

SPECIAL MEETING EDITION



SEPTEMBER 1983

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GOSPEL MEETING

October 3 - 9

Aude McKee

7:30 P. M.

FULTONDALE CHURCH OF CHRIST

EVERYONE WELCOME!



ARE YOU SEEKING AN ALTERNATIVE?

by H. O. Hutto

HAVE YOU HEARD about the group of Christians in this community that is not at all like the denominations so often encountered? Some have wondered about this difference and even remarked about it. This group is different in a number of ways but space permits us to consider only a few, and that but briefly.

1. DIFFERENT, in attitude toward the Bible. These Christians believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, complete, authoritative word of God, and that the New Testament is the final expression of that word. This faith is based upon such scriptures as 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:3-4, 21; Revelation 22:18-19; John 10:35. But, do not all Protestant denominations believe this? There was a time when they did, but now many of them will tell you unhesitatingly that they no longer do. Even those denominations which are known as "Fundamentalists" are guilty of dividing the commandments of Christ into "essential" and "non-essential" commands. This, in effect, nullifies the authority of the scriptures because it will let every man decide for himself what is essential and what is not. But not these Christians! They believe that man shall live "by **every word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Is this what you believe?

2. DIFFERENT, in attitude toward how to become a Christian. Since their faith in the scriptures is such that it will not allow them to divide the commandments of Christ into essential and non-essential commands, this group of Christians insists that because every man has sinned and separated himself from God (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1-2) man's only hope for benefiting from the blood of Christ is to do **all** that Christ has commanded men to do in order to reap these benefits. This, of course, in-

volves faith in Christ as the Son of God (John 20:30-31; Mark 16:16). But since the scriptures says that our faith avails only when it **works by love** (Galatians 5:6; James 2:24) they also **repented** of their sins (Acts 17:30), confessed with their mouth what they believed in their hearts (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:10) and gladly obeyed the command of Christ to be baptized, i.e., immersed (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12), in water (Acts 2:36) for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16) or to be saved (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21). When one has done all these things -- and not until then -- the Bible reveals that he is saved, a child of God by faith (Galatians 3:27), and a member of the Lord's church (Cf. Acts 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2). Is this what you did?

3. DIFFERENT, in insisting on being simply a Christian -- nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. Every religious group teaches that a person can believe all the truth, obey every command of God, be a Christian while he lives, and go to heaven when he dies without ever belonging to any denomination whatsoever. Since this is true, this group of Christians sees the unimportance of every denomination and hence have not joined any denomination and are not a part of any denomination, but are simply Christians -- nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else! Furthermore, since the Bible reveals that it is wrong and sinful to divide the people of God into different categories, and be called by different religious names (1 Corinthians 1:10-13) this group is satisfied with the name given in the New Testament, i.e., the name **Christian** (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16), and pleads for all believers to be one even as Christ prayed (John 17:20-21). They are satisfied to

(Continued on Page 4)

Fultondale Church Of Christ

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL, SR., EVANGELIST
3004 BRAKEFIELD DR. - FULTONDALE, AL 35068
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September, 1983

Dear Reflector Reader:

About twice each year we invite a guest speaker to come to speak to us on vital Bible subjects. We believe that this is not only good for members of this church but also good for the community as a whole.

Aude McKee of Knoxville, Tennessee has been invited to be with us during the week of October 3 through October 9. His experience as a preacher and his knowledge of the Scriptures well qualify him for this work. He will be speaking each night at 7:30 at our building located at 2005 Elkwod Drive in Fultondale. He will also speak at our Sunday morning service (10:45 AM) on October 9 and on Wednesday morning at 10:00.

We would like to invite you to share with us in this spiritual feast. We would consider it an honor indeed for you to visit with us during this series of meetings.

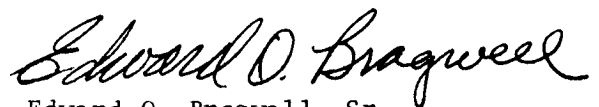
You will not be embarrassed by being ask to give any kind of emotional demonstration or by any kind of show of hands. You will not be asked to give any money. In fact, the only contribution that will be taken all week will be the contribution that is regularly taken from the members of this church on Sunday morning. You will not be pressured by any kind of salesmanship type emotionalism.

Each night there will be a brief period of congregational singing followed by a prayer led by some brother. Then you can quietly listen to a lesson from the scriptures presented by brother McKee. He will speak for whatever length of time he chooses. Usually the entire service, including the songs and prayers lasts about an hour. After the speaker has finished we sing a song during which anyone who wishes to become a Christian or to be restored as a Christian is encouraged to make it known. At this point there is no effort to whip up undue emotional feeling, because we believe that this decision should be an intellectual decision based upon knowing what the Bible teaches one to do - not merely a response to the emotion of the moment.

You are encouraged to bring your Bible to these meetings and to follow the speaker from verse to verse, if you would like. Feel free to take any notes during the lesson for future reference.

Hope to see you then.

Sincerely,



Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.

On behalf the entire congregation.

be simply members of the Lord's church and just Christians. Can this be dangerous? Can it be anything but safe? Is that what you are; or are you a "Christian plus another name"?

4. DIFFERENT, in its attitude toward church worship and work. Since the New Testament commands Christians to assemble together (Hebrews 10:25) these do so, but such does not make them a denomination in any sense of the word. Such is simply the congregation of the Lord's people; the congregation devoted to and belonging to the Lord; or the church that belongs to the Lord, hence the church of Christ or church of God. (Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16).

Since these Christians have the confidence in the scriptures already mentioned, they accept the New Testament as the divine, verbally inspired, and authoritative **blueprint** for the church throughout all ages. Whatever acts this blueprint reveals that Christians did when they thus assembled is the **pattern** for them to it they cling tenaciously. Since the New Testament reveals that Christians are to assemble on the first day of the week to break bread or eat the Lord's supper, give of their money, sing, teach the apostles' doctrine, and pray together (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19), that is exactly what this group of Christians does. Since the Bible forbids adding anything to what is revealed (Revelation 22:18-19) these Christians do not do anything else in church worship. Is this unreasonable? Can it be anything but right? Is that what you do?

The New Testament also tells that the church is to preach the gospel, edify itself, and care for its needy (1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 4:16; Acts

6:1-6). This group is glad to do just that.

5. DIFFERENT, because it has no ecclesiastical or denominational hierarchy. Since this group accepts the New Testament as its blueprint for the church, it is happy to follow the pattern therein given for church organization. The New Testament reveals no ecclesiastical authority higher than the local congregation, except Christ the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22-23). The local congregation being overseen by elders (Acts 14:23, Acts 20:17,28; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Titus 1:5-9) with deacons to serve (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8-10) and is not governed by any conference, association, synod, pope, or council, but is simply **free** under God to do the will of Christ. It has no denominational machinery or earthly headquarters but is a free, independent, and autonomous body of Christians. Is the church of which you are a member like this?

This group occupies a unique and enviable position, indeed! It is a position based upon and produced by the infallible word of God. This group does not occupy this position merely as their opinion but because the word of God tells them and all others to do so. Wouldn't you like to do the same? For more information about this group of Christians who insist on calling Bible things by Bible names and doing Bible things in Bible ways, you cordially invited to attend

Fultondale Church Of Christ

You'll be glad you did.

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