capitol Hill in OK City and this fall in Ardmore, OK. It was especially good to spend time with Joe Hisle and Johnny Elmore in Ardmore. I've been privileged to grow up around them as they held meetings in my home congregation in Harrison, AR. Their advice and care for the truth is unparalleled. I hope we younger people will never forget these men as time rolls along. Men such as Brother Lynwood Smith, Ronny Wade, Johnny Elmore and countless others have fought off digression, innovations and liberalism and have founded us solid on the ancient landmarks that will never change. I pray we never forget their conservative voices, uncompromising stand for the truth and sacrificial lives. The congregation here has Lord's day worship at 10:30 A.M. and a new time for the evening service of 4:00 P.M. Wednesdays at 7:30 P.M. We welcome anyone who is traveling to stop by. Please pray for the work. May God bless the brotherhood.

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, FEBRUARY 2001

NO. 2

A HUNG JURY

By DOUGLAS HAWKINS

In I Cor. 1:13 the apostle says, “Judge in yourselves...” After making his arguments as to why a woman should be covered and man should not, Paul calls for the brethren to weigh the evidence and render a verdict.

In just about every area of life, we are required to use a level of judgment and a certain amount of wisdom. At times, our values are thrown into conflict, and we are forced to balance them against each other and make the very best decision possible. As we get older we see that not every question is easily answered and not every problem is easily solved. Your work probably has a procedural manual outlining what to do in a number of given situations. However, if circumstances were to arise that are not specifically covered in the manual, you would be forced to draw from your experiences, weigh the consequences of your decision, and use your best judgment.

The bizarre circumstances of our last presidential election is a case in point. Legal questions sprang up about which votes should be counted in the final tally and which should be excluded. In your mind, the solution was probably quite clear. After all, it was in everyone else’s. There were, though, generally speaking two strongly held opinions about what course of action should be followed. The Florida supreme court ruled in one way and the U.S. supreme court in another. No exact procedure had been outlined, forcing judges to decide questions based on legal and democratic principles.

Even in spiritual matters, we are required to apply principles and use good judgment in our application. Gambling, social drinking, and provocative clothing, for instance, are sinful because the eternal principles of God’s word legislate against them. Very seldom do men disagree over a stated principle in the Bible, but men do often disagree over the application of the principle and where the “line” ought to be drawn in different situations. Such disagreements, regretfully, cause needless confusion in the kingdom of God. Paul strongly exhorted, “...that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Unfortunately our deliberations are not always in such agreement. People have varied opinions on a number of different subjects. This article is entitled “a hung jury” for this very reason.

In some areas, a difference of opinion is inconsequential. Whether you believe Paul’s thorn in the flesh was blindness

or gallstones makes little difference. A certain amount of speculation is needed to form either opinion. But, when it comes to doctrinal matters, Christian living, or the worship far more care should be given in deciding the best “position” to take and what advice to give.

In a court of law involving criminal charges, if a jury cannot unanimously decide a case, it is considered to be a hung jury. In that instance, our system has elected to err on the side of individual rights and not on the side of the courts. Under our judicial system a man is presumed innocent until proven guilty. The burden of proof rests with the state. That system in itself is a resolution of what to do when there is a deadlock. Similarly, we have to look for resolutions to decide some questions, resolutions that are sound, safe, and absolutely right. I believe when possible we must look for ways that are right and can’t be wrong.

Instead of looking to occupy the high ground or taking a position that is unquestionably right, some have caused needless confusion by insisting on things that are doubtful at best. Some brethren will brazenly say, “I don’t see anything wrong with social drinking.” “What harm is there in buying a raffle ticket?” “I don’t believe missing Lord’s day worship on occasions is forsaking the assembling.” What if, just for sake of argument, that there’s nothing “technically” wrong with moderate social drinking. Seems harmless enough doesn’t it? Well, if a fellow can have one beer can he have two? If he can’t have two, should he have stopped at a half? At what point does he violate the principle of sobriety? If it’s absolutely right for him not to drink alcohol at all and completely avoid the sin of drunkenness why would I contend that drinking on any social level is acceptable? Why don’t we use the very best judgment possible? Why don’t we render a safe verdict?

Let me make brief application to the latest controversy. As most well know, material has been circulated defending a woman “trimming” her hair or cutting it providing it’s still left long. To my disappointment, some have bought into it. Brethren, if a woman’s hair can’t get too long, but it can get too short why would anyone advocate that she cut any at all? Who knows, you may be the very reason she crosses the line and there is a line somewhere. Here’s but one more thing to cause controversy. My, my what some of us are going to have to account for in judgment. I’ll promise you this — there won’t be a hung jury then. It seems wise to me to be absolutely sure now.

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 2



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-10

A Hung Jury 1

Christ Has The Answer 2

The Querist Column 3

Religion In The Home 4

The Message & The Messenger Pt. 2 5

The Twelve Thrones The Apostles Sit On .. 6

The Song Of The Vineyard 7

Shut Your Mouth! 8

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
Also On The Internet
Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536

A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.

CHRIST HAS THE ANSWER

By KEVIN W. PRESLEY

His nation was steeped in a war that had been waging on for years. With what seemed the weight of the world upon his shoulders, the great statesman Winston Churchill called on a close friend who happened to be a minister. He asked if he could come see him and naturally he could and did. After a few hours of discussing world affairs and the war at hand, Mr. Churchill looked silently at the floor for several moments. He broke the silence by saying, "My friend, all of the problems that the world has ever tried to solve or ever will, can not and will not be solved until Jesus Christ comes again." What an impressive statement coming from one of the most brilliant men in modern times. He was essentially confessing his inadequacy and his dependence upon a higher source of intelligence to untangle all of the webs that man had woven. However, while it is true that every argument will be settled and every dissenting voice silenced on the day of judgment, the fact remains that Jesus has already been to earth once before. He came claiming to be "the light of the world" and said, "Whosoever followeth him shall never walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." His words and his works continue to bless this old earth with whatever level of civilization that it enjoys. The word of the Lord never penetrates a society but that society doesn't become a better and more decent place.

"In God we trust" has made our nation great. However, as God is slowly being driven from our shores the light is going with him and a blanket of darkness is settling upon this country. Why? With all of the problems that we face as individuals, as church members, and as citizens of a divided country, you would think people would readily listen to one who not only claims but also has demonstrated that he has all of the answers. Yet we refuse to listen to him and our troubles but increase. Jesus said that it would be this way. In John 3:19-20, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

While our society claims to be searching for answers to life's most difficult questions, they frustrate themselves by refusing to turn to the source for all of the answers. For example, isn't it strange that the ones making the most noise about AIDS and other STDs, are the ones living a perverted lifestyle which spreads disease like the common cold? We would all like to see disease of any kind cured and suffering alleviated. However, we know their motive is be able to live the life of their choosing without consequences. Such is impossible! They are stumbling in the darkness and complaining about their plight. However, they love their sin too much to give it up and come to the light. When the Gentiles did so, God finally gave them up to fulfill their lustful cravings. They "received in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." (Romans 1:27)

It is the one who refuses to get up and go to work who most often complains about how economically unfair and unbalanced our society is. They could work, but they would rather be lazy. But we are supposed to recognize a problem

and solve it by coming to their rescue with handouts and welfare. Again, they could come to the light and live as God would have them to, but they love the darkness and thus remain in it.

Yes indeed, Jesus Christ is the answer to all of the troubles in the world. The question is will we come unto him and find rest or will we continue to frustrate him and ourselves by refusing his counsel? With that stated, let me affirm that Jesus is the answer to problems in the church. Now anybody should be aware that the church shall always face issues, setbacks, and difficulties. There is no need to throw up our hands and panic as though the cause has been jeopardized because somebody assails it in one way or another. The early church had its fair share of problems to solve. I fear though that the difference between them and us is that they were willing to let Jesus solve their problems. They were anxious to let his word settle every dispute. Unfortunately, we not only don't solve many of our problems, we compound them by either refusing to address them or by seeking an alternative to God's prescription. Let me name a few areas in which this is evident.

IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH

Any conscientious person should be alarmed at the escalating rate of divorce and remarriage in our brotherhood. Who is not shocked and discouraged by reports of sexual immorality, drinking and drug abuse, even homosexuality among the saints? I am! In the year 2001, it will be hard to visit a congregation that has been untouched by issues revolving around ungodly living on the part of someone. But why should we be shocked when the attitude of many is to "sweep it under the rug."

Jesus gave a prescription for sin in the church in I Corinthians 5. I happen to believe that it will work if we resolve to do what the Lord said. In regard to the brother involved in an incestuous relationship, Paul plainly commanded the brethren to "with such an one know not to eat." (vs. 11) However church discipline is rarely practiced when it should be. I have heard folks try to dilute Paul's teaching by inferring that taking disciplinary action is cruel, unloving, judgmental, and harsh. Congregations that cast the Scriptures aside and decide that they are going to "love" the sin away, always end up becoming a hotbed of worldliness and immorality. After all, did not Paul teach in the same context that when we ignore Christ's admonition that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

I have never seen a congregation become more pure or an adulterer leave an unscriptural relationship because the church decided to just "love" and tolerate them and hope they would decide to straighten up. In fact, gargantuan messes have been made in any number of churches in an area because the original church failed or refused to act. Brethren, sin is going to consume us if we don't take the difficult stand that Christ commanded we take!

FALSE TEACHERS

Here is another thorn in the side of the church, though not a new one. False teachers have been around since the Judaizers who harassed Paul and the early churches. Once again, however, Paul was clear and definite in regard to dealing with them. He never hesitated to stand up and point out one who posed a threat to the church and the truth by teaching false doctrine. (II Timothy 2:17)

Some would be appalled at the boldness of the apostle

were he to be with us today and call the names of those who have in recent times sought to teach new and strange things. He told the Romans to "MARK and AVOID them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." (Romans 16:18)

Whether it is in the pulpit, by printed page, house to house, or via the world wide web, when preachers and would-be teachers begin encouraging us to 'broaden our comfort zone', or fellowship the digressives, or otherwise leave the truth and create strife in the church, the local congregation has a God-given duty to identify him and warn others about him. Instead, we are just glad to have him off of our hands and we let him go on down the road and spread his heresy to more unsuspecting people in the next congregation. Maybe some of our more liberal preachers would start shaping up and we would see less confusion and controversy in the church, if faithful brethren would start taking the mask off of the false teacher that is among them so everyone may know to avoid him before it is too late.

We could all cite various problems that we face as the church in modern times. But Jesus has the answer to any and all of our them. The question is, are we really seeking the answers?

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: I John 5:16 is a bit confusing. For whom do you pray, and for whom do you not pray? (CA)

Answer: The scripture in question reads: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death, I do not say that he should pray about that." (NKJV)

A number of things are evident from the teaching of this passage. First, that a child of God can sin, secondly, that there are sins that are not "unto death," thirdly, we should pray for those who sin "not unto death" with the assurance that God will hear and answer our petition, fourthly, there is a sin "unto death," and finally it is useless to pray for those guilty such sins. But what is the sin "unto death?" It would seem likely that John did not have a specific sin in mind. Even though others would be aware of the sin, there is no necessity to conclude that it had to be one particular act. Hence, any sin that one commits. The death mentioned here is not the death of the body, but rather "spiritual death." In other words the individual under consideration is involved in sinning that causes a separation between him and God. Inherent in the verse is the obvious conclusion that the one praying is able to distinguish between a "sin unto death" and "a sin not unto death." The real question then becomes, how do we make that distinction? John has previously written in I John 1:8-10 that all men have sinned and that those who deny such, not only lie, but they make God a liar. He further taught that the blood of Christ cleanses our sins if we walk in the light, (I John 1:7) and that if we "confess our sins, he is faithful to forgive our sins" (I John 1:8). From these passages, we learn that the Lord will forgive every sin that one commits if he truly repents and confesses the sin.

But according to I John 5:16 there is a sin the Lord will not forgive. Thus, the sin the Lord will not forgive must be one that the individual refuses to confess. The one who commits this type of sin has a disposition of heart that causes him to be unwilling to acknowledge his wrong and turn away from it. Such an attitude will ultimately lead to eternal destruction. Truly a sin "unto death." With this background information the answer to the above question is: we should pray for those brethren who sin and then repent and confess, for their sin is not unto death. For those, however, who continue to sin, those who will not repent and confess their sin, we should not pray.

Question: Should a Christian carry health, life, or accidental insurance coverage? Would doing so demonstrate a lack of faith on the part of the individual? Is it wrong for a Christian not to plan for the future?

Answer: I do not know of a single passage in scripture that would prohibit a Christian from carrying insurance or planning for the future both spiritually and financially. Some have referred to the teaching of Jesus in Mt. 6:25 where he said "Take no thought for your life..." (KJV). A better and more accurate translation of that verse reads "Therefore I say to you do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on..." (NKJV). The idea is that we are not to be anxious or overly concerned about the future. The Lord will take care of His people. That does not mean, however, that I should not do my part in looking out for myself. If this verse teaches that it is wrong for me to secure insurance coverage, it would also teach that I don't need to work; i.e. I could just lay around, do nothing, and expect the Lord to care for me. Such is a foolish and unfounded conclusion. Notice verse 19 of this same chapter "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal." Is Jesus saying "don't save any money"? Is the teaching here, that it is wrong to have a bank account? Of course not. The Lord is teaching that the primary emphasis of our life should not be to make and hoard money. Our primary concern is to "lay up treasures in heaven." However, it is not wrong for people to save, or plan for the future. In fact it is demanded. It is a part of good stewardship. Paul taught that the man who fails to provide for his own has "denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (I Timothy 5:8). I am wrong, when I fail to be a good steward with that which the Lord has allowed me to have, or when I fail to make provisions for the future of my self and my family when I could have, and then when trouble or disaster happens I expect the church to step in and take care of me. It is not the responsibility of the church to care for people who foolishly and carelessly fail to provide for themselves, when they could have done so. Carrying insurance is just good business and good stewardship, and is in no way an indication of a lack of faith in God.

Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, PO Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 or rfwade@juno.com.

RELIGION IN THE HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

Family worship is as old as the family itself Noah and his family stepped from the Ark and built an altar. They then worshipped God (Genesis 8:20). Think of the multiplied instances in which God has made use of the home places which were consecrated to Him: Abraham and his wanderings, (Genesis 12th and 13th chapters) is replete with the recurring phrase, "and he built there an altar unto Jehovah."

There is intrinsic beauty in the study of our first human home at its daily worship hour. In that perfect relationship with the Creator there was a period in "the cool of the day" when the family were in fellowship with God. During that pause in the evening, before the long rest at night they had learned to anticipate the sound of His voice while "walking in the garden."

Lydia's house, (Acts 16) enabled her to give her timely invitation to Paul and Silas to, "come into my house and abide there." Aquilla and Priscilla turned their house into a place of meeting for the church. (I Corinthians 16:19) Mark's home, alive at midnight with praying disciples, was ready to receive Peter from his prison deliverance according to Acts chapter 12. The "upper room" of a disciple sheltered the last Passover that our Lord ate with His disciples. It was also the place where the Lord's Supper was first instituted. The homes of Mary and Martha, Zacchaeus, Peter and hordes of others mentioned in the Bible were also utilized. These homes have helped to shape and mold the lives of great characters, both statesmen and religionists.

The memories of the old home place with all that went to fill them have held straight the lives of many youths when footloose in the world at large. Home places of great men are preserved and displayed with interest as having a significant bearing on the character of such men. Not often do we see pointed out to us the homestead of a noted criminal. The reason may be that few of them had the advantage of such a place. Religious homes do not lend themselves to the breeding of criminals.

Christian parents should see to it that religion has the first place in their homes. Some of the best and earliest impressions can be made upon the child by his parents living Christianity in the daily home life.

Where God's Word is read and obeyed in the daily home life, the child is made to see the beauty and benefits of it constantly. He learns to appreciate it because it causes him to have a more truthful father and mother than the parents of his playmates who are worldly. He sees that they treat each other better and that his home is more congenial. Thus, like young Timothy, the faith is imbedded in him in his tender years.

Regardless of how much religion we may display at church, if we do not practice it at home it can not have the proper influence upon our children. We cannot be hypocrites before them. They know us too well. What we are when we get out into the wider circles of the work of the church depends on what we are in the intimacy of our own homes. One, who cannot lead the prayer in the quiet of his own home, usually does a poor job of trying to lead a public prayer. When Jesus had cast the devils out of the

poor benighted soul. He told him: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." (Mark 5:19) Thus, He laid down a principle showing that it would not be in accord with the principles of Christianity to allow this man to accompany Him to some foreign field while his home folk knew nothing about the Christ. I believe that today the Lord expects us to first exert our influence at home. I have always been made to wonder about the preacher who wielded such an influence away from home while his children were not even members of the church. Too, I have always felt that the brother who could sit on the street corner all day and argue scripture, (not knowing what kind of mischief his children were in) would do better to do some of that teaching at home.

Family worship will go as far as anything in the world in giving religion a place in the home and causing children to realize that father and mother reverence God. It will cause them to appreciate His goodness and depend upon Him for their blessings. Every Christian home should have at least one hour set apart for this worship where all the family can participate. We found in rearing our children that a good time for this was soon after the evening meal before the children got too sleepy. Some prefer to do this around the breakfast table. One of the most impressive of these services I ever took part in was around the breakfast table of Brother Alfred Ellmore, when I was a boy.

A song or two that the children can help sing makes the worship more realistic. A chapter read by father or mother or by one of the children, with anyone asking questions or offering comments on the lesson, followed by all, both young and old kneeling down should go to God in prayer. Here the children will learn the lessons, of life and duty. They will learn to read aloud the Word of God and learn how to pray and sing.

May we all have more religion in our homes. -*OPA* (next month: "LEADING CHILDREN INTO THE CHURCH")

THE MESSAGE & THE MESSENGER

BY JEFF THOMPSON
PART 2

The responsibility of promoting Christianity by living a blameless life does not rest solely at the feet of preachers and church leaders. In his sermon on the mount, Jesus told all of the multitude to be perfect even as their father in heaven is perfect (Matt 5:48). Too often this passage has been dismissed by the reasoning that we are all human and therefore can never be perfect. But the fact is that Jesus told us to be and furthermore, gave us the means to be (I John 1:5-7, Eph 5:1, Col 1:28, 4:12). The doctrine of perfection does not mean that we are expected to make no mistakes or errors in judgment; after all, we have the second law of pardon. Instead, it forbids willful sinning. To sin willfully, even with the intention of making a confession for it after the fact, is a mockery of God, his mercy, and the second law of pardon. Hebrews 10:26-27 means exactly what it says.

The scriptural exhortations to live a pure, godly, Christian life apply to all believers, and all believers serve as representatives of Christianity and the church to a degree. The Scriptures place more emphasis on the lives of church

leaders and preachers because they are under so much more scrutiny.

Christians should also understand that sins have consequences and repercussions that will be felt by future generations. The church that we read of in the New Testament went into apostasy; why? Why are there no congregations today in the cities where they existed in the first century? We do not know the exact details of the things that happened to these congregations; but what ever happened, it did not happen overnight. When the strict form of the Scriptures is relaxed and unscriptural things are tolerated, spiritual decline begins. The end result is the total loss of a congregation. Let us never think it cannot happen to us (I Cor 10:12). Revelation chapters two and three relate to us how the Lord feels when we let our guard down spiritually and allow unscriptural practices to creep in. When we loose our first love, or the zeal with which we once served the lord; when we allow unscriptural things or fellowship those who do them, when we are weak in our Christian responsibilities, the Lord is not satisfied. When we stop demanding separation from the world (I John 2:15), we give silent consent to worldliness. When we enjoy and thereby encourage involvement in worldly things, pleasures, appetites, even fashions and hairstyles, it cannot surprise us when our younger generations turn to worldly pursuits and choose them over their duty to the church. It cannot be a surprise when young people raised in the church grow up and leave it or when they never obey the gospel at all. After all, what is the point if we are just like the world?

When we praise the things that are the world's goals (money, power, prestige) how can it surprise us when a church member takes a job working or traveling on the Lord's Day instead of assembling with the saints to worship as commanded in the Scriptures?

When the importance and seriousness of the sacred institution of marriage is not taught, there can be little wonder why too many Christian couples divorce. Further more, it can be no surprise when younger generations view marriage so frivolously and sometimes enter into it almost whimsically instead of looking long and hard for the right mate. Nor can it be a surprise when young people marry out of the Lord. Certainly there is more to finding the right marriage partner than just finding a member of the church, but it should still be a top priority. No wonder there are so many broken hearts and broken homes among the Lord's people.

Sexuality and morality need to be taught from the pulpits and in the homes. We dare not bury our heads in the sand on this issue for fear of embarrassment, but we must teach what is right in order to avoid what is wrong. Silence on such issues results in "Christians" committing fornication and adultery, having babies out of marriage, and contracting deadly diseases. Such terrible and painful things as these are not surprising; the surprise is that we don't seem to know where they came from or what to do about them. We should never assume that people know the things that we do not teach. The Bible is not silent on these issues, how can our pulpits afford to be?

Too many preachers today do not address the tough issues. Too many gospel meetings are conducted in which no sin is ever mentioned for fear of offending someone.

Maybe there is someone in the crowd who is guilty of that sin. How ambiguous would our religion be if Christ and his apostles were as vague as we sometimes are? Too many sermons today do not address the real issues that confront the church. There will probably be few church members lost for failing to believe baptism is essential for salvation (we preach that every sermon); but many could be lost for worldliness and sin which we fail to address. There have been instances when brethren did not appreciate the preaching of a certain issue. They argue that such preaching will "run off" the guilty brother rather than draw him in. But I have never known even one case of a person repenting and correcting his error without the truth being taught. It is strange that some believe the preaching of the gospel will cause souls to be lost when the Bible says it will save them (I Cor 1:21).

The sad fact is that we live in a world of sin. Many times it seems that dishonesty, immorality, and just plain meanness rule the day. But even more sad is the fact that just about any sin the world can invent can be found in the church. From the light weights like lying, cheating on taxes, or general dishonesty, to the heavy hitters like adultery, drug abuse, spouse and child abuse, homosexuality, and just about any others. Certainly such deviant behaviors are not the norm, but such things should never be numbered among the saints; not even once. God punished David because his sin gave great occasion for the enemies of God to blaspheme. Can we suppose he views sin more favorably today than he did then? It is not just the soul of the sinner that is at stake here, but the future of the church and the souls of all who depend on her for salvation.

It may well be that since the Lord has his treasure in earthen vessels it cannot help but be tainted by the dust of the vessel; but if we are ever to succeed in our endeavors to save ourselves and the world, we had better take that responsibility seriously. We must live the gospel, all of us, and draw a line of demarcation between ourselves and those who don't. We must preach sound doctrine and the things that become it (Titus 2:1), that is promote it and support it. The things that, when practiced by Christians, cause unbelievers to take us seriously. Until we preach and practice these things, our spiritual survival and much more our efforts to save others are in grave jeopardy.

THE TWELVE THRONES THE APOSTLES SIT ON

By BENNIE T. CRYER

The apostles of Christ found it difficult to understand some of the doctrines Jesus taught them. They seemed especially concerned when he taught them a lesson about the difficulties rich people would have entering the kingdom of heaven and following him, Matthew 19:16-30. The disciples seemed to think that if the rich in this world would have difficulty being saved, it would be difficult for anyone to be saved. In v. 27 Peter asked an important question for the disciples. He said, *Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?* Jesus' answer gives us the subject of this article. *Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne*

of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. When was this promise to be fulfilled? Would they be ruling over something or someone while they are sitting on the twelve thrones? What does their sitting on the twelve thrones mean for us today since it is expressly stated that they would be *judging the twelve tribes of Israel?*

They Were To Do This When Christ Sat On His Throne

It was prophesied in the Old Testament when Christ would begin sitting on his throne. Peter referred to this prophecy on the day the church began in Acts 2:30-32. God would, *raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.* Jesus is now at the right hand of God on the throne of David with all authority given to him in heaven and in earth, Matthew 28:18; Revelations 3:7. Therefore, the apostles began sitting on the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel at that time and are currently sitting on these thrones since Christ is still on his as the king of kings.

They were to do this in a period called *The Regeneration*

The regeneration refers to the period of time we are in now. It means reborn or renewal. Sinners can be born again now. We are in the regeneration period. The generation period existed when Paul wrote Titus 3:5. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* The regeneration age has a "washing" and the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." This is exactly what Jesus taught Nicodemus in John 3:5 about the kingdom of God. *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* "The washing of regeneration" and "born of water" refers to the act of immersion in water the believing, penitent sinner submits himself to as the apostle Peter preached from his throne on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:38-41. Those that gladly received his word were baptized and thus "born again" and received "the washing of regeneration." Therefore, the apostles began sitting on the twelve thrones when it became possible for man to be born again.

The Apostles Began Their Judging In Acts Chapter Two In A.D. 33

The apostles were asked a question in Acts 2:37. *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* The apostle Peter answered their question in v. 38. *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* In this way they began their "judging." Their judging refers to their decisions about what we are to believe and practice in the kingdom of God. They judged in person while they lived on this earth. Today they are still judging through the written word. Each judgment they made was inspired by the Holy Ghost and they all became "the commandment of the Lord," I Corinthians 14:37.

The reason the apostle Peter could judge as to what the people in Acts 2 were to do in order to be forgiven of their sins is found in John 20:22-23. *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they*

are retained. This is the kind of power Jesus gave the apostles when they sat on the twelve thrones. They were the ones who were to decide who was guilty or justified, who was saved or lost. Jesus strengthened their judging position in Matthew 18:18-20. *Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* This was said in the context of what was to be done in the case of discipline in verses 15-17. The reason what the apostles decided was bound in heaven is because heaven was the source of their decisions.

What Does This Mean For Us Today?

We live under the reign of Christ. Christ delegated authority to the apostles to judge in matters of faith and practice for each one in the kingdom. They handed down to us through the New Testament how to enter the kingdom, how to worship God, and how to maintain our relationship with God and each citizen of the kingdom. Their words are bound in heaven. Some have attempted to weaken the apostle's decisions about "doctrine" by saying there is a difference between the gospel and doctrine. We can have unity on the gospel but in doctrine we can have diversity. It seems this is untrue because it dethrones the judgments of the apostles as they sit on the twelve thrones judging in such matters as what is doctrine and not doctrine. What must be obeyed and what we may have liberty in. Let us all be good citizens of the kingdom.

THE SONG OF THE VINEYARD

By JIMMY VANNOY

Isaiah 5:1-7 is a song which is meant to be sung and not read. It is a tragic ballad about a vineyard which was destroyed by its owner because it produced wild grapes. It is a prophecy in song about the future fall of Israel and Judah because they too did not produce good fruit. This is a song to the Well-beloved (God), who had a vineyard. It was on a hill which had very good soil, and all the stones were dug out of the soil. He planted the very best grape vines, had a wall around the vineyard to protect it and a tower in the middle of it to watch over it and protect it. He also had a winepress so the grapes could be processed. This vineyard had every advantage and should have produced the very best grapes. Instead, it produced wild grapes.

God asked the question, "What more could have been done to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" (Isaiah 5:4) Then He asked, "Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?" (v. 4) The obvious answer was that there was nothing else He could have done. The vineyard had every advantage and should have produced the very best grapes. The fault was not God's; it was the fault of the vineyard.

Israel and Judah represented the vineyard, and God blessed them, giving them every advantage. They should have been honorable, righteous and fruitful nations, but instead they were rebellious and involved with idolatry.

God would not tolerate such behavior but would punish them for their disobedience.

What did the owner do to the vineyard? He tore down the hedges around it and broke down its walls. He did not prune the vines or dig up the weeds and refused to allow the rain to come on the vineyard.

Similar punishment would come to Israel and Judah. The Assyrians came down on Israel in 722 BC and conquered them, destroying their cities and scattering them among other nations. Judah was conquered in 586 BC by Babylon. Jerusalem was destroyed, and the people were taken into captivity. Like the vineyard, God destroyed these nations because of their rebellion. Neither Israel or Judah had been conquered when Isaiah 5 was written, but Isaiah accurately prophesied through the song of the vineyard that it would happen.

We today are like the vineyard. We have Jesus, who died for us. His shed blood cleanses us from our sins. We are members of the church, the body of Jesus, the pillar and ground of the truth. We have the Bible, the complete revelation of God to man. We have leisure time we can give to the Lord. We are blessed with plenty. We live in the most prosperous and stable country in the world. We have every advantage. God has the right to expect us to put Him first, obey Him and worship Him according to His will. But many Christians take their blessings for granted and do not focus on service to God and others. What is God's attitude about this? Look at what He did to the vineyard and to the nations of Israel and Judah.

The reason God destroyed the vineyard was that it produced bad fruit, and so it will be with us if we do not produce good fruit. We will be destroyed like the vineyard. Jesus said, "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (Matt. 7:19) In John 15:1-8, Jesus depicts Himself as the vine, and we who are God's children as the branches. There is no excuse for us to fail to produce fruit because Jesus, our vine, provides nourishment which allows us to produce the best fruit. Therefore, it should be no surprise that any branch which does not bear good fruit will be cut off and burned, just as God destroyed the vineyard which produced bad fruit.

Maintaining our fellowship with God depends on producing good fruit. It is important, then, to understand what good fruit is. Phil. 1:11 teaches us to be filled with the "fruits of righteousness." Good fruit includes doing deeds which are righteous. The church in Philippi was very generous in giving to Paul so he could meet his physical needs. He told them that their generosity would be "fruit that abounds to your account." (Phil. 4:17)

The most complete definition of good fruit is found in Galatians 5:22, 23, where we have listed the fruit of the Spirit. They are "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." None of the items in this list is actually a deed or a good work. They are all characteristics and personality traits that all Christians should have. Those who have these characteristics will do good works because they have these characteristics, but the good fruit is spoken of as being the characteristics themselves rather than the works produced by the characteristics.

It is important to remember the tragic song of the vineyard. The vineyard was destroyed because it did not

produce good fruit, even though it had every advantage. We too have every advantage, and we will be cut off if we do not produce good fruit.

SHUT YOUR MOUTH!

By TAYLOR A. JOYCE

William Barclay, author of the *Daily Study Bible*, tells of a time when he lost his voice. He stopped by a drug store on route home from the university where he was a teacher. Although he could only speak in a whisper he was able to communicate his need and to receive a bottle of medication. As the sales clerk was wrapping the bottle she commented, "You must have been talking too much."

She was right, of course. Barclay had strained his voice from too much talking in the classroom. Loss of voice is frequently a consequence of too much talking, but not always. The fact is that all of us talk too much, but we don't always lose our voices. Of far greater concern is the possibility that we might lose our souls.

James cautioned against this common human frailty when he counseled: "Let every man be swift to hear; slow to speak (1:19)." Solomon noted: "The more you talk, the more likely you are to sin. If you are wise, you will keep quiet" (Prov. 10:19 TEV)."

As God listens to our incessant chatter He must be tempted to say, "Shut up!" Indeed, He does say that. God's directive is conveyed to us by the Apostle Paul: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God (Rom. 3:19)."

The area of special concern here is our sinfulness. Accuse a person of sin and he immediately shifts his mouth into overdrive. He will respond in one of two ways. He will tell you about his goodness, as though goodness in one area of life can counterbalance badness in another. Or he will find a way to offer excuses for his misconduct. But neither bragging nor excuse making will pass muster with God.

The excuse-maker will tell you a thousand one reasons why he is not guilty. But he is guilty, despite his protestations to the contrary. We are all guilty. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). When Paul speaks of sin, he puts it in the past tense — "All have sinned." But to emphasize the continuing nature of our bad conduct, he shifts to the present tense — "All ... come short (continually) of the glory of God." And no amount of excuse making can belie that fact! John addresses the same issue and stresses both the past and the present reality of sin in the experience of the believer. "If we say that we have no sin (present), we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in; us ... If we say that we have not sinned (past), we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1:8-10).

On the other hand, hear the self-righteous Pharisee say, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:11-12). He was so busy extolling his own virtues that he couldn't hear God saying: "You talk too much. Just

shut up, and when you do you will come to realize, Mr. Pharisee, that when every mouth is stopped all the world becomes guilty before God!"

In an exposition of Romans 3:19-20 D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote: "How do you know whether a man is a Christian? The answer is that his mouth is 'shut'. I like this forthrightness of the Gospel. People need to have their mouths shut, 'stopped'. They are forever talking about God, and criticizing God, and pontificating about what God should or should not do, and asking 'Why does God allow this and that?' You do not begin to be a Christian until your mouth is shut, is stopped, and you are speechless and have nothing to say. You put up your arguments, and produce all you righteousnesses; then the Law speaks and it all withers to nothing - becomes 'filthy rags' and 'dung', and you have nothing to say. That is what the Law does: That 'every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God.'"

Those who responded to the invitation to a feast with excuses missed out on a great blessing (Luke 14:16-24). The immoral idolators of Roman 1 were declared to be without excuse for their failure to see the Creator in creation and for their resultant debauchery (v 20). Until a person is rendered speechless before God he can never be a Christian. So long as his only response to the commandments of God is a string of excuses he will remain unsaved. God has clearly taken all our excuses away. And so long as we can still brag about our accomplishments we do not possess the requisite humility to be a child of God. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded" (Rom. 3:27). So if you really want to go to heaven, shut your mouth!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notice of Wade-Buchanan Debate

The Lord willing Ronny Wade will meet Bob Buchanan in a religious discussion March 22-23, 2001 in Bowling Green, KY. The debate will be held at the Carroll Knically Institute for Economic Development and Conference Center (also known as WKU South Campus) in Bowling Green. The Potter Christian Home is directly across the parking entrance from WKU. The discussion will be over the number cups that may be scripturally used in the Lord's supper. We invite all to attend. For further information contact: Michael Conley, 1565 Hayes Rd., Bowling Green, KY 42103 or Shelby Taulbee, 51 Trammel Boyce Rd., Scottsville, KY 42164, (270) 622-7628.

New Church Building In Dothan, Alabama

We are excited to announce the opening of our new building for worship soon in Dothan, AL. With the help of the Lord and a lot of brethren along the way, we are getting close to completion. The building is located at 4186 Hartford Hwy. (a major thoroughfare) on the west side of Dothan. Lord willing, we will introduce the church to the surrounding community by holding a weeklong meeting with Ronny Wade. We are planning on Sunday March 4th being the first service in the building and the first service of the meeting. It will continue through March 11th. We would like to have any and all come to be with us for the

occasion. If you can come and want more information about times and/or accommodations please contact Kevin Presley at (334) 678-8999 or Charles Marsh at (334) 692-5756. We look forward to seeing you then!

Brethren, Can You Help?

A few weeks ago, we either misplaced the calendar of my meetings or it was stolen. It looked like a checkbook and may have been stolen. At any rate, all of my meetings were scheduled there for several years. If you have me scheduled, I need to hear from you right away. Please check your records and let me know the dates for our meeting. It is impossible for us to book more meetings until we know when you have us scheduled. Please contact Don L. King, (510) 651-1842 or (510) 651-3926 as soon as possible. The 651-3926 number can also be used for fax. Thanks for your patience. DLK

OUR DEPARTED

WELLS—Ruby Wells was born Oct. 29, 1919 in Mulkey, OK and departed this life Dec. 11, 2000 at her residence in Ardmore, OK. She was married in 1934 to Ira Henry Wells, who preceded her in death. Survivors include: one son, Bobby Gene Wells, of Velma, OK, one brother, J.C. Fry, of Springer, OK, two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Ruby was one of the first members of the congregation here in Ardmore. The writer spoke at graveside services at Hillcrest on Dec. 13, a very cold wintry day.—Johnny Elmore

WADE—R. Inez Wade was born Dec. 29, 1909 in Mills Co., Texas and departed this life in Wichita Falls, TX Dec. 18, 2000. She was married for almost seventy-two years to Foy E. Wade, who preceded her in death in 1998. She is survived by one son, Ronny Wade, of Springfield, MO, a daughter, Janice Goodgion, of Wichita Falls, TX, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. I considered Foy and Inez some of my closest and dearest friends and I personally know of none who worked harder in life and were more dedicated to the cause of Christ than they. Inez studied the Bible and stood for the truth without reservation. There was nothing she enjoyed more than gospel meetings, good gospel preaching and singing, and visiting with friends in Christ. The writer spoke at services Dec. 21, at Greenlawn in Springfield, MO, where many friends, preachers, and brothers and sisters in Christ gathered to pay respects. Mark Triplett conducted congregational singing. Burial was at Rivermonte.—Johnny Elmore



HOLMAN—Eva Rachel Holman was born March 11, 1925 in Cloudchief, OK and departed this life Dec. 25, 2000 in Ardmore, OK. She moved to Ardmore from Lawton, OK in 1953 and worshipped with us at the 1st Ave. Church of Christ until she became bedfast. Services were conducted Dec. 29 from Craddock Funeral Home in

Ardmore with the writer speaking.—Johnny Elmore

McKINNEY—After a long fight with cancer our dear brother James McKinney has left this world. When I say fight, I do mean fight! James never gave up and kept a good attitude during all the hard pain he was going through. Over the last 3 years there were many times when I thought James' health would start to go down hill, but every time he would bounce back for another battle. About six months ago, and around the time that I thought James would not be able to teach any more, He preached a great sermon on a Lord's day morning. You would have had no idea that James was dying of cancer. Then, only two weeks before James' death and when I thought that we would never see him again at another worship service, he surprised us all at Evans Road Church. James came with his wife Barbara to worship that day and he got out of the car and with the help of a walker walked through the church house door. Surprised to see him I greeted him and he said, "Look out world here I come." I will always remember that those were the last words James spoke to me. Those words can be good for us all to live by. No matter what happens keep on fighting physically and spiritually. Brother James was the kind of person you could always count on, especially at church services. If someone could not bring the lesson that day, he was always prepared to step in. James and I did not always agree on things, but regardless of the disagreement he never held a grudge or a bad feeling towards me or towards anyone else. Brother Ed Daniels of Chapel Grove, TN preached the gospel at James' funeral just like he had asked him too. Ed Daniels did a wonderful job. Brother James Smith of Evans Rd. congregation gave the eulogy and he also did a wonderful job. We will miss our brother James. Please pray for family members and the church at Evans Rd. in Athens, Alabama. May God bless us all. —Bobby Wright

CARTER—Jesse Eugene Carter was born July 18, 1937 in Athens, AL, and departed this life on Nov. 29, 2000. He was a faithful member of Sanderfer Road Church of Christ. He is survived by one son Randy Carter, daughters, Gail Frakes, Connie Gates, Cathy Pylant, brothers Billy, Odie, Bobby, sisters Betty Bennett, Lousie Davis, Eounice Gordon, 10 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren. The funeral services was held at Spry Funeral Home; and the singers were from the Sanderfer Road Congregation. The writer had the privilege to try to speak words of comfort to the family and large crowd that assembled in respect of bro. Carter. We knew each other all of our lives, and he will truly be missed. He is buried in the Sunnyhill Cemetery here in Athens.—Bobby J. Pepper

BEARDEN—Stroud Kelly was born April 14, 1909 in Tenaha, TX and died in Odessa, TX Nov. 29, 2000. He is survived by his wife Jewell, to whom he was married almost 70 years, one son: Charley of Odessa and four daughters Louise Spratlen and Mildred Clemmons, of Odessa, Alice Busby and Linda Junker of Midland. I have known this family for forty years and was asked by Sister Bearden to speak words of comfort and encouragement to the surviving family. May they look to and trust in the God of all comfort in their time of need.—C. A. Smith

JAMESON—Brother Hilbern Jameson of the Hartwell congregation near Huntsville, AR passed away December 12, 2000. He had been ill for sometime and was confined to the Meadowview Healthcare facility in Huntsville, at the time of his departure. Before he became sick, he was constant in his attendance at the services of the church. Hilbern is survived by one son, four daughters (among them Wanda Gifford) and several grandchildren. The writer and Brother Jimmy Smith conducted the service.—Ronny Wade

HOLLOWAY—John, 52, of Odessa, Texas died after a hard fought battle with cancer, Dec. 26, 2000 at Memorial Hospital in Midland, TX. Brother Holloway was special to all who knew him. He lost a leg in his youth after an accident, and just a few months ago was found to have a malignancy in his other leg which had to be amputated, then following that surgery, the cancer spread throughout his body, from which he did not recover. He leaves to mourn his passing: his mother, Lela Holloway, and two brothers, Jerry and James Holloway all of Odessa, TX. Brother Dwayne Permenter and myself were asked to speak words of comfort, encouragement and warning to the many who were gathered in the chapel to say good-bye to John. Brother Rob VanStavern led congregational singing, the kind that John loved to hear and sing himself. We carry an enormous hollow spot within our hearts—a spot once filled with the presence of brother Holloway. Heaven's gain truly has become our loss. Each of us looked forward to spending more time with him in the here and now, but did not get to. But because God's bountiful grace, because of His willing sacrifice to His Son, and because of the commitment that John made to His lord, we still may look forward to spending more of the future with our special friend and brother, that is if we too commit ourself to the Lord and His ways. May God bless all who mourn his passing.—C.A. Smith



Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@juno.com, Jan. 15—We look forward to the following meetings in the near future, Lord willing: Buffalo, MO Jan. 17-21, Nashville, TN Feb. 16-18, Farmerville, LA Feb. 21-25 and Dothan, AL March 4-11. If you are close to any of these, why not try to attend? We are also scheduled to meet Bob Buchanan in a religious discussion in Bowling Green, KY March 22-23. Of late we have been busy around home, helping in whatever way we can to strengthen the church and spread the good news of the kingdom. So many have been sick of late, both here and elsewhere. Our hearts and prayers go out to all of them in hopes that better days are ahead. Please remember us when you talk to the Father.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net, Jan. 8—I was glad that my wife could be with me at Houston, MO Nov. 12-19; it was the first place that we worked together over 45 years ago. The meeting was very enjoyable for us and we hope it was profitable for the congregation as well. I enjoyed visiting with Don Pruitt, who now calls that his home. We approach the new year with optimism and confidence.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, January 1, 2001 —A new year has dawned, and we look for great things in it, if the Lord allows time to continue. I enjoyed the New Year's meeting at Walnut Grove, KY. The last night was exceptionally encouraging. A number of brethren spoke and did an outstanding job. I am really thankful for the brethren in this area. I haven't set the dates for my meetings this year, but plan to do that very soon. For the next few months I will be at Blue Springs. The winter months are always a welcomed time at home. As always, we wish the Lord's blessings for the faithful.

Bobby J. Pepper, 11800 Joe Bob Ln., Athens, AL, Dec-18—By the time this comes to you, we will be in another year. It just seems like yesterday when all of us were looking forward to the year 2000; and that is just another reminder how short this life is. The Sanderfer Road Congregation here continues to enjoy the unity in Christ; and it is a blessing to work with members that want to hear God's Word on any subject for the purpose of growing closer to Him. May God richly bless us in this new year to feel the oneness in Christ that He prayed for, and work harder than we have ever worked to accomplish that goal. Wife and I, at this time, are making our plans to be at the New year's meeting in Florida. If you are coming this way please stop by, and worship with us. May God bless the faithful in their efforts.

Kevin W. Presley, 1604 Verde Trail, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, kwpresley@earthlink.net, January 9, 2001—Since September, I have been with the churches in West Chester, OH (2 confessions), Opp, AL, St. Albans, WV (1 confession), Birmingham, AL (2 confessions), Napoleon, AL, and Lee's Summit, MO. I enjoyed being with each congregation and hope that good was done. Brethren such as RH. and Leora Renner, Greg and Karen Fleming, Lawrence and Madge Lore, Joyce Hammonds, and Dave and Lela Doing refreshed me along the way with their kind hospitality. Thanks to all of the congregations that invited me this past year and to all of the brethren and especially preachers who came to support our efforts. Bethany and I are enjoying a winter mostly at home. However, that is not to say we haven't been busy. The church at Dothan broke ground in October on our new building. It has gone up fast and we are hoping to move in by the first of March. (See announcement in other section of the paper). We have some exciting plans here and we hope the Lord will bless our efforts as he has in the past. The television work continues to do very well. We had several visitors this past Sunday in fact. In September, I was privileged to baptize Michael Wilkerson from Kinston, AL. Jack Burkett has been acquainted with

him for several years and arranged for us to study. As of late, I have been studying with his wife. She comes from a "Pentecostal" background, but I think she is close to being converted. They have been attending at Earlytown. In December, we were privileged to have Bro. Ricky Martin with us for a short meeting. His preaching was very timely. His style is concise and so easy to listen to. It was a pleasure to have him and his wife Jane with us. I am going to hold a more limited schedule of meetings in 2001. I am looking forward to the following: January 19-21, Robertsdale, AL; March 14-18, Nashville, TN; April 1-8, Blue Springs, KY; April, Temple, GA; May 13-20, Fremont, CA; June 8-17 Kansas City, KS (Stony Point); July 18-22, Flintville, TN; July 29 -August 5, Wichita Falls, TX (Crestview); August 11-19, Mountain Grove, MO; September 2-9, Bandy, KY; October 6-14, Fort Worth, TX; October 15-21 Houston, TX. I would like to compliment several articles that have run in the paper lately. In regard to Bro. Ronny Wade's article about making unnecessary public confessions and to all of those who responded to Bro. Ricky Cutter, I say AMEN and AMEN. If Ricky accomplished anything positive in his mass E-mail, maybe it was to light the fire under some of us to preach more regularly and definitively against the sinful practice of women cutting their hair. We are praying that 2001 will be an encouraging year in the Lord's work.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono St., Waipahu, HI 96797, Fax and phone (808) 680-0249, December 29, 2000—I am glad to inform the faithful everywhere that four precious souls--responded to the message and song of invitation, and made public confession of their faith in Jesus--we added to the Church of Christ at Ikepono Street, after they were baptized last Sunday afternoon. They are Bro. Epifanio and Sis. Juanita Abad; and Bro. Al and Sis. Mary Gaudino. According to Bro. Abad, he is a listener to our radio program. He had experienced being a town counselor, a vice-mayor and then mayor of Roxas, Isabela (my hometown in the Philippines) in successive consecutive terms. He said he is now through with politics. He is respected by residents of, and even those who come from Roxas, but now are living in Hawaii. We hope that through him we can contact possible prospects in the days to come. Bro. Al Gaudino is an American who used to live in Arizona; married Mary--a first degree cousin of my wife--several years ago in Canada. The first time I talked with him about the Church, he was reluctant because he said it is hard to make a change, he being a Catholic at the time. We are glad and grateful he made that much needed change in his life. Please, join us pray for them that they may continue to become firm and faithful to the faith. Generally, the Church here is at peace. During my absence, the leaders of the Church will be giving lessons by rotation, for which I am very thankful. I will be leaving for the Philippines on January 3rd, and join Bro. King and Bro. Connor in Manilla. We earnestly solicit your prayers in our behalf that this year's preaching itinerary of Bro. King will lead many souls back to the fold of God; and that we will be under His loving care and blessings, especially in a time when peace and order situation in the Philippines seem not stable. God bless.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, Jan. 10—I am looking forward to the new year and the next few months should be busy ones for me. The North Area congregation here in Springfield is at peace and it is a delight to work and worship with them. We ended the old year with a restoration during the evening service of Dec. 31. Irvin Barnes, Smith Bibens, Dan Paulson, and I are the speakers of a new radio program every Sunday morning on KTXR. "The Gentle Giant," as the station is known in this part of the country, covers a wide area of Missouri and extends into Arkansas. The program has been airing for four months now and we have had some requests for tapes of our messages. My upcoming meetings are March 9-11 at Ft. Smith, AR and April 13-22 at Ada, OK. Also, the congregation here is looking forward to a spring meeting with Jimmy Cating. Let's all work as hard as we can for the Lord in 2001!

C.A. Smith, 810 NW 6th St., Andrews, TX 709714—I have been some time since I have written a report to the *OPA*, and I am sorry for that and hope to do better in 2001. My wife, Iva Jo has recently had a hip replacement, so we have been somewhat confined to our surroundings for several weeks now. I am happy to report that after the surgery, therapy and etc., that she is doing well and ere long, we trust, will be back to full strength. We continue to labor in the vineyard, praying that after we plant and water, that God will give the increase and bless us with more laborers. Though we are a very small congregation, we have some of the finest, dedicated Christians that you can find anywhere, who are willing to spend and be spent for the Lord. In September 2000 we begin airing "Let The Bible Speak" on KOSA - CBS - channel 7 out of Midland. This is the co-operative effort of congregations in Midland, Odessa, and Andrews. We hope and pray that brother Ronny's preaching will find lodging in good and honest hearts and the fruit of our laboring together with God will result in a bountiful harvest. God bless all the faithful as they work for the Lord. Please pray for us that we may make 2001 a banner year, as we do the best we can to serve God in an acceptable way.

Alton B. Bailey, 410 Ginger Circle, LaGrange, GA 30240. Email Abbailey@mindspring.com. Phone number (706) 882-1114—Another year has passed and we look forward to the work ahead in 2001. Lord willing our first meeting in LaGrange this year will be Feb. 14-18. The preaching will be done by Bro. Cullen Smith. We are looking forward to our meetings across the country. They will begin at Donnellon, FL on Feb. 22-25, then to Baton Rouge, LA on March 16-18, then to Texarkana, TX on March 21-25. I enjoyed the New Year Meeting at the Oyster Bay, FL congregation this year. The speakers did an outstanding job preaching the gospel and the local congregation did a wonderful job providing food and places for people to stay. I always rejoice over any advancement being made in the deep south as well as other places. I personally feel the south is one of the richest places in the USA to reach out to those who never obeyed the gospel. It is still referred to by many as the Bible belt. May our God richly bless all his children everywhere. Please continue

 OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

date near your name and address ; 2-01 your subscription expires with ssue. Please renew promptly. DLK send all subscriptions to 41931 chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

to pray for us and our efforts for good in his service.

Roy Criswell, Rt. 2, Box 2535, Cassville, MO 65625, January 10—Since our last report we have had 2 baptisms here at Aurora, MO. One was an older lady that I had visited in the hospital some time back. After she had attended for several months she wanted to be baptized. She is bringing another lady with her, so it is my prayer that she too in time will obey the gospel. The other person is a young married man with 3 sons. He started coming due to his mother taking a stand with us from digression. I am studying with him each week. He thought his baptism into a denomination was okay, but when I showed him what the Bible taught he was ready to do as it taught. Recently we subscribed to a service to obtain a list of new residents that move into our area monthly. You are allowed 4 zip codes for the price of subscribing. Since we are so close to these zip codes, I ordered 4 and the first month they have sent me 45 different names. Most all are in the Aurora area. This week I have mailed each of them an invitation to come and worship with the congregation here and I also offered them a free Bible correspondence course. Lord willing, I plan to visit each family soon. I have greatly enjoyed the timely articles in the *Old Paths* of late. Brethren pray for those of us who labor for the Lord in His vineyard. There is much to be done and so few to labor, and such a short time to accomplish what needs to be done.

Dear Brethren,

I am taking this opportunity to write and thank you for your interest in the work and to keep you updated on especially the work in Penza, Russia. First, though, I know that most of you know that my wife Pat died of cancer in early February. This was a great loss to me, and I believe to the work of the Lord, also. However, I wish you to know that I have recently remarried. I have married Linda Word, a very good Christian, who was the wife of Bruce Word. Bruce died in 1995. In the mid-1980s, Bruce and Linda lived and worked for the church in Australia, or during the same time that Pat and I lived there. Now concerning the work. I worked in Penza during the month of May, and again during the month of August. During the month of August, Buddy Brumley, my co-worker, was with me. While in Russia, I also visited the work in Moscow as

well as Saransk, I feel very good about the work in Penza. From May to August, five were baptized, and, as far as I know, all are faithful to the church. In October brother Raymond Fox visited Penza and held a meeting. In November my son Jimmy and granddaughter Jillian were in Penza. (Jimmy and his family, as you may know, were the first to live and work in Russia, and Jimmy established the work in Penza in November of 1992.) The Penza church is at peace, after a few bumpy years; several men are now faithful members of the church, and the church is now reaching out to help others, especially the Christians in Saransk, located about 125 miles from Penza. My plans for the near future are these: I have been asked to go to Malaysia and encourage the work there. However, the plans for going are not yet firm. If we go to Malaysia, it will be in January, Lord willing. While we are in that part of the world, Linda and I also plan to go into Australia. Then we hope to go to Penza in March, which is the time of the annual gospel meeting there, and to hopefully stay in Penza for a few months and encourage the work in that area. The apartment in Penza is being renovated, and is now much more comfortable than before, especially in the winter. We have a washing machine that will work, and a bathroom with a hot shower year around. But most of all, some new heating radiators have been installed, and all new windows, plus a new door to the balcony. Jimmy and Jillian, while there recently, stayed warm. The drafts have been eliminated, plus much of the outside noise and dust. Hopefully, the kitchen can be redone, the ceilings recovered, and the walls papered. From time to time I have to ask for assistance in financing my work for the Lord, especially in Russia. If you brethren can, and wish, your help would be very much appreciated. Linda and I will need financial assistance for going to Malaysia and Australia, and later for going back to Russia to live and work. Also, your assistance is used to help improve the apartment and the church building in Penza. Your contributions are put into a special account and the account will be monitored by brethren not benefiting from it. Brethren, I cannot thank you enough for your help toward the work and your encouragement and support to me. Please send your contribution to me at the above address. May the Lord richly bless you all.

—Jerry Cutter

<p>Subscribe To The Old Paths Advocate 41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94536 \$10 Per Year</p>

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, MARCH 2001

NO. 3

WOMEN TEACHERS

(WHERE AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES MAY THEY TEACH?)

By RONNY F. WADE

The involvement of women in teaching and leadership situations is fast becoming one of paramount discussion among people of all religious persuasions. The Southern Baptists are divided over the subject of women pastors. The Catholics debate the issue of women priests. Many Churches of Christ differ in their views as to exactly where, how, and with what authority women may teach. What saith the Scriptures? The only way to rightly answer the questions being asked and address the situations arising is to go to the Bible and determine what it has to say on this most important subject. Paul in I Corinthians 11 teaches that God is the head of Christ, Christ the head of man, and man the head of woman. This divine order cannot be ignored or rejected regardless of what popular opinion might decree. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church..." Eph. 5:27. "Let the women 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" I Timothy 2:11-12. Two things are forbidden by Paul in this verse (1) a woman may not teach, and (2) she may not have dominion over a man. The word "teach" used by Paul means, according to Thayer, "to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses." Hence a woman may not deliver a didactic discourse whether it be in the assembly of the church (I Cor. 14:34-35,) on a street corner, over television or radio, or in a situation parallel to Paul's teaching in Acts 24 before Felix or Acts 26 before Agrippa. In addition she may not have dominion over a man, which would include, but is not limited to, the area of teaching. Paul gives as reason for his prohibition: "For Adam was formed first then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." Does this mean that a woman may not teach anywhere or under any circumstances? Certainly not, for the scriptures give us some examples her teaching as well as some inferences where she must have taught. In Acts 18:26 Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos "aside" or "unto themselves" and taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly. We do not know how much Priscilla participated in the teaching process. It is, however, very doubtful that she took the lead. At any rate this was a private, house to house, informal type situation. Invitations were not sent out to people of the congregation, or to certain ones in surrounding congregations inviting them to attend the session. I am

amazed when I hear of people arranging teaching situations where women take the lead, where people, (sometimes from across the brotherhood), are invited and then call this a "private" situation. Some seem to have the idea that as long as we don't announce a thing at a church service it is automatically private. Calling something private does not make it so, and brethren need to be careful in this area. For years the Sunday School advocates couldn't decide whether the classes they have were "public" or "private." When pressed they would say that they were announced to the public, but limited to only the ones who fit in a particular classification, hence private or sequestered. They obviously had a problem, but no more so, than those that I have heard from lately who try to justify what is obviously public by calling it private. In Acts 21 we have the case of Philip who had four daughters that prophesied. We know that these daughters could not have done their teaching publicly or in the church. Such would have been a violation of I Cor. 14:34-35 and I Timothy 2:11-12. Hence, their teaching was a "house to house," individual, informal type of teaching, parallel to that of Priscilla in Acts 18. In 2 Timothy 1:5, we read, "when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also." The inference here is that both Lois and Eunice had taught their children. Parents, both fathers and mothers, should teach their children (Eph. 6:1-2). Here again, however, we have women teaching as individuals in the home setting. In Titus 2:3-4 older women are described as "teachers of good things," and are told to "admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children," etc. The word "teachers" is from a word translated by Berry to mean "teachers of what is right." Robertson in *The Expositor's Greek Testament* says "Not only by 'discourse at home,' as Chrys. explains, but by example." The word translated "admonish" is rendered by Berry "that they may school," and Robertson renders it "train." Thayer says it means "...to restore one to his senses; to moderate, control, curb, discipline; to hold one to his duty, to exhort to admonish earnestly." Hence, older women are to "at home, in a house to house, domestic type situation" instruct and train younger women in the these matters. They school them by way of example and on-going training. Such training is not the type that takes place in a Sunday School class, or class type setting, but rather

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 3



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 7-10

Women Teachers 1

Editorial 2

Leading Children Into Church 3

Lot's Decision 4

Where Are We Headed? 5

The Food & Water That Matter 6

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer
Barney Owens
Billy Dickinson

Johnny Elmore
Jerry Dickinson
Kevin Presley

Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536

A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.

is domestic in nature and is an ongoing process, i.e. a matter of training. From these scriptures we see that women have their place as teachers in domestic, house to house type situations. Such teaching is always individual and informal. Let us stay with what is revealed. To fail to do so, only invites trouble and unwanted departures from the Scriptures. (Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)



Editorial

UNITY

By DON L. KING

We all love unity. Most of us strive for it, as well we should. Jesus prayed for unity in John 17:20, 21: ***Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.***

Unity is of supreme importance because Christ demands it of us. Division in the local congregation is condemned as contrary to the will of our Lord. (I Corinthians 1:10) Anyone who has ever gone through the unpleasant and destructive experience of division in their congregation can testify to the terrible demoralizing effects. Nothing other than worry over my children has ever had such an effect on this writer. It is the last thing one thinks of before falling asleep and the first to invade the mind upon waking in the morning.

In Matthew 10:34-39, however, Jesus shows that there is one just cause for division and that is *truth*. He points out that there will be strife within a man's own household because of the truth He came to bring. Yes, the gospel of Christ may very well separate one even from parents, etc. What do we learn here? Simply that peace and unity must not be purchased at the cost of truth compromised or sacrificed.

This creates an interesting situation. Jesus demands that we strive for unity, yet warns that sometimes unity will elude one even at home because of His truth! How far should we go to ensure that unity prevails? Notice John 4:24: ***“God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”*** The word “must” here means the same in Greek as it does in English. In other words it is imperative that worshippers approach God in “spirit,” that is, in an appropriate mind frame which is completely devoted to God, and in “truth.” Mr. Thayer says the word as it is used in John 4:24 means “in truth, truly, as the case is, according to fact.” (page 26). It certainly appears that it matters a great deal to God how we approach Him in our worship. Not only must our minds be focused, but also our worship **MUST** be according to truth!

The apostle Peter writes: ***“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that I hath called us to glory and virtue”*** (2 Peter 1:3) According to

Peter, we can know what God wants us to do when we come together in worship. He says that the divine power of God has given us (through the Bible) all things, everything, that has anything to do with life (spiritual life) and godliness (the attribute of living as God would have us live). In other words, if it has anything to do with our spiritual welfare, we can read it in the Bible!

That explains why the apostle Paul said we should all speak the same thing (I Corinthians 1:10). Since God demands that our worship be according to truth (what is written in His Word) and since Peter tells us that God has given us all things that have to do with life and godliness, there is no reason we could not all speak the same thing! What is the problem? Why do some teach differently? It is pretty obvious, isn't it? Not every one is teaching what God has given in His word. Some are adding things not found while others are leaving out portions of the will of Almighty God.

Friends, we say this in love. There is no acceptable reason why we all do not preach the same thing. We are told that because we are to love those in error we can fellowship them though they do not worship according to the divine pattern. There is absolutely no doubt that many, in error, are as sincere as those who walk in the light. What is our responsibility toward them? Fellowship them anyway? No, Paul speaks of those who are lost because they "...received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thessalonians 2:10) Perhaps there may be something wrong with my thinking, but it seems to me that if we can fellowship those who worship God in a manner not found in the Book, they must be saved anyway. Surely we are not to extend fellowship to those who are lost? Why bother to teach them differently, if they are going to be all right anyway? Paul said: **"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."** (2 Thessalonians 2:15). What was the matter with Paul? Did he not realize that we were supposed to fellowship those people who worshipped differently than what is found in the truth? There are some writers around today who would have set him straight quickly! Why, if we stand fast and hold to those things we read in the Book, some might leave and the church will be divided. What then? We must stand for the truth no matter who leaves it. Jude said we ..."should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3)

Many years ago, those who insisted that we worship with more than one cup divided the Lord's church. Oddly enough, we are accused of being the cause of the division! They insisted on more than one cup, etc., but our brethren could not go along with it. They knew what the Bible said and contended for it. Were they right to do so? Of course they were, and anyone knows that the fellow who drives the wedge causes the split. One cup did not divide the church! God's people had been using one cup since the beginning on Pentecost. It was those who insisted on *more* than one who brought about the division. How should we view them who are on the other side? Are we to love them? Of course we are. However, our fellowship cannot be mended as long as the cause exists. The innovations have to go. **"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine**

which ye have learned; and avoid them." (Romans 16:17)

Yes, division is terrible and sinful. It is condemned in no uncertain terms. I would not want to stand in the shoes of any that have caused it on judgment day. However, no matter who leaves the truth we intend to remain with it. Do we love them? Absolutely, we do! That's the very reason so many preach and write about the truth. We want them all to accept the love of the truth that all might be saved.

Think on these things.—DLK

LEADING CHILDREN INTO CHURCH

By HOMER A. GAY

Parents should know that the gravest responsibility they have in this world is their children. Also, one of the most honorable things that they can accomplish is to bring their "children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." It certainly is sad to see children neglected physically, dirty, thinly clad in rags, undernourished, uneducated, etc., but it is a thousand times worse for their souls to be neglected! Regardless of how much money and land I might leave for my children to inherit; or how much education I have given them or how high in circles of fame I may help them to go in this life, if I fail to lead them to Christ and into His church, I have made a miserable failure.

I am often faced with good Christian parents whose children have been educated and given a good start in the financial world, but have never obeyed the gospel. These parents want me to talk to their children and encourage them to obey the gospel. Now, these are hard facts and they are facts that we may as well face. Our children were as so much clay in our hands and we have molded them into what they now are. Just today, I have been talking with some parents who have sent their daughter, who was recently baptized into Christ, off to college. There is no loyal congregation where the daughter is, and NOW they are asking ME to try to get the girl in touch with a congregation. Why did these parents not think of the church first? Don't you think that the parents made the girl think that they thought more of the school than they do of the church?

The evil influences of Satan are strong enough at the best, and children are going to be affected by some of them. However, the parents have the first chance at the children and surely can lead them into the church if they will start soon enough. When Hannah prayed for a man child, she "vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt, indeed, look upon the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life." (I Samuel 1:11) She evidently believed that she could have an influence over this boy, and did. In Acts, chapter 16, we notice that Lydia and her "household" were baptized. The angel told Cornelius (Acts 10), "He shall tell thee words whereby thou and thy house shall be saved." Paul said to Timothy, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." (2 Timothy 2:15) Again, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." (2 Timothy 3:15)

If we expect our children to come into the church, we must prove to them that we appreciate the church. Jesus "loved the church and gave Himself for it," (Ephesians 5) and we should LOVE THE CHURCH. We should do all within our power to make it a success. When we spend more money for cold drinks, tobacco and such like, than we contribute into the church, we are showing the children that we do not think much of the church. When we go to ten times as much trouble and expense to educate our children than we do to get them to the services of the church and to have them taught the Bible; when we find fault with all of the members of the church; when we allow company, a little muddy road, a little headache, and other such things to keep us away from the services of the church, we cannot expect our children to be very much interested in it themselves.

Parents should always be careful to live in a community where both they and the children can attend the worship. It is far better to live on less and have the influence of the church to help you with your children.

We should talk about the church, its benefits and advantages and blessings before the children. We should go to every service of the church. We need to be a real booster for the church with our time, talent and money. Let the children know from infancy that the church and its work and needs come first with us.

The church needs young folks in it, and young folks need to be in the church. I hear some parents say, "Well, I want my children to get through sowing their wild oats and settle down before they come into the church." However, Solomon said: "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth." (Ecclesiastes 12: 1). How much better it is to not sow those wild oats at all!

I do not believe that parents should over-persuade their children nor try to scare them into the church. It will be easy to LEAD them into the church if we will always see to it that the church is first with us. *OPA* (Next month: ENCOURAGING CHILDREN)

LOT'S DECISION

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

The direction and outcome of a person's life, whether it is for failure or success, can often be linked to a particular point in time when an important decision was made. That is true of Lot's life! There came a day when he made an unwise choice. It would be a choice that not only had a sorrowful impact upon himself, his wife, and his children, but it even effected his grandchildren and future generations in an adverse way. The great lesson to be learned from Lot's story is that we need to carefully consider the consequences of the choices we make in life. That means decisions must be based upon God's word as we keep the welfare of our soul and the souls of others in mind.

The story of Lot is intertwined with the story of Abraham. In fact, Lot was Abraham's nephew, for Gen. 11: 31 explains that Lot was the son of Abraham's brother, Haran. There can be no argument that Lot's relationship with Abraham was the greatest blessing of his life. To begin with, not only was Abraham blessed with an abundance of material blessings as God had promised him (Gen. 13:2),

but Lot also became a man of much substance. The Bible makes it clear that Lot was blessed, for the most part, because of his association with Abraham. Notice how Gen. 13:5 puts it: "And Lot also, *which went with Abram*, had flocks, and herds and tents." Yes, it's because he "went with Abram" that he also is the beneficiary of the covenant God made with Abraham.

Well, there came a day when the flocks and servants of both Abraham and Lot grew in number to such an extent that it strained local resources and led to quarreling among the perspective parties. Abraham, being a wise and godly man, realized that something had to be done: "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; *for we be brethren.*" (Gen. 13:8) There is often a need in the church, when strife and contention reigns supreme in congregations, for someone to plead for unity among brethren! Let us cast aside ill-will, deceitfulness, jealous feelings, and slander (I Pet. 2:1), and anything else that hinders peace in the body of Christ. Also, if we truly love the children of God, we will walk in the truth and not divide the church with unscriptural innovations that violate the consciences of others (I John 5:2). Let us endeavor to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). Why? Because, as in the words of the ancient patriarch, "We be brethren!"

For the sake of peace, Abraham is very gracious in the proposition he offers to Lot. He gives Lot first choice of where to dwell in the country that lays before them. It is at this point in the story that Lot is faced with the biggest decision of his life—a choice with extensive consequences that will haunt him the rest of his days. Really, to a great extent Lot shows his true colors here! Lot takes advantage of Abraham's generosity by choosing the rich and well-watered plains of the Jordan. Then the Bible says this in Gen. 13:12: "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom."

Based simply upon material gain, Lot chose to dwell in Sodom, eventhough the Bible says in Gen. 13:13, "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." This was the pivotal decision of his life. Lot would soon discover that the cost of compromise is always high, and the benefits for which we sacrifice our convictions are fleeting. Living in Sodom and intermingling with them every day would take its toll on Lot and his family. When it is all said and done, he will lose practically everything that is near and dear to him—his possessions, his wife, his two married daughters, and even his descendants will be effected.

As far as Lot's personal character was concerned, he was a good and moral man. 2 Pet. 2:7-8 calls him "just" and "righteous," because of his refusal to participate in the wickedness of the Sodomites. In fact, Peter says that Lot was "vexed" in his soul in seeing and hearing their unlawful deeds from day to day. Oh, what a price to pay for material gain! I think that we must conclude that although Lot was a moral man personally, to a certain extent he was a weak man. After all, he chose material comfort at the cost of constant distress over the filthy lives of lawless men, and he soon learned the truthfulness of I Cor. 15:33: "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." (ASV)

A lesson to learn from this story is that it is not enough to be a moral person. No, we must also actively avoid association with evil: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **but rather reprove them.**" (Eph. 5:11) We must resist, reprove, and even rebuke sin and error. As the church, for example, we can worship correctly ourselves, but if we don't actively oppose false worship it will have a corrupting influence and we'll reap the consequences in future generations. Jude 3 exhorts us to "earnestly contend for the faith."

In conclusion, let us learn from Lot's story that when we are making a decision—any decision—we should always be concerned with more than just material matters. The most important question of all is: How will this effect me and my family *spiritually*? If from a spiritual standpoint there are dangers and a negative impact to be risked, we need to act accordingly and not be swayed by material considerations. What if you were offered a better job, for example, with a substantial increase in money and greater benefits, but you had to move your family to a place where there are no faithful congregations? Here's the question: Are you willing to risk losing your children to the world, and even putting yourself into a weaker position spiritually, simply for material gain? While you ponder that question, remember Lot's decision!

WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

The question under consideration may not be of much concern to a lot of the nominal members of the church. But it certainly should be of interest and concern to all Christians who are really trying to do the will of God.

The Way Of Least Resistance

It is natural for things and people to take the way of least resistance. Water always runs downhill, and people degenerate who are not willing to put forth an effort to do otherwise. In spiritual things Jude says, "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). And Paul says, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph 5:11). Again he says, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim 6:12). Such scriptures show that Christians are to resist error and sin, and fight for that which is right. Paul writes to Timothy, "Thou therefore endure, hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim 2:3).

Standards Are Lowered

In congregations where brethren seek peace at any cost and are afraid to teach, or allow preachers to speak on certain Bible subjects, you will find the standard of Christianity going down. Individuals and churches are "rooted and grounded in the faith" through firm doctrinal teaching. "Contending for the faith" is the only way to maintain the Bible standard.

"The Truth Shall Make You Free"

Jesus our Lord said, "If ye continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and truth shall make you free" (Jno 8:31, 31). But Paul predicted, "...The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lust shall they heap unto 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). The word "fable" is from "*muthos*" (Gr) which carries with it the idea of fiction or myth. The time would come when some would rather listen to stories than to hear God's word preached. Fun and games are more interesting to many than sound doctrine or truth. In some places more want to be entertained than to hear the word of God. Paul calls it "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." He says, "they will not endure sound doctrine" and "they shall turn away their ears from the truth." The apostle says such people would heap those up to satisfy their fancies, or in other words, give them what they want. Popularity is hard to resist; it is only natural for one to want to be accepted or liked and especially when his likelihood depends on it. One of our own preachers said sometime ago, "I used to give them what they need. Now I give them what they want." (He is no longer with us, but has gone off with error.) But the attitude to some members in the brotherhood encourage this.

The Standard For Selecting Preachers

In the early day of the church men who preached the gospel put their lives "on the line." The apostle Paul said the Holy Spirit informed him that in every city "bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:23,24). Listen to him again, "But as we are allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts," (1 Thes 2:4).

Paul was a preacher with a purpose. His mission after accepting Jesus as the Savior was to save souls. He said. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom 1:16). Again, "Christ sent me...to preach the gospel" (1 Cor 1:17). Also, "Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor 4:1,2).

I am convinced that there are some congregations in this day and time that would not call the apostle Paul, if he were alive, to come and work with them, or even ask him to hold them a meeting, because he would keep back nothing that was profitable to them, nor would he shun to declare all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26, 27). The reason Paul would not be welcome is because of the standard some churches have set for themselves. "We will get so and so. He won't preach on this or that (long hair, sin, worldliness, racial prejudice, cup question, Sunday School question, immodest apparel, divorce and remarriage, denominationalism, recreation in the church, innovations in religion, church discipline, ad nauseam)." One preacher before going to preach on the west coast is reported to have said, "I am not getting on anything that will get me in trouble in California." (Paul would preach on anything that would help prepare people to meet the Lord in judgment.) With this attitude, where are we headed?

Then there are some congregations who listen to gossip and slander against preachers with whom they are not even acquainted. And without investigation to see if what they

have heard is the truth, make the decision that they will never have this or that preacher come to hold them a meeting or work with them. What is told may stem from sonic personal difference, or the basis may be professional jealousy or envy, which uncontrolled, are wrong in themselves. Brethren, don't partake of other men's sins by believing just anything you hear about preachers. You may be depriving yourselves and the congregations where you are of the ability and knowledge of faithful men who could really benefit the cause of Christ where you live; were it not for the prejudice you have.

When you do get a preacher to come hold a meeting or to work with you for a longer period of time, why not demand the high standard of preaching that the Lord does, and that they not shun to declare all the counsel of God? If this were done, don't you know that we preachers would be more careful to be like the apostle Paul and keep back nothing that is profitable to the hearers. Preachers would not specialize in certain subjects to the exclusion of others. We would be more inclined to preach all the will of God without fear or favor. And instead of churches and brethren looking for preachers who will not preach on certain things, start seeking only for those who are not afraid to preach on anything that is needed regardless of attitude and feelings. When this happens, then the church will be strong and the standard raised and maintained where it ought to be, and where it was when Christ first gave it, and where it was when the apostles were still alive.

If attitudes don't change, I wonder where we are headed.

THE FOOD & WATER THAT MATTER

By JIMMY VANNOY

"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat." (Isaiah 55:1) The food and water that really matter are not physical, and the lesson of Isaiah 55:1-6 is that it is not the physical things that are important, but the spiritual- It is a lesson on having proper priorities. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, "But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) We need to focus our lives on the water which will quench our thirst eternally. It is only from Jesus that we can drink and have eternal life.

Later in the same chapter, Jesus told His disciples, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me." (John 4:34) So should the focus of our lives be; to do the will of God. It should be our "food".

It is obvious that we must concern ourselves with obtaining food, water and other physical things, but for many people, this is the focus of their lives. The spiritual is priceless, yet it cannot be obtained with money. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) Hunger and thirst are the two strongest desires of the human, and we should hunger and thirst both to learn about and to do righteousness. For many, it will take a drastic change in priorities to focus on learning and doing righteousness.

Jesus said, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you

will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?" (Matthew 6:25) Jesus warned against worrying about the things of this life and making them our most important thing. He then proved that He will provide the physical things for us by indicating that He feeds the sparrow and clothes the lily. Since He cares so much more about us than them, He will certainly take care of us. He then promised that if we put Him first, He will guarantee to provide all the physical things we need. "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33)

Jesus again said, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you." (John 6:27) Isaiah offered to the people food and water that could not be bought with money, yet to partake of it meant salvation of their eternal soul. But this was not what most people wanted then, nor is it today.

Isaiah admonished them: "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy?" (Isaiah 55:2) The people who lived 750 years before Jesus were no different from people today. They lived for the physical, trying to obtain all they could. They spent their money for that which matters little, that which is not bread. All that a person can gain of this physical world will never satisfy, no matter how much of it is obtained. Solomon said, "He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity." (Ecclesiastes 5:10)

Isaiah concluded his thoughts about true food and water in vs. 6 and 7. "Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. "Many delay coming to God, waiting for a convenient time. That time never comes. They soon lose their interest and lose their souls. Many Christians have thoughts of one day being more dedicated to the Lord and devoting more time to Him. If there is not movement to put these thoughts into action, it is not likely that any changes will be made. The lesson of Isaiah 55:1,2 is a lesson about priorities. Christians in America have a strong temptation to put their priorities in the wrong place, and the reason is because of our prosperity. We have the money and the leisure time to do as we choose. Often, we make bad choices. Also, in America, there are so many opportunities to make money, and the more time we work, the more money we make. So many Christians work long hours to bring in more money and neglect their family and the Lord's work. They are laboring for that which is not bread. There are two verses which should scare every Christian in America. "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'Assuredly I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'" (Matthew 19:23, 24) Being prosperous is so dangerous to our souls that we must be on constant guard to avoid the pitfalls. It is the temptations of prosperity that will cause many American Christians to be lost eternally. We need to dedicate our lives to that which is living water and to that which is true bread.

Many need to repent of their focus on physical things, that which is not bread, and turn their lives to the spiritual.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORDINATION

On January 21, 2001 our brother Ed Daniel was ordained as an Evangelist here at Chapel Grove Church of Christ in Tennessee. After a day of fasting, the Elders, (Fred Orten, Ronald Long, and Dwight Patton), joined with Evangelist Johnny Fisher to select our brother to this work by the laying on of hands. Adding to our emotions was the fact that Brother Fred Orten who will be 97 years old February 2nd of this year, led the opening prayer in the ceremony. The family here at Chapel Grove give God the praise for allowing us to witness this wonderful occasion. In His Love, Dwight Patton

NEW ALBUM - PRAISE VOLUME II

The *PRAISE* collection is a selection of songs written by M. Lynwood Smith. These recordings just scratch the surface, in comparison to the many, many songs written by Brother Lynwood. We have recorded fifty-one songs for this two-volume set. Volume II, of the set is now available and completes the *PRAISE* Collection. Brother Lynwood personalizes the album with narration about song writing memories and experiences. The singers are a select group singing A Cappella, four-part harmony. Some of the songs on *PRAISE* Volume I are: Alone With God, A Lovely Rose, One Sunset Nearer My Home, An Empty Mansion and many more. Some of the selections from *PRAISE* Volume II are: O Lord, Our Lord, God's Children Are Gathering Home, I'm Going Home, 'Way Down Deep Inside and many more. *PRAISE* Volume I & II are both available on CD or Cassette tape. For ordering information write to: Larry Bradford, 613 Buckaroo, Peculiar, MO 64078, e-mail: Brad4d@juno.com Phone: (816) 779-6135.

WANTED: RETIRED FAITHFUL COUPLES

Would you consider relocating in an area where you could be a tremendous asset to the cause of Christ? If so, would you please consider relocating in El Paso, Texas? You could be such a blessing to the Lord's work here. Your experience in serving the Lord would give us a much-needed nucleus of sound brethren. If this appeals to you, please contact: Randy Tidmore; 10681 Birthstone Drive; El Paso, TX 79935, Phone: 915 590-5774; E-mail: bro-randy@yahoo.com

OPA ON THE INTERNET

Visit <http://www.newtestamentchurch.org> for additional articles, resources (including Gospel Meetings Schedule), & links to other helpful websites.

CAN YOU HELP THESE PEOPLE?

Brother and Sister Walter Hunter lost almost everything they had in a house fire a few days ago. They were only able to save a few things. Walter is a leader in the church at Bedford, IN and preaches at various places from time to time. They are certainly worthy of our help. They plan to rebuild, but insurance will cover only a portion of the

expense. Their address is Walter Hunter, 1922 Mundell Church Rd., Heltonville, IN 47436. You may call at 812-834-8955.

A FAITHFUL CONGREGATION IN CUBA!

On January 15, 2001, Bro. Jaime Contreras and this writer left Mexico City on a missionary trip to the Island of Cuba. We had been in contact with a congregation of the Church of Christ—cups and Sunday School and many other errors—for almost a year. Bro. Juan Rosales had sent them some tracts about the Lord's Supper and they wanted to know more about the true worship. We started to study with them through letters and phone calls. Finally, they invited us to visit them on the Island, to discuss personally our differences and to study together. So I talked to Bro. Bill Verner and he was willing to help us with the trip expenses. We arrived on the Island and were received and treated royally, with true brotherly love. Not only the brethren but all the Cubans are very nice, kind, and helping people. They help each other, they are a very solidary people! For a complete week we studied with the preacher Bro. Orlando Dago and two leaders of the congregation at Puerta de Golpe, Pinar del Rio. We studied daily such subjects like The Lord's Supper, the Sunday School, The First Day of the Week, Modest Apparel, The Hair, The Holy Spirit, etc., etc. After much study, discussion and prayers the brethren decided to accept what the Bible teaches on these subjects, and on January 21, 2001 we had our first worship service using one cup and no Sunday School. For this we rejoice and give God the honor and glory! The congregation is made up of 15 members, 10 regular visitors and 10 children. They worship in the home of Bro. Orlando Dago. He has been a preacher for 4 years and has been in charged of the World Bible School-correspondence course for the Province of Pinar del Rio in Cuba. We want to ask you to pray for this new work in Cuba. They are facing a lot of hardships and they will have to defend the Truth against the oppositions from the other churches of Christ and the denominations. We are planning a trip in the next few months to continue to help the church in the Island and even talk to other preachers. Please pray for our efforts to convert many more to the True worship. We want to express our appreciation and thanks to Bro. Bill Verner and his wife for their wonderful support to spread the Gospel into many parts of this world. May the Almighty richly bless them for all their good works! If you have any questions about the work in Cuba or want to help this new work, please let us hear from you.—Juan Rodriguez Jr.

DIRECTORY UPDATES AS OF JANUARY 31, 2001

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

CONGREGATIONS:

Alabama, Dothan: Service times: Sun 10:00 AM & 5:00 PM, Wed. 7:00 PM

Alabama, Opp: Remove the line that begins with "Currently meeting..."

Alabama, Trussville: Remove Duane Fancher. Add: Steve Wallace, 117 Victoria Ave., Trussville, AL 35173 (205) 655-2780

Alabama, Lowery: Wednesday evening services will now be at 6:00 PM

Arkansas, Scotland: change Tommy Acton address: 24 Poteete Rd., Morrilton, AR 72110, (501) 354-1265

California, Atwater: change Sun. pm to 3:00pm

California, Auburn: new address: 305 Foresthill Ave., Auburn, CA

California, Gardena: change to Hawthorne, 12503 Crenshaw Blvd, Hawthorne, CA, 90250-3302. Add Duane Washington address: 763 W. 138th Street, Gardena, CA 90247, (310) 329-6163

Indiana, Brazil: Harrison and Blaine St.-add 1st, 3rd, and 4th. Sun. evening services dismissed to attend Pleasant Grove Church of Christ. Remove Lance Stallcop. Add Joe Loughmiller, 2257 W. St. Rd. 340, Brazil, IN 47834, (812) 448-1286

Indiana, Pleasant Grove: add 2nd and 4th. Sun. evening services dismissed to attend Harrison and Blain Church of Christ. Correct Bill Stallcop address & phone: RRI Box 227A, Carbon, IN 47837, (765) 672-4545

Kentucky, Bowling Green: Remove Fred Pryor. Add Michael Conely, 1565 Hayes St., Bowling Green, KY 42103, (270) 842-8783. Change Shelby Taulbee area code to 270

Louisiana, Farmerville: Darbonne: Change Sun. afternoon service from 3pm to 2pm.

Mississippi, Covington county: change Greg Cole phone: (601) 765-8223

Missouri, Brumley: change George Windes address: Box 461, Windes Ridge Rd., Richland, MO 65556, (576)765-4391

Missouri, Buffalo: New building: 308 N. Kennedy. On N. Hwy 73 just north of Superior Gear

Missouri, Mtn. Home: correct Clayton Fancher street address: 7296 W. State Hwy 248

Ohio, Brimfield: Address correction: 1875 Tallmadge Rd., Brimfield, OH. Mailing address: PO Box 314, Tallmadge, OH 44278. Change meeting time: Sun. 9:30 am. No evening services. Directions: CH 18, 1 mi E of SR 43-near Exits 31 & 33 off I-76. Remove David Dunford

Ohio, Dayton: 3331A Stanley Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45404. Sunday 10:30am. Directions: 75 to route 4 east. Take the Stanley Ave. south exit. Turn right. Go a half block to a block-it is the first white office building on the right, across from Setters volleyball complex. Contacts: Richard Hamilton, 1302 Leo St., Dayton, Ohio 45404, (937) 222-7929, Emery Peters, 1416 Demphle Ave., Dayton, Ohio, 45410, (937) 253-7887, Duane Reed, 1411 Felix Ct., Dayton, Ohio 45410, (837) 254-2039

Oklahoma, Calera: Please change Wayne Sanders address to 1682 Lemon Hill Road, Calera, OK 74730

Oklahoma, Newcastle, Whispering Pines Church of Christ. 7818 E. Hwy 37, Tuttle, OK 73089. Web site: whisperingpineschurch.org. Off Hwy 44, take exit 108 (Hwy 37), west 5 miles. Sun 10:00 AM & 4:00 PM, Thurs. 7:30 PM. Clifton Dougherty, 2300 Oak Hollow Dr., Newcastle, OK 73065, (405) 387-4321. Dean Harris, 1711 Oaklawn Dr., Tuttle, OK 73089, (405) 392-2905

Oklahoma, Watonga: add Sunday evening service: 2:00 pm. Change Bob Orear's area code to (580)

South Carolina, Walterboro: Change directions: From 1-95 get off at exit 57, and turn left onto Hwy 64 (Bells

Hwy) at first traffic light, turn left on Robertson Blvd. Then go through two traffic lights and turn at first road on left (Barracada Rd). Turn first road on Right (Live Oak St.) Go approximately one half mile to brick church building on right.

Tennessee, Burns: Currently meeting in the home of J.W. Dodd, 1140 Oak Grove Road, Dickson, TN, 37055, (615) 446-7749. Directions: Interstate 40, exit on Dickson 48. Go toward Dickson. Turn right on Oak Grove Road, about 1/4 mile road will turn to right, first house on right.

Tennessee, Nashville: Remove Murry Lesnansky & Randy Burns. Add: Kenny Prince, 746 Williamsburg Dr., Smyrna, TN 37167, (615) 355-9148, Bryan Harris, 1413 Cannon St., Franklin, TN, 37064, (615) 595-9258

Texas, Allen: correct Bruce Caskey zip code 75013-0003.

Texas, Amarillo: Grand St.: Change meeting times to: Sun. 10 am & 4:30 pm. Wed. 7:30

Texas, Athens: remove Mitchell Hurt.

Texas, Corsicana: Remove Mike Jones. Add: Steve Lackey, 609 Oaks, Teague, TX 75860, (254) 739-3278

Texas, DeLeon: Remove Ricky Wilson. Add Jackie Johnson, Rte. 2, DeLeon, TX 76444, (254) 893-6244, David Rogers, Rte 5, Comanche, TX 76442, (254) 842-5271

Texas, Ft. Worth, Fossil Creek: Remove Glyn Wilks. Add: Randy Cantrell, 3820 Welwyn Way, Bedford, TX 76021, (817) 540-2308. Keith Minter, 1512 Belaire Court, Roanoke, TX 76262, (817) 431-0511

Texas, Harlingen: New address: 712 N. 77 Sunshine Strip, #8 El Mercado Mall

Texas, Laredo: 102 Lincoln and San Pablo St., Laredo, TX Sun. 10:30 am, Thursday 7:00 pm. At the end of I-35 turn left on Highway 83 (Zapata Highway) go one block turn right to Lincoln St. (about 3 blocks) turn left to building. Juan Rodriguez Jr., 3328 Cortez Blvd., Laredo, TX 78043, (956) 729-8638, juanjr@laredo.globalpc.net Hermilo Ostiguin, 1916 Durango St., Los Presidentes, Laredo, TX 78046, (956) 724-5121. Services are in Spanish, but someone will translate if needed.

Texas, Madsonville: no longer meeting

Texas, San Angelo: change Sunday afternoon service from 6pm to 4pm.

Canada, Toronto: Change all information to: Filipino congregation. Contact phone numbers (416) 532-1206 or (416) 543-5229 for directions to the place of worship on Sundays at 10am

Mexico, Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas (across the border from Laredo, Texas) Enriqueta Castaneda #7408, Col. Buenavista, Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico. Sunday 4 pm, Wed. 7:00 pm. The building is located 5 blocks north from Soriana Carrizo supermarket on Eva Samano St., and then turn left on E. Castaneda one block. The building is on the corner of E. Castaneda and Viena Streets. Juan Rodriguez Jr., 3328 Cortez Blvd., Laredo, TX 78043, (965) 729-8638, juanjr@laredo.globalpc.net. Services are in Spanish, but someone will translate if needed.

PREACHERS

Tony Denton: email change: tedenton64@hotmail.com
Miles King: correct address, 8586 Wilderness Trail, Scotland, AR 72141, mtking@cei.net

Glen Osburn: new address & phone: Rt. 4, Box 918,

Blanchard, OK 73010, (405) 392-4400,
glenreba@email.com

Add: Dan Paulson, 1496 W. Shelvin Rock Road, Nixa,
MO 65714-7114, (417) 725-2120, danprn37@aol.com

Duane Permenter: change address: P.O. Box 80687,
Midland, TX 79708-0687, duane@dnlpermenter.com

Jimmy Vannoy: correct address: 105 Sunset Circle.
vannoy4@airmail.net

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

BOWEN-OSBORNE—In the afternoon of December 16, 2000 Rachel Louise Bowen and Michael Reed Osborne were united in marriage in a beautiful ceremony in Houston, Texas. Rachel is the daughter of Steve and Marilyn Bowen and Michael is the son of Don and Patty Osborne. A large crowd of relatives, friends, and brethren in Christ witnessed the ceremony. The singing was a cappella and was beautifully rendered by several brothers and sisters in Christ. The night before the wedding a heavy fog descended on Houston and many of us had great difficulty even driving to the chapel for the rehearsal. Because of the bad weather, here and elsewhere, some family members were not able to make it all. Saturday, December 16 dawned a beautiful day and a lovely wedding and reception ensued. Rachel is my niece and I was honored that she and Michael asked me to conduct the ceremony. As I told them during the ceremony, however, it was in reality God and not me joining them as man and wife. They are going to reside here in the Houston area where they are a great asset to the church. May the Lord be the centerpiece in their home and may their love and commitment to each other deepen as the years come and go.—Jerry Dickinson

OUR DEPARTED

ROGERS—Donald Rogers was born Nov. 3, 1919 in Michigan and died Nov. 7, 2000 in the Veteran's Hospital in Temple, TX. He is survived by his beloved wife Mary; his son, John; his daughter, Patricia; one sister; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Donald was buried in the Buckhorn Cemetery near his home of Moody, TX. He was the leader of the White Hall congregation when he lived in Michigan and he was a pillar in the Schaefer Ave. Church of Christ. The Rogers Family is some of our dearest friends. Brothers Wayne McKamie, Murl Helwig, Miles King and this writer conducted the service. Bro. Glen Jones and group from the Temple Church did the beautiful singing.—Charles Hurst

PACE—Hurles Eugene Pace, son of Shirles and Jessie Landon Pace, was born in Doniphan, MO on August 28, 1927, and passed away at his home near Somerset, KY on December 26, 2000. On May 19, 1946, he was united in marriage to Betty Crowe in Sikeston, MO. Hurles and Betty had lived in the Somerset area for the past 15 years after living in Houston, MO, Texas, Arkansas and Georgia. Surviving are his wife, Betty of the home; two sons, Larry Pace of Round Rock, TX, Jimmy Pace of Johnson City,

TX; three daughters, Jeanie Helm of Leander, Texas, Peggy Patterson of Mt. Vernon, KY, Susan Votaw of Crowley, TX; 12 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren; three brothers, Hubert Pace of Farmington, MO; Homer Pace of Piedmont, MO and Val Pace of Mt. View, AR; two sisters; Mae Clifton of Columbia, IL and Nell Clayton of Florissant, MO. He was preceded in death by one daughter, Bonnie Pace. A memorial service was held at Walnut Grove Church of Christ, where Hurles and Betty were members, with a large crowd gathered. Hurles was brought back to Dexter, MO for funeral services and burial was at Rock Hill Cemetery near Puxico, MO. Hurles will be missed by all who knew him. I was always impressed by his concern for the physical and spiritual well being of his family and friends. The writer offered words of encouragement.—Ron Alexander

JACKSON—Tommie John Jackson was born May 27, 1935 in Fay, OK. He passed away December 11, 2000 at the age of 65. He is survived by his wife Eva, 4 sons, 2 daughters, 20 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, 1 brother, and 3 sisters. The word that may best describe Tommie is *faithful*. I met Tommie in 1966 when I began preaching with the Boulder Dr. congregation in Dallas. He kept his strong love for Jesus, the Bible, and the Church. As his son Joel put it, "He loved to eat, he loved to talk, he loved 'to go to church.'" There was a large crowd of mourning family, friends, and brethren at Laurel Land Memorial Park, where he was laid to rest. Tommie will be greatly missed. Bro. Melvin Blaylock and the writer attempted to speak words of comfort and warning to all.—James Hickey

BAREFOOT—Dauline I. Barefoot's spirit departed from it's earthly tent on October 31, 2000. She was born in Searcy, Arkansas on the 27th day of January, 1924. Her birth into the Messianic kingdom was at the age of thirteen in the year of 1937. Dauline was widowed in the year of 1966. She is survived by her son Allen Barefoot and wife Alexie of Rockwell, Texas and two grandsons Alex (wife Janis) and Phillip. She also has one surviving sister Adell Vaughn and family. Dauline was a fixture in the church here in the Pontiac area throughout our two score years of being associated with the churches in Michigan. She was settled spiritually and ever to be counted upon to do her part. She was plain spoken, but ever willing to listen to worthy counsel and ever ready to aid the church in the way of truthful unity. Dauline now takes her place among a host of elderly widows that have graced the church in this area with their lives, but have now passed with their lives continuing ever in review for their faith. The significance of having faithful, aged widows and their example in the spectrum of a local congregation's life should never be overlooked. Her faith was not one of word only, but also deed. Therefore, she leaves her family and brethren with the greatest comfort a departed one can give to the spiritually aware, that is to have gone asleep with hope. The following tribute was written by a young lady in her early teens at the time of Dauline's passing. "I'm watching her fade away, I'm watching her now with tear-filled eyes as they take her away. I'm watching a piece of my heart depart. My life time friend is taking a break for a

little while. They're trying to stop her, they're trying to call her back, but as I remember her love filled heart, I remember her stubborn side. She's always been ready to help, she'll always lend her smile. Her voice wasn't always perfect, but that never dampened her song. Etched lines infringed her face, lacing her eyes with age. Grimacing in pain, she scarcely muttered a complaint while inquiring of others. Her breathing slowed as they sent us out, my eyes now laced with worry, riverbeds for my tears. But then she did not leave me. Memories of times past by, of laughing and crying and soul to soul silence. Discussing this and pondering that, she never held back an opinion. She taught me of life's values, purposes and perplexities, always giving me food for thought, I'll never go hungry. My Dauline, my heroine, my voluntary guide. I'm watching her fade away. I'm watching her turn to wave. She's not going to be gone for long. I'll meet her again someday, up in the clouds to sing forever, up where the tears are gone. My heroine and I reunite in the sky". May these words be an encouragement to the aged among us who question their worth and dignity due to the faltering of the earthly tent. Do not question your worth, but rather simply be aware how nurturing and invigorating your life of faithfulness is to your family, the young about you and the church.—Ron Courter



Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, e-mail: rf Wade@juno.com, Feb. 13—The meeting at Buffalo, was very enjoyable. They have a new building in a good part of town. The brethren did most of the work, resulting in a building that is neat, comfortable, and cost effective. Crowds were large each night, with a number outsiders in attendance. The Lord willing we look forward to the following meetings in the near future—Nashville, TN Feb. 16-18; Farmerville, LA Feb. 21-25; Dothan, AL March 4-11; and Garrett's Creek near Wayne, WV April 8-15. The debate in Bowling Green, KY is still scheduled for March 22-23. We took forward to seeing many brethren and friends at all these places.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74920, carlmj@compworldnet.com, Feb. 10—The year 2000 was a busy one for us and I'm grateful for every opportunity I received to preach the gospel. I've recently preached at: Galey, Healdton (one confession of faults), Wagon (two confessions of faults), Moore, and I've preached the last three services here at home. We are now preparing for our twenty-fifth annual March meeting (2-4). We have another excellent lineup of young preachers who will teach us from the parables of Jesus. My meetings schedule for this year includes: Tulsa, OK 129th E. Ave. (Feb. 10-11), Sulphur, OK (Feb. 23-25), Piedmont, AL

(March 11-18), Eldon, MO (March 30-April 1), Stockton, CA (April 7-15), Springfield, MO Mission Hills (April 29-May 6), Allen, TX (June 1-10), London, KY (June 13-17), Temple, GA (July 22-29), Mountain Home, AR (Sept. 16-23), San Angelo, TX (Sept. 26-30), Kansas City, KS 36th & Everett (Oct. 3-7), Longwood, FL (Nov. 4-11), and Seminole, OK (Dec. 7-9). May God bless us all in our service to Him.

Don McCord, Box 1773, Covina, CA—The year 2000 meetings took me to the following congregations: Cable Ridge, MO; Tyler, TX; Kenai, AK; Ceres, CA; Lee's Summit, MO; Flintville, TN; Broken Arrow, OK. I can never express to these folks my adequate thanks for the confidence they put in me, their wonderful care they gave me in opening both their hearts and homes to me, and for giving me once more the privilege of doing what I love to do best, preach the gospel of the everlasting kingdom. Lord willing, the year 2001 will take me to the following: Irving, TX; Glendora, San Antonio, TX; Lubbock, TX; Valliant, OK; Lawrenceburg, TN; Cassville, MO; Piedmont, AL; Vance Jackson, San Antonio, TX; Mountain Home, MO. Come June, I will, Lord willing, retire from 47 years teaching in the public schools; not from preaching the gospel, never until He sees fit. It is my humble hope to do more for the church here at home and abroad than I have ever done, the Lord willing hopefully. Our 2000 meetings here were with Bro. Wayne Fussell and Bro. Joe Hisle; great meetings they were; the 2001 meetings will be with Bro. Joe Lee Norton and Bro. Wayne McKamie, Lord willing. I with sincere regret chronicle the passing of Bro. Otis Stewart, a pillar here; Bro. W. H. Bullard, Norco; Bro. F. W. Morrow, a dear brother here, and Bro. John Stahl, of Corning; I apologize to their families for not submitting formal obituaries. God bless their memories!! God bless their loved ones.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, Feb. 8—Lynwood Smith was with us here at Ardmore Jan. 26-28 for a short meeting and the fourth Sunday singing. Attendance locally and from neighboring congregations was very good. Our next singing here will be in March.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, papagreg@aol.com, January 31, 2001—We were in Yuba City, CA for a weekend meeting Dec. 15-17 preaching on the theme of "Rules for Holy Living," based on Col. 3. The Yuba City congregation has been a great encourager of us through the years in preaching appointments and their willingness to help with local and foreign work. Preaching brethren Rod Watson and Bennie Cryer were able to attend the meeting. We spent one night with Bennie and Joann. We didn't have enough time to get our visit out. Other travels have taken us to Waipahu, Hawaii the last Sunday of the year where Bro. Danao and the congregation made us welcome with an invitation to preach and a potluck following services. They were rejoicing because of 4 recent baptisms. We were also in Texas for a weekend in January and preached at Irving on Sunday. Allen Bailey had been studying with a brother from the Christian Church who took his stand with us that day. I always go away from Irving encouraged about the church and our hope of

heaven. Our work continues with 64th St. in Sacramento. We were thrilled with one recent baptism, Natalie Costa, the youngest daughter of Bill and Lissa Costa.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, E-mail: old_paths@juno.com, Feb. 11—During the month of January, it was my pleasure to travel to the Philippines along with Brother Ryan Conner to visit the brethren and do what we could to strengthen and refresh them. Brother Virgilio O. Danao met us in Manila and, as always, traveled along with us acting as fellow preacher, guide and translator. It was an enjoyable trip in spite of the fact that the political situation in that country is now precarious. Filipinos are notoriously hospitable and this year was no exception. They were gracious in every way. We drove about 2,000 miles as we visited among the brethren. According to our count there were 58 souls who obeyed the gospel. God be thanked and praised for the power of His word wherever it is preached. I believe there were also two new congregations established for which we are thankful. It was a pleasure to have Ryan Conner with us. He worked hard and did his fair share and more. We can recommend him without reservation as one who is studious and true to the Book. This was the 21st trip Brother Danao and I have made together. Through the years I have learned to love and appreciate him as a friend and fellow laborer. He stands for the right, make no mistake about it. The Lord willing, Brother Kevin Presley will go with us next year. Since arriving home, it has been my pleasure to preach here. We wish to thank the Fremont congregation for their unflinching dedication to the work in the Philippines. They make it as easy as possible for me to go each year. They gladly support me and cover all expenses, no questions asked. Thank God for brethren who want to take care of the preacher. Also, we salute the congregation in Lodi that for many years has taken care of the car rental expense for the trip. It is expensive to rent an automobile there and they graciously cover it each year. Pray for us.

Clovis T. Cook, 12913 Hwy. 64, Lebanon, MO 65536—Though I have not reported to the paper for sometime, I am still doing what I can to help the smaller churches in our area. Because of health reasons, I have cut back on much of my long distance traveling. My health seems to be improving, for which I am very grateful. I have had the best of care in the hospital and at home that any man could ask for. We have had a number of deaths in our part of the country in the last few months. If my health keeps improving, we plan a trip or so this spring. To the best of my ability, most of the churches around this part of the country are holding firm. Some have been a little too liberal for my way of thinking. When a person states that he has no position on certain issues, that he just wants peace; but to say one is neutral on certain issues whether they be controversial or not puts himself in the category with fence-sitters which is called "lukewarm" (Rev. 3:16). This position is in between, and because thou art neither hot or cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth, so states the scriptures. We need to take a positive stand against that which is wrong and also take a positive stand for that which is right.

Ryan J. Connor, 1549 Black Oak Drive, Stockton, CA

95207, ryanconnor@juno.com, February 13, 2001—The work here in Stockton, CA continues to press on. My work in preaching, publicly and privately is very busy. Our teachers continue to grow and develop. It has been some time since my last report. I have literally been all over the world. In November, I was happy to hold the Thanksgiving Day meeting in Oregon, hosted by the Wilsonville congregation. We had many visitors from all around the Northwest. The congregation there at Wilsonville did a wonderful job in arranging and conducting the meeting. I wish to express my appreciation to Ralph and Roberta Osburn for keeping me during the meeting—I value them and their family as dear friends. In December, I was pleased to hold a short meeting for the Spring Valley congregation in West Virginia. My wife and I enjoyed the meeting, and the people there are some of the friendliest people we have met. We appreciate Jamie and Jennifer Leonard for their great hospitality. I was able to spend a week back at home before attending the Preachers' Study in Oklahoma City. I enjoyed the study (I could have done without the ice storm, however), and I am looking forward to this year's study in Texas. I was able to attend the first two days of the New Year's meeting in Oklahoma City, and the last two days of the New Year's meeting in California. Then on January 3rd, Brother Don King and I boarded a plane headed for the Philippines. The work in the Philippines is one of the best evangelistic efforts in the world today. We met with some 40 congregations, preached to over 1000 people, baptized 58 souls and were present for the first service of one of the 2 congregations established during our visit. (There are many places we did not have time to visit as well). There are about 20 preachers laboring in that country. We spent a lot of time with these men, teaching and seeing to particular needs. The people are poor, but industrious. The people are gentle and honest. The simplicity of the gospel goes a long way with the honest people of the Philippines. I appreciate Brother King for taking me along with him this year. This was his 21st trip. Brother King is dedicated to the work, and has been an integral part of the Philippine work from the beginning. Brother Danao accompanied us, and translated for us. There is not enough good things that can be said about Brother Danao. He is a true blessing to the Lord's work. I was happy to return home. But I am going to miss being in the midst of the tremendous work of evangelism in the Philippines. I returned home to a busy schedule of preaching. I was happy to attend and present a topic at the Winter Study in Placerville, CA. I am looking forward to preaching a short gospel meeting at the church of Christ in Ventura, CA (March 16th, 17th & 18).

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA, Feb. 9—We have been busy the last few months. The work in Oliverhurst continues to go well. A new family has started to attend the services and we hope they obey the gospel soon. Alan Bonifay and I surveyed the members of the congregation in Lodi, CA with a view of ordaining elders and deacons. The survey began last October and was finished in December. Friday night, one week ago, the congregation met to pray about this work and the men they had selected to be elders and deacons. Last Sunday, with fasting and prayers, Bro. Charles Berna, an ordained

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

If the date near your name and address reads 3-01 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

evangelist, laid hands on Jimmy Winchester and Dwight Williams appointing them as elders. For deacons, he appointed Kenny Winchester and Tom Frey. Each of these men had 100% of the members backing them for this work. May God bless them and the congregation at Lodi. On Sunday, January 21, I had the pleasure of speaking twice at the Fairview Church in Louisiana and once at the D'Arbonne Church in Farmersville. The congregations in that area are working together. It was good to see the preachers working in the that area, Terry Baze, Marcus Ayres and Cecil Smith. It was also good to see Bro Glen Post again and see the excitement he has about the work there. Beginning in January, the congregation in Placerville, CA, began a study of the minor prophets each Saturday evening. They asked Alan Bonifay and myself to coordinate this study. Attendance and interest has been good. This Winter Study will come to an end February 17. The plans are to make this an annual Winter Study. We appreciate the Placerville congregation for all the work they have put on out for this study. It was also a pleasure to attend the December Study at the 21st St. congregation in Oklahoma City, OK. I had the pleasure of helping Cliff Arney and Duane Cutter moderate the study. It was a blessing to have Jim Franklin, Bro. Kasenda, and Bro. Kassembwe (two of our Malawian preachers) from Malawi attending the study. It was also a treat to be able to spend three nights in the home of Jerry and Linda Cutter. It has been a long time since I was able to visit with Jerry that long. Thanks to Duane and Mary Cutter for letting me along with a host of others stay in their home during the study.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797, Fax No. (808) 680-0249, February 12, 2001--This year, Bro. Don L. King's annual preaching itinerary in the Philippines was scheduled on January 4-21. He was accompanied by Bro. Ryan Connor. I was their guide and interpreter throughout, as they held meetings from one church to the other in Metro-Manilla, Bagulo City and in the provinces of Isabela, Quirino, Cagayan, Iloco Norte, Ilocos Sur, Pangasian, and Tarlac. For the first time, we conducted a meeting in Iloco Sur, and two were baptized, paving the start of the first congregation in that province (Bro. Nestor Jara, who as instrumental in contacting prospects there, told me later that additional baptisms were made, and the brethren there started conducting Sunday worship services). We also conducted worship service in a newly started congregation in Marikina, Metro-Manilla, where a professor of a well known state university there attended. Six responded to the message and the call for salvation. This new congregation was established through the efforts of Bro. Eduardo Danao and Bro. Jojo Danao--one of the children

of Bro. Leonard Daneo--who now resides there with his family. The total number of baptisms as fruits of Bro. King's preaching itinerary in the Philippines this year is 58. I think, this year, lots of things beneficial to the spiritual growth of the work there have been accomplished. As always, the brotherhood there continues to respect Bro. King. They are grateful and appreciate his continued sacrifices and concern toward the Lord's work there. Though this is Bro. Connor's first trip to the Philippines, he seemed to have easily adjusted himself to the situation and he developed a close relationship with the Filipino brethren. Bro. King's and Bro. Connor's messages during the meetings encouraged and strengthened the brethren in the faith and challenged lost souls to come forward and confess their faith in Jesus, ready to be baptized for the remission of their sins. It is a wonderful privilege to work with dedicated and worthy servants of the Lord, especially Bro. King whom I continue to labor with in the Lord's work for about twenty years now. How fast the passing of years--like the falling "autumn leaves" fall, so to speak--that it seems it was only yesterday that I first met him! I would say with all honesty that without him I should have not been in the truth today. I continue to salute and love him as a co-laborer in His vineyard. They left for the U.S. on January 22. I departed for Hawaii on February 7th. On January 28, I was asked to preach in the worship service in Roxes. Five (5) more precious souls were added to the Church through baptism immediately after the service. On January 31-February 1, the Roxas congregation sponsored a meeting/study attended by most of our preaching brethren and some leaders from different places. I preached the first night; and lectured the following day on the works of a successful preacher or leader of the Church. We commend the Roxas Church and here leadership because the continue to manifest spiritual growth toward maturity. We also commend the entire brotherhood there--for despite some divisive preachers from the U.S., who seemed to have been in a "fault finding expedition" in the Philippines, approached them and tried to thrust further the spirit of discord and division into the brotherhood, even promising financial assistance to some, only to be turned down--because of their continued faithfulness and firmness to the faith. When I arrived I found the church here at peace, and the leadership gladly supplied the pulpit in my absence, alertly safeguarding the "flock" for which I am very grateful. Since my arrival, I was not feeling well--troubled by a "dry cough" accompanied by a slight fever--that I request Bro. Onofre Reboliedo to preach last Sunday morning. In the evening service, however, I was able to give the lesson. With the medication I continue to take, my health will soon be back to normal, so to speak. I continue to solicit your prayers. God bless!

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, MARCH 2001

NO. 4

THE CONTRIBUTION: HOW IT MUST BE USED

By JERRY L. CUTTER

The purpose of this article is not concerning the necessity of giving, but is rather concerning the proper use of what is given to the church. I long ago saw the futility of teaching people, who already know their duty concerning their duty to give, but find foolish reasons for not doing so. Those who spend themselves into overwhelming debt, and use it as an excuse for not giving properly to the church, should do so with some fear. Will a man rob God? The Jews succeeded in doing so by cheating in their "tithes (10%) and offerings," and as a result were "cursed with a curse" (Malachi 3:8-9). We are not serving a different God.

GIVING IS COMMANDED

Some believe, and have taught publicly, that the contribution is not a command. This idea is based upon what Paul wrote to the Corinthians in II Corinthians 8. This chapter has to do with the giving to the poor saints mentioned in I Corinthians 16:1-4. In II Corinthians 8:8, Paul writes: "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others." The NIV has it: "I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others."

The mistake in understanding this scripture is failing to realize that Paul is not commanding the Corinthians to fulfill A PROMISE that they had made already concerning the giving to the poor saints. The answer is clearly seen in II Corinthians 9:1-5, where Paul writes: "There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the saints. For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia [where Corinth is located] were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action. But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow, but that you may be ready, as I said you would be. For if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we — not to say anything about you — would be ashamed of having been so confident. So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for THE GENEROUS GIFT YOU HAD PROMISED. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given" (NIV).

What was commanded is that a contribution be made in each church upon each Lord's day and set aside for the poor. Notice I Corinthians 16:1-2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order (order is a command) to the churches of Galatia, even so do you. Upon

the first day of the week (every week - see the Greek and other translations), let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings (collections) when I come." Order can be translated as "directed, authorized, arranged, ordained or commanded" (see your lexicon). The same Greek word translated "order" in I Corinthians 16:1 is translated as "ordained" in I Corinthians 9:14 (KJV). The verse reads: "Even so hath the Lord ORDAINED that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." The NIV renders the verse: "In the same way, the Lord has COMMANDED that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel."

We may be at liberty to choose which gospel preachers we will support, or what saints we will help, but this does not change the fact that "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up..."

A MISUSE OF THE CONTRIBUTION

Almost innocently we have been lulled into using the contribution in ways not permitted by the Scriptures. There are commands involved in the use of the contribution. A command was given to the churches to lay by in store, upon the first day of every week, for poor saints. A command is also given by our Lord to support those who preach the gospel. It is important to remember that these commands given by Paul were given to churches in a very broad area. It was given to "the churches in Galatia" (I Cor. 16:1). It was also given to the churches in Macedonia as well as the churches in Achaia, where Corinth was located (II Cor. 9:1-2). This was a universal doctrine with Paul. Note I Corinthians 4:17 where Paul said Timothy would bring into their remembrance "of my ways which be in Christ, AS I TEACH EVERY WHERE IN EVERY CHURCH."

What then about building church buildings and other things necessary for the worship and work of the church? Can they be scripturally justified? There is a simple rule one must always remember: WHEN ANY COMMAND IS GIVEN, INHERENT WITHIN THAT COMMAND IS EVERYTHING IT TAKES TO CARRY OUT, OR OBEY, THAT COMMAND. This is true concerning any law, whether civil or religious.

For instance, we have been commanded to baptize those converted. Inherent within that command is all that it takes

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 4



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 10-11

The Contribution: How It Must Be Used 1
 Editorial 2
 Querist Column 3
 I Ceased Not To Warn Everyone 3
 New Testament Conversions 4
 Encouraging Children 6
 Old Testament Personalities
 Withheld Blessings 6
 The Unity Of The Spirit 7

FROM THE FIELDS 11-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
 41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
 Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
 P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
 Also On The Internet
 Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536
 A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
 periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
 Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.



Editorial

FREEMASONRY AND THE CHRISTIAN

By BARNEY OWENS

Most of us have some acquaintance with Freemasons. We likely know someone that is a member of the lodge, or have seen the symbol of the compass and square with the "G" in the midst on an automobile, ring, tie pin, or tombstone. Some of you men may have been approached by a member who extolled the merits of Masonry, although they do not directly ask you to join (you must request membership), yet it all is for the purpose of enticement. What is Masonry? Is it a mere club or social organization? Is it helpful to the Christian? Is membership looked upon by God as a good work? Or is it sinful for the Christian? This paper is not of sufficient length to discuss everything relating to this ancient order, but a few things of note will be addressed.

A Personal Perspective

My first awareness of the Masons occurred when I was about 10 years old. Having a few dollars to spend I entered a 5 and 10 cent store (we called it a dime store) to empty my pockets. Seeing a case of inexpensive rings, I asked the clerk about them. Then I saw another more expensive and inquired about it. She said, "That's a Mason ring." I asked, "What's that?" She said, "You'd have to be one to know." My father died in December; a neighbor stopped by to express his sympathy. Knowing we are members of the Church of Christ, he asked if I knew another man that had recently died as well, who was also a member of a nearby congregation. I affirmed that I was acquainted with him. He told me that the man was a member of the same Masonic Lodge as he. A few days ago another man of my acquaintance died. I went to the visitation one evening and, while there, we were told by the funeral director to please step back and be silent as a certain lodge (he gave the specifics) was to have a memorial. I stayed around to observe the proceedings. Some details will be given later. Such is my firsthand knowledge of Freemasonry.

WRITINGS DEMONSTRATE FREEMASONRY IS A RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

Over the years I have accumulated several books and have read several things regarding Freemasonry. Due to a lack of space and other things, I discarded them. The following statements are taken from *The Meaning Of Masonry* by W.L. Wilmshurst.

Page 27-28, *To state things briefly, Masonry offers us, in dramatic form and by means of dramatic ceremonial a philosophy of the spiritual life of man and a diagram of the process of regeneration. We shall see presently that philosophy is not only consistent with the doctrine of every religious system taught outside the ranks of the Order, but that it explains, elucidates and more sharply defines, the fundamental doctrines common to every religious system in the world, whether past or present, whether Christian or non-Christian. The religions of the world, though all aiming at teaching truth, express that truth in different*

continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is a man qualified to be an elder, if he has children who are not Christians?

Answer: The scripture requires that an elder have "faithful children not accused of riot or unruly." The NKJV translates "...having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination." It is the conviction of this writer that the word "faithful" (*pistos*) KJV, refers to a believer in Christ or a Christian. Hence, I reject the idea that one can be an elder if he has a child or children who are not Christians, including those who may be too young to obey the gospel. My reasons for so believing follow: (1) The word, *pistos*, occurs sixty-three times in the New Testament. Thirteen times it is used of the Deity as in I Cor. 10:13, "God is faithful." Eleven times it is used in the synoptics of faithful servants, as in Mt. 25 :21. Eight times it is used of God's word and faithful sayings, as in I Tim. 1:15. One time it is used of the sure mercies of David, Acts 13:34. Thirty times the word is used of ones who believed in Christ. (See Jno. 20:27; Acts 10:45; Acts 16:1; 2 Cor. 6:15; Col. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:2 etc.) The word distinguishes between Christian and non-Christian in the following passages 2 Tim. 2:2; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:2; 1 Tim. 6:2; and 2 Cor. 6:15. It is also noteworthy that the word "*apistos*" which is the opposite of "*pistos*" refers to one who is mature and is unbelieving, or unfaithful, of his own will. Note the following passages: I Cor. 6:6; 7:12-15; 10:27; 14:22; I Tim. 5:8; 2 Cor. 4:4; 6:16; Titus 1:15 etc. Not one time is this word used of little children. There are some who claim that "faithful children" means that the children are faithful to the father, not the Lord. Such an interpretation seems to be not only at odds with the usage of this word, but with common sense as well. How could children be faithful to a father who is a Christian, an elder in the church, a man whose main goal in life is to lead people to the Lord and shepherd them for the Lord, and yet fail to be Christians themselves? It just doesn't add up. (2) In Titus 1:6 the children under consideration that believe are those who "are not accused of riot or unruly." The words "riot" and "unruly" have to do with the characteristics of the "children that believe." But let us take a closer look at these words. The word "riot" is from "*asootia*" and is found three times in the New Testament, Eph. 5:18; Titus 1:6; and I Pet. 4:4. The adverb form of the word is found in Luke 15:13, where the prodigal is said to have spent his money living riotously. The behavior of this man, who squandered his money on harlots, is not that we would expect from little children. The word "unruly" is from "*anupotaktos*" and is found four times in the New Testament, I Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:6, 10; Heb. 2:8. Thayer defines the word "Not made subject, unsubjected, Heb. 2:8 (Actively) that cannot be subjected to control, disobedient, unruly, refractory." It would seem very unlikely that Paul would use the word in Titus 1:6 to describe little children who disobey their parents. We thus conclude that the children that believe mentioned in this passage are children old enough to be accused of the actions indicated in the meaning of the words. (3) Another consideration in making a determination about the "children" of an elder is the statement in I Tim. 3:4 that they are to be "in subjection with all gravity." There is

some disagreement as to whether the word "gravity" modifies the father or the children. Meyer, Alford, Ellicott, Greek Expositor's N. T., and Pulpit Commentary all agree that it describes the children. The word (*semnotees*) is used only three times in the New Testament I Tim. 2:2; 3:4; and Titus 2:7. Thayer defines it as "that characteristic of a person or thing which entitles to reverence or respect, dignity, gravity, majesty, sanctity, honor, probity, purity." The word would appear to require too much maturity to be used of young children under the age of accountability. (4) In I Timothy 3:5 the scripture says "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" This shows that all an elder's house must be faithful. "House" here is a metonymy. The house for the contents of the house i.e. a man's family, hence one non-Christian child will disqualify an elder, (because he is not ruling part of his house or family) even if he has other children that are believing. Some have concluded that if a man has some children who are Christians and one yet too young to obey the gospel he can still be appointed to the office. But suppose the young child never obeys the gospel. What then? Once that child reaches the age of accountability and fails or refuses to become a Christian, can it still be said that the elder has "faithful children?" Question: Suppose a man has several children all of whom have obeyed the gospel. One of his children becomes rebellious and can be justly accused of being "riotous" and "unruly." Is the man qualified to serve as an elder? I think not. Why? Because he has a child accused of riotous and unruly conduct. This child, justly accused, violates the plain specification of the scripture. By the same token if he has one child that is not "faithful" or "believing" (not a Christian) that child also violates the plain requirement God's word. All admit that the man who has children who are Christians meets the Bible requirement. This is the safe, sane, and scriptural view. Why not be satisfied to stay with it? I can honestly say that I want to see elders in every church. I believe that is the Bible pattern and should be the working goal of brethren everywhere. The goal, however, cannot be scripturally reached by weakening or stretching the qualifications to include men that do not qualify. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

I CEASED NOT TO WARN EVERYONE

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

The title of our article is an excerpt from a speech made by the apostle Paul to the elders of Ephesus. It is recorded in Acts chapter 20. He was reminding them of his preaching and teaching while he was working with them. He had come there and established the church and for three years he taught them "publicly and from house to house," continually making known to them duties and responsibilities, and warning them of the consequences of sin and unfaithfulness. He had "not shunned to declare...all the council of God" (v32). He had "kept back nothing that was profitable" to them (v20). In short, he was a courageous and faithful servant of the Lord.

In The Old Testament

Ezekiel, the priest, was told by the Lord, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel:

Therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul" (Eze 3:17-21). Ezekiel could have excused himself by saving the people would not listen to him. But the Lord precluded that in the preceding chapter. He said, "And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: For they are most rebellious" (Eze 2:7). The warning would serve two purposes. (1) It would make the person warned aware of the sin and the consequence of it. (2) It would make Ezekiel free from the blood of the individual warned. It was for the benefit of the warned as well as for the sake of the man who did the warning.

In The New Testament

It was the apostle Paul who wrote to the Thessalonians, "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts" (1 Thes 2:4). He writes to the Galatians, "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 1:10). The apostle was a servant of the Lord, not a politician.

He was not interested in popularity, but the salvation of souls. He wrote the Corinthians, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor 5:11). We are informed of his attitude in preaching the gospel when he writes, "Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Cor 4:1,2).

When the apostle addressed the elders of Ephesus, he could boldly assert, "I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26, 27). "A ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears" (v 31).

Paul's Instruction To Preachers

To Timothy Paul wrote, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith mid of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (1 Tim 4:6). Again, he says, "These things command and teach" (1 Tim 4:11). To Titus he writes, "These things speak, and exhort and rebuke with all authority" (Tit 2:15). In Paul's last letter to Timothy he wrote, "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...And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim 4:2-4). He also predicted that the time would come when people would be "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim 3:4). I think that all honest persons can agree that we are living in such a time.

Not All Men Love Truth

Our Lord said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt 5:6). But all men do not take kindly to instruction. Jesus was crucified for his teaching. John the Baptist was beheaded for the truth he spoke. And Stephen, a disciple of Christ, was stoned to death for his preaching to the Jews. And Paul asks of Christians, "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? (Gal 4:16). Truth only makes friends of those who love truth.

It is dangerous for one not to love the truth all of it. Because of this attitude some "changed the truth of God into a lie" (Rom 1:25). Paul said concerning others, "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send the strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thes 2.10-12).

When Jesus was on trial for His life before Pilate, the governor asked the poignant question, "What is the truth" (Jno 18:38). The question is answered for all in Jno 17:17, when Jesus in His prayer to God says, "Thy word is truth."

The wise man, Solomon declares, "Fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov 1:7). The man who does not want to be warned or taught his duty is foolish and jeopardizes his own salvation. Paul says, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works" (Heb 10:24). But when this done out of concern for souls, sometimes are those who just get provoked. But Paul said to the elders of Ephesus, "I ceased not to warn, every one night and day with tears." And neither will we if we love souls and want to see them saved.

NEW TESTAMENT CONVERSIONS

By C.A. SMITH

The Book of Acts, as you know, gives us a brief history of the church and Christianity during the first thirty-three years of existence. This great Book pursues many themes, one of which is, the theme of "Conversion." Brother J. W. McGarvey in his *New Commentary on Acts of Apostles*, made this "the theme of Acts," pointing out that practically the whole of it revolves around a series of conversions and attempted conversions. A careful study of the Book of Acts, will reveal that it is the only source of what one must do to enter into the kingdom of God. It follows then, does it not, if men would be saved today, they must do what those did to be saved, as recorded in Acts of the Apostles. Let's just look and see what they did!

The first chapter of Acts deals with the ascension of Christ, the return of the apostles into the city of Jerusalem, and their prayers to God. The second chapter opens on the Day of Pentecost, or fifty days after the resurrection of Christ. Acts 2 finds the coming of the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised. Here in Acts we find the church established

for which Jesus shed His precious blood. The apostle Peter, when asked on that day what to do to be saved, told them to "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). And "Them that GLADLY RECEIVED THE WORD WERE BAPTIZED." People who, today, receive the Word gladly will not argue about baptism.

Many, however, try to justify themselves without it, but according to the scriptures they will never be able to. Justification does not come by man's plans, but by God's.

The next example is found in Acts 8:12, let us read it also. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were BAPTIZED, both men and women.

The next example is found in Acts 8:13, where we read: "Then Simon himself believed also and when he was BAPTIZED he continued with Philip."

Again "And Philip 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. And he commanded the chariot to stand still and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he BAPTIZED him" (Acts 8:3 7-3 9).

In the 11th chapter of Acts we read how the angel told Cornelius to "Call for Simon whose surname is Peter, WHO SHALL TELL THEE WORDS WHEREBY THOU AND ALL THY HOUSE SHALL BE SAVED" (Acts 11:13-18). Here are SOME OF THE WORDS WHEREBY THEY WERE SAVED. "And he commanded them to be BAPTIZED..." (Acts 10:48). Be it remembered that wherever the word baptize is mentioned it is always immersion, because sprinkling was not practiced until seven-hundred years later, and at that, it was authorized by the Pope of Rome and not Jesus nor His Apostles. Let's remember that the Head of every man is Christ, not the Pope of Rome (I Cor. 11:3).

As Paul was preaching in Philippi, Lydia heard the Word, believed and immediately was "BAPTIZED" with her household (Acts 16:12-15).

The Philippian jailer and his household BELIEVED AND WERE BAPTIZED (Acts 16:33-34). Read also Acts 18:8).

Paul found certain disciples who had not been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus and they were IMMEDIATELY BAPTIZED IN THAT NAME (Acts 19:1-5).

We can see in ALL of the foregoing examples that in the early days of the church those who believed, were ALL BAPTIZED. Baptism is that NEW BIRTH which Jesus commanded, and is "FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS" (Acts 2:38).

Baptism is to "WASH AWAY SINS" (Acts 22:16). Finally, baptism enters into our salvation as Peter says, "The like figure whereunto even BAPTISM DOTHS ALSO NOW SAVE US! (I Peter 3:21). Peter said BAPTISM SAVES US! But, we are not foolish enough to say that Baptism ALONE will save anymore than faith ALONE will save anyone. Let's be BIG enough and INTELLIGENT enough to accept the Bible plan and submit to it.

Why then do preachers preach that it is not necessary today? Where in the Scriptures was it changed?

This, baptism, is the New Birth of which Jesus spoke in John 3:5 "Verily, verily, I say unto thee except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The other night I heard a preacher preach on this verse and he said, "Jesus meant the physical birth when He (Jesus) said, 'water.'" In thinking of this as a physical birth let's see just what it would sound like. It would run something like this. "Nicodemus, if you were never born into this world, you would never have been able to come into My kingdom." Let me say here, an idiot would not tell a full grown man anything like this. Jesus would never give such a repugnant answer as this to a person who is earnestly asking what he must do. No, we must believe just what Jesus said, "Except a man be BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD." This is dogmatic, authoritative, infallible, and all should accept it literally! Only those possessed with the diabolical hellish schemes of the devil would try to make this verse mean something different!

There is only one way into the sheepfold and that is through the door. Jesus said, "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved..." (John 10:9). The sheepfold here is the church and the door is Christ. Through Christ is the only way by which we can gain admission into the church. Jesus said, "I am the way" (John 14:6). How are we to get into Christ or into the fold? For the answer we read what Paul said about getting into Christ. Hear him: "Know ye not, that so many of you as have been baptized INTO CHRIST have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Then being baptized (immersed) INTO CHRIST is the only way into Him.

The following matter on "Coffee" is a prime example of what men do to the scriptures to try and prove that one does not have to be baptized to be saved.

"COFFEE"

Here is a pointed story, which has been told in rhyme, About a certain preacher who lived once upon a time. At one of his appointments, some members, not a few— Became most sorely troubled about the word "INTO." The good Book says quite plainly (Acts 8) "They came unto," and "went down INTO" water, as Bible people do. This parson preached a sermon with zeal and power and might. And to his satisfaction, he set the passage right! "INTO" 'there, don't mean INTO, but AT, or NEAR, or BY: They went down TO the water and got a small supply." Now, near this place of worship there lived a Sister Brown, Who, by her splendid cooking, had gotten much renown. And her delicious coffee! On all the circuit round; The preacher oft said boldly, "Its like could not be found." When he would preach a sermon of extra power and length, He liked at her good table to recuperate his strength. She was a simple Christian—No better in the land, And oft reproved the daring for changing God's command. She heard Jones' "INTO" sermon, and thought the matter o'er, Then asked him home to dinner, as she had done before. She ground her well browned coffee—the kettle steaming hot, And put it AT, not INTO the famous coffee-pot. She poured for him a cupful—I think she did not sin; "Why, sister, you've forgotten to put the coffee in! "No, no, dear sir, that's coffee; I ground a good supply, And then down BY the vessel, I put it AT—NEAR BY. By logic of your sermon

(I thought it very thin), If AT, or NEAR, means "INTO," then I put the coffee IN!! But if you now will promise no more such stuff to teach, Nor dodge God's plain commandment when you attempt to preach. I'll go and make some coffee, just to a Bible dot, And I will put the coffee INTO the coffee-pot"!!!

ENCOURAGING CHILDREN

By HOMER A. GAY

We believe children should be encouraged to do good things and then they will not have to be corrected and prohibited from doing bad things. A person never climbs so high, nor accomplishes so much in this world, but that a kindly word of encouragement will help him to have a brighter outlook on life. There are many good things that we can see in our children, (and we should see them) and let them know that that we see the good. I am afraid the parents make the children think that they never see any good in them because they always correct them for their wrong doings. Many never mention the good deeds they do. Moses, who led the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage and into sight of the Canaan land, said to the people concerning his successor: "But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it." (Deuteronomy 1:38) If Joshua needed to be encouraged, surely we should realize that our children need it also. Again we read: "Moreover, he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord. (2 Chronicles 31:4) Again: "And he set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them to the service of the house of the Lord." (2 Chronicles 35:2) This comes on down to us today in dealing with our children for we read in Colossians 3:21: "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."

Children are human, not toys. They come into our homes as pure as the driven snow. There is within every child a desire to do things that are upright, good and wholesome. Usually, if we will encourage them in these things the evil will not be so tempting.

Children ought to be allowed to enjoy themselves at home. As a general rule, parents who do not allow their children to enjoy themselves at home soon find that they are enjoying themselves elsewhere. Often, it is in the wrong kind of company. Those slamming doors, stamping feet, whistling, singing, yelling mouths will be missing from that old home too soon anyway. Encourage your children, young and old alike, to bring all the company they want home with them and enjoy themselves. If they are slamming your doors, playing your radio, thumping on an instrument at home, you know where they are. You know they are not bothering the neighbors nor into anything that is very bad.

Often, in trying to look after their children, parents do them an injustice by not allowing them to associate with even good company. Boys and girls will associate with some one at some time. It is far better to encourage them to play with, chum with, and keep company with Christian boys and girls than to selfishly try to make them stick right with you. It may be that you will find out later that they

are slipping around and going out with questionable characters.

Encourage the children to go to the services of the church every one of them. If we will make it our business to see that we always go, the children will grow up into the habit. Always have their clothes ready, quit work in plenty of time for them to go. Be sure to never, NEVER, plan any piece of work, visit, nor anything that would hinder the children from going to church. I have known parents to plan a birthday party for their child at exactly the hour of a church service! This is surely not encouraging them to go to church.

Children should also be encouraged to think for themselves. I find so many parents jumping in and telling the child what to say every time and giving it the answer to every question. Better, to let the child think for himself. He will have to learn some time in life.

Encourage the child to always be honest and tell the truth regardless of consequences. Let him or her know they can depend on you staying with them and helping them undo anything wrong they have done, if they will just be truthful about it.

Encourage them to sing! Make a special effort for them to learn to sing. That is one thing that will bring them to the front in meetings of the church. It will make them realize that they too can help worship God.

Encourage them to take some active part in the work of the church. Mothers can take their daughters with them when they visit the sick. There are many things they can do in the church in that way if given a chance. Boys should be encouraged to read a chapter in the worship, lead a song, and lead a prayer. They will soon be able to carry on the worship by themselves if they have to do so.

Parents, remember, you can train a plant to lean to the north, south, east, or west by the proper care. But if you turn a tub down over it, it will die. So, give that child some elbowroom to do the good that he is capable of doing and wanting to do.

Encourage him in everything that is right. "Give them the roses now."

Next month, The Dissolution of the Home.

OLD TESTAMENT PERSONALITIES

WITHHELD BLESSINGS

By JIMMY VANNOY

Jeremiah wrote just before Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in about 586 BC. God was allowing Babylon to conquer Judah and destroy Jerusalem because of their sinfulness. In spite of the fact that Jeremiah warned them that they were going to be conquered and that the Babylonians, the most powerful army in the world, loomed large on the horizon, Judah continued in their sins. Jeremiah prophesied to some of the most ungodly people who ever existed, and their sins limited God's ability to bless them.

Jeremiah spoke of these people in Jeremiah 5:23. "But this people has a defiant and rebellious heart; they have revolted and departed." The blessings of God have always been conditional. He will not bless a disobedient and rebellious person, but the blessings from God for the faithful and obedient are greater than we can imagine. The

following is said of rebellious Judah: "Your iniquities have turned these things away, and your sins have withheld good from you." (Jeremiah 5:25) So many today, just like ancient Judah, have blessings withheld from them by God because they choose to live by their own will instead of God's. God said through Jeremiah that because of the wickedness of the people, "the showers have been withheld, and there has been no latter rain." (Jeremiah 3:3) Extended periods of drought are devastating to crops, animals and the pocketbook of the farmer. But in those days, it could mean the loss of all earthly goods and even starvation. The reason the rain did not come in that day was because of their sins.

During the forty years the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they angered God many times with their sin and rebellion. In doing so, they caused God to withhold blessings from them. "Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." (Psalm 78:41) God wants to bless His people, and He has so much He can give to us, but when we knowingly disobey Him or close our minds to His truth, we limit God's ability to bless us.

God will withhold blessings by closing His ears to the prayers of the disobedient. "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." (1 Peter 3:12) God turns His face away from those who will not submit themselves to Him so that He will not see them to protect them or hear them to help them. "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." (Isaiah 59:2) Separation from God means separation from His blessings and protection, and it is sin that causes the separation. James says it is the prayer of the righteous which will be heard. (James 5:16) The conditions necessary for answered prayers are made clear in 1 John 3:22. "And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." Answered prayers come to those who obey God's commandments. It is indeed a tragedy to be 'in the position of not having our prayers heard by God, but this is exactly what happens when we sin and refuse to repent. There is no blessing greater than to be able to speak to God and to have Him hear and answer our prayers. However we destroy God's ability to help us when sin creeps into our lives.

When a Christian lives so that God withholds blessings, the problem can be resolved so that the blessings will flow again. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:7) We must simply stop committing sin and return to the ways of God, complying with His will for forgiveness. It is of ultimate importance that we live so that God's blessings will flow freely to us and so we do not limit God's ability to bless us.

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT

By H.C. HARPER

There is a notable instance of division in the church at Corinth that will be well for us to contemplate, a division that was leaving its blight upon that flourishing growth of the church, a division that was condemned in no uncertain terms. And while only some among them (1 Cor. 11:19) were causing the division, yet all were enjoined to give diligence to maintain unity. (1 Cor. 1:10). "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," says the apostle, "that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

They were not speaking the same thing, and as a result were not practicing the same thing. And the remedy, any discerning mind can easily see, even if the apostle had not set it forth. Men act as a result of speaking, teaching--true or false: from God or from man. And the apostle strikes at the very source of the foul stream that was contaminating the body. And he gives the penacea that will effectively cure the ailment if the direction is faithfully followed. He says: "These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written." (1 Cor. 4:6).

Hence any man that opens his mouth to speak "beyond the things which are written," is a factionist, a schismatic, a servant of the devil. And every true disciple of the Lord is under the most solemn obligation to give diligence to checkmates such a course. "And they shall all be taught of God," quotes Jesus (John 8:45). God's word, and that alone must guide us Jesus says, "He that is of God heareth God's words." (John 8:47).

It is useless and senseless for a person to claim to be of God, so long as he is not guided solely by God's word. Hence John says, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God." (2 John 9). God has spoken by his Son. (Heb. 1:1).

God gave his word to the Son, and the Son gave it to his apostles. He says, "I have given unto them the words which thou givest me." (John 17:8) Hence, we are circumscribed within the limits covered by the words of Jesus. Jesus said to his whom they baptized to observe all things that he had commanded. And within this sphere the early disciples moved, for we read: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added about three thousand souls. And thy continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching." etc. (Acts 2:41, 42; Matt. 28:20).

Hence we must be guided by the word of the Lord in our faith and practice, and by that alone--the teachings of man have no place here. And speaking the same thing, having the same teaching, all being taught of God, we will all have the same practice if we follow that teaching; and unity and sweet harmony will prevail and Christ and God will be glorified, and the devil will be ruined. Let all give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit.

Remarks

Even though the above by our lamented Brother H.C. Harper was written for the readers of the *Apostolic Way*, December issue, 1925, it is as appropriate and timely as if written for December, 1958, yes, or Jan., 1959, hence we

Subscribe To The *Old Paths Advocate*
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94536
\$10 Per Year

pass it on the readers of the *OPA*.

It must be evidence to all of our readers today that if we will apply and practice the Scriptures cited, that they will eliminate all division over the introduction of the various innovations, such as instrumental music in worship (anywhere), the Sunday school with its classes, women teachers in public, separate collections, more than one loaf and one cup on the Lord's table, Bible colleges, or other institutions in addition to the blood bought church of our Lord. God gave Christ to be head over all things to the church. His body and the fullness of Him that filleth all in all (Eph. 1:20-23). If all will "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11), they cannot contend for the above innovations.—*OPA 1959*

"THE CONTRIBUTION: HOW IT MUST BE USED"

continued from page 1

to baptize someone, whether it is building a baptistry, going to a manmade lake or pond, digging a hole in the ground and filling it with water, or traveling to a lake or the ocean. So it is with assembling to worship. We must assemble upon the first day of every week (I Cor. 16:2). A church must agree upon a place to meet, among other things. We might have to meet under a tree (as I have done), rent a place, buy a building, meet in a home, or be given a place to meet. There is no other way to carry out the command. Many times, of necessity, a building must be purchased. Of course, this involves money, and the purpose for the building is to keep a command and for the furtherance of the gospel.

The church at Troas met in an upper room, where the public could gather. Seemingly the church at Corinth was not meeting in a private home, but had homes to eat in other than the place of worship (I Cor. 11:34). Their meeting places were situated to where the unlearned and unbelievers felt welcome to "come in" (I Cor. 14:24). Paul rented a house "and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ..." (Acts 28:30-31). Rent involves money. Certainly we must make ourselves available to the public in order to preach the kingdom of God and teach concerning Jesus. Thus, it is not unscriptural to use church funds for a place to meet, teach and preach.

What, though, about using church funds for more than that which is spiritual - worship, preaching and teaching about Jesus? It is unscriptural, and once begun has no stopping place. For instance, we cannot build a place of worship and spend church funds on a kitchen or a place to eat. We cannot use church funds to provide for places of entertainment, such as gyms, ball fields, camps, etc. And we certainly cannot form church choirs and ball teams to compete with the denominations.

Sometimes places of worship are purchased with kitchens and dining areas. This in itself is not wrong; however, if buying such a facility adds up to being more in cost than the cost would be of building a building without the kitchen and dining areas, then the building should not be purchased. More and more brethren are being "tempted" to go beyond the Scriptures in these matters, but the temptation must be avoided at all cost. The contributions to the church have specific uses, and any use other than that is clearly defined in the Scriptures as wrong.

And, then, we will notice one last misuse of the contribution, and that is NO USE. The command to contribute to the church also carries with it the command *to use*. The leaders of the churches must actively find ways to scripturally use the collections. Never let it be said that there is no need, thus no reason to give. Neither should the lack of need ever be used for an excuse not to give. Our obligation to give as we have been prospered never varies. We may live in a small community, but the world is a big place, and we are barely beginning to fulfill the great commission in our generation - and, comparatively speaking, none of us has much time left.

At this time in America there is tremendous wealth in the Lord's church. However, despite this great wealth, it is still difficult to keep the work going worldwide, in many cases. Brethren, we must be very careful about how we are spending the contributions, and at the same time we must remember we are setting examples for future generations. We must be very careful not to set the stage for even more digression, by our use of church funds. A place to worship has its place only insofar as it is necessary for us to have a place to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

ways, and we are more prone to emphasize the differences than to look for the correspondences in what they teach. In some Masonic Lodges the candidate makes his first entrance to the Lodge room amidst the clash of swords and the sound of strife, to intimate to him that he is leaving the confusion and jarring of the religious sects of the exterior world, and is passing into a Temple where within the Brethren dwell together in unity of thought in regard to the basal truths of life, truths which can permit of no difference or schism."

Page 8, "*The gentle nature of the Masonic system... upon mystical religion and the service of the inward life...a subject of which...Masonry is but a spiritualized form.*"

Page 13, "*The full Master-Mason-the just man made perfect who has actually and not merely ceremonially traveled the entire path, endured all its tests and ordeals, and become raised into conscious union with the Author and Giver of Life and able to mediate and impart that life to others-is at all times hard to find."*

In other places Mr. Wilmshurst speaks of Masonry as the straight and narrow path, of the need to use "the New Testament as well as the Old, of regeneration which is accomplished by the Lodge, and even of being born again in the Order. He shows that after the candidate's "initiation:" to Masonry, he will "*henceforth dedicate and devote his life to the Divine rather than to his own or any other service, so that the Principles of the Order he may be the better enabled to display that beauty of godliness which previously perhaps has not manifested through him.*"

Although these quotations are not a "drop in the bucket" from the vast storehouse that could be quoted, they do show from this recognized authority among Masons (himself being a Mason) that it is a religious fraternity. I have discussed this with Masons, some of whom deny it to be religious. Those who do are either ignorant, blind, or trying to willfully mislead others.

MASONRY IS A FALSE WAY

The way of life is found in Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament. The Lord Himself declared, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life.*" (Jn. 14:6). Masonry's claim to have truth, knowledge, and life is a lie, full of darkness, and those who walk in it are astray. Masonry presents a way other than Christ, and Jesus predicted such would take place, Jn. 10:1, 9, 10

VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, HE THAT ENTERETH NOT BY THE DOOR INTO THE SHEEPFOLD, BUT CLIMBETH UP SOME OTHER WAY, THE SAME IS A THIEF AND A ROBBER... I AM THE DOOR; BY ME IF ANY MAN ENTER IN, HE SHALL BE SAVED, AND SHALL GO IN AND OUT, AND FIND PASTURE. THE THIEF COMETH NOT, BUT TO STEAL, AND TO KILL, AND TO DESTROY: I AM COME THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE, AND THAT MORE ABUNDANTLY.

Christ has no place for those men and organizations that claim to do divine work, yet fail to obey His commandments. All they do has no value. It is empty. Mt. 15:7-9

YE HYPOCRITES, WELL DID ESAIAS PROPHECY OF YOU, SAYING, THIS PEOPLE DRAWETH NIGH UNTO ME WITH THEIR MOUTH, AND HONORETH ME WITH THEIR LIPS; BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR FROM ME. BUT IN VAIN THEY DO WORSHIP ME, TEACHING FOR DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN.

MASONRY OFFERS NEW LIFE WITHOUT THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

While Masonry claims to offer regeneration and a new life after leaving the ways of the world for its practice, the Bible testifies that through Jesus Christ is the only means of redemption and "in Christ" is the new life to be lived. Peter declares in I Pet. 1:18-19

FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW THAT YE WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS, AS SILVER AND GOLD, FROM YOUR VAIN CONVERSATIONS RECEIVED BY TRADITION FROM YOUR FATHERS; BUT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, AS A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH AND WITHOUT SPOT.

It is no stretch to think that Masonry is a tradition like that received from the fathers of these Jews. If a man is redeemed, it is by the blood of Christ. Furthermore, Christ did not purchase Masons or the Masonic Lodge with His blood. He did purchase the church (Acts 20:28), at which time He became the Savior of the Body (Eph. 5:25). The church then is glorious (Eph. 5:27) not having spot or blemish. Such cannot be said of Freemasonry. To trust in Masonry for salvation is to count the blood of Christ as an unholy thing (Heb. 6:6) and openly put Christ to shame. There is no salvation in any other name than "Christ" (Acts 4:12).

THE MASONIC MEMORIAL AT DEATH

Being present at the memorial of an acquaintance as referred to previously, the following among some other things took place. The men marched in before the casket, one of them holding the Bible on some type of pillow. Another was carrying the compass and square, the Masonic symbol. Each of the men wore white aprons. It was stated

that these aprons were the signs of innocence. There were several scriptures quoted that I recognized from Genesis, Job, Solomon's writings, and John in Revelation. The Lord's Prayer was also recited. The deceased had an apron placed in the casket along with an evergreen. The one making most of the talk stated that his brother Mason, now departed, had served in the Lodge here on earth and now was to be of service in the "Celestial Lodge."

Obviously missing from his remarks to a person like me were the words "Jesus Christ" and "Christian" and "Gospel." One might as well be listening to a narration by a Jewish Rabbi, except for the Lord's Prayer and the one statement from John in Revelation. Even though God was mentioned, those rejecting Christ have neither the Father nor the Son (II Jn. 9-11).

The whole thing was sacrilege and to Christian people was a shame. While it is claimed by Masons that an "infidel" cannot be a Mason, they must admit that they are "infidelic" in rejecting Jesus Christ as the Divine Son of God and the light into all the spiritual world of unbelief. These Masons sought to give hope to the hopeless without God and Christ.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF FREEMASONRY

Should a Christian be a member of the Masonic Lodge? No. In view of its belief, how could we be Masons? What should a Christian do if he is a Mason? The same thing one does when he obeys the gospel who is a Baptist or Methodist, or a Roman Catholic. What is that? Repent of it and never return to such practice.

BE NOT YE THEREFORE PARTAKERS WITH THEM. FOR YE WERE SOMETIMES DARKNESS, BUT NOW ARE YE LIGHT IN THE LORD: WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT (Eph. 5:7-8)

What should be our attitude toward our brethren in Christ who are members of the Lodge? May I ask two thought-provoking questions, then a follow-up question?

(1) What would be your attitude toward me if I as a Christian held membership in the Roman Catholic Church? Each Lord's Day I arose early and celebrated "Mass," after which I came to worship and submitted to the things as taught in scripture?

(2) Or if I held membership in the Seventh Day Adventist Church and met with them on Saturday, worshipped as they do, fellowshiping them in every way, and then on the Lord's Day, without fail, assembled with the church in worship?

(3) Or if on Tuesday evening I met with the Masonic Lodge, fellowshiped them, call them "Brethren," share a handshake used only by them, wear the insignia on a ring or a tie bar or my automobile, and engaged in every activity of their service and homage, going as far as calling the one in charge "Worshipful Master?"

Think about it seriously. There are congregations where men are even the leadership. Preachers come from near and far never saying a single word about the practice. I realize that these things will not be well received by some, others believing that it is not right to belong to the Masonic Lodge will condemn me for bringing it up, as they think it of little consequence and would rather the boat be left unrocked. Others have known the truth but have refused to say anything because of what may happen, as I have known brethren to be persecuted by Masons for speaking out

against the organization, and there is plenty yet that could be said. If you wish to learn more, go to a public library and read the words of Masons themselves. I will give them credit, they are willing to tell the basis of their organization, which some of the brethren in Christ try to hide. Any question that I might help with will be considered. May God bless us all.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We Need A Preacher

The Church of Christ at Rogers, AR is currently searching for a full time Gospel Preacher. Interested preachers must have strong evangelist skills to assist with personal work. NW Arkansas is one of the fastest growing areas in the US and has a great potential for evangelism. The congregation at Rogers has grown significantly within the last several years and has many families with young children. Please contact Bennie Nichols at 501-986-9220 or Dale Wellman at 501-751-3505 for further information.

Church Directory

The Moore Church of Christ will be changing its Sunday morning meeting time to 10 a.m. beginning April 1. We've been meeting at 10:30.

Denison, TX—Please change Wayne Sanders address to 1682 Lemon Hill Rd., Calera, OK 74730.

Lowery, AL—Wednesday evening services will now be at 6:00 PM

Stockton, CA—Address of Gene Youngblood should be 2643 Summerfield Dr.

The Internet

For many other articles and resources for Christians, including a schedule of Gospel Meetings across the United States, and numerous links to other helpful web sites visit <http://www.newtestamentchurch.org>.

OUR DEPARTED

WILBURN—Vivian Wilburn was born on July 4, 1916 and passed away on January 15, 2001. Vivian was a native of Honolulu, Hawaii and lived there until 1946. In 1944 she married Elvin Wilburn and two years later they moved to Ripon, CA. In 1951 Al and Vivian moved to Stockton, CA, and both have been long-time members of the Church of Christ there. For many years Vivian operated a children's daycare center from her home. She was an avid gardener and a good cook, and her family was very important to her. Al and Vivian had three daughters and all of them are still living nearby. Patsy Hill resides in Stockton as does her sister, Kathy Guidi. Raylene Williams lives in Lodi and is the wife of Dwight Williams, an elder of the Lodi Church of Christ. Vivian is also survived by two grandchildren and two brothers: Joseph Tachera of Hawaii and Richard Tachera of Hawaii. She was preceded in death by three brothers: George Anderson, Manual Tachera and Fred Tachera. Jim Winchester spoke words of comfort to the family and large gathering of fellow Christians and friends. Brian Osburn led congregational singing and I was honored to assist Jim in comforting those who had come to pay their respects to Vivian, who was someone special to all who knew her. We sorrowed over our loss but not as others

who have no hope—for in the glorious resurrection at the coming of Jesus we expect to see Vivian again among the redeemed of all ages. May the God of all comfort calm the spirits and lift the hearts of each member of Vivian's family.—Alan Bonifay

OWENS—Russell Owens was born on Jan. 13, 1923 near Mt Vernon, KY, next to the youngest of 14 children belonging to Aden and Alice Bell Owens. His soul took its flight in the early morning hours on Dec. 26th, 2000 in his home in West Chester, OH at the mature age of 77 yrs. 11 mos. and 13 days. He was married to Lucy Jane (Sis) Price on Oct. 24th 1942, a union that blessed the community and brotherhood producing a stalwart gospel preacher and a home that was a haven of love, peace, hospitality and cheer. Besides raising Barney and Glenda, Russell and Sis took Sis's two younger sisters when orphaned and raised them from the ages 6 and 10 to be treated in their own words "just like Glenda and Barney." He obeyed the gospel while in his teens. When he and Sis moved to Cincinnati on July 4th 1950 there was no faithful congregation meeting in the area. In 1953 when word spread that some brethren planned to meet for worship after the New Testament pattern at Woodlawn, he was present the first Lord's day. Not a single one there was "in fellowship," so Russell was instrumental in getting Bro. E.H. Miller of LaGrange, Ga. to come up and hold a meeting and set things in order, which he did and confessions were made and people were baptized. Thus began the work in the Cincinnati area. Russell remained a staunch, faithful leader to the end of his pilgrimage, being the last male member of that original group at Woodlawn. He had a big heart, a quick wit, good humor, a faith embedded in strong convictions. A lover of faithful preachers, the church, his family and brethren. While he was quite a "cut up" entertaining in his home, there was no foolishness when it came to religion and his worship, he was as SERIOUS as his preacher son, who was his pride and joy. He was "genuine." His adoration for Sis mimicked Abraham's love of Sarah. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife of 58 yrs of the home, one son; Barney of West Chester, OH, three daughters; Glenda Lindner of Cynthianna, KY, Betsy Blanton of Morrow, OH, and Clara Jones of Clarksville, OH. Two sisters; Eva Wheat of Kings Mtn., KY and Loretta Belcher of Berea, KY, the church at Sharonville, OH of which he was a charter member and pillar, and many friends and brethren in Christ. The memorial services were in the Sharonville, OH church building at 2 pm on Dec. 29 where a large crowd assembled and the singing was rendered by local Christians. Yes, his passing was taken "hard" by those who loved him. It is our prayer that his "works that follow him" will result in the redeeming of many who are astray and heaven will be more real and longed for by the faithful.—Jimmie C. Smith

KING—Jewell Edna King, was born Oct. 20, 1904 near Lebanon, MO. She departed this life Nov. 5, 2000 in Springfield, Mo., at the age of 96 years and 18 days. April 26, 1924 she was married to "Jim" Hobert King. His brother, Homer L. King performed the ceremony. To this union one son and two daughters were born, Harold, Pauline and Mary Joyce. With their spouses, four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren survive her passing. She was preceded in death by her husband Jim, Feb. 18, 1969. Jewell married into the King family, who were pillars in the Lee's Summit community, and the Church of Christ. This writer conducted the funeral for six of the original family. The King family were like my own. After the death of her husband, Jewell moved to

Springfield, Mo., where for twenty-five (more or less) years we lived where our properties joined. She was very hospitable and friendly. If it was in the realm of possibility, there's nothing they would not do for me. She will be held in my memory as one of the best friends I ever had. Jewell obeyed the gospel at an early age and attended the Lee's Summit Church of Christ for many years before she moved to Springfield, Mo. where she attended the Mission Hills Church of Christ as long as her health permitted. The beautiful funeral parlor was decorated with many flowers which made a spectacular floral arrangement. The singing was well directed by Mark Triplett, and the assembly was invited to sing along. Dan Paulson, Jewell's grandson by marriage closed the service at the graveside.—Clovis T. Cook



Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Highson, CA 95326—We arrived home last evening from Niangua, Missouri where we had an enjoyable meeting. It was a joy to stay with Ron and Carolyn Alexander whose hospitality is well known. Going and coming to Niangua we had the opportunity of visiting with Paul and Wilma Nichols who took us in and carried us to and from the airport. We go back many years with them in the Lord's work. The hospitality of Clovis and Wilma Cook and Billy and Judy Dickinson, Warren and Bernice Arnett and many others was very pleasant. When you have such close ties with men as Clovis and Paul, both of them sacrificing for the cause where I grew up, you don't forget them. Though both are up in years they still preach, and are very concerned with the welfare of the Church. I thank the brethren in North Springfield for the invitation to preach there. They have Billy Dickinson and Irvin Barnes working with them. I enjoyed the association with Ronny Wade and Irvin Barnes, for a short visit. The preachers came to the meeting often to support it which added to the joy of it. They were: Clovis Cook, Billy Dickinson, Gary Weaver, Smith Bibens, Roy Lee Criswell, Dan Wissinger, Clyde Lampkins, David Griffin, and Ron Alexander whose staunchness and faithfulness in the cause is well known. Ron was sick toward the end of the meeting and we hope his health will be better. The churches near and far cooperated by their presence which was encouraging to me and the brethren. We are home to work again, with real good prospects for growth, both in number and spiritually. May the Lord bless his people all over this world, and especially the faithful men preaching the gospel. The Lord's people are the best in this world.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, March 15—The meeting at Nashville closed with good crowds and a number of outsiders in attendance. The brethren had done extensive work and advertising, which paid off in a number of ways. Next we were at Farmerville, LA where a new work was recently begun. These brethren had worked hard and long for the meeting. Crowds were large and attentive. Over one hundred different outsiders

attended the meeting. Some nights the attendance was above two hundred twenty five. One was baptized and one returned to the church. Brother Terry Baze works here and is highly respected by the church. I don't know that I have ever seen a church equal in enthusiasm and individual member participation in working for a successful meeting. Several preachers attended as well as members from nearby congregations. Our next work was at Dothan, AL where the church just moved into their beautiful new building. Brethren came from all over the deep south to help out, making for large crowds at each service. Area congregations were good to cooperate and help out as well. Brother Kevin Presley lives and works here, and is highly esteemed by all. This congregation is growing and seems to have a bright future. The Lord willing we will be at Garretts Creek near Wayne, WV April 8-15, Marion, IA May 9-13, Ratliff City, OK June 6-10 and Marietta, GA July 7-15. May the Lord's blessings rest upon all his people.

Douglas T Hawkins, Rt 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, 606-256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, March 10, 2001—Typing that date seems unreal to me. As Paul said, "it is high time." Another year is quickly advancing. My meetings are soon to get underway. By the time this is printed, Lord willing, the meeting in Mt Home, AR will be history. It's always a joy to go there, as it has become a familiar place to me and so many of my dear friends are there. I've elected to limit my schedule from now on to around ten meetings a year. The pace I've tried to keep lately is too much and now with a little addition, I see I have to slow up some. In April, Bro. Kevin Presley will be with us at Blue Springs. We're really looking forward to that. Kevin made his home here for a time and has many dear friends in the area. We expect a great meeting. Afterwards, I start at Walnut Grove, KY April 15-22. I then have a weekend meeting in Huntington, WV April 27-29. In May I will be with the church in Washington, OK May 6-13. For now, please pray for the Lord's work. Let's make 2001 a great year for the Lord!!

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4, Box 188, Ada, OK 74820, Feb.28—It does not seem possible that the winter is almost over and it is time to hit the road again. As always I have enjoyed the opportunity to be with the congregation at Ada. I appreciate their constant support. The New Year meeting was excellent as usual in spite of terrible weather. Following is the first portion of my schedule: Jasper, TN, Mar. 18-25; Columbus, OH, Mar. 28-Apr. 1; Odom, MO, May 6-13; Pansey, AL, May 20-27; White Bluff, TN, June 3-10; Trussville, AL, June 11-17; Pearlhaven, MS, July 15-22; Andrews, TX, Aug. 8-12; Ratiff City, OK, Aug. 19-26. If you are near any of these area we would certainly appreciate your support. Please think about us when you pray.

Jerry L. Cutter, Rt. 1, Box 139, Crescent, OK 73028, Feb. 28—My wife, Linda, and I returned from our trip to Australia and Malaysia two days ago. We left Oklahoma early Thursday morning, Feb. 6th, arriving in Perth, Australia, on the following Saturday. We had a joyous reunion with the brethren in Armadale (Perth) Sunday morning. The services were followed with a dinner. We

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

date near your name and address s 4-01 your subscription expires with issue. Please renew promptly. DLK Send all subscriptions to 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.
--

boarded a train immediately after dinner for Kalgoorlie, located 375 miles from Perth in the near outback and in a rich mining area. Kalgoorlie Boulder is where the work was first established in 1983. Two families make up the church in Kalgoorlie. They are George and Ivy Hook and Mark and Judi Burt and their two children. George and Ivy are charter members of the church in Kalgoorlie, coming into the work from the Associated Church of Christ (Disciples). Ivy has been a member of the church since 1929, and is now ninety-six years old. Ivy does well for her age and is cared for by George, one of the best men anyone will ever meet. After two days in Kalgoorlie, we returned by train to Perth. Our hosts were Keith and Anne Thomson, personally known to many here in the States. We were able to study and visit with most of the brethren in Armadale. On Feb. 16th we flew to Kuala Lumpur (KL), Malaysia. Space will not permit me telling you of our wonderful visit with the brethren in KL. It was my first visit to KL since 1994, and even that visit was cut short by a death in my wife's family. My first visits and preaching in KL began over twenty years ago. On this trip, I was able to visit virtually every member in the KL area that I ever knew, and was graciously and joyously received by everyone. It was a busy time, and we had numerous (and daily) studies with those in and out of the church. There is a second church now in KL, only recently beginning to worship scripturally. The new group has about ten members and the services are conducted in Tamil, the local Indian dialect. The church in KL has invited us to return later this year, while school is out, for more studies and preaching. After extensive studies, one was baptized in KL while we were there. One last thing: one thing that would help and encourage the work in the areas like Australia and Malaysia, I believe, is for churches here in the States to "adopt" the younger teachers in the churches and bring them to the States for the annual preachers' study. At this time I know of four teachers who could be helped much. The cost of one church being responsible for one of these men would be considerably less than a gospel meeting. I am sure it would be a blessing for everyone. All of our expenses in Australia and Malaysia, such as travel, lodging and food, were covered by the churches in those countries. We are scheduled to leave for Russia March 16th and continue there until June 4th, Lord willing. Please continue to pray for us and for the work everywhere.

Dario Estavillo, Ilocos Norte, Philippines, March 12- Brother Greg Maluga and I have just arrived from a trip to Calanasan, Apayao. Brother Joseph Aclin also accompanied us for the two-day trip. We found people there who listen to our radio program, for which we are thankful because this is a remote place. It is a two and one half-hour ride from Claveria, Cagayan. The road is very rough and mostly uphill. It is also very slippery during the rainy

season. After riding for a long time, we walked for almost two hours. The way was so slippery and along mountain cliffs. I nearly had a serious accident when I slipped and fell and was stopped only by small trees from falling perhaps 100 yards! Though our preaching there was very limited because of bad weather, we were able to conduct some private studies and plan to return as soon as the weather improves. We were happy through all these experiences all because of serving the Lord. Though we had no baptisms this time, we are confident that we have done much and when we return all will be well. We are thankful that Brother Nelson Agresor, who was instrumental in bringing the truth to this place was brought back into the fold and is now our guide and helper in making for great success there. We continue our preaching schedules in Ilocos Norte regularly. We are very happy that the work is as busy as ever before and thank God that there are more and more people who want to know the truth. I am glad to be working with other preachers such as Brother Greg Maluga who is a good partner even in our radio program. Please continue to pray for us. God bless you, we love you all!

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA, 94539, E-mail old_paths@juno.com, March 12-It has been nice to be at home for a few weeks but it will soon is time to travel once more. Besides preaching at home, we have also been with the church in Yuba City, California this past Lord's day. We are to be here next Lord's day and at Stockton after that. Last Saturday evening; we were glad to hear Duane Permenter preach a good sermon at Oakdale, CA to a full house. It was good to visit with him briefly. April 4-8 we are to be with the congregation at West Monroe, LA. April 11-15 we plan to be at the Hillcrest congregation near Brookhaven, MS if the Lord wills. If you live near we hope you will plan to be with us. We were sent an excellent article regarding Freemasonry written by Brother Barney Owens. We are gladly using it as an editorial this month. Please read it carefully. This is a matter about which we all need to be better informed. It cannot be consistently mixed with true Christianity, brethren. We wholeheartedly endorse it to you as truth. It is distressing, that several would rather the *Old Paths Advocate* not deal with controversial issues. It isn't that we like to write about troubling issues. We truly wish we could always write about things that are lovely. However, the facts are that there are issues troubling the church! They must be met with a "thus sayeth the Lord." If you appreciate this about the paper, let us know it and let others know about it as well. We benefit from your compliments as well as the criticisms. Please pray for us in the work. Preachers, we need to receive your field reports and articles. Our supply of articles is getting low. Let us hear from you this month.

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, MAY 2001

NO. 5

CHURCH AUTONOMY

By JOHNNY ELMORE

The beloved apostle Paul reassured the Thessalonians that the "day of Christ" would not come "except there come a falling away first" (2 Thes. 2:3). Most conservative scholars believe that this was a warning about the great apostasy resulting in the ecclesiasticism of the Dark Ages. During that time, the outgrowth of that apostasy, the Roman Catholic Church, intruded itself into every aspect of men's lives where it had control. An arrogant ecclesiastical priesthood, patterned after the government of the Roman Empire, controlled every thought and deed of those under its sway. Conformity to the edicts of a central power was demanded.

According to historians, it all began with the demise of church autonomy. It must be obvious to all students of the New Testament that the churches established by the apostles were independent. Groups of saints formed themselves into local congregations to carry out their duties. Each church had its own overseers (elders, bishops), appointed from among its number, and equally subject to the Lord. Their oversight was congregational only, not universal. They were to take the oversight of "the flock of God which is among you" (I Peter 5:2). They were to "take heed" to "the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts 20:28). Paul and Barnabas appointed "elders in every church" (Acts 14:23).

I cannot tell exactly how it happened, but at some point, bishops began to exercise authority over more than one congregation. Maybe it started out of a desire to help and to do good, but the full-blown consequence of violations of church autonomy resulted in a pyramid form of church government unknown to the New Testament. After a long, dark night of many centuries, courageous men rebelled against these abuses, resulting in the Protestant Reformation. Unfortunately, most of the reformers did not learn the lesson of the apostasy. Martin Luther, we are told, suggested the idea of self-governing congregations, but abandoned it as impractical. But, there were some who opposed the national churches, resulting in independent churches and individuals. A group, led by John Robinson (1576-1625), was driven from England to Holland. A minority of that group, under the leadership of William Brewster, crossed the Atlantic in the Mayflower in 1620 and established the colony of Plymouth in New England. The influence of the independent principles of John Glas of Scotland, and his son-in-law Robert Sandeman affected thinking in England and in America.

Out of this and subsequent religious ferment came the men of the American Restoration Movement. Alexander Campbell came from Scotland, fresh from contact with Grenville Ewing and the independent movement led by James and Robert Haldeman. Campbell and his associates began to cry out against the creed-bound practices of their day. In the Christian Baptist, he caricatured missionary societies, ordination of the clergy, ministerial calls, the pew rent system, salaried clergy, Bible societies, and church associations. Anything that threatened the independence of churches fell under censure. In 1804, Barton W. Stone and others disbanded the Springfield Presbytery, willing that "the Church of Christ resume her native right of internal government" and "never henceforth delegate her right of government to any man or set of men." After their experiences with creed-bound synods and associations, the men of the Restoration Movement became suspicious of all church councils and conferences that threatened domination of congregations.

When the Mahoning Baptist Association in Ohio dissolved in 1830 for fear of "exercising any supervision or jurisdiction over particular congregations," Campbell wrote about it in glowing terms. About the same time, largely due to the labors of John Smith, three or four Regular Baptist associations were "corrupted" by the teachings of Campbell, the associations were divided, and then the part occupied by the Reformers dissolved. Apparently Campbell and others opposed associations as a form of government, but not the collective action of churches. They demanded independent church government, but not independent church function.

At the close of the Mahoning Association, Campbell proposed that the churches meet annually for preaching the gospel, mutual edification, and for hearing reports on the progress of the cause. According to Earl West, "Campbell was not pleased with the dissolving of the Mahoning Association" but "silently acquiesced." About a year later, Campbell reported that the "most important item which occupied the attention of the meeting was a proposition to adopt some plan of co-operation among the churches in spreading the gospel." There were some who called such plans in question. T.M. Henley wrote to the *Millennial Harbinger*, saying, "But it seems to me like a departure from the simplicity of the Christian institution to have co-operation meetings with *Presidents* and

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 5



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-10

Church Autonomy 1
 Editorial 2
 Querist Column 3
 Bible Classes: An Abandonment Of The
 Restoration Plea 3
 The Wade-Buchanon Debate 4
 The Dissolution Of The Home 6
 What Of The Fallen Children 6
 Following God's Blueprint 7

FROM THE FIELDS 11-12

PUBLISHER
 Don L. King

41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
 Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER
 Ronny F. Wade

P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
 Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536
 A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
 periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
 Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.



Editorial

DO WE UNDERSTAND AUTONOMY?

By DON L. KING

Brother Johnny Elmore has written an interesting article which begins on page one of this issue. We hope several more of the preachers will also send articles about the subject of church autonomy. It is our belief that we need to study this subject carefully and prayerfully. Every aspect of the matter needs to be opened for our learning.

The church is spoken of in several senses in the New Testament. When Jesus promised to build His church in Matthew 16:18 He promised a worldwide organization. He had in mind the church *universal*. He had no specific congregation in mind. However, the church is also spoken of in the *local* sense such as: the church at Jerusalem Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth, etc. When a location is specified, we know that the church is used in the local sense. Sometimes, the gospel writers spoke of the local church in the *assembled* sense also. An example of this is found in I Corinthians 14 where Paul, by inspiration, gave rules for the public worship of the local congregation (i.e. Corinth) when it is assembled. In verses 23 and 26 he speaks of the church when it comes "*together.*" One of the many wonderful things to learn in the Corinthian letter is that the apostle there gives inspired instruction to the local congregation at Corinth for the use of one loaf and one cup. (1st Corinthians 11:23-29) However, in I Corinthians 4:17 he tells us that he taught the same thing in EVERY church. We are not, therefore, allowed to use our own judgment in such matters because he said, "*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.*" (1 Corinthians 14:37) Much more could be said along this line which we will reserve for another time.

The local church is the only unit of organization known to the New Testament for the fulfillment of the work of the church. Every Christian should be in association or fellowship with a local congregation. There is no example of the church *universal* doing the work of the *local* church. Any plan which enlarges and goes beyond the authority of the local church is unscriptural. "What about cooperation?" you say. Can we not cooperate in preaching the gospel, etc.? The answer to that is pretty obvious. Of course we can cooperate but it must be carefully structured so that no local congregation ever loses its autonomy or independence. Each congregation must determine what work she can afford to do. No congregation elsewhere has a *scriptural* right to rule over the work of another local congregation. Certainly, brethren from several congregations may agree about the need in a certain area, and based upon decisions made within their respective local congregations, send directly to the need in another field of effort. We can read where that was done in New Testament times. However, to allow a particular congregation to dictate to others what they must do and when, etc., is

continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is it wrong for a woman to braid her hair, in any form, according to the teachings of 1 Tim. 2:9 and 1 Peter 3:3? (WV)

Does 1 Tim. 2:9 teach that it is a sin for a woman to braid her hair, wear gold or pearls? What would be costly array? (LA)

Answer: Perhaps, we would do well to first of all give the passages in question: 1 Peter 3:3 "Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel;" 1 Tim. 2:9 "in like manner also that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing." If the injunctions given in 1 Peter 3:3 are intended to be unconditionally prohibitive, Peter is condemning the putting on of apparel, and would in effect be saying that it is wrong for women to wear clothes. I don't know of anyone who is ready for such a conclusion. What we have in the passage from Peter is what some writers have called a Hebraism, which is common in sacred writings. ("A Hebraism is a construction, an expression, or an idiom peculiar to the Hebrew language, especially when used in another tongue" *Crowell's Dictionary of English Grammar and Handbook of American Usage* p.298). A parallel is found in John 6:27 where Jesus said "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life." If taken literally these words would prohibit one working for his food or daily bread. Taken as a Hebraism the interpretation is simply that one is not to place his primary focus on material things, (i.e. making a living) but give it to those things which are spiritual or eternal in character. In the same way Peter is saying to women, "Don't let your primary concern be that of braiding the hair and wearing jewels or apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, that of a meek and quiet spirit." Other writers refer to these types of passages as not/but passages. In other words "not that," "but this." Hence, Peter does not forbid women from wearing jewels or braiding their hair, or wearing apparel, but is admonishing them that such things mean nothing when compared with the graces that adorn the Christian character. The passage by Paul in 1 Tim. 2:9 emphasizes a similar principle. Here the writer admonishes his readers not to give attention to the vanity so characteristic of women in the world who adorn themselves with "braided hair, gold or pearls or costly raiment." "Costly array" or "costly clothing" (NKJV) is clothing worn for the sake of vanity and designed to draw attention to the individual wearing it. It is the opposite of modest unassuming garments worn by Christian women. Guy N. Woods quotes from historical sources that claim the women of that time "were disposed to go to extreme lengths in braiding and plaiting their hair, often arranging massive whorls of it several inches above the head into which had been woven twisted strands of gold and chains of pearls which glistened and scintillated in the light, thus making an impression of great brilliance. Clement of Alexandria says that "many women of his time dared not touch their heads for fear of disarranging their

hair, and that they regarded sleep with terror lest during it they should destroy their waves." It is this type of vanity that Paul condemns.

Christians are not to be vain, but are to adorn themselves in modest apparel, wearing such garments that befit their purpose and station in life. Is it wrong for Christian women to braid their hair, wear jewelry or good clothing? No, of course not. But it is wrong for them to dress immodestly, or to be vain in their appearance, or to dress for the express purpose of calling attention to themselves. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

BIBLE CLASSES: AN ABANDONMENT OF THE RESTORATION PLEA

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

When the Highers - Blakely debate on instrumental music took place in Neosho, Missouri in 1988, Alan E. Highers affirmed that "the use of mechanical instruments of music as an element of Christian worship is without scriptural authority and therefore sinful." After driving the point home that instruments of music are nowhere authorized in the Scriptures for the New Testament church, Bro. Highers produced this quotation from J.W. McGarvey (*Apostolic Times*, 1881): "It is manifest that we cannot adopt the practice [of using instrumental music] without abandoning the obvious and only ground on which a restoration of Primitive Christianity can be accomplished, or on which the plea can be maintained. Such is my profound conviction, and consequently the question with me is not one concerning the choice or rejection of an expedient, but the maintenance or abandonment of a fundamental and necessary principle...I hold that the use of the instrument is sinful, and I must not be requested to keep my mouth shut in the presence of sin, whether committed by a church or an individual." The thrust of McGarvey's logic should be clear and convincing to the man who loves the restoration plea who is determined "to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent" (1 Peter 4:11).

Instrumental music, however, is not the only unscriptural practice that leads to a compromising of the restoration plea! If it is truly our entreaty for people to give up doctrines and practices unknown to the New Testament, how can we accept anything for which there is no scriptural authority? The class arrangement of teaching is another innovation that amounts to an abandonment of the restoration plea. The following questions apply to both instrumental music and Bible classes with equal force: How can we restore a practice that was not in the New Testament church? Is it possible to restore what never was there? When one shines the spotlight of Holy Writ on the practice of Bible classes, it is obvious that we are dealing with an arrangement that is a violation of what is authorized, specified, and exemplified in God's word.

Let me first emphasize what the issue is not. When discussing Bible classes, we are not discussing just any kind of teaching situation or teaching in general. No, we are discussing a particular arrangement. We are not discussing what we as individuals may or may not do. It is

easily established that Bible classes are not parallel to teaching done in a private, individual capacity. Furthermore, we are not discussing whether some Bible teaching is done out of the assembly. All of the above has nothing to do with the class arrangement of teaching!

When discussing Bible classes, we are dealing with the arrangement for teaching bound and specified in God's word that the church is to use when the church comes together. The Scriptures establish that when the church comes together, the authorized arrangement is an undivided assembly with the men only doing the teaching and the women remaining silent. Classes are a violation of that divine arrangement because they are a coming together of the church; the church come together into a congregational capacity.

Are not Bible classes a teaching situation where the leadership of the church calls the members of the local congregation out of their private homes to come together to be taught in those classes? Aren't classes a gathering of the local church? When the author engaged Thomas N. Thrasher in a public discussion on this issue in West Monroe, Louisiana in 1995, two written questions posed by the author elicited responses that demonstrate what classes really are: (1) Are the classes of your proposition in any sense a gathering of the church? Thrasher's answer: "Yes in the sense that the church provides the classes as a part of its teaching program; however, the classes of the proposition are not 'the whole church come together in one place' as mentioned in 1 Cor. 14:23-35." (2) If after a Wednesday night service was dismissed, I went home with a couple to study with them about baptism, would that constitute a class such as embraced by your proposition? Thrasher's answer: "It would constitute a class; however, if you arranged it purely as an individual, no, it would not be the type of arrangement expressly addressed in the proposition."

Without realizing it, the author's opponent in that debate admitted too much about the true nature of his practice. Yet, he gave a precise description of Bible classes with deadly accuracy: Classes constitute a gathering of the church. Classes are not parallel to teaching that is done in an individualistic way. Classes are the church come together into a congregational capacity. It is true, as it was admitted, that classes are not "the whole church be come together into one place" (1 Cor. 14:23). That's the scriptural arrangement that they violate because they are the church come together.

Heb. 10:25 says, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." The phrase "assembling together" comes from the Greek word *episunagoge* and it means "a gathering together, in one place" (*Berrys Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 40). The class arrangement of teaching is a violation of specific instructions in God's word. In Heb. 10:25 the inspired writer is dealing with the gatherings of the church and he specifies the arrangement to be used when the church comes together for exhortation, that arrangement being an undivided assembly. Bible classes are a violation of Heb. 10:25 as surely as instrumental music is a violation of Eph. 5:19. Why do I say that? I say that because instrumental music is another kind of music

than what is specified in Eph. 5:19 and Bible classes are another kind of gathering than what is specified in Heb. 10:25! In other words, just as instrumental music is an addition, or a coordinate, to singing--the kind of music specified in the New Testament, classes are an addition, or a coordinate, to the one assembly--the arrangement specified to be used when the church comes together.

Since it has been shown that classes are a violation of specific instructions in God's word, the practice cannot be justified by appealing to generic authority--the general command to teach. The reader is reminded that more is involved in this issue than just the mere act of teaching. Establishing that the church is authorized to teach is a long way from proving that the church is authorized to use Bible classes! Also, when the real issue is ascertained, it is easily seen that the extraneous matters often claimed to be parallel to classes are not parallel at all--such as tracts, radio programs, television programs, overhead projectors, chalk boards, etc. Those things are not parallel to classes because they are not a gathering of the church or in some instances they don't even involve a coming together of the church. A radio program, for example, is not the church come together but is merely a means of publicly proclaiming the gospel as a person's voice is transmitted across the air waves. The same is true of a television program, except in this medium a person's image is projected on the screen. Is a chalk board a gathering of the church? Why, of course not, it is merely an aid for teaching when we come together! Since radio programs, television programs, chalk boards, etc. do not violate any principle of truth in God's word, including the arrangement specified in Heb. 10:25, we are consistent in our acceptance of those things while opposing Bible classes.

Another objection to Bible classes is the use of women teachers in some of those classes. The Bible is clear about where a woman may and may not teach. Please note that the issue is not whether a woman may teach. The issue is not even whom a woman may teach. No, the issue is where a woman may teach. Women may not teach in the assembly, publicly, or in a congregational capacity--1 Cor. 14:34-35 & 1 Tim. 2:11-12. However, women may teach privately, informally, and in an individual capacity. In this capacity they may teach women (Tit. 2:3-4), children (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15), and men (Acts 18:26).

Advocates for Bible classes are hard pressed to tell us which category their classes fall under! Is it the private, individual capacity? If so, anything that can take place in a private, individual capacity, like common meals and feet washing, should be allowable. Do classes fall under the first category (the assembly, publicly, or a congregational capacity)? If so, women are teaching in a situation that the Bible specifically condemns. The truth is that Bible classes are the church come together into a congregational capacity. The practice involves an unscriptural arrangement that leads to an abandonment of the restoration plea!

THE WADE-BUCHANON DEBATE

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

On the dates of March 22-23, a debate took place in Bowling Green, KY between Ronny Wade of Springfield, MO and Bob Buchanon of Bowling Green. The discussion

focused on the scriptural observance of the Lord's supper as it relates to the number of containers to be used in the communion. Bro. Wade represented the Rockfield congregation as he contended for one cup, while his opponent defended the practice of individual communion cups. Bro. Buchanon represented the... Well, I'm not sure if he had the official backing of any particular congregation. Before the debate, it was our understanding that Bro. Buchanon was representing the Eastside Church of Christ in Bowling Green, a church that he began working with in 1983. We were surprised when Bro. Buchanon announced in his first speech that such was not so, but that he had resigned as their local preacher to devote more of his time to missionary work.

A good spirit prevailed throughout the discussion and both disputants conducted themselves as gentlemen. I want to express gratitude to our congregation at Rockfield for providing the audiences (250-300 in number both nights) with a commodious and comfortable facility at the Western Kentucky University's south campus. By my count there were fifteen of our preachers present from eight different states, and many brethren who drove hundreds of miles to be with us. Ronny Wade is an effective preacher of the Gospel, but it is in a debate that his scholarship and analytical skills rise to the surface. Bob Buchanon is a good speaker and his speeches were well organized. I feel that those who attended heard a fair representation of both sides of the issue: "He who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him" (Prov. 18:17, RSV).

Bro. Wade affirmed Thursday night (March 22) the following proposition: "The Scriptures teach that an assembly of the church of Christ for the communion must use one drinking vessel in the distribution of the fruit of the vine." You will notice that the word "cup" does not appear in the proposition because Buchanon insisted that it be stricken from all propositions. He was running scared of his position in that he did not want to deny one cup and nor did he want to affirm individual cups! In fact, Buchanon claimed to be the real "one cup man" in the discussion. It surely speaks volumes that everyone wants to be known as the "one cup man" and no one wants to be branded with believing in more than one cup. Wonder why? It is because they know that one cup is all we read about in God's word!

At times Buchanon came close to admitting that Jesus used one cup, but then he would assert that the word "cup" is always used metonymically regarding the Lord's supper. Ronny proved in his affirmative speeches that the use of one cup is taught by all three ways of establishing scriptural authority--i.e., command, example, and necessary inference. The negative sought to obfuscate the issue by bringing up extraneous matters that are in no way parallel to individual cups. Buchanon wanted to know, for example, where a plate for the bread is authorized. Ronny answered that quibble with ease by introducing a chart that showed the difference between subordinate elements (things that fall within the scope of what is commanded) and coordinate elements (things that violate what is specified because they are of the same order or class). While Buchanon objected to being put into the same camp with the Christian Church and the institutional liberals, Ronny emphasized that he argues just like them - he confuses incidentals with

examples, and he engages in the old digressive dodge!

Another way that Buchanon sought to obfuscate the issue was by jumbling up figures of speech. A quotation was given from Bullinger [*Figures Of Speech Used In The Bible*] to reason that there are no rules when it comes to figurative language. If there are no rules, I suppose that you can make it up as you go along and call it whatever you like. That is exactly what Buchanon did! Here are the different positions that he took on what the cup is: (1) It involves a literal container, (2) The fruit of the vine is the cup, (3) The cup is the blood, (4) It is a metonymy, (5) It is a metaphor, and (6) It is a species. My understanding is that some of his own brethren complained that he was talking over their head (by mixing up all of those figures of speech), and they complained that he was not giving enough Bible for his practice. That is what you have to do, however, when you are defending a practice that violates what is specified in the Scriptures--"And he took a cup" (Matt 26:27, ASV).

When it was all said and done, Bro. Buchanon regretted bringing Bullinger up. Ronny introduced a chart that showed how the following three statements are grammatical parallels: (1) "This (bread) is my body" (Luke 22:19). (2) "This (fruit of the vine) is my blood" (Mark 14:24). (3) "This cup is the new testament in my blood" (Luke 22:20). The discussion ended without Buchanon calling for the chart or even attempting to deal with the argument. Ronny asked his opponent if he agreed with Bullinger's statement on how metaphorical language is to be applied: "The two nouns themselves must both be mentioned, and are always to be taken in their absolutely literal sense, or else no one can tell what they mean" (p. 735). That sounds like a rule to me! Buchanon felt the force of the argument, because when applied to the three above statements, it means that literal bread represents the body of Christ, literal fruit of the vine represents the blood, and a LITERAL cup represents the new covenant! In his final speech Friday night, rather than rejecting his own source, Buchanon was forced to reply that he did not understand what Bullinger was saying. The audience could see that he needed to avoid Bullinger!

The proposition on Friday night was as follows: "The Scriptures teach that an assembly of the church of Christ for the communion may use individual drinking vessels for the distribution of the fruit of the vine." Notice again that the word "cups!" is avoided in the proposition! When Buchanon was in the negative the night before, he basically gave two prepared speeches and ignored most of Ronny's arguments. Buchanon's first affirmative only contained four charts that he did not use the night before. Ronny in his negative speeches answered his opponent item by item and statement by statement, and it was clear that Buchanon's mistakes were catching up with him. Buchanon tried to leave the impression, for example, that Thayer says the cup is always used metonymically regarding the communion. Ronny pointed out that Buchanon quotes from Thayer when he finds it convenient, but then he ignores the rest. Ronny really drove the point home by citing several references from the lexicographer: "*Pino ek* (drink out of) with a genitive of the vessel out of which one drinks," (p. 510); "Of the thing out of which one drinks: *Ek tou poterion* (out of the cup), Matt. 26:27"

(p. 189); "This cup containing wine, an emblem of blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood an emblem of the new covenant" (p. 15). The audience could see that Thayer repudiated Buchanon's position. To top it all off, in answer to a written question posed to him by Ronny, Buchanon agreed that Thayer was correct when he placed "cup" under LITERAL usage in Matt. 26:27!

It has not been my purpose to cover every argument advanced in the debate, but to simply give an overview. Ronny Wade did a superb job in defending the truth and it was an honor to serve as his moderator.

Dudley Ross Spears moderated for Bob Buchanon. Only time will tell how much good was accomplished. 'Truth crushed to the earth will rise again!'

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

God has taught from the beginning of man that death separates husband and wife. (Genesis 3) Jesus also shows in Matthew 22 that the family tie ends at death. Hence, we will not be fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, children, etc., but will be as the angels in heaven. The home, therefore, must accomplish its purpose in a very short period of years. This only emphasizes the importance of the things I have said in the foregoing articles.

I recently visited in a Christian home where the couple had lived together for fifty years! This is far beyond the average. If nothing but age cuts us down, we can stay here a very little while and it is not very often that both husband and wife leave this life at the same time. "No snow falls lighter than the snow of age; but none is heavier, for it never melts." While we are young we constantly look to the future, but as we grow older we are inclined to look back over the past times of our lives. We begin to live in, and for, our children and not for ourselves. The hope of Christian parents is to live to see their children grown and settled in life for themselves. Though we cannot keep back the tears when our children marry, yet we realize it is only natural and that God has always intended it to be so.

Dissolution of the home in this way, if children are brought up right and have chosen Christian companions is only natural. It is a blessing to the human race. Too many times parents act as if their children have forsaken and turned against them just because they are getting married. They forget that they did the same thing a few years ago. It is not right for parents to be so selfish as to expect their children to always stay with them.

The separation of Christian parents such as we have been studying is sad, indeed. I have had the sad experience of conducting the funeral for a good Christian father who was leaving behind a Christian wife and Christian children. I have also conducted the funeral of a good Christian mother, who was leaving behind a Christian husband and Christian children. In either case it is certainly heart rending. We have minute accounts of such as this as far back as Genesis 23 "where Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. And Abraham stood up before his dead and spake to the sons of Heth, saying: I am a stranger and a sojourner with you, give me a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of

my sight." (verses 2-4)

Even though Sarah was well over a hundred years old, she was still the "beloved wife of faithful Abraham." Abraham is held up to us as "the father of the faithful," and Sarah as the "mother" of faithful mothers today. (1 Peter 3:5)

It is hard for young people to realize that death will ever separate us but as we grow older we realize that we cannot always live. We then begin to look toward the grim monster.

DEATH

No sex is spared, no age exempt. The majestic and courtly roads which monarchs pass over, the short and simple annals of the poor, all lead to the same place.

"Dear, we've been long together, through pleasant and cloudy weather: 'tis hard to part with those so dear, in grief we shed the scalding tear."

Below is a little poem that I feel is fitting just here:

ONE OF US TWO

"The day will dawn, when one of us shall hearken

In vain to hear a voice that has grown dumb,
And morns will fade, noons pale, and shadows darken,
While sad eyes watch for feet that never come.

One of us two must sometime face existence

Alone with memories that but sharpen pain
And these sweet days shall shine back in the distance

Like dreams of summer dawns, in nights of rain.

One of us two, with tortured heart half broken,

Shall read long-treasured letters through salt tears,

Shall kiss with anguished lips each cherished token

That speaks of these love-crowned, delicious years.

One of us two shall find all fight, all beauty,

All joy on earth, a tale forever done;

Shall know henceforth that life means only duty,

Oh, God! Oh, God! Have pity on that one."

-Ella Wheeler Wilcox

When these hands of ours shall be pulseless and cold, and motionless as the grave wherein they must lie, when the winding sheet shall be our vesture and the close-sealed sepulcher our home; As our bodies rest in their beds of clay, and our spirits recline in the bosom of God, if we are conscious, may we be able to see-like the reflection of the sun's rays after it sinks behind the western horizon, sheds its beauty across the sky-the golden influence of a Christian home still echoing and re-echoing in the world.

WHAT OF THE FALLEN CHILDREN?

By JIMMY VANNOY

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) This verse haunts many Christians who have lost their children to the world. Some console themselves by believing that this is a general principal which is not true in every case. There is no scriptural basis for this view, but it is based on analysis of particular cases in which the parent seemed to be a good parent, but the child strayed. We need to accept Proverbs 22:6 as true in every case and place the blame of straying children where it belongs, on the parents. This verse teaches that if the parent will do the proper training, the child will not depart.

Some say that children have free will and that the parent cannot be held responsible for their choices, but the Bible

makes it clear that the parents are responsible for the training that will lead their children to become faithful Christians. "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) "That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children." (Titus 2:4) The commands of training and loving the children are clear, and the result of properly doing so is assured. ("He will not depart from it." [Proverbs 22:6])

It is clear that parents are held responsible for training their children, but are they held responsible for the results of this training? God holds the candidate for elder responsible for the results of the training of his children. "If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination." (Titus 1:6) It is obvious that God places the responsibility of the faithfulness of his children squarely on the back of the candidate for elder. Since we have assurance of good results for proper training, it then becomes the responsibility of the parent to provide that training, knowing that the Bible assures good results.

This article is not written to offend those whose children have left the faith but to awaken parents who still have children at home and who may be in the process of losing them because they are not following the scriptural pattern of teaching their children.

Why would children leave the faith after being taken to church all of their lives on a regular basis? When children hear teaching at church and see their parents violate it at home, the value of Christianity is reduced in their minds. The following is a list of questions designed to convict parents who are lax in training their children and is designed to help them see areas in which they need to improve. This is critical because there is nothing so painful as losing a child to the world.

How many times do your children see you reading the Bible? How many times have your children known you to visit the sick? How many times have they known of you inviting others to church? How many times have your children heard you and your spouse discussing the Bible with each other? How many times have you given priority to entertainment (TV, videos, sports, books, etc.) instead of Bible study? How often have you sat down with the children to, study the Bible? Is it done on a regular basis? How often do you pray with your children? How often do they hear you praying? Have you emphasized earning money above spiritual matters and the training of your children? How often have you chosen the secular over the spiritual? Going to church is not enough. Children can spot hypocrisy before anyone else. We must train our children by example and by studying the written word with them. If we do so consistently, we are promised that they will not depart.

FOLLOWING GOD'S BLUEPRINT

By KEVIN PRESLEY

He does indeed have one and it's far better plan or mine whatever that might be. It's hard to get men today to see the necessity of going by a specific plan. We live in a transient and rapidly changing age. I don't know of any arena in which that in any more true than religion. People

are led about by their feelings, or their instincts. They are often lured by modern trends and driven by popularity polls. Paul seemed to know that this was characteristic of man for he wrote that when the faith was revealed we should "all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a complete man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Listen now, "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." Ephesians 4:13-14.

Paul here is pointing out to the Ephesians that the divine plan was soon to be completed. This was written of course during the age of direct revelation when the church only knew God's will in part or bit by bit as it was being revealed through the apostles and prophets of that day. However, it soon would finally be complete and furnish the church in every age with an infallible and everlasting guide that would anchor us to God amidst the winds of doctrinal change and instability. It is a plan or a blueprint if you please. We can look to it today and see what God intended for the church to be and how he intended for it to worship and live. Paul said to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3:14, that he was "writing these things to him that he might know how he ought to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

God's historical dealing with mankind should point out to even the casual Bible reader that he has never left man without a plan. In every age, throughout every system of religion, God has instructed man in the things that pleased him as forms or acts of worship. When God called upon Cain and Abel to worship him, he specified what kind of offering to bring. It was to be a bloody sacrifice. Abel adhered to the plan and thus pleased the Lord, but Cain brought something else... a vegetable offering which God utterly rejected (Genesis 4:1-5) It was the first example of man giving to the Lord worship which he did not want.

When God determined to destroy mankind save Noah and his house in a catastrophic flood, he commanded Noah to prepare a vessel which would bear him safely thru the great storm. However, he didn't just tell him to build a boat...he gave him a set of plans to go by and to the framing of the door and window and the driving of the last peg... Noah built what God said to build. God was pleased and Noah and his family survived to replenish the earth.

During God's dealings with the Jews during the Mosaic era, God had many ceremonies surrounding the service of the tabernacle, the sacrifice of animals, and other divine services for which he gave specific directives in carrying them out. Those who sought to serve the Lord did so carefully. They constructed their altars of worship and brought their service to him according to his pattern or blueprint. Unfortunately for them, the Old Testament is replete with the stories of rebellious and presumptuous men who did what suited them rather than what pleased Jehovah. God's wrath was kindled against such people and often led to their tragic and untimely deaths. The sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu are classic illustrations of this fact. In the giving of the law, such as is stated in the writing of Leviticus, God plainly told the sons of Aaron how to kindle fire for their offerings. They were to take live coals from beneath the altar and place them within their sensors

and use that fire with incense in service to God. However the record states in Leviticus 10:1-2, "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered STRANGE FIRE before the Lord, which he commanded THEM NOT! And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." What a severe penalty. But such is an everlasting testimony to the fact that God wants his plan not tampered with.

In I Samuel 15, Saul the first King of Israel was denounced and rejected by God because he failed to do completely and accurately what God said in smiting the Amalekites. He acted presumptuously and spared a portion of the animals and saved the life of the King to present them to the Lord as sacrifices. Once again, he rolled up God's blueprint and built according to his own design. How many such incidents must we read to learn the very basic lesson that God is saying, leave my word alone.

Hebrews 8:5 says of the priests of the Old Testament tabernacle "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount."

Once again, we see that God had a pattern. Continuing in the 9th chapter, verse 1, it says "then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary...But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and MORE perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say not of this building (verse 11)." Paul makes a stark contrast and shows that a greater and a spiritual tabernacle in which Christ is its High Priest replaced the Old Testament tabernacle with its priestly services. Now if it was a harmful thing to tamper with mere physical and worldly articles in God's earthly tabernacle, how much more grave a matter is it to rearrange, do away with, or add to the things that constitute true and spiritual worship in the church-the real tabernacle?

When the apostle Paul wrote unto the troubled church of Christ in Corinth, he addressed several problems that existed there. One was their corruption of God's plan or pattern for worship. In the 11th chapter and also the 14th chapter, he says that the very purpose of their assembly was changed and corrupted by their failing to do what God had said in the way God had said to do it. In Chapter 14:36 he asked, "What? Came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only?" Paul is saying "Surely you brethren don't think that you have a special right from God to change his will and offer a different type of service to him? What gives you the right to distinguish yourself from all of the other churches throughout the brotherhood who are worshipping God in peace and in truth? Well, nothing gave them this right. Paul went on in verse 37 to say "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, they are the commandments of the Lord." Paul says, my inspired writings constitute God's blueprint. If you claim to follow the Lord, then follow what I've written and don't deviate from it.

What about you? Is your religion according to the divine plan? Can you place your finger on the passage that authorizes what you do in your worship and service to

God? If not, your religion is according to someone else's plan and not the Lord's. Respecting God and his word demands that you seek God's sanction and not your own, nor man's approval in all matters of faith and practice. Our plea is to take men back to the Bible and away from the doctrines of men that God does not approve. For John said in 11 John 9 that only if we abide in the doctrine of Christ could we say that we have fellowship with both the Father and his Son Jesus.

"CHURCH AUTONOMY"

continued from page 1

Secretaries, calling for the Messengers of churches, and laying off districts. This was nearly the principle upon which the Baptists began in Old Virginia (except their creed) and it has now become the scourge and curse to the peace of society." Robert Richardson (Campbell's son-in-law) replied that "a thing may be unscriptural, but it does not therefore follow that it is anti-scriptural."

Campbell justified multi-church operations on the basis of expediency, and with this mindset, the part of the slogan that said "where the Bible is silent, we are silent" died. As history will show, the co-operatives led to district conferences, state societies, and ultimately, a national missionary society. The establishment of the American Christian Missionary Society in 1849 precipitated a division in the Restoration Movement that hitherto had moved as an overwhelming force.

I bring these things up to ask questions: Do we see violations of church autonomy, whether foreign or domestic, among us today? Are there congregations that exercise authority over other congregations? Are there churches using another church treasury to do evangelistic or benevolent work? Are there organizations among the churches that are larger than the local congregation? Are there individuals outside the local churches who tell them when to have meetings and what preachers to have?

Brethren, I propose that we study this matter of congregational autonomy to make certain that we do not go beyond our rule-the Bible. I want to hear from other brethren. I have no more desire to be digressive in this than in the worship of the church.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

foreign to the Bible. Neither can we read where a New Testament church asked other congregations to send into their treasury so that they could then do a work greater than their own financial abilities. We CAN read where various congregations sent directly to an evangelist in another location so that he could afford to stay there and preach. 2 Corinthians 11:8 reads: *I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.* Other congregations had supported Paul so that he could work among the Corinthians and he mentioned it again in chapter 12:13. It is very interesting that during New Testament times the various local congregations sent help to a need in some distant place. However, they always knew to whom their money went and for what purpose. No other congregation made that determination for them.

Some seem to feel that church autonomy gives a local

congregation the complete right to do as they please and others must not say anything about it. Let us go on record as saying that *autonomy gives no church the right to do what the Bible does not*. Each local church has the autonomy or independence to manage her own affairs. However, the Word of God is the final say. We have had some tell us that they decided to call on those who are associated with the cups and classes and that was their business. Absolutely not!

Autonomy allows the local congregation to make *biblically lawful decisions*. They may lawfully choose to send funds to a gospel preacher while another congregation elects to spend their money in a different field. Neither is bound by the other to follow suit. Neither has any right to have authority over the other in that regard. However, ALL are required to follow the Scriptures. A congregation may *unlawfully decide to do things not found in the scriptures*. However, those who are faithful have the right and duty to speak out against it in accordance with the Word of God. Just because each congregation is autonomous does not infer that others are bound to accept their unlawful behavior. In fact, we must not. We reserve the scriptural right to withhold our attendance from any congregation who decides to disobey God. *Autonomy does not mean one has the right to do as they please, even if it is wrong, and others have to accept it as their right!* We say again, the scriptures must be the standard by which we behave ourselves.

Today, we have evangelistic work all over the world. In some cases, a local congregation has promised to guarantee the support to the preacher or preachers. Does this mean that congregation has lawful authority over the work itself and any congregations within that work? The answer is no. We must remember, brethren, that EVERY congregation of the Lord's church is autonomous. That includes those in other lands! Just as any congregation in America has the autonomous right to guide their own affairs, call faithful preachers to work with them, etc., *congregations in foreign lands do as well! If not, why not?* Just because that congregation may be in the Philippines, Africa, South America, etc. does not imply that they must look to a congregation elsewhere to decide, or rule, for them. A congregation may wisely seek advice from others, but the final decision is not for "others" to make.

The congregation in Fremont, California promised to guarantee the support for Filipino preachers many years ago. Other congregations, who send support directly to Filipino preachers, usually do us the courtesy of telling us how much and how often so we can keep records and know when one is in need of support. Each year, since 1981, Fremont has sent us to that land in order that we may render assistance as is needed. The brethren in the Philippines are eager for us to come there and preach and always ask when we can return. They are happy when any faithful preacher can be with them and several have visited among the churches. A number of times through the years they have approached us about disciplining some member who had sinned. We have always told them what we believe the Bible teaches. However, we insist the actual discipline must be put in place by the local brethren. They have learned, in this way, that they must take care of their own problems and they do so faithfully. In fact, they often put

us to shame in disciplining those who do wrong. We would be glad to hear from others with thoughts along these lines.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A NOTE OF WARNING

Several have called in recent months about letters from the Philippines asking for financial support. To our knowledge, none of the Filipino's who have written are counted as being in fellowship with our brotherhood. At least two have been investigated and found to be cups and classes preachers. Another is with the no-exception fellowship and apparently hoped to pick up a little extra money. One or two more may not be members of any group of the Churches of Christ. No faithful preacher in the Philippines is without support at this time to our knowledge. Please be assured that anyone needing support would likely let us know about it so that we could contact American brethren and help them get support. There have been none of our Filipino preaching brethren randomly writing you for support. Just how your addresses came into their possession is not known. However their requests are not legitimate and should not be granted under any circumstances. They are not faithful men. Our advice is that any request from anyone, anywhere, should be investigated before any action is taken. - DLK

LOOKING FOR PREACHER

The Church of Christ at Rogers, AR is currently searching for a full time gospel preacher. Interested preachers must have strong evangelist skills to assist with the personal work. NW Arkansas is one of the fastest growing areas in the US and has a great potential for evangelism. The congregation at Rogers has grown significantly within the last several years and has many families with young children. Please contact Bennie Nichols at 601-986-9220 or Dale Wellman at 601-751-3505 for further information.

DOES THIS INTEREST YOU?

Over the last thirty five years, we have collected several tape recordings of some of the older preachers. Some sermons of Homer A. Gay and Homer L. King are among those in our possession. Also some recordings of the Sulphur, OK meetings during the 1950s. One recording of Homer L. King, Homer A. Gay, and Lynwood Smith made by Warren King as he "interviewed" them after services at the 1947 meeting is brief but interesting. If you are interested in preserving these voices from the past (or perhaps contributing some you may also have been saving) and know where to get them electronically "cleaned" to get rid of some of the static, etc., let us hear from you. If there seems to be enough interest, we would consider having some CDs produced.--DLK

THE LEBANON 4TH MEETING

The annual Fourth Of July meeting will begin June 27, 7:30 p.m. and close July 3, with the 7:30 p.m. service. The daily services, 10:30 a.m. & 7:30 p.m., will be in the Cowan Civic Center, 500 E. Elm Street, with the following exception: June 27 & 28 services will be in Lebanon's Church of Christ building, Hayes Street and Springfield

Road. Conducted by Evangelist Bill Ferguson, Cincinnati, OH and M. Lynwood Smith, Wesson, MS. Sponsored by the Lee's Summit Church of Christ, Lebanon, MO

OUR DEPARTED

STUDER—On Nov. 4, 2000, many friends, loved ones and fellow Christians gathered at Greenwood Chapel in Ft. Worth for a memorial service for Bessie M. Studer. Sister Studer, wife of Mick Studer of the Old Trentman congregation in Ft. Worth was well known by so many. Sister Studer was a wife, a mother, and a grandmother, and a dear friend. She is survived by a daughter, a son, Bobby Studer of Grandbury, and also by her grandchildren. Joe Norton and I spoke in Ft. Worth and later at Riverview Cemetery in Seymour, Texas. Sister Studer will be greatly missed.—J. Wayne McKamie

LEA—Jackie Lamar Lea was born March 8, 1947 and departed this life February 17, 2001, at the age of 53. He was a faithful member and Treasurer at Pearlhaven Church of Christ, Brookhaven, Mississippi. He was married to the former Laverne Smith for 30 years. Born to this union, a son, Jeffery Lea and a daughter, Kim Smith. Survivors are a daughter-in-law, Lisa Lea and a son-in-law Clay Smith. Grandchildren Jordan Lea, Tyler Smith and Logan Smith. Preceding him in death was a grandson, Kolby Smith. Jackie was a man that was well loved and respected, not only in the Lord's Church, but in the community, as evidenced by the tremendous number of friends and family and so many beautiful flowers and arrangements. Jackie endured a lot of pain in this life from arthritis and chronic back problems, but hardly ever complained. He had a deep love for his family. He was a good man that believed in having a good name. Glen Mullins, John Smith and the writer sought to gather and deliver comfort from God's word. The congregational singing was beautifully led by Larkin Smith. Jackie was laid to rest in a tranquil and serene family cemetery, near their home. He will be deeply missed by all of those who knew him. Proverbs 22:1. A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.—Mike Smith

RICHARDSON—Lester Ray Richardson, son of Edward and Stella Richardson, was born March 22, 1911. He departed this life 2001 at the age of eighty-nine years, eleven months and two days. Jan. 8, 1942 he was united in marriage to Doris Geneva Phillips, and to this union one daughter and two sons were born. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, a daughter, five brothers and three sisters. Ray is survived by two sons, four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, a number of nieces and nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends. Ray served in the armed forces in World War II, and was stationed in the Philippines. For twenty two years he and Doras made their home in Kansas City. Ray was employed by the Union Pacific Railroad. Later he and Doras moved back and retired on the same place where he grew up as a boy. Ray came into the church several years ago, and attended the Lee's Summit, Church of Christ. This writer had many

studies with Ray and Doras and visited in their home often. I feel close to the Richardson family having baptized many of them, performed the wedding ceremony for some, and have been called on to preach the funeral for a great number of the Richardson family. I preached his wife's funeral a little over a year ago. They will be missed in the community.—Clovis T. Cook

LEE—Brother Robert E. Lee was born August 26, 1912 at Pinon Mountain, New Mexico. He passed away January 21, at his home in Manteca, California. Robert was preceded in death by a brother, George Lee, of California and a sister, Ursie Moseley of New Mexico. He leaves at his passing, his Christian wife Inez, and six children, Melvin Lee of Manteca, CA, Bonny Harris of Manteca, CA, Robert E. Lee Jr., Springfield, MO, Donna Stanley, Placerville, CA, Delmer Lee, Forrest Grove, OR, Terry Lee Of Manteca, CA. One brother John Lee, Edmond, OK, who is 102 years of age, one sister, Evelyn Franklin, Jackson, CA. He leaves 18 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren. Bro. Robert was a member of the Lord's church for 71 years. He and Inez were married over 65 years. What an example for us all! Robert and Inez's home was a joy to be in, always gracious, hospitable, loving, for kindness was a chief attribute of the couple. He brought his children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, for all are Christians, along with most of the grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He has left a great heritage. It can be said of Robert, what God said of Abraham. "For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; "To know this good man was to love him. His heart was pure and his life was an example of what it means to be a Christian. Inez cared for him in a loving way, for he was bedfast for over two years at home, where he passed away. The family express their sincere thankfulness for all the cards, letters, calls, e-mails and every expression of kindness from brethren and friends. Being dead, Robert will still speak for many years to come through his children, and every good work he accomplished for the cause of our Lord. May God bless Inez and all the relations, including brethren who will miss his presence and influence. Robert is buried in beautiful Cherokee Memorial Park in Lodi. Congregational singing was lead by Ivan Costa, and it was beautiful. This writer was honored to speak words of comfort along with Bro. Jimmy Winchester at the memorial service.—Richard DeGough



Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net, April 1—We had a great day here March 25 with regular services and the 4th Sunday singing.

We were pleased to have a number of fine young people from other congregations with us that day. I am scheduled to be at Jonesboro, GA April 8-15; Ratliff City, OK April 27-29; and Hillcrest, near Brookhaven, MS June 10-17. We expect the next 4th Sunday singing to be here in May. Come and stay all day with us.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt. 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, (606) 256-8148, hawkins@kih.net, April 11, 2001—We just closed an enjoyable meeting here at home with Kevin Presley. It was well attended and the preaching was superb. Everyone was very encouraged by the meeting. I personally enjoyed being with him for a few days, giving us a chance to catch up. I personally just closed a meeting in Mt. Home, AR. The meeting was real enjoyable there too. It was good to spend a few days with Bro. Bruce Roebuck. Bruce and I go way back and always enjoy time together as well. I made my home with Darryl and Lucy Haun who have recently returned to Mt. Home. I for one am glad to see them back home. As always, it was good to see Bro. Jimmie Smith in Mt. Home. He's very faithful to support area meetings, despite his own demanding schedule. I plan to be in Washington, OK May 6-13 and Conway, LA May 27-June 3.

Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015, 713-455-8024, MISTERJLD@aol.com—The last weekend of February I was in San Angelo, Texas for a short meeting and enjoyed my stay there as usual. Cullen Smith is working with the church and the brethren speak highly of him. He has a great deal of talent and, even more importantly, he is committed to the "old paths" and is unwavering in standing for the truth. I commend him to the brotherhood and pray we encourage such young men. March 11-18 I was in McGregor, Texas for their annual spring meeting. I made my home with Wayne and Jean McKamie and had a wonderful time with them and the church in McGregor. Thirty-two years ago, when I was nineteen, I worked with the church in McGregor one summer while Wayne was in meetings, and then Judy and I made McGregor our home congregation while I was doing my C.O. work from 1970-1972. It was great to be with the church for an extended stay and we had a good meeting. I am looking forward to the following meetings in the upcoming months: April 13-15, Hartwell, AR; June 3-10, Cable Ridge, MO; June 16-24, Huntington, WV; June 30-July 1, Pleasant Hill, MO; July 6-8, Oklahoma City (21st street); July 11-15, Ardmore, OK; July 22-29, Tyler, TX; August 3-5, Lebanon, MO. The year is flying by so fast! May we redeem the time and savor every opportunity God gives us.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mtn. Home, AR 72654, broebuck@mtnhome.com, April 6—Recently we finished a good meeting with Doug Hawkins. Crowds were good and the preaching was timely. Several Sunday School brethren were present during the brief meeting. Earlier this year several teachers and I completed a public speaking course. We are pleased with the progress some are making. The first weekend in March we conducted a meeting in Pocahontas, AR. It was good to see everyone again. We especially appreciate Leon and Peggy Harris for taking us

into their home, as well as my mother and father who were with us during the meeting. Next, we were in Hamilton, OH for a week's meeting. This was our first trip to the "Buckeye State" and we certainly were not disappointed. Several young people brought their friends to the meeting and brethren from the area were present each night. We are thankful for the support of preaching brethren Barney Owens and Brian Burns. We were impressed with the hospitality of the brethren and their genuine concern for us. Bill and Ruth Ferguson and family received us into their home and made us feel like part of the bunch. The rest of our schedule is as follows: Columbia MO May 24-27; Fossil Creek TX June 8-10; Medical Lake WA June 18-24; Hilltop KY July 15-22; Hartwell AR Sept. 28-30; Sharonville OH Oct. 20-28. Lets all continue to pray for the brotherhood.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, March 31—I am happy to report that the north area congregation here in Springfield now has the scriptural organization that Christ desires for each local church. Ronny Wade ordained elders and deacons last Sunday (March 25): Irvin Barnes and I are serving as elders, and Kent May and Tony Barnes are the deacons. On behalf of the congregation, I want to thank Ronny for his help and wise counsel in this matter. The ordination service was one of the most humbling experiences of my life, as I realized that I need the Lord's help more than ever before to meet this awesome responsibility. Since several have asked me about this, let me explain that I will hold few meetings each year. After much prayerful thought, I believe that I can do that only without being gone too much or for too long a period. I will not be gone more than eight Sundays a year for meetings, perhaps not even that many. As long as I serve as an elder, shepherding the local flock will be my main concern that will come before anything and everything else. It was my privilege to moderate for Ronny Wade in his recent debate on the communion in Bowling Green, KY. [Be sure and read my report on that event.] Ronny's knowledge on the issue, and his experience as a debater, proved to be too much for his opponent. I sensed that our brethren who were present were proud of the valiant way in which Ronny defended the truth. We are presently in a meeting with Jimmy Cating who is edifying us with good, solid gospel preaching. We have had some outside interest and pray that in time souls will be baptized into Christ.

Jimmie C Smith, 5100 Rail Rd, Harrison, AR 72601, cjsmith@alltel.net—Sorry that I haven't reported since last July. My final meeting last summer was at Crestview in Wichita Falls, TX where I was welcomed as a favorite son. The meeting was hampered with much sickness, but concluded with good attendance and several visitors from the community. There were new faces since my previous visit and the congregation is blessed with visitors. I made Arley and Nina Fancher my headquarters. Johnny Elmore's family attended several services. In December I enjoyed a weekend with the Mission Hills congregation in Springfield and enjoyed the attendance of area preachers and good crowds. I recently returned from a meeting at Brundage Ln. in Bakersfield where I headquartered again at Doyle

 OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

date near your name and address
 s 5-01 your subscription expires with
 issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
 Send all subscriptions to 41931
 chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

and Nancy Elliot's. It matters not the season, everywhere I go sickness is our portion; many missed part of the meeting due to illness. I enjoyed the area preachers there also. I go places where preachers are finishing up their "contract" and things are less than agreeable. Not so with Brian Elliot, who was a local boy working in his first work with his home congregation. He has the esteem of everyone and it was repeatedly said, "Brian really does a good job teaching!" He has a good wife and mannerly, well behaved boys. He is expecting to work in the general area with the support of all the local congregations. Jerry Barrett is doing a good work at Tehachapi. A friendlier congregation would be hard to find. Brundage and Planz Rd. are models of harmony, fellowship and conservatism. We're expecting to begin a meeting here in Harrison Sunday with Brandon Stephens, Lord Willing. We baptized four here in Harrison in the year 2000, lost two to death, thus had a net gain of two. Three of those were parents and a teenage son who began attending the first Sunday of January, the parents were baptized in April, and the father is doing a real good job teaching in the chapter studies. We have several elderly who are growing feebler. There were several losses to the grim reaper in 2000 that I'm having trouble putting behind me, some whose obituaries are awaiting publication at the printers. May the Father bless our efforts.

Kevin W. Presley, 1604 Verde Trail, Dothan, AL 36303 (334) 678-8999, March 30, 2001—So far this spring, I have been with several churches throughout the South as well as working extensively here at home. I enjoyed weekend meetings in January and February with the brethren in West Point, GA; Robertsedale, AL; and Temple, GA. We had good attendance at all three and it was a joy to spend time with the good folks in those places. In March I was with the Brookside church in Nashville. I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent there. There are several young families there who provide a good nucleus and sound leadership for the church. They want to grow and are working together toward that end. They are to be commended. I returned this past Sunday from a meeting in Blue Springs, KY. It was a real encourager. We had crowds all week between 150 and 170. Two were baptized and I hope the church was strengthened. You always have a good meeting at Blue Springs thanks to the help and influence of Bro. Zade McClure and now Bro. Doug Hawkins. Zade's presence is felt in the community and Bro. Doug is doing a great work in the area with his telecast out of Lexington. I go a long ways back with Doug and Lori and enjoyed seeing them and their son Zade. It was my privilege to baptize a lady here at Dothan in February. Her husband was restored to the Lord at the same time. They have visited from time to time as a result of our television program and finally obeyed the truth. During the first of March we began

meeting in our new building on Hartford Highway in Dothan. We had a great meeting with Bro. Ronny Wade. There were several who drove long distances to be with us and we are indebted to each of them. Roy and Donna Greer came all the way from Lebanon, MO as well as Delbert and Glenda Boman from Greenville, SC. The folks from the surrounding states were good to come as well. Most of the churches in our immediate area helped us out and provided consistently good crowds. There were some visitors from the community and we pray that the church has a long and bright future in this community. Our thanks to Ronny for his usual good preaching. Finally, we baptized two more at Earlytown this past Wednesday night. We have had contact with them now for several months and are glad they finally made their decision to obey Christ. Lord willing, I start a meeting in Fremont, CA on May 13. Pray for us and may the Lord bless the paper and, most of all, the brotherhood of believers.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, April 10—We closed an enjoyable meeting at the West Monroe Congregation, Monroe, LA last Lord's day evening. This was the first time we had actually been at that congregation though we had met some of the members at nearby places. The cooperation from other congregations was good and very much appreciated. Several preachers also came one or more times and their backing was encouraging. Brother Royce Garman opened his home to us and hospitality is certainly alive and well there. He is an integral part of the congregation and is loved and appreciated. There are several younger men who seem to wish an active part also. Together, they should provide a bright future for the congregation. We look forward to returning in 2003, Lord willing. We are to begin at Hillcrest, near Brookhaven, MS tomorrow night. We have been in this area several times previously and have always enjoyed being among them. Kevin Presley is to hold the next meeting at Fremont and we look forward to some good preaching. We hope many will come from near and far to help us. Preachers, we need to have your articles and field reports. Try to get them to us by the 10th of the month. By the way, a good sister writes that she would like to read an article from one of you about a proper way to dispose of the bread and fruit of the vine after the Lord's supper is over. Would one of you please help us there? Pray for us.

Subscribe To The *Old Paths Advocate*
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94536
\$10 Per Year

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, JUNE 2001

NO. 6

BECOMING MORE SPIRITUAL

By KEVIN W. PRESLEY

Have you noticed that the winds of change and innovation are often fanned by the rhetoric of some who claim to be searching for a deeper level of "spirituality?" I have heard it said, "We think that making this change or that will make our worship services more spiritual." Such talk is silly and unscriptural. It makes the concept of spirituality very ambiguous and difficult to discern. It is yet another indication that we are indeed facing an age of emotional surpluses and doctrinal deficits. Men today are not concerned with what pleases the Lord as much as they are with what appeases them in the arena of religion. Being "spiritual" is now equated with how many chill bumps rise on the arm or how many neck hairs stand on end when we engage in some act of religious service. It is unmistakably the "language of Ashdod" for the Bible never uses the term in such a trite way. Mere emotions and better-felt-than-told experiences are not indications of spirituality. Matter of fact, they are often just the opposite. Infusing change into the worship of God is not a catalyst for spirituality but rather the converse is true.

We will agree that there is a great need for heightened spirituality among the Lord's people. In fact, in this writer's estimation, that is the greatest modern encumbrance to the preaching of the gospel. In too many churches people are spiritually dead and disinterested in the work of the church. Let us note a few passages that teach us about "spirituality" and from whence it comes. We could see along the way some things that will make the church genuinely more spiritual and hence more effective.

Spiritual Things Are Things Revealed

"Now we have received...the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:12-14). Paul is discussing the origin and revelation of the scheme of salvation. It came from the mind of the Lord. However, he went on to say that "we" as apostles "have the mind of Christ" (vs. 16). The only way that the plan of God could be made known to man was by God revealing it through some medium. He sent his Spirit into his apostles to make known unto them the things he wanted conveyed to man. They wrote those things down in scripture.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit

of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (vs. 14). This passage has been taken to mean that one must be "spiritual" to understand the deep truths of the Bible. Paul is not teaching such in this passage. He is showing that spiritual things are revealed in the Bible. The "natural man" under consideration is one who uses natural means to discern information. A chemist, geologist, or other form of scientist may study the earth, its contents and its atmosphere and learn many things about the earth. The astronomer may peer into the starry sky and learn of the creative power necessary to create the universe. But none of these methods have the ability to search out the mind of the Lord. Just as one must articulate his thoughts for them to be known unto others, so God had to verbalize his scheme unto man, which he did through the ministry of His Spirit within His apostles. Those whom Paul designates as "spiritual" are those who were enlightened by the Spirit. We now have access to God's mind by examining his word. If something is not authorized within the Scriptures, it is not "spiritual" nor will it make its practitioner "more spiritual."

Liberal churches have begun advertising their services as being full of "spirit." They typically include things such as handclapping, hand-raising, special music designed to create a sensational atmosphere, etc. The fact that something brings thrills and chills over the worshippers is not an indication that their worship is spiritual. If we are relying on our emotions or any other means outside of the directives of God's word to guide us in our worship, we are equitable to "the natural man" of whom Paul said, the true things of the gospel are often "foolishness unto him."

Corinthians Were Impressed With Natural Things And Not Spiritual Things

Paul continues in the next chapter by writing, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." False teachers had appealed unto the carnal appetites of the Corinthian brethren by characterizing Paul as an ignorant and shallow teacher. They gloried in the great philosophies of the day and considered themselves intellectually sophisticated. The simplicity of the gospel as Paul presented it was foolish and inadequate in their view. They wanted something that seemed deeper.

The problems addressed in this letter are very contemporary with our times. Many in the church are not satisfied with a

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 6



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-10

Becoming More Spiritual 1

Editorial 2

Querist Column 3

Congregation Discretion 3

Unacceptable Worship 5

The Hidden Treasure 6

Headaches, Dizziness, Etc..... 6

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536
A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.

Editorial

LONG HAIR, RIGHT OR WRONG?

By DON L. KING

In the years I have been preaching the gospel from place to place, it has been obvious that some sisters do not appreciate the Bible teaching about their hair. From my boyhood I recall hearing preachers speak of certain places where the sisters kept their hair cut. We suppose that may have happened in part because some just didn't understand what the Bible said. Perhaps others may not have had a conscience about disobeying. It has always been the case, in any event, that some cut their hair. Many would say, "I know I shouldn't do it but I want to." In other words, they cut their hair but admitted it was wrong. In later years, however, as the world around us has become more brazenly decadent some have cut their hair and said, "Yes, I cut my hair and it is all right. I have not disobeyed God." It hasn't helped the Cause of Christ, either, that now it is so easy to simply get on the Internet and teach a false doctrine. There was a time that it was much more difficult to find a platform from which to teach. There was only the *Old Paths Advocate* as far as a brotherhood paper was concerned. There were few congregations that produced any sort of bulletin and if one were to teach a false doctrine from the pulpit he would be quickly challenged and rebuked. Now, people can just use the world of technology and spew their error right into our homes. Amazingly, this is affecting people. Why is it so easy to convince people of a false doctrine, something we have always been opposed to, when it is so difficult to convince them of the truth? Paul must have been feeling the same when he wrote the Galatians. *"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."* (Galatians 1:6-8) As Paul wrote to the brethren in Thessalonica he warned about the danger of believing a lie (see 2 Thessalonians 2:11,12). When J.W. McGarvey commented about the danger of believing a lie he pointed out that God has made us so that we can finally believe what we really want to believe. So, a person who really wants to believe that a Christian sister may lawfully cut her hair can finally manage it. He can reinforce that so many times in his mind that he finally believes the lie. Once that happens, no amount of logic, Bible study, grammar, etc. can move him. He is hooked.

In 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 Paul deals with the subject of which we speak. He sets up the headship in verse 3 where he shows the order of authority from God to Christ, Christ to man and man to woman. My understanding of this subject is that it all rests upon the subject of (a) authority (b) recognition of authority and (c) the sign or token signifying recognition of authority. The woman must be in subjection to the authority under which she has been placed. When she recognizes it, she is to have her hair as a sign of her subjection to that authority.

continued on page nine

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Please explain Revelation 13:14-18. (PA)

Answer: Any correct interpretation of these passages, must have meaning to the first century Christians who were in need of encouragement at that time. An interpretation that places the fulfillment hundreds of years down the road, would miss the mark, since John wrote of things that must "shortly come to pass" (Rev. 1:3; 22:6). We shall begin our discussion by giving the passages that concern the querist: (14) **"And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live."** There are two beasts identified in chapter 13. The first is a beast rising out of the sea, exercising great political power and the second is a beast coming off the land. The subject of verse 14 is the land-beast of verse 11 and represents false religion, from henceforth known as "the false prophet." This verse (14) tells us that he (the false prophet) uses signs to fool the unsuspecting. We know that Satan uses all kinds of deception to confound the ungodly (see 2 Tim. 3:13 and 2 Cor. 11: 14-15). This second beast instructs the people to make a statue in honor of the first beast, mentioned in the first two verses, which represents the Roman Empire. History indicates that temples were built to glorify the Caesars, and the people worshipped the emperors, resulting in a domination which had both spiritual and political implications. (15) **"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should be killed."** The probable meaning is that priests in the pagan temples required the people to make sacrifices thus causing the spirit of Caesar-worship to come to life, thus speaking the mind of the empire. This necessitated that the Christian choose between Christ or Caesar. To choose the former could mean certain death. (16) **"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads."** It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine what the "mark," here mentioned, actually was. Some claim it to have been a stamp or imprint of some type upon the person of the people involved. Others see it as a physical object which individuals carried with them, similar to our current identification cards. Still others feel it was nothing more than devotion to the emperor in mind or deed and service, which found its expression in the lives of the individuals, by determining their character and conduct. The latter may be the best explanation since the "seal of God" (7:3-4) is said to be upon the foreheads of those who followed Christ, which evidently represented spiritual devotion. (17) **"And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."** Whatever the mark was, it is identified with his "name," just as the "seal" of God was identified with His name. Those who refused the "mark" were discriminated against, perhaps to the point of hunger and possible starvation. They could not buy or sell, and were unable to earn a living without it. (18) **"Here is wisdom" this beginning phrase tells us what heaven thinks about it. The message to be given is for the benefit of those who would win the spiritual battle then being fought between**

the enemies of God, and those who served Him. "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." The mark of the beast and his number is and has been the subject of much speculation and disagreement. The label has been applied to any number of men including Nero Caesar, the Pope, Napoleon, Hitler, and even Saddam Hussein. Such references are based on the cryptic method of assigning a numerical equivalent for the letters of the alphabet. The sum is derived by adding together the value assigned for each of the letters by which a name is spelled. The major problem with this approach is that several different individuals cryptically add up to 666. Those who follow the continuous-historical school in interpreting the Revelation apply the beast to the Roman Catholic ruler named Latinus. The Catholic scholars apply the same method to fit Martin Luther. Carid makes a good observation when he says "Though it is easy enough to turn a name into a number, it is not so simple to proceed in the opposite direction" (p. 174). This approach, while intriguing, encounters the same problem we have with other numerical passages given a literal interpretation, such as the identity of the 144,000 and the 1000 year reign. Hence, it seems to me that the 666 must be understood symbolically rather than literally. This being true, we should interpret the number to represent, not a particular man, but that which is human. That which is less than perfect. Hence, any occasion where man is in conflict or disagreement with God, man will fail. The "wisdom" referred to at the beginning of the verse, is that all who stand with God will triumph and those who receive the mark (devotion to the Roman emperor in mind and service) of the beast (pagan Roman Empire) shall fail. Those who would apply these passages to some individual or incident today, in the view of this writer, totally miss the mark in so doing. For those who might be interested in an in-depth study of the Revelation, I would personally recommend the following books: *Revelation* by Robert Harkrider, *Commentary on Revelation* by Homer Hailey, and *Worthy Is The Lamb* by Ray Summers. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

CONGREGATION DISCRETION

By BARNEY OWENS

Among the knotty questions confronting the people of God today is the one we are presently looking into. What, if any, *discretion* may be made by a congregation, and once these are decided upon, which are to be respected by sister congregations and which are to raise the contempt of other congregations within the brotherhood? Only a knave would think the answer simple or that once an answer is achieved, it will widely be accepted. However, such cannot dissuade us from an attempt at some guidelines at least. At best perhaps enough can be found that will profit the here and now as well as some in the future.

Autonomy

Autonomy is the right of self-government. Bible students are aware that this term is not found in scripture, the idea however is there, as each congregation is to select and appoint "Overseers" from its own number. These men are to "rule" which can be nothing less than governing the body. This is not to say that they have "absolute authority," since this resides

alone with Christ. It boils down to these men using “*discretion*” to carry on (out) the work of the Lord. All their faculties of judgment, prudence, and wisdom must be used in this, the most important work in the world, it having to do with the souls of others (Heb. 13:17). Their Bible knowledge, as well as experiences in life, is drawn upon. For this reason, selection of these is from the pool of men of experience and age. Novices are excluded. They rule the flock that they dwell among, not neighboring congregations.

In an era of extended communication and rapid transportation, it is exceeding difficult at times for congregations to function within themselves. Some churches try to lord it over others, and some well-meaning, good intentioned congregations put undue pressure on others to bind together in ways unauthorized by God. The identity of a single church is lost in the process of the work, which is sought to be done. We, at Sharonville, have sought to be self-governing until at times we have appeared to bend over backwards. We have not in the past allowed others to do “our work,” nor do we have such intentions in the future. We believe this is as God wishes it.

While congregations are to govern themselves and those who are called upon to make decisions relating to the work of the body, the church is not without law to Christ. Any decision made, any judgment followed, and discretion set forth must be within the boundaries of the Perfect Law of Liberty.

A Principle Stated

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient. (1 Cor. 6:12, etc.).

Expedient is translated in other passages, “profitable, better, good, brought together.” It therefore means, “what is brought together for good or to make things better, or to be profitable, then to *expedite*.” At the congregation’s *discretion* a plan may be adopted to move the working of the body along. If what is brought together is contrary to the Lord’s will, then it is not profitable although it may “*expedite*.” First, according to the Law of the Spirit, then what will be “*expedient*.”

An Illustration

Beginning some years ago because of the energy crisis, people all over the United States upon approaching a “red” traffic light are permitted, after stopping, to turn right. This from then until now is left to the driver’s *discretion*. There are times when this cannot or should not be done, but most of the time it is profitable or better to proceed than to sit awaiting a “green” light. It does “*expedite*” traffic. Although a person who continues straight ahead or makes a left turn at a “red” light is in violation of the law. Progress can be made only within the law. So, with congregations, some things “*expedite*” the work and worship of God’s people, but this does not become a law unto itself. Expediency operates only in the bounds of law.

Discretion Abuses

“Give an inch and take a mile” is more than poetry; it seems inbred with human beings. The only sad part about liberty is most of the time it is abused. Spiritual things are not exceptions with us. While some see “law” everywhere, others see “liberty” in all things. We have come to a time in the church when the cry of many is: “*all things expedient are lawful*.” Let me open your eyes to some such things.

1. *Distributing the fruit of the vine.* The night of the Lord’s betrayal He took a cup, gave thanks for it, drank out of it, gave it to His disciples, telling them to “drink it.” “This do,”

said He, “in remembrance of Me.” Later He verified “fruit of the vine” to be the liquid inside the cup. To this day, each first day of the week disciples continue to follow the Lord’s example.

In the *discretion* of some congregations, it *expedites* the distribution of the fruit of the vine when it is put in many little individual cups. These then are placed on trays and a number of people can be drinking at the same time. What is wrong with this picture? Is it possible to read the account of Matthew (26:26-29), Mark (14:23-25), Luke (22:20), or Paul (1 Cor. 11:25) and visualize anything like that? One notable preacher (and quite a debater I might add) a generation ago was asked to affirm publicly the proposition, “the Scriptures teach the use of individual cups.” He declined saying; “the Scriptures do not teach such.” He added, “I will affirm they may be used as an expedient.” He realized if the Scriptures teach individual cups, then to use one, or two, or any number less than one for each individual wishing to drink the fruit of the vine would be wrong.

This means that what Jesus did is the teaching of Scripture and a congregation is in error to use individual cups. It is not within the *discretion* of a congregation.

2. *Classifying people to teach the word of God.* The New Testament teaches that the whole church (congregation) is to come together for edification, instruction, reproof, rebuke, and correction from the word of God. Men, women, and children, saints and sinners thus assembled are admonished by men speaking one at a time (1 Cor. 14:23-40 etc.). This practice is agreed to by all churches of Christ within this writer’s knowledge as scriptural. It is the practice of all congregations.

In the *discretion* of some congregations, a decision was made to *expedite* the teaching somewhat. This has been and is being done by *classifying* people according to varied situations. For example, place the small children in one area where they can be watched, the teenagers in another, the married couples in still another, with the older folks placed together. In this way, lively discussions will promote a thirst for knowledge and further study. Among some congregations this all takes place at the same time, usually on Lord’s Day (before what is called the “worship hour”) and Wednesday evening. In other congregations, such practice would not be tolerated, so, the *classification* is more subtle. The *classification* takes place at different times. For instance, the young men meet on Tuesday, the teens Thursday, the couples on Saturday, etc. By following this manner, it can be contended that we do not advocate *classes*. In fact, we are opposed to *classes* (as practiced by our digressive brethren). “Shades of the blind leading the blind.”

Class is defined, “a group of students under a teacher or pursuing a study together; also the meeting of such a group; as a history class.” (Funk and Wagnalls). While some brethren and sisters might try to mislead us into thinking such groups as named above are *not classes*, we know better and are not to be deceived (1 Cor. 15:33). These arrangements to teach the word of God are foreign to Scripture. To thus violate the Scriptural Plan for assembling to teach God’s word is not within the *discretion* of a congregation.

3. *Praising the Lord in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.* Singing can be found among the people of God in the Old Testament, therefore it is not surprising to read of the Disciples of Christ singing. “And when they had sung an hymn, they

went out..." After the church was established singing was a part of the worship (1 Cor. 14:15) and was done as one followed his pursuits of life (Jas. 5:13). To sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs is to accept Apostolic authority. Each Christian can express his love for the Lord and the joy of serving God in Christ by singing from the heart (Eph. 5:19).

Since singing is a part of public worship (Heb. 2:12), a congregation must use *discretion* as to how and when in the worship we sing. The number of songs, those chosen to lead the singing, as well as the time in the worship we join in song varies with congregations to *expedite* and profit all.

In their *discretion*, some congregations have stepped over the boundary by adding mechanical instruments to accompany singing. The reasoning is two-fold.

1. Such is *expedient* as it helps us over the "rough" spots. It carries the singing along and makes the service more enjoyable. How can this displease the Lord? While "dragging" out the songs discords in the Lord's ear.

2. The contention is mechanical instruments are demanded in the word "*psallo*, translated "*making melody*" in Eph. 5:19. While discussing the matter last summer with a preacher who informed me that he was a Greek scholar, having spent seven years in a seminary was well acquainted with the term and it included using the instrument along with singing. In the face of this knowledge I asked, Could we *sing* a psalm? His response, "yes." I asked, could we *sing* a hymn? His answer, "yes." I asked, could we *sing* a spiritual song? He said, "yes." I declared, "well, then, we can do all the Apostle said in Eph. 5:19 without an instrument." The discussion was closed.

While some things are within the *discretion* of a congregation relating to singing, adding a mechanical instrument is not one of them. Those who contend that such is within the bounds of *discretion* are perverting the truth of our Savior and His inspired spokesmen dispatched into the world (Heb. 2:3-4).

In Conclusion: Good Cannot Come Of Evil

Paul (so it seems) had enemies that would do almost anything to stifle his influence among the early congregations, even to the point of accusing him of doing evil. He asked the rhetorical question, "Let us do evil, that good may come?" (Rom. 3:8). This question is pertinent to the practices named above (and others) as the cry goes forth, "but it does good." The question is not "does a practice do good" rather, the question must now and always be "is it according to the truth of Jesus Christ?"

"For bodily exercise profiteth little" (1 Tim. 3:8). Since there is some good to bodily exercise, I suppose we should engage a physical education teacher to hold sessions among the churches to show us how to exercise. Would that not be good? And, a psychologist could be hired to explore our minds and counsel us. Wouldn't that be good? Maybe we could employ a homemaker to teach the art of being hospitable. Isn't that a good thing? Ridiculous? Methinks so. However, not more so than transgressing the will of God, adding to the words of the apostles, or wresting the Scripture to our own destruction. Think about it.

UNACCEPTABLE WORSHIP

By JACK A. CUTTER

The purpose of this article will be to focus upon the attitude and shortcomings of the children of Israel as it relates to their

worship practices. The apostle Paul admonishes, "These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm be careful that you don't fall." (1 Cor. 10:11-12)

In this study, three of the instances which will be studied will come from the post captivity-Books of Haggai, Malachi and Nehemiah. One example is taken from Isaiah.

A Failure to Give Their Best Offerings

Malachi, the last prophet of the Old Testament, prophesied about 400 years before Christ. While this Book marks the end of the Old Testament, it also indicates that God had given up on trying to change Israel from idolatry and paganism. The future hope for Israel now rested in the promises of the prophets of the coming Messiah.

What had gone wrong? They were guilty of sacrificing inferior offerings to the Lord. "When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" (Mal. 1:8) He continues by warning them, by bringing "these contemptible offerings into the temple," His anger had reached the point that it would have been better for them if the temple doors were shut.

In our worship services, as we sing, pray, teach and do other acts of service, are we giving the very best that we can offer?

They Had Wrong Priorities

The intent of the children of Israel when they returned from Babylonian Captivity was to rebuild their own homes before rebuilding the temple that lay in ruins. This displeased God. "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house (temple) remains a ruin." (Hag. 1:4) He warned them that if this continued, "He would not bless them."

We are taught in the New Testament that we are to serve Him with all of our "heart, soul, strength and mind." (Matt. 23:37; Lk. 10:27) Jesus said, "Seek you first the kingdom of God." (Matt. 6:33)

Is it possible that we could be guilty of being more concerned with "things" than with the "House of God?"

They Failed To Remember "The Lord's" Day

In the historical book of Nehemiah, he gives an account of the return of the children of Israel from captivity. In this instances, the Israelites had become so engrossed in "making a living" that they had forgotten to honor God in worship. They had violated the Sabbath law. Once Nehemiah was made aware of this, he warned them that this type of attitude and behavior would bring the wrath of God upon them once again. He said, "Therefore, I warned them against selling food on that day." (Neh. 13:15) He, then, took steps to assure that it did not occur again. (Neh. 13:19-22)

Several valuable lesson can be garnered from this example. A couple are: the indifference of the people of God in respecting and honoring the Sabbath. (Under the New Testament, the Lord's Day worship.) And, it reveals the importance that good leadership provides in assisting the "flock of God" from going astray.

The Lack of a Carry Over Affect

One of the most important benefits of worship to the worshipper is it strengthens and assists him when he isn't worshipping. This was lacking in the daily lives of the children

of Israel. Isaiah prophesied, "The multitude of your sacrifices—what are they to me?" says the Lord. They have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them." (Isa. 1:11-14) As far as their worship practices were concerned, they were "right." The problem was: their worship did not carry over into their daily lives. They were guilty of taking bribes, perverting justice and an endless list of other evil deeds. (Isa. 1:21-23) "Take your evil deeds out of my sight." (Isa. 1:16) As a result, God would not accept their worship.

In the New Testament, Jesus quoted from Isaiah, "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men." (Matt. 15:8-9)

If our worship fails to extend out into our daily lives and provide strength for us, something is terribly wrong with us, our worship or both.

In closing, after reflecting on these various examples from the Old Testament, perhaps, you see some failures in your life. If so, repentance is in order for you. "Stop doing wrong, learn to do right." (Isa. 1:16-18) "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." (James 1:22)

THE HIDDEN TREASURE

By BENNIE T. CRYER

Matthew 13:44 introduces our thoughts for this article. *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.* God seems to hide those spiritual things that are most vulnerable to man in this life and in the life to come. He does this and expects man to put forth great effort in searching for the treasure. He aids man in his search for the treasure by giving clues in His word, the New Testament.

Most people are interested in searching for treasures. Millions of dollars are spent each year by people searching for lost treasures in sunken ships that have held them in their secret locations for centuries. With new and sophisticated tools and instruments they are discovering the locations of those lost treasures. Then they go beneath the surface of the ocean to great depths and recover these valuable treasures. I once lived in a small West Texas town that decided to have a treasure hunt. Personnel from the local radio station hid a small treasure worth approximately five hundred dollars. Local merchants had provided the treasure. When the radio station began their broadcast about the treasure hunt people became very interested. Five hundred dollars was a lot in those days. Hundreds of people began searching for it. They would listen for each clue the radio announcer would broadcast. The clues, properly interpreted by some, led a swarm of people to a vacant lot. I drove by that lot and there the people were with their picks, shovels, hoes, and rakes frantically looking for the treasure. One person actually dug up the treasure but before it was recognized it was covered by dirt again. Finally, after much effort, the treasure was unearthed, recognized and claimed by the successful searcher. The kingdom of heaven is a treasure. Those things that pertain to this kingdom are described as "true riches" by Jesus in Luke 16:11. When the Holy Spirit revealed these things to the apostles the treasure was found in a treasure in a field and did what he had to do in order to buy the field so he could have the treasure for him-

self. He was rich because he found and possessed the treasure. If a person does not possess the "true riches" he is considered poor by God though he might have a bank full of earthly riches. However, if a miserable lost soul reaches for and finds these "true riches" he is rich in God's sight though he might not have much in worldly goods, Revelations 3:17-18. The apostles and prophets revealed the treasure and its location in the New Testament. This treasure was announced to the world, Colossians 1:23. The gospel and those things that have to do with it comprise this treasure. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:3, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." How are the lost to find this treasure?

In order to find the treasure hidden by the radio station the listeners had to pay attention to the clues given in the broadcasts. The personnel at the radio station were the only ones that knew the location of the treasure. They were the only ones that could give the proper clues to the listeners. It was the responsibility of the listener to hear the clues, properly interpret them, find the location, and do what was necessary to unearth the treasure. They had to be able to recognize the treasure when they found it. Remember one person actually dug up the treasure but he did not know what it was and it was covered up by dirt again. So it is with the hidden treasure of the gospel. The New Testament reveals the clues that will help us find and possess the "true riches." Each person has the responsibility to hear and read the New Testament. The clues are recorded therein. The description of the treasure is written there. You listen intently for clues like Jesus gave in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This statement was to be the clue given to those who were lost. They had heard the gospel. By believing and being baptized they could possess the treasure of salvation through Jesus Christ. The important of hearing these clues is emphasized in Luke 8:15, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

One of the things that impressed me about those who heard the radio station broadcast the clues in their treasure hunt was the diligence that the listeners exhibited once they heard the clues. They had all kinds of tools and worked hard in digging the treasure up. It might have been hard for them to work in their own yards digging the earth in order to plant a garden or prepare the soil for a flower bed. Yet, here they were working hard digging the ground on someone else's property. Why? Because there was something valuable to search for. There was a treasure to be found.

If you are lost in sin the gospel treasure has been hidden from you. God has graciously provided clues to you to find the "true riches" that can make you rich toward God and enable you to enjoy a more abundant life here on earth. John 5:39 encourages you to "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

"HEADACHES, DIZZINESS, ETC."

By CECIL SMITH

The above caption is often found in billboards or other public ads to educate people concerning the symptoms of a stroke. If you habitually have headaches, dizzy spells or see spots, it could very well be that you are a likely candidate for

a stroke. Such advertisements are very effective. Without knowledge of the fact that these problems may simply be symptoms of a deeper problem, one could very well suffer a stroke for he or she may ignore the warning signs until it is too late. A good friend and brother in Christ recently told me about a man for whom we used to do some work who was having some health problems. This man was of the opinion that God could still work miracles today. While conversing together, he told our brother of pains that he was having in his arms and of the lack of breath he had recently been experiencing. Immediately, this brother told him he needed to go to the hospital for he was either having a heart attack or was about to do so. At first, this man refused to go for he believed that God would heal him miraculously of whatever problem he had. Finally, when told that God's way of helping him could be through or by the doctors hands, he went in for a check up and shortly underwent the necessary procedure to repair the valves around his heart. This all came about, his life was saved, due to someone telling him the problems he was having were actually symptoms of a deeper problem. To have told him he had heart problem without showing the evident reasons why, that is the symptoms, this man may have suffered a life threatening heart attack.

This same thing is true when it comes to Christianity, yet, how often do we hear those who avoid the obvious symptoms in the name of healing the heart. There are many today that do not want to hear symptoms discussed. Symptoms such as disobedience to God's word as evidenced by ones actions. At times, one may justify himself for not preaching concerning the need for a woman to have long, natural length hair by saying, this is not the problem, this is just the symptom and we must get the heart right. We also see such when it comes to the assembling of ourselves together, modest apparel, nakedness, cursing, and on we could go. It seems to me that the "children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." (Luke 16:8) We see this evidenced each time we see a billboard or sign with symptoms listed to let people know that there may be a deeper problem involved. You see, symptoms help to educate us of the real problem. If we have no knowledge that habitual shortness of breath may be a sign of a heart attack, that dizziness may be a sign of a stroke or that a cough may be a sign of a bronchial infection which may lead to pneumonia, we may very well ignore the symptom and suffer the consequences. The simple truth is, doctors use symptoms in order to isolate the real problem. If this is true in physical things, how much more so should it be true concerning spiritual things?

In thinking concerning this subject and the obvious need for education concerning symptoms, people who have certain things believed to be symptoms of a deeper problem, all fall into one of two categories. We want to consider these two categories and show the need for education concerning symptoms in each of them in order to properly isolate the problem and heal the heart or make the necessary corrections.

Lack of Education

When it comes to the education of an audience concerning a subject of which they are in complete ignorance, many seem to take the attitude of the apostle Peter out of context and simply state "if any man be ignorant let him be ignorant." We do this in a variety of ways, one of which is by ignoring certain symptoms that show to us they could very well be ignorant or unlearned concerning the subject. Our attitude should be

entirely different for the whole purpose of preaching the gospel is to educate the masses concerning their need for God and obedience to His Will. Jesus told his disciples to "go ye therefore, and teach all nations." He went on to say of those who obeyed the gospel, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Mt. 28:19-20) To "teach" implies instruction which implies ignorance or need for instruction. When it comes to problems in ones life, which may be a result of an inner problem, if the inner problem is that of ignorance, the best way to combat such is to deal with the symptoms. We can tell one who is ignorant of such matters from now to judgement day that they have a problem, but until we educate them concerning the symptom or the evidence of the problem, we will have done no good.

An old Arabian Proverb ends with the statement, "He who knows not, and knows he knows not is a child, teach him." This should be our attitude toward those who show symptoms of a heart problem when in reality they simply do not know. Such a one will often listen intently when a subject of which they have no knowledge is brought to their attention. They know not, they realize they know not and thus they are teachable. As we go to the Bible for a quick example of this, we need to think of how the results could easily have been different if the need for education had been ignored. A good case in point is found in Acts 18:26. As Apollos began to speak boldly in the synagogue concerning the baptism of John, Aquilla and Priscilla recognized he was preaching an erroneous doctrine. They could easily have just left him alone and judged him as having a heart of indifference to the truth or a heart of rebellion. Instead, they gave him the benefit of a doubt, they judged him as one who was simply ignorant of the whole counsel of God and whose heart was right, and thus they expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. The results were wonderful and far-reaching as is evidenced from verse 28. Without knowing an individual personally or knowing they have heard the truth taught on a particular subject, we need to be careful in judging them as having a heart problem. These symptoms may be symptoms of ignorance. In such a situation we need to "preach the word" for "it is the power of God unto salvation." As preachers of the gospel or as fellow Christians, we must understand this is a life and death, heaven or hell situation. In Mt. 15:13 Jesus said; "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." If we love our brethren and they show forth some obvious symptom of a problem, shouldn't we educate them in love concerning the truth? I do not mean we are to rake them over the coals, but we must do our part and teach them the truth in meekness and in fear considering ourselves.

Indifference or Rebellion

The second category consists of those who have symptoms of a deeper problem, which is truly a problem of the heart. These are they who have heard the truth on a subject and have chosen to side step the issue, ignore God's Word, or explain away the obvious meaning of the word of God. Not even Jesus seemed to have a lot of patience with this type of individual. In Mt. 13:15 Jesus said; "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." There are many today who have chosen to close their eyes and ears to the truth for fear of having to make a change or

make some extra sacrifice for the one who gave his all on our behalf. This is evidenced when brethren became angry concerning the preaching of the gospel. Those who became angry generally show their lack of conviction, knowledge or confidence. The person who is confident in his conviction and in his stand, is in no way threatened to hear someone preach the opposite. In fact, a genuine Christian understands that he must "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:21) Our faith should never be so shallow as to not allow ourselves to listen to the gospel being preached for fear we may have to make some changes. But, this is exactly what the Jewish leaders were guilty of according to the words of Jesus.

The question for us as Christians, when we find someone who fits into this category, that has an obvious problem of the heart which is simply exemplified in the symptoms, what are we to do? The answer lies within the context of Matt. 13. Jesus has just taught the great multitudes the great parable of the sower. In this parable Jesus mentioned four types of soil. What was the common thought concerning the sower's responsibility to each type of soil? He was to plant the seed! Jesus did not differentiate between planting the seed upon the good soil and the hard soil. The seed was to be broadcast, allowing it to fall where it may. This is the way we must treat the preaching of the gospel. It could be that we go into an area where there are obvious problems based upon the symptoms that are evident. It could be that as we search a little farther many of them may have a heart of rebellion. But, as we plant the seed in such a place, it may be that we have overlooked a good honest and sincere individual who allows the seed to be planted deep. This individual could very well rise up and bring forth a bountiful harvest. Even when dealing with those whom Jesus referred to in Mt. 13:15, he still pointed out to them the symptoms that proved their heart problems. This is evidenced in Mt. 15 as Jesus deals with what many would consider symptoms. By dealing with these symptoms Jesus was able to strike at the heart of the matter. If he would have ignored the symptoms, look at the many lessons in the gospel narratives that we would have missed out on. As evidenced by Jesus our responsibility is always to preach the truth, to show the symptoms for what they are in the hopes that someone might realize these things are evidence of a problem of the heart and might change before it is everlastingly too late.

A final thought concerning this subject of symptoms. Why do we often use the excuse that one has a heart problem in order to justify our failure to lay out the symptoms for what they are on subjects such as moral issues, and we do the opposite when it comes to issues of worship? As we have pointed out, it is certainly judgmental to the fullest extent to say one has a heart problem based entirely upon a particular symptom. It could be that they are simply ignorant. But, my question revolves more around the idea of consistency. False worship is actually a symptom of a lack of respect for God's Word or a lack of education! Yet, when it comes to the Lord's Supper, we often preach the need for doing things just as God delivered. We know this is absolutely essential. Why, then, do we not treat moral issues or issues such as immodesty or appropriate apparel, the very same way? My brethren, let us no longer hide the truth about certain symptoms, it could very well cost someone their eternal soul, maybe a loved one, maybe even our own. Yes, a lack of education may very well

lead to eternal condemnation.

"BECOMING MORE SPIRITUAL"

continued from page 1

thus saith the Lord. Simply doing Bible things in Bible ways seems trite and lifeless to them. They are digging for a deeper vein of "spirituality," but alas they dig in vain! You cannot become any more spiritual than sincerely doing God's commands. Paul labeled these brethren as fleshly and carnal because of their insatiable desire for something more and something greater. People who are truly spiritual are content with the Lord's simple message and design. They are satisfied with what God has said instead of looking for things outside of His word to fulfill them. They are comforted in the knowledge that they are walking within "the old paths, wherein is the good way" (Jer 6:16). If some are being left with a sense of insatiableness and lifelessness after worshiping according to the New Testament pattern, they should look inwardly. They need to tune their heart to God and develop an appetite for the truth instead of trying to find something "exciting" outside of the word of God.

Being Spiritual Involves Seeking After Spiritual Things

The Apostle Paul stated, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). Paul says that the rewarding life is one that is devoted to fulfilling the needs of the inner man and not the fleshly tabernacle in which he dwells. The contrast made by Paul is one between that which is corruptible and that which is eternal. Man is comprised of these two properties. His body is but the temporary house in which lives his eternal spirit. The same writer reminded us in Galatians 6:7-8 that if we sow only to the flesh that our investment will not reap much of a return. However, the riches that are rewarded to the spiritually minded are eternal and incorruptible. So then, to be spiritual, means that one concentrates on his internal needs rather than the fleeting earthly cares which so often distract and bog us down. Spirituality is not an emotion produced by an hour on Sunday morning. It is a daily life of utmost devotion to God, which is produced by faith in his word. With that in mind, I would like to make some scriptural suggestions toward becoming more spiritual.

(1) Saturate your mind with the Lord's word. Christ said "It is the spirit that quickeneth; (makes alive) the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Some believe that an abstract and direct operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary to make one spiritual. However the Lord here is teaching that our inward man is fed and nourished by the words that he spake. The Holy Spirit has given to us the words of Christ and through faith in those words, he infuses spiritual life within us. The Psalmist said that a man is blessed whose "delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water...his leaf also shall not wither..." (Psalm 1:2-3). A worldly man can likely quote the daily stock trading volumes, but the spiritual man is more concerned about being able to quote the scriptures, which will make him rich toward God. Many are interested and can discuss with great interest the literary works of the day and know much about the authors of those books, but are poor in knowledge about Christ and his apostles.

(2) Develop an appetite for spiritual food. Spiritual things appeal to the man who is spiritual. He hungers for it, He loves

to read his Bible. He looks forward to every opportunity to assemble with the church. That is more enjoyable and fulfilling to him than all of the ball games, car races, and golf tournaments in the world. Instead of complaining about the services, he goes intending to draw needed strength from being with other Christians and hearing the Lord's word taught. The Lord gave us the keys to the spirit-filled life. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt 5:6).

(3) Seek first the kingdom of God. So said Jesus in Matthew 6:33. If our minds are fixed on heaven, if our affections are on things above and not on things below, and if our service to God is meaningful and life giving, it is because we exercise our minds on things that are spiritual. The pursuit of the kingdom will come before anything else. I have heard people complain about how dead they think the church is and have seen the same people miss services of a gospel meeting to go to some worldly event. They show very little affection for the church and its work. They tend to know very little about the Bible and as a result their attitudes and beliefs are often the result of emotions, whims and feelings. It takes some sort of hype or symbolism to excite them instead of the real substance of God's word. They might go to some fun activity if all of their church friends are going to be there, but they won't drive the next town over to the little congregation to help a gospel meeting that may be struggling. The fact of the matter is, carnal things appeal to them instead of real issues pertaining to the kingdom of God. Spiritual people spend the majority of their time and energy dwelling on the Lord's word and things that pertain thereto instead of mere earthly pursuits.

We all see the need for more spirituality in the church. However, the answer is not changing the worship but changing the worshippers. If we would all resolve to delve into the word of God like we never have before, put the church and its work and services first in our lives, start cultivating a desire to be more like Christ instead of more like the world then we would see churches that abound in spirituality and are living entities instead of dead carcasses of indifference and worldliness. Remember that Jesus said to the church in Smyrna "I know thy...poverty, but thou art rich" (Rev 2:9)! So may we ever be.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

In verse 14 Paul mentions "nature itself" as a corroborating witness. This he could not have done unless hair was the subject all along. Hair is produced by "nature itself" Paul shows that "nature itself" teaches us that it is a "shame" (sin) for a man to have long hair. The word "hair" in verse 14 as well as the first time it is used in verse 15 is from a verb in Greek. Thayer tells us the word is "*Komao*" (page 354) and that it means: "To let the hair grow, have long hair." (Various other lexicographers give similar meanings) We affirm that this word means Paul is issuing a command that the man must not have long hair. In verse 15 the first time the word "hair" appears the same Greek verb is again used. The woman is commanded to "let her hair grow." ("Long hair" in KJV) Can she cut it? No, she can not cut it and let it grow at the same time. He then says that if she lets her hair grow it is a "glory" to her. "Glory" is from the Greek "*DOXA*" which means: "to call forth praise to her." So, a Christian woman's growing hair calls for praise to her; but why? Because, says Paul, her

"hair" (this time from the Greek noun *KOME* which Thayer says denotes the hair as an ornament) is given her "for" (Greek "*AVTI*" meaning instead of, in place of"; Thayer, page 49) a "covering." The word "covering" here is from a word in the original, which means a veil or covering.

There can simply be no argument as to the meaning of verse 15. The covering is simply a woman's grown hair. How does she have growing, or grown, hair? She refrains from altering it in any way and allows nature to decide the length. There is nothing to be gained from the useless argument that a woman's hair grows all the time, therefore, even if she cuts it she has growing hair.

With a little simple translation one can understand the meaning of verse 15 plainly. Paul said that if a woman lets her hair grow, it calls forth praise to her because her grown hair, which becomes an ornament to her, is given her instead of a veil or covering.

Someone objects, 'Paul didn't say I couldn't cut or trim my hair.' Look at this again: What the Christian woman wants, and in fact must have to be pleasing in God's sight, is "hair" (*Komee*, noun for ornamental hair) She must have the ornamental hair because that is given to her INSTEAD of a veil or covering. So how does she get that ornamental hair? BY LETTING IT GROW AND IN NO OTHER WAY! Paul shows that one noun is given in the place of the other, i.e.: hair instead of a veil or covering. In order to arrive at that, she must first obey the directive in the verb form of hair, which is "*koma*" to let the hair grow, have long hair.

Folks, that is what the Bible teaches. The man must not have long hair. That is, he must not allow his hair to grow unhindered. On the other hand, the woman must have long hair. She must let her hair grow unhindered. Paul isn't dealing in inches or feet here. He is saying the woman must allow nature to decide the length of her hair, while the man must not do so, he must alter the length of his hair.

Why is all this so necessary? Because it affects our prayers and teaching. See verses 4 and 5. Brethren, anything that has such an important effect is certainly worth our being careful to obey!

The story was once told of an older sister who excused her cut hair by saying that as she got older she trimmed it because she didn't want to look like an old lady. Someone remarked that when she cut it off she looked more like an old man.

Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Internet

We appreciate Brother David Risener and company for kindly placing so many things from the *Old Paths Advocate* on a web site for us. There are many articles and resources for Christians, including a schedule of meetings across the United States, and numerous links to other helpful web sites. Visit this web site at: <<http://www.newtestamentchurch.org>>

Let Her Be Covered

We still have some copies of this tract left. It deals with the covering as per 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. The position is taken that the covering is the woman's hair in place of an artificial veil. Until they are gone you may have them at fifty cents each plus postage. Order from Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA, 94539

OUR DEPARTED

WILSON—Opal Lucille T. Wilson was born May 10, 1925, in Fox, OK and died March 1, 2001, in Healdton, OK at the age of 75. Opal married Jack Wilson, January 24, 1946 in Anadarko, OK, and he preceded her in death February 26, 1988. She is survived by one son: Jackie Wilson; two daughters: Cheryl Bryson and Debbie Norman; two sisters: Carolyn Briscoe and Cletus Nesbitt; and one brother: Bill Tate. Opal had been bedfast for several years and unable to speak. Her children, however, took wonderful care of her—care that could not have been equalled by anyone else, including hospitals or nursing homes. I knew Opal for 35 years and I was honored the family asked me to conduct the funeral. A large crowd of family, brothers and sisters in Christ, and friends gathered in the Healdton church building for the services. Gary Cannon led the congregational singing and it was beautiful.—Carl Johnson

Thanks From The Russell Owens Family

While “Daddy” was sick and yet in the hospital many had called, visited and sent cards wishing him well. He asked that a note of thanks be written to *Old Paths Advocate*. After his death hundreds extended us sympathy for which we are so grateful. Daddy died as he lived, loving the Lord and thinking of the church first. The doctors, recognizing his need for surgery, wanted to operate to replace another heart valve the first part of October. He declined, telling them, “Our meeting is coming soon and I need to attend it.” He attended every service, but grew very weak. After a week in the hospital, they sent him home to gain strength giving him protein. After the surgery, he never regained his strength. He planned to be in worship on the last Lord’s Day of the year but death came leaving his wish unfulfilled. We continue to miss him so very much. Thank you all for each act and word of kindness. (“Sis,” Barney and Glenda)—the Owens’



Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Tupelo, OK 74572—The second annual Gospel Meeting at Valliant, Okla. has come and gone. We all believe it was a great success. There was one restored and one confession of faults. We had good crowds each night. The following speakers spoke one or more times. Barney Owens, William St. John, Tim Byrd, Ewell Byrd, Cecil Tidmore, Paul Tidmore, John Tidmore, Ralph Noack, Gene Hopkins and Ed Bullard. We already have plans for the 3rd meeting the second Sunday through the third Sunday in April of 2002. We appreciate all the help and visitors, especially Glen and Roberta Van Stavern from Springfield, Mo.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH—We have just concluded a series of Meetings with William St. John preaching. His preaching was both scriptural and timely, fitting us to the “T.” All were encouraged and informed. Since last reporting I have been with the churches at Bunner’s Ridge, WV, Paris, TX, and Birmingham, AL. Each was enjoyable and helpful to me as I renewed old acquaintance and made

some new friendships in Christ. My next will be as follows: June 10-17 Columbus, GA; June 26-July 4 Sulphur, OK; July 8-15 Sentinel, OK; August 8-12 Jamesville, MO. I look forward to being with these brethren. Pray for me.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Nortficrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820 carlmj@cableone.net—Phyllis and I just returned from a short meeting in Eldon, MO. This is a relatively new congregation and it has participated in starting two more congregations in the past few years at Brumley and Montreal. Several new members have been added to the area congregations since I was at Eldon two years ago, and that fact is a testimony to the hard work of the brethren in the area, the Lebanon congregation who backs the work, the television program out of Jefferson City with Ron Alexander, and Dan Wissinger who has been immersed in this work for the past few years. We had visitors from the community at virtually every service of the meeting, some of whom are very good prospects. Prior to the Eldon meeting I was in Piedmont, AL for eight days. We had visitors from the community at every service of this meeting also, and most of them came to nearly all the services. A couple of the ladies indicated they were going to take their stand with the Piedmont congregation. I’m grateful to Terry, Angie, and Aaron Studdard for the great hospitality they provided me during my stay. Lord willing, I’ll preach here at home tomorrow night and then fly to Stockton, CA to begin a meeting Saturday night. My next few meetings are: Springfield, MO (Mission Hills, Apr. 29-May 6), Allen, TX (June 1-10), London, KY (June 13-17), and Temple, GA (July 22-29). We continue to ask for your prayers.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, May 8—The meeting at Garrett’s Creek near Wayne, WV was an enjoyable experience for me. Wyn Baker lives and works here. I have known Wyn virtually all his life and have seen him develop into a fine, very talented preacher of the gospel. Our meeting was blessed with good attendance throughout, made possible by the cooperation of nearby congregations. Next we were at Lovejoy, PA. We had a reunion of several of the churches in PA including visitors from Indiana, Flemington, Rote, and Greenville. We made our home with Eugene and Betty Lockard, friends of long standing. Eugene is a “rock” in that part of the brotherhood. From Lovejoy we traveled to Greenville (Shenango) for another good meeting. Here we stayed with the Bee’s (Don and Eloise), who treated us royally. Again crowds were good with brethren coming from all over PA and Northeastern Ohio. May the Lord bless those brethren in the Northeast as they labor for the truth. We have just enjoyed a good meeting here at home with Carl Johnson. Our crowds were especially good. A full house most every night. The Lord willing we go next to Marion, IA May 9-13, Ratliff City, OK June 6-10, Fayetteville, Ohio June 13-17, and Marietta, GA July 7-15. Please remember us when you pray.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, May 4—The work is going well at 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas City. Of course, there are always improvements that can be made and we strive for that. We have good lessons from our local teachers, and all are willing to share the responsibilities. We have regular home Bible studies with a number of people. One woman I have been studying with was baptized recently along with her boy friend. We have found more people in this part of the country willing to study the Bible with a preacher than any place we

have worked in a long time. It is such a joy to see people who want to gain a knowledge of the scriptures. Recently two neighbor girls knocked on our door who wanted to study certain Bible subjects. On Saturday nights several of us get together for private studies. We have been doing this for over a year now. Presently we are studying the book of Revelation, which is proving quite profitable. Our next meeting will be with Kevin Presley of Dothan, AL, June 3-10. We look forward to a good meeting. The Lord bless all righteous efforts everywhere.

Kevin W. Presley, 1604 Verde Trail, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, May 13—We have been enjoying good crowds and cooperation at home lately. Most recently, a sister returned to the church after having been away for 15 years or more. She is showing a lot of interest, which, of course, encourages the rest of us. It was good to see Miles King at Slocomb a few weeks ago. We had a good visit and his meeting was well attended. I also heard Wayne McKamie preach a good sermon at Napoleon congregation this past Thursday night. Today, we began a meeting at Fremont, CA. We started out with a good crowd and good interest. I am looking forward to spending the week with Bro. Don King. My next meeting begins June 3rd in Kansas City, KS (79th and Kansas). We hope to see many of you in our travels this summer and pray the Lord will bless the work everywhere.

Cecil Smith, 872 North Quigley Rd., Marion, LA 71260, e-mail: cesmith@bayou.com—It has been some time since I last sent in a field report for the work in which we are engaged. We are presently working with the congregation in Conway, LA. It is a joy in many ways to be able to be a part of the work in this area. Though we have had our ups and downs, things really seem to be looking up for the work at Conway. We recently took the opportunity to attend the debate in Bowling Green with Ronnie affirming the use of one cup. This was an enjoyable experience to be able to sit at the feet of one who can defend the truth on this issue in such fashion. Afterward we were able to hear Jimmy Cating in a meeting in Depauw, IN as well as visit with the brethren from the Bedford congregation. It was indeed a joy to visit with many of our loved ones in the area. During our work in the state we grew to love and appreciate them very much. From there we were able to be with the congregation in Fayetteville, Ohio for a short meeting. We enjoyed seeing brethren from the Cincinnati area and renew old acquaintances in our stay there. We also enjoyed the association with Brother Michael Kidd and his family. The meeting seemed to be a great success with God receiving the glory. It was a joy to see Brother Barney Owens, one of the preachers in the area and one who I attribute greatly with my own desire to preach the word. Upon arriving home, we were able to take in a few nights of the meeting in West Monroe with Brother Don King. It was good to hear his good sound preaching once again. We presently have some excellent leads in this area and are striving to spread the word by way of a newspaper article as well as personal work. We covet earnestly your prayers on our behalf. Remember, it's meeting time again so pray diligently for those engaged in this work.

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4, Box 188, Ada, OK: Greetings to the brethren everywhere. Our schedule for this year is off and running. We have been busy with some good results to report for which we are thankful. Our first meeting was at Jasper, TN. The congregation there is doing really well. They have

grown in number as well as in spiritual ways. I enjoyed my stay in the home of Sherman and Sue Long. Their hospitality is wonderful. There were three baptisms during the course of the meeting. From Jasper I traveled to Columbus, OH where I enjoyed my visit in the home of Jim and Denise Duty. The congregation there is rather isolated being about an hour and a half drive from a sister congregation. I really appreciated the support of brethren from Cincinnati and from congregations in West Virginia. Presently I am in a meeting in Odom, MO. I am staying in the home of Paul and Gerry Roy. Their hospitality is second to none. We have already had one baptism and are hoping for more. Between meetings I attended our meeting at Ada with Bro. Billy Dickinson. Billy did us a great job. It was a treat to hear Billy preach the wonderful truths of God's word with such enthusiasm and conviction. We look forward to meetings at Pansey, AL, May 20-27; White Bluff, TN, June 3-10 and Trussville, AL, June 11-17. Please remember us when you pray.

P. Duane Permenter, Post Office Box 80687, Midland, TX 79708, May 9—Since last reporting, I held a meeting at Oakdale, CA, and brethren came from far and near to support the meeting. Several preachers attended the meeting for which I am thankful. Matt Trent is laboring with the church in Oakdale and they are doing very well. My next was at 21st Street in Oklahoma City. The brethren in that area are working hard to build the church. In fact, the week after I was there, the group started a work in the Newcastle area. It was a pleasure to be with Glen Osborn who is doing a good work in that area. I made my home with Cliff and Pat Arney, and I was treated royally during my stay. Cliff and Pat are fine people and I count it an honor to have known them for many years. Next, I was in Kentucky and had the privilege of hearing Doug Hawkins at Walnut Grove until my meeting at Hilltop, Kentucky started on Sunday. It was a pleasure to make my home in Les and Mary Russell's house during the meeting. They were very gracious to me. The church at Hilltop is at peace and has potential for growth in the future. The church here at home continues moving forward. We are now running Ronny Wade's TV tapes each Sunday morning. We have had some interest from the program around West Texas. We have had around fifty calls or cards about the program. Three women from the community have been attending our services the last several months. We also continue with our weekly studies. We are looking forward to our summer meeting, July 22-29 with Terry Baze doing the preaching. Wayne McKamie and I leave Monday for Lusaka, Zambia and return May 30. The church in Edmond asked if we would go and hold the annual meeting in Zambia this year and we are looking forward to helping Roger Boone in that great work. July 5-8 I will be in Tucson, AZ for a meeting. My next will be at New Salem, MS August 3-12. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at Sulphur and Lebanon this year during the Fourth of July meetings. Please pray for me and mine.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, May 12, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com The meeting at the Hillcrest congregation near Brookhaven, MS closed with no visible results. However, crowds were excellent with some outside interest and sister congregations cooperated splendidly. A number of states were represented for which we are very thankful. The congregation had worked hard to be ready for the meeting. Many phone calls and various other kinds of invitations were made which showed in the interest and attendance. Several preachers also came from near and

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

If the date near your name and address reads 6-01 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

far and their help was gladly accepted. James Orten has been working among the congregation on a part-time basis and we were glad to have him until the last weekend. Since then, we have been at home and nearby. Kevin Presley begins our meeting at Fremont in the morning, Lord willing. We look forward to a good meeting. The next Lord's day, we are to begin the annual Memorial Day meeting at Turlock, CA. We look forward to seeing many of our friends there. Then, it is on to the Lebanon, MO 4th of July meeting for a few days and then to West Chester, Ohio where Pat and I lived and worked with the church thirty years ago. A word to our preachers: we need your field reports and articles. We also need you to mention the paper to those you see. There is a great work to be done through the printed page and all of us can share the load. Remember, anyone who sends us 10 subscriptions can have theirs free for one year. Pray for us.

Brett Hickey, 823 W. 5th St., Tyler, TX 75701; (903) 533-9782; brett.hickey@juno.com, May 7—It has been too long since last reporting. I've enjoyed the monthly paper and relevant issues from years gone by that are indexed alphabetically on David Risener's website. We have been in Tyler fourteen months. Besides the two baptisms, we have seen genuine spiritual growth within the body. Wednesday night services were started shortly before we arrived and the congregation has demonstrated a solid and growing commitment to them. Consistently edifying teaching has visitors returning on consecutive Wednesday nights. There is a renewed understanding or at least renewed priority in attending worship services every Lord's day. Several men have made confessions and taken on added responsibility. Our evenings and some of our days are loaded with studies with seven nonmembers and eight of those young in the faith. We are working with others on strengthening relationships within the family and church. Our most recent meeting featured talented young men Josh Keele, Luke Post, Brendan Wallace, Rob Hayes, Shawn Willis and Patrick Grouse. Mature beyond their age, each speaker confronted especially relevant issues for the gathering of well over 150 - most of which were teenagers. Our earlier meeting with Terry Baze was also well attended. The love at Tyler for Terry and Becky is deep and strong. His sermons were bold and pointed - just what we needed. About a dozen brethren from Shreveport and Paris gave the meeting a boost. More importantly, a congregational effort resulted in twenty-seven visitors from the community. Some of them are currently studying with us. Our meeting with William St. John in the fall was everything our spring meeting was. Since last reporting, we appreciated the opportunity to be at Allen, Corsicana, Hoyte, Duncanville and Weatherford. We stayed with the Baker's during our meeting at Hoyte. I know of no family that experiences the joy of Christian living more than they do. Great to get acquainted with Morgan Stripling and reacquainted with area brethren. After our stay, Joey, our six year old decided he not only wanted to preach, but he wanted to be a farmer. Our weekend at Weatherford enabled us to see the fruit of Melvin Blalock's labors—most recently the baptism after our last service of a

young man he had been studying with. The meeting at Duncanville was somewhat of a homecoming. Many of them were at Boulder Dr. when I was born in Dallas and my father worked with the congregation. The other members at Duncanville have obviously been only good for the church there. We look forward to being at McGregor this month and being with our brethren at Greenville, SC in June. I am encouraged to hear of the young men who have committed their lives to preaching the gospel. Let us keep praying for laborers!

Cullen Smith, 86 E. 19th ST., San Angelo, TX 76903, phn #915-655-8917 email: cullensmith@hotmail.com, April 24—The work here in San Angelo is beginning to pick up. There are frequent responses from **LET THE BIBLE SPEAK** television program which Brother Ronny Wade preaches and handles only as Ronny can. The seed is being sown. The viewers of the broadcast are generally very receptive to visitors associated with the program. There are many new leads to work here in San Angelo and all credit must be given to several brethren here who work diligently to invite their friends to study the Bible or worship. We've heard some great preaching from Wayne McKamie, Jerry Dickinson, Brandon Stephens, and Joe Norton in our monthly weekend meetings. I really appreciate the congregation here in San Angelo for allowing me to travel and preach other places this Spring. They have been more than fair with me and have made it easy to live so far from home. The second Sunday of each month I've been visiting the Crestview congregation in Wichita Falls, TX and I appreciate that opportunity to preach. I was in LaGrange GA in February and enjoyed so much the hospitality of Brother Mike Thompson and his family. Brother Alton Bailey and Sister Florence continually work hard for the Lord there in LaGrange and I really enjoyed being around them. They were put under a great strain during the meeting with the death of Sister Wingo in the congregation. Brother Alton preached the funeral and Brother Larry Thompson assisted in the service. I was so glad to be able to finally meet Sister Miller and listen as she spoke of her husband, the late Bro. E.H. Miller and his great preaching career. Brother Kevin Presley and Ricky Martin are to be thanked for driving so far to support the meeting. They are two very fine preachers and men. After I closed there I preached in Napoleon AL and enjoyed the evening with the Prince family. In March I was first in Ada OK at the 25th Annual Young Speakers meeting. They always know how to have a good meeting and the crowds overflowed with people from all over the country. I wish every meeting within driving distance was attended like the Ada meeting was and it's past time for vacations, ball games, and homework to take a backseat when gospel meeting time rolls around. Next, I was in Dora MO with the Odom congregation where Jeff Howard lives and works. They have some recent growth in the congregation and Jeff is to be commended for his work with new converts. Lord willing, I'll be in California for the Memorial Day meeting and some appointments. I appreciate Brother Benny Cryer for setting that up for me. Please pray for the work here in San Angelo.

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, JULY 2001

NO. 7

THE AUTONOMY OF A LOCAL CONGREGATION

By *BENNIE T. CRYER*

The Lord's pattern for His church precludes His followers being classified as anything but autonomist. Whether you are looking at a local church's government, the work it does whether by itself or in cooperation with other congregations, the work a preacher does within that congregation or in other domestic or foreign fields that the church sends him to the congregation and that preacher must practice autonomy. Each preacher that is sent out must respect the autonomy of each local church he comes in contact with as well as the congregation's that sent him. If he does not, or if he violates the pattern in some other way the sending congregation should call him back and if the preacher is an autonomist he will come back without any problems.

The work of the church has grown domestically. Its growth has multiplied in foreign fields. Because of this growth we need to take a look at the Biblical doctrine of autonomy because of our past history both ancient and recent indicates we can easily slip away from the pattern. We have been taught that if we do not look back at the past we are bound to commit the same mistakes over again. While you may not find the exact word, *autonomy*, in the scriptures the revealed pattern has in it the examples teaching self-government for each congregation.

The Jerusalem Example: Acts 15

While we esteem the church in Jerusalem because it was "the beginning" or the first church established we do not classify that first congregation as the mother church as some do today. False teachers had gone out from Jerusalem to Antioch. Paul and Barnabas were there. They withstood the false teachers to their face. However, this did not solve the problem. So, it was determined that Paul and Barnabas, along with some others should go to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this matter. Why did Paul have to go to Jerusalem to ask them about this matter? Did he go there to find out if he were right or wrong about the false teachers? Did he need to learn new truths about this false doctrine from the other apostles? No! He wrote in Galatians 2:6, *But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me.* So, those worthies in Jerusalem could not supply him any new truths. They added nothing to his knowledge. His information came from another source. Galatians 1:12, *For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* The reason Paul went to Jerusalem was because that is where the false teachers home congregation was. That is where they had come from. This is taught in Acts 15:24, *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. Paul was respecting the pattern of local self-government. The Jerusalem false teachers who came to Antioch were members in Jerusalem and that was where the matter had to be settled. Antioch would not discipline the false teachers nor stop them from going to other places. Jerusalem had to settle those problems. So it must be today. Those, whether preachers or otherwise, who go out from their home or sending congregation must answer to that congregation. If they do not they are not an autonomist and should be dealt with accordingly.

Preachers Sent To Work With More Than One Congregation

When the pattern is followed this should not pose a problem. The sending congregation, the preacher, and each congregation he works with must respect the self-governing body of the local church. If an evangelist is being supported by a local church and is responsible to them he may go work with other congregations in gospel meetings, extended work efforts, problem solving, etc., without violating church autonomy. Each congregation he comes in contact with has the right to withstand him face to face if he violates New Testament pattern. If he will not listen to them they each have the right to go to the supporting, sending congregation, or his home congregation and present the problem to them to deal with. Each congregation has a right to reject him if his words and actions are out of line. Titus must have felt a tremendous responsibility when he was left on the Island of Crete to work with a plurality of congregations, Titus 1:5. He was to set each congregation in order to ordain elders in every city. If he and others (Note that other evangelists were to continue this work on Crete after Titus left, Titus 3:12) could work with a plurality of congregations in those matters without violating the autonomy of each one of them an evangelist may do the same today without violating the self-government of each local church. I would think that one of Titus' responsibilities was to teach other congregation on Crete to be autonomous. In the May issue of this journal Johnny Elmore asked the question, "Do we see violations of church autonomy, whether foreign or domestic, among us today?" He is concerned about this and rightfully so. I agree, and I am sure all the preachers would agree, that we must be ever watchful in this area. None of us desire to be digressive in this or in any other area. When Jerry Cutter, along with myself, and others worked in Malawi in the early and mid 1960's we fought centralization and the idea of having a "mother church." We taught each congregation to be autonomous. This was the

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 7



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-11

The Autonomy Of A Local Congregation .. 1

Editorial 2

Querist Column 3

The Mother Every Child Needs 3

Capital Punishment: Ananias & Sapphira 4

Greet One Another 6

Greasy Grace. 7

FROM THE FIELDS 11-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson Kevin Presley
Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00

Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536

A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.

Editorial

“DECEIVING AND BEING DECEIVED”

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

Satan is a master in the art of deception, for by his cunning devices he has deceived the whole world (Rev. 12:9). The Bible shows that all deception is from the Devil and it involves a “process” that will captivate us if we are not careful. Furthermore, it is a process that is reciprocal in nature. What do I mean by that? I mean that deception is something that grows and involves more people with the passing of time, eventually becoming a mutual process by which people deceive each other.

Paul describes this phenomenon in 2 Tim. 3:13: “But evil men and seducers; shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” Do you see what Paul is saying? He is writing of a group of individuals who are deceiving one another, and as a result, the situation adds to their own deception! The idea is that while they use deceit, they themselves are overcome by deceit. When you stop to think about it, it is easier to believe a lie when other people join in and help to create an atmosphere of acceptance—a spiritual climate where falsehoods and delusions can thrive. Can you relate to that? Can you understand how two people can mutually participate in a scheme of deception to where they help to harden one another in error?

When I was a lad in elementary school, I went with my mother to visit a new family in the neighborhood. I met a boy who was my age. He attended a different school than I did, and we enjoyed each other’s company. During our first visit, I told him some far-fetched stories in an attempt to impress him. I told him that I played on my school’s football team and that I was no less than the star quarterback! To my amazement, he seemed to believe all of my lies. However, he related to me the same kind of information, claiming that he was also a star player on his school’s team. Before I left for home, I broke down and told him that I had made the whole thing up. Would you believe that he made the same confession to me? Both of us at the time knew on a certain level that we were deceiving each other, but it was something that we enjoyed doing. We created an atmosphere between us where deception was possible. It was a case of “deceiving, and being deceived.”

I believe that we can see that very same process at work in the religious world today! In fact, I want to discuss two modern-day examples of how religious folks often allow themselves to be deceived as they get wrapped up in an atmosphere of deception.

There is a Charismatic preacher, a so-called faith healer, by the name of Benny Hinn. Some point to him as living proof that miraculous power and spiritual gifts are still available in the church today. It is an undeniable fact that Benny Hinn has a large following—everywhere he goes people stand in lines to attend one of his “healing services.” Sometimes when Benny Hinn lays his hands on people and prays for them, they will pass out and fall to the floor. I have seen him on television simply blow his breath on people, and the result is that they will fall backwards. When a reporter once asked him why his breath has that kind of effect upon people, Benny Hinn replied that he has been trying to figure that out himself!

continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By *RONNY F. WADE*

Question: Please explain what we have to obey in the New Testament. Is it just commands? What about examples and/or necessary inferences? Is there a difference between an example and an incident? (TX)

Answer: This question is one of extreme importance. A failure to recognize what is required of us by God in His word can lead to unscriptural practices currently, and eventually eternal destruction. In order to establish right or wrong in matters dealing with our service to God, we must first of all recognize that all inherent authority resides with God. God, has however, delegated authority to His Son Jesus Christ. "All authority is given unto me..." Mt. 28:18-20. He is "head over all things to the church which is His body." Eph. 1:22-23. Hence, we can act in the church only by the authority of Christ. As head of the body, He controls the church, the church is an absolute monarchy. Just as God delegated authority to His Son, Christ has delegated authority to the apostles Mt. 16:19; Jno. 13:20; Jno. 20:22-23. In their writings, we have the will of God expressed. These men were guided by the Holy Spirit in what they wrote and spoke 1 Cor. 2:9-13. The authority of Christ is expressed in the New Testament scriptures. The word of God is complete and furnishes us with all things that we need 2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:13-17. Because of this we are forbidden to go beyond what is written Gal. 1:6-8; 2 John 9-11. There are three ways authority is established in the New Testament scriptures: (1) By precept or command. Such teaching may take the form of a direct statement or positive command. Commands are numerous in the scripture. For example in Acts 2:38 the people were told to "repent and be baptized" for the remission of sins. In Acts 10:48 they were "commanded to be baptized." Every command of God carries the weight of heaven. Commands cannot be taken lightly, nor can they be ignored if we expect to please God. (2) Authority may also be established by an approved example. An example is defined as "A pattern, a model, an illustration of a rule or precept, sample" (Webster). It is important to notice that everything that happened in the Bible is not an example. Every incident was not intended to be a pattern or model for us to follow. If something is an example, it is a pattern illustrating a rule or precept. A mere incident, on the other hand, is something that occurs accidentally; something that happens beside the main design. It is a mistake to confuse the two. We should never label an incident as an example. To do so will result in false applications and erroneous conclusions. Thus, we must decide whether or not an event is (a) an example illustrating a rule or precept or (b) just a casual incident. In order to do this, we should make the determination based on whether there is some background rule, precept, command principle, or statement which is being illustrated. In Acts 8:38 we have the statement "they went down into the water." This illustrates the command to baptize. Going down into the water illustrates how one is baptized. "Ye sent once and again to my necessity" Phil. 4:6; "that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied" 2 Cor. 11:9; "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them" 2 Cor. 11:8 all illustrate the rule "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" 1 Cor. 9:14. These passages also illustrate a background rule that shows funds were sent directly from the congregation to the preacher. There was no missionary society or "preacher fund" into which the money was sent then distributed. "They

all drank of it" Mk. 14:23 illustrates the command "drink ye all of it" Mt. 26:27. But what about the upper room? Is that an example? No, it is not. The upper room illustrates nothing. In fact in Jno. 4:20-24 Jesus loosed the place where God is to be worshiped. Another incident is recorded in Acts 27:38 "They lighted the ship and cast the wheat into the sea." Here is an event with no background rule, principle or command. It is an incident not an example. Examples are binding. Just as binding as a command. "But," someone may ask "what if a command may be obeyed or carried out in more than one way?" Then, we may obey and carry out that command in any of the ways exemplified in the scripture. An approved example cannot be ignored by practicing what is not taught or exemplified in the scripture. (3) Necessary inference is something that is neither expressly stated nor specifically exemplified yet is necessarily implied by the clear import and meaning of the language used. In Acts 20:7 the frequency of the observance of the Lord's supper is necessarily implied. Note "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" Ex. 20:8, and "The first day of the week to break bread" Acts 20:7. If the "sabbath day to keep it holy" means every sabbath day, as regularly as it comes around, then, "the first day of the week to break bread" means every "first day" as regularly as it comes around. Hence, a weekly observance of the Lord's supper on the first day of the week is necessarily implied. In Mt. 3:16 we are told that Jesus "came up out of the water." While the scripture does not specifically state that He "went down into the water," it is necessarily implied, since one cannot "come up out of the water" unless he "went down into the water." From these observations we conclude that something may be authorized in the scripture by either command, example, or necessary inference. To suggest that the only way God communicates with us through his word is by commands is clearly without scriptural foundation.

(Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 or e-mail to rfwade@getatlas.com)

THE MOTHER EVERY CHILD NEEDS

By *RICK MARTIN*

One of God's greatest gifts is the gift of motherhood. There is no formula for the ideal mother, but God gives us a wonderful example of motherhood in the Bible through a woman named Hannah.

Hannah was a beautiful godly woman living in a very difficult situation. In this home, there were two women and one husband. The husband was El-kan-nah and he had married two women, even though this was not the will of God. Although God allowed it, it was never his plan for a man to have more than one wife.

The other wife had sons and daughters but Hannah had none. In Old Testament times, it was considered a disgrace not to have children. So, men sometimes married more than one woman to ensure they would have children.

This other woman was not the best of friends to Hannah. I Sam. 1:6 says that she was Hannah's rival. She provoked Hannah, because the Lord had closed her womb. All of this caused Hannah a lot of emotional and social pain. God was preparing Hannah for the role she would later play as a godly mother and providing us with an encouraging example of motherhood.

Every child needs a mother whose commitment level goes far beyond family trouble. Hannah lived in a hostile situation. Yet she was committed to her family. We all experience strife within our families at times. The mother, who refuses to quit

when difficult times come, teaches the valuable lesson of commitment to her children. Every child needs a mother whose commitment level is far above her comfort level.

Every child needs a mother who truly wants her children. In today's society, there are many unwanted children. In fact, some mothers will even go so far as to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. Hannah was a mother who wanted her child. She made a vow to God that if she had a son, she would dedicate him to the Lord's service (1 Sam. 1:11). From an early age Samuel could sense his mother's devotion. Children are able to sense the affection of those around them. Mothers should be very careful in what they say. Any thought recklessly delivered and conveying a message of not being wanted can cause emotional damage to a child. It can cause feelings of not being wanted and insecurity. If a child feels he is not wanted, he will begin to view himself as worthless.

Every child needs a mother who will take care of his emotional and physical needs. Hannah was a loving mother and she let others know she loved her son. Samuel was her gift from God. Children need to hear you say that you love them. They need to feel a mother's loving arms around them. Our world is suffering because so many children have grown up without the love of their parents.

Every child needs a mother who loves God. Hannah loved God. She was a servant of God and referred to herself as God's handmaid. When children see their parents loving God, serving him and living for him, they also learn to love and obey God.

Every child needs a mother who trusts God. Mothers are an important factor in the spiritual protection of their children. When temptations come, a child whose mother has instilled trust in God won't need drugs, immoral relationships or alcohol. God will be seen as all-sufficient. Even if the child should stray, the truth of God's word will go with him because of the example that his mother has set.

Every child needs a praying mother. Every mother should make prayer a priority. Mothers should pray for guidance in rearing their children. Mothers should pray for and with their children. A praying mother is committed to seeking God's will for her family.

Every child needs a mother who loves her husband and is loved by him. One of the greatest things a father can do for his children is to love their mother. This builds strength, stability and security while setting a loving pattern for children to follow.

Every child needs a mother whom they love and respect. Children have a duty to be respectful and concerned about their mother. Jesus set this example by being concerned about his mother while he was on the cross (Jn 19:26-27). Children, your mother deserves your love and respect.

We live in a time when many mothers work outside the home. Some people have blamed all the ills of society on working mothers and this is quite unfair. Women have been working outside the home from as far back as Solomon's virtuous woman of Proverbs 31. It is said of her "She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; her candle goeth not out by night" (Pro 31:16,18). Women have proven that they can be successful in the home and business. The woman who chooses to stay at home should not be lead to believe that she is performing a demeaning task or that she is less ambitious. There are mothers who work outside the home who are good mothers. There are mothers who stay at home who are good mothers. Likewise there are mothers who work outside the home who are bad mothers

and mothers who stay at home who are bad mothers. It is a matter of priorities. In any walk of life, our priorities must be in the right place. It is not just mothers who can have their priorities out of order. This is something that plagues fathers and Christians as well. Every mother needs to make sure her home, children and God are her priorities.

Motherhood originated with God and was established before the fall in the garden. Gen 1:27-28, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." The sin in the garden and the pain that accompanied childbearing came later.

God also planned for babies to be born to women who are married to men. Today we hear about single women bearing children. Gen 2:22-24, "And the rib, which was taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones 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 shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." Motherhood the way God planned it is an honorable thing.

Mothers are to play an integral part in the spiritual well being of their children. This was the case with Timothy. Paul made reference to his sincere faith which existed first in his grandmother and mother and then in him (2 Timothy 3:15).

Mothers do not have an easy job. There are disputes to be settled, colds and fevers to be nursed, and endless tears to be wiped away. Being a mother requires a lot of energy, ambition and love. It is sometimes a thankless task. It is a 24-hour a day job and hours are not flexible.

The Christian woman will realize that motherhood is a God-given responsibility. She will want to be the type of mother that every child needs. Does this mean she will be perfect? No, but it does mean she will have her priorities in the right place and will ask for God's guidance in being a mother.

For most of us the word mother is a wonderful word. Many stories, poems and songs have been written about mother that bring tears to our eyes. Husbands and children with Godly wives and mothers should realize their blessings. They should treat them with dignity and respect. Pro. 31:28, "Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."

Thank God for women who want to be the type of mother that every child needs.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA

By GEORGE BATTEY

In Acts 5:1-10 we read of the execution of a husband and wife – Ananias and Sapphira. This execution was presided over by the apostle Peter with many witnesses present (cf. 1 Tim. 5:20). Let us first summarize what occurred and then attempt to understand why this harsh punishment was dealt out.

The apostles had been "tried" by the outside forces of the church. In chapter four Peter and John were arrested for preaching in the name of Jesus. The Jewish Counsel strictly warned these men not to "speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus" (Acts 4:18). Peter responded, "Whether it is right in

the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge" (v. 19). After further threatening the apostles, the Counsel released them "finding no way of punishing them, because of the people" (v. 21). The apostles had survived the trial levied against them, showing themselves to be brave and loyal.

It was now time for these apostles to be tried by forces from within the church. The occasion which brought the trial was the selling and giving of possessions for distribution to the poor within the church. "All who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet and they distributed to each as anyone had need" (vv. 34-35). Focus your attention on the fact of the apostles being in charge of this money brought for distribution. Had "lesser" men in the church been in charge, Ananias and Sapphira would not have died.

Beginning in Acts 5 we see Ananias and Sapphira "jumping on the band wagon" and selling their property like others. The scriptures say when Ananias and Sapphira brought the money from the sale of their land they "kept back part of the proceeds" (v. 2) and special mention is made of the fact that the wife was part of this scheme - the husband was not acting alone. Peter, who has already passed a severe trial from without the church, now is faced by a trial from within the church. He exposes what Ananias and Sapphira tried to do and both were immediately executed.

What Happened?

Exactly what happened? Why were Ananias and Sapphira so severely punished for lying? What would happen if everyone in the church who "stretched the truth" received the same sentence? How many of us would still be around?

Most commentators assume that the sin of Ananias and Sapphira was the sin of covetousness; they were greedy, but wanted to appear generous. Their lie, it is assumed, was designed to make them look better than they really were. But again, the question remains: Why such a severe punishment for being covetous? How many members of the church have done worse and yet continue to live. It does not seem very fair and equitable that Ananias and Sapphira died, but others, who do the same, live. The appearance is that God was either overly harsh with this couple or overly lenient with us today. At any rate it does not seem fair or merciful. They had no opportunity to repent and make things right before they died.

On closer examination it will become obvious that Ananias and Sapphira were not merely being covetous and they were not merely lying - though they were, no doubt, guilty of both these sins. There is a greater issue at stake than covetousness and lying. Peter said they had "*lied to the Holy Spirit*" (v. 3) which is equivalent to "lying to God" (v. 4) - because the Holy Spirit is Himself God. He is a divine Being - the third member of the Godhead (Mt. 28:19). They lied to the Spirit when they lied to a Spirit-filled apostle. The statement, "You have not lied to men but to God" (v. 4), implies that had they merely lied to men they would not have died. As already noted, they lied to God when they lied to God's Spirit-filled leader. Anyone else doing the same thing would have suffered the same fate, for "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34). Ananias and Sapphira had also "agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord" (v. 9). Had they been testing lesser men they would not have died. They made a plan to test the Spirit of God. They premeditated their crime. They "tested the Spirit" by testing a Spirit-filled apostle.

A Little Background

A little background information would help in understanding the story of Acts 5. The apostles were the early leaders in the

church (Acts 1:15). Peter, especially, was the foremost spokesman of the group. He was the one with the keys to open the doors of the church (Mt. 16:19). He was doing most of the speaking (Acts 2:14). He was initiating and performing the miracles (Acts 3:4ff). Peter was telling everyone that what he was teaching and doing was not really him, but it was God working through him (Acts 4:10). No doubt he had informed the brethren that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit upon himself and the other apostles to "guide them into all truth" (Jn. 16:13). When released from the Counsel, he and John "reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them" (Acts 4:23). Peter may have told the brethren that when he and John stood before the Counsel, they did not have to "worry before hand, or premeditate" what they were going to say because "it was not us who spoke, but the Holy Spirit" (Mk. 13:11).

When leaders become prominent, when they are having success in every direction, when they seem to be getting all the attention of all the people, there will be someone nearby who is envious. Ananias and Sapphira were of this character. They were thinking along the lines of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?" (Num. 16:3).

Ananias and Sapphira conceived a plan to demonstrate the apostles were no better than any of the other brethren. They were going to prove these apostles are not inerrant. They were going to prove the apostles were not "guided into all truth," that they were not one whit more qualified to be in leadership than other brethren. Their plan was to sell property and only bring part of the proceeds to Peter. He would, they thought, praise them for bringing all their money and thereupon Ananias and Sapphira could expose him. They could reveal to everyone they sold the land for much more than they brought. Peter, the "Spirit-filled apostle," would have been shown to have no more supernatural guidance than any other man and it would have "dethroned" Peter from the limelight. This plan was to "test the Spirit of God" (Acts 5:9), that is, to test if the Spirit of God was actually working within Peter and all the apostles. Think of the consequences had the plan worked. The apostles would have been proven to be uninspired. Their leadership would have been undermined. The church could not ever be sure that "revelations" they received were actually from God or merely the fertile minds of charlatans. The entire gospel system was threatened. The integrity of the New Testament scriptures hinged on the outcome of this "test," for if Peter could not prove himself to be inspired, nothing he wrote would be inspired either.

When Korah, Dathan and Abiram tested Moses, Moses said to the people:

"By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will. If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, then the LORD has not sent me. But if the LORD creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD."

Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. Then all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they

said, "Lest the earth swallow us up also!" (Num. 16:28-34).

When envious, rebellious men tried to usurp the authority of Moses they were executed in a horrible way. God's people stood there and watched as the rebellion was authoritatively put down. The people knew beyond doubt that Moses was indeed the chosen prophet of God and he was to be listened to and obeyed.

When the same thing occurred in Acts 5, our unchangeable God (Mal. 3:6) dealt with the problem in the same way. The Spirit-filled apostles could not be deceived. They were indeed "guided into all truth." They obviously did not "speak on their own authority" but it was the Holy Spirit speaking through them. As Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were put to death, so Ananias and Sapphira were destroyed. As Israel learned that Moses was to be respected and obeyed, the brethren in Jerusalem learned the apostles were to be respected and obeyed. "So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things... Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly" (Acts 5:11-13). That is, no one else in the church dared to exalt himself ("join") to the leadership position that the apostles occupied. This was the beginning of the church viewing the apostles as special men.

Closing Observations

This story reminds us that men who claim to be apostles today are only deceivers. They lack the proper credentials (cf. Rev. 2:2). If someone were to lie to a Mormon "apostle" he would be "lying to men, not to God." A Mormon "apostle" would not know someone was lying to them and the liar would certainly not die a miraculous death as we read in Acts 5. In fact, men have done this very thing. The Mormon "apostles" are as easily deceived as any other man on earth - proving they are not inspired, nor inerrant, nor "guided by the Spirit."

As a closing point, notice the severe discipline did not prevent anyone from obeying the gospel. It had the opposite effect. "Believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women" (Acts 5:14). The multitudes were themselves convinced that Peter and all the apostles spoke with the authority of heaven. They were indeed "guided by the Spirit." The credentials of the real apostles are impressive and cannot be duplicated by any man living today or in the future.

GREET ONE ANOTHER...

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

Greetings between strangers or acquaintances have always been a practice of civilized man. Even in uncivilized society men have always had ways of saluting one another. Some greetings we would find quite strange. For instance, the kiss in the days of the apostles was a common means of saluting someone. Even in this day and time in some societies the kiss is a common and usual way for people to greet one another. From time to time on TV we see men greeting each other by kissing one another on the cheeks, first on one side and then the other.

In this country if we should meet someone who greeted us in this way, we would find it strange and embarrassing. The handshake is the normal and common way of saluting one another here.

When the apostle Paul wrote to churches in his various letters (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thes. 5:26), "Greet one another with an holy kiss," the emphasis is on the word "holy" with regards to attitude. Paul did not have to teach Christians that they were to greet one another, but that their

greeting should be in the right way and with the proper attitude. It was only normal for them to greet one another, but he instructed them to have a holy attitude in their salutation. One can readily see that the kiss greeting could be easily abused by a sensual person, or could be given in an erotic way. The inspired writer taught Christians to avoid this. Such a thing would be completely out of order for any child of God. So the apostle always qualified his statement by calling it a "holy" kiss. He was not saying kiss one another (for this was a common practice), but that the greeting was to be a holy greeting.

In Paul's instructions to the churches he was not binding the method of salutation. Rather he was telling them that their greeting was to be done in a right way. The word "holy" in the Greek is "*hagios*," meaning "pure, morally blameless." So whatever customary salutation or greeting is used, it must be done in holiness.

Today in many places in the world the handshake is the accepted way to greet one another.

The salutation should be genuine and a gesture from the heart. It should be prompted by love and friendship among the children of God. However, many times it is marred by a sour disposition or a rotten attitude, which is certainly not holy. Nay, far from it. It is amazing how much a handshake tells on a person. It can say, "I really love you as my fellow Christian, my brother or sister in Christ." It can also say, "I want to get acquainted with you and be your friend." On the other hand it can say, "I'm mad at you and I have no desire to shake your hand." Or it can say, "I'm mad at the world, and I don't want to shake hands with anyone." It can also say, "I'm mad at my husband or my wife (as the case may be) and I want everyone to know I am upset." Such a childish attitude as this is very unChristian, to say the least. And most people don't care to know it, anyway. That is your business. Keep it to yourself.

Congregations which are made up of friendly loving people are a source of encouragement to one another, and have a tendency to draw people to them. When visitors attend the services of such a congregation, they are impressed and are encouraged to come again. They are more likely to want to be a part of such a group of Christians. They feel like people care for each other, and they may feel they themselves have a need for such love and concern. On the other hand when strangers come to the services and they are ignored or shunned by uncaring and unfriendly members of the church, it can cause them to never want to return. Then we may have lost an opportunity to save a soul. Sometimes members of the church are selective about shaking hands. They choose who they will and will not greet for reasons best known to themselves. **This is wrong.** The Bible teaches in no uncertain terms, "**If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors**" (Jas. 2:9). Also, some members never meet or greet a visitor because they are so busy with their close friends or relatives. Some people never make an effort to welcome a new person to let them know how glad we are that they have come to the services. They are too busy doing their own thing to think about what is best for the church and how they can be a source of encouragement to others. One may not have the ability to teach publicly, wait on the table, or even to lead a song, but everyone, man and woman, boy and girl, can all show an attitude of friendliness.

Recently we attended a service of a sister congregation. The people were so friendly and let us know how glad they were to see us and welcomed us to their service. It was very

impressive. It made us feel good and we were glad we went. This is the way it should be. On the other hand we have been to services at different places and had to make people speak. This leaves a bad taste in a visitor's mouth. It can make an outsider or a weak Christian have no desire to ever go there again.

Jesus said, "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. 5:46, 47). **We are commanded to greet one another as Christians in a friendly and holy way. And, more than that, we are also taught to salute others as well.** Some people don't know why they don't have friends. The wise man, Solomon said, "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly" (Prov. 18:24). If you want to have friends and have people like you and want to be around you, act like it. Christians need to train their children, by word as well as by example, to be friendly with others. In this way their children will always be surrounded by friends as they grow to adulthood, and they will have a good Christian influence on their peers. And when they become adults in the church they will have no difficulty being friendly with others. **Remember, no one in his right mind enjoys being around unfriendly people.**

Let us consider this lesson well and make up our minds as individuals that we are going to do our part to make our home congregation the most friendly congregation in the brotherhood. Let us lay aside all grudges and hard feelings that may exist, and behave ourselves as Christians. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:12-14). The apostle Paul wrote, **Take heed unto thyself,** and to the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:16).

GREASY GRACE

BY BRETT HICKEY

What subject has more impact on our approach to Scripture than the bond between grace and law? Our understanding here colors our views on everything from salvation and worship to fellowship and daily living. So it should be no surprise that some hold so tenaciously to their slanted views on grace. Fighting for religious "tolerance" and compromise—within the church and without hinges on the distortion of these grand doctrines.

Grace is mercy in action. The word "grace" is found 150 times in the Bible. So, grace is not a bad word to be avoided or despised. At the same time, a regard for "law" is no work of the devil. The word "law" is defined as "an authoritative rule; Divine will, command or precept" "A rule or principle that must be obeyed." Phrases like "the law of Christ" and "the perfect law of liberty" suggest respect for law; Scriptures like 2 Tim. 2:5 demand reverence. In this verse, Paul warns that the athlete is not crowned unless he "strives lawfully."

So why are these pitted against each other? Some confusion comes from attaching mystical, fanciful ideas to the word "grace." If we associate grace with more familiar, concrete words like goodwill, loving kindness and favor, we may be less prone to develop superstitious ideas about grace. Another error that leads to lopsidedness is the lumping together and

wholesale disposal of Old Testament obligations like the Sabbath and circumcision with New Testament mandates like baptism and the scriptural observance of the Lord's supper.

The denominational doctrine of grace is as dangerous as it is popular, eroding or at least blurring the line drawn by Scripture between right and wrong. It is as if our religious friends read "grease" where we read "grace." They are not content with the Biblical account of God's amazing kindness, good will and desire that all come to repentance. No, they are looking for something slippery. In their mind grace means it is impossible for sin to stick to the sinner. Greasy grace also means an end to consequences, while Biblical grace honors truth and consequences.

We Are Debtors

While Jesus did fully pay our sin-debt (Rom. 4:4), the Christian still has responsibility. Jesus harmonizes grace and obligation in Lk. 17:7-10 where the original word for "debt" is translated "duty." The message: work is required of God's servants, but no matter *what* we do or *how much* we do, we remain "unprofitable servants." After Pentecost, some form of the word "debt" is used dozens of times to suggest our lingering obligations. In Romans, Paul repeatedly refers to the debts we have as Christians. He says, "I am a debtor" (1:14), "We are debtors" (8:12) and "they are debtors" (15:27), exploding the fashionable myths that salvation is only about what God does and that God is indifferent toward doctrine and morality.

Righteousness

As for earning salvation, "*our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*" (Is. 64:6). In a similar vein, Paul wrote in Phil. 3:9, "*...not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith...*" Because so many Jews sought salvation in attempting to lawlessly follow the law, they saw Jesus as nothing more than an irritation. Paul never minimized the importance of obedience; rather, he reminds the church that without faith in Christ, obedience is worthless.

The Jews knew God was righteous, but they failed to submit to God's standard (Rom. 10:3). There is ample evidence from Acts 10:35 that Peter too recognized the human role in salvation: "*...whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.*" The apostles also speak of "*the way of righteousness*" and "*instruction in righteousness,*" but there is no passage more plain on personal accountability than 1 Jn. 3:7-10 "*...he that doeth righteousness is righteous...whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God...*" Clearly, God is concerned about what man does or neglects to do.

Obedience

There is nothing obscure in the New Testament about the demand for obedience and the consequences of disobedience. This makes the persistent protests both fascinating and perplexing. Jesus, the perfect example "*...learned obedience by the things he suffered, And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*" (Heb. 5:8-9). Again, the Lord expects His people to "*bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*" (2 Cor. 10:5). There is no straddling the fence. It is not a matter of whether we obey, but who we obey. For Rom. 6:16 teaches us "*...his servants ye are to whom you obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*" If we choose to obey the truth, we "*purify our souls*" (1 Pet. 1:22); if we do not, "indignation and wrath" are our portion.

Commandments

The New Testament stress on obedience leads one to believe

that "the faith" (Jude 3) includes concrete commandments. Need we be reminded that we do not obey suggestions, promises or facts; we obey commands, laws and the Divine will. The idea that the Biblical doctrine of grace minimizes or eliminates commands from the Christian system is untenable. Jesus weighs in with His final message of Matthew's gospel: "teach them to observe all things that I have commanded you." Baffled during His ministry by how easily His followers separated allegiance from obedience, Jesus asked, "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?" The rest of the New Testament shows that the apostles got the point. The apostle Paul injects inspired gravity into doctrinal matters considered irrelevant by many today: "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." The beloved disciple even more abruptly reprimands those downplaying obedience under the cloak of grace. John writes "...we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar..."

Without honing in on any references to "the law of Christ" or "the perfect law of liberty," the pure heart can see that the Spirit's teaching on grace does not dispense with all law (Heb. 7:12). Instead, we see that although we stumble and fall, by God's grace the Christian has the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of forgiveness through Jesus' blood. God's word provides a formula to access this power after baptism by repentance, confession and prayer.

THE AUTONOMY OF A LOCAL CONGREGATION

continued from page 1

plan the work was set up on and thrives on to this present day. When Don King went to the Philippines he taught and practiced the same thing and that work is lively and growing to this day. When Ron Courter went to Zimbabwe he was an is an autonomist to the core. That work continues under the same scriptural system. We could go on with examples in Mexico, Central America, Zambia, along with other countries in Africa, and other nations where work has begun. Each one who shares in this work must continue to these scriptural practices.

Remember, brethren, when Hymenaeus and Alexander were speaking evil things to and about the brethren, I do not think that, if consulted, they would have given a good report about the Apostle Paul or Timothy, 1 Timothy 1:20.

The Lord willing I plan to write another article on this subject about church autonomy and how it must be maintained in the distribution of the contribution.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

Is Benny Hinn really "the great power of God" (as falsely claimed for Simon the Sorcerer Acts 8:10) or is this a case of people engaging in mutual deception? CNN once did a documentary on Benny Hinn's ministry, and during the telecast admissions were made by the so-called faith healer that should be an eye opener to anyone who is seeking the truth: (1) Benny Hinn admitted that not all who claim to be healed in his services are actually healed. He explained that it took a good six months to find out if the healing was real or imaginary. (2) He estimated 50% of those who claim a healing in his services are making a false claim. (3) He said that if only one person per service was really healed, it would be a great accomplishment. (4) Finally, he reasoned that if he were

simply giving people hope, he thought he was doing a good work.

Think about it. Benny Hinn was admitting in so many words that his ministry is built upon deceptions and misleading claims. Why do people continue to follow someone who has confessed that he really doesn't have the power to heal people? The Bible records of our Savior in Matt. 9:35: "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people." How many people would believe in Christ if the Lord's miraculous power had been the failure that Benny Hinn's ministry represents? Our Lord's miracles are recorded in the Scriptures that we might believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 20: 30-31). However, if the testimony of Scripture was that Jesus only healed 50% of those He laid His hands upon (with the other 50% of claims for healing proving to be false six months later), our faith in Christ would rest upon a shaky foundation and people would refuse to believe in Him!

There is the difference between Christ's ministry and the modus operandi of modern-day faith healers. If Benny Hinn has truly received the baptism of the Holy Spirit like Peter and the other apostles did on Pentecost, his ministry should mirror what is recorded of Peter in Acts 5:16: "There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." When men swallow hook, line, and sinker the faith healer's attempt to explain away his failures, it is proof that people are still "deceiving, and being deceived."

The second example has to do with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons). I have seen one of their commercials on television that really gets under my skin because it is designed to deceive people and mislead the unsuspecting. In the commercial they offer to send a free Bible to anyone upon request. While a family is reading the Bible together, the following statement is made: "The Bible is a powerful witness that Jesus is the Christ." What is deceiving about that? Well, they speak of the Bible in such glowing terms that you would think that they love the Bible and have a great respect for it.

Don't be deceived! Instead of revering the Bible, these people actually hold the Scriptures in contempt. Here is what *The Book of Mormon* says: "And because my words shall hiss forth—many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible...Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible... Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written" (2 Nephi 29:3,6, & 10).

There you have it! According to *The Book of Mormon* you are a fool if you believe in the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures. That is their real attitude toward the Bible. Joseph Smith declared: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe *The Book of Mormon* to be the word of God" [*Pearl of Great Price*, P. 59]. Notice how their main prophet questions the veracity of the Scriptures. Bear in mind, of course, that they presume to tell us where the Bible is and is not correctly translated. The commercial is misleading in its attempt to leave the impression that the Bible and *The Book of Mormon* are compatible. I will close with a quotation from Latayne Colvett Scott (an ex-Mormon): "The Mormon church does not encourage Bible scholarship by the average member. They have too much to

lose if their members learn to understand and love the Bible...Mormons call the Bible corrupted and misleading" [*The Mormon Mirage*, P. 99]. Deception is still at large in the world!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New 2001-2002 Church Directory

I am ready to take orders for the new 2001-2002 directory: *Where The Saints Assemble*. They are \$2.50 each plus postage. Book Rate postage estimates are: 1-5 copies (\$1.50), 6-copies (\$2.50), 11-15 copies (\$3.50), 16-20 copies (\$4.50), 21-25 copies (\$5.50). For numbers over 25, just read the amount on the postage label and send that amount. Orders may be placed by email to: papagreg@aol.com or by regular mail to: Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621

North Area Stops Midweek Services

The north area Sacramento CA congregation is temporarily suspending the public midweek service end of June 2001 due to illness and job conflicts of the male members. Please post this announcement in the *OPA* as soon as possible along with our congregational phone number (916-923-5211) for any questions or further information. Thanks, Jim Prater

Tennessee Labor Day Meeting

Hosted by Chapel Grove Church of Christ. Theme is Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Evangelist is Phillip Prince. Wed.-Fri. August 29-31 7:00 P.M.; Sat. Sept. 1, 10:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.; Sun. Sept. 2, 10:00 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. Contact Dwight Patton at 931-829-2485 or Ed Daniel 931-964-3458 for additional information and accommodations.

Brethren, Please Read

The Moscow Church

March 19, 2001 - This is to inform anyone traveling to Russia who may have plans to worship with the congregation in Moscow. In September of 2000, Alan Bonifay and James Cating met with Sergei who preaches in the congregation in Moscow. Sergei expressed his views that he did not believe it to be wrong to use instrumental music in the worship of the church. Sergei seemed unmoved by the scriptures presented by Alan and James. When Alan arrived back in the states he informed some brethren of the situation in Moscow. Kostya, a preacher from Michurinsk, was contacted and sent to study with Sergei. It was hoped that this study and visit would have fixed the problem.

In January of 2001, Mike Criswell and I (George Battey) were in Tula, Russia and had Boris from Tula contact Sergei to arrange for a time and place that we could meet together and visit. Sergei refused to meet with us saying something to the effect of, "I know what they want to talk about and I have no interest in those things. I do not believe it is necessary to follow the word of God strictly." Needless to say, we were shocked. I came home and again informed brethren of the situation.

On March 2, 2001 I received a letter from Boris in Tula. Boris writes as follows:

Last month we had a chance to talk with Sergei in Moscow, he is firm in his view. Then Yaroslav and Valery went to see him. No good news from there! I was in Moscow and met David? Looks like he's doing ok. We discussed the Moscow problem and probably the best way meet Moscow Church

members without Sergei and explain the problem. If I ask who makes collection in Moscow Church, you will never guess — THAT WAS SERGEI'S LITTLE DAUGHTER!

What this means is that Sergei is still firm in advocating instrumental music and he is using his daughter in the services to take up the collection.

The brethren in Tula have plans to meet with the other members of the Moscow congregation and speak with them about the issues of digression which Sergei is advocating. Brother Jerry Cutter recently returned from Russia and may have more up-to-date information. I know he was hoping to meet with the brethren in Moscow to study with them. As Jerry reported, "the leadership in Moscow is weak." We are hoping brother Sergei will meet with these good brethren and the problems resolved permanently. However, until we hear back from brother Jerry or the Tula brethren, we cannot recommend the Moscow congregation to any of our brethren. We know several from the brotherhood travel to Russia from time to time. If these matters are important to you, we would recommend that you call ahead and investigate the situation before making definite plans to stop for worship in Moscow. Keep in mind that Sergei has changed his views several times and seems to be unpredictable.—George Battey, Alan Bonifay, Mike Criswell and James Cating

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

Nichols-Waggoner—On August 12, 2000 in a simple, but beautiful setting Matthew Nichols and Melonie Lynn Waggoner made their wedding vows in the presence of God and a host of fellow Christians and friends and relatives in the Leawood Village meeting place at Joplin, MO. They are both strong Christians and I was happy to be asked to officiate. Matthew is the older son of Nick and Sally Nichols and the grandson of Carl Nelson Nichols, Jr. and Earlene of Anderson, MO. Melonie is the daughter of Tom and Pattie Waggoner of Arkansas. We wish for this fine young couple a long and happy life together in the Lord's service. They have recently moved to the Kansas City area to attend Missouri University and are members of the Stony Point congregation.—Paul O. Nichols

OUR DEPARTED

FOYIL—Rebecca Lynn (Becky) Foyil was born November 19, 1961 to Jim and Vera Winchester in Lodi, CA. She entered into her rest early Saturday morning, June 12 at the age of 39. On August 8, 1982 she was married to Mike Foyil. They made their home in Pine Grove, CA. Becky was a remarkable woman in many ways. In 1980 she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. During the next 5 years she underwent 9 surgeries. Through all of this she never lost her faith in God. In fact, she was able to encourage so many others who also had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Her struggle with this disease and the wonderful attitude she was able to maintain touched the hearts of all of us who knew her. Becky was baptized into Christ by her grandfather, James L. Winchester in 1976. She was faithful unto death. Our special thanks should go out to Mike, Jimmy and Vera for their very special examples in how to be faithful while enduring many disappointments & heartaches. Their care for Becky was wonderful to behold. Alan Bonifay, Don King and I attempted to speak words of comfort at the memorial service.—Bennie T. Crier

MONTGOMERY—Sister Mildred V. Montgomery was born January 26, 1915. She died February 19, 2001 at the age of 86. Mildred was the daughter of L.N. and Rosie Smith of Brookhaven, MS, where she lived her entire life. She was buried in the small cemetery beside the Church of Christ at Hillcrest where she attended worship so long and so faithfully. Mildred was married over 67 years to Earnest Montgomery, a true gentle-man and a Christian, who cared for her with devotion in the declining health of her later years. Other survivors include their daughter, Elaine, who is married to Claude Bennett Smith, two grandsons, Scott and Steve Smith, and two great-grandchildren, Laura and Riley Smith. A large crowd of friends and relatives attended the services at Brookhaven Funeral Home. Brothers John Smith and James Orten attempted to comfort the family.

HATFIELD—Ruth Hatfield was born July 12, 1912 in Monroe County, IN, to Otis and Gertrude (Galyan) Whitaker. She died at home May 12, 2001. Her husband Cloudy Hatfield preceded her in death March 10, 1979. She met for worship with the North Bedford Church. Sister Hatfield was a homemaker and was a former worker for the Sarkes Tarzian Corp. in Bloomington, IN. Surviving her are two sons: Lewis and Joe; seven daughters: Martha Calabrese, Clarissa Hawk, Mary Lou Trisler, Karen Sue Hearth, Rebecca Robertson, Nancy Smith, and Connie Wilson. A brother William Whitehall. There are 27 grandchildren, 40 great-grandchildren, and 11 great-great-grandchildren. Sister Hatfield served the Lord faithfully and could be counted on to be present when the church met. Always smiling and cheerful made her an encouragement to young and older alike. She planned her memorial service, designating the preachers, and the subject material and songs. Brother Walter Hunter and I spoke words to remind of the past and prepare for the future.—Barney Owens

WARREN—Elizabeth (Lizzie) Warren was born June 4, 1917 at Big Sandy, TX the daughter of Elisha and Sarah (Greer) Mackey. She died May 10, 2001 at home. Her husband Charlie Warren Sr. who preceded her in death March 7, 1993. Mourning her passing are four sons: Earl, Ronald, Charlie Jr. and Doug. Three daughters: Dolores Harcrow, Elaine Thompson, and Ruby Jordan. She left two sisters Valdetero and Bessie Fisher. There are also 19 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren. Many brethren and sisters in Christ and a multitudes of friends. She assembled with the church at Golden, OK. Lissie preached her sermon while she lived and a fine one it was. She was a, homemaker and did it in the finest opening her home to many a preacher and spreading her table for any who might happen in to dine. She loved to “talk-Bible” being an avid reader of that book. It was my pleasure to spend many hours of joy in her (and Bro. Charlie’s) home. From the first time we met, they treated me like a son. I loved her dearly. I spoke words of comfort and warning to the assembly with the help of Bro. William St. John. “Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies...Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”—Barney Owens

NUNNALLY—On May 4, 2001 many friends and loved ones gathered to remember Hugh Campbell Nunnally. Hugh was born on June 13, 1927 and passed from this life on the morning of April 27, 2001 in a hospital not far from his home. Hugh had recently celebrated 50 years of marriage with his wife Lottie whom he married in April of 1951. He is survived by

his wife Lottie, four sons, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Hugh and Lottie also had one daughter who preceded him in death as an infant. Hugh was a long time resident of southern California. While living there he was a member of the Church at Covina and worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad. After retiring Hugh moved to Manteca to be closer to his four sons and attended the congregation at Manteca faithfully. Hugh had an amazing relationship with his family. He was especially close with his sons who considered him their model for life in many ways. I knew Hugh to be a quiet man who enjoyed a good marriage, loved his family, and most of all, loved the Lord’s church. At the service Jimmy Bradford led the congregational singing. Don Rowland, who is my grandfather, and I endeavoured to speak words of comfort and warning to those present There was also another service for Hugh held in southern California where Hugh was to be buried. Don McCord spoke at that service.—Matt Trent

TEEL—Recently I received the sad news from my sister, Olive Belle Teel, that her husband and my brother-in-law, and my brother-in-Christ, Kenneth Teel, had met his appointment with death. Olive Belle advised me not to come since it had been only a short time ago that we had visited with him, but I could not heed her admonition, for Kenneth was a man much admired by me, since I had know him since he began to court Olive Belle and through their fifty-five years of marriage. He taught me many valuable lessons in life by word of mouth and example. Thank God, though absent in the body, he is now free of his trouble, trials, pain and sorrow, all of which were his lot over the past several years. He had the debilitating inflammatory disease of Lupus which eventually resulted in his death. A large crowd of family, friends, and brethren and sisters in Christ came that day to honor this beloved Christian man. In all probability his death will be reported by brother Gary Cannon who preached his funeral, but since I did not get to express my feelings for him at the funeral, I wanted to do so to the brotherhood at large, for many of you knew and loved him. Though he did not hear me, when I viewed his body at the end of the service. I said, “Good-bye, I’ll see you in heaven,” and I sincerely believe that I will. I pray that God will bless his wife, Olive Belle, and his children, Charlene, Mark, Chris, and Tommy. I will miss him, but having known him will be an inspiration for me to keep on keeping on.—C.A. Smith

LEE—Brother Robert E. Lee was born August 26, 1912 at Pinion Mountain, New Mexico. He passed away January 21, at his home in Manteca, Calif. Robert was preceded in death by a brother, George Lee, of Calif. and a sister, Ursie Moseley of New Mexico. He leaves at his passing, his Christian wife Inez, and six children, Melvin Lee of Manteca, Bonny Harris of Manteca CA, Robert E. Lee Jr., Springfield, MO, Donna Stanley, Placerville, CA, Delmer Lee, Forrest Grove, OR, Terry Lee, of Manteca. One brother, John Lee, Edmond, OK, who is 102 yrs of age, one sister, Evelyn Franklin, Jackson, CA. He leaves 18 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren. Bro. Robert was a member of the Lord’s church for 71 yrs. He and Inez were married over 65 yrs. What an example for us all! Robert and Inez’s home was a joy to be in, always gracious, hospitable, loving, for kindness was a chief attribute of this couple. He brought his children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, for all are Christians, along with most of his grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He has left a great heritage. It can be said of Robert, what God said of

Abraham. "For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment;" To know this good man was to love him. His heart was pure and his life was an example of what it means to be a Christian. Inez cared for him in a loving way, for he was bedfast for over two years at home, where he passed away. The family express their sincere thankfulness for all the cards, letters, calls, e-mails and every expression of kindness from brethren and friends. Being dead, Robert will still speak for many years to come through his children, and every good work he accomplished for the cause of our Lord. May God bless Inez and all the relations, including brethren who will miss his presence and influence. Robert is buried in beautiful Cherokee Memorial Park, in Lodi. Congregational singing was lead by Ivan Costa, and it was beautiful. This writer was honored to speak words of comfort along with bro. Jimmy Winchester at the memorial service.—Richard De Gough



Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953. June 11, 2001—Our work with the Oliverhurst, CA congregation continues. Recently a young couple was baptized into Christ. They have three children. In April I had the privilege of speaking at the Chapel Grove congregation three times. I also participated in several studies while there. The congregation had begun to look at several male members with the possibility of ordaining them as deacons. The congregation is really growing and developing more teachers. It was a pleasure to be able to visit with Fred Orten in his home and talk with him about the church and the home over there. He is one of the elders of Chapel Grove. His mind is still good. His wife, Zula, passed away a few days after I returned to California. They and their family have been an inspiration to so many in the Lord's church. What a great sister in the church Zula had been over the years! I have recently preached at Brundage Ln. church in Bakersfield, the Lodi congregation, at the Yuba City congregation, at Fremont. God bless all.

Douglas T. Hawkins, Rt 1 Box 717, Mt Vernon, KY 40456, 606-676-0727, hawkins@kih.net, May 15, 2001—I just closed a meeting in Washington, OK. The crowds were not what we all hoped, but we were the 5th meeting in the area within the last month. I enjoyed my stay at Mark and Faye McAlisters. They are old friends. Several preachers from the area came and I appreciate them. It was especially good to work with Brandon Stephens. He and his new wife Kelley are enjoyable to be with. Brandon will definitely do a great deal of good wherever he labors. I was with the congregation at 18th St. in Huntington, WV the last part of April. It was delightful to be with the congregation there. There are many fine people in that area. In June, I plan to be with the congregation in Hartwell, AR (June 10-17) and then in West Point, GA in July. The meeting in GA will end the 4th Sunday in July. Its 5 days. Note that our address will be changing soon. Lori and I are locating to the Somerset area, a community about 25 miles from where we now live. All is as good as possible here in this area. These are wonderful people to know and work with.

Lord bless you all.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, June 5—At 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas City, we continue to plant and water, depending on the Lord to give the increase. A woman with whom I have been studying was recently baptized along with her boyfriend. Since moving to the Kansas City area we have had many opportunities for home studies with various individuals—more than any place we have ever lived. And nearly all with nonChristians have resulted in baptisms. I have also been privileged to study with many members of the church on various subjects. I don't know that we have ever lived where so many people have shown an interest in knowing more about the scriptures. Recently two young teenage girls came to our door and wanted to study a couple of Bible subjects. And for over a year now several of us have been getting together in private studies on Saturday night. Presently we are considering the book of Revelation and we are learning together. At the time of this report we are in a good meeting with Kevin Presley of Dothan, AL doing the preaching. We appreciate his strong stand for the truth and his bold and fearless preaching of the gospel. May his tribe increase. The Lord bless all righteous efforts everywhere.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, June 11—Billy Dickinson did the preaching at our last meeting here at home and he did a superb job. We just closed a meeting at Allen, Texas, which resulted in one confession of faults. We enjoyed our stay with the Gary Robinson family during the meeting, and we appreciate their hospitality very much. I've also conducted meetings at Stockton, CA and Springfield, MO. Both meetings were well-attended. We had visitors from the community, good support from surrounding congregations, and a large number of preachers at both meetings. I stayed with long-time friends James and Loretta Mason at Stockton, and Ronny and Alfreda Wade at Springfield. One man was baptized after the conclusion of the meeting in Stockton. We have had three baptisms recently here at home. Lord willing, I'll begin a meeting Wednesday night in London, Kentucky, and then we look forward to the Fourth of July meetings. We continue to solicit your prayers that the Lord will bless our efforts to His glory.

Joe Hisle, Rt A Box 188, Ada, OK. June 12—I never cease to be amazed how time flies away. "They" said it would be that way but I don't think "they" make us believe it when we are young. It is already the middle of June and we are well into our schedule for the year. The meeting at Odom, Mo. closed with two baptisms for which we are very thankful. From Odom we traveled to Pansey, AL. It was a treat to be with the Pansey folks. The meeting was well supported by the congregation and sister congregations in the area. I was glad to have the association of Bro. Kevin Presley who works with the church at Dothan. Next we were in White Bluff, TN where we enjoyed the hospitality of Bro. and Sis. M. R. Kimbro. The meeting was excellent. The brethren there are enthusiastic and zealous about the Lord's work. As we are all aware it is difficult to get the world to church today but sadly it is also difficult to get the church to church. This was not the case at White Bluff. If I am not mistaken, every member was at the services every time! This was a most pleasant experience for me. We are presently with the Trussville, AL congregation staying at the home of Steve and Angie Wallace. As we would

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

If the date near your name and address reads 7-01 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

expect... Darlene tells me the good sisters... the brotherhood spoil me and I need to come home on occasion for a "reality check." At this time I am glad to have a young man traveling with me who aspires to preach the gospel. Bro. Brad Shockley from Buffalo, MO is a talented young preacher, from whom we can expect much good in the future. I am looking forward to a short break for the Sulphur fourth of July meeting. Please pray for us.

Kevin W. Presley, 1604 Verde Trail, Dothan, AL 36303 (334) 678-8999, June 14, 2001—Thus far the spring and summer have been an encouraging time in the Lord's work. In May, it was my privilege to be with the church at Fremont, CA. We had a fine meeting with good crowds and good interest. The church there has a bright future ahead having so many young families. I made my home with Don and Pat King. As always, we had a good visit and they couldn't have been any more welcoming. The same is true of all of the brethren there. Melvin and Lanette Lee from Manteca pulled their trailer over and attended several nights which was a help to us. I returned home this week from a successful meeting in KS City, KS (79th and Kansas). Bro. Paul Nichols works with this congregation and his influence is easily seen. They are an exemplary congregation in many ways. They are dedicated to the work and to upholding the truth. They demand sound preaching and they are supportive when they hear it. Three different men either left work each evening or took their vacation in order to accommodate the meeting. Brethren, that is the type of commitment that it takes to make a church strong. They have an abundance of strong young people as well. One was baptized and two confessed wrongs during the meeting. I made my home with Paul and Wilma where they always roll out the red carpet for their guests. I thank the brethren in both places for their exceeding kindness. It has been good to listen to others preach lately, We enjoyed a week of good preaching from Joe Hisle out at Pansey. He laid it on the line, which is to be expected from him. I also heard Barney Owens last evening at Columbus, GA. He was also in fine form. Here at home, things continue to do well. Two weeks ago, a formerly digressive man came and made a confession and has been faithful to attend and bring visitors. We hope for good things within his family. Lord willing, the summer months take me to the annual Lebanon meeting and then on to Flintville, TN, July 18-22; Wichita Falls, TX (Crestview), July 29 - August 5; and Mountain Grove, MO, August 12-19. We hope to see many of you there. The paper has been very timely. I especially appreciate the articles on church autonomy. This is a forgotten principle among some brethren. While we all love and value the brotherhood, many focus so on the brotherhood that they pay little attention to what goes on at home. If we would build strong, uncompromising congregations at home, then we would naturally have a strong, uncompromising brotherhood. Think about it.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail:old_paths@juno.com, June 15—The Memorial Day

meeting at Turlock, CA closed with 6 confessions of wrong and 1 baptism. Crowds were very good with a number of states and area congregations represented. We stayed with Richard and Glenda DeGough the last weekend and were treated royally. It was good to visit with them again. The congregation had worked hard to be ready for the meeting and their work was evident. We appreciated a number of preachers who came and helped in the meeting also. The home church recently enjoyed a good meeting with Kevin Presley. He preached the gospel with all he had and the congregation is the better for his having been with us. We appreciate the area congregations for their attendance as well. We look forward to a few days at the Lebanon 4th Of July meeting and then a meeting at the West Chester congregation in Cincinnati, Ohio beginning July 8. Recently, Pat and I enjoyed going to Turkey (Asia Minor in the New Testament) and visiting many places we read about in the Bible. We went to Ephesus where Paul spent a great deal of time and where, for two years (Acts 19:9,10) he taught each day in the school of Tyrannus. It is believed this may have been located along the street leading down to the ancient port. We walked that street and likely stood within feet of where the grand Apostle preached many sermons. It was a moving experience for me to think I may have been so near. Yet, I could not but think that we have Paul's writings which he must have also preached in that very place. We often read them but many pay little attention and do not obey. How very sad! Ephesus is slowly being uncovered and one wonders if, perhaps, the very place where the church met may someday be found. Pray for us in the work.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Road, Hughson, CA 95326—Our annual Memorial Day meeting with Don King was a great success, with six confessions and one baptism. Don preached with conviction, very plainly, edifying the Church and warning the lost. Crowds were consistently good, with the best of cooperation from brethren near and far. Several hundred were in attendance the last weekend. We were blessed with several gospel preachers from the state, along with brother Cullen Smith, and Marcos Ayers of Texas, and Louisiana. Young people made up at least half the crowd, and their conduct was commendable throughout. We were blessed with the teaching of young preachers and teachers at the Saturday morning service. The singing was beautiful and we received reports that it could be heard two blocks from the meeting house. I have a "nerve entrapment" in my right arm and hand, causing some deterioration. I thank all the brethren everywhere for their concern, prayers, cards, letters, and calls. The doctors assure me that things will be right after an operation June 19th. Our appreciation to Don for preaching sound doctrine, and his choice of subjects that were very timely. We look forward to next year when Ronny Wade comes to preach. Brethren, plan to be with us then, or at every opportunity you have. May God continue to bless the brotherhood throughout the world.

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) ⁵And 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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, AUGUST 2001

NO. 8

WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY BAPTISM?

BY BARNEY OWENS

As Christians seek to convert others to Christ, it is necessary to encourage them to be baptized. One cannot be saved unless he is baptized, even as Jesus said "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:16). Once the one pointed to Christ is able to see the importance of baptism, a common response is "what is wrong with my baptism?"

The response comes from those affiliated with a religious organization, which cannot be found in the New Testament. It demonstrates a lack of understanding the difference in baptism as revealed in scripture and so-called baptisms clutched in the doctrines of men. Such confusion is not peculiar to our time; in fact, there was a time of confusion in Apostolic days.

In the 18th chapter of Acts we are introduced to Apollos, a man with a knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures and from the evidence quite a preacher. He was preaching in the city of Ephesus, when Aquila and Priscilla, a couple whom Paul had left there while he returned to Jerusalem, heard him. Apollos was preaching "the baptism of John." These Christians (husband and wife) took him unto themselves and explained to him the will of God completely.

John's Baptism was to prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He preached the Messiah was soon to come and establish His kingdom, which John said was "at hand." John was beheaded in Matthew the 14th chapter, so did not see the kingdom that he had preached about so fervently. Jesus promised that the apostles would be given the "keys to the kingdom" in Matthew the 16th chapter. These "keys" were first used in Acts 2. From that time we never read about the kingdom as something in the future, rather men were in it (Col. 1:13, Rev. 1:9, etc.).

After Apollos was shown the truth, he went to Corinth, Acts 19:1. In those days, Paul returned to Ephesus. He encountered some disciples. Thinking they were Christians, he wondered if an apostle had "laid hands upon them," enabling them to receive gifts of the Holy Ghost? Such laying on of hands was reserved for apostles as revealed in Acts 8:14-17. These people were startled, as they had never heard of the Holy Ghost. Immediately Paul knew something was amiss with their baptism causing him to ask, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" One who is baptized into Christ must necessarily have heard of the Holy Ghost, as Jesus commanded people to be baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Mt. 28:19). The response to Paul's question "unto

what were you baptized," was "unto John's baptism."

Well, it is not difficult to see these were in the same position of Apollos and had need of understanding the complete will of God. Paul explained that John's Baptism was limited to a certain time (until Christ was revealed) and now we are under the commission of Christ and are to be baptized in His name. Immediately they were baptized in the Lord's name. Paul laid his hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost.

Later Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus declaring "there is one baptism" (Eph. 4:4-5). One baptism that is acceptable to the Lord and although these had been immersed two times, there is but ONE BAPTISM authorized and recognized by the Lord.

Some today have been baptized as these people were—a baptism without the Lord's authorization. However, unlike these people, they are not as easily convinced to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Look now with me at some of the baptisms accepted by men where the title question is asked.

I WAS BAPTIZED AS A BABY:

"WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY BAPTISM?"

There are several things that can be said regarding this practice, not the smallest of which is the practice is not one time mentioned in the New Testament. A couple of things are worthy of our noting presently.

1. The practice is forbidden because the requirements for baptism can not be complied with by a baby. Those to be baptized must first believe. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:16). "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and 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...and they went down both into the water, both Phillip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." (Acts 8:36-38). There are other prerequisites (namely repentance of sin and confessing Christ); this however should suffice to show babies are not proper candidates for baptism. Babies cannot believe the gospel of Christ, cannot believe in Jesus as the Christ.

2. The practice sets aside New Testament teaching regarding the innocence of babies. Baptism is "for the remission of sins," or to "wash away sins" (Acts 2:38, 22:16). Jesus taught that men are to strive to be like children (Mt. 18:3, 19:14). Sin is not hereditary. There is no such thing as "original sin" being passed to newborn children.

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 8



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-10

What Is Wrong With My Baptism? 1
 Editorial 2
 Querist Column 3
 Church Autonomy & The Distribution Of Funds 3
 An Interesting Incident 4
 His Word Was In My Heart Like A Burning Fire .. 6
 It's The Message, Not The Messenger... 6

FROM THE FIELDS 11-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
 41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
 Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
 P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
 Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536
 A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
 periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
 Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.



Editorial

“THEY “PROTESTETH TOO MUCH, METHINKS”

By CARL M. JOHNSON

As I was surfing the Internet recently I was a little startled to find myself “written up” in a religious article entitled “*Doctrine of Christ in 2 John 9: Subjective or Objective Genitive?*” by Dallas Burdette. Burdette takes me to task for my interpretation of 2 John 9 in a February 1996 article I wrote for the OPA entitled “*Trojan Horse in the Church.*”

In the article I warned that the church had withstood many frontal assaults by outside foes through the years, but perhaps the most subtle and deadly attacks upon the church have come from within—which is analogous to the legendary tactic employed by the Greeks in attacking ancient Troy. I made reference to the late W. Carl Ketcherside who traveled throughout the United States in the 1960s and early 1970s conducting “unity” meetings and forums in which he and others pleaded for religious unity based upon a de-emphasis of doctrines concerning such things as the items of worship. I pointed out that this effort was a latter-day fruit of the theological movement known as modernism.

In an effort to give insight into Ketcherside’s rationale I added: “The Apostle John warns, ‘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’ (2 John 9). In an effort to harmonize his own position with John’s words Ketcherside argued that the expression ‘doctrine of Christ’ does not refer to all that Jesus taught personally and through His apostles, but it refers to teaching about the nature, or the deity of Christ only. By limiting the meaning of ‘doctrine of Christ’ in 2 John to teaching about the deity of Christ, Ketcherside and his supporters could extend open fellowship to all ‘sincere believers’ regardless of their doctrine and practice.”

Scholars of the Greek language, however, including W.E. Vine, M.R. Vincent, Alfred Plummer, A.T. Robertson, and J.H. Thayer unanimously agree that the expression “doctrine of Christ” in 2 John 9 refers not to the teaching concerning Christ, but to all the teachings of Christ Himself and His apostles (cf. Acts 2:42; 13:12; Matthew 7:28).

As Burdette takes issue with my words he writes: “Johnson, another one-cup and non-Sunday believer (sic), calls attention to unity meetings that Ketcherside and others conducted. He erroneously states that ‘Ketcherside argued that there are no doctrines other than the teachings concerning the person of Christ (that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah) that are serious enough to justify a break in fellowship among believers.’ Since Ketcherside sought to recapture the spirit of unity for which Jesus prayed, Johnson justifies his separation from Ketcherside through his citation of 2 John 9” (**Biblical Studies** 7-8).

Based on Burdette’s words, I may have been mistaken about Ketcherside’s belief that there are no doctrines other than the teachings concerning the person of Christ serious enough to justify a break in fellowship among believers. I am not mistaken, however, about Ketcherside’s belief that

continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Would you please explain the significance of the cup in the Lord's supper. (GA)

Answer: We are told in Mt. 26:27 that "Jesus took the cup." Some later versions say "he took a cup." Mark and Luke in their accounts of the institution of the supper agree with this rendering, as does the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:16 and 11:23-26. Every Greek lexicon of which I have knowledge places the word "cup" in Mt. 26:27 under literal usage. There is certainly no reason from the text for doing otherwise. Jesus took a literal cup. The cup he took, however, was not empty. It contained something. That something (fruit of the vine) was a representation of his blood (Mt. 26:28). The idea that the cup was the blood or the fruit of the vine is an attempt to prove that the fact that Jesus took one cup (container) has no significance. People who advance this argument conclude that since the cup is the blood, it doesn't matter how many containers are used to distribute the cup. Unfortunately for them their reasoning is greatly flawed. "Cup" is the name of a solid, not a liquid. Jesus never did call the "cup" his blood. Read the accounts in the Bible; it's just not there. When Jesus said "this is my blood of the new testament..." His reference was to the contents of the cup, the fruit of the vine. The disciples were to "drink ye all from it" i.e. they were to all drink out of or from the cup Jesus had given them. If we follow the example of Jesus, we will use only one cup, when we observe the communion. But does the cup have any significance other than the fact that Jesus used one cup? Let it first be remembered that since Jesus did not take or give thanks for an empty cup, whatever significance there is to the cup must be to the "cup containing," not just an empty cup. In Luke 22:20 Jesus said "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Paul in 1 Cor. 11:25 says "This cup is the New Testament in my blood." Just as the bread "is" or represents the body of Christ, and the fruit of the vine "is" or represents the blood of Christ, the cup containing fruit of the vine "is" or represents the new covenant. All three of these statements have a subject and predicate joined by the copula "is." A comparison is suggested by the usage of "is" and carries the meaning or idea of "represents." In all three statements there is a literal something under consideration. Bread, fruit of the vine, and cup are all literal. The Lord is not defining bread, fruit of the vine, or cup but merely telling what each represents. Someone is ready to respond by saying, "Do you mean to tell me that a literal cup can represent the New Testament?" Well, if literal bread can represent the body of Christ and literal fruit of the vine can represent the blood of Christ, why cannot a literal cup containing fruit of the vine represent the New Testament? The Lord and Paul both said it does. That settles the matter. Thayer says on page 15 of this Greek lexicon "This cup, containing wine, an emblem of blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood an emblem of the New Testament." "An emblem of blood" is an appositive and put in opposition to wine. It describes what "wine" is, i.e. an emblem of blood. Thus, just as the wine is an emblem of blood, so also the "cup containing wine" is an emblem of the New Testament. In my opinion, it is a mistake, when offering thanks for the

cup to say "we thank thee for this cup which is the New Testament and its contents, the fruit of the vine, which represent the blood of Christ." It is the "cup containing" that represents the New Testament, not the empty cup itself. The cup containing wine is significant. A beautiful picture should come to our mind when we commune. Bread, one loaf, representing the one physical body of our Lord who died for our sins. A cup containing wine reminding us of the blood shed for our sins and the one covenant sealed or ratified by that blood. Steak in the Lord's supper represents nothing. Fermented wine, or Coca-Cola represent nothing; a plurality of cups represent nothing. All are additions to the word of God, and violations of the pattern set long ago by our Lord.

Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, E-mail: rfwade@getatlas.com.

CHURCH AUTONOMY AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

By BENNIE T. CRYER

The church leaders generally make sure that the contribution is collected only on the first day of the week and that the members are giving as they have been prospered. In this they are following a scriptural pattern. When these funds that have been put into the local treasury are distributed the leaders must continue to follow the pattern laid down in the New Testament for the distribution. We must not think of the contribution and distribution as two completely different ideas. Each of them makes up the fellowship involved in the collection of our monies on the first day of the week.

The distribution of the Lord's money is fertile ground for a local congregation to delegate their autonomy to someone else whether it is another congregation, another individual, or some non-patterned fund. Each congregation should expect its leaders to maintain control over all their money until the funds reach their scriptural destination. The destination might be a preacher they have chosen to support, helping the poor, or some other worthy cause. Our brethren are so eager to help when a legitimate need arises they sometimes send money without investigating whether the funds are being handled according to the scriptural pattern. The past history of the brotherhood in creating nonpatterned organizations for the distribution of a local congregation's money should be a "warning of danger flag" at all times.

The Pattern

Benevolent works were done in New Testament times and the way funds were administered then provide the pattern for the local congregations to follow today. The funds were collected on the first day of the week, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2. In verses 3-4 the congregation was to approve messengers, Paul could be chosen also, who would take the money to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was chosen, not because she was the mother church, but because that is where the need was for the funds. Messengers were evidently chosen by each congregation so the contributing local church could maintain control over their funds until they reached their "use" destination. It seems they could choose someone from their congregation or someone outside their local church. The local church had to do the

approving of the messenger. The messenger or messengers then would carry the money to the elders of the churches in Jerusalem and Judea, Acts 11:29-30. A messenger might have the funds of more than one congregation on his person. Note that an area was to be helped. The individual congregations to be helped were not named or selected by the contributing congregations. Those who directed the affairs of each needy church in that area would then complete the distribution to individuals in need.

Tracking The Lord's Money

It seems to me that if a congregation chooses to help someone in need, whether here or in foreign land and messengers are required, there are two areas of responsibility. The first area is with the contributing congregation. The leaders have the responsibility to make sure they are helping a scriptural work and that the church's funds are being handled by the messenger or messengers in a scriptural way. They also must maintain control over their funds until they reach their destination. If need be, they should be able to contact their chosen messenger and see whether their funds have been used and in what manner. If they are not satisfied with the situation they should be able to recall their funds until they are used for the purpose sent. The second area of responsibility is with the messengers. The messengers may handle the funds of more than one congregation they must be able to give an account to each congregation about their money. I know this may require extra work on the messenger's part but the results will be worth it.

A Suggestion

The work in Africa that is so successful now got off to a rocky start. One American preacher refused to go and share in that work and listed as one of the reasons he chose not to go was because he had conscientious scruple about the manner in which the work was being supported. It seems that a "one man missionary society" had inadvertently been employed in which one man received funds and out of that fund a number of African preachers were being supported. I bring this up out of our history to show that instead of condemning the African work and the man that was over there doing the work they studied the problem and suggested a way for the work to be done according to the pattern. They determined that the pattern was to support the preachers directly. A list of preachers in need of support was made and published and congregations began sending money directly to them.

I think our brotherhood still possesses that spirit. We have made mistakes in the past and probably will in the future about handling money for benevolent works and preaching the gospel. Let us preach the true pattern, and when a mistake is suspected let us provide the plan that will correct the alleged mistake, be acceptable to God, and the brotherhood that is supporting such great works.

AN INTERESTING INCIDENT

By JOHNNY ELMORE

I recently purchased a history book by Baptist historian J.N. Rayzor, copyrighted in 1936. It tells of the struggles of Baptist churches in Denton County, Texas during the previous 90 years. Mr. Rayzor relates something that happened around 1883-1885 that I now reproduce

verbatim.

"An incident occurred in the Pilot Point church during Rev. J.B. Cole's pastorate, which involved a point of doctrine that subjected Pastor Cole to criticism, and gave the incident much publicity and notoriety, Pastor Cole went fishing one day with a business man who was not a Christian, and he availed himself of the opportunity to talk to the lost man about his unsaved condition, and led him to an acceptance of Christ. Jo Ives, the man converted, said to Pastor Cole, 'Here is water, what doth hinder me from being baptized?' Obviously Brother Cole thought of the story of Philip and the eunuch, and, taking that incident as an example, he led Mr. Ives out into the water and baptized him. Rev. Cole had been a Baptist but a short time and was not up on their conception of baptism, and how and when it should be administered. The news of the incident soon spread among the members, and then the show began. The following Sunday Mr. Ives presented himself to the church, asking membership, and his application was rejected and he was hurt at the action of the church and turned to another church, which readily accepted his baptism. The criticism of the pastor caused him to ask a committee of eminent brethren to sit in judgment upon his conduct—Drs. A.J. Holt, J.B. Link and R.C. Buckner. After reviewing the details of the incident they wrote the church advising it to drop the matter, and Pastor Cole to go his way, but not to repeat the act." (*History Of Denton County Baptist Association And The Sixty Churches Within Its Jurisdiction*, pp. 82,83).

The irregularity of Mr. Ives' baptism seems to be that the preacher went by the Bible instead of his church manual. His church manual, in telling how members are received, states that persons wishing to unite with a church are to "give an account of the dealings of God with their souls, and state the 'reason of the hope that is in them'; whereupon, if, in the judgment of the church they 'have passed from death unto life,' they are by vote of the church recognized as candidates for baptism, with the understanding that when baptized they will be entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership" (*Church Manual Designed For The Use Of Baptist Churches*, pp. 17, 18 by J.M. Pendleton, D.D.).

If relating an experience and a vote of the church are pre-requisites for baptism, don't you think that Philip, who was "full of the Holy Ghost," would have known of such a requirement? Can you imagine the eunuch of the eighth chapter of Acts requesting baptism and hearing Philip say, "Now, I'd love to baptize you, but I don't have the authority to do that. The church has to vote on you, first! So, if you will lend me your chariot, I'll race up to Jerusalem and put your case before the church, and likely they'll vote for you, and then I can baptize you."

Maybe we are able to see the errors of voting on candidates for baptism and demanding experiences, but what about your baptism, dear reader? As you took at the account of Philip and the eunuch in Acts 8:26-40, does your obedience to the gospel parallel that in every essential feature? Did you hear Jesus preached, believe it with all your heart, and determine to make a change? And what did you confess? Did you make the divinely revealed confession of Acts 8:37, or did you make a "flesh and blood" confession. Do you remember that Peter made the

divinely revealed confession when he said to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God?" (Matthew 16:16) Some have made a "flesh and blood" confession by stating: "I believe that God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins." There is no record of such a confession in all the New Testament.

Now, when you were baptized, did you and the preacher both go down into the water as Philip and the eunuch did, or did the preacher hold all the water in his hand? (Acts 8:38) After baptism, the eunuch "went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:39) Did you rejoice over sins forgiven before or after baptism? If you subscribe to the idea that a sinner is saved before and without baptism, you rejoiced at the wrong time. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16) Maybe one other question is in order: Did you recognize that when you were saved by obedience to the gospel, the Lord added you to His church? (Acts 2:47) Or, did you join some human denomination? Happy is the person who can say, "My conversion corresponded in every essential way to the conversion of the Ethiopian nobleman."

HIS WORD WAS IN MY HEART LIKE A BURNING FIRE!

By P. DUANE PERMENTER

The statement above is found in Jeremiah 20:9, the words of this prophet ring loudly even to the present age. Even though his circumstance was most undesirable, God's word was so powerful in Jeremiah's heart that he poured it forth with fervency. My question today is: Do you have this same feeling from God's word? Have you so studied that the Bible has become a fire burning deep within your bones?

These are questions that every Christian should ask himself. Is God's word a daily part of your life or is it simply a necessary nuisance that you look at because of guilt? Too many Christians have never read the Bible enough to realize how incredible God's book really is. Sometimes a person will say, "The Bible is boring." Others have said that "it is too complicated to understand." But the real issue is that these people have not studied God's word enough to develop a love for it or to realize the benefits that come from personal Bible study.

Jesus pictures His word as a treasure hidden in a field. Anyone who had a treasure in his backyard would do whatever was necessary to attain it or benefit from it. A person would be considered foolish if he had a treasure in his yard and said something like, "I don't have a spade." One would do whatever was necessary to dig up the treasure and he should. God's word is a treasure valued beyond our wildest dreams! It's right at our figure tips, yet many of us make very little effort to possess its treasures. Excuses offered for not studying the Word are as ridiculous as the man who excused himself from digging for treasure in his backyard complaining, "I have no spade."

Let's think together and notice just a couple of things that might help us better appreciate God's word.

God's Word is a Timeless Book!

The Bible is not the book of the month. It is not the book of the year. It is the book of ages. Listen to David in Psalm 119:89, "Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in

heaven." (NKJV) The Bible is here to stay. The Creator has founded and settled it forever. God has given us a book that is absolutely unique in every way. It is no doubt, one of a kind, and there are several reasons to draw this conclusion.

First, the continuity of the Bible sets it apart from all other books. The Bible was written over a period of sixteen hundred years over sixty generations involving over forty authors. The writers came from all walks of life: kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, scholars, and judges. These varied scribes wrote from every imaginable situation, in different times and with different moods. The Bible was written on three different continents in three different languages. Its subject matter includes hundreds of controversial subjects. The authors of the Bible write about sin and its cure. They tell specifically what is right and what is wrong. The prophets and preachers who wrote the Bible tell us how that we can change our condition from lost to saved. These authors spoke on all these different topics, and yet, they spoke with complete harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation. There is one incredible, continuous story from cover to cover and that is: "God's great scheme of human redemption."

What does this prove?

Suppose we took ten modern authors with the same educational background, the same mood, the same area of the country, who spoke one language, and just one controversial subject. Would they agree? The answer is a resounding no! Yet, here is this book with all these variables and the forty plus authors write in total continuity. The Bible's continuity is unsurpassed. God's word is timeless and unique and every Christian will benefit by studying its grand text with renewed fervency in the days ahead. It is little wonder that Peter wrote centuries ago in I Peter 1:25, "The word of the LORD endures forever." (NKJV)

God's Word is a Truthful Book.

Psalms 119:151, "You are near, O LORD, and all Your commandments are truth." (NKJV) In a world that has lost its appreciation for truth you can say without hesitation that the Bible is truth.

The Bible is God's mind revealed through the inspired scribes of both the Old and New Testaments. We are told by Paul in I Corinthians 2:13 that even the words used are inspired of the Holy Spirit. Every word of God is trustworthy and "you can take that to the bank." In the midst of all the chaos and error in this world we can go to God's word and find the truth about any thing we need to know to please God. Paul stated in 2 Timothy 3:16 that God's word is inspired by God. The word inspiration means the very breathe of God. God breathed out His will through the various writers of the Bible and gave us His infallible word. Jesus referred to this when he said in Matthew 4:4, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (NKJV) The Bible is true in every place because it came from God. Take for example the Old Testament. One can read over and again the Bible's own confirmation of its inspiration. If one were to note every time an expression like, "Thus says the Lord," or one like it, one would find over 7,000 occurrences. Either the Bible is the biggest pack of lies ever given, or it is what it claims to be, the word of God. God's word is the book of ages and it is absolutely truthful. This book we

call the Bible deserves our utmost attention and time. Every Christian should be reading the Bible on a daily basis. Without doubt, every person on the face of the earth should prayerfully, read, study, and meditate upon God's word daily. Think for just a moment how much your congregation could grow and how many of your own problems could be solved if God's word were a burning fire in your heart today. Every Christian must be diligent to show oneself approved before God. The only way that will happen is through knowledge of the Bible. May our Lord bless you in your study of His eternal word?

IT'S THE MESSAGE, NOT THE MESSENGER

BY MARK GRANT

In first Corinthians chapter one starting in verse ten we read, "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there be contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul Crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:10-13).

The Church of Corinth was a seriously troubled church. The majority of Christians at Corinth had developed into conflicting loyalties to different human teachers and were acting in antagonism toward each other because of it. These factions were badly divisive of the church and are made clear by the fact that Paul says "there are contentions among you." Contentious attitudes are always destructive to unity and peace for it throws the truth out of proper focus and misdirects believers toward false and illusive goals (2 Tim. 2:23-24). Organizationally the church was still intact but spiritually it was severely rent within. This should teach us that all the problems the church faces today are not always on the outside. Innumerable churches have long since been destroyed from within because of brethren who continually stir up strife and contentions. This can do more damage to the cause of Christ than alcohol, atheism or worldliness.

So Paul begins the task of mending the situation by discussing the respecting irregularities and disorders that had become dominant in the church at Corinth. Specifically, Paul names the factions involved, and he does not omit the ones who were rallying around his own name and ministry. First, there was the "Party of Paul." This party likely consisted of mainly Gentile believers because of Paul's emphasis on his preaching to the gentiles (Rom. 11:13; Gal. 1:16; Eph. 3:8). While the "Party of Paul" may be his friends and staunchest supporters, he does not spare them for it is the first group on which the rebuke of correction falls. A second group identified itself with Apollos, one of Paul's fellow preaching brethren (1 Cor. 3:5-8). The "Party of Apollos" arose possibly because of his eloquent speaking abilities (Acts 18:24-28; 19:1). A third group identified itself with Cephas, which is the Jewish form for the apostle Peter's name (John 1:42; 1

Cor. 15:5). The "Party of Cephas" may have been mostly of Jewish background. (Gal. 2:7) Perhaps there were those of Peter's followers and admirers at Corinth who had migrated from Antioch and other cities. These were probably Jews and proselytes who had been converted to Christ but maintained their loyalty and adherence to the Jewish religious customs (Act 18:1-17). A fourth group that Paul lists had identified itself specifically with Christ. Whether there was a genuine fourth party bearing the name of Christ is in dispute among scholars. There appears to be evidence that this unique claim to the "Party of Christ" became the chief point of their opposition to Paul (2 Cor. 10:7; 11:23). Paul certainly does not commend any of the groups, not even the "I am Christ" faction, suggesting that all of their professed allegiances were causing division and dissension in the local church. As Christians may we never let our appreciation of any leader or preacher lead us into pride. It is pride that always lies at the bottom of contentions and strife. (Prov. 13:10)

Be Perfectly Joined Together

The apostle's handling of this grave problem is the most subtle, wise, and tactful way in which all of us should learn from. He approaches the not with a stern command as a law enforcement official to force them, but the language of affectionate exhortation. "**Now I plead with you brethren**" proves that in the New Testament we now live under grace as to why Paul beseeches or pleads with men to be reconciled to God, and here with one another (2 Cor. 5:18-20). In his address "**brethren**," he also identifies himself with them in the Christian brotherhood. Paul is emphasizing that all Christians are part of God's family. Believers should share a unity that runs even deeper than that of earthly family (Matt. 12:46-50). Paul now appeals unto them to avoid the evils of schism and of strife by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ. When Paul wrote, "**by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**" it should teach us that Christ is to be regarded as the supreme head and leader of all His church (Col. 1:18-19). Which is why the church should not be divided into parties, enlisted under different human leaders, because the whole family in heaven and earth is to be named after Christ (Eph. 3:14-15). The primary and foremost principle which Christ had directed upon His church was union and mutual love of the brethren through His name (John 13:34-35; 1:17). It was Jesus in the garden of Gethseman who revealed His great desire for His disciples to become one. Jesus' prayer for unity among believers is based upon our participation in the unity of the Father and the Son. This deep unity of purpose in the bond of love is to be a convincing witness to the world that Jesus came from God. Christians can know unity that He desires for His church. After Paul emphasize the authority of Christ he now tells them "**that you all speak the same thing**." "To speak the same thing" would be opposed to speaking antagonistic and conflicting points of view. Paul does not ask that they agree with on another in all points, but he pleads for a common basic understanding for the Christian faith. Where Christians may differ on some **OPINIONS** we can still promote unity. Our different judgements should not create broken fellowship, but rather work toward reaching an agreement. Which is why Paul pleads, "**that there be no divisions among you**." Divisions or the Greek word "*schismata*"

(Strong's 4978) which is "rents," as a torn garment, is the word which Paul uses to describe their condition. The garment is there but it has been torn into four pieces. The divisions had grown into contending parties and sects within the congregation. The body of Christ is to be regarded as one and is not to be divided, and rent into different factions, and arranged under the banners of different leaders. Paul now seeks to sew the garment back together by stating, "that you be perfectly joined together." *Joined together or knit together* comes from the Greek word "katartizo" (Strong's 2675) that means "to refit, to repair, to be restored to harmony, 1 Cor. 1:10" (*Berry Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament*). Paul wanted the Corinthians to be knit together. The word he uses is a medical word which is used of knitting together bones that have been fractured, or joining together a joint that has been dislocated. Whenever there has been a fracture in the bone of the body that a surgeon has to reset the bone in order for the fracture to reunite. Paul as the surgeon begins the healing process of the fracture by telling the Corinthians to be "in the same mind and in the same judgement." To "be perfectly joined together" so that there are "no divisions" and "be of one mind" (united in thought and purpose), does not require everyone to believe exactly the same. There is a big difference between having opposing viewpoints and being divisive. The proper way to produce union in the Church of Christ, is not by whipping brethren into shape by vigorous actions where everyone's opinions are precisely the same, but to elevate supreme love to God, and all who bear the image and the name of the Redeemer (Mark 12:28-31). All of us as Christians will never completely agree on every issue, but we can work together harmoniously if we agree on what truly matters: Jesus Christ is Lord of all (Rom. 10:11-12). When the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the main focus of the Church, then our goals and motivation remain constant, and factions do not develop easily (1 Cor. 15:1-4). In the body of Christ Christians should speak and behave in a way that will reduce arguments and increase harmony. "May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other each with the attitude of Christ Jesus toward the other. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:5-6; *New Living Translation*) Our own petty differences of personal opinions should never divide the Lord's Church. Let us as Christians always act in love and pursue actions which promote peace and seek to edify others and never divide the Lord's Church.

Is Christ Divided?

In first Corinthians 1:13 Paul uses three simple questions, each expecting a negative response, to show the absurdity of the Corinthian divisions. "Is Christ divided?" Obviously the answer is that He cannot be and still be Christ, and therefore the true Christ, and therefore the true Church cannot be divided and really exist. It was Jesus who said, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls" (Luke 11:17). Since Christ is not divided, then His body (the church) is not to be cut into parts, and these

parts assigned to human leaders. To let our appreciation for human leaders reach the point to where a congregation has contending factions will eventually bring it to desolation and a fall. So Christ is not to be divided. "Was Paul crucified for you?" It was Christ, not Paul nor another, who was crucified. And through Christ's death atonement was made for sin. If there is any possibility of Christians rectifying from the heat of strife, from different names, from contending sects, it is the recollection of the fact that they have been purchased by the same blood. It was Jesus who died on the cross to redeem us all. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation of our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (1 John 4:7-11). If this fact could be kept before our minds as brethren in Christ, it would put an end to angry strife everywhere in the Lord's Church, and produce universal Christian love. "Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" It was in the name of Christ, and not of Paul or another, that they had been baptized into His body (Gal. 3:27). Paul pointed out that in the act of baptism, a person identifies himself or herself with Christ, period. Baptism does not align the believer with any human leader nor with any "faction" of Christ, but with the Lord Himself (Rom. 6:3-5). The Corinthians may have begun to identify themselves with the men who had performed the baptisms rather than with Jesus Himself. Thus Christ is the head of the Church; and by reason of the fact that we were baptized into Christ's name, we should be entirely devoted to the service of our Savior and not arrange ourselves under different human leaders.

We might be tempted to write off this behavioral problem, referring to the Corinthians as silly or immature if it were not for Christians who have the tendency (still prevalent today) to exalt dynamic leaders. Preachers and teachers who are vibrant, energetic leaders still have the power to excite the motivate believers today. There is nothing of course, inherently wrong with such influence. The danger comes when the speaker or leader, and not the message, becomes the focus of our attention. David said, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8). Christian teachers and leaders are merely earthen vessels through whom God's Word is communicated (2 Cor. 4:7). Exalting men above the message they proclaim is a misunderstanding of their purpose. The three preachers Paul, Apollos, and Peter were united in their message, but it was their personalities that attracted different Christians. By Paul's mention of Jesus Christ 10 times in the first 10 verses, he makes it clear who it is that all preachers and teachers should emphasize. Paul said, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellent of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:1-2) To put it simply, it's the message, and not the messenger.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY BAPTISM?

continued from page 1

We sin when we "transgress the law" or practice "unrighteousness." (1 Jn 3:4, 5:17)

The people who were baptized (to confuse a term, as apologists mean "water sprinkled or poured on a baby") have need to be baptized as taught in Scripture.

I WAS BAPTIZED AFTER I WAS SAVED:

"WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY BAPTISM?"

This in my limited experience is encountered more than any of the others. This expression demonstrates that the one making it understands salvation has nothing to do with baptism. Therefore, baptism is just a thing practiced to express to the world "Christ has been accepted." Nothing could be further from the truth as baptism is submitted to prior to salvation. When one is baptized, certain stated results occur. They do not occur prior to baptism.

Mt. 28:19	Baptizing	Into Name of the Father-Son-Holy Ghost
Mk. 16:16	Baptized	Saved
Acts 2:38	Baptized	Remission of sins
Acts 8:37-39	Baptized	Rejoice
Acts 22:-16	Baptized	Wash away sins
Rom. 6:3-4	Baptism	Newness of life
Gal. 3:27	Baptized	Into Christ
Gal. 3:27	Baptized	Put on Christ
1 Pet. 3:21	Baptism	Answer of good conscience

As simple as the above chart is, the fact contained within this visual exercise cannot be missed by the casual observer. The results all of which are equated with salvation of sins, so that the one thus forgiven can enjoy a new relationship with deity come AFTER and not BEFORE baptism. Therefore, any baptism that is administered to those who have already been saved is null and void, having no purpose. If we are saved BEFORE AND WITHOUT baptism, then we have a relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we are saved, have remission of sins, our sins are washed away, we rejoice, have a new life, are in Christ, have put Christ on. Thus, what is said to be effected by baptism in the Word of God is a lie and not the truth. The doctrine is false; meaning that one must be baptized in a scriptural manner, just as the people in Ephesus had the need.

I WAS BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST:

"WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY BAPTISM?"

At first glance, you may think me silly for asking you to consider this baptism wrong. How could it possibly be wrong when we are told "whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Col. 3:17). Thus to baptize in the name of Jesus Christ cannot possibly be wrong. This is a classic example of misusing a passage and therefore making it wrong by forcing an untruth out of it.

Those who press this passage (Apostolic Pentecostals among others) use Acts 2:38 as an exclusive ceremony for baptism. There are at least two errors connected with their doctrine relating to the passage.

1. To do anything "in the name of Jesus Christ" is to do it by the AUTHORITY of Christ. Jesus often pointed out that prior to His death and resurrection the people were to recognize the authority of Moses: "hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name...At that day ye shall ask in my name." (Jn. 16:24, 26). When Christ resurrected, He was given

"all authority." (Mt. 28:18). Now we are to do everything as authorized by Christ.

When Peter said, "repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," he meant that the command of Jesus relating to repentance and baptism was to be obeyed. Jesus Himself said the disciples were to teach others, then baptize them "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Mt. 28:19). Men baptized by the authority of Christ are to be baptized in the "name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The conclusion is this: to contend for the formula of speaking the name of Jesus Christ over those baptized, is not by the authority of Christ at all. It overlooks His commandment.

2. In Acts 2:38 men are commanded to "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." While these people cry long and loud for the precise formula to be said over the candidate at baptism, they contend that one is saved by receiving the Holy Ghost PRIOR to the baptism. As one Apostolic Pentecostal preacher explained it to me, baptism is the beginning of the new life after forgiveness.

The error is two-fold. The words said are wrong by the administer of the baptism as what he says is not by the authority of Christ. And the purpose for which the candidate is baptized is wrong. Therefore, one thus baptized must be baptized correctly.

I WAS BAPTIZED INTO A CHURCH

"WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY BAPTISM?"

Occasionally one encounters an individual who has been baptized into a church that claims to be striving to "restore the New Testament fellowship." These appear to present the plan of salvation, but upon closer examination one hears them teaching that all men who recognize Jesus as the Christ are to be received into fellowship, even to accepting those sprinkled as well as those immersed. They besmirch and destroy the identity of the church of Christ. When one is baptized by these people, they wonder "what is wrong with my baptism?"

To begin with, baptism saves us or gives us remission of sins because it takes us out of the world of sin and places us into the church (which is the body of Christ). "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. 12:13). The baptism of scripture does not put one into a denomination. When men accept and promote the idea that all men who recognize Christ as the Son of God are automatically Christians, they are certainly a denomination or sectarian. The baptism that places anyone into such is not acceptable to the Lord. Those baptized are in the same condition as those Paul encountered in Ephesus.

CONCLUSION: The tone has been set for your further meditation. The purpose has been to cause you to think about your baptism. Is it scriptural? If you have questions about your baptism, feel free (please) to contact us and we will try to answer your questions.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

the phrase "doctrine of Christ" in 2 John 9 refers only to the teachings about the nature of Christ and not to **all** the teachings of Christ and His apostles. This is the same position, of course, for which Burdette contends.

Consequently, he argues that the teachings by Jesus and the apostles about the items of worship—which have generated such controversial issues as individual communion cups, Sunday school, and instrumental music—are not important enough criteria to be considered in determining fellowship.

Incredibly, the first authority Burdette cites in an effort to buttress his belief about the meaning of 2 John 9, is Rudolph Bultmann. Bultmann and Martin Dibelius are considered the pioneers of “form criticism”—a discipline used to study the Bible that presupposes the Bible is not actually an inspired product (see my article, “Higher Criticism” *1994 Preachers’ Study Notes* 1-16). Bultmann and other “higher critics” have done more to promote skepticism about the Bible than faith in it.

Burdette also ignores a parallel passage in I Timothy 6:3-5 which supports my own conclusion about the meaning of 2 John 9, while citing I John 2:22-23 as a parallel passage to support his position.

The footnote for 2 John 9 in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* refers the readers to I John 2:22-23 for a comparison. Implicit in the footnote, however, is that the phrase “doctrine of Christ” refers to “the Christian revelation” and not just to the teaching about Christ’s nature (1489).

While I categorically disagree with Ketcherside’s and Burdette’s interpretation of “doctrine of Christ” in 2 John 9, I do agree that the way you interpret this passage will have a large influence upon your understanding of fellowship.

I did a little more surfing on the Internet and found another article by Burdette entitled, “*A Brief History of the One Cup and Non-Sunday School Movement.*”

I always wonder what motivates anyone who has “outgrown” us and left our brotherhood to remain obsessed with us. Burdette explains in the latter article that the reason he writes about our brotherhood is because he wants to keep in touch with his past (14). He explains he worshiped with us years ago, and still has relatives who worship with us now. I have no reason, therefore, to doubt his explanation. In the articles I’ve read he seems to make an attempt to be fair.

I wonder, however, about the motives of some others. What makes anyone limit his scope of scrutiny to his former brethren only? What drives a person to obsessive extremes to watch our every movement and scour our every journal while looking for something to attack and to use to discredit us?

I suppose there are many and varied motivations for obsessive conduct, but I’m reminded of an ego defense mechanism I studied years ago in college called “reaction formation.” This mechanism is a means by which a person tries to hide and control certain strong desires by cultivating attitudes and behavior patterns that are just the opposite of those desires (Coleman, James C. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life* 100). Tel-evangelist Jimmy Swaggart always comes to mind when I think of this ego defense mechanism. On his television program Swaggart regularly railed upon those guilty of moral sins. He was ruthless and unmerciful while turning in one of his preaching brethren for adultery and having him defrocked. But, lo and behold! Swaggart himself was later found in a motel with a prostitute. He loudly condemned sins of immorality

while secretly harboring those very feelings within his own heart. Paul condemns such hypocrisy in Romans 2:21-24.

Shakespeare gives us a literary example of the above mechanism in “Hamlet.” Queen Gertrude is watching a play in which an actress playing the role of the Queen repeatedly declares her love and loyalty to the King while planning all the while to have him killed. After listening to the actress—Queen’s repetitive declarations of love and loyalty, Queen Gertrude leans over and comments to her son, “The lady protesteth too much, methinks” (III, ii).

If those people who have left our brotherhood truly believe that by leaving the one-cup church they have been liberated from a group of ignorant bigots, and that all sincere baptized-believers are saved anyway, why are we subjected *ad nauseam* to their endless intellectual justifications over and over? Who are they trying to convince, their readers or themselves? Could it be that their manic ranting at our brotherhood is a symptom of reaction formation? Could it possibly be that there is a little self-doubt and uncertainty shining forth from beneath all their bravado? These conclusions are real possibilities because they “protesteth too much, methinks.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please Read

In March of 2001 an article was sent to several brethren in the Philippines and perhaps the USA as well, written by Brother Felipe Bayani who lives in Hawaii. This article contains some serious charges made against other brethren. Brother Virgilio O. Danao Sr. has written an answer to the article. If you received the article from Brother Bayani and would like to know the other side, feel free to write Brother Danao at 94-371 Ikepono St., Waipahu, Hawaii 96797 and a copy of his answer will be made available to you.—DLK

Sermons And Writings Of Homer L. King

This hardbound 221-page book is a bargain in this modern world. At \$7 per copy, anyone can afford it. It contains quite a number of Brother King’s sermon outlines he used in his nearly 50 years of preaching. Also a number of essays which appeared in *Old Paths Advocate* during the many years he served as Publisher. Every preacher will find this book useful in his work and anyone should enjoy the materials within. Order from Helen King, 1061 North Pilgrim St., Stockton, CA 95205

Our Objection To Carnal Warfare

To Whom It May Concern

I would like my name to be listed in the *OPA*, stating that I am opposed to carnal warfare. I believe I cannot take part in any military service in any form, directly or indirectly, in combatant or noncombatant service. Below are listed some of my reasons:

1. My duty and obligation to 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 again thy sword ... for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matt. 26:52); “For the weapons of our warfare

are not carnal" (2 Cor. 10:3-4); "Recompense to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17).

3. To enter any military services combatant or noncombatant I would be compelled to "swear" (take an oath), but the Bible forbids that I do so. "Swear not at all" (Matt. 5:34).

4. To enter any military service in any way, I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden. "Be ye not yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14).

5. To be in any branch of the military service in any way, I would be a part of an organization and would therefore have fellowship in the service but such is prohibited. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5: 11).

6. To serve in the military service in any way, I would be deprived of obeying the command to assemble on the 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 warfare in any form or branch and for the above reasons I ask that my name be listed in support of the above principles.

Ashley Robinson

2210 Forest Grove Est. Road, Allen, TX 75002

Brian McDavitt

18208 S. Gray Drive, Pleasant Hill, MO 64080

Let Her Be Covered

This 20-page tract has been well received for a number of years. We once sold them at \$1 each. However, because of the recent interest in the subject of the hair as a covering, we are selling them now at 50 cents each plus postage. We will fill orders as large as you wish for as long as they last. A number of congregations have placed them in tract racks for ready access. This tract treats the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, 1-16. The position taken is that hair is the only covering given by God as a covering. Order from Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

MIDDICK-BLAIR—On the night of April 27, 2001, before a very large crowd, Tiffany Marie Middick and Michael William Blair made their wedding vows to one another. It was a beautiful and elaborate setting in the State Line Church of Christ meeting house, Seneca, MO. People had come from far and near for the occasion. Many present were members of the church and many others were friends and acquaintances of both of the families, who came out of love and respect. Tiffany is the only daughter of Denise and Kenneth Middick. Mike is the son of Bill and Mary Blair. The singing was beautifully rendered, and it was my privilege to officiate. We hope for this young Christian couple a long and happy life together in the Lord's service. —Paul O. Nichols

STRUNCK - GREEN—It was my honor to officiate at the wedding of Amanda Strunk and Mike Green at Joplin, MO, May 11, 2001. The ceremony took place in the

Leewood Village Church of Christ in the midst of simple but beautiful and appropriate decorations. Amanda is the daughter of Ralph and Rosalie Strunk of the Mountain Grove, MO congregation, and Mike is the son of "Doc" and Marie Green of Seneca, MO. A good crowd of Christians and other well-wishers assembled for the occasion. The beautiful singing was rendered by a quartet of young men. The reception followed at the church building. We hope for this Christian couple many years of joy and happiness as they build their married life together. —Paul O. Nichols

OUR DEPARTED

VARNON—Esther "Louise" Varnon of Cottage Grove, died June 3, 2001 of age-related causes. She was 89. She was born Aug. 5, 1911, in Duncan, Ariz., to William and Mattie (Barber) Lloyd. She married Claude Griffith Varnon in Bell, Calif., on Feb. 27, 1929. She was a homemaker. She also worked at K.C. Drugs and Varnon Plumbing, both in Cottage Grove. She enjoyed oil painting, crafts, and sewing. She was baptized for the remission of sins. As best we can remember, that took place in 1956. She was a member of the Church of Christ on Monroe Avenue in Cottage Grove. For the church in Cottage Grove, before the worship service on Lord's Days, she set the Lord's Table in preparation for the Lord's Supper for a number of years. Her husband was baptized into Christ before his death, and that greatly was because of her Christian influence upon his life. She was preceded in death by a daughter, Carolyn Fay Varnon, in 1936; and by her husband in 1982 while living in California. She is survived by a daughter, Kathryn Vincent of Oakland, Oreg.; a son, Griffith (Little Gift) of Cottage Grove, Oreg.; a brother, Joe Lloyd of Santa Rosa, Calif.; eight grandchildren; nineteen great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren. The writer conducted services at the church building in Cottage Grove, Oreg. on June 7, 2001. Her body was laid to rest in the Rest-Haven Memorial Park, in Eugene, Oregon.—Gayland Osburn

CHERRY—Flora Cherry was born December 13, 1905 and died May 16, 2001 in McGregor, Texas at the age of 95. She is survived by one daughter and son-in-law, Jean and Wayne McKamie of McGregor, four grandsons and their wives and children. Sister Cherry was a charter member of the church of Christ in McGregor. When I was nineteen, I worked one summer with the church in McGregor while Wayne and his family were away in meetings. I stayed in Wayne and Jean's house and Brother and Sister Cherry lived just across the drive in a little white house. Brother Cherry was very ill and Sister Cherry had her hands full taking care of him. Still, she kept an eye on me and was always cooking me something special. Sister Cherry loved to go to church and she loved to hear gospel preaching. She always, it seems, wore a hat, whether in the garden at home or at church. She has been a part of the church at McGregor for a long time and will be missed. I was honored to speak words of hope and exhortation at her funeral. May her memory, and the hope of reunion in heaven, comfort Jean, Wayne, the children and grandchildren, and her many brethren who miss her.—Jerry Dickinson



Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood CT, Somerset, KY 42503, (606) 678-4347, hawkins@kih.net, July 6, 2001—I just returned home from the 4th meeting in Lebanon. It was great to see so many loved ones at one time. However, time doesn't allow you to visit for very long with too many. Meetings in May and June were good overall. I'm scheduled to be in Lowery, AL and Chestnut Ridge, KY in August.

Taylor A. Joyce, 1713 Savannah Dr., Fort Smith, AR 72901, taylor_joyce@arwd.uscourts.gov, June 21—I have just concluded an eight day series of meetings with the Lowery, AL congregation. The church has existed in this community since early last century. Some who attend now have been there since the beginning. A more congenial and considerate group would be hard to find. I presented my "Exploring Ephesians" series on PowerPoint and made handouts of all the outlines available to all who attended. We had people from 13 congregations in five states in attendance one or more times. Two people obeyed the gospel and two others requested the prayers of the congregation. The brethren have asked me to return in 2003.

Gregorio S. Maluga, Ilocos Norte, Philippines, May 28—The work here in Ilocos Norte continues to be faithful. Last April, I've baptized 2 while in Bacarra, a young lady and a brother who is a teacher. I hope this brother will be a good preacher someday for I sometimes used him to preach during Sunday worship service. Also, since I've discovered the talent to preach the gospel of Brother Wilson Gaoaten (the brother of Bro. Arsenio) in San Antonio, Piddig, he always working with me during Sundays. I used him to preached also in other congregations where I'm working. I'm working also with new prospects and presently conducting trainings on young peoples who would be future leaders and preachers in the church. Of course, Bro. Dario is always a good partner in the work. By Wednesday, I will go with him to Calanasan, Apayao. We hope we can do some good things in this trip for the church there to be strengthened and we hope positive results will be achieved. I will report later any development.

Alton B. Bailey, 410 Ginger Circle, LaGrange, Ga. 30240. (706-882-1114)—All things continue well here in LaGrange, Ga. We have just closed a gospel meeting with Allen Bailey. Everyone was very pleased with his preaching and choice of sermons. It was good for Florence and me to have him and his family home for a few days again. My meetings this year have been rewarding to me to see brethren most everywhere with an up-beat about the work at their area. My last few meetings were in Baton Rouge, La; Texarkana, Tx; Lynnville, Oh; Lone Rock, Ar; We are looking forward to the 4th of July meetings this year. It will be good to see friends from all over the country again. Lord willing my next meeting will be at McGregor, Tx. July 22-29. I look forward to visiting with Bro. Wayne McKamie in this meeting. Then to Kenai, Alaska Aug. 9-12; Valliant, Ok. Aug. 25-Sept. 2; Radnor W. Va; Sept. 23-30, and Bandy, Ky. Oct. 21-28; The success of the new congregation in McDonough, Ga. looks good. Should you be visiting that way you will find a warm and encouraging welcome. At the first service there were 35 present. There are six qualified teachers in the congregation which makes for a bright future. Presently the church is meeting at the "Sleep Inn Motel" in the banquet room. The time of services are Sunday 10:30 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. For more information you may contact Don Snow (678) 432-6374 or Mark Grant (770) 898-7161. We solicit your prayers for us and our work through the country. God bless His people everywhere.

Gerald R. Barrett, c/o Church of Christ, 120 E. Tehachapi Blvd, Tehachapi, CA, 93561—Since our beginning in August 2000 we have had 12 visitors from the community and surrounding areas; some of those have

returned at least once more to the worship services. We have had J. D. Grissom from the Brundage Ln. congregation teach on several occasions and as usual he did a superb job of edifying us here at Tehachapi. Recently we were blessed by the teaching done by Don McCord. Brother Don is a wonderful, kind and gentle man and as our brotherhood knows a staunch proclaimer of the truth. We continue to solicit the prayers of the brotherhood for this work here so that souls will be won to the Master and His cause. We continue to be supported by the brethren of Planz Rd, and Brundage Ln. congregations for which we are thankful. Brother and sister Jim and Lucille Downum and Dave and Joanne Payne have been a great encouragement in the work here. These two wonderful couples have been dedicated to this work and continue to assist in the broadening the borders of Zion here in the Tehachapi area. Glen and Melissa Harrin, members of the congregation, have been a great asset to the work as well as James Barrett. Since James has come back to the Lord he's been on fire, in fact, most of our visitors have been a result of his enthusiasm for the Cause. Brethren this is what is needed in our time in every place. If any one in the brotherhood knows of anyone in this area whether family or friends that you would like for us to contact please send me an address via my e-mail (barretfg@csu rfers. net) or in care of the church's address and we'll make contact to invite them to worship. If they are wayward members we'll try our best to exhort them to duty. The surrounding communities to Tehachapi are Mojave, California City, Palmdale, Rosamond, Lancaster and Boron. We give God the glory for the continued work here. God bless the work everywhere.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, July 8—Our meeting at Stony Point, 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas City, KS with brother Kevin Presley was both enjoyable and profitable. There were two confessions and one baptism. God continues to give the increase here, and to Him we give the glory. Kevin did a good job of preaching the gospel of Christ without fear or favor (the kind of preaching that builds up the church, and makes sinners aware of the need for obeying the gospel.) The Lord willing, he will return here for another meeting in 2005. Politics and frivolity have no place in the pulpit. Both take away from the dignity of the pulpit and the message of the cross. We enjoyed another annual meeting at Lebanon, MO. There were people present who had never been before. The crowds were large, the singing was beautiful, and we heard some good sound preaching. The Lord willing, we will be in West Virginia (Spring Valley) Aug. 5th for the McKeand family reunion (my wife's people). Aug. 11-19, we will be at Moore, OK for a meeting. This will be our first there, and we hope for a good meeting. We invite all within driving distance to attend. We look forward to seeing a lot of our friends and relatives, and hope to do some good for the cause of Christ in that area. The Lord bless all.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA, 94539, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, July 16—We closed an enjoyable meeting yesterday with the West Chester, Ohio congregation in the Cincinnati area. Thirty one years ago last April, Pat and I went there to work with the church. We stayed about two years before returning to California and a mission work in Fremont where we still live. Friendships were made in Ohio which survive to the present and it was a treat to go back for another meeting. We stayed with R.H. and Leora Renner who could not have been more kind to us. Area congregations attended well and some came from West Virginia and Kentucky for one or more services. We were glad to have preaching brethren Barney Owens, Brian Burns and Bill Ferguson with us most of the week as well. One sister was restored. We look forward to returning in the future. Enroute, we stopped by the Lebanon, MO 4th of July meeting for a few days and enjoyed it. Crowds were large and the preaching and singing enjoyable as well. It was great to see so many brethren from so many places. Lord willing, we are to be at Stockton, CA next Lord's day. We look forward to staying home for a time and being with the brethren here. This is the lean time for the paper. Preachers are on the road in meetings and perhaps too busy to send articles and field reports. You will notice the number of reports is fewer this month. We hope for more next month. Preachers, we need your materials every month, please. Brethren, why not mention the paper in your work? The printed page is a wonderful

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

If the date near your name and address reads 8-01 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

way to reach the masses.

VIRGILIO O. DANA O, 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, HI 96797; Tel. & Fax No. (808) 680-0249—In the precious name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, greetings to all faithful brethren everywhere! Through God's blessings, the Church here at Ikepono Street is at peace. Though most of the members here are senior citizens, each are willing to share whatever he/she can from cleaning the hall and premises every Saturday afternoon, and other works of the Church. We are grateful for another member is added to the Church here. Sis. Ester Corpuz Balisacan from Ilocos Norte has arrived recently here in Hawaii to join her husband who is also a member. Both are to reside here permanently. Sis. Ester is a faithful member of the Church in the Philippines. And we are thankful that since her arrival both Bro. Balisacan and herself continue to be active in the Church. We are blessed in the past Sundays because of our brethren from the mainland who came and worshipped with us, such as: Bro. Leo and Sis. Barbara Baldwin, Sis. Debbie Owen and son, Andrew, and Sis. Shaylyn Sypneski, all from the Benicia (CA) congregation; Sis. Neva Stephens and Sis. Barbara McCall from Oklahoma. My health has not been good for the past months and this affected my daily activities. After I recovered from the cough I got in the Philippines last February, I was troubled by a problem in the urinary bladder ("stone"). This first attacked me in 1974; in 1986, and in 1991. At present, I am fully recuperated, hoping I can "fill up" whatever I missed related to my work in the previous days because of my illness. In behalf of my family, particularly the Lord's work here, I would like to express heartfelt thanks to all brethren everywhere, especially to the elders of the Stockton (CA) Church, who continue to extend their financial assistance to the work here. Your continued generosity, as Apostle Paul writes, is "an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." May our God of Heaven -Who knows you all, dearly beloved brethren continue to bless all of you! I regret to say, Bro. Felipe Bayani has been sending articles—written in English and flocano containing derogatory words primarily intended to put me down, to assassinate Bro. Don L. King's reputation and others—to almost all preaching brethren in the Philippines, sowing seeds of discord and division in the brotherhood. Bro. Bayani said he is now exposing these in the internet and e-mails, making it global in scope. I have no computer. But for more information or inquiries regarding all these advances Bro. Bayani is pursuing ever since they left us, please feel free to write or call me at t address and telephone & fax number mentioned above. I urge faithful brethren everywhere to please pray for the Lord's work here. May God bless us all!

Josh Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, E-mail: Josh 1477@juno.com—I have been working with the Covina congregation since April 1, 2001. This is the first field report I have sent in to *Old Paths Advocate* but the new births that the Lord has blessed us with have been announced on the church website and e-mailed to members an David Risener's e-mail database. Our first baptism was a man named Andy Alarcon, 30 years old, who approached me after one of my sermons which covered Biblical repentance, and told me that he did not believe that he really repented before his baptism. I agreed that that was a serious matter and we had an indepth Bible study that covered what we need to believe to be saved, What it means to turn away from sin and commit to Jesus as your Lord, and how we need to trust that we're actually being baptized into Jesus' death (Romans 6:4) and that His blood is washing all our sins away when were being immersed. After the study Andy asked me to baptize him with the right understanding and a true repentance, which I did on

April 27, 2001. In spite of some serious trials in his life Andy is continuing to grow strong in Christ and he's been an inspiration and encouragement to me. In May we began a campaign at Citrus college and Mt. Seri Antonio college, which are both close to the Covina church building, and the Lord has been blessing it. Andy often accompanies me to the campuses, and we approach students with a survey asking them what they think a person must believe and do to go to heaven and which asks them if they would like to have a Bible study to learn what God says about it in His word. We have found that college students tend to be far more receptive to studying Gods' word than the population as a whole. We have not had any college students obey the gospel yet but several have been willing to have a complete salvation study. We are excited that the seed is being sown, and ask you to please join us in praying for the Lord to convict their hearts to obey the gospel. On Thursday nights the city of Glendora has a farmer's market where many vendors rent space for booths, and I thought that it would be a good idea to rent a booth for the Covina church (Glendora is a neighboring town to Covina). My wife Mariah has been accompanying me, and we have been using the survey approach there as well and giving away literature about the true plan of salvation. On our debut I was able to have a salvation study with two high school students, Channele and Natasha. On the second Thursday a lady named Maria approached the booth and we had a study on the deity of Christ, and she recently called us and is eager to have us over to her home for another study. On July 8 I did some street preaching to people gathering for a concert at a nearby park. Mariah, Andy, and a couple others accompanied me. We did not see any results from it but Isaiah 55:10-11 tells us that God's word does not return unto Him void. I plan to try again soon. We have been reaching out to our Hindu neighbors, Rajith and Shika, who are from India. They are very hospitable people, and we have had some opportunities to share about the true God of the Bible, judgement following death as opposed to reincarnation, and other Biblical matters. On June 12, I studied the Bible with a girl named Nikki, 17 years old, and had the privilege of baptizing her that evening. A young man named Travis was baptized a few days before that while I was visiting the El Cajon congregation. Please pray for their new walks with Christ, and for the Lord to add more to the church in Covina.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, July 17—Since last reporting to the paper I have enjoyed meetings at Marion, IA where we found a group of loving and receptive brethren working for the Lord. Brother Richard Reed was present for several services. His presence was a help to the meeting. The church in Marion and Cedar Rapids are working together and striving to enlarge the borders of Zion in that area. Next we were in Ratliff City, OK. This group is working diligently to spread the word. Brother Johnny Elmore was present two nights and is much appreciated in that area. We had good cooperation from surrounding congregations which was a help to the meeting. The same was true in Fayetteville, OH, where brethren are trying to establish the cause in this central Ohio town. Brethren from the greater Cincinnati area proved to be a great help. We also had visitors from the Killbuck congregation. We were privileged to enjoy the Lebanon meeting again this year. Large crowds made for great services with stimulating singing and preaching. From Lebanon we went to Marietta, GA for a good meeting. Rick Martin has lived and worked here for years, and is highly respected by the church. We had visitors from a number of places all of which helped the meeting greatly. One confessed wrongs. The Lord willing we go next to Rogers, AR July 18-22, Walnut Grove, KY July 29-Aug 5, Deer Park, TX Aug. 12-19, Cleburne, TX Aug. 22-26, Killbuck, OH Sept. 6-9 and Nashville, TN Sept. 12-16. Please keep us in your prayers.

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, SEPTEMBER 2001

NO. 9

TILL THE SON OF MAN BE COME

BY BENNIE T. CRYER

The title for this study comes from Matthew 10:23. Jesus has just selected the 12 apostles and is giving them some instructions as he sends them out to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He said to them, "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." This last phrase in this verse looks strange in this setting. Does it mean that Jesus' second coming was supposed to have occurred during the earthly work of the apostles? Since the second coming did not occur during their life time is this misinformation that Christ has given to them and to us? A brief study of three "comings" of Christ mentioned in the scriptures will help us survive at the correct scriptural conclusion of this dilemma.

The Second Or Last Coming Of Christ

Jesus is coming again. We look forward to this coming. In Revelation 22:20 John wrote, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly, Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." One day in the future a mighty trumpet blast will be heard to summon all who have ever lived and died on this early, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. A mighty voice will accompany this trumpet sound. John 5:28-29, "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." The events that follow the resurrection are supplied partially by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:10. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Peter instructs us that the earth and the heavens are going to be destroyed. Then he asks a pertinent question about all of this. 2 Peter 3:11-12 records this question. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

Dear reader, ask yourself if you are the "manner of" person you ought to be. If you are not, remember this same Jesus that is coming at the end of time loves you and is able to be merciful to you now. Why not prepare to meet God now so you will be ready for the wonderful coming of Christ. Now, returning to our text, Is this the coming of the Son of man mentioned? No. It would be impossible to

rightfully interpret that as the second coming of Christ. The apostles have all died. The gospel has been preached to the cities of Israel.

Christ's Coming In The Destruction Of Jerusalem

In Matthew 24:1-2 Jesus had this to say about the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." The holy temple was so large and magnificent the apostles could not conceive such destruction. In v3 they asked Jesus to tell them about the signs of his coming that would bring to an end the Jewish state as they knew it. This destruction took place in 70 A.D. In verse 14 Jesus declared that this would be the end of something. "And the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Paul declared in Colossians 1:23, "...the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven..." This was written about 60 A.D. That sign about the destruction of Jerusalem with its temple had been fulfilled. It was time for a destruction such as the world had never seen up to the time and never will see again. Jesus used as his instrument Titus and others of the Roman empire to bring about this destruction. Indeed, the Lord had come and fulfilled the prophecies he and others had uttered. The end had come for the Jewish state and Judaism as well. But is this the coming of the Son of man spoken of in our text? I think not. There is one more coming of Christ I desire to study and in this coming we will find the answer to our question.

The Coming Of The Son Of Man In His Kingdom Or Church

The coming of the Son of man written about in Matthew 10:23 was to occur rather quickly. They would not have had time to preach the gospel of the coming kingdom in all the cities of Israel. They would do that in a relatively short time. If the gospel, after Pentecost in Acts 2 in 33 A.D., could be preached to every creature under heaven by 60 A.D., Colossians 1:23, a time span of approximately 27 years, it would not take the 12 apostles long to preach to all the cities of Israel. The Son of man was to come before that happened. So what coming of Christ would occur in such a short time span? The obvious and scriptural

continued on page nine

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is it a sin for a widow to marry non-Christian? Is so, are they now living in adultery? Does God accept that kind of marriage?

Answer: There are many interpretations of 1 Cor. 7:39. Some have argued that the phrase "only in the Lord" should not be applied to the man the widow is marrying, but that it rather modifies "to be married" in which case it would be adverbial in force rather than adjectival. To make it adverbial is to do an injustice to the text, they claim. Others believe that "only in the Lord" refers to the "sphere in which the action takes place," and not to the fact that the man she marries must be a Christian. Such passages as Col. 3:8 "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord" and Eph. 6:1 "Children obey your parents in the Lord..." are cited to show "in the Lord" does not mean that the husbands and parents are themselves in the Lord, but that the conduct of wives and children is what is in the Lord; that is submission and obedience. As far back as 1831 someone writing in the *Millennial Harbinger* thought that the passage should be repunctuated so that it would read "If her husband be dead she is at liberty to be married to whom she pleases. Only in the Lord she is indeed happier if she so abides according to my opinion." A. Campbell agreed that the text would bear the change in punctuation, but he himself would not rely upon it. He did however state that he felt that the thrust of the passage was not dealing with whom one married, but rather with the expediency of marriage itself. Then there is the view that the Christian widow must marry a Christian if she remarries. It is the belief of this writer that the last interpretation is the correct one. Note carefully the verse in question: "A wife is bound for so long as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." First of all Paul states the general law of marriage i.e. that marriage is for life. This bond can only be broken by death or unfaithfulness on the part of one of the parties. (Mt 19:9) When one of the parties dies, the other one is released from the relationship. In such a situation Paul states that this surviving person is free to marry whom she will. If we were to stop here, we would assume that this individual can marry anyone in or out of the church, who is also free to remarry. Paul, however, gives a qualifying clause... "only in the Lord." Stated in plain language Paul is saying (1) a Christian woman whose companion is dead may marry again, (2) she may marry whom she will, (3) but her choice must be from among those "in the Lord." But what does the phrase "in the Lord" mean. To help us here we cite, first of all, Arndt and Gingrich, in their Greek-English Lexicon. They define the phrase "*en kurioo*, in the Lord" "esp. in Paul or John usage, to designate a close personal relation...be or abide in Christ...*gameetheenai en kurioo* marry in the Lord marry a Christian, 1 Cor. 7:39." J.H. Thayer defines the phrase "...that in which any person or thing is inherently fixed, implanted, or with which it is intimately connected...So used in the writings of Paul and of John particularly of intimate relationship with God or with Christ, and for the most part involving contextually

the idea of power and blessing resulting from that union. Of frequent use by Paul are the phrases (in Christ, in Christ Jesus, in the Lord) ingrafted as it were in Christ, in fellowship and union with Christ, with the Lord...the expression is equivalent in meaning to *by virtue of spiritual fellowship or union with Christ...* Finally it serves as a periphrasis for *Christian...*" Thus, in the view of this lexicographer, to marry "in the Lord," is simply to marry a Christian. But what about Eph. 6:1? Is there a valid point here i. e. that "in the Lord" does not designate a Christian but only means that the action of the verb "obey" is in the sphere of the Lord's teaching? We think not. First of all to imply that these children were not old enough to be Christians is to assume something we cannot prove. Many writers believe that these children were in fact Christians. B. W. Johnson said "This passage has been thought to imply that all children of Christians are baptized in infancy into the church, but the children addressed are surely not babes, but old enough to hear and obey the apostolic command, and hence old enough to have heard and obeyed Christ" *Peoples New Testament with Notes*, (Vol. 2, page 204.) If on the other hand, we were to concede that in this verse "in the Lord" refers to the action of the verb "obey" rather than designating Christians, would this justify the same interpretation of 1 Cor. 7:39? Certainly not. What about such plain passages as Rev. 14:13: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow them?" Do we have any doubt about the meaning of "in the Lord" in this verse? Of course not. Nor do we have problems with "die in the Lord" or "Be strong in the Lord" Eph. 6:10. We need to always use clear and obvious passages to interpret those that are obscure rather than the reverse. The consensus of scholarship regarding the meaning of this passage is truly amazing. We could spend literally pages and pages quoting their writings. Only a few will suffice: F. W. Farrar (*Pulpit Commentary*) "The second marriage of the Christian widow must be a holy and Christian marriage." Albert Barnes "That is, only to one who is a Christian." (*Comm. on First Corinthians*) J. W. McGarvey "*monon en Kurioo* only in the lord, not apart from Christ as the specifically determining element of the new union; only in a Christian way, i.e., only to a Christian let her be married." (*Comm. First Corinthians*) But what about one who disregards the apostles' teaching and marries an unbeliever? Where does this leave them, and what should they do? The Scriptures do not address this. We are merely told by Paul that Christian widows are to, marry Christians. When one fails to do so, he has disobeyed this precept. However, there is no biblical basis indicating that the relationship is adulterous. Nor is there any reason to assume that God doesn't recognize that a marriage has taken place. To demand a divorce in order for the widow to then marry a Christian is something the Bible says nothing about. Neither can I. In those areas where clear instruction is absent, we should be careful and reluctant to impose our own interpretation or feelings in the matter. (The Lord willing, next month, we will deal with the question of whether a Christian should marry a non-Christian the first time.)

Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65809.

THE SIN OF PRIDE

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

Pride has been classified by man as one of the "seven deadly sins." It is a problem that we must all deal with on some level because pride is an avenue of temptation that Satan will use against us (1 John 2:16). In modern usage, pride is one of those words that can have a good or bad connotation, although it is always used in a negative way in the Scriptures. When you consult a dictionary, you discover that pride involves the following ideas: (1) Reasonable or justifiable self-respect (2) Inordinate self-esteem or conceit (3) Disdainful behavior that manifests itself in haughtiness or arrogance.

Everyone needs to possess self-respect. In fact, Christ validated the concept that there is a sense in which we are to love ourselves: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Mark 12:31) What does it mean to have a love for self? It means that we care about ourselves in that we work to bring about favorable circumstances for our good. We are especially interested in saving our souls and escaping condemnation in the day of judgment (Matt. 16:26)! A person who does not care about the consequences of his actions is a dangerous person to be around because he is on a destructive path. If you are not concerned about your own safety and well-being, you certainly will not care about what happens to other people.

Authors have amassed fortunes by selling books that are simply designed to convince people that they have self-worth. Do you realize that the Bible alone is sufficient to lead us to that conclusion? The good news of the Gospel is that God sent His only begotten Son into the world to save mankind (John 3:16)—a fact that reinforces the principle that every soul is redeemable and precious in the eyes of the Lord. If you possess pride in the sense of self-respect, that is a healthy thing. However, the Bible warns us not to think of ourselves "more highly" than we ought to think (Rom. 12:3)! While there is a sense in which we are to hold a high regard for ourselves, we must be careful lest we cross over into forbidden territory and have the kind of pride that the Bible condemns. The danger is that we might make that transition easily without realizing that it has taken place.

We are discussing an area of life where we must learn to maintain a good balance and not give ourselves to excess or overindulgence: "It is not good to eat much honey; so for men to search their own glory is not glory." (Prov. 25:27) Do you hear what Solomon is saying? Honey is a delightful and nutritious food, but too much honey can make one sick. Solomon is pointing out that even some good things can be bad and detrimental if they are indulged in to excess. That's the way it is with the man who becomes self-centered to where he has an exaggerated opinion of himself! When a man thinks "too highly" of himself (as Goodspeed renders Rom. 12:3), that is classified as a sin in the word of God: "An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin." (Prov. 21:24) Also, Solomon informs us that "a proud look" is at the top of the list of those things that the Lord hates (Prov. 6:16-17).

There are three Greek words that are translated "pride" in the New Testament. Let us take a brief look at them: (1) In 1 John 2:16, John writes of "the pride of life." This is

the same word that is translated "boastings" in James 4:16. It is also rendered as "vainglory" (ASV). Vincent gives this explanation: "it means, originally, empty, braggart talk or display; swagger; and thence an insolent and vain assurance in one's own resources, or in the stability of earthly things, which issues in a contempt of divine laws." (*Word Studies Of The N. T.*, Vol. 2, P. 336) (2) In Mark 7:22, Christ listed "pride" with a number of other sins. This word means arrogance or haughtiness. It literally means "to show one's self above." Vincent explains: "The picture in the word is that of a man with his head held high above others. It is the sin of an uplifted heart against God and man." (*Word Studies Of The N. T.*, Vol. 1, P. 203) (3) "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." (1 Tim. 3:6) The word is actually in a verb form and it literally means "to wrap up in smoke." This is where the idea of being "puffed up" comes from—i.e., it refers to a beclouded and dull state of mind as the result of pride.

What are the fruits of pride? Pride dethrones God in one's heart. Like those described in Rom. 1:30, we see people today who are haters of God, spiteful, and proud. It is evident from the insulting language that people speak against God and His word that they have a contempt for God's authority and things divine. Man in his own conceit overestimates his importance and fails to realize that it is a "fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). The following story illustrates the point: In October of 1995 off the coast of Newfoundland there was an exchange between the Canadians and the Americans. The Canadian radio message said, "Please divert your course 15 degrees to avoid a collision." The American message replied, "You divert 16 degrees to avoid a collision." Again, the Canadian message said, "Divert 15 degrees to avoid a collision." The American message then gave this stern reply, "This is the USS Lincoln, the second largest ship in the Atlantic fleet. We are accompanied by three destroyers, three cruisers, and many support vessels. You divert 15 degrees to avoid a collision or counter measures will be taken!" Then the Canadian message came back, "This is a lighthouse. Your call." Man in his earthly pride fails to see that he is on a collision course with God, and God is the one who is going to win out! 1 Pet. 5:6 gives us sound advice: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

In pride man exalts himself. Consider the example of Herod in Acts 12:21-23. Here was a wicked ruler who was persecuting the Lord's church. On a particular day Herod sat upon his throne and made an oration unto the people with this result: "And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a man." Did Herod rebuke the audience and insist that they give God the glory? No, but in his conceit and arrogance he gladly allowed the people to deify his name. As a result, the anger of the Lord was kindled against him: "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory."

While very few people would actually declare themselves a God, men often take prerogatives that belong only unto God Almighty! When the creeds and opinions of uninspired men are the criteria for deciding religious truth, pride has led man astray. When even members of the body of Christ dare to tamper with the work and worship of the

church, it shows a presumptuous attitude that can only be described as arrogance. Jesus instituted the communion with one loaf of unleavened bread and a cup of the fruit of the vine (Matt. 26:26-29). Let us keep in mind that it is the LORDS supper (1 Cor. 11:20)—not mine, yours, or any other man's! The Lord instituted it as it pleased Him to do so, and to make changes in this divine ordinance (1 Cor. 11:2) is to rush in where angels fear to tread.

Pride breeds an attitude of self-sufficiency and leads to boastfulness: "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil." (James 4:13-16). The word "boastings" here indicates a vain assurance in one's own resources—i.e., if you think that you can get by on your own without God, you have been deceived by earthly pride. In order for one to enter the kingdom of heaven, he must be "poor in spirit" (Matt. 5:3). The man who does not feel a need for salvation will never bow his stubborn heart to God and seek forgiveness.

Pride causes a man to feel superior to others. It is an evil disposition that hinders our service to God and man. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." (Prov. 16:18)

"AN ETERNAL SIN"

By CARL M. JOHNSON

The subject of the "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" has been a source of concern and controversy for centuries. There have been many conscientious people who have lived in perpetual fear of committing this sin for which there can be no forgiveness. For some people, the identity of this sin is unknowable, shrouded in a cloak of mystery. Others have mistakenly broadened the definition to include other types of sins. By carefully considering the context in which Jesus makes this shockingly harsh pronouncement, however, the meaning of the "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" becomes clear.

In the second chapter of Mark, Jesus is involved in four controversial situations. His main antagonists, the scribes and Pharisees, criticize Him for forgiving sin, associating with publicans and sinners, refusing to fast, and breaking the sabbath. In chapter three, Mark tells of Jesus' healings on the shores of Galilee with unclean spirits confessing Christ (7-12). After Jesus selects the twelve apostles, He becomes so immersed in His ministry that word filters back to His family in Nazareth that He is not eating and sleeping properly, and that He is "beside Himself" (20-21). In a culture where meals are rituals and food is scarce, anyone who refuses to eat must be "out of his mind." Evidently, none of them had ever seen a genius at work,

Thomas Edison worked in his laboratory hours upon end without food or sleep. As he approached the discovery of the incandescent light, trays of food went untouched and his family feared he would collapse from the lack of sleep. To the contrary, when a person is creatively engaged in work he loves and is on the verge of the discovery of a

lifetime, everything else falls into second place. Similarly, Jesus is not "out of His mind" or "beside Himself," He is fully "within Himself," enjoying seeing all His preparation coming into focus in a ministry of service. Contrary to the fears of His friends, neither madness nor exhaustion threatens Him.

The scribes, however, try to capitalize on the frenzy of Jesus' friends. They twist the charge of madness into deliberate perversion. According to them, Jesus is not demented, but demon-possessed. They say, "He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils" (22). The name "Beelzebub" is defined variously as "god of flies," "god of dung," and "master of the dwelling." The implication is that Jesus is more than just allied with evil. Rather He is possessed with evil on a grand scale, sort of a Satanic incarnation (Wuest 75).

Jesus has no trouble exposing the absurdity of their accusation (23-27), but He treats the charge with shocking severity. Up to this point Jesus has reasoned with the scribes, now He solemnly warns them: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit" (28-30).

"Blaspheme" (*blasphemos*) means "speaking evil, slanderous, reproachful, railing, abusive" (Thayer 103). Wuest says it means "malicious misrepresentation" (77). What is this evil speaking or slanderous reproach upon the Holy Ghost? Verse 30 contains the answer, "**Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.**" Jesus is casting out demons by the power of the Holy Spirit that indwells Him; however, the scribes charge He is casting out demons by the power of an "unclean spirit." They are, in essence, calling the Holy Spirit an unclean spirit or demon. Hence, the charge is indirectly reproachful to Jesus but more specifically reproachful to the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says "he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." The word "damnation" (*hamartano*) means "an error, sin, offence" (*Analytical Greek Lexicon* 17). The American Standard Version reads, "Is guilty of an eternal sin." This translation is supported by Marshall, Vincent, Wuest, and others. J.B. Phillips says, "But there can never be any forgiveness for blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. That is an eternal sin" (74).

Matthew's parallel account reads:

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come (12:31-32).

In the phrase, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come," the word "world" is from *aion* and is defined as "an era; an age" (*Analytical Greek Lexicon* 11). "This world" refers to the age in which they are presently living—the Jewish age. Hebrews 9:26 says Christ died "once in the end of the world...to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." How is it that Christ died in the end of the world? Again, the word "world" refers to the end of the Jewish

“age.” The phrase, “world to come,” necessarily refers to the Christian age—the age that is immediately to follow the age in which they are now living.

V.E. Howard summarizes the above as follows:

Actually, Jesus declared to those blaspheming Pharisees that they sinned, or blasphemed, against the Holy Spirit, who performed this miracle through Him, and they would not be forgiven in that age (the Jewish age), neither in the age to come (Christian age). Therefore, it was those Pharisees, on that occasion, who committed the sin against the Holy Spirit! There was no forgiveness for them then; neither would there be forgiveness for them in this age, the Christian “age” to come. It was unpardonable! (108).

Why does Jesus pronounce such a shockingly harsh sentence on these scribes? Because, had they not stopped their evil propaganda, it might become the commonly-accepted view and explanation of Jesus’ power to cast out demons. Consequently, Jesus would have failed to prove His Deity and Sonship, and His mission on earth would have been aborted. So, He “nips their theory in the bud.” He pronounces such a harsh penalty upon them that this particular charge against Christ is stopped. There is no record of this sin ever being committed by anyone else subsequent to that time.

As mentioned earlier, the subject of the “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit” has been a source of concern and controversy for centuries. It is primarily because of a failure to study Jesus’ words within their context, however, that some expositors have mistakenly broadened the definition to include other types of sins.

Some Bible students have concluded the “sin unto death,” mentioned in I John 5:16, is the “unpardonable sin.” The “sin unto death,” though, refers to a sin for which there has been no repentance. It does not refer to a sin that is *unpardonable*, but rather to a sin that is *unpardoned* because of a lack of repentance.

Other Bible students have pointed to Hebrews 6:4-6 where the writer says, “For it is impossible...If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;” as an example of the unpardonable sin. This passage, though, says nothing about its being “impossible to be forgiven.” The emphasis here is some people can allow themselves to become so depraved in sin and hardened in conscience that it becomes “impossible” to persuade them to *repent*. This passage says nothing about its being impossible to obtain forgiveness if they do repent.

Others have pointed to Hebrews 10:26, “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,” as included in the unpardonable sin. This statement does not even remotely imply the “sin against the Holy Ghost.” This verse is referring to Jesus Christ as the one and only sacrifice for sin. In contrast to the *many* sin sacrifices made under the law of Moses, God’s only Son is the *one and only sacrifice for sin* under the New Testament.

One of the most popular misconceptions concerning the “blasphemy against the Holy Ghost” is that it is just going through life without obeying the gospel. If this is what Jesus means when He makes this statement to the scribes, it would mean they could not have committed this sin until after Pentecost when the gospel would have become of force. But Jesus tells the scribes that if they blaspheme the

Holy Ghost, they would never receive forgiveness, neither in the Jewish age, nor in the “age to come,” the Christian age. Thus, it is a sin committed specifically in the Jewish age and before the gospel is in effect.

Furthermore, if merely rejecting the gospel is the unpardonable sin, it follows that if a man ever rejects the gospel invitation one time he is guilty of an unpardonable sin and could not be forgiven if he obeys it the next day. It should become clear that rejection of the gospel is an unpardoned sin until it is obeyed, at which time all sins are forgiven.

The sentence imposed upon those guilty of the “blasphemy against the Holy Ghost” is the result of a specific set of circumstances that cannot be duplicated in the world today. Jesus was in the world working miracles with the power provided Him by the Holy Spirit. His antagonists conceded His miracles, but said the Holy Spirit, by whom He worked them, is actually an “unclean spirit.” If they had been successful with their propaganda, Jesus’ mission to seek and save the lost would have been aborted. Hence, He pronounces the shocking condemnation of an “eternal sin” upon them to put a stop to their charges. It is a declaration of condemnation never before or since pronounced upon man.

FATHER FORGETS

By D.B. McCord

(The following, under the above caption, was written by W. Livingston Larned. It is sure to find a cordial welcome in the hearts of those of us who have the privilege, and it is a privilege, of having little ones committed into our keeping. Too, it is sure to instill within us that sacred desire to do our best to make of our boy today the kind of man that we and our Father in Heaven would want him to be tomorrow.)

Listen, son, I am saying this to you as you lie asleep in your little bed, one little paw crumpled under your cheek and the blond curls stickily wet on your damp forehead. I have stolen into your room alone. Just a few minutes ago, as I sat reading my paper in the library, a hot stifling wave of remorse swept over me. I could not resist it. Guiltily I come to your bedside.

These are the things I was thinking, son: I had been cross to you. I had scolded you as you were dressing for school because you gave your face merely a dab with a towel. I took you to task for not cleaning your shoes. I called out angrily when I found you had thrown some of your things on the floor.

At breakfast I found fault, too. You spilt things. You gulped down your food. You put your elbows on the table. You spread butter too thick on your bread. And as you started off to play and I made for your train, you turned and waved a little hand and called, “Good-bye Daddy!” and I frowned and said in reply, “Hold your shoulders back!”

Then, it began all over again in the late afternoon. As I came up the hill road, I spied you, down on your knees playing with marbles. There were holes in your stockings. I humiliated you before your boy friends by making you march ahead of me back to the house, lecturing you all the while. Stockings are expensive, and if you had to buy them

you would be more careful! Imagine that, son, from a father! I was such stupid, silly logic.

Do you remember, later, when I was reading in the library, how you came in softly, timidly, with a sort of hurt, hunted look in your eyes? When I glanced up over my paper, impatient and irritable at the interruption, you hesitated at the door. "What is it that you want?" I asked querulously.

You said nothing, but you ran across in one tempestuous plunge, and threw your arms around my neck and kissed me, again and again, and your small arm tightened with affection that God had set blooming in your heart and which even neglect could not wither. And then you were gone, pattering up the stairs. Well, son, it was shortly afterward that my paper slipped from my hand and a terrible, sickening fear came over me. Suddenly I saw myself as I really was, in all my horrible selfishness, and I felt sick at heart. What had habit been doing to me? The habit of complaining of finding fault, of reprimanding—all of these were my rewards to you for being just a fine little boy.

It was not that I did not love you; it was that I expected so much of youth. It was measuring you by the yardstick of my own years. And there was so much that was good, and fine, and true in your character. You did not deserve my treatment of you, son. The little heart of you was as big as the dawn itself over the wide hills. All this was shown by your spontaneous impulse to rush in and kiss me good-night.

Nothing else matters tonight, son. I have come to your bedside in the darkness and I have knelt here, choking with emotion and was so ashamed! It is a feeble atonement. I know you would not understand these things if I told them to you during your waking hours, yet I must say what I am saying. I must burn sacrificial fires, alone, here in your bedroom, and make free confession. And I have prayed God to strengthen me in my resolve. Tomorrow I will be a real daddy! I will chum with you and suffer when you suffer and laugh when you laugh. I will bite my tongue with impatient words come. I will keep saying as if it were a ritual: "He is nothing but a boy—a little boy!"

I am afraid I have visualized you as a man. Yet, as I see you now, son, crumpled and weary in your cot, I see that you are still a baby. Yesterday you were in your mother's arms, your head on her shoulder. I have asked too much, entirely too much! — OPA June 1954

THE CHURCH: COMPOSED OF DENOMINATIONS?

BY VIRGILIO O. DANA O. SR.

The understanding that the existing different religious denominations we see today composed the Church revealed in the Bible is not true, for the simple reason that when the Church of Christ of the New Testament was founded in 33 A.D., they were not yet established. In short, they were still unknown in the religious world when the Church of the New Testament was already in existence, complete with her own organization of governance.

During the first century, the Church of Christ of the New Testament grew in number, and her mission works spread rapidly, not only in the province of Judea, Samria, Asia

Minor, and Macedonia, but also it reached as far as the city of Rome, and to all civilized nations at the time. All these glorious accomplishments were attained by the Church of Christ we read in the New Testament without the assistance and participation of these religious bodies or denominations that are in existence today.

To say that the Church of Christ is composed of different religious bodies, is tantamount of indorsing the concept that the Church Christ built was not established during the first century. But the New Testament Church already existed long before the foundation of denominations. To substantiate this fact, we would like to quote statements we read - from a book, *Churches of Today in the Light of the Scriptures*, written by L.G. Tomlinson - regarding the year when some of these denominations we see today were established.

L.G. Tomlinson wrote, "The first Baptist Church that is known to have existed was organized in Holland by John Smyth...The first Baptist Church in England was organized by Thomas Helwys in 1611..." (p. 68). So, according to Tomlinson, the Baptist Church began to exist in the religious world in about 1611, about 1,578 years after the establishment of the Church of Christ. He also wrote, "Adventism began in Massachusetts in 1831, under the leadership of William Miller. In 1833, in Low Hampton, New York, he began to preach that the end of the world was at hand, publishing a pamphlet entitled, 'Evidences from Scriptures and History of the Second Coming of Christ about the year 1843, and His Personal Reign of One Thousand Years.' When this prophecy failed, he declared he had erred in his calculation and set the time in 1844. This likewise failing, he set 1845 as the year. The third failure divided his followers and out of the fragments Seventh Day Adventist was constructed" (p. 76). The Church Christ built was already 1,812 years old when the Seventh Day Adventist Church was "constructed" or established.

Mormonism was organized in 1830, about 1,797 years after the establishment of the New Testament Church. L.G. Tomlinson wrote, "The Mormon Church was organized on April 6, 1830 at Fayette, New York with six members, by Joseph Smith, known as "Peep-Stone Joe" because following in the steps of his father as a roving water witch, he claimed to have miraculously discovered a "peep stone"...After Smith's death, the Mormon split into several divisions; one under the leadership of J.J. Strang went to Wisconsin, but died out upon the death of its leader; another group formed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, but the main body, under the leadership of Brigham Young, immigrated in 1848 to Utah. This, even today, is by far the largest body of Mormons and his its headquarters in Salt Lake City" (p. 84). Tomlinson further wrote, "The Lutheran Church dates from the eve of All Saints Day, October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther tacked his celebrated 95 thesis on the Catholic Church in Wittenburg, in protest against the sale of indulgences as carried on by Roman Church under Tetzel in German..." (p. 32). The Lutheran Church was founded in 1517, about 1,484 years after the establishment of the Church of the New Testament.

In another book entitled, *Jehovah of the Watchtower*, Copyright in 1953, by its authors, Walter R. Martin and Norman H. Klann, we quote a very informative statement.

"Charles Taze Russell was the founder of what is not Jehovah's Witnesses and the energetic administrator that brought about its far flung organization. The name Jehovah's Witnesses, incidentally, was taken at Columbus, Ohio in 1931, to differentiate between the Watchtower and the true followers of Russell as represented by the Dawn Bible Students" (pg. 11). So the name Jehovah's Witnesses started to be known in the religious world only in 1931, about 1,898 years after the Church was built.

We cite one more quotation, "Felix Manalo established the "Church of Christ." On July 27, 1914, through the help of Atty. Juan Trinidad, Felix Manalo registered a society named Church of Christ with the Office of the Division of Archives, Patented Properties of Literature and Executive Office of Industrial Trade Marks. The year 1914 is very important to the INK (Inglesia ni Kristo-vod). At present the certified true copy of the original document written in Spanish is kept by the S.E.C." (This is originally written in Pilipino; translation is mine; S.E.C. is Securities and Exchange Commission in the Philippines-vod; from the book, *Ang Lihim at Kabulaananing Iglesia ni Cristo* (Manalo), or *The Secret and Fallacy of the Church of Christ* (Manalo), Copyright in 1981 by its author, Dr. Melanio P. Gabriel Jr.) According to Dr. Gabriel, this religious body which originated from the Philippines was established on July 27, 1914, about 1,881 years that Jesus' Christ was already in existence.

Of course, we can quote many more statements from reliable books regarding the year when these mentioned religious bodies, and other denominations, were established. However, I think the quotations presented are sufficient to substantiate the fact that the Church of Christ of the New Testament has been in existence long before the denominations we see today. If long before the existence of these religious bodies - each wearing names and teaching doctrines foreign in the Holy Bible - the New Testament Church was already in existence, with all fairness based on true essence of consistency we can humbly say that these religious bodies are not parts of the Church our Lord Jesus Christ built. And so, these denominations we see today do not compose the New Testament Church.

Dear Reader, do you desire to become a part of the Church of Christ and avail yourself of the promised salvation? If you are a member of the religious body, which is not the Church Jesus built, please listen to God's call and invitation, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). Simply believe the gospel of Jesus; repent of all your sins; confess your faith in Him as Lord and the only begotten Son of God, then be immersed in Christian baptism for the remission of your sins, and you become a member of the Church Christ promised to save.

UNIVERSAL LOVE

By JIMMY VANNOY

Eric Fromm, who was a prominent psychoanalyst, said that no one can love another individual unless that person loves universally, loving all people. Is this a biblical concept? Does God require that we love all people? If so, how do we express that love? A Greek word found many times in the Bible indicates that we are to have universal love. That word is *agape*, usually

translated "love" in our English Bibles. This word does not mean emotional love, and it is not necessary to have an emotional attachment to a person to obey this command. This word also has no sexual connotation. Sex outside of marriage does not show love, but is harmful to both participants.

Let us see if we can find the concept of universal love in the Bible. We start with the parable of the Good Samaritan. A lawyer came to Jesus with the intention of humiliating Him by asking Him a question he could not answer. The lawyer, an expert in the Old Testament, would then show his superior knowledge by answering the question. The question was, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25) Instead of answering, Jesus asked the lawyer to answer his own question. The embarrassed lawyer was forced to show that he had asked a question to which he already knew the answer. He answered that one must love God with all his heart, soul and mind and his neighbor as himself. Jesus told him he had answered correctly and that he needed to obey this, indicating that the lawyer had not been doing what he knew to do.

By this time, the lawyer had been thoroughly humiliated, asking a question to which he knew the answer and being correctly told that he was not obeying the command he had recited. To try to save face, the lawyer asked a great philosophical question of the day: "Who is my neighbor?" This question was designed to whittle away at the concept of universal love. Many Jews would agree that the Gentiles were not neighbors and that loving them was not required. Most would also readily agree that the Samaritans, the half-breeds who lived north of them, were not neighbors. Others who might be added to the list would be tax collectors, prostitutes and the poor. The longer the list of non-neighbors, the fewer people it would be necessary to love, and the easier it would be to receive eternal life.

Jesus answered the question "Who is my neighbor?" with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The road between Jericho and Jerusalem was dangerous, and many thieves and robbers lurked for their victims. On this day, a certain man was beaten and robbed and left for dead. First, a priest came by and saw the man, but he just passed by on the other side. Next came a Levite. He stopped and stared at the man before passing by. Next came a Samaritan, who fixed him up, took care of him and took him to an inn so he could recover.

Who is my neighbor? It is this "certain man." He is a man of unknown nationality, race, level of riches, and age. He is a man who needs my help. He is any person and every person who needs my help. Our neighbor, represented by this unknown man, is anyone who needs our help, and whom we have the ability to help. It is the universal person.

One day about noon, Peter was hungry, but the meal was not yet ready, so he went on the roof. While he was there, he fell into a trance and saw a vision of all kinds of unclean animals. A voice told Peter to "arise, kill and eat." Peter informed the voice that he had never eaten anything which was unclean. The voice replied, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." (Acts 10:15) Men servants of the Gentile Roman centurion Cornelius arrived, Peter realized from the vision that he was supposed to go with them. While speaking to Cornelius and those gathered with him, Peter revealed that his vision had changed his attitude about other races and that he needed to love everyone. "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality, but "in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him." (Acts 10:34, 35) Cornelius and his household were baptized, and the concept of a universal gospel was born. Since that time the gospel has been spread to nations around the world, and those carrying this message are

demonstrating the universal love required by God for all of us.

What was it that motivated Paul and Barnabas to set out from Antioch to preach the gospel to people they did not know? Why would they risk their lives and expend such energy? It was this universal love, a love for the souls of all people. This love should be expressed by us in our support of foreign work, as well as by inviting those in our community to church and asking them to study the Bible with us. In Matt. 5:43, Jesus teaches us that we are to love our enemies. Again, this is not an emotional attraction but a desire for the good and well-being of all people, even our enemies. To love our enemies causes us to complete the circle, including everyone inside our circle of love. Then we have universal love.

The philosophy by which Christians should live is found in Galatians 5:13. "Through love serve one another." Because of our love for others, we are to serve them. The Samaritan showed love by his service to a man he did not know. *Agape* love is demonstrated by service, helping others as we have opportunity, and this love is to be universal. But one might say, "I do not have the opportunity to help most people." The concept of universal love is that we walk around on this earth looking for opportunities of service. The Samaritan had no idea he would find the man in need that day, but deep in his heart he held the concept that if he found someone who needed him and whom he could help, he would do so. We must daily walk around with a readiness to help others. Otherwise, we will miss many opportunities. John teaches in 1 John 3 that we are to show love by what we do and not what we say. (1 John 3:18) Our willingness to serve the brethren is an indication that we are saved. (1 John 3:14) Our love is to be so strong for our fellow man that we should be willing to lay down our lives for them, just as Jesus did for us. (1 John 3:16)

This universal love begins with God and is shown by the gift of His Son for us. God gave Jesus as a ransom for *all*. (1 Timothy 2:6) God "desires all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:4) If we lead godly lives, we will imitate our Father in showing love for all.

The love God requires for us to be saved is to be for everyone in the world. We cannot exclude a certain nationality or even one individual. We are to love those who consider themselves our enemies, and we are to love those we do not know. We cannot love as God requires and hold a grudge toward another person. There is no room in the heart for held in anger, because this destroys the ability to love universally, which God requires. This love is expressed by service, taking advantage of every opportunity to help others.

TILL THE SON OF MAN BE COME

continued from page 1

answer in Matthew 16:28. "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." In Mark's account of this he said, "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," Mark 9:1. So this coming in his kingdom was to transpire during the life time of some of the disciples he was speaking to. After his resurrection and after Judas, one of the twelve, had died Jesus told his disciples in Luke 24:49 to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endured with power from on high." In Acts 1:8 he instructed these same folks that they would "receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." The Holy Ghost came upon them in Acts 2:1-

4. This gave them the power necessary to preach and reveal the instructions of the King who now sat on David's throne, 2:29-33. Note in v33 the words "he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Through the Holy Ghost and the apostles Jesus had come and was revealing all of this. Now he was a king with a kingdom, laws, territory, and subjects. God had made him both Lord and Christ. Dear reader, when this happened and the people heard the first gospel sermon they asked the question, "What shall we do?" Peter answered them in v38, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." They gladly received his word and were baptized. In this way, according to Colossians 1:13, they were delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Luke, in Acts 2:47, words this in a different way. He wrote, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Would you become a member of the Lord's church or kingdom with them by obeying or doing exactly as these people did on that day when Jesus came in his kingdom or church?

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

invite him out to the meeting and he said he would pray about it. He did not come.

It bothers me that there are so many who claim to be hearing voices or in some other way receiving revelations from the Lord today. How does the Lord speak to us today? Note the following diagram.

God
Jesus
Holy Spirit
Apostles
Scriptures

According to Matthew 28:18 God the Father has given all power or authority to Jesus in this last dispensation. Jesus in John 14:26 and 16:13 told the apostles that he was going to send them the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth. The apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit in their preaching and writing. In fact, in II Timothy 3:16 the apostle Paul declares that all scripture is given by the inspiration of God. The word scripture has its root in the word script. The word script simply means to write; therefore the Scriptures are the writings of inspired men. The Lord, therefore, speaks to us today through the inspired writings—the Scriptures.

Let me be as plain as I can be. If you cannot take your finger and place it on a passage in the Scriptures then your belief or practice is not from God! It does not matter what you have heard, or felt, or seen. If you cannot sustain your revelation by the written Word of God it is simply not from God! The Scriptures, and the Scriptures alone, are the method by which we hear the voice of God today.

I talked with another man awhile back who told me that his son had gone to hear a woman preacher and when she gave the altar call his son went forward to pray. While kneeling at the altar a voice spoke to his son telling him that this woman was a true prophetess of the Lord. "Who do you think spoke to my son?" he asked me. "It was not the Holy Spirit!" I replied. "How do you know that?" the man asked. "I know it was not the Holy Spirit," I told him,

“Because the Holy Spirit told Paul it was a shame for a woman to preach publicly and I do not believe the Holy Spirit told Paul one thing and your son something else.” “How then do you explain what my son heard?” I told him that I did not have to explain it. It could be in the excitement his son just thought he heard a voice, or there may be another possibility, but I do know that God speaks to every person in one way today—through his written word.

Isn't it passing strange that all these folks who are hearing voices and seeing angels are receiving messages that contradict what is written in the Scriptures. When you point out to them that the voice they heard is telling them something different that what we can read in the Scriptures they take their voice over the Scriptures every time. Be careful dear reader. “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (I John 4:1) No matter what someone says they have seen or heard if it does not jive with what you have seen and heard from God's Word it is not from God. Let us hold on with all our might to the things we have seen and heard in the Holy Scriptures, lest at any time we should let them slip! (Hebrews 2:1)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2001/02 Church Directory Farmington, New Mexico

Correction: (San Juan County) go four miles East of Farmington on Highway 64, go South one block then turn right (West). Sunday, must call in advance (505) 325-3204 or (505) 334-9017. W. P. Powell, 1509 Laguna Ave., Farmington, NM 87401.

Sacramento, CA • 2570 Darwin St. (North Area)

Please note the Sunday afternoon service for the Oct. 12, 13, 14, 2001 meeting with Don King will be at 3:00 on Sunday, Oct. 14. Please plan to attend the meeting for all the services.—North Area Church of Christ

California Labor Day Meeting

All are invited to attend the annual Labor Day Meeting which will be hosted by the Lodi Church of Christ beginning on Friday, August 31 and continuing through Sunday, September 2. This years theme is *The Parables of Christ* (by various speakers). Meeting begins Friday, August 31 at 7:00 PM and resumes Saturday, September 1st at 10:30 AM and 7:00 PM. Sunday, September 2 services begin at 10:30 AM with singing to be announced. Final evening service begins at 7:00 PM. Meeting location is at the American Legion Building on 320 Washington St., Lodi CA 95240.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

GOLBA-McKINNEY—On the date of July 14, 2001 at the meeting house in Indiana, PA on a beautiful Saturday afternoon, Chad McKinney and Marbeth Golba of Indiana, PA, were united in marriage before a full house of brethren, family and friends. The wedding was arranged in a simple, lovely, and dignified way with one vocalist providing

beautiful accapella music for the occasion. Both families of Chad and Marbeth did a lot of work to help them organize this special day. The surroundings were made to be colorful, pleasant and joyful as we all were able to witness, their exchanging and receiving of marital vows. It was my privilege to be asked by the family to conduct this ceremony and we pray for Gods richest blessing to be upon Chad and Marbeth as they begin their new life as husband and wife in the Lord. The couple now live in Loveland, Ohio, and will be worshipping with the congregation at Goshen. I am certain they will be a great asset to the congregation there and to all who live in their community—Wyn Baker

HISLE-MULLINS—Lorna Hisle and Kevin Mullins were united in Holy Matrimony May 25, 2001. The wedding took place Friday evening in the beautiful garden of the historic Hefner Mansion in Oklahoma City. A large crowd of brothers and sisters in Christ, family, and friends gathered to witness Lorna and Kevin exchange the most sacred of human vows as they became “one” in marriage. Lorna's parents are Jack and Judy Hisle of my home congregation, and I've known Lorna all her life. I had the pleasure of baptizing Kevin into Christ, so I was honored to be asked to officiate the ceremony. May God bless them and help them to keep their vows of life-long love and loyalty.—Carl M. Johnson

OUR DEPARTED

BERRY—Brother Gene Berry, age 71, passed away on May 30, 2001. His parents Robert and Lura Berry preceded him in death. His wife Dot, to whom he had been married 52 years, survives Gene. Also a son, Rusty; a sister Jeanette Holloway; two grandchildren and mother-in-law Margaret Morgan. Gene was a faithful member at the Crescent Ridge congregation in Birmingham. He was a wonderful man and pleasant to be with. His kind ways and unique sense of humor drew people to him, especially children. He was a dear sweet friend.—Paul Walker



Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, Aug. 10—The meeting at Rogers, AR was well attended. Several congregations helped us out, especially Hartwell. We also had numerous visitors from the community who regularly watch our T.V. program in that area. Next we were at Walnut Grove, KY. Here we had a house full several nights, and excellent cooperation from surrounding churches. Three returned to the church and two made confessions of wrong doing. In addition we were able to put to rest some problems that have plagued the area in the recent past. There seemed to be a willingness on the part of all to join hands and work together for the good of the Cause. It was good to have Douglas Hawkins

with us several nights. He lives and works in this area. Lord willing we go next to Deer Park, TX Aug. 12-19; thence to Cleburne Aug 22-26; Killbuck, OH Sept. 6-9; Nashville, TN Sept 12-16 and Paris, Texas Sept. 21-30.

Paul Walker, 833 Mahr, Lawrenceburg, TN, 38464—Joel Smith was with the Union Hill congregation in June, there was one baptism. Wayne Fussell was at Chapel Grove, TN in July and there were two baptized. Kevin Presley recently closed a meeting at Flintville, TN and Don McCord began at Springer Rd the last Lord's Day in July. We enjoyed being in Jackson, MS recently and look forward to Grassy Fork, TN soon. Ronny Wade does a great job with the TV program in Nashville. We enjoyed the White Bluff, TN meeting with Joe Hisle. We were recently called to Birmingham, AL to conduct funeral services for Brother Gene Berry who will be greatly missed there. Pray for us.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, August 8—The work in Olivehurst is progressing. One brother who had been out of duty for a long time was restored. Another precious soul was baptized last Lord's day. This is a busy time in California with many gospel meetings being held. This month the annual Western Study will be held at the Fair Oaks congregation with Mike Fox and Ryan Connor assisting the elders there. Besides preaching in Olivehurst I have preached in Stockton, Fremont, and Yuba City. We also attended meetings conducted by James Orten in Placerville, and Matt Hayes in Yuba City. We were delighted to have Rich Lee speak for us recently and he is to return and give us another lesson next Lord's day.

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, Aug. 2—Phyllis and I just returned home from a meeting in Temple, GA. There were no visible results, but the meeting was well-attended with visitors from the community and surrounding congregations. Several preachers were in attendance also. Our meeting at home is in progress this week with Ron Alexander. We are having excellent crowds and Ron is doing a good job preaching. My schedule for the next few months includes: Mountain Home, AR (Sept. 16-23), San Angelo, TX (Sept. 26-30), Kansas City, KS (36th & Everett) (Oct. 3-7), Davis, OK (Oct. 10-14), Longwood, FL (Nov. 3-11) and Seminole, OK (Nov. 30-Dec. 2). We ask God's richest blessings upon our brotherhood, and for your continued prayers in our behalf.

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4, Box 188, Ada, OK—Greetings to all. Our summer is going really well for which we are thankful. We enjoyed a short break in our schedule for the 4th of July meeting at Sulphur. The meeting was really good, the weather cooperated (cool), the crowds were good (710 counted one night), preaching, singing, fellowship were great. Bros. Barney Owens and Morgan Striping did an exceptional job in conducting the meeting. While at home we had the great pleasure of baptizing a young couple into Christ. After Sulphur we were in a meeting at Pearlhaven, MS. It has been years since I was at Pearlhaven. It was a treat to renew old acquaintances. The meeting was well supported by sister congregations as well as several visitors from the community. We were also happy to have preaching brethren, Miles King and Lynwood Smith in the audience on several occasions. We made our home with Mike and

Chris Smith. You learn the true meaning of southern hospitality when you stay with Mike and Chris, their home became ours for the week. The meeting closed with the baptism of two women into the body of Christ. Presently we are in a meeting with Ron Alexander here at Ada. As expected Ron is doing a wonderful job of preaching the gospel. Our next effort will be with the church at Andrews, TX. (Aug. 8-12) followed by Ratliff City, OK (Aug. 19-26). Please remember us when you pray.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, July 27—I would like to express my gratitude to all the congregations I have held meetings for this year: Ft. Smith, AR, Ada, OK, Montreal, MO, and Leawood Village/Joplin, MO. During those meetings I had the privilege to work and visit with several preachers I respect and admire—Dennis Smith, Taylor Joyce, Joe Hisle, Carl Johnson, Dan Wissinger, and Clovis Cook. I am also looking forward to being at Lebanon, MO (Aug. 1-3) and Neosho, MO (Oct. 24-28). Our fall meeting will be with Doug Hawkins on the dates of Nov. 3-11. The future of the congregation here looks bright. We have four young men who are showing an interest in teaching and taking part in the assemblies of the church. Lord willing, as we encourage them in the development of their abilities and skills, it is our plan to use them more in the teaching schedule. We also have some that have been attending our assemblies who need to obey the gospel. Due to our visiting with them and the good preaching they have heard, it is our hope that they will soon become members of the Lord's church.

Brandon Stephens, Route 2 Box 99, Blanchard, OK 73010, email: brandonandkelly@hotmail.com, (405) 485-8200, June 27—This year is hastening by very quickly, and we're thankful to God for the good year that we've had thus far. We have been engaged in several studies here at Washington, OK, and the work continues to go well. We've also enjoyed several meetings. In March, we went to San Angelo for a short meeting. Cullen Smith, a good friend of mine, is working for that congregation and the brethren speak highly of him. We appreciate all the brethren in that area. In April, I conducted a meeting in Harrison, AR. Kelly and I are grateful for the hospitality of Jimmy and Cindy Smith, who kept us in their home and treated us like family. Brother Jimmy continues to do good work with that congregation, and he is to be commended for his efforts. It was also a pleasure to see Bruce Roebuck and his family there several nights. In May the congregation at Washington had a meeting with Doug Hawkins. 'I traveled with Doug and Lori in the summer of '98 when I first began preaching, and from that time on Doug has always been a great source of encouragement to me. It was good to see him and hear his good teaching. Later in May, we went to Watonga, OK. We are thankful for all those that drove many miles to support that meeting, and it was good to spend time in the home of Bob and Betty Orear. The month of June saw us go to Galey, OK, for a very encouraging meeting. We had good crowds from night to night, and it was good to have several visitors who were not members of the Church. The meeting closed with three baptisms and four confessions of faith. My meeting schedule is as follows: July 15-22, Red Oak, TX; September 9-16, Spring Valley, WV; October 7-14, Healdton, OK. We solicit your prayers as we endeavor to do the Lord's Work. May the Lord bless the Body of Christ.

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

Change the date near your name and address
 Send all subscriptions to 41931
 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Tupelo, OK 74572, July 16–Jolene and I loaded our motor home and met Glen and Roberta VanStavern at Valliant, Okla. where Bro. Don McCord started a gospel meeting that night. Glen and Roberta were in their motor home so we had a lot of time together during the day. They are very special friends of ours. Don McCord has also become a special friend to us and we appreciate him so very much. I lost my brother about one year ago and Bro. Don helped me so much. If you ever need someone to “lean on” let me recommend Bro. Don. Also the church at Valliant, Ok. has become a part of our lives. We have learned to love and appreciate the church there. Good crowds were at every service. Visiting preachers were Barney Owens, Jim Hickey and William St. John. There were visitors from eleven congregations and six states also local visitors. Bro. Don McCord did some superb preaching. The meeting closed Sunday p.m. July 22. I believe we were all blessed by being a part of this great meeting.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mountain Home, AR 72654, broebuck@mtnhome.com, Aug. 11–This summer has been another enjoyable one in the Lord’s work. We began in Ft. Worth, TX with a weekend meeting. We really appreciate the hospitality of Randy and Rhonda Cantrell. The brethren there made it a great meeting with their Christian demeanor and example of dedication to the cause. Good crowds were present at each service including visitors from the area and neighboring congregations. Next, we headed to Medical Lake, WA. This was the first time we had been there, so we were especially excited. Congregations in the Northwest are few and far between, therefore their work is even more impressive to us. We enjoyed working with Juergen Deutsch, who is the motivating force there. In addition it was encouraging to have brethren from Nampa, ID, Kennewick, Wa, and Cottage Grove, OR attending. Preaching brethren David Stands and Gayland Osburn made great efforts to be with us and their help was indispensable. On personal note, I was thankful to have my parents with us on this trip. We returned home just in time to take in a few services of the Lebanon Meeting. We enjoyed every service. Our next meeting was in Liberty, KY at the Hilltop congregation. It was good to see them all again and the peace they now enjoy. The meeting was well attended and closed with three confessions. Presently, we are engaged in a number of studies with brethren and outsiders here at home. Mountain Home continues to enjoy peace and spiritual growth, for which we give God thanks and glory. We are looking forward to our fall meeting with Carl Johnson Sept. 16-23. Our last few meetings of the year are: Hartwell, AR Sept. 28-30, Sharonville, OH Oct. 20-28.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, papagreg@aol.com, July 18, 2001–I was in Farmerville, Louisiana at the D’Arbonne congregation June 6-11. To say I was impressed is a vast understatement. Under the guidance of four capable elders the congregation has tripled

since their beginning about two years ago to nearly 100 in regular attendance. During the meeting the crowds ranged from over 100 to near 200. Everyone in the congregation worked hard to invite people to the meeting. After they had invited everyone they knew, some even divided up the phone book and called the homes listed there. By the time the short meeting was over we had about 100 visitors from the community. Two were baptized as a result of studies initiated previously by one of the new members. Bro. Terry Baze is there and none works harder or is more effective in the kingdom than he. Many visited from surrounding congregations including area preachers Bobby Cunningham, Marcus Ayers, and Cecil Smith. Our next stop was at Capitol Hill in Oklahoma City for a ten day meeting June 15-24. The brethren worked hard walking the neighborhood to pass out fliers to stir interest for the meeting with some results. The congregation faithfully attended their own meeting, which was great, plus we had many visitors from surrounding congregations and area preachers including Doug Edwards, Edwin Morris, Jerry Cutter, Brandon Stephens, and Vaden Morgan. Capitol Hill has a long history of supporting the work of the church in many places. Their latest is helping a Spanish-speaking congregation get started in Oklahoma City with Bro. Jose Manuel Molina from Central America. Capitol Hill is sharing their building and helping in every way they can. I was thrilled to be invited to Bro. Molina’s home for a meal and to visit with him and his sweet family. One highlight of the meeting was Bro. Nathan Osburn translating the sermon into Spanish on Thursday night. I enjoyed staying with my cousin and her husband, Jonette and Larry Parker. Reggie Spradley, Jonette’s brother and another cousin, took vacation time to come from Tennessee for the week so we got to spend a lot of precious time together.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, August 11, e-mail: oldpaths@juno.com.–The home church is doing pretty well at this time. The young men have been trying hard to do their part with teaching and in other areas as well. Last Lord’s Day; we enjoyed a good lesson, and visit, from Wallace Lea, currently from Joplin, MO. I spoke at the evening service and am to do so again this Lord’s Day. I recently preached at Stockton, CA and enjoyed being with them. We look forward to a short meeting in Sacramento, CA soon. May we remind the preachers to please keep sending the field reports, articles, announcements and subscriptions while you travel? We know you are busy and pressed for time but your help is greatly needed and appreciated. We always need material from you. Though the paper has men who have committed themselves to send materials, we have always depended, in large part, to material voluntarily submitted by various brethren around the brotherhood. Also, to our readers: if you move, please send us your new address before you actually move, if possible, so that your paper is not lost in the mail.

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, OCTOBER 2001

NO. 10

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

BY GREG GAY

For any organization to grow and thrive it must have leaders. In the workplace, in sports, in school and in government we are accustomed to looking to those who are leaders for direction and example.

E.C. McKenzie says of leadership: "The business of a leader is to turn weakness into strength; obstacles into stepping stones, and disaster into triumph."

I think every congregation must pause from time to time and ask: Where are we weak? What obstacles are in our way? Where are we experiencing possible disaster? Then, what direction are we going in these areas? Are we improving, or declining? And, what is our part as individuals? Are we weak? If so, where? Are we an obstacle? If so, how? Are we on the brink of spiritual disaster? If so, what are we going to do about it?

In a well-led congregation the leaders will constantly be aware of the congregation's needs and will look to see how problems can be overcome and all strengthened in Christ. In a congregation that is not led well the leaders may be totally unaware that the congregation is crumbling around them and may even cease to exist if incorrect behaviors continue to be followed.

The nature of the church requires leadership.

Of necessity each congregation consists of two or more individuals. By definition communion is "joint-participation" which requires more than one person. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16)?"

Anytime more than one individual is involved in anything there must be leadership. A child playing alone in a sandbox can direct himself. He makes the choice of what to play with and for how long. But as soon as a second child enters the scene everything changes. What do we want to happen if our child is one of the children in the sandbox? We want them to cooperate and share.

The concept of leadership for the church can start there. It is like a second child has entered the sandbox. How are we going to do things together? What do we hope to accomplish together? Can we agree on goals? How can we work together to achieve these goals? In the church, just like in the sandbox, we hope for cooperation and sharing.

Certain people are to be followed.

The writer of Hebrews says: "Remember them which have the rule over you (your leaders RSV), who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow,

considering the end of their conversation (Heb. 13:7)." And again: "Obey them that have the rule over you (your leaders RSV), and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you (Heb. 13:17)."

Leaders should never think the church is theirs to do with as they please. No man is above Christ. The order of voluntary submission for members of the church is given by Paul: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God (1 Cor 11:3)."

In our homes we understand this to mean the man is to be submissive to Christ just as Christ is submissive to the Father and that the man is the one held most responsible for the quality of the decisions that are made in his home.

Similarly, men are to be in positions of leadership in the church, being submissive to Christ and are the ones held most responsible for the quality of the decisions that guide the congregation. They should have the same attitude as the apostle Paul: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ (1 Cor. 11:1)."

Such men are called "chief men" in the church at Jerusalem. "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men (leaders NIV) among the brethren (Acts 15:22)." These men had the gift of prophecy according to Acts 15:32 and were likely preachers but apparently were neither apostles or elders. Yet, in a congregation with both apostles and elders, they were still recognized as leaders. The word translated "chief" in Acts 15:22 is the same word translated "rule" in Heb. 13:7,17. Certainly apostles and elders would be considered rulers or leaders, yet others were also considered leaders.

Faithful men are to lead the church.

Today in the church we do not have apostles or miraculous gifts of any kind. Still, we must have men in positions of leadership. Whether a man leads as an elder, deacon, evangelist, teacher, or respected member he should be known as a faithful man. Paul wrote the evangelist Timothy: "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)."

According to Thayer the word translated "faithful" means one who is "worthy of trust; that can be relied on." This is

continued on page seven

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 10



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-10

Church Leadership 1

Editorial 2

Querist Column 3

Choose One Of Two 3

How Shall They Hear Without A
Preacher? Part 1 5

Seventh Day Adventism Exposed 6

FROM THE FIELDS 9-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King

41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539

Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade

P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer

Johnny Elmore

Barney Owens

Jerry Dickinson

Billy Dickinson

Kevin Presley

Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00

Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536

A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536

periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536

Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931

Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.

Editorial

“THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE”

By DON L. KING

About twenty-five years ago, this writer began preaching against the sin of homosexuality during some gospel meetings. Most appreciated it, some thought it unnecessary and a few were down right critical. It is likely that the mere mention of such horrendous acts made some uncomfortable. However, the passing of the last quarter century has brought all of us to recognize that the problem is real. It is obvious that the homosexual lifestyle is not a passing “fad.” Their numbers are great enough that politicians court them in an effort to win their votes. They realize that to displease such a large segment of the population would mean defeat in the election. So, they promise whatever they must in order to win it. Let’s face it, the homosexual lifestyle is a part of the world in which we live. They proudly parade down public streets and the media covers it. (*One wonders how long the media might cover a “straight” parade?*) They seek to adopt and raise children in their “homes.” They want the country to allow them to marry. If they can’t marry, they at least want their employers to provide medical insurance for their “partners.” Guess what, in some cases they are getting it! The homosexual population has worked hard to present themselves as a normal part of the world. Unfortunately, the world in which we live has largely accepted that premise and many believe it is totally wrong to say anything against it. In fact, it has gone so far as to invade religious circles! For a number of years various denominations have argued and debated as to whether or not practicing homosexuals should be allowed the privileges given to ordinary members. Little by little they are winning there too. In the month of August 2001, it was reported that the Lutherans are debating among themselves as to whether or not “gay and lesbians” can become ordained clergy. The Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, etc. have already gone through it.

For those who read and accept the Bible as truth, there is no doubt about the facts. Romans 1 (among other passages) makes it perfectly clear that it is a sin. Paul said “God gave them (homosexuals DLK) up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves.” (Romans 1:24) In verses 26, 27 he continues: “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.” We all understand this; it needs no explanation. Paul plainly says the sin is against nature. He speaks of the “natural use of the woman,” etc. It is obvious to all but the most stubbornly blind that Paul considered men with men, women with women, as not being natural.

Now the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19) is

continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: If it is wrong for a Christian to marry a non-Christian, would God sanctify such a marriage were it to take place? If not, would it be an adulterous relationship? (CA)

Answer: Down through the ages, it has been God's express desire that His people marry from among His people. In Genesis 24:3 we read the words of Abraham who said "Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Caananites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go to my country and unto my kindred and take a wife unto my son Isaac." Again in Genesis 28:1 we find Isaac instructing Jacob his son: "Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan." Later in the Law of Moses we read "Thou shalt make no covenants with them... Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me" Deut. 7:2-3. During the time of Ezra the people were told "Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel" Ezra 10:10. All these passages were written "for our learning" Romans 15:4. They happened "unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition" 1 Cor. 10:11. In the New Testament Paul addresses this question in 1 Cor. 9:5 "Have we no right to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as the other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" The NIV translates the passage "Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us?" Rotherham: "Have we not a right to take round a sister wife..." The NEB "Have I no right to take a Christian wife with me..." McGarvey writes: "Have we no right to lead about (in our constant journeyings) a wife that is a believer (i.e., a lawful wife; it was unlawful to marry an unbeliever...)." Macknight says, "...that is a Christian wife..." Paul could have simply said that he had the right to be married or lead about a wife. However he specified the kind of wife to which he had a right i.e. a "sister" or a "Christian." So far as this writer is concerned, that settles the matter. Christians should marry Christians. But what about a situation where a Christian marries an unbeliever even though the Scriptures teach otherwise. Are they married in the sight of God? Does he sanctify the marriage? In 1 Cor. 7:13 we read "And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy." Most writers assume that this is a marriage where two unbelievers were married and one obeyed the gospel, becoming a believer. The Scriptures, however, do not say this. However this marriage came about, the following facts are clear: (1) it is a marriage recognized by God, (2) if the unbeliever is willing to remain with the believer, the marriage should not be broken, and (3) the believer brings a sanctifying influence to the marriage. To summarize: it is the will of God for Christians to marry Christians, one who disregards the Lord's will and marries an unbeliever is "married" in the sight of God.

Such a marriage does not in and of itself constitute an adulterous union. For anyone contemplating marrying outside the faith: if what has been said thus far has not discouraged you in such a course, please consider the following: two Harvard researchers Dr. C. C. Zimmerman and Dr. L. F. Cervantes studied 60,000 families and discovered: "A higher than average divorce rate in interfaith marriages, two or three times as great. These psychologists also discovered that when the mixed marriage did not end in divorce, it often was still a 'sick' marriage." Lynn Anderson of the Highland Church of Christ in Abilene, TX did a study of mixed marriages in that church. Using a base figure of 49 he found in such marriages 21 out of 49 left the church. Twelve out of the 49 remained faithful but never converted either mate or children. Nine out of the 49 were able to win their mates to the Master and to be his instrument of converting the whole family. Aside from the fact that the scriptures teach against such marriages, even statistics bear out the great difficulty in making such a marriage successful. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 or rf Wade@gatlas.com)

CHOOSE ONE OF TWO

By BARNEY OWENS

ENTER YE IN AT THE STRAIT GATE: FOR WIDE IS THE GATE, AND BROAD IS THE WAY, THAT LEADETH TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY THERE BE WHICH GO IN THEREAT: BECAUSE STRAIT IS THE GATE, AND NARROW IS THE WAY, WHICH LEADETH INTO LIFE, AND FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT. (Mt. 7:13 & 14)

Life is full of contrasts; we are therefore not surprised to find many of these in the scripture. In His parables, Jesus often resorted to this type teaching. In Luke 15 he presents the ninety-nine sheep safe in the fold, one wandered away and was lost. Nine coins placed safely to secure them; one was misplaced and was out of reach. One son went into a far country disgracing himself and his family; the other remained at home to engage in honorable toil. Later he spoke concerning two men who had talents they put to use and profited their master, while another hid his talent and rendered it useless. He presented five virgins, who exercised wisdom by taking oil for their lamps, in the company of five who foolishly took lamps without oil. (Mt. 24+25). Of His disciples, eleven were followers another was a traitor. Then the greatest contrast of all was the scene at Calvary. Two thieves (by their own admission) received the due reward for their deeds, while in the midst hang the guiltless Son of God. In our text, we have some contrasts presented that shall be looked into with more detail.

TWO DESTINIES

The first destiny is life. This is for those who have entered the narrow way by means of the strait gate. It shows they do not have the same destination of the many. Jesus described Himself as "the life" (Jn. 14:6). John informs us "he that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I Jn. 5:12).

Life therefore is the state of those who have escaped death by the Son of God. "And you hath he quickened, who were

dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). The new life begins when one arises from baptism.

THEREFORE, WE ARE BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH: THAT LIKE AS CHRIST WAS RAISED UP FROM THE DEAD BY THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, EVEN SO WE ALSO SHOULD WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE. (Rom. 6:3-4)

This is only the beginning as the "*crown of life* is afforded those who are "faithful until death" (Rev. 2:10). The grave will not hold us anymore than it did our Lord as we share in the "resurrection unto life" (Jn. 5:28-29).

The other destiny is destruction. It is true that men in sin are lost (under the penalty of destruction) now. Nevertheless they can at any moment step out of the broad way and have life. The destiny of these will await the judgement to be revealed. The Lord pleads to such "come unto me and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28). By rejecting His plea and continuing in the broad way will bring His word at last to them, which will come as a command rather than a plea. "Depart from me, (He will say) ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt. 25:41). Such will have a punishment that will never end, "these shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Mt. 25:46). There is no escape if we should wait until life is over.

THE LORD JESUS SHALL BE REVEALED FROM HEAVEN WITH HIS MIGHTY ANGELS, IN FLAMING FIRE TAKING VENGEANCE ON THEM THAT KNOW NOT GOD, AND THAT OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: WHO SHALL BE PUNISHED WITH EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD AND FROM THE GLORY OF HIS POWER; (II Thes. 1:7-9)

TWO WAYS

A way is a method of proceeding, manner of action, denoting a going, a process. We are all going along in life and the way we go determines the ultimate destiny of each of us. Reflecting on the preceding, each way leads to the determined destiny.

1. *Life is reached by the narrow way.* Truth or right is always narrow. 1+1=2, no more no less. The alphabet begins with ABC, ends with XYZ. There is no other way. Jesus said, I am the way" (Jn. 14:6). There is no other way of salvation than Christ.

NEITHER IS THERE SALVATION IN ANY OTHER: FOR THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, WHEREBY WE MUST BE SAVED. (Acts 4:12)

So narrow is this way that any other will lead to destruction. Christ is the ONE WAY to salvation. He is the "new and living way" (Heb 10:20). What does it mean to be "in Christ?" It means to be in the "body of Christ" of which He is the head.

The "body of Christ" is said to be the "church" (Eph. 1:22-23). Christ is said to be the "head of the church" and then "to be savior of the body" (Eph 5:23). Read these passages please. There can be no other conclusion than to be in Christ is to be in His body—the church.

Further, we are told that men are "baptized into Christ" (Gal. 3:27). In another place we are told that we are "baptized into the body" (I Cor. 12:13). The act that puts one into Christ puts him into the body—the church.

Now, Christ is the way, so His body—the church, is the way. If one gets into Christ by the same action that puts him into the church, and those in the way are saved, and Jesus is the savior of the church—His body, it is necessary to be in the church to be saved by the Savior.

When it is pointed out that the Lord built His church (Mt. 16:18) and that the saved are added to the church of Christ (Acts 2:47, Rom. 16:16), therefore one must be in the church of Christ to be saved, the first cry is "that is narrow minded." Well, is the way narrow or broad that the saved travel? Like Joshua of old we must say, "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15), without regard to what men may say or think.

2. *Destruction awaits those traveling the broad way.* The broad way is the way of the many, the popular, the way of ease, the way of the world. Religiously there are so many ways that we could not begin to name all. It requires but little thought to recognize the broad way.

THERE IS A WAY WHICH SEEMETH RIGHT UNTO A MAN, BUT THE END THEREOF ARE THE WAYS OF DEATH. (Prov. 14:12)

What could be more expressive of the broad way? We hear it on every hand, as people are advised "it does not matter what you believe as long as you are sincere." "Attend the church of your choice." "Worship any way you please." "Church membership is not necessary to be saved." "Doing what the Bible says is not what counts, the important thing is how you feel in your heart." Such is "*the way that seemeth right unto a man*"—the BROAD WAY—such are "*the ways of death.*"

Some say "a picture is worth a thousand words." If that is true, allow me to draw a mental picture of the BROAD WAY. Contained within most small towns, as well as large cities, are buildings erected as places of worship. These "church buildings" are monuments to the different and distinct beliefs of those who have built them. The beliefs are as different as night and day, yet the multitudes who worship in them accept the idea that all the others are all right. One may believe and teach infant baptism, while another believes no such thing, another believes sprinkling to be baptism, another believes only immersion. One believes that mechanical instruments should be used in worship, while another rejects them. One believes in women preachers, others say women must keep silence. Some accept homosexuality as a life style accepted by God, others cry out against it. One believes in conforming to the Bible, another trusts in feeling. One says cults are right, another accepts everybody. Some think we should judge by the Bible whether a practice is right, another contends those judging are wrong.

Enveloping all these and others, MANY claiming to be Christians think they are all justified. Friends, if that is not the BROAD WAY, if that is not THE WAY THAT SEEMETH RIGHT, I confess I am at a loss to know what the BROAD WAY could possibly be.

TWO GATES

A gate is a hole or entranceway in a wall, fence, etc. It signifies the way one enters into any place. The Lord says there are two gates through which people can pass. One of these places us into the narrow way the other into the broad way.

1. *The strait gate* puts us into the way, which is Christ—

the body of Christ. It is worthy of mention respecting this gate—it is STRAIT—not STRAIGHT. *Strait* is narrow, confined, compressed, as a “straitjacket.” There can be little doubt to the Bible reader how this is done.

FOR AS MANY OF YOU AS HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST HAVE PUT ON CHRIST. (Gal. 3:27)

The Apostle says we are “baptized into Christ.” That is the way. It is rather compressed, as it allows of no other means of entrance. The question may be asked: “how does one get into Christ?” The answer: “he is baptized into Christ.” That is what your Bible teaches.

We have learned already; to be in Christ is to be in the body of Christ, the church, so:

FOR BY ONE SPIRIT ARE WE ALL BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY (I Cor. 12:13)

How does one get into the body or church? He is baptized into the body of Christ. To deny that is to deny the word of the Holy Spirit. To obey the word of the Holy Spirit one must be baptized and when baptized he is placed in the body of Christ—the church of Christ.

2. *The wide gate* puts one in the broad way. The wide gate is easily entered. It is accommodating to all. Whatever one believes gains for him access through the wide gate. Family ties, faith only, getting in the spirit, prayer, etc. etc. are ways preached to put one INTO CHRIST, but are requirements of men not God. These are the gate that Jesus describes as wide.

THE CHOICE IS YOURS – THE CHOICE MUST BE MADE

Salvation and eternal life are before each of us. We must select the end we desire. If we choose life, then we must live a certain kind of life, a life in Christ Jesus. Choosing that life is to enter into Christ by the strait gate. If we decide against Christ, or decide for another way, another kind of life, another church, we have selected destruction.—OPA

“HOW SHALL THEY HEAR WITHOUT A PREACHER? - PART 1”

By Clovis T. Cook

Preaching the gospel is a very important and unique calling. Soul-saving is the greatest work on earth, and preaching the gospel plays as large a role, if not more so, than any other act in this endeavor. Therefore, in order to preach the gospel you must have the preacher. The word preacher is from the Greek *Kerux*, “A herald or preacher of the gospel” as in Rom. 10:14, “where the verb *Kerusso* is used, it means to herald or proclaim.” *Kerux* indicates the preacher as a proclamation; evangelists points to his message as glad tidings” (W. E. Vine, P. 201-203).

In the above quotation, Paul is simply pointing out that the Gentiles could not be expected to believe on one of whom they had not heard; and, of course this is true of anyone today. It is impossible to please God without faith we have learned in Heb. 11:6. But faith comes by hearing the word of God according to Rom. 10:17. Phillips says: “Belief, you see, can only come from hearing the message, and the message is the word of Christ.” The New English says: “We conclude that faith is awakened by the message, and the message that awakens it comes through the word of Christ.” The meaning is clear; there is a message to be

delivered, a sermon to be preached and the word of God to be proclaimed. The salvation of mankind depends on it. This leads us then into a study of its importance, and to whom belongs the responsibility.

There has been in the past some thought given to the words “teach” and “preach” as to whether they mean the same. First, let me say, they do not come from the same Greek word. The word teach is from *Didasko*, “is used absolutely, to give instruction.” The verb preach, is *Kerusso*, the meaning of which we have already given. Reason teaches that one can be both a teacher and a preacher. All preachers are teachers, but I doubt that one can say all teachers are preachers. Paul was both of course; see 1 Tim. 2:7 and 2 Tim. 1:11.

He said he was ordained and appointed a preacher; also a teacher of the Gentiles. All roosters are chickens, but all chickens are not roosters. However, I personally feel that the difference is negligible. Jesus said. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”—(Matt. 28:19-20). Teach—No. 1, since preaching is teaching, this can be done by preaching the gospel. In Mark’s account of this same matter he uses the word “preach” (Mk. 16:15). Baptize—No. 2, how can one know the importance of baptism if he were never taught; if he never heard about it? Teach—No. 3, now they must be taught to obey and observe the laws of God.

The importance of preaching and teaching the truth as it is revealed in the Bible must not be underestimated. The salvation of the world and the cleansing of the sanctuary depend on it. Do not be ashamed of the gospel, my friend, for it is God’s power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). Never neglect an opportunity to preach it and teach it. You might be surprised how its simplicity impresses. Paul preached it to governors and kings, in its most simple form. It “shook ‘em up from head to toe” (Acts 24, 25, and 26). Paul told the wicked and immoral governor Felix just where his trouble was as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. With King Agrippa, he used a different approach in calling him an expert in matters pertaining to the Jews. If this is called philosophy, psychology, metaphysics, or just plain old horse-sense, this I can take. Here were two men and their situations were different; so, Paul approached them differently. This is wisdom. Paul said, “Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time” (Col. 4:5). Now, Paul’s approach was different because these two men had different circumstances surrounding them; however, his message was clear and simple to each. We must strive never to preach over the heads of those to whom we preach, lest we lose them. Preachers should never let much learning (literary or otherwise), make them mad. The better educated preachers do not have to advertise by telling about it, for they could not hide it if they wanted to. I am very thankful that we have some among us like that.

In some circles of late the importance of a gospel preacher, and respect for his work has been diminished. Let us examine a few cases of conversion and see how God used the preacher. When the church was established twelve preachers were present; one of whom preached the first gospel sermon ever preached. In Acts 2, it shows that

the preacher answered their questions, verse 28, and later about three thousand were baptized. In Acts 10, we learn that Peter was sent to Caesarea, to the house of Cornelius to preach to him, and having done so he commanded them to be baptized. In Acts 8, God sent a preacher running through the desert to meet a man from Ethiopia, to preach to him, which he did, and after baptizing him the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing. In Acts 8 and 22, we read about the big, bad persecutor of the church, Saul of Tarsus: While this man was on his way to Damascus, God struck him blind and brought him into subjection. No doubt God could have finished him off right here, but He did not for He had a work for him to do. So, he was sent to the preacher. The preacher was scared and did not take to the idea kindly. But Saul was under control. The preacher told him to get up and be baptized and wash away his sins. We could cite other cases, but these should be sufficient to show that God put the preacher in His plan, for how can you hear without a preacher?

If God saw the necessity of using the preacher in almost every case of conversion in the New Testament, in times of miracles and direct inspiration, is there any reason why we should expect anything different or less in our times? It is the same gospel the Apostles preached, and will accomplish the same effect when obeyed. The church and the preacher must work together to get the job done, and the amount of time that it takes is secondary in my opinion. Paul stayed three months in Greece (Acts 20:2-3). Paul stayed in Ephesus two years disputing in the synagogue, and the school of one Tyrannus (Acts 19:8-10). For one year Paul and Barnabas assembled themselves with the church at Antioch, and taught much people (Acts 11:26). On his return trip to Antioch, Paul with his traveling companions, abode a long time with the disciples (Acts 14:26-28).

In closing I have been here in Kansas City, twelve years now, with more opportunity and more leads available to me than when I came. In a City this size of slightly more than half a million people, there is no limit to the work of preaching the gospel that should be done. With the church having sustained its greatest growth in 1967 than in any previous year since I have been here, we feel that we are just now getting ready to do something. We have one man in this congregation that has been directly responsible for at least seven baptisms since I have been here. This man works for a living. Others have been instrumental in the restoration and conversion of several. What could a man do if he could go at this work full time without having to entangle himself with the affairs of this life (2 Tim. 2:4)? In our next article we will talk about some desired qualities to be found in a preacher; his ordination or appointment, and his support.—OPA 1968

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISM EXPOSED

By EDWIN S. MORRIS

From the pages of history we learn concerning this sect and their origin. *The Universal Standard Encyclopedia* gives the following: "Adventists, a group of American religious sects characterized by their expectation of the second coming of Christ, and the commencement of the millennium. The earliest to bear the name were followers

of the American evangelist William Miller, who expected the end of the world in October 1843. The principal Adventist bodies are now the Advent Christian Church and the Seventh-Day Adventist Denomination." In the book *Churches of Today* by L.G. Tomlinson we read: "Adventism began in Massachusetts in 1831, under the leadership of William Miller. In 1833, in Low Hampton, New York, he began to preach that the end of the world was at hand, publishing a pamphlet entitled, *Evidences from the Scripture and History of the Second coming of Christ about the year of 1843, and of His Personal Reign of One Thousand Years.*" When this prophecy failed he declared he had erred in his calculation and set the time in 1844. This likewise failing, he set 1845 as the year. The third failure divided his followers and out of the fragments Seventh-Day Adventism was constructed. Adding some new doctrine, the principal one of which was Sabbath-keeping, that is, Saturday, for to this time all the followers of Miller had kept Sunday. Elder James White and his wife, in 1846, became the leaders of the Seventh-Day branch of Adventism."

Jesus over and over again warned in the plainest possible language, just what Adventists did in 1843 and again in 1844—setting a definite time for the Lord to come. In Matt. 24:36 "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven but my Father only." Vs. 42—"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Vs. 44—"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 25:13—"Watch therefore: for you know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." The failure of their set time has proved their folly to all the world. So we see very plainly that no one, not even the angels or the Son, knows the time of His coming, only the Father.

Next, we want to notice their teaching of keeping the Sabbath or Saturday. Seventh-Day Adventism teaches that there were two separate laws given at Sinai. (1) The one written on stones which was deposited in the ark and related only to moral duties. (2) The other given to Moses privately and written with a pen in a book which was deposited in a receptacle by the side of the ark and related only to ceremonial duties (Deut. 31:26). (Quoted from *Synopsis of Present Truth*, page 255). In their teaching they teach that the ceremonial law "only" was nailed to the cross and that the ten commandments are still binding. But let us notice what the Apostle Paul teaches concerning this in 2 Cor. 3:6-11. In verse 6 Paul says that God has made us sufficient for these things. "Not of the letter"—The contrast is between the law and the gospel, between Moses and Christ, between laws imposed from without and from within. "Letter killeth"—The law. It condemns all who do not obey its commands, but could make no man perfect. The law places under the sentence of death. In this sense, therefore the letter killeth. "Spirit giveth light"—That is the Gospel bestows eternal life. In verse 7 Paul refers to it as the "ministration of death"—The Old covenant, the law is so called, because it places under the sentence of death. In this sense, therefore the letter killeth. "Written and engraven in stones"—Literally engraven on stones by means of letters. Notice that only the ten commandments were written on stones. It was the central and most important part of the Old Covenant. Notice that when Paul speaks of

the Old Testament, he includes the ten commandments, and does not simply mean the ceremonial law, their doctrine argues. He shows that this law is temporary and must be done away. Paul goes ahead to show how much superior the new law is over the old. Further in the chapter he shows that when the people read the law that a veil is over their face and they cannot see that this law was taken away in Christ. Christ nailed this law which included "Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy" to the cross.

Today we are to keep the First Day of the week as we read in the New Testament in Acts 20:7. This New Testament is to remain (2 Cor. 3:11). The heathen world was not under the law and did not keep the sabbath. It is noteworthy that the Apostles never once mentioned the keeping of the seventh day but taught those converted from heathenism to keep the first day of the week. If we were to keep the "sabbath" as taught by these people why were those that were never familiar with it not taught to do so? We read in Acts 20:7 "and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

The Bible teaches only one law given unto those people. In Nehemiah 8:2: "And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and that could understand, upon the first day of the seventh month" and in the third verse the scriptures say—"and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." The law of the Lord contained both so-called moral and ceremonial law (Matt. 22:36-40).

It is plain by the Scriptures that the Seventh Day adventist doctrine, like all other false doctrines, falls when tested by the Word of God. Many more scriptures could be given but we feel these sufficient to prove that their practice of worshipping on Saturday instead of the First day of the week is error; Also that the ten commandments were a part of the law and they passed away along with all the law when Christ died. Christ initiated a New Covenant and in this New Covenant gave us the First day of the week to worship him.—OPA 1968

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

continued from page 1

how the truths of the Lord's church are supposed to be handed from generation to generation. These precious truths are to be passed on by men who can be trusted and relied on to men who can be trusted and relied on. That means those who are older must be very careful what they pass on and those who are younger must be very careful to listen to those who are older in the faith. This is not always easy, but it is always best because it is God's plan.

Leaders' faith in God is easily seen.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (Heb 13:7)." For faith to be followed, it must be seen. How is faith seen? Faith at its core is trust in God (Heb 11:1) but true faith will be easily observable by the works it produces (Js 2:14-20). "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (Js 2:17)."

Leaders' submission to Christ is easily seen

Since our submission in the church is completely

voluntary, it follows that those who would be leaders must display submission so others may consider following their example. Remember Paul's words: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ (1 Cor 11:1)."

Can you imagine going to the Apostle Paul and saying: "Paul, you are a such a good person in many ways, and we are so glad you are here with us and part of the congregation but we have noticed when it is time to gather for worship you aren't there much of the time. And when we ask you about it, the excuses you give are not very good. In fact, we can't help but notice you are able to work at tent making just fine all through the week, but when it is time to gather for worship we can't count on you to be there. We just never know when we are going to see you."

Can you imagine going to the Apostle Paul and saying: "Paul, we think you ought to know we have been hearing from several in town that you are cheating people on business deals. When you sell a tent we are told you represent it falsely and people are saying you lied to them."

Can you imagine going to the Apostle Paul and saying: "Paul, we have noticed at times your language is just not what it ought to be. You are careless with your words and you often use slang words that appear that you are taking the Lord's name in vain. And, Paul you were overheard the other day when you were angry with someone using words that were just awful."

Those statements sound very, very strange being applied to the Apostle Paul. But how strange would these conversations sound with our name in them? We may say: "But Paul was an apostle. He had it made. He was never bothered by anything." Consider what Paul said: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (1 Cor 9:27)." When Paul said, "I keep under my body" others translate that as "I discipline my body and bring it into subjection (NKJV)."

How could Paul say, "follow me?" Because he had an awareness of potential problems in his own life and he worked hard to overcome those problems. He knew he needed to discipline himself to be worthy to be followed by others. Leaders today must do the same. Leaders who lead careless lives introduce chaos into God's order, which can only result in a congregation's ultimate demise.

Leaders must walk their talk.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (Heb 13:7)." Leaders are to be heard, watched, and followed. Nothing is more confusing in a home than parents who say one thing and do something else on a consistent basis. The same can apply to a congregation. It is necessary for teachers to teach good lessons, but if they themselves don't even follow their own words that becomes very confusing to the listeners.

Leaders watch for the souls of others.

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief for that is unprofitable for you (Heb 13:17)." Thayer says this type of "watch" is "to exercise constant vigilance over something" and he adds this is "an image drawn from shepherds." Of necessity, those who are leaders in the Lord's church need to know and get to know all in the

congregation. That takes dedication of many things including time, love, and hospitality.

Leaders are the chief servants.

Those who would be leaders must be well known by how they serve others. Jesus said: "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant (Matt 20:27)." When we look to the life of Jesus we find great examples of service. All during his time with his disciples, he constantly served others. When Jesus washed the disciples' feet (Jn 13:5) he was showing humility that all should learn from and exemplify. Willingness to serve others is the heart of Christianity. If service cannot be seen in a man, no matter what else he may be, he is not the leader God wants.

Servant Leaders must be willing to contribute more than just an opinion.

There are many who have great opinions of what needs to be done in a congregation or the brotherhood but are not willing to lift a finger to help. They are willing for a congregation to grow, but they are not actively inviting their friends to worship or studies. They are willing for the teaching to improve, but they are not willing to study. They are willing for the singing to be better, but they are not willing to sing out. They are willing for the gospel to be preached in other places, but they are not willing to contribute an extra dollar for that to happen. I never mind hearing suggestions from working Christians. But I get insulted quickly when folks seem to make it their life's work to share complaints with all who will listen. Such members can drain the life out of a congregation just as water is squeezed out of a sponge.

Leaders must be spiritual.

Paul describes those who are to help restore one who has been overtaken in a fault as "ye which are spiritual (Gal 6:1)." When someone is spiritual they are seeking God's wisdom and doing their best to avoid being carnal with their thoughts and decisions. Vines says "men in Christ who walk so as to please God are 'spiritual.'" Certainly leaders would be spiritual men, doing their very best to avoid even the very appearance of evil and constantly feasting on the word of God to gain a deeper understanding of its truths to achieve greater maturity in Christ.

The results of proper leadership.

Brethren it is correct that church leadership includes careful appointing of song leaders and teachers as well as careful selection of preachers for meetings. Likewise, it is fine for church leadership to be concerned about the appearance of a place of worship and its grounds. And, it is correct that leadership be concerned with every home in the congregation that it may be a haven of righteousness. But surely leadership of God's people does not stop there.

With maturity, every congregation will look beyond itself with a sense of obligation to share the gospel with others. After all, Jesus did say: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (MK 16:15)." And it was Jesus who said "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest (John 4:35)."

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

being spoken of as one that is difficult to understand. In a recent article in a local Sunday newspaper a writer says: "In one of the most memorable passages of Genesis, God destroys the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of unnamed sins...." Anyone who reads the story given there knows perfectly well what the sins were. In Genesis 19:5 it says: "And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came into thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may KNOW them." The word "know" as used here has a great variety of uses. However, it is used here with a sexual connotation. Lot recognized it and that's why he said in verse 7 "...I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly." Lot knew the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were filled with homosexuals and he also knew that the intentions of the men of the city who had gathered around his home that night were to engage in a sinful activity with his guests. That's why he called it wickedness. He knew what they wanted to do was sin! Some time ago, a homosexual writer asserted that perhaps the cities were destroyed because the people were not hospitable! Certainly, he said, it wasn't because the people were largely homosexual.

However, ridiculous and strange this may seem to you, please know that little by little, this country is being converted to accept their sinful lifestyle. More and more we hear that it is unfair and bigoted to speak out against the sin. Our children in many places, are growing up hearing that it is just as bad to be opposed to the "gay and lesbian" lifestyle as it is to be racially prejudiced. There is no doubt that it is wrong to judge a person because of his race or skin color. There is no question there. A person has no choice as to what race he or she may be. However, sexual preference is just that, a preference. When a person wants to serve the Lord, he has some choices to make. If he wants to please God, he must honor the moral code given by God. Paul said, "But I keep under my body, and bring into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (1 Corinthians 9:27) Our bodies are under our control. We can decide to live the Christian life or we may choose to serve Satan. Some are born with a weakness to lie. What would you think of the person who says he has no choice but to lie, he has always been that way? You would probably remind him that "...all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone:" (Revelation 21:8) Others seem to have a weakness to steal. Must we accept the active thief as a fellow Christian if he tells us he has always had the problem? No, we would tell him that is sin and he must stop. The same is true with the homosexual. It is just another sin that he must guard against. He can control it if he really wishes to.

Yes, these things are a part of the world in which we live. However, we must always remember to let God's Word have the final say. Think on these things. DLK

Subscribe To The *Old Paths Advocate*
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94536
\$10 Per Year

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Understanding The Old Testament: A New Book by James Orten

This book discusses the frustrations many feel by their failure to understand the Old Testament, then develops confidence in our ability to know its meaning and to trust it. It covers the geography, culture, history, and spiritual life of the times from creation through captivity, from Eden to Babylonia. Charts and maps make this 336-page book a concise summary of the Old Testament, enabling one to read the real thing with greater ease and comprehension. The price is \$15 plus \$2.50 for postage and packaging and can be ordered from: Pages Of Time Books, 9631 Wildbrook Ln., Cincinnati, OH 45231-3745.

Announcing The 2001 Oklahoma New Years Meeting December 27-31

Conducted by the Broken Arrow Congregation (a suburb of Tulsa). Services to be held in the Nathan Hale High School Auditorium, 6960 E. 21st Street, Tulsa, OK. Services will begin on Thursday, Dec. 27 at 7:30 P.M. Friday, Dec. 28 thru Monday, Dec. 31 at 10:00 A.M. New Year's Eve singing will begin approximately at 11 P.M. For more info. concerning accommodations, contact: Hollis Allen, (918) 451-9974; hllallen@netzero.net. Other information contact: Joe Ferguson, (918) 836-9141; joeandsondra@juno.com or Jack Cutter, (918) 437-6760; jacknorita@integrity.com. *(Additional information will be mailed to each congregation with motel listings and a map)*

Thank You Note

A word of thanks to the Anderson, MO Park Street congregation for the great Missouri Labor Day Meeting 2001. It takes a great deal of preparation and hard work by all to make these types of meetings successful. The Anderson congregation took advantage of an opportunity to do something wonderful and good for the cause of Christ and they did it. I was impressed by the way everyone conducted themselves and the excellent attendance from so many congregations far and near. Brother Carl Nichols, NICK, did a wonderful job of coordinating the efforts and his brethren seem to cooperate without question. I believe God was glorified, and the Church edified by this meeting and so may we give God the glory for blessing us with meeting such as these through out the years. I must not forget the wonderful meals provided by the sisters and the hospitality was just excellent. To these good brethren I say thanks for a labor of love in Him well done. From Roger L. Owens, this servant was well refreshed, and strengthened in the inner man.

OUR DEPARTED

NEWTON—During her 84 years of life, Orpha Newton of Huntington, West Virginia built an influence that will affect the lives of all that knew her for years to come. Family and friends will sorely miss her love and kindness. On July 19, 2001 she departed this life at her home. Orpha was the wife of Emery Newton. Together they built no

ordinary home, but a Christian home where love and respect for God and the Church were of ultimate importance. Orpha and Emery were blessed with two children, Patty Maynard of the Spring Valley Congregation and Irvin Newton of the 18th Street congregation both in Huntington, WV. She was also blessed with 11 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild and a host of Christian friends. On July 22, 2001 family, friends and her spiritual family in Christ gathered at the 18th Street congregation in Huntington, West Virginia to pay tribute to a quiet, modest, Godly woman whose influence came not in what she said but in how she acted. Saying goodbye was not easy but our sorrow was lightened knowing she had established her hope in Christ. It was my privilege, together with Bob Hayes of the 18th Street congregation in Huntington to celebrate her life and death in Christ.—David Smith

WADE—James Clarence Wade, was born Oct. 10, 1913 near Manes MO, departed this life August 18, 2001 in the Countryside Senior Citizen facility near Lebanon, MO, where he and his wife Golda, have been confined for a number of years. Clarence was eighty-seven years of age. On Aug. 20, 1938 he was united in marriage to Golda Brown, and to this union one son was born. He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers and three sisters. Clarence is survived by his wife Golda, of sixty-three years, and one son. It's very unusual that Clarence was buried on what would have been his and Golda's 63rd wedding anniversary. I have known this couple for many years. Clarence was a long time member of the Church of Christ, which he so dearly loved, and attended regularly as long as he was able. He was a hard working man of good repute and a good provider and neighbor. He will be greatly missed by his friends and family. The singing was done by members of the local church, and prayer was offered by Floyd Massey, one of the leaders of the Lebanon church. He was a very good friend of mine, and this writer delivered the final words at the funeral. Ron Alexander, dismissed the audience at the grave.—Clovis T. Cook

CORNETT—Norma J. Cornett, age 76, of Hamilton, Ohio passed away on March 19, 2000. She was born on April 1, 1923, in Linnit, Kentucky, the daughter of John and Della Gabbard. She was married on December 24, 1938 in Lothair, Kentucky, to Pearl Cornett who survives her, as well as four sons and two daughters, four of whom, along with their spouses, are members of the Greater Hamilton Church of Christ—John and Ella Cornett, Quentin and Mildred Cornett, Gordon and Wanda Bishop, and Chester and Sue Gregory. She is also survived by fourteen grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. Norma was a dear sister who, as expected, took living as a Christian seriously and was always willing and ready to go to worship. She and her husband Pearl were always, it seemed, the first to the church house to open the doors. One never had to second guess where Norma stood in matters of faith and doctrine. She was dedicated and loyal to truth and her life of commitment and her savoring influence for good is missed. And though her place in the pew at the church house is empty and silent, her example continues to live, speaking volumes.—Bill J. Ferguson

PARKER—Calvin Ray Parker, passed from this world of pain and suffering on August 23, 2001 after a long series of illnesses. Calvin left this earthly domain with hope and knowing the Lord. The Hartwell congregation, of the Church of Christ, in Huntsville, Arkansas will long recognize and feel the void death has brought to their spiritual body. Calvin is survived by: Thelma (Edens) Parker, his loving faithful wife of fifty-five years; two sons, Randy and Danny; his mother, two brothers, six sisters, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. I stood and beheld so a great cloud of witnesses as the folks gathered to remember this man. There was standing room only as they begin to line the walls of the room for the funeral service. It was obvious this man had touched and influenced the lives of much people. Calvin's church family was there along with many local neighbors and friends. The singing was so sweet and beautiful that it was difficult to hold back the tears. The words of John in the gospel came to life as I listened to the songs, "Jesus wept." The thing that impressed me most was the fact that all came with words of honor and respect for this man whose spirit had departed the way of flesh. I thought as I spoke what I hoped would be words of comfort and promise to the family and friends, how wonderful it would be to leave this world as this man. It would be most comforting to know that you have in some way made a difference in the lives of others for good as Calvin most certainly had. Then to the cemetery we traveled ever so slow and what a gathering there just like unto that at the funeral home before. I believe it was one of the largest gathering I had ever witnessed. This man no doubt had given many cups of cold water in his life, visited sick ones, and feed much poor. I hope as Calvin had done so many times, that we were able to refresh and comfort all that gathered to see him off on his final flight home. It was such an honor given me to make these final remarks in memory of Calvin, though I was humbled by the duty before me. Calvin was a great encouragement to me and I will remember him as long as I live on this earth. The families in his fleshly home, and those of his spiritual home will miss him greatly now, and long to see him again as we look for the blessed return of the Lord. I request in behalf of the Parker family and the church at Huntsville that you whisper a little word in the corner of your prayer closet tonight. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.—Evangelist Roger L. Owens



Cullen Smith, 86 E. 19th St., San Angelo, TX 76903—Things at the congregation here in San Angelo are very good to date. Since last time, we had a great meeting with Brother Ron Alexander in June. We had several outsiders and everyone enjoyed Ron and Carolyn. Presently, there are several bible studies ongoing with those both in and out of Christ. There are some young leaders in the congregation here in San Angelo that will help keep the banner held high in years to come. At the end of September, I will complete one year here in San Angelo. I will forever be in debt to the brethren here for allowing

me to learn and grow up in their presence. They have treated me like one of their own and made it much easier to live so far away from family. I commend them for their hospitality and kindness. There are things about the Morrison, Jones, Fowler, Wilkerson, and Harris families, and all the others that have made everything work out. I will always be in debt to Mike Howard and his washing machine. Mike is one of those guys that will always keep you on your toes with bible questions and if you enjoy listening to sermons on tapes, he can keep you busy for months. The brethren here have been constant in supporting, let the bible speak and we know we are reaching people through Ronny Wade's preaching. I know this congregation will move on and continue to grow in years to come. In December, I will begin work with the Crestview congregation in Wichita Falls, Texas. I'm looking forward to that. The remainder of the year I'll be in Ratliff City, OK, Oct. 19-21, Turlock, CA, Oct. 31-Nov. 4, Manteca, CA, Nov. 18-25. God bless the Church.

Josh Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, E-mail: Josh1477@juno.com—I have some really good news to share this month - we have a new sister and brother in Christ! My wife Mariah and I met Amber Brown, 16 years old, through the Glendora Farmers Market outreach. After we studied about the Deity of Christ, the gospel, and Biblical repentance, Amber told us that she was baptized as a baby. During our next study we watched a Christian video about Bible conversions and looked at some additional Bible passages on baptism, and Amber recognized her need to obey the gospel. I took her confession and immersed her into Christ, and when she came up out of the water she joyfully declared, "I'm saved!" Just three days later Don McCord baptized Norman Smith, the boyfriend of Nikki, the young lady who was baptized in June. Please pray for Amber and Norman in their new walks with Christ. Because of how well the Glendora Farmers Market has gone, we have also been manning a booth at the Covina Farmers Market, which is held on Friday nights. We've already met some people that we hope to study with soon. I've been doing some street preaching from a pulpit I bring to the booth at certain times during the Farmers Markets (when we're not engaged in one on one discussions and studies). A lady that we've been studying with named Maria who sells clothes at the Azusa swap meet (a town bordering Covina) invited me to preach to the patrons from her booth space, which I did. The college campaigns are continuing, and I had the opportunity to preach at the Fremont congregation last month, and had a good visit with the saints who meet there. I was also honored to preach at the Labor Day meeting at Lodi, which I believe was the biggest crowd that I've ever preached to. Mariah and I got to meet many wonderful brothers and sisters and were very encouraged by the preaching, worship, and fellowship.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, September 13—Due to the horrendous and sad events brought about by terrorists only days ago, your paper will likely be late. With no planes flying, express mail could not be sent which is the way we send the copy to the printers in Lebanon, MO. We apologize but feel sure our readers will understand. The California Labor Day meeting at Lodi went very well. Large crowds were in attendance and a good spirit was manifested by all. We have been home for a time and enjoyed it. We look forward to a short meeting with the church in North Sacramento soon. Too, it has been a treat to preach at home more lately. We enjoyed preaching at the Yuba City congregation a few Sundays ago as well. I would like to mention again to the preachers and others who write for the OPA that we need your articles and field reports. This is a lean time for the paper because the preachers are on the road and have less time to write. However, we need to remember that the printed page is a very effective tool to reach the world. OPA goes into many lands where you

may never go personally. However, your writings can still deliver the gospel to those who have never heard it. Let's not forget them, please. We always need your prayers.

Gregorio Maloga, Ilocos Norte, Philippines—For us here, the churches continue to enjoy peace and moving forward. Last July 29, I was able to worship in Marikina, Metro Manila. This is a young church in Metro Manila wherein brother Eduardo Danao is working. It is a privilege to meet these brethren who are brought to the fold. Though I am not good speaker in Tagalog dialect, I am happy that I was able to deliver my sermon fluently. When the invitation song was sung, 4 obeyed the Gospel. Immediately after the service, we travel for more than an hour to reach a river wherein they were baptized for the remission of their sins and even feel added to the church. How wonderful to see people who turn away from their sins and be back into the fold of the Lord. Bro. Joel Guillermo who worked with Bro. Eduardo Danao in Manila is now here in Ilocos Norte. His parents ordered him to come home to help them in the farm. He is now working with us here so with Bro. Wilson Gaoaten and some other young men whom I'm expecting to be brave enough to defend the truth in the future. It's so nice to work with Bro. Dario with new prospects at Morong, Badoc through the invitation of brother Nestor Jara. We are looking also for the possibility to be in Apayao again this month. Bro. Joseph Aclin came this afternoon requesting Bro. Dario and I to have study with his new prospect, which is a Pentecostal pastor. We hope God will bless all our plans regarding the work of the church.

Jack A. Cutter, 12321 E. 14th, Tulsa, OK 74128, jacknorita@integrity.com, Sept. 5—This has been an eventful year. Recently, we witnessed the baptism of two young Hispanic men. Jose Manuel Molina baptized them. Although he lives in OKC, Bro. Doug Edwards has been bringing him to Broken Arrow to study with them (Romiro, & Alejandro Chavez) in Spanish. They have a brother, Ruben Chavez, who was baptized a year or so ago that attends Broken Arrow. It is through this influence upon them that they became acquainted with the church. On May 5th of this year, elders and deacons were ordained at Broken Arrow. The elders are: Joe Ferguson & Jack Cutter. The deacons are: Rylan Nichols, Hollis Allen & Steve Smith. This year we arranged with a local TV station (Fox channel 5/23) to show Ronny Wade's video series Let The Bible Speak. Besides Broken Arrow, it is sponsored by several congregations in N.E. OK. Also, we have consented to conduct the annual Oklahoma N.Y.'s Meeting. (Additional information can be found elsewhere in this issue of the OPA.) In August, Jerry Cutter held us a weekend meeting. As most are aware, Jerry possesses experience, wisdom and knowledge. He demonstrated all three qualities in his preaching. He is respected and appreciated at Broken Arrow. A few this and that's before ending this report. If you were unaware of it, Broken Arrow is a suburb of Tulsa. I have completely recovered from the bypass surgery performed on me May 25th of last year. Our e-mail address (given at the beginning of this report) was changed a few months ago. If you haven't changed it, your current address will be incorrect. Please continue to pray for us and God bless.

C.A. Smith—We here in Andrews are the better for having called brother Joe Hisle to preach in a meeting for us August 8-12, and preach he did! With his God given ability and power he proclaimed the gospel in all of its purity and simplicity. What a joy it was to have him in our home. I told him that he and I were on the same page, for as we discussed the Bible and things pertaining to the kingdom, we found ourselves to be in agreement and best of all, that which we agreed upon is what the blessed Book teaches as well. We had a wonderful meeting. Good crowds prevailed throughout, from our city, from sister congregations and some attended from other towns that heard the announcement

of our meeting on the telecast "Let The Bible Speak." One couple whom I baptized some thirty years ago, came from a city nearby. They had left the church some time ago, and fell in with the digressives. He was appointed an elder among them, but their minds would not allow them to continue any longer. He felt as if he needed to resign the office in that congregation, so he did that this last Sunday, and Wednesday night, if the Lord wills, he, his wife and his aunt intend to confess their wrongs, take their stand for truth and right and become one of us here in Andrews. Both Joe and I encouraged him to not wait until after he resigned, but that is what he wanted to do, and I have just finished talking to him on the telephone. He did resign and barring any unforeseen hindrance, there will be great rejoicing in Andrews as well as in heaven this Wednesday night. Thank God for the Power of His Word, which still pricks the hearts of men and induces them to obedience. We pray that this is only the beginning of what can be done for the Lord here in Andrews and with a fervency we hope to work harder to help make things happen. Of course we will work together with God. Please pray for us! Preaching brethren, Cullen Smith who is working with the Lord's church in San Angelo came, and what a fine, promising young man. I predict that he has a bright future and that he will be a great asset to the church wherever he may go. Also brother Randy Tidmore and his family came all the way from El Paso to be with us. Our brethren love the gospel of Jesus Christ and will travel great distances to hear it. We are helping support brother Tidmore and the work in El Paso, and though sometimes the work there is discouraging as it is in so many places, thanks be to God, brother Randy and his family continue to toil for the Master. Surely in the future that labor will come to fruition. God bless him and all the preachers who are busy in the Lord's work. Please pray for us. We continue in prayer for the Lord's work and the Lord's people wherever they may be.

Bill J. Ferguson, 9631 Wildbrook Ln., Cincinnati, OH. 45231, fergy@fuse.net, August 20—In the spring the family and I enjoyed tremendously our meeting with the 18th St. congregation in Huntington, WV and making our stay with the Chatterton family. Our Young Speakers Meeting here at Hamilton was well attended with people from 8 different states. The men participating in this years meeting were well prepared and did an outstanding job presenting their topics. This meeting is always held in May, the weekend after Mothers Day, for those interested in attending in subsequent years. We have here at Hamilton 2 new young men who are developing very well in their teaching abilities - Neal Williams and Eric Stone. These men have become a great help in edifying the church and we look forward to seeing their growth continue in the months and years that lie ahead. The summer months were busy with meetings and other preaching engagements. First of all, I would like to thank the Lee's Summit congregation for their invitation to assist brother Lynwood Smith in conducting the "Lebanon Meeting" this year. The work these brethren, along with the cooperation of the Lebanon congregation, is remarkable. These brethren, year after year, continue to coordinate their efforts to bring about a wonderful meeting. Once again they are to be appreciated and commended for their works sake! It was an honor to assist them in whatever way possible to help the meeting go smoothly. Too, I'm grateful for the opportunity to sit next to, and work along side of, brother Lynwood Smith. As ever, I continue to glean from his labors. Shortly after the meeting at Lebanon I held a meeting in Waterloo, Iowa. Brethren from Marion and Cedar Rapids drove up to help in the meeting. I enjoyed the meeting and the kindness extended while there, and look forward to being there again next year. A little while after the meeting closed I was notified that there were 2 who were baptized and I who returned to the fold. We were thankful to hear such great news! It was once again a real treat being in the home of Calvin and Daria Dalton while in a meeting

PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

Please indicate the date near your name and address as to when your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

with the Laurel Hill, West Virginia congregation. The brethren there are doing fine and have continued to grow and mature through recent years and are to be commended for their perseverance and steadfastness in the truth. The meeting was attended well with much help from regional congregations - Wayne, Radnor, Huntington, and St. Albans. Brother Wyn Baker, laboring with brethren in that area, and who attended nearly every night of the meeting, was a tremendous help. He is highly appreciated and respected by these brethren and doing a great work to build them up! Brother Charlie Ross who has visited, worked and studied for years with people all over parts of West Virginia, and another well respected man in this part of the country, also is appreciated for his help during the meeting. Other places where we preached recently have been Ft. Smith, Arkansas; Bedford and Richmond, Indiana; Bandy, Kentucky; Lebanon, Missouri; West Chester and Dayton, Ohio; Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; and Wayne, West Virginia. It was wonderful hearing William St. John, Don King and Ronny Wade in meetings in the area of Cincinnati and now look forward to the Labor Day Meeting hosted by the Pontiac, Michigan congregation, and then our meeting here at Hamilton with brother Wayne McKamie (September 22-30). It's good to have Tony Melton and his family who have recently moved into the area and look forward to working together with them. Our labors here at home will resume and we ask for your prayers. Pray for the brotherhood!

Roger L. Owens, 16768 Heron Dr. Neosho, MO. 64850, 417-455-2497—Time has escaped me as it has been just about two years since my last note to the *OPA*. I am happy to report that the Church at Neosho, MO. West HWY. 60 is growing steadily in the knowledge of truth and in the power of His might. We have enjoyed great and wonderful meetings over the past two years. Those preaching since last reporting were Jimmie Smith, Allen Bailey and Allen Bonifay. I also recall the wonderful preaching of Bennie Cryer, that we have come to have a great respect for here at Neosho. Brethren we are blessed to have some great men in our numbers and we need to remember them when we pray. We hosted the Missouri Labor day meeting last year and the New year meeting this past year. Beside these we enjoyed the Fourth meeting at Lebanon, MO. I was encouraged when brother Ferguson granted me the opportunity to speak at the Friday morning service. It had been five years since I last spoke at the Fourth meeting. I was so thrilled that my son, Lee Owens, was blessed to speak for the master at the Fourth meeting as well. My meetings this year included Brumley, Rolla, and Aurora, MO. I also have had appointments at Eldon, Montreal and Lebanon, MO, and in Chouteau, and Council Hill, OK. I have some wonderful news to share with all my brethren, that is, my youngest daughter, Heidi, obeyed the gospel this year, so I now rejoice that all my children are in the Church, Christians. We have many that are now reaching the end of life's way, well into their eighties and nineties, and so we ask your prayers for them. We sorrow that some things are not as good as we would like here at home, but we continue to seek the truth and pray that God's will be done in all things. We pray for the work being done in places far away and for those men that are willing to fight the good fight of faith and hold the line for truth. Brother Andrew Weaver recently moved to Neosho and is now worshipping with us, it is a treat to have him with our number. We have several prospects as we move forward in the Lord's work to do more each year for Him. We

have a weekly newspaper article, and are considering a radio program. Our fourth Sunday basket lunch has become one of the great times for our congregation as it grants us opportunity to have some wonderful Christian association. The church here works hard to keep all the members involved in study and visitation of those who need help and support. Should you be coming our way please call and let us know so that we can make all things ready to receive you. Brethren it is not how big or small your congregation, but it is humility, and hard work that make the difference. May God's riches blessings abide with you as we move onward toward the goal. Please pray for us.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797; Tel. and Fax: (808) 690-0249—For the past several Sundays, we were glad to have visitors. Brethren from the mainland U.S. worshipped with us. When Bro. David and Sis. Maxine Fowler from Austin, TX came, we requested him to preach for us for two Sundays. Bro. Wayne McKamie also preached in the morning and evening services when he and Sis. Jean McKamie worshipped with us on June 10. I translated for him in the evening service, and the brethren were appreciative because they understood very well the message. There are still others who came but space does not permit us to enumerate them all. But let me say, we appreciate your presence, and please continue to come, whenever you are here in Hawaii, for your presence bolsters, not only the Lord's work in the community but also our morale, as your brothers and sisters in Christ. We continue to invite brethren everywhere, when they are in Hawaii—"the paradise in the middle of the Pacific Ocean"—to come and worship with us! I continue to work with our radio program, aired every Saturday afternoon (4:30-5:00 P.M.) at Radio Station KNDI 1270 AM here in Honolulu. We have been conducting home Bible studies with prospects in Aiea, about 15-20 minutes drive from Ikepono Street (Waipahu). The leadership of the church also agreed to conduct studies and prayers in the homes of each member, where the host invites his friends and neighbors to attend. I continue to encourage the brothers to participate in the worship service. To help them, I furnished them a written guide especially when they are required to speak in English during times we have visitors from the mainland U.S. They do not have problem when they speak in our Filipino language (most of the members are Filipinos). Because some of them are not well acquainted with our songs when they preside, leading, they depend on me to start the song. I have to help them lead in the singing. Sometimes mistakes are committed, but we do not discourage them to participate, for we know that we learn from our mistakes. We started translating prayers done in Ilocano into English, so everybody in the assembly understands. Bro. Domingo and Sis. Josie Presto left Hawaii recently to live for the meantime with their children, whom they did not see for many years, in Lemmore, CA, then in Colorado. Also, Sis. Windy Williamson de Castro, who has been faithfully attending Sunday worship services since they arrived here in Hawaii, will be leaving with her husband for San Diego, CA in August. We will be missing them. We pray for them. We continue to have visitors during Sunday worship services from the area (here in Hawaii), May you please mention us, the Lord's work here, in your prayers. By the way, if you have any question or you desire to ask information regarding the Church here, feel free to write Bro. James Mason of the faithful Church in Stockton, California or myself.

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, NOVEMBER 2001

NO. 11

WE ARE AT WAR

BY TERRY BAZE

Our lives will perhaps never be the same after the atrocities committed against our nation on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. This country has experienced a tragedy that is beyond expression. The leaders of these United States of America have already declared war on terrorism, not only throughout this country, but the entire world. This war on terrorism could possibly last for years. The unimaginable reality is that to some extent this war will be fought on our own soil. There will no doubt be a measured and immense response against those held accountable for the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. There is also little doubt that we have not experienced the last of terrorist assaults against our nation, as the enemies are surely prepared for counterattacks against us.

These horrific events that have developed before our eyes so suddenly have caused our nation to unite. We have witnessed a people respond to these awful attacks on our way of life with heroism and courage. We commemorate and honor those who valiantly gave their lives in their attempts to rescue victims from the veritable war zone created by terrorist acts. People all over this country have come to the aid of the victims in every plausible way.

We have also witnessed our nation become more spiritually minded and in some ways begin to turn to God. It has amazed me to see politicians, the news media, and American citizens calling for our nation to pray, reading scripture, discussing spiritual warfare and our need for God.

Aside from the shock, the deep sadness, and even the fear and uncertainty many of us have experienced throughout this awful ordeal, we need to concern ourselves with our response to these events as Christians. Let's focus on our spiritual perspective as the children of God living in a sin sick world. Questions arise as to why such things happen? Is this the work of God or Satan? What should be our response or level of involvement? What can we learn from all of this?

What Role Is God Playing In This Conflict?

As we search the Scriptures for answers, we learn that there have been times when war was used by God as a form of punishment to His people, or to give them a wake-up call of sorts. God warned Israel of impending war upon them in Leviticus 26:31-33 if they did not obey Him.

I will lay waste your cities as well, and will make your sanctuaries desolate; and I will not smell your soothing aromas. And I will make the land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled over it. You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste.

1 Chronicles 5:22 states, "For many fell slain, because the war was of God." Then in Job 19:29 we read, "Then

be afraid of the sword for yourselves, for wrath brings the punishment of the sword, so that you may know there is judgment."

Psalms 60:1-3 says, "O God, Thou hast rejected us. Thou hast broken us; Thou hast been angry; O, restore us. Thou hast made the land quake, Thou hast split it open; heal its breaches, for it totters. Thou hast made Thy people experience hardship; Thou hast given us wine to drink that makes us stagger."

On the other hand, the Psalmist proclaims that God makes wars to cease: Psalms 46:8-11

Come, behold the works of the LORD,
Who has wrought desolations in the earth,
He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth;
He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two;
He bums the chariots with fire.
"Cease striving and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
The LORD of hosts is with us;

We simply cannot be certain as to whether or not there are spiritual forces behind these current events. It may be possible that God has stirred up the spirits within these terrorists to punish America for her sinful ways in hopes that she will turn to Him. It may be that God will use America to stifle or eradicate the Islam religion, which is certainly anti-Christian and is spreading rapidly throughout the world. It may be none of these things or perhaps there is something else entirely at work in these matters. What role is God playing in this conflict? We simply don't know. This uncertainty, however, should not affect or alter the Christian's perspective and response in these matters.

The Christian's Perspective

From the prophets Isaiah and Micah we read of the peace loving nature of the Messianic kingdom:

And He will judge between the nations,
And will render decisions for many peoples;
And they will hammer their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
And never again will they learn war. (Is 2:4)

And He will judge between many peoples
And render decisions for mighty, distant nations.
Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
And never again will they train for war. (Mic 4:3)

In this same vein the apostle Paul writes the Corinthians, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh" (2 Cor. 10:3).

continued on page seven

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 11



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-10

We Are At War 1

Editorial 2

Understanding The Times 3

The Terrible Truth About Islam 3

What Can I Do For My Country 5

How Shall They Hear Without A
Preacher? Part 2 6

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00

Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536

A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.



Editorial

“WHO IS DIOTREPHE?”

By DON L. KING

As John the apostle grew old, he had occasion to write a letter to a brother called Gaius. Little is known about this brother. His name is sometimes spelled Caius in other writings and some believe it may have been the same man. There is mention of five persons who had this name in the book of Acts as well as the epistles. As one reads the early history of the church at least three are mentioned. Scholars are, of course, at variance as to which one he might have been. The truth is, no one knows for sure if he may have been any of these. However, whoever he may have been he must have been a good man. John says he loved him in the truth. (3 John 1) If John loved him, we should also.

It doesn't seem to have been John's purpose, as he wrote to Gaius, to warn him about heretical teachers who had been about. Neither does he warn him about the many errors such teachers always push. One thing we have learned from experience is that false teachers always precede false doctrine. If the false teacher is kept at bay his false doctrine has less chance of making it to the church. Oh, the responsibility one who schedules teachers has!

No, John's purpose seems to have been to praise Gaius for having kindness to some brethren and strangers who, in traveling among the Gentiles had somehow come to the place of this good man. Whatever else Gaius was, he was hospitable and good to those who came his way. I suppose, like today, there were times when strangers came to the services and were not invited home with many. It is sad to see visitors who may never have been to the services before stand wistfully and wait for someone, anyone, to speak to them. Such treatment doesn't cause a visitor to ever want to return. However, Gaius wasn't like that. He had been so good that these brethren and strangers had returned to their home congregation, perhaps Ephesus, and bore witness of his goodness before the church. (See 3 John 5)

The second reason John seems to have written this letter (Third John) is to rebuke and perhaps try to restrain Diotrephe who had arrogantly assumed for himself the place of boss in the church where Gaius was a member. He had refused to assist the brethren who had come there. He had even tried to stop others from helping the brethren who had come among them. John says in verse 10 *“Wherefore if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.”*

Isn't that pitiful? Diotrephe was not content to just go off in a “huff” so to speak while refusing to be nice to brethren who had come to visit the church. No, no, he insisted that none of the church be good to those people. He was going to run it or ruin it.

How sad that such people may still be found. Some suppose that Diotrephe may have been an elder of the church where Gaius was a member. Others suppose he had been the author of some new faction, etc. Frankly, that doesn't seem likely does it? Don't you think John would have warned Gaius about his doctrine had that been the case? No, Diotrephe seems to have just had a nasty disposition. Some theorize that he was racist against the “strangers” who were perhaps Gentiles. However, all of

continued on page eight

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES

By JAMES ORTEN

The writer of I Chronicles (12:32) spoke of the tribe of Issachar as men "who understood the times, and knew what Israel should do." The "times" in question was the period just after the death of King Saul, when Ishbosheth ruled the northern tribes and David ruled Jūdah from Hebron. Apparently the wise men from Issachar knew the kingdom should be united under David and took their stand early on that matter. And they were right. David had been anointed King on God's orders. Even from a political point of view, it was a good move; Ishbosheth was a weak and hapless leader and David a good and strong one.

Individuals or groups are wise to think about how the times they live in may impact them. I have wondered how the church would have fared if, early in the discovery of microbes, church leaders had predicted the impact of the germ scare. If they had reassured Christians (with such passages as Exodus 15:26 and Deuteronomy 7:15) that God knew about germs before man was created, we might not have had the division over individual communion cups. No wonder Jesus complained to the Pharisees that they could predict the weather but "could not discern the signs of the times" (Matthew 16:3).

The Impact Of September 11

Every serious person understands that the terrorist attacks of September 11 have changed America. We hear frequent declarations that America will never be the same.

Everyone is concerned about how changes such as loss of freedom, increased security, and a sagging economy will affect them. Should we not think about the impact these matters likely will have on the Lord's church? Here are some ideas that are intended to stimulate our thinking on these matters.

A Religious Revival. We are hearing that the terrorists attacks have created a spiritual revival. There is a more open espousal of prayer and a general recognition of a need for God's help. This is quite likely to be temporary if the war goes well for the U.S. Even so, the times may have created a "season" for preaching the gospel, and we should take advantage of it. We are told to "preach the word, in season and out of season" (II Timothy 4:2), and to be ready to give an answer to those who ask about our hope (I Peter 3:15). Christians who show confidence in troubled times, may have more opportunities to talk about our hope.

Perhaps it would be reasonable to reach out first to those who have drifted away from the faith. Many of them know what they should do and their consciences may have already pricked them. This would also be a good time for churches to make an outreach to their communities. We could prepare pamphlets that are appropriate to the times—a list of Scriptures that speak of confidence in troubled times, that God is always in control, and so forth—which could be left behind. Such literature is sought in times of anxiety. If we supply it, we may influence the people to the church.

Negative Impact Of The Times

While there may be some positive influence of the times on the church, there will likely be negative influences also. There is always pressure to unite in times of danger.

Patriotism, which means unity behind our leaders, is at an all-time high and this often brings anger toward those viewed as unpatriotic. There is likely to be pressure to ignore differences inside America in order to present a united front to the enemy.

Our preaching against false doctrines, immoral lifestyles, abortion etc. may be viewed as divisive and unpatriotic.

We already get verbal attacks from those who approve these practices and it will likely get worse. We should decide on appropriate responses to an increase in such pressures. We can not give up the truth. There is good information on this subject in Jesus' instructions to His apostles Matthew 10, the actions of the apostles in the Book of Acts, and so forth. Most of us have not thought about these matters because we have not needed to, but we may need to do so in the near future.

Patriotism and Going to War. In times of war everyone is expected to help and those who will not are viewed as traitors. There are ways we can and should support our government (paying taxes, being good citizens, etc.) but we can not scripturally do so by going to war and actively supporting the destruction of human life.

The church has had experience with our stand as conscientious objectors to war.

As far back as World Wars I and II, many young men did "alternative" services, others were taken to concentration camps, and some went to prison because they would not serve in the military. Many families were harassed by such actions as pouring yellow paint (as a sign of cowardice) on their automobiles, and some treated in worse ways. These men stood the test for their faith, and that strength caused them to remain faithful to the church. Many of them are now congregational leaders.

The good thing about these experiences in the past is that the church was united in the issue. And the thing that worries me about it in the future is that we are not. As Joe Hisle pointed out in a lesson at the Sulphur Meeting this year, there are churches that accept active military personnel (and those in paramilitary such as police and F.B.I.), not just as members but as leaders and teachers.

Our stand on going to war and use of violence in general is surely undermined by honoring military/paramilitary men with leadership roles. If the draft is brought back, and it will be if the war drags on, young men who want to be true to their convictions will have a difficult time convincing draft boards they are sincere. This article is not the place to discuss the biblical basis of our stand as conscientious objectors. The topic is well discussed in the literature of the 1940's and 50's. But churches, especially those which have young men of draft age, should think seriously about this matter now.

THE TERRIBLE TRUTH ABOUT ISLAM

By JOSHUA MILLER

September 11, 2001 will surely be remembered as one of the darkest days in American history. Terrorists hijacked planes and deliberately crashed them into both of the World Trade Center towers, which soon collapsed, as well as into the Pentagon building in Washington, D.C. A fourth plane was hijacked and crashed outside of Pittsburgh, apparently not reaching its intended target. The death toll is catastrophic, with several thousand people dead, including courageous firefighters who perished while seeking to rescue victims trapped under the rubble.

According to the September 12, 2001 abc news.com report titled "Terrorist Hunt," stated that "The Boston Globe reported that a copy of the Koran, instructions on how to fly a commercial airplane and a fuel consumption calculator were found in a pair of bags meant for one of the hijacked flights that left from Logan." (I underlined the words above, not the on-line report). Another abc news.com report released on the day of the attacks, titled "Acts of Terror," indicates that Osama Bin Laden, a notorious Muslim terrorist, "warned three weeks ago that

his followers would carry out an 'unprecedented attack' on the United States, an Arab journalist told Reuters news agency." As the investigation presses forward, the mounting evidence has revealed beyond any reasonable doubt that these atrocities were perpetrated by Muslim terrorists.

In addition to the shock and grief that most Americans are feeling in the aftermath of these attacks on our nation, many are also puzzled about why these individuals would do such a thing, particularly when they knew that they would also be killed in the process. Unlike terrorists who plant a bomb and escape to safety before it explodes, these plane crashes were literally "suicide missions." However, when one studies the teachings of the Qur'an (also spelled Koran) the pieces of the puzzle come together about why a true believer in Islam would be willing to kill countless people, even sacrificing his own life in the process. In this article I will be quoting passages from the Qur'an that reveal teachings of Islam that many Christians may be unaware of, as well as passages from the Holy Bible revealing the shocking differences between New Testament Christianity and Islam. I believe that as the Lord's church it is important for us to be aware of these differences so that we can more effectively share our faith with any Muslims that we may come in contact with. Sadly, at least one out of five people in the world today identifies themselves as a Muslim.

"Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Apostle have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection. And the Jews say: Uzair is the son of Allah; and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allah; these are the words of their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; may Allah destroy them; how they are turned away!" (Surah 9:29-30) ("Surah" is the name for a chapter in the Qur'an, "Allah" is the name the Muslims use for God). Muslims obviously consider Islam to be the religion of truth and Muhammad (the founder of Islam) is the apostle referred to in the above passage. Christians are considered among those who disbelieve due to their belief that the Messiah (Jesus) is the Son of God. Because about 80% of Americans profess to be Christians, Muslims consider America to be a Christian nation, and therefore a nation to be fought against and destroyed in the name of Islam. (In reality, only a small percentage of professing Christians are actually saved according to the New Testament doctrine, but most Muslims consider everyone who professes Christ to be a Christian). According to the above passage in the Qur'an they actually want us to pay taxes and be in a state of subjection to them!

"And kill them wherever you find them...but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers...And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah, but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors." (Surah 2:191, 193) The goal of jihad (what the Muslims call "holy war") is that "religion should only be for Allah." In other words, true Muslims want to make Islam the only permitted religion in the world, forcing those of other faiths to convert or at least desist and accept Islamic rule. When one studies the Qur'an in any depth it soon becomes apparent that the god of Islam (Allah) is very different from the true God that we read about in the Holy Bible.

"Therefore let those fight in the way of Allah, who sell

this world's life for the hereafter; and whoever fights in the way of Allah, then be he slain or be he victorious, We shall grant him a mighty reward." (Surah 4:74) When we consider these passages from the Qur'an, we learn why Muslims are willing to die in suicide missions to kill those that they consider to be unbelievers. The god that they believe in (Allah) commands it in the book that they believe to be inspired Scripture (the Qur'an), and even if they are slain in the process, they are promised a mighty reward. Just what is the nature of that reward? "Surely those who guard (against evil) are in a secure place, In gardens and springs; They shall wear of fine and thick silk, (sitting) face to face; Thus (shall it be), and We will wed them with Houris pure, beautiful ones." (Surah 44:51-54) In the Hadith, a commentary on the Qur'an which Muslims generally believe to be inspired, Houris are described as virgins of incredible beauty in face and form. Muslim men who die fighting unbelievers (of Islam) actually believe that they will spend eternity in paradise enjoying intimate relations with numerous houris wives.

Other Disturbing Facts About Islam

As we saw from Surah 9:29-30, Muslims do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, but Jesus said the following about Himself, "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." (John 3:18) In addition to Jesus being the Son of God, He actually is God, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2:9). Though confusing to many, there is no conflict between these two verses about Jesus, because the God that we read about in the Bible is a tri-une God, in other words, one God Who exists in three Persons - the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All three Persons of the Godhead were present at Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3:16-17. However, the Qur'an vigorously denies the nature of God, which shows that they actually believe in a different god than the God revealed in the Holy Bible.

"O followers of the Book! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak (lies) against Allah, but (speak) the truth; the Messiah, Isa son of Marium is only an apostle of Allah and His Word which He communicated to Marium and a spirit from Him; believe therefore in Allah and His apostles, and say not, Three. Desist, it is better for you; Allah is only one God: far be it from His glory that He should have a son; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; and Allah is sufficient for a Protector." (Surah 4:171; underlines above are mine). Isa is the Arabic name for Jesus, and Marium is the Arabic name for Mary, Jesus' mother. According to Islam, Jesus is only an apostle of Allah, and Islamic theology cannot accept the very idea that God would have a Son. Unlike many religions that are willing to co-exist with people who do not share their beliefs, pure Islam demands that they convert or be destroyed. In writing this I am well aware of the fact that many professing Muslims are willing to co-exist with their non-Muslim neighbors and do not believe in or condone violence against them. I have heard that some Muslims have attended memorials for those killed in the latest terrorist attacks and have prayed for the victims' families. This is commendable and right, but it is not in line with the Qur'an that they claim to believe in as the inspired word of God. That is the inconsistency that I see. In a similar way, America is filled with professing Christians who do not really believe in and follow the teachings of the New Testament, which they are supposed to revere as the inspired word of God.

Many are unaware that the Qur'an actually commands

wife beating: "Men are the maintainers of women because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded; and (as to) those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping places and beat them; then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them; surely Allah is High, Great." (Surah 4:34; underline above was mine).

In contrast to Islam, while Christian wives are called to submit to their husbands as unto the Lord (Ephesians 5:22), the New Testament gives the following directive to Christian husbands - "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...So men ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Ephesians 5:25, 28-29). A man who nourishes and cherishes his wife will not abuse her. How much did Jesus love His church? He loved His people so much that He died a terrible death on the cross to save us from our sins. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) Jesus showed us the greatest love of all by dying for us, and that is how much husbands are commanded to love their wives. However, Islam goes so far as to deny that Jesus was crucified at all: "And their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah, Isa son of Mariam, the apostle of Allah; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them so (like Isa) and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure. Nay! Allah took him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise." (Surah 4:157-158)

Therefore, Islam denies the very gospel (good news) whereby we can be saved, for the Bible says: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures..." (I Corinthians 15:1-4)

Romans 3:23 tells us that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." That is why Jesus, who never sinned, paid the full penalty for our sins with His blood, which brings redemption and forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7). Over five hundred eyewitnesses saw Jesus risen from the dead (I Corinthians 15:6). 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 warns that those who do not know God and those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. Islam keeps its adherents from knowing the true God and from obeying the gospel.

Islam also teaches that one will be saved if one's good works outweigh the bad: "Then as for him whose good deeds are preponderant, these are the successful. And as for him whose good deeds are light, these are they who have lost their souls, abiding in hell." (Surah 23:102-103) In contrast to the Qu'ran, Ephesians 2:8-9 of the New Testament says "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." As Christians we know that Jesus is the "author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9). The commonly accepted "faith-only" view of salvation is false, that is not the meaning of Ephesians 2:8-9, because one cannot be saved

without obedience to Jesus and His inspired word, which is proven by many other passages such as Matthew 7:21-27. At the same time, Christians understand that we could never earn our salvation through good works, or ever merit it through our own virtue - we are only saved by Christ's merit, and justified only by His blood (Romans 5:9). That is the point missed (and rejected) by Islam, and by other world religions for that matter.

As understandably grieved and angered as we are by the dastardly acts of terrorism committed in the name of Islam, as Christians we need to love even our enemies (Luke 6:27), and reach out to them with the true plan of salvation. If you know any Muslims (or those influenced by them) I hope that this article will help equip you to do that in the blessed name of Jesus, who died for all men, including Muslims.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR MY COUNTRY

By GREG GAY

Years ago, some evil men tempting Jesus asked him whether or not the Jews should pay taxes to the Roman government. The Jews did not like their conquerors, the Romans. And, they certainly did not want to pay taxes so the Roman government could maintain and even increase the size of the empire. Read carefully Jesus' response: "Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt 22:17-21).

Obviously Jesus' attitude was that the government could ask for a return of a portion of that which they owned, money, in the form of taxes. Yet, there was also a higher power, God, who must always be honored and obeyed.

Years later, the Apostle Paul addressed the attitude Christians are to have toward the government of the land in which we dwell. "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor" (Rom 13:1-7 NIV).

The only time a Christian should even think about being disobedient to the government of the land in which he dwells is if the government wants Christians to do something that is against God's teachings. In Acts 5:27-29 the apostles were questioned because they were preaching the gospel of Christ after they had been ordered to stop: "And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying,

Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? And, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought (must gg) to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:27-29).

Now let's turn our thoughts to current events. Here in the United States we have just been introduced to the horror of terrorism. Unfolding before our eyes has been an unimaginable series of events that culminated in the deaths of thousands with the plane crashes in Pennsylvania, the Pentagon, and the World Trade Center Towers. Our President is preparing for war, which may well be started by the time this is printed.

What Are God's Children To Do In Times Like These?

Years ago President John F. Kennedy challenged the nation with these words: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." During these difficult times for our nation, and indeed for the world, I think every Christian may ask the question, "What can I do for my country?"

Things We Cannot Do:

As citizens of a Heavenly Kingdom we cannot bear arms to serve in the military. Jesus explains the citizens of his kingdom would not spread his cause with earthly weapons. "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).

We cannot seek vengeance. Paul writes Christians of every nation: "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. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom 12:17-21).

Things We Can Do:

We can be loyal citizens of the nation in which we are blessed to dwell by doing the following:

We can recognize our nation's right to wage war and protect her citizens. Paul says of nations' leaders: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom 13:4).

We can pay taxes as Jesus and Paul said in Luke 20:25 and Rom. 13:7 to be used however the government sees fit, even to maintaining and strengthening the military.

We can pray for our nations' leaders. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour" (1 Tim 2:1-3).

And, we can be law-abiding citizens according to the verses just cited, even possessing a strong national patriotic pride for our nation. It should be our desire that our government never needs to pay any extra attention to us, certainly not ever because we are unruly citizens. Our goal as citizens of the heavenly kingdom is to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty and to spread the gospel of Christ to all the world.

HOW SHALL THEY HEAR WITHOUT A PREACHER? PART 2

By CLOVIS T. COOK

Last month, we began a study of the importance of preaching the gospel under the above caption. We closed the article with a promise that we would continue the study at a later date by looking into some other matters related to preaching the gospel.

Desired Qualities

I think it needless to say, that certain qualities or abilities possessed by gospel preachers are to be desired. Jesus was appointed to preach the gospel to the poor. In Luke 4:18-20 when Jesus came to Nazareth, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath, there was handed Him the book of Isaiah, and He read from what is known as the 61st chapter. When he had finished He closed the book and gave it to the minister, and sat down—"And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon Him." A gospel preacher at work is an object of observation. Most all the time, but more especially in the pulpit, many eyes are fastened upon him. So, since this is true, it seems reasonable that he should be concerned about his personal appearance. I was told by a dear old brother once, while assisting Bro. Homer King in a meeting in Jonesboro, Ark., that personal appearance means a lot to a preacher. I may not have always lived up to it, but I have never forgotten it. I do not think that a gospel preacher must wear "the collar" to qualify as such. I don't think that he should dress like a clown, nor act like one either as to that matter. I don't think that he should dress as if he were attending or taking part in a fashion show, or some sporting event. I think that most of our preachers know how to conduct themselves in this department, and they certainly look the part. Our preachers, both young and old, are to be commended in this field for they know how to dress conservatively well, so that when they take the pulpit they are no object of pity nor one for laughter. What I have said here is purely a matter of opinion, but one our young preachers would do well to heed.

Another thing we look for in our preachers is a good personality. One who has the ability to attract others to him is likely to be remembered because of his individuality; also, one who is able to go it alone, or if he chooses, take the crowd with him. Some are born with this talent, others have to cultivate or develop it. He who has this ability is less likely to fail as a gospel preacher. A man with this sort of personal magnetism, whether natural or acquired, increases his chances to be a success in selling the gospel to the world.

People usually are not interested in how long a preacher may be able to talk, but rather in what he says, and how well he is able to say it. Paul told Timothy to study (2 Tim. 2:15) yet, in the next chapter, 2 Tim. 3:15, he said that this young preacher had known the holy scriptures since he was a child. If you wish to apply yourself you must study and give attendance to reading (1 Tim. 4:13). To be ready to give an answer always to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in you, is general instruction to us all, the preacher being no exception to the rule. When it comes time to hang out your shingle, grab your briefcase and hit

the road as a full time gospel preacher, it would be well to be prepared, for if you are not the people will soon find it out.

Appointment

It seems only fair and reasonable, after preparing himself for such a worthy calling, and it becomes evident that he can do the job, that he be appointed (or ordained) for such a work as preaching the gospel. Where the King James uses the word "ordain" the R. V. and others translates it "appoint." See John 15:16 and 1 Tim. 2:7 where Paul said he was "ordained a preacher;" other translations have it "appointed a preacher" or "messenger and proclaimer."

Timothy was a traveling companion of Paul on different occasions; which, may we suggest, is a fine way for a young preacher to get a little experience, for which there is no substitute as a teacher. In 2 Tim. 2:2 Paul referred to something that was said at the time Timothy was appointed or ordained a gospel preacher, before or in the presence of many witnesses. Perhaps he refers to a solemn charge which he gave him before the church. Who would know more about when a man should be recognized as a gospel preacher than the man with whom he had traveled, or the church with whom he worships most of the time, or shall we say the home church? It not only is a scriptural procedure, but it solves many legal problems also, which arise often in the life of a preacher. To be able to point to a time and place when you were appointed or ordained, as Timothy was able to do, would certainly be to a preacher's advantage. Since Paul evidently ordained Timothy, I can think of no one better than a firmly established preacher who is well acquainted with the one desiring to become a recognized preacher of the gospel to do the job. I think his home congregation also could confirm his ability and send him out, which would be a great asset to a young preacher to have his home church behind him. Those officiating at the ordination should charge the candidate with the responsibilities and duties incumbent upon him. John said, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 Jno. 4:1). The church has the right to make the test, and the preacher should live up to it. We need more preachers to be sure, but the great need does not qualify everybody to be preachers. One of our old pioneer preachers was approached one time by a young man who wanted to become a preacher. The old preacher said to the young fellow, "Son, if there is anything in your power to keep you from becoming a preacher, use it, but if you cannot keep from becoming a preacher then, get on with it, for you will make it." Anybody with that kind of desire, and any ability at all should make it. There are too many excuses used for preaching the gospel today. There is only one reason for it and that is to save souls. God needs you. If you can sell His product, then He needs a salesman like you.

Support

It is the responsibility of the church to have the gospel preached. This does not mean that the church is under obligation to support every preacher in the brotherhood, but since Paul said, "How shall they hear without a preacher" and that the church must make known the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 4:10), then we have to choose a preacher and it becomes our duty to support him.

A preacher called for a certain work has the right to expect support for his efforts, just as the church has the right to expect the preacher to be qualified to do the job. Brethren, let's support these qualified men well, rather than let them starve out and seek other fields of employment. There are a lot of people that have turned to, but few who can do what our preachers can do, simply preach the gospel. Let's not let all this talent and ability possessed by many of our preachers can do, simply preach the gospel. Let's not let all this talent and ability possess by many of our preachers be wasted in the pursuit of other employment, which is found so lacking the field of preaching the gospel many times. Of course this is not always the rule, but in many places I have found it to be true. Let the church and preacher work together that we may fulfill our God-given mission, for "how shall they hear without a preacher?"—OPA 1968

WE ARE AT WAR

continued from page 1

Christians are involved in warfare, all right. It's just that our warfare is spiritual in nature. Islam is in essence, an attack upon Christianity, and in that sense our battles may be waged on new fronts, but we have been at war with Satan long before these recent tragedies in New York and Washington. Paul tells Timothy, "fight the good fight" (1 Tim 1:18). He spoke of the spiritual conflict in his letter to Ephesus saying, "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." He taught them how to prepare for spiritual warfare – "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and with your feet fitted with the gospel of peace as a firm footing" (Eph 6:12-15).

As Christians, we are engaged in spiritual warfare in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. We are fighting the evil forces of Satan with the word of God, prayer, and godly lives. We do not engage in carnal warfare against men regardless of their beliefs or agendas. We preach the gospel to them and slay their sinfulness with the power of God's word and a Christian life, rather than taking their lives by literally fighting them. We are peacemakers spreading the gospel of peace and we conscientiously object to carnal warfare. Our Lord has taught us to pray for our enemies. Just because one is a Muslim does not make him a terrorist, however, Islam is not Christianity, and is its spiritual enemy. We pray that all terrorists would become Christians. We pray that all in the Islam religion would come to know Jesus Christ and be saved from their sins.

Lessons To Be Learned

Just as our nation has united to win the war against terrorism, the church must unite to win the war against sin. Brethren have far too long been fighting one another while the enemy has run rampant in the world and even in the church. We must do more than just give lip service to the Lord's prayer for unity. It's time for brethren to stop condemning, criticizing, and slandering one another. It's time to be at peace with one another and together take the offensive against the world. We must forgive one another, be patient with one another and be tolerant with one another. We must unite on what the scripture plainly says, and stop fighting and arguing and legislating on what it does not say. So long as we maintain our long standing

spirit of infighting, we will never debilitate or even put a dent in the forces of evil around us. The fact is that many of our churches have little or no effect on their communities for good and the Cause of Christ.

The terrorist attacks have awakened our senses to the need of security and watchfulness. Air travel and other every day activities in our country are already experiencing changes as security measures have tightened considerably. No longer can you arrive at the airport twenty minutes before your flight leaves and make your flight. As Christians, we should have already put in place measures for security against sin. Peter said that we are to "be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Pet 5:8). Had security measures been in place and great caution exercised on our borders and in our airports, we likely could have prevented the terrible disaster on September 11th. Likewise, one disaster after another occurs in our lives and the church because of our failure to be one the alert and on guard against sin. Wake up brethren! We need to be constantly watching for the enemy! We need to implement measures to protect against sin. Our spiritual dullness has reached ghastly proportions. We are living in times that demand that we be sober, focused, and alert.

Our hearts have broken as we've surveyed the damage at the scenes of the attacks. The destruction, devastation, and death, has been indescribable. How is it though, that we get so upset about what happened on September the 11th, and yet the destruction, devastation, and death caused by sin doesn't seem to bother us. We should be much more upset about sin in the world and in our lives, than we are about what has happened recently to our nation.

Just as men and women from all over New York City and many other parts of our country left their homes and jobs to render aid to fallen victims, Jesus willingly left His incorruptible, sinless existence to come to our sin-stricken world of sorrow and death to help us. You see, we are the victims of sin. Yet, we are not innocent. Suppose the terrorists would have survived the crashes. Could you imagine people coming to help them? That's what Jesus did for us, because you see, we were the spiritual terrorists. But now, we are saved by Jesus, and we are soldiers in His army to fight against evil. Receive encouragement from the words of the great apostles, "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 Jn 4:4). "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 15:57). Soldiers of Christ arise and put your armor on. We are at war.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

that is just speculation. What is certain, however, is that John rebukes his proud attitude. The Bible says he "...loveth to have the preeminence among them." This means he loved having a superior position, he loved being distinct. Not only that, he was willing to do whatever was necessary to keep that lofty position in the eyes of others!

Who was Diotrefes? He was an important member of the church who was envious and jealous of others. John says he "receiveth us not." Solomon said, "A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones." (Proverbs 14:30) This brother was the kind of man who had such a jealous nature that he showed himself in this way. As my mother used to say, he was the kind of person who acted as though he had been weaned on a dill pickle.

Diotrefes was also a slanderous person. John reports that he was guilty of "prating against us with malicious

(or wicked) words" (3 John 9). Let's examine that for a moment. We're told that a slanderer seeks to build up himself by destroying the reputation of others. Many of us have had the unhappy experience of suffering a slaughter by the slanderer's tongue. Innuendoes, untrue rumors, evil surmising, etc. are all the usual tools of the slanderer. Of course, it is sinful to cause harm to another that is innocent of any wrongdoing, we know that. The truth is, many are guilty of this with never a second thought. It often comes home to roost. The wise man said, "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known." (Proverbs 10:9) We should always remember the words of James who said, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, I this man's religion is vain." (James 1:26) He said it plainly did he not? Your religion is worthless and empty if you do not keep your tongue!

Diotrefes was also a vindictive man. 3 John 10 speaks of him casting those charitable brethren out of the church! Why? Because he was going to have his way. Contrast his hurtful and mean-spirited way with what Paul said in Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." There are just some people who if they feel threatened will seek a way to hurt the ones who are seen as the enemy. A few sarcastic statements, innuendoes, half-truths later, the damage is done and they feel vindicated. Yes, vindicated perhaps, but the spirit of Christ has been trampled underfoot. The Lord has been crucified afresh!

Diotrefes was also a man who was completely unconcerned with the value of the truth. He cared nothing for the authority of the truth as well. Can you imagine rejecting the letter of a known, respected and beloved apostle? Yet that is exactly what this wicked man did. John says, "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrefes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not." (Verse 9) In at least one translation, it reads "I would have written the church, etc." In other words, John knew there was no reason to send a letter to Diotrefes. He would not accept the authority carried by the apostle.

We still recall a conversation with a brother who said, "I don't care what the Bible says, I say..." You see, completely insensitive to the Truth.

There are several types of pre-eminence seekers. Some will have the esteem, the praise, etc., or they will self-destruct. Others relish controversy as a means of being the center of attention. We recall a person who would start a verbal war just to see who would be on his side. This list could go on and on.

We must be careful not to allow self to grow too large. Think on these things.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 2001 Oklahoma New Years Meeting December 27-31

Conducted by the Broken Arrow Congregation (a suburb of Tulsa). Services to be held in the Nathan Hale High School Auditorium, 6960 E. 21st Street, Tulsa, OK. Services will begin on Thursday, Dec. 27 at 7:30 P.M. Friday, Dec. 28 thru Monday, Dec. 31 at 10:00 A.M. New Year's Eve singing will begin approximately at 11 P.M. For more information concerning accommodations, contact: Hollis Allen, (918) 451-9974; hllallen@netzero.net Other information contact: Joe Ferguson, (918) 836-9141; joeandsondra@juno.com or Jack Cutter, (918) 437-6760;

jacknorita@integrity.com. Additional information will be mailed to each congregation with motel listings and a map.

2001 Alabama New Year's Meeting

The church at Dothan, AL will host the 2001 New Year's Meeting, December 27-31. Bro. Jimmie C. Smith will be in charge of the services and visiting evangelists will be asked to preach upon their arrival. Services will be at 10:00 each morning and 7:30 each evening. We will be assembling at the Hartford Highway Church of Christ building on State Highway 52 two miles west of the Ross Clark Circle in Dothan. We are highly recommending the Comfort Inn and EconoLodge as excellent accommodations. The number for the Comfort Inn is (334) 793-9090 and you must identify yourself with the Church of Christ to receive the special rate of \$55 per night. This is a nice corporate hotel with inside corridor access and a large continental breakfast is provided. You may also reach the EconoLodge at (334) 673-8000. We are anticipating a great meeting with sound preaching and great singing. We hope you will make your plans to attend. For further information, you may contact Kevin Presley (334) 678-8999; Charles Marsh (334) 692-5756; or Troy Spradley (334) 983-4411.

2001 Preachers Study

The 2001 Preachers' Study, scheduled for December 24-27, will be hosted by the church of Christ on Greek Oaks in Arlington, TX. The theme for this year's study will be "New Testament Survey" and will focus on the Gospels and Acts. This study will be the first of a three-part survey of the New Testament books. We invite all interested persons to attend. For information, please contact Joe Norton (817) 465-4933 or Jim Crouch (817) 496-9443.

My Position On Carnal Warfare

I cannot participate in military service 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).

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 any way, 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 any way 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.

1. **Jason Ken Holland**, Ada, OK e-mail: blazar_boy@hotmail
2. **Gregory Hanson**, 7995 S. Fairfax Rd, Bloomington, IN 47401
3. **Grant Hanson**, 7995 S. Fairfax Rd, Bloomington, IN 47401
4. **Catherine Hanson**, 7995 Fairfax Rd., Bloomington, IN 47401
5. **Cody Adam Gilley**, 1477 CR 3250, Paradise, TX 76073
6. **James Drew Baze**, 309 Academy St, Farmerville, LA 71241
7. **Al Felder**, 719, N. Quigley Rd., Marion, LA 71260
8. **Javan Glenn Cutter**, e-mail: jaxen01@hotmail.com
9. **Joshua Scott Cutter**
10. **Joanna Mae Cutter**
11. **Jared Lee Cutter**
12. **Joshua Melton**, 7986 Millcreek Circle, West Chester, OH 45069
13. **Matthew J. Steffen**, 32093 Calle Novelda, Temecula, CA 92592
14. **Derek Dillard**, Hwy 84 E. Church of Christ, Opp, AL
15. **Shane Dillard**, Hwy 84 E. Church of Christ, Opp, AL
16. **Jeffery Micheal Velez**, 127 Towaliga Trail, Forsyth, GA 31029
17. **Derek Norton**, 1712 Wanda Way, Arlington, TX 76001
18. **Joseph Ogletree**, 120 Maxwell Rd., Hackberry, TX 75034
19. **Dustin Johnson**, 108 Greenwood, Ovilla, TX 75154
20. **Bradley Glen Post**, 1020 Ward Chapel Rd., Farmerville, LA 71241
21. **Brad Coy Stipes**, 6311 N.W. 30th, Bethany, OK 73008
22. **Benjamin David Little**, 2701 Becky Lane, Harlingen, TX 78550
23. **Morgan Kenneth Hyman**, 4801 63rd St., Lubbock, TX 79414
24. **Jesse Wayne Wildes**, 1270 GA Hwy 42 S. Knoxville, GA 31050
25. **Jason Pruitt**, 2703 E. Mechanic St., Harrisonville, MO 64701
26. **Nellie Rachel Rodriguez-Meza; Juan Rodriguez-Meza; Josue Abinadab Rodriguez-Meza; Daniel Rodriguez-Meza**, e-mails: juanjr@laredo.globalpc.net
27. **Wesley Bonifay**, 3713 Felkirk Way, Modesto, CA 95356
28. **Joey Worsham**, 3713 Felkirk Way, Modesto, CA 95356
29. **Daniel Marsh**, e-mail cdmars@aol.com; twocd@aol.com
30. **Michael Justin Caine**, 3282 Old Red Star Dr., NW Brookhaven, MS 39601
31. **Lydia Beth Caine**, 3282 Old Red Star Dr., NW, Brookhaven, MS 39601
32. **Anthony Michael Norton**, 2802 Norton-Assink Rd., NW, Wesson, MS 39191
33. **Shana Owens**, 1346 School St., Neosho, MO 64850
34. **Jennifer M. Smith**, 17762 Goldfinch Rd., Neosho, MO 64850
35. **Justin Smith**, 17762 Goldfinch Rd., Neosho, MO 64850
36. **Adrienne J. Owens**, 16768 Heron Dr., Neosho, MO 64850
37. **Mindy S. Owens**, 16768 Heron Dr., Neosho, MO 64850
38. **Heidi A. Owens**, 16768 Heron Dr., Neosho, MO 64850
39. **Aber D. Owens**, 630 Walnut Dr., Neosho, MO 64850
40. **Andrew Weaver**, 16768 Heron Dr., Neosho, MO 64850

NOTE: If others wish their names included, we will run the list again as soon as we have a list together. -DLK

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

DICKINSON-HAYS—Leah Marie Dickinson and Terry Lynn Hays exchanged wedding vows in Houston, TX on June 1, 2001 at the Goose Creek Place Chapel. A large number of family, brethren, and friends gathered to witness the special event in a beautiful outside ceremony. Leah is the daughter of Jerry and Judy Dickinson of the Deer Park, TX congregation. Terry is the son of Mildred Hays of the

Mablevale Pike congregation in Little Rock, AR. Terry's father, Bill, passed away earlier this year. At the reception there were two memory centerpieces in loving memory of Terry's father and Leah's maternal grandfather, Brad Bradford. As the bride and groom make their new home in Little Rock, AR, our prayer is that the Lord will bless them with many happy years together! Leah is my niece and it was an honor to officiate at the wedding. I ask that Leah and Terry accept my apology for being late in sending in this report.—Billy D. Dickinson

OUR DEPARTED

BAZE—James Willis Baze was born October 22, 1906 in Bastrop County, TX, and passed away Sunday, August 5, 2001 in Midland, TX at a local nursing home, from an extended illness and the infirmities of old age. He was ninety-five years old at his passing. He married Gladys Tatum on February, 3, 1928, who preceded him in death. He is survived by a daughter, Mary Louise Whitney of Baton Rouge, LA., two sons, James Alfred Baze (an elder in the church at Midland), and Richard Nelson Baze of Midland as well, 13 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, and a brother Robert Sidney Baze of Arizona. Two of his grandsons are well known in our brotherhood, brother Terry Baze and brother Joel Baze. The singing was congregational (led by brother Mike Oestmann) Brother Baze loved singing and instilled in his children that same love. They sang his favorite song, "I'll Fly Away," and fly away he did, after having lived a long faithful Christian life. He and his dear wife were pillars in the church at Midland, and many are they who were fortunate enough to have them touch their lives. I humbly thank God that the life of brother Baze touched mine. Brother Terry Baze, his preacher grandson, that he was so proud of gave a humorous and touching resume of what his granddad was to him. As a long time friend of the family, I was asked in my feeble way to speak words of comfort, encouragement, and warning. Brother Baze was a barber for many years and I said that he probably laid hands on more people than all of the charismatic preachers combined and no doubt did folk more good than they. My words were my symbolic way of standing at attention to salute with honor our fallen comrade and to pay homage to a very special friend and brother. May his dear family realize as they bid him farewell with tear filled eyes and breaking hearts, that, tomorrow in God's eternal presence, if they too live a faithful Christian life, they shall be reunited with him in joy amidst the city set foursquare, whose street is paved with the purest of gold, whose gates are made of the more precious pearl, and "whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10).—C. A. Smith



Douglas T. Hawkins 3711 Castlewood CT Somerset, KY 42503; (606) 678-4347; hawkins@kih.net—Our recent meetings have been fairly well attended, and I've enjoyed being with the brethren in every single place. As I think back over the last few months since my last report, nothing unusual comes to mind. It will suffice to say that I'm thankful for the opportunity I've had to help in meetings where I've been called this year. Too, it's been a joy to be with preaching brethren in these few places. By the time

this is printed brother Paul Nichols will be finishing at Blue Springs. He has been in these parts many many times and is dearly loved by the brethren here. We are preparing to have a great meeting. My next meetings will be in Flemington, PA (Oct 3-7); Liberty, KY (Oct 19-21); Springfield, MO on the northside (Nov.3-11); and Knoxville, GA (Dec.5-10). God bless us in his service!

Cecil Smith, 872 North Quigley Rd, Marion, LA 71260, cesmith@bayou.com—The work in this area seems to be going very well. After crossing a few hills and traversing a few valleys, we seem to be on good level ground. Since last reporting, the congregation has grown in number. After losing some to other congregations, we have been able to convert one family and restore a brother to Christ. We have also seen a good bit of growth among the church here as a whole. It is also very encouraging to have some visiting with us on a regular basis here at Conway. We look forward to the days ahead as we strive to implement some private studies with a number of the members as well as some outsiders who have expressed interest. We also continue to use every means available to meet new people and spread the message of Christ. Our meetings this year have also been very well conducted and attended. We just closed a meeting with Brother Jerry Dickinson who did an excellent job of preaching the gospel. Earlier in the year Brother Doug Hawkins also conducted a fine meeting with some very good preaching. It is a great pleasure to be able to work with Brother Al Felder as he is employed in the work of the Lord in assisting the congregation at West Monroe, LA as well as Strong, AR. Al is an able defender of the truth who uses his time wisely in studying the word of God and working for the Lord. We especially look forward to a couple of meetings in the near future. In October we are to be with the brethren in Trussville, AL and in November with the brethren in Rolla, MO. Please pray for us in our endeavors as we pray for the church this wide world over.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621; papagreg@aol.com, October 6, 2001—We braved the skies to fly to West Virginia for a meeting at Garretts Creek Sept. 23-30. This was my first-time in West Virginia. What beautiful country! I was told just up the creek and around the bend from the Garretts Creek building is where my grandfather, Homer Gay held a tent meeting over 50 years ago that helped start the work in that area. Wyn Baker, my wife Cassie's brother, is doing a good work with Garretts Creek and Radnor congregations. He and his sweet family were our gracious hosts for the week. The meeting was well attended with some local visitors and many other congregations' members who attended again and again. We were thrilled to see Ryan Connor and family who just moved from California to work with the Spring Valley congregation. They are missed here and very welcomed there. I preached for 18th St. in Huntington one Sunday night and also held a study that the Bob Hayes and Terry Brumfield families put together with some wonderful young people from the area.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, October 4—I'm sorry to have been remiss in reporting lately. This year, I have spoken at Jonesboro, GA, April 8-15, Ratliff City, OK, April 27-29, Hillcrest, Brookhaven, MS, June 10-17, Competition, MO, July 11-15, and at Lexington, KY, Aug 5-12, and Lebanon, MO, Sept. 9, while giving singing instruction. We leave tomorrow for St. Albans, WV for a meeting Oct. 7-14. It has been a busy time and I

expect to be at Burkhart, MO Nov. 21-25 for the final meeting this year. We look forward to a meeting here in Ardmore with Taylor Joyce Oct. 24-28, climaxing with the fourth Sunday singing. I feel very optimistic about our progress here at home and I am thankful for the good interest we presently have.

Matt Trent, 377 Laurel Ave., Oakdale, CA 95361—This year has been a very busy year for us. We have enjoyed a good work here at Oakdale, with several baptisms and several training to become teachers. I have also enjoyed holding meetings at Fremont, Gardena, Placerville, Ventura, and Ceres. I am now looking forward to holding the Thanksgiving meeting in the Northwest, November 16-25. This year the Cottage Grove congregation will hold the meeting. A very enjoyable part of the work this year was a trip this summer to Africa and Russia. Megan and I were able to travel with Alan and Tonya Bonifay. We left July 22 and returned August 23. While in Africa we were able to preach in Zimbabwe and Malawi. In Malawi we preached seventeen times in twelve days to over 6,000 people! As far as I know, you cannot do that anywhere else in the world. While there we enjoyed being around Jim Franklin and Bill Davis, two veterans. We also grew to admire Stephen and Davidson, our translators in Malawi. From there we went to Russia. We were able to spend some time encouraging the brethren in Tula. While we were there, we were thankful to have visitors from Moscow, Penza (a 24 hour trip), and St. Petersburg. For most of my life I have heard about these works and it was a true thrill to be able to see them first hand. Those involved in these works have both my respect and my support. Please remember us when you pray.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, Oct. 9—Since last reporting we have been in meetings at Deer Park, TX, where we found an energetic and unified group of workers. Good crowds came nightly with excellent cooperation from the Fairbanks church nearby. Jerry Dickinson lives and works here and is a wonderful asset to the church. One confessed wrongs. Next we were at Cleburne, TX where Melvin Blalock lives and works. Melvin is strong and straight, tried and true, a tireless worker for the Lord. Area churches cooperated making for a good meeting. At Killbuck, OH we found a group of Christians striving to serve the Lord and share the gospel with their neighbors. This was our first time at this congregation, and we thoroughly enjoyed our stay among them. The meeting in Nashville, TN was well attended. Several outsiders were present, some driving from as far away as Kentucky to attend the meeting. Two confessed wrongs. We were at Paris, Texas Sept. 21-30. William St. John lives here, and is much respected by the church. We had an enjoyable stay with these good people. Seven made confessions during the meeting. Currently we are in a good meeting at Cable Ridge near Edwards, MO. From here, Lord willing, we go to Houston, MO Oct. 15-21, Harrison, AR, Oct. 24-28, Indianapolis, IN Nov. 4-11, and Ft. Smith, AR Dec. 5-9. During the past few months we have lost several dear brothers in death. Our hearts and prayers go out to the bereaved.

Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Turpelo, OK 74572—Just had another good gospel meeting with Alton Bailey doing the preaching. I preached the next Sunday after his meeting. We had five to make confessions of faults. Some of these had been out of duty, I understand about 20 years. One man was baptized. His mother and father have now started

coming. I believe this was because of Alton's good preaching. Glen and Roberta Van Stavern from Springfield, MO came and helped in this meeting. We all appreciate them so much. I preached last Sunday at Sulphur, Okla. and recently I was at Imperial, NE I surely enjoyed preaching there. We are hoping for good weather for the New Years Meeting, which is coming up real soon. We have several on our prayer list. We do believe in prayer. Christian love to all.

Brett Hickey, 823 W. 5th St., Tyler, TX 75701, (903) 533-9782, brett.hickey@juno.com, October 6, 2001—We enjoyed being with the brethren at Greenville, SC and getting acquainted with some of the brethren from that part of the country. We were impressed with the spiritual strength, warmth and hospitality of Delbert and Glenda Boman. Working with a number of devoted brethren, we are optimistic that the Boman's will foster future growth at Greenville. We look forward to a brief meeting in Amarillo this month and five days in Columbia, MO the first of November. Our meeting at Tyler with Ron Courter is scheduled for November 7-11. The local work at Tyler is getting busier with an increased need for local brethren to help with Bible studies. Recently, thirteen brothers and sisters from Tyler helped us work a booth at the East Texas State Fair to acquaint the community with our congregation and generate leads for Bible studies. There were more than 350 requests for more information on various kinds of Bible studies. This presents us with a unique challenge. If even only 10% of these people follow through, we will be hard-pressed to engage all of them in studies as soon as we would like. Our initial goal to convert at least one person from this effort certainly looks realistic. We were also able to speak with out-of-duty members we have not been able to contact otherwise. We expect fruit from these contacts as well.

A. Joshua Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, E-mail: josh1477@juno.com—Sadly, the Glendora Farmer's Market closed for the year on September 6, but the Covina Farmer's Market has remained open, and the outreach there has been going well. In fact, we have made so many contacts from both farmer's markets that I have had to put the college campaigns on hold in September in order to follow up with all of them (who gave us numbers and addresses to reach them at), but the campaigns will resume in October, Lord willing. We have been reaching out to an older man named Al (whom we met at the Glendora market) who recently came to both Sunday services, which was encouraging. Please pray for Al to really take to heart the verses that we have shared with him, particularly concerning baptism for the remission of sins. Mariah and I have also been spending time teaching Amber Brown (baptized in August), to help her become better grounded in God's word, and seeking to encourage her in between services. She has been an encouraging addition to the assembly at Covina; please continue to pray for her growth in Christ. Door knocking is admittedly my least favorite form of outreach, but I've recently felt convicted that I need to make more of an effort to reach out to the people in our apartment complex I got to have a Bible study with a couple college students at the first door I knocked on (in a while), and have gotten to meet some more neighbors that will hopefully be willing to study in the future. I have been asked to preach on the first Sunday of each month at the Hawthorne church, a small congregation meeting near the LA airport that has a sincere desire to grow. Don McCord was back for a while from

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. LXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI, DECEMBER 2001

NO. 12

THE LORD'S SUPPER

By *BENNIE T. CRYER*

Titus 2:7-8: "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

The faithful brother that serves at the Lord's table on the first day of the week should always use "sound speech" in the things he says and in his thanksgivings to God or blessing God for the bread and the cup of the Lord. "Sound" literally means healthy. Figuratively it means "true." In other words, it is possible to use words that are unhealthy to the speaker and those that hear him when he is serving at the Lord's table. The New Testament has given us enough information about how Jesus instituted the Lord's supper for us to have a good idea about what are sound words and actions and what are not. Let us examine some of the complaints we have heard about what is said by the one serving at the Lord's table. I am writing this to encourage brethren to study more about what to say and what to give thanks for at the Lord's supper.

ARE WE LITERALLY EATING AND DRINKING WITH JESUS?

Mark 14:25: "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." This verse teaches Jesus literally drank of the fruit of the vine when he instituted this memorial feast. Combining Matthew 26:29 with this verse teaches us that he was referring to "this" fruit of the vine he was in the process of giving to his disciples. The word "more" indicates he had drunk some because you cannot have "more" without already having "some." When the kingdom of God would be established, for at that time it was still in the future, Jesus said he would drink it "new" with them in that kingdom.

The kingdom was established on earth in Acts 2. Acts 2:42 indicates that the disciples continued steadfastly in breaking of bread—a phrase that is used to describe observing the Lord's supper. In order to fulfill his promise to the disciples Jesus was communing with them but in a "new" way. He was not literally eating and drinking with them as he did at its institution. It was in another way and not in the same way. In Mark 14:24 Jesus used the word "new" to describe his testament. There was the old testament but his testament was to be "new," that is of another kind. In the communion today Jesus eats and drinks with us in a new and different way than he did when he instituted it. He did not explain how he would eat and drink

with us in this "new" way. I assure you he knows how to do it. Some brethren say words when they serve at the table that show they think that Jesus is literally there and will literally eat and drink with us. Make no mistake about it—Jesus is there and eats and drinks with us, but it is in a new way than when he did with the twelve in the examples we have. When we are observing the communion there must be communion with the members of the congregation in order to fulfill the teaching of 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. By our communing with each other we show we are one. If we do not keep this in mind we could fall into the trap of some of our erring brethren who think they can take the fruit of the vine and bread and, as one described to me what he had done on an airplane one Sunday morning while he was flying, (when he should have been at church), just opened up the little communion traveling kit he carried and Jesus and he had communion with no other brothers or sisters present. Brethren, I do not see how we can do that. So, let us be sure and not say anything at the Lord's table that could lead to such a practice. It takes Jesus plus the local congregation's members to observe the Lord's supper.

SEPARATING THE CUP (CONTAINER) FROM THE FRUIT OF THE VINE

We must be very careful about what we say concerning this lest we cause people to believe that the container separate and apart from the fruit of the vine stands for the New Testament and that the fruit of the vine separate and apart from the container stands for the blood of Christ. Note how Jesus kept these two things together when he instituted this memorial feast: Mark 14:24, And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Also Matthew 26:28, Mark and Matthew kept them together. Luke and Paul followed the same pattern when they recorded the institution in Luke 22:20 and 1 Corinthians 11:25. "This cup is the new testament in my blood." The New Testament writers, inspired by the Holy Spirit, used a figure of speech that we call metonymy today in some of the places where "cup" is used. Metonymy requires that what you are speaking or writing about must have at least two parts. These two or more parts must be so closely related that to name one part readily suggests the other. In other words, in the communion, the container and the fruit of the vine are so closely related to each other that when "cup" is used the contents come along with it in our thoughts. Note the phrases that are used by New

continued on page six

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXV No. 12



A D V O C A T E

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-9

The Lord's Supper 1

Editorial 2

Querist Column 3

This Is Not Heaven 3

A Senseless Act Of Terror 4

A New Life 4

Challenges To Christianity 5

FROM THE FIELDS 9-12

PUBLISHER

Don L. King
41931 Chadbourne, Fremont, CA 94539
Fax 510-651-3926

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

EDITORIAL STAFF

Clovis Cook & Edwin S. Morris

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bennie Cryer	Johnny Elmore
Barney Owens	Jerry Dickinson
Billy Dickinson	Kevin Presley
	Carl Johnson

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year \$10.00
Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by Old Paths Advocate, Lebanon, MO 65536

A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to Old Paths Advocate, 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539.



Editorial

"THE VALUE OF INFLUENCE"

By DON L. KING

As Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount, he mentioned the value of influence. He said, *"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be sifted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* (Matthew 5: 13-16)

Whether or not we recognize it, we are all in possession of influence. Some may have, in varying degrees, either bad or good but all have one. It has been said, "influence is something one thinks he has until he tries to use it." Probably there are some grains of truth in that proverb. However, a good influence is gradually accumulated over many years of careful living. No one has a good influence he doesn't deserve. If you know a brother who has a widespread influence for good, it is certain that he has built it over many years of Christian living and service. It is such a valuable asset that others often seem to be envious of it. There are some that possess such an influence that when they speak, brethren just naturally listen. We all know that's true.

Influence is a very powerful thing. So powerful, in fact, that the apostle Paul warned against our allowing the bad influence of anyone to come over us. He said: *"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."* (1 Corinthians 15:33)

In another translation it reads: *"Bad company is the ruin of good character."* In Paul's letter to the Corinthians he warned them against allowing the fornicator to remain among the church. Why? Obviously because the Holy Spirit realized the power of influence. He told the brethren, *"...Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"* (1 Corinthians 5:6) The Spirit knew more than some that believe the answer is to love them back to the right way. Paul said to purge it out! (Verse 7) Of course, we still love them. Of course, we want them to come back. Of course, it breaks our hearts to turn away from them socially, but they must feel the loss of the church and loved ones. Paul knew, and we ought to believe him since he wrote under the influence of the Holy Spirit, that to allow a continuation of social togetherness was potentially damaging to the rest of the church. When will we learn that God's way is always the best and surest way to recover such a person? Why would anyone want to make a change when their sin has cost nothing in terms of acceptance? Why change when the church continues to pat them on the back and accept them? Worse yet, their bad influence will harm those who are still trying to do what is right. Too often, the Lord's way is put aside by those who believe they have a unique case and so should be dealt with in a

continued on page seven

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Titus 6:1 teaches that an elder must have children that believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. How long is a man responsible for the actions of his children? If an elder has a child forty years old who leaves the church, can he still serve as an elder? What if an elder's child, while still at home, makes a huge public mistake, but makes a public confession, will the man still qualify as an elder? (TX)

Answer: There are actually three questions here, and we will attempt to answer them in the order asked. (1) How long is a man responsible for the actions of his children? There is obviously a time when parents no longer have control over what their children do, even though they may be distressed by their conduct. Children reach a point in life when they become personally accountable to God for their actions. They have free will and are able to choose for themselves how they live and behave. Ezek. 18:20 "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." A father is not responsible for the conduct of a child over whom he has no control or oversight. He does not bear the guilt, so saith the scripture. This, of course, does not relieve him of the heartache or remorse that he feels at the rebellion and disobedience of his children. The fact, however, that a parent may not be responsible for his child's conduct does not preclude the fact that such conduct might reflect unfavorably upon the parent. (2) If an elder's forty year old child leaves the church, can he still serve as an elder? My answer will appear unreasonable and arbitrary to many, however, in my view the only safe and scriptural answer is—no he may not be an elder. If one child can be out of the church or unfaithful, and the man still qualify as an elder, then they all may be out of the church. Such an interpretation, flies in the face of the qualification. Either a man has faithful children or he does not. When a man has one or two faithful children and one or two that are unfaithful, he does not have "faithful children." The elder must be one that "ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" There are two considerations here: first of all even though the man whose children leave the church cannot be held responsible for their conduct, (it was certainly not his wish that they go wrong), the fact that they do leave the church, reflects on his "ruling well his house." He obviously failed here. Paul asks "how shall he take care of the church of God?" - a question every preacher should ask himself who appoints a man to the eldership who has children out of the church. His success in raising his family is a precursor to his success in taking care of the church. The qualification deals with something he "has" done. Note: "having believing (or faithful) children," not something he might do later on. One whose children leave the church just has not proved himself worthy to "take care of the church" as one of its elders. While this conclusion is difficult for many to accept, I personally cannot answer it differently in good conscience.

(3) If an elder's child makes a huge public mistake while living at home, but makes a public confession, will the man still qualify as an elder? I have no idea what the querist means by a "huge public mistake" but will answer that if the child makes amends for his/her conduct, I do not believe that would disqualify the man from being an elder. The very fact that the child makes amends for his/her conduct would indicate that the parent had taught them correctly in such matters. Remember the bible did not say "perfect children" but "believing children, not accused of riot or unruly." Now, should that same child continue to do things that fall under the category of riotous or unruly, then it would be evident that the man has failed in ruling well his house, and is not qualified to serve as an elder.

(Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 or rwwade@getatlas.com)

THIS IS NOT HEAVEN

By JERRY DICKINSON

On September 11, terrorists hijacked four airplanes and crashed three of them into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. Thousands lost their lives. If nothing else this tragedy reminds a world preoccupied with pleasure and selfaggrandizement just how fragile life really is. We certainly need to pray for those suffering due to this great tragedy, but we also need to pray for our country to repent and turn back to God. The nation's attention has been turned toward God, at least for the moment. Let us pray that many will realize that we live in a world where sin and rebellion against God's moral law abounds and our only hope is repentance and reformation. Woe be the individual (or nation) that persists in the depravity we have witnessed in recent years.

The Bible does not teach the doctrine of total hereditary depravity, but the Scriptures do teach it is possible to become totally depraved. Some hold that the original sin of Adam is passed on to every baby born into the world. Each child inherits a totally corrupt and depraved nature. The Bible does not support such a theory. Jesus said except we be converted and become as little children we cannot enter into the kingdom, something he would never have said if little children are completely corrupt from birth. No, men are not born totally depraved, but they can become so. The men of Sodom and Gomorrah were depraved, from the youngest to the oldest so we are told, and God, because He could not find even ten righteous people in the city, rained down fire and brimstone until the cities of the plain became a smoking furnace.

Violence is nothing new. In the days of Noah the Bible says violence filled the earth and the imagination of man's heart was only evil continually. How terrible and frightful are the descriptive words, *only* and *continually*. Their thoughts and imaginations were only evil and continually evil. I am not prepared to say we are that bad yet, but we have been heading in that direction. If nothing else, we pray these tragic events will stem the tidal wave of immorality and ungodliness.

One thing is for sure—this is not heaven! Most of us, especially in the United States, have been lulled into thinking we were already living in paradise. The economy

has been good, we have lived for some time without the threat of war (not on our soil at any rate) and we have been free and financially able to travel the world and buy virtually anything our hearts desire. We thought we were living in the Promised Land. This is not heaven! Even those of us who are Christians needed to be reminded that this world is still filled with danger, evil, and death. This world can be a cold, harsh, and terrifying place. This is not heaven!

There is a place where there will be no more war and violence. There is a country where there is no need for armies, bombs, missiles, and national defense systems. There is a land without hospitals, mortuaries, funeral processions, and graveyards. But, dear reader, this world is not the place. We will never completely eradicate terrorists and war. No matter how determined our government and military may be, this old world will never be free of war and violence. Not until Satan and sin are consigned forever to the lake of fire and brimstone will there be a cessation of the sin and rebellion against the government of God that perpetually leads to evil, depravity, and death.

No, this is not heaven! Let us never again forget that. We are indeed, as we have sung through the years, strangers and pilgrims in this world. This world is not our home; we are just passing through. Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and will come again, perhaps sooner than we think, to take us to those mansions in the land that is fairer than day.

There's a land that is fairer than day; And by faith we can see it afar; For the Savior waits over the way, To prepare us a dwelling place there.

In the sweet by and by, We shall meet on that beautiful shore. In the sweet by and by, We shall meet on that beautiful shore.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

A SENSELESS ACT OF TERROR

By JIMMY VANNOY

Much has been said about the acts of terror committed on the United States on September 11, 2001. One word expresses my perspective of these terrible acts, and that is the word "senseless." There is no rational or reasonable way to explain why anyone would commit these horrible crimes against so many innocent people. David was also a victim of a senseless act of terror.

This story, found in 1 Samuel 30, reminds us that terrorism is an act which has occurred throughout time. It is always horrible, and it is always senseless. King Saul became jealous of David and chased him all over Israel trying to kill him. David finally got tired of being chased and pretended to defect to the Philistines so he could be protected from Saul. The Philistine king Achish trusted David completely and gave him the city of Ziklag for his soldiers and their families to live in. When it was time for war against Israel, the Philistines gathered together for battle. David marched with the troops of Achish, but the other kings and generals did not trust him as Achish did, so they sent David and his troops home. When they

returned, Ziklag was burned to the ground. Their wives and children were missing, and everything they owned had been taken.

David and his soldiers began to grieve with the deepest possible grief, just as we have seen so many times recently. "Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep." (1 Samuel 30:4) They wept until they became numb, and there was no consoling them for their loss.

The enemy who had committed this terrible deed were the Amalekites. This was a nation of scoundrels who had terrorized the children of Israel during their forty years in the wilderness. They would get in the back of the procession of the Israelites and pick off the old and weak who lagged behind. God despised them so much that he commissioned Saul to wipe them out. He killed most of the Amalekites where he fought, but there were other cities where they lived, and one of those groups attacked Ziklag. They showed their cowardice in that they attacked the city while the men were away.

David asked God if he should pursue the Amalekites and God said "Yes." David eventually found an Egyptian who had been enslaved by one of the Amalekites but had been abandoned to die when he got sick. He agreed to show David where the Amalekites were. They were having a drunken party to celebrate their victory, and David and his men attacked ferociously, killing most of them. They were blessed to be able to recover all their wives, children and goods without any loss.

The two emotions which were prevalent on September 11, 2001 were anger and sorrow. Anger is an appropriate emotion for a Christian in a circumstance like this, but the stipulation is that the Christian must free himself of this emotion by sundown. (Eph. 4:26) The deep sorrow expressed by David has been seen from those who lost loved ones in the incidents in New York and Washington and those who sympathize with them. This sorrow is expressed by tears and numbness. This grieving is God's way of helping us overcome tragedy.

A pervasive attitude of the American public after this horrible incident was the desire for revenge on the terrorists. Christians should not seek revenge because this is the realm of God alone. (Rom. 12:19) God may choose to use governments to bring vengeance on these people if he chooses, but we must allow Him to bring them to justice in His own way. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." (Rom. 13:3) As horrible as these acts were, anger and the desire for revenge should be far from our hearts by now. God will take care of these people in His own way and in His own time.

Terrorists may hide from governments, but they cannot hide from God. They will get their just punishment. In the case of David, God used him and his army to punish the Amalekites for their senseless act of terror.

A NEW LIFE

By GREG GAY

Just last July our daughter Lori gave birth to a little boy, Kelan Gregory Owen (I especially like that middle name). He weighed 8 pounds 10 ounces and was 21 inches long. Kelan cried mightily when he was brought into the world.

(The voice of a preacher perhaps?) He is her first child, and our third grandchild. Our family, the Owen family, and other friends were there for the birthing process and were anxious during Lori's more than 30 hours of labor. Whew! Just being there made me tired. I can't imagine being the one going through that. What an amazing process God has ordained for our entry into this life! As I watched Lori and Justin (the dad) hold their little boy I could see their eyes were full of love and wonder and welcome for this new little person. What will he be? Only God knows of course. But what opportunity waits. He is a "new life!"

I once read in an old book that while Mary and Joseph were doing their best in raising Jesus, Simon and his wife were doing their best in raising Judas. While the lives of Jesus and Judas turned out very differently both had potential for great good as they were on their mother's laps as babies.

God gives us, all potential for good or evil. That, in a nutshell, is the meaning of "free will." We are free to glorify him with our lives in our every decision or we are free to ignore him in our lives. He gives us opportunity to obey the gospel and become a "new life" spiritually. He gives us his word to guide us in our every decision. He promises us the greatest of rewards for being good and resisting temptation. He also promises us punishment if we ignore him.

Let us have the heart of a child: tender and easily molded by the Master and Creator of life. May our every decision reflect our love and wonder that He lets us be his child.

Matt 18:1-4

18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

18:2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. KJV

CHALLENGES TO CHRISTIANITY

By BILLY ORTEN

Never before has Christianity faced such an array of challengers as it does today. Militant, atheistic Communism is marching toward complete world domination. Not only does it threaten Christianity, but its goal is to destroy our American way of life. Yet in our fear of Russia, many have blindly ignored other enemies that are equally as ruthless and determined in their efforts to destroy what we hold sacred. Moral rot and social decay eat away at the heart of our affluent society. Scientism challenges the concept of a creative and all-powerful God. In the name of education, it scorns revelation and makes God the servant of man instead of man the servant of God. Relativism seeks to remove all absolute truth and make right and wrong all things to all men. This is simply saying that there is no absolute standard of right and wrong, because truth is a relative thing. Interpreted, this means one must try anything out for himself to see if it is good for him or not. Violence

has become the order of the day. (Even as I write this, the nation mourns the death of a leader that was struck down by an assassin's bullet). Rioters burn and loot our cities. Racists openly advocate murder and destruction to achieve their ends. Alcoholism and drug addiction is the number one social problem. Young people turn to drugs, sex, and violence for excitement. God and the Devil have been spoken out of existence and people have become too sophisticated to believe the Bible is infallible.

The above conditions are real; these are not just the babblings of some pessimistic prophet of doom. But since every condition has a cause, what has brought about the tragic break-down in our values? It is the product of our "permissive anything-goes" society. We have become a nation that permits anything and is shocked at nothing. We have championed non-discipline and non-direction. We have sown the seeds of relativism and the fruit we are reaping is the new morality. We need to stop and look where we are headed. H. G. Wells, noted historian, made this statement, "If Communism doesn't overcome us, we will destroy ourselves with our own immorality by the year 2000." Another great historian, Edward Gibbon, in his work **The Decline And Fall Of The Roman Empire**, lists several reasons why Powerful Rome fell. Number one was, "The increase in sexual immorality, divorce, and the breakdown of the Roman homes." Mighty Rome did not fall to an outside conqueror; Rome slid into oblivion because of moral decay. The people went on a pleasure binge. There was such a mad desire for excitement that the people indulged in all kinds of moral extravagances. How do we measure up to Rome in America today? Immorality has greatly increased in America in the last few years. The traffic in pornographic literature has increased until it has become big business. Public interest in immoral books, songs, plays, and movies has ballooned. Divorce rate has gone up until our divorce mills now grind them out at the rate of one divorce to every four marriages, and in some states this ratio is one to three. It does not take an expert to see that the same pattern that brought the destruction of Rome is obvious in America today.

What is the meaning of all this to the Christian? Because we live in such unnatural circumstances, our temptations are multiplied. Young People, especially, must be on guard against the many evils of our day. Boys and Girls, the enemies of Christianity use such high-sounding words it makes anyone who clings to God and His way seem terribly old-fashioned. Many young people rather than be called old-fashioned will reach for the cocktail glass, turn on the jazz, and prove how modern they can be. At this time we would like to discuss with you some things we need in order to stand firm in this degenerate society.

First, we need a strong faith in God and His Word. Man was made with a need to believe in something. He must have something to which he is dedicated, something in which to pour out his energies if his life is to have meaning and purpose. The big question is not, "What belongs to me?" but "To what or to whom do I belong?" Faith in and dedication to God gives direction to our lives. The apostle Paul could say, "I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:8). Again he said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). The

following statement in 2 Timothy 1:12 shows that Christ had given real meaning to Paul's life, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." A strong faith in God and His promises will help us weather the storm in this time of turmoil and change.

Second, in order to build a happy and successful life, we need values that will stand. No one can build happiness on the live-for-the-moment theory. Many of the younger generation have thrown away all rules and guidelines for conduct and are saying, "Live, drink deep of life's pleasures." The fast, gay life may appear glamorous for awhile, but it cannot last. Pleasures soon become boresome. The person who gives himself to pleasures finds after a few years that life has lost its glamor and there is nothing to live for. This is the reason so many turn to alcohol and drugs. The only way for life to have meaning and direction is to live by some standards that cannot be successfully contradicted. May we suggest that you examine your values. If they are sound, then do not let anyone cause you to turn aside from them. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We hear a lot about freedom, but freedom does not grant unlimited license. Not all desires can be or should be immediately fulfilled. We need liberty, not license. Paul says, "Ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13).

Next, we need to identify ourselves with right. Everyone identifies with something or someone. This means we see in someone the traits we admire and we try to imitate that person. We become like the people we admire. Young People, your speech, your dress, your conduct, even your hairdo suggests with whom you are trying to identify yourself. It is a tragic shame that the groups that have influenced American youth most are atheist in belief, vulgar and obscene in their life. The apostle Paul said, "No man liveth unto himself and no man dieth unto himself" (Romans 14:7). We are a little of all the people with whom we associate. "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33). Choose to associate and identify with people who stand for right. Model your life after Christ as Paul said he did. "Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Also, for a successful life, one needs a sense of direction. Some may call this a goal for life. Why do we have the hippie communities, mobs in the streets, skidrows, drug addicts, etc? These people have lost their direction. They have no real purpose or goal in life. Listen to a man whose life had meaning and direction: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14). Faith in and dedication to Christ gives meaning to life. No one loses his direction in life who has a real reason for living. What greater goal is there than to save oneself and others?

Last, one must learn self-discipline in order to attain the good life. When we were children, our parents were responsible for our discipline; but as adults, we must accept

responsibility for our actions. Self-government means government of self. The lusty appetites of the body must be controlled. Fleshly desires must be made subject to the spirit. The apostle Paul talks about the warfare that rages within us in Galatians 5:16-25. The combatants are the flesh and the spirit. If we allow the spirit to have its way, we cannot fulfill the desires of the flesh. It is a matter of yielding. Every individual decides whether the flesh or the spirit is going to control his actions (Read Romans 6:12-16). If the flesh controls we will reap everlasting damnation; but if the spirit rules, we will enjoy life everlasting (Romans 8:12-13). For this reason Paul said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest after I have preached to others, I should be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:27). It is our sincere conviction that the things suggested above will be most helpful to an individual in meeting the many challenges to Christianity today.—OPA 1968

THE LORD'S SUPPER

continued from page 1

Testament writers: "This cup is the new testament in my blood" and "For this is my blood of the new testament." Jesus, by using these two phrases, clearly teaches that something he is giving to the disciples stands for the New Testament and something stands for his blood. Since he had the cup and was handing it to his disciples, that cup containing fruit of the vine stood for his blood and the New Testament which his blood ratified. If a brother mentions the fruit of the vine only he is doing something Jesus did not do in these phrases above. The cup by itself does not stand for the New Testament and the fruit of the vine by itself is not an emblem of the blood of Jesus. Together they are emblems of the New Testament in his blood or ratified by his blood. It is an error to say that the cup is the blood as some do. We can use "sound" speech by using the words and phrases recorded in the Bible.

BLESSING AND GIVING THANKS

Matthew 26:26-27, And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and give it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.

In these two verses we are taught that Jesus blessed something when he took the bread but gave thanks for the cup. Is there a difference in these two expressions? There is a slight difference. Note that in verse 26 in the phrase "blessed it" than in the KJV "it" is italicized showing there is no corresponding Greek word. "It" leads us to believe that he was blessing the bread. If we leave "it" out as does the Greek then he was blessing God which I think is the correct interpretation. The Jewish people were used to the idea of blessing God. In Psalms 66:20 we have an example of this practice. "Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me." Also, you may compare Psalms 68:35. This was their way of adoring, praising, or thanking God for his favor toward them. At any rate, whether we bless God or thank God for the cup of blessing (Note it is blessing singular and not blessings plural.) And the bread we are doing just about the same thing. I think though that the word "blessed" indicates there is to be the idea of honoring and praising God in our

thanksgiving.

Our older preachers, as well as those who followed them, taught us this simple formula for the giving of thanks for the bread and the cup of blessing. "Father, we thank you for this bread which is the communion of the body of Christ. In Jesus' name, amen." "Father, we thank you for this cup of blessing which is the communion of the blood of Christ. In Christ's name, amen." It would be difficult to go wrong if we would keep our thanksgiving this simple. That is not the time to be praying a general prayer for many different things or even thanking God for many other things he has blessed us with.

Brethren, when you serve at the Lord's table it is not the time to go over the sermon or lesson given in the service. It is also not the time to preach another sermon. It would be good to remember, according to Matthew's record of the institution, that Jesus only used approximately sixty words to get his thoughts across to the disciples. I also do not think it proper to be too brief. Some say, "Well, we all know what this is for" and then they offer thanks. Some in the audience may not know even the basics about the bread and the cup. Just use common sense and sound words when you speak about it.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

different manner. How foolish man is to believe he knows better than God whose ways are higher than ours, etc. (See Isaiah 55:8, 9) We still recall a case, many years ago, where a brother had left his family for a fling with another woman. It devastated everyone involved. One evening at a get together, the fellow showed up unexpectedly and apparently uninvited. He was welcomed with open arms and invited to stay, socialize, and eat in direct violation of 1 Corinthians 5:11. To our knowledge, he has never come back to the church. Would things have been different had the Lord's plan been followed? We will never know, but at least the Lord would have been honored and His Holy Word obeyed.

Solomon said, "*A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour than silver and gold.*" (Proverbs 22:1) The wise man realized the value of influence. He knew what it took to build a good one. How can we build a good influence today? First of all, be consistent and practice what we preach. James told us to show our faith by our works. (James 2:18) Be uncompromising with the Truth. (1 Timothy 3:9) Avoid offenses. (1 Corinthians 8:9-13) Don't be selfish but rather try to serve the needs of others. (Ephesians 4:28) When you do serve, do so with zeal and fervency because this is a mark of fidelity. (Romans 12:10) When one does these, and other things, one can eventually possess a good influence.

Influence can be mistaken for authority. We have known of cases where preachers who had carefully built a good influence across the brotherhood were accused of having too much authority. A seemingly envious brother once said of a preacher, "You are equal to all of us." He had reference to the way the members listened to the preacher. This brother had mistaken influence for authority. A person who has a good influence can not keep others from being affected by what he says. In fact, brethren often ask for

his advice in various matters. It seems to us that is as it should be. Someone once ventured the idea that in most cases where some great mission work is being done there is a preacher behind it rather than a congregation. Another case of mistaking a good influence for some kind of unscriptural authority. When brethren call the preacher for advice about the work in this place or that place, it is obviously because the brethren have confidence in the preacher. If they didn't, they wouldn't call him. It may not be the case at all that the preacher is trying to "run" something. He is probably just being asked to perform another service because of his good influence. Might we also add, that there is a great difference between giving an opinion to one who has asked for it and trying to maintain some kind of authority.

There is much interest in "authority" today. When we look into the Bible for New Testament principles to guide us in making decisions in the church, we find some about authority and oversight, etc. but also much about submitting one to the other. For instance, we learn in 1 Peter 5:5 that the younger folks are to be subject to the elder or older ones. The scholars are at variance as to whether or not the word "elder" in verse 5 refers to an official elder or just a senior person. Whatever the case, submission is in order. Then, in the same verse, he tells us "... *Yea, all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.*" (1 Peter 5:5) Again in Ephesians 5:21 he said, "*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*" As Paul wrote the Corinthians he spoke of the same thing again. In chapter 16:15,16 he said, "*I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboreth.*" Over and over we find ourselves told to be subject to each other. One of the problems among us today is that some are loath to be in subjection to anyone. If we could all learn the lesson of subjection to each other, there would never be the problem of subjection to elders in the church! That wouldn't even be in the picture. We would already be in subjection not only to the elders but each other. This concept is further clarified in Romans 12:10 where Paul wrote: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." The word "preferring" here literally means to show "deference" to one another. Paul does not say what some have claimed he said. He didn't say we should prefer one another's company. Rather, he said when it comes to "honor" one would show "deference" or defer to the other. In other words, I would prefer you to have the honor and you would prefer me to have it. We would "defer" to each other. This meek and lowly attitude can only occur when Christians are truly subject to one another.

A wise man once said, "It is amazing what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit." Brethren, let us set ourselves to the task of truly becoming more like the meek and lowly Savior. Let's begin to look for the good in one another. If there is a doubt where our brother is concerned, let it be for the good rather than for the bad. If you have done a good work, may God help me to truly be thankful for you and vice versa. We must not

bow to the god of ego because the God of Heaven will always be greater. Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Let The Bible Speak Website

Let *The Bible Speak* a T.V. program originating in Springfield and seen in a number of other cities in the U.S. now has a site on the World Wide Web. You may access our site by typing in www.letthebiblespeak.com. We have several sermons that may both be viewed and heard, plus an Bible correspondence course and a place for locating congregations near you, as well as times and locations where the television program may be seen. Please visit us on the world wide web and tell others about it.

Ryan and Shannon Connor have a new address:

Ryan, Shannon & Emma Connor, 20 Birch Lane, Huntington, WV 25704, (304) 429-3018, ryanconnor@juno.com

Wanted: Old Issues of OPA

I'm collecting back-issues of the *Old Paths Advocate* for the purpose of binding them and adding them to my personal library. I have most of the issues from the 70s, 80s, 90s, and 2000s, and I have some issues from each decade prior to those years beginning with 1933. If you have any old issues especially from the 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s (I have all issues from '62, '65, '66 and 69), and wouldn't mind parting with them, please contact me or send them to me, and I'll reimburse you for the papers and postage. Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, (580) 332-1739, carlmj@cableone.net

Southern New Year's Meeting

The annual Southern New Year's Meeting will be held December 27, 2001 thru December 31, 2001 hosted by the Oyster Bay congregation in Crawfordville Florida. The host Preachers this year will be Glen Ballard and Aaron Risener. Also scheduled to speak this year is Anthony Brockett, Ed Daniel, Mark Deatherage, Gene Grant, Miles King, Johnny Kornegay, Wallace Komegay, Dwight Patton and Bobby Pepper. As many preachers and congregational teachers will be used as possible. For hotel accommodations please see the church web site, gospel meeting section—Southern New Year Meeting or call Michael Atkinson (850) 926-4692; Dennis Fiorini (850) 906-9650 or Robert Kornegay (850) 531-0777 for more information. New this year, free RV hook-ups next door to the church building for those brethren who will be camping. Limited number please call for details.

Alabama New Year's Meeting

The congregation in Dothan is excited to announce the Alabama New Year's Meeting. It is to be conducted by Bro. Jimmie C. Smith and is scheduled to begin at 7:30 PM on Thursday, December 27. The meeting will then continue at 10:00 each morning and 7:30 each evening with the final gathering being for the New Year's Eve singing at 11:00, December 31. Unless further notified, services are to be held at the Hartford Highway Church of Christ in Dothan, AL. Visiting preachers will be asked to

preach. For hotel accommodations, we highly recommend the Comfort Inn (334)793-9090 for \$55 per night. This is a business hotel and has ample room for people to stay, gather, and visit. To receive the rate, you must identify yourself with the Church of Christ and try to reserve by the 10th of December. We can also recommend the EconoLodge (334) 673-8000 or the Courtyard by Marriott (334) 671-3000. We are anticipating large crowds, powerful preaching, and great singing. We hope you can join us. For more information contact: Charles Marsh (334) 692-5756 or Kevin Presley (334) 678-8999.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

JOHNSON-LANKFORD—On the evening of May 25, 2001 at Joplin, Missouri, in the presence of the Almighty God, Sean Johnson and Dana Lankford entered into the covenant of marriage. It was a beautiful wedding with a large gathering of brethren, relatives and friends to wish them well. Having known Dana for several years, and being able to work with Sean during his conversion, it was a special treat for me to perform their ceremony. It is apparent that Sean and Dana are two fine Christian people, who love the Lord and his church very much. They are an asset to our congregation at Columbia, where they presently make their home. We look forward to watching them grow together as a family.—Reggie Kinser

OUR DEPARTED

WADE—Brother Ernest Wade departed this life, in his sleep, in the early morning hours of Oct. 5, 2001. He had been a member of the church for many years. His brother, Arthur, preached the gospel throughout this country until his death a few years back. At the time of his death Ernest worshipped with the Cable Ridge church near Edwards, MO. He is survived by his wife Evalyn, two sons, two sisters, and several grandchildren. The writer conducted the service from the Holman Funeral Chapel in Lebanon, MO. We extend our sincere sympathy to the entire family.—Ronny F. Wade

SHARP—Howard Sharp passed from this life September 20, 2001, being 86 years born June 22, 1915. Howard's surviving children are; Howard Jr., Warren, John Sharp, all sons, and daughter Janice Maudlin, all of the Sacramento area. Also several grandchildren, great-grandchildren and many friends, brethren in Christ. His wife Lola preceded him in death. Howard moved to Fair Oaks in the nineteen forties and worked for IBM-Corp. as a technician until he retired several years ago. He was a charter member of the Fair Oaks congregation and active as a teacher for many years. He was a Bible student with exceptional knowledge. He loved the Church and She was foremost in his conversation. His religious library was large, and I am one that received some good books from him while he lived. Howard encouraged everyone to excel in their worthy occupation, especially in living the Christian life. He will be missed by the church. Howard prepared the copy of *Social Worship* by James A. Haldane for re-publication, along with Ronny Wade the publisher.

In all his endeavors Howard was a tireless worker. He suffered with ill health, but showed great strength and courage, looking forward to heaven. Brother Roger Boone, Michael Fox, Jeff Sharp and James Maudlin, grandsons of Howard, along with Pete Massengale who led the congregation in singing beautiful songs, and this writer conducted the service. Howard is buried beside Lola at Mt. Vernon Park in Orangevale, Ca.—Richard DeGough.

Editors note: When word came from Howard's daughter Janice about his death, I received it with both sadness and joy. I was sad at his leaving, but glad he was now free from a body racked with pain and discomfort. He was truly a remarkable man. Very intelligent, strongly committed to what he believed, ever ready to plead his case, yet always considerate and courteous. He was one of the few people I have known who could disagree without being disagreeable, and contend without being contentious. We had our disagreements over a number of things, yet we remained good friends until the end. Howard always had a "project" something he wanted or planned to do. I think that was what, in part at least, kept him young and active even though he was advanced in age. He and I had worked together on the publication and printing of James Haldane's book *Social Worship*. Not long before his death he wanted me to look into publishing Pannin's greek text. I knew this was a task he could never complete, but I supplied him with the information he requested and allowed him to dream of what might be. That was one of the things I liked about him. He always wanted to do one more thing. He never gave up. God bless him. I shall miss him greatly.—Ronny F. Wade

WILSON—Brother Gilbert Wilson passed from this life September 27, 2001, being 93 yrs. 7 mo. 25 days. Surviving children are two sons; Rod, and Alfred Wilson, four daughters; Lorene McCluskey, Florene Murry, Linda Bumgardner, Alice Bunner, 19 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren. Gilbert's wife Lis' and one daughter Frankie Brindedahl preceded him in death. Gilbert was a special brother and friend, a giving brother with no fanfare. He was a self made carpenter, plumber, farmer, cowboy in earlier days, and talents too numerous to mention. Brethren, preachers, friends for many years have been recipients of Gilbert's charity, and good works. He was the most unique man I have ever known. A supporter of faithful gospel preaching and preachers. Paul Nichols writes of Gilbert giving the first one hundred dollars toward the African work when Paul and Wilma went in 1952. (Pg. 19 of Paul's book) Only our Lord knows of the good works accomplished by Gilbert, that are too many for me to know. He mentioned that he would like to die on his feet, and he did while standing in the pharmacy of Wal-Mart in Ceres CA. The church in Modesto was his home congregation for many years, and he will be missed, not only by them but all of us who knew and loved him. Gilbert built the casket he was buried in many years ago. A large crowd attended the graveside service in beautiful Lakewood Memorial Park in Hughson, CA. To know him was to love him. I am thankful for the encouragement and goodness he gave freely to his brethren and friends. This writer along with Howard Cole, and some grandchildren conducted the

service. His works will follow him.—Richard DeGough

EVITT—On September 25, 2001 Brother Truman Evitt left this world for a better one. I had known him since I was a small child. I can hardly remember a time when he wasn't a part of my life. Growing up in the old Vaughn Blvd. church in Ft. Worth was a great experience for me. Truman was a teacher, song leader and consistent worker during the early years of my life there. He married the former Jean Hayes. They remained faithful to each other for almost fifty-three years. About six years ago Truman was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. The doctor sent him home to die. Neither he nor Jean were willing to accept that verdict without a fight. They relied on prayer and alternative medications, and as a result he had several good years. Of late the cancer returned with a vengeance, and he lasted only a few months. On Sunday September 23 my wife and I drove from Paris to Ft. Worth to visit with Truman and Jean. He was weak and frail, and we knew death was fast approaching. Within thirty-six hours, he made the crossing. A large crowd gathered at Laurel Land Memorial Park in Ft. Worth for the memorial service. Brother Melvin Blalock told of Truman's dedication to the work and church in Weatherford, where he was a member at the time of his death. This writer tried to speak words of warning and comfort to those gathered. Besides Jean his wife, Truman is survived by three daughters, eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and one brother. With sadness we say good-bye to a brother beloved, with the hope of reunion someday on the beautiful shores of sweet deliverance.—Ronny F. Wade

WEST—Sister Dora V. West departed this life August 13, 2001. She was a native of Brady, Texas, at the time of her passing she was a resident of Pomona, CA where she had lived for several years after moving from Texas, in 1973. She was a member of the body of Christ, having been baptized for the remission of sins at Covina, CA. On Jan. 3, 1933, she was married to Bro. William T. West, who preceded her in death in 1900. To this union were born 3 children, William, Jr., Lloyd R. and Doris Dutton. Dora was faithful from the time of her obedience to the time of her passing. She was a pillar of strength at Covina, as is her daughter, Doris; they are the kind of people it is not easy to get along without. Dora was such an example of humble resignation to the infirmities of age and to the inevitable; she was an example in many noble virtues to all of us. We will miss her for a long time and will never forget her. The funeral was conducted August 16, 2001, by Brady McCord, burial was in Pomona, CA cemetery by the side of her husband to await the resurrection of the faithful.—Don McCord



Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, Oct. 15—Since last reporting, we

have held good and enjoyable meetings at the following places: Cable Ridge, MO where a seventy-two year old man of the Catholic religion was baptized into Christ, Houston, MO, Harrison, AR and Indianapolis, IN. We were privileged to have good crowds at all these places with a number of visitors both locally and from a distance. Preaching brethren present were Dan Wissinger, Jimmy Smith, Don Pruitt, Bill Ferguson, Tony, Melton, Greg Jordan, Anthony Brockett, and Cullen Smith. We were encouraged by their presence and support. We are currently back at home working with our T.V. work that continues to grow in both size and results, for which we are truly grateful. In December, Lord willing, we will be with the church at Ft. Smith, AR December 5th-9th.

Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 770125, MISSTERJLD@aol.com—I am leaving for Kansas City, KS (36th & Everett) tomorrow (November 10) for a short meeting emphasizing the need for Christian homes and then the next weekend I will be in Allen, TX, Lord willing. Here at home we are in a meeting with Glenn Osborn who is doing some teaching on relevant issues of the day. We have had a lot of sickness but still our crowds have been good and enthusiastic. I have changed my phone number recently and several have told me, after they called others and finally got me, that I need to publish the new number. Sorry. The new number is 713-455-4731. Let us pray that the Word of the Lord will continue to have free course in the world, even in these turbulent times. Let us also remember that this world is not heaven. We are bound for a place free from the evil and violence in this world. Let us keep our eyes on the prize!

Jimmie C Smith, 5100 Rail Rd, Harrison, AR. cjsmith@alltel.net. Nov. 10—Since last reporting one lady in her forties was baptized here, and a young man who attends the Locust congregation. Since last reporting I've held meetings at Burkhart, MO; Strong, AR; Lexington, OK; Hoyle, TX; and recently at LaGrange, GA. where I made my home at Alton and Florence Bailey's. No one can treat you any better than they did me. We enjoyed very good crowds in most of these places. Cullen came and spent half the meeting with me at LaGrange in between moves. I enjoyed the association of preaching brethren at all the places I went. Ronny Wade closed a good five day meeting here recently where we had 25 visitors of the age of accountability. We look forward to seeing many who read this in the Dothan, AL New Year Meeting where our theme will be, "ARE YOU READY?" (Matt. 24:44). I attended the first Alabama New Year Meeting in Dec. of '67 held by Wayne McKamie, and if I'm not mistaken this will be my 4th Alabama New Year Meeting to be ask to direct. I look forward to working with Kevin in this endeavor. I've been privileged to hear Carl Johnson at Mtn. Home, AR; Wayne McKamie at Ozark, MO; Jerry Dickinson at Hartwell, AR. The churches in the area are at peace.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, HI 96797; Telefax No. (808) 680-0249; October 16, 2001:- Greetings! We are glad to inform faithful brethren everywhere that the Lord's work here continues her paces

toward growth, spiritually and numerically. Despite the concentrated efforts of those who left us to undermine, seemingly with ultimate objective to totally destroy, the work, for they are urging the brethren to leave and be separated from the Church here at Ikepono Street, severely opposing and castigating our Biblical beliefs on civil government (i.e., carnal warfare, election processes, etc.) and woman letting her hair grow, though some seem to have been affected by said efforts, generally, members continue to be strong as ever before, firmer in the faith. Apostle Paul, said, "No doubt there must be divisions among you so that the ones who are in the right may be clearly seen" (1 Cor. 11:19, TEV; also see I John 2:19). The leadership has been very cooperative in working with me in some areas of endeavors; such as, in distributing reading materials in swap and open markets, inviting people to attend our Sunday worship services, and contacting prospects for home Bible studies. The presence of the brethren from the mainland U.S. during Sunday worship services continues to bolster and strengthen the morale of the Church. Bro. Allen Bailey preached for us for two Sundays, October 7 and 14. I translated his last message into our native Filipino dialect, Ilocano, and three made confession of faults, while one who has been attending our studies made a good confession of faith in Jesus, and was baptized later. We thank Bro. Bailey; he is indeed a faithful preacher who simply preaches the truth, word of God. He was accompanied by his wife, Sis. Suzanne, Bro. Bruce and Sis. Tonya Bailey. We also continue to have visitors from the area during Sunday worship services. We urge and request you please, mention us, my health, particularly the Lord's work here, in your prayers. Thank you!

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, Nov. 12—The church here continues in peace for which we are thankful. Recently, a young man was converted from cups and classes. Brian Elliott held a weekend meeting for us a few weeks ago and did a fine job. We enjoyed a short meeting at the North Area congregation in Sacramento lately. We had very good crowds with the area and near by congregations and preachers helping us. Among the preachers attending were Bennie Cryer, Alan Bonifay, Max Butler, and Greg Gay. One brother made a confession of wrongs. We appreciated the hospitality of the Bob George family who opened their home to us while we were there. Preachers, don't forget to send us your articles and field reports. If the paper is to prosper, we need your continued assistance. Let us hear from you before December 10th, please.

Ryan J Connor, 20 Birch Lane, Huntington, WV 25704 (304) 429-3018, ryanconnor@juno.com, November 1, 2001—Much has happened since my last report some time ago. My family and I reside in a new state, West Virginia. We moved here in September to work with the Spring Valley Church of Christ in the Greater Huntington Area. We have been warmly welcomed into this place by a loving group of Christians. The congregation here has great dedication to doing its part in the cause of Christ. The church has spent much time in planning and working toward supporting an evangelist. We are setting up a radio

program, a bulk-mailing program, and we are updating the Website that brother Jamie Leonard and David Smith started some time ago <<http://www.livingletters.org>>. Also, the church has provided me with a long list of contacts to reach out to with the gospel. It is a privilege to work with brother David Smith, a fellow preacher of the gospel. We have a lot of work to do, and with God's help we shall do it. It was difficult to leave our previous work in Stockton, CA. The church in that place is so dear to me and my wife and our baby girl. We were able to stay in California for the 2001 Labor Day Meeting. I enjoyed preaching at the Meeting and hearing the good preaching of others. We saw so many friends and loved ones that it made our leaving the state that much more difficult. We received a wonderful good-bye from the brethren in California. Brother Bennie Cryer said some very kind words and offered a prayer for us the last night of the meeting. Shannon and I hold Bennie and Joan very near and dear to our hearts. We will miss living and working with the brethren in the state of California. As a native, I may say with no bias at all that the brotherhood in California contains some of the most faithful and dedicated members of the body of Christ in the world. Of course, we look forward to visiting from time to time. In February, I am scheduled to preach in Placerville, CA. I am also looking forward to attending and presenting at the Preachers' Study in December.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, November 11, 2001—Our meetings in the year 2001 have ended and I am enjoying a time of respite. I have worked with brethren in some enjoyable and rewarding efforts this year. I appreciate every congregation that has called upon me to preach the gospel in their community and I look back upon the year encouraged by the zeal and commitment of several churches where I have been. The meetings in Fort Worth and Houston ended successfully. One was baptized and one restored in Fort Worth. Crowds were good and the enthusiasm of the brethren for the preaching of the truth was evident. At Fairbanks, in Houston, I enjoyed getting acquainted with a number of brethren. This was my first visit to that city to preach. The folks were so kind and hospitable and they seemed to enjoy the meeting. I know I did and I hope that good was accomplished. Phillip Prince held us a short meeting in Dothan last week and did a fine job. His lessons were timely and needful. Things have been going very well this year. Our crowds continue to grow and good things continue to happen. Last month, a couple was restored who have been out of duty for many years. They seem so happy to be back and we are thankful for their renewed resolve to serve the Lord. Lord willing, I will be home until January when I am scheduled to travel to the Philippines with Bro. Don King. I am looking forward to his association and seeing the good that he and the brethren there do from year to year. Our New Year's Meeting in Alabama is quickly approaching. We hope many of you will come and enjoy the meeting with us. See the announcement in the earlier pages of the paper for further details. May God grant us all the strength to enter a new year with a greater zeal than ever for the truth and the great cause for which we labor. Great things can happen if we

give the Lord our very best.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Nov. 7—I am happy to report that last month I celebrated my 61st anniversary of preaching the Gospel. Recently we were in meetings at Blue Springs, KY (Sept. 30-Oct. 7) and Lawrenceburg, TN (Oct. 10-14). I have been holding meetings at Blue Springs for nearly thirty years. We had wonderful crowds and interest again this year. The last Lord's day for morning service we had 140 persons present. I was asked to return for another effort in 2004. At Lawrenceburg, we saw people we had not seen since my last meeting there over twenty years ago. It was good to be there to preach the Gospel and to enjoy the Southern hospitality. The Lord willing, we go next to Frisco and McGregor, TX. We are to be at Frisco Nov. 9-13 and at McGregor Nov. 14-18. It has been good to be associated with a number of preaching brethren who have attended our meetings and we anticipate more in the near future. The work in the Kansas City area continues to progress. We have added one or two new ones to our roster of local teachers. We are very much encouraged by their ability and desire to use their talents in the Lord's work, and we are thankful for them. We also have several young women who are to be commended for their faith and zeal. A short time ago five of these who are mothers with small children quit their jobs and are staying home and taking care of their little ones. We are so proud of them. They take their responsibilities very seriously and it shows. May the Lord help us all "to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called"

A. Joshua Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, E-mail: Josh1477@juno.com—I have some more good news about new births to report. One of these has brought us an extra measure of joy because it is a family member. My father-in-law George has been ill for a long time, and until recently has not shown much interest in the gospel. Mariah has been praying for her dad for years and we have both tried to share God's word with him as we had opportunity. Early last month George called and his health really seemed to be taking a turn for the worst. When Mariah asked him if he wanted to hear from the Bible what he needed to do to be saved, to her pleasant surprise he responded that he did, and after she shared different passages with him related to salvation he told her that he wanted me to come up and baptize him. We made the trip up north that day and I reviewed some of the points that Mariah had covered and studied with him from Romans 6. He gave his confession and I immersed him for the remission of sins. His situation needs a lot of prayer because he lives about 90 minutes away from a faithful congregation, his health problems make it hard for him to travel far from his home, and he has no transportation of his own. A new brother named Matt Steffen recently brought his friend Clayton, a high school student, to one of the young peoples' gatherings, and he asked me to help study with him. We looked at different conversion accounts in Acts, as well as different passages on the Lord's church and Biblical worship. I was impressed with Clayton's openness to God's word. Matt brought him back to church at Covina (he regularly attends the Norco congregation) on Sunday and we watched a

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

If the date near your name and address reads 12-01 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to 41931
Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

video about Bible conversions and Don McCord met with him as well. After the afternoon service Matt baptized him, and he just informed me that Clayton is doing well spiritually. Mariah and I continue to meet new people from the Covina Farmer's Market and have studies with them. One man we met there came to services recently and brought his wife, and we are building a friendship with them. Mariah is still meeting regularly with a couple of girls to help them come to a better understanding of and deeper convictions from God's word. Don McCord and I have been able to regularly meet together and study the Bible which is a blessing. Mariah and I, along with a group of young people from the church recently went door knocking in the neighborhood surrounding the church building to invite people to the Wayne McKamie gospel meeting, which we are in the last two days of at the time of this report. None of those neighbors have come yet, but Wayne's sermons have been excellent and one brother responded to the invitation by making a confession of faults.

Wyn Baker, 304-272-9813, 229 Orchard Street, Wayne, WV 25570, November 7—The Lords work in this area of West Virginia continues to develop and see good progress. In the past year we have seen several come to Christ in obedience to the gospel. Recently, we had one brother out of duty make a confession of faults he had in his life and he was restored to the faith. We have made solid progress in regard to local teachers between the two congregations we are working with. At this point we have two new teachers that are currently teaching at the Radnor congregation and they are doing a real good job in their efforts. At Garretts Creek we have one young man who will give his first lesson this Wednesday evening. It is so good to see these young men taking such a vital role in the local work here, and it is evidence to the fact that these congregations are developing well and have great potential for present and future work. We are enjoying a measure of peace and stability within these congregations, and we pray for wisdom and understanding that this might continue for many years. Recently we had a gospel meeting at Radnor, with Brother Alton Bailey. He did a good job in his presentations of the Word, and we were glad to have him in our midst. A couple of weeks before, Brother Greg Gay came to Garretts Creek and conducted a gospel meeting for us. We highly commend Greg for his study and wisdom in presenting God's Word. The lessons he gave were so timely, and appropriate. Many of the members related to me after, how much they enjoyed and had learned during the meeting with Greg. We hope to have him back in the fall of 2005. He and my sister Cassie stayed with us, and we greatly enjoyed having them in our home. The only regret is that their stay was just too short...we would have liked to have had them longer. In summary of the overall

work, it seems we are regularly seeing good things that speak well of the efforts being made by our members here who are promoting the cause of Christ in their life. We continue to run a weekly ad in the county paper, which continues to draw consistent interest from the community, and we continue to have our weekly leadership study for those who are local teachers, or those who have an interest in becoming local teachers. Our goal in this work is not complicated, but rather is to simply develop interest by encouraging involvement and motivation to brethren who want to learn more as to how to apply the Word of God from the pulpit and in their lives. I pray that all we accomplish is according to the Lords will. One final note: I just returned from holding a gospel meeting at the congregation in Eldon, MO, Nov 1-4. We had good crowds at each service, with community visitors attending as well. We closed the meeting with one young lady obeying the gospel after the final afternoon service. We are very encouraged by this and pray that she and the congregation there will continue to grow in the most holy Faith. We solicit your prayers as we continue in this work, and we pray that all in the brotherhood are doing well and prospering in further advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jack A. Cutter, 12321 F. 14th, Tulsa, OK 74128, Sept. 5— This has been an eventful year. Recently, we witnessed the baptism of two young Hispanic men. Jose Manual Molina baptized them. Although he lives in OKC, Bro. Doug Edwards has been bringing him to Broken Arrow to study with them (Romiro & Alejandro Chavez) in Spanish. They have a brother, Ruben Chavez, who was baptized a years or so ago that attends Broken Arrow. It is through this influence upon them that they became acquainted with the church. On May 5th of this year, elders and deacons were ordained at Broken Arrow. The elders are: Joe Ferguson & Jack Cutter. The deacons are: Rylan Nichols, Hollis Allen & Steve Smith. This year we arranged with a local T.V. station (Fox channel 5/23) to show Ronny Wade's video series Let The Bible Speak. Besides Broken Arrow, it is sponsored by several congregations in N.E. OK. Also, we have consented to conduct the annual Oklahoma N.Y.'s Meeting. (Additional information can be found elsewhere in this issue of the *OPA*.) In August, Jerry Cutter held us a weekend meeting. As most are aware, Jerry possesses experience, wisdom and knowledge. He demonstrated all three qualities during the meeting. He is respected and appreciated at Broken Arrow. A few - this and that's - before ending the report. If you were unaware of it, Broken Arrow is a suburb of Tulsa, I have completely recovered from the bypass surgery performed on me May 25th of last year. Our e-mail address (given at the beginning of this report) was changed a few months ago. If you haven't changed it in your address book, it will be incorrect. *Printer inadvertently deleted last issue, our apologies. DLK*