

Defender



“I am set for the defense of the gospel”

Volume XXIV

1995

January

April

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October

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Defender



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Volume XXIV

January, 1995

Number 1

REVIEW OF GOEBEL MUSIC'S NEW BOOK

W. Terry Varner

[The following review of Goebel Music's new book, *Easy-To-Read Version Easy To Read OR Easy To Mislead?* was given at the monthly preacher's meeting on December 5, 1994 at the Hillview Terrace Church of Christ, Moundsville, WV.]

INTRODUCTION

To review the latest book of our beloved brother Goebel Music of Colleyville, Texas will take much longer than the 30 minutes allotted in this meeting. It is a massive tome of gigantic proportion and importance involving a review of the *Easy-To-Read Version* (henceforth, ERV) and the World Bible Translating Center (henceforth, WBTC) operated by our brethren. We encourage all present to purchase their copy after the meeting.

THE MECHANICS OF THE BOOK

Brother Music's work contains 1,207 pages of text and 24 pages of additional introductory materials. The Foreword is written by our good brother Robert Taylor, Jr., who read the book in its entirety and to whom the book is dedicated, along with his precious wife, sister Irene Taylor.

The book is a hardback with dust jacket and the price is \$6.00 plus postage. As with brother Music's earlier work, *Behold the Pattern*, **he is making no profit from its sale.** The book is a labor of love for God, His Word, and the kingdom of God.

The book required better than two years of daily, diligent research. Time and diligent research is an absolute in any writing, but especially in the writing and production of this volume.

Correspondence behind this work is unbelievable, to speak nothing of the cost involved to do the neces-

sary research. The failure of many to correspond, who were involved with the ERV and the WBTC or who could have given valuable assistance, required extra time and money to bring this great work into reality. Documentation, which is a must, has been checked and rechecked.

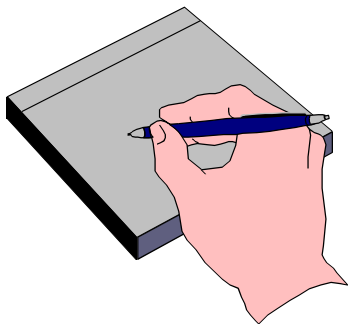
Brother Music's health has not been normal for the past several years and was not good during the time of writing this book. One may feel he has wasted his time but when he knows the long hours of diligence, dedication and determination by brother Music in writing this work under great physical affliction, he will come to appreciate it. To all of us, we need to understand the Biblical philosophy that motivates brother Music, not just in the production of this book but in his entire life; i.e., he is committed to do his best to serve God. 1 Thessalonians 2:2 and 2:4 serves as a Biblical guideline for him (and for each of us), "...bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention...not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

Brother Music's book is a multiple purpose volume. It is a review of the ERV and a carefully researched study of the "highly questionable" WBTC of Fort Worth, Texas. It deals with the involvement of Eastern European Missions, Houston, Texas, Richland Hills Church of Christ, and the work of Bob Hare, Vienna, Austria.

Being a multiple purpose volume, the reader does not need to read the book from Chapter One to the end. He can begin reading anywhere. The work contains 15

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Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Withdrawing Fellowship

One aspect debated, even among faithful brethren, is whether one congregation can withdraw from another congregation. If one congregation cannot withdraw from another, several congregations have erred, because they have withdrawn from another congregation. The Bellview congregation (which oversees this publication) took this action with the Gateway congregation in Pensacola (where Buddy Bell presently preaches) and has had no fellowship with them since July 10, 1977. The congregation I formerly worked with, Burkburnett Church of Christ, withdrew from the Central Church of Christ in Burkburnett, Texas, in April 1989. The August 1994 issue of *Contending for the Faith* documented that Trinity Lane Church of Christ withdrew from Woodmont Hills. Others congregations have done the same thing. If this action is wrong, then these congregations who have practiced withdrawing from another congregation need to repent of their actions and again have fellowship with those apostates. However, we are convinced these actions, one congregation withdrawing from another, are right Biblically.

If congregations cannot have fellowship with each other, then it would be impossible for one congregation to withdraw from another congregation. Thus, we ask the question, can fellowship be on a congregational level? As the apostle Paul, writing by inspiration of God, wrote to the saints at Philippi, he thanked them for their fellowship with him. "For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" (Phi. 1:5). Later Paul would write that "...no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only" (Phi. 4:15). The ASV has "...no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only." Here is an individual having fellowship with a

congregation. Paul had fellowship with the church at Philippi, thus fellowship can be and is on a congregational level. If the Philippian church apostatized, certainly Paul would have withdrawn his fellowship from them. Since fellowship is on a congregational level, one congregation can withdraw from another congregation.

We also realize that we are members of the church universal (Mat. 16:18; Acts 2:41,47). As members of the church universal, we have fellowship one with another. However, the church universal is made up of the church congregational (1 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:2). It is inconceivable that a group of Christians in one location (congregation) could not extend fellowship to another group of the church universal in another location (congregation) since they are both members of the church universal. If one congregation can extend and have fellowship with another congregation, then it follows that they can and must withdraw and have no fellowship with that congregation, if they no longer walk in the light (1 John 1:7).

Would one congregation withdrawing from another congregation destroy the autonomous nature of local congregations? This objection is simply a smokescreen to confuse the real issues involved. Autonomy does not nullify our common fellowship. We are still members of that church universal, though we are members of a local congregation. When one congregation withdraws from another congregation, it in no way infringes upon the autonomy of the congregation withdrawn from. The congregation withdrawn from still has the right to rule herself. An eldership practicing withdrawing of fellowship from another congregation has not tried to rule over the other congregation nor her elders. They have not tried to depose or supplant the existing elders. The elders are only acting in the relationship of the members under their care. They are protecting their flock from wolves. It is not an infringement of autonomy for the elders of one congregation to inform their flock and others that such fellowship that was once enjoyed is no longer permitted, it is withdrawn, for the good of the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers (Acts 20:28).

It is the obligation of Christians and the church as a whole to oppose sin and error wherever it might appear. If it infiltrates a former faithful congregation, then the church has the obligation to oppose that apostate congregation. We will have more to say on this subject in the next few months.

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(Continued from Page 1)

chapters. It advocates the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible and the translations where they are accurately translated. A section on "Versions and Versionists" is mandatory reading by all. So many do not understand the translation philosophy behind the various translations. Only when we understand these translating principles will we be able to better evaluate translations and versions.

A history of the WBTC is given with careful accuracy, which when read will produce serious questions about the WBTC. While all are interested in seeing the Bible is translated, it must be done accurately, clearly and in a dignified and reverent manner. The book reviews carefully the ERV (English New Testament), the ERV in Russian (our good brother from this congregation who makes trips to Russia will want to read carefully this chapter), ERV for the Deaf, and the ERV in various India dialects. (We will return to this last section in a moment).

The three chapters titled "Major Minuses" (260 pages) are written by men selected by brother Music and assigned their respective articles which all have interacted with the translating principles of the ERV. The following men writing in this section are: Roy J. Hearn, the late Guy N. Woods, Robert Taylor, Jr., Roy Deaver, Wayne Price, Wayne Jackson, J. E. Choate, Tom Bright, Thomas B. Warren and W. Terry Varner. The subjects covered and interacted with the ERV are: Inspiration and 2 Timothy 3:16, The Virgin Birth, The First-born Son, Monogenes, Covenant, Law, Fornication, Music in Worship and 2 Timothy 2:15. Throughout the other chapters, brother Music has used many other men in discussing and exposing the fallacies of the ERV and the WBTC.

The book raises several serious and various ethical questions concerning the claims and work done by the WBTC. Reuel Lemmons has written his evaluation of the ERV as "One of the finest translations of the Scriptures in the modern age. Written in simple terms that a child can understand, the text is as true to the book as Christians can make it" (Christian Chronicle, December 1994, p. 10). This misleading ad has occurred almost monthly and the Chronicle will have to make a decision about its future appearance once they have read the book. I cannot imagine the Chronicle supporting false claims. The Preface of the ERV (1980, Third printing revised) makes some staggering claims: "...a serious translation, based directly on the original Greek of the

New Testament...Ideas not found in the Greek text are not introduced, and nothing expressed in the Greek text is omitted...both clarity and accuracy." Nothing could be farther from the truth. If they have omitted 1,000s of words they have added 10,000s!! The translation is based on the "dynamic equivalence" theory which is translating from the "thought" of the text with little regard for the "words" in the text. Verbs are made into nouns; nouns are changed into verbs; singulars have become plurals; plurals have become singulars. Sentences are exploded from one sentence into 30 sentences; i.e., see Ephesians 1:3-14! This misrepresents the Greek text and misleads the reader. By what authority can they explode a sentence into many. The sad results of the translation theory of the WBTC is a translation that is inaccurate, unclear, lacking dignity and reverence. God is mocked and truth is changed, and all of this done without a blinking of an eye. The Greek text behind the ERV is the UBS Third edition which is basically the unsound Westcott-Hort text.

EXAMINE BRIEFLY ONE CHAPTER

We cannot spend a lot of time reviewing this book because of our time frame. We will briefly look at Chapter XIV, "The Easy-To-Read Version and India." If you listen carefully, the following information will terrify you, shock you and anger your righteous indignation.

Richard E. Walker, a former WBTC employee and a language expert in the India dialect of Telugu, states that the "WBTC's main theory, that the New Testament must be in the language of the common man (and understandable to everyone), faces its greatest challenge, for Hinduism colors not only the lives of the people in India but their languages as well" (p. 1,055). Walker goes on to state that WBTC used non-Christian Hindu people to translate the Bible into the Indian language. He raises a valid question: "If he himself [translator, WTV] does not fully understand Christianity, how can he explain it in Hindu terms?" (p. 1,056). Walker makes an astounding admission and claim: "Many of these Indian brethren are just as intelligent, talented, sincere, spiritual and well educated as US counterparts" [*sic*] (p. 1,058). This being so, WHY did the WBTC use non-Christian Indians to translate the Bible into their language with its potential Hindu problems, when we have Indian brethren scholarly enough to do so?

To add even more concern and questions, our Indian brethren using the Telugu dialect are fearful of

WBTC's translation! WHY???? A long-time missionary (32 years) to India, J. C. Choate states he cannot understand using non-Christian Hindus to translate the Bible (p. 1,062). Further, brother Choate believes the brethren in the USA who are supporting the WBTC work in India "may not be aware of the great harm they are doing in helping to bring out such translations" (p. 1,063). Brother Choate claims "the old translations are far better than anything these brethren [WBTC, WTV] have done" (pp. 1,063-1,064). Choate concludes his material with the startling statement concerning the ERV in Telugu: "There is no possible way that I could recommend it" (p. 1,064).

Now listen to something unreal and arrogant? The WBTC released news of the new version of the Indian Scriptures with the phrase: "God's Word Reaches India!" Remember, J. C. Choate has been a missionary in India for 32 years! But, the "worst" is yet to be heard! Sit tight and hold on!

Two Indian brethren, Joshua and Nehemiah Gootam do not approve of the ERV in Indian dialects done by the WBTC (p. 1,072). Sunny David, another Indian brother of New Delhi, "does not endorse the New Testament (Hindi) ERV" (p. 1,073). This is taken from a letter by Perry B. Cotham, a ripe missionary to India and great gospel preacher.

Sunny David of New Delhi, India wrote material for brother Music's book. He is willing to travel to the USA and take a lie-detector test to verify the following information concerning Dale Randolph, president of WBTC. Consider:

1. Dale Randolph visited New Delhi, India and Sunny David met him concerning the Telugu Version being produced by the WBTC.

2. Brother David asked Dale Randolph, while visiting in his hotel room, who the man was in the room on the bed. Dale replied, "he was from Andhra Pradesh, a southern state in India, and that he was involved with him in the translation work of the Telugu language" (p. 1,079). Brother Randolph went on to identify the man as a denominational member.

3. Sunny David mentioned the fact that in all the India cities where Dale Randolph visits, when he makes trips to India, are congregations of the Lord's people. He encouraged him to visit and worship with them. Randolph's response is shocking, filled with mockery, and arrogant! Hear it and weep—"I like to worship with these people because they are better Christians than the churches of Christ, in fact, I have problems even in the

States with some members of the church" (p. 1079).

This troubles me greatly. Are you not also troubled? Think of the fact that brethren have been duped into supporting a brotherhood work in the WBTC and their very president, Dale Randolph, is too good to worship with brethren, but will worship with denomination people whom he calls "Christian." Brethren, we must ask for an accounting from the WBTC. If we do not, God will ask for an accounting from us at the judgment. We know He will ask of those involved in the WBTC.

Let me shock your mind with the following documented materials. The WBTC has an office in Bangalore, India. It is staffed by eight people. Those in charge are P. Joshua and his wife, Sylvia. These two and the other six are ALL MEMBERS OF DENOMINATIONS!

There is no member of the Lord's church working in the WBTC, a brotherhood project, in Bangalore, India! Shocked? P. Joshua and his wife, Sylvia, are not even members of the same denomination. He is a member of the Brethren church and she is a member of the Evangelical church. They often visit different denominational churches each Sunday! This makes the WBTC in India operated totally by denominations and not the Lord's church who pays the funding to support its operations there. We are supporting salaries of denominational people!

Ready to be shocked again? On November 13, 1993 in Pune, India, the WBTC arrived in town to release their new Marathi New Testament Translation. Consider the following documented information:

1. Our own brethren in Pune and other parts of India were not informed by the WBTC of the event, but learned it from a religious bookstore.

2. The ceremonies were held at the local YMCA. About 300 attended, brethren not present by invitation.

Again, when the Hindi ERV was released in New Delhi, the home of Sunny David, brother David was unaware that it took place on October 12, 1992 in the Christ's Methodist Church and that the Methodist Bishop Param was the guest of honor along with various other denominational heads and members. THE BRETHREN WERE NOT INVITED! A denominational Bishop was "honored"—by WBTC, but not by God! Is WBTC ashamed of these Indian brethren?

The WBTC officially dedicated its India Bible Center on October 8, 1991 in Bangalore, India. Dale Randolph, president of WBTC and Ervin Bishop, vice

president of WBTC, were present. They held a “three-day Bible seminar for preachers and church leaders” (p. 1,117). From this you would assume that the seminar was held for the preachers and church leaders of the Lord’s church, but will you be shocked when you read these were not brethren!

CONCLUSION

As I stated, time prevents a thorough review of this multiple purpose volume. However, you see its significance and its importance. Let me offer a few suggestions:

1. Buy, read, sell, and give brother Music’s book to others so as to inform them of the inaccurate work involved in the ERVs and warn the brethren concerning the unethical practices of the WBTC. We do not advocate that the WBTC be destroyed, but that they produce accurate translations and handle the money and programs correctly. We do not need denominational people operating works supported by brethren!

2. Write brother Music a note thanking him for his dedication, work and love for God, His Word and His kingdom. Hold up his hands. He would do so for you if the roles were reversed.

3. As elders and preachers let us investigate before we contribute money to brotherhood causes. Then, our

stewardship of the Lord’s money will be spent more properly. We will give account to God at judgment.

4. I want to make a prediction—the WBTC will dismiss any serious answers to any letters you send them. I encourage you to send letters and raise questions concerning the ERV and the various foreign translations and that a financial and ethical accounting be given by the WBTC brethren. [Following this review, there were those present that indicated they had helped WBTC, EEM and Bob Hare that were going to discuss these matters with their elders and brethren. At least four who indicated dropping their support. Brethren, need to review the book in preacher’s meetings, inform brethren who have for too long been duped into supporting that which supports denominationalism.]

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Editor’s Note: This book can be ordered from Goebel Music: 5114 Montclair St., Colleyville, TX 76034-5401. His phone number is, (817)283-3634. Cost of the book is \$6.00 per book. Postage for one book is \$3.00, totaling \$9.00. If you buy a case of books (ten books) the postage is \$15.00, totalling \$75.00. Talk to brother Music about other postage rates. If you order one of these please send your money with the order.

“TEACHEST THOU NOT THYSELF?”

Robin W. Haley

This is the question of Romans 2:21 that Paul asked of the Jews who felt they had it made over Gentiles. His point was simply: do not be hypocritical. Such is the question we would ask of many of our brethren today who seem not to be able to recognize their own short-comings in this very regard. Some, it seems, are able to correct those of us who “object” to the liberalism perpetrated by many, yet are unable to see that they themselves are guilty of some of the very same things. Consistency has always been a rare jewel, I offer no guarantees of my own consistency, but I try. I offer the benefit of doubt to many of my brethren, that they are trying to sincerely be consistent. There comes a time, however, when we must go beyond “doubts” and realize that a brother simply is wrong and is continuing in an erroneous direction. Such is the case with brother Howard Norton and his work at the *Christian Chronicle*, the organ of OCUSA. I want to compare two statements brother Norton has made in his editorials,

with some things he said to me during a luncheon we had together. These statements were made exactly one year apart in his editorials in the *Christian Chronicle*. In September of 1993, addressing the subject of “Lessons We Can Learn From Denominations,” his closing remark was: “One last word, please. Let us not be timid about presenting the Restoration Plea to “churched” people whose churches have left them desolate.” Amen! But, will brother Norton be consistent in this plea? Judge ye: Within the body of that editorial he made a few fine points. He spoke of such things as “the importance of teaching, preaching and honoring God’s infallible Word; holding to Biblical doctrines that make us distinctive is a key to the church’s spiritual health, not a sign of legalism; leaders who don’t share the spiritual values of people in the pew, the church is in serious trouble.” To all these, we say amen! Yet, was it not our own brother Norton who appeared on the Tulsa Workshop where appear such teachers of apostasy as

Rubel Shelly, Marvin Phillips, Terry Rush and Jeff Walling? Verily! Have not these false teachers been exposed long enough to the brotherhood for all who are even the slightest bit informed to know that they do not teach the kinds of things brother Norton just outlined? Absolutely. How can one who is the head of the Bible Department at a Christian University not know these brethren's folly? He does know! He admitted as much to me in our lunch together at Pryor, OK, on August 8, 1994. Why then does he not join others of us to expose these brethren for what they are? Why will he join with them and fellowship their error? Does he think he is immune to the folly they endorse and represent? Truly, he is guilty of it himself. Ephesians 5:11 still reads "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." So, though he says we ought not to be timid about the restoration plea to the "churched," why will he not plead with his apostate brethren and try to bring them back?

The second statement is from his editorial of September, 1994. He was writing on "The Unity of the Spirit." Again, his closing remark was: "We desperately need people today who, regardless of their other functions, will make peacemaking within the church a top priority." These are swell words. Or perhaps they would be better called "great swelling words" (2 Pet. 2:18; Jude 16). They sound good, but they are empty. In making several points within the body of his article, he tells us that it is a waste of time to deal with division. He tells us that "the real work of the church comes to a

screeching halt while Christians fight." Though that may be true if the "fight" is over options and methods which are not contrary to doctrine. But it is simply not true when the "fight" is pitched because of brethren who will not walk the old paths! It then becomes the work of the church to deal with it swiftly. He could help in such things by allowing his *Christian Chronicle* to be an organ for good, and not compromise as it now stands. Much of the apostasy the church feels today could be averted if brethren like Norton and others would lend their influence to the battle, rather than to the foe. Yes, peace is very important, and indeed it is a virtue to be a peacemaker. But he has overlooked what the prophet said, "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, SAYING, PEACE, PEACE; WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE" (Jer.6:14, emph. RWH).

So, as we see from these two statements, "peacemaking within the church must be a top priority...(and)...let us not be timid" is just so much hot air, or rather, cold ink. Brother Norton would do well to teach himself what it really means to be a peacemaker, and not be timid about confronting the false teachers with whom he runs! Brother Norton charged me and the brethren I was with at this lunch (brethren Cliff Lyons and Ron Cosby) with being "right extremists" because we dared question him regarding his part in the Tulsa Workshop. He was being a peacemaker when he said this, I guess. But I gather from our exchange that he was being timid, not able to answer.

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RIGHTEOUSNESS PLUS AFFECTION

Shan Jackson

"Speaking the truth in love." Righteousness plus affection. This striking sentence serves as the very heart of Paul's beautiful and persuasive plea to the Ephesian church. He exhorts them to two things which are fundamental to the life of any home or congregation, namely, purity of heart and unity of spirit. If there is no unity of spirit a bond cannot hold together, and if there is no purity of heart it ought not hold together. Without unity we cannot exist and without purity we ought not exist. Paul is exhorting these Ephesians to these two things, and right in the very heart of this plea he says in substance that with the "speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things..." (Eph. 4:15).

First of all, speaking the truth in love brings into

our lives things that are fundamental not only to our lives, but also fundamental to each other. After all, what is truth without love? We know that truth without love is cool to the touch and harsh to the heart. Likewise, what is love without truth? We also know the answer to that. Love without truth brings tragedy. Either, without the other, is hard pressed to stand alone. We must have the two. We must have the truth, but it must be encased in love. However, just as we cannot allow truth to be without love neither can we allow love to be a lie. You see how fundamental this is to the home, to life, and as Paul addresses here, to the work of the church. Here is a man, for instance, who tells the truth but he has no love in his heart. His life is as accurate as a mathemati-

cal equation, but without love he will have no influence on another. We might agree with his every word, but without love we will not desire to listen.

Here is another man. His heart is bursting with love. So much love that he cannot bring himself to chance offending someone by telling them the truth. We might enjoy his loving attitude but we would never turn to him for knowledge. Righteousness plus affection. Purity of heart and unity of spirit. Without unity we cannot exist and without purity we ought not exist.

Another element of Paul's divine comment concerning speaking the truth in love is that this is the ideal way in which to communicate. There are many ways in which Christians speak the truth. In our normal, friendly conversations with other, as we approach them in a Bible study or class, as our men enter the pulpit, etc., but our effectiveness is dulled, or even dissolved if they cannot recognize that our speaking flows from a heart filled with love. Speaking with indifference never accomplishes anything positive for the Lord's cause. Even truth, if it is spoken without love, leaves a sting that is hard to heal.

Speaking truth in love is ideal for yet another reason. That is, it enables us to say things that ought to be said which otherwise we would not dare speak. There are some things I need to say, but I hesitate until I know the hearer will see they come from a loving heart, and that I can say them in a loving way. If we are speaking the truth in love we can say anything that needs to be said. In fact, there are some things that must never be said unless we can say them truthfully in love.

Speaking the truth in love is still ideal for yet another reason. That being, it keeps us from saying something that should not be said even though it is true. One who speaks the truth in love will make sure it is the truth before he speaks, and, will make sure it is needed and helpful to the hearer. However, the most charming aspect of Paul's statement is that it causes us to most

resemble our Savior. That is the heart of the text. "Speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him (Christ) in all things; which is the head, even Christ."

It is a laudable ambition to want to be like Jesus. And there is nothing that would do more to bring that to pass than for us to catch the spirit and meaning of this text. May God help us in this effort.

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We recommend a new book, *AMONG THE SCHOLARS* written by David W. Hester. The book is well documented, exposing those individuals who would pervert the Lord's church. It warns against apathy and indifference and calls faithful brethren to action. The cost of the book is \$6.95. You can order directly from David W. Hester, Rt. 4, Box 138, Tuscumbia, AL 35674.

Make plans to attend these Lectureships:

Memphis School Of Preaching Lectures

March 26-30 Memphis TN

"Shall We Restructure the Church Of Christ"

North-East Oklahoma Lectures

April 7-9 Sapulpa, OK

"Things Which Do Not Change"

Southwest Lectures

April 9-12 Austin, TX

"Music In New Testament Worship"

Bellview Lectures

June 10-14 Pensacola, FL

"The Doctrine Of Christ Versus
The Doctrines Of Men"

Houston College Of The Bible Lectures

June 18-21 Spring, TX

"Isaiah"

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume XXIV

February, 1995

Number 2

What the Church Does Not Need Now!!

Jesse Whitlock

Recently I received a copy of *The New Testament Of The Inclusive Language Bible*. This perversion will join the ranks of *The Living Bible Paraphrase*, (Premillenialism, faith only and Calvinism, etc.), *Today's English Version* (faith only, Lord's Supper on Saturday night, denies Virgin birth of Christ, etc.), *Revised Standard Version*, (denies Virgin birth, denies deity of Christ, removes entire texts, makes Christ and Paul contradict one another, i.e., Mat. 5:17 and Eph. 2:14-15, etc.) *The New International Versions* (exchanges flesh to sinful nature, denies deity of Christ, faith only, Calvinism, denies baptism is essential to Salvation, etc.). Many others could be added to such a list of modern day perversions. Alas, now the ranks are joined by this *Inclusive Language Bible*.

The preface states in part: "Jesus says in Matthew 22:30, 'At the resurrection men and women do not marry, they are like the angels in heaven.' In this existence...there are no gender differences among persons. These roles, while they may be different, do not make men and women unequal. ...There arose the practice of male domination, starting with the evolution of the early societies.... When the Biblical messages were put to writing, what the writers used was this tainted language of the early societies....It is proper for us to put the message of the Bible into a language that reflects the values of our culture.... Thus, there are two imperatives that require us to change the language of the Bible...that comes from the criteria of our culture today."

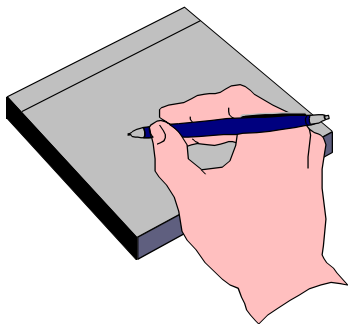
The "Change Artists," the New Hermeneutics Folks and the feminists among us will soon be flocking to this "new Bible message." While the ILB (I'll be! - JLW)

claims the Bible is "tainted language of the early societies," the Word of God declares, "...but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). Culture is not the criteria for "thus saith the Lord" preaching and teaching. While I have not had the time to fully investigate this perversion I know that it is not going to add any to the cause of truth. Alas, I also know that some of my senseless brethren will put it in the songbook racks and classrooms like they did with the *New International Version*, complete with all the basic tenets of Calvinism within its pages.

Someone is bound to wonder what are some of my specific objections to this latest perversion in a long line of perversions. My concerns are numerous; but, I will attempt to be brief:

1. In reference to Christ and the term, "Lord" the ILB has omitted every single reference to Christ as "LORD"! In most instances substituting such terms as: Teacher, One or Son of Humanity, etc. (cf. Mat. 21:3; 23:39; 12:8). In every reference Christ makes to Himself as "Lord" the ILB has either omitted the term or changed the term. Of course, their thinking is that the Greek term *kurios* implies the masculine gender. However, W. E. Vines tells us this Greek word is "...properly used as an adjective, signifying having power or authority, is used as a noun, variously translated in the New Testament." (p. 698). Christ rightly assumes the title for Himself (Mat. 7:21-22; 9:38; 22:41-45; Mark 5:19; Luke 19:31; John 15:15). In all of these references the ILB changed to: Rabbi, Overseer or God. This change

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Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Withdrawing Fellowship

Last month we discussed that one congregation can Scripturally fellowship another congregation of the Lord's church. Please study these passages as they relate to this subject: Philippians 1:5; 4:15-18; Romans 15:30-31; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 6:10. We also mentioned that one congregation fellowshiping another congregation or withdrawing its fellowship does not infringe upon the autonomous nature of congregations.

All fellowship ultimately resides in God.

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ....This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:3-8).

There is no doubt this passage refers to individuals. I have fellowship with God, only as long as I walk in the light. John also teaches that when an individual ceases walking in the light, then that fellowship with God ceases. God cannot and will not have fellowship with one who is walking in darkness. "*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity*" (Hab. 1:13a). "*For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil*" (1 Pet. 3:12). Therefore, if I should cease walking in the light, God does not have fellowship with me.

If a Christian stops walking in the light, what is the church to do? The church has the obligation to withdraw its fellowship from that individual. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us....And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 The. 3:6,14). In First Corinthians 5, there was a man among them that no longer was walking in the light. Paul uses seven expressions to denote what the church is to do. They were to, "take(n) away from among you...deliver such an one unto Satan...Purge out...not to company with...not to keep company...no not to eat....put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13). The reasoning behind this is clear upon our understanding of God's nature. God does not have fellowship with that one in sin, thus neither can we.

Now, let us apply this principle to our subject. By what stretch of the imagination can one say this principle applies to individuals but does not apply to congregations. Could this principle apply equally to a group of individuals and thus to an entire congregation? If not, why not? If a congregation is walking in the light and another congregation is walking in the light, then those two congregations have fellowship with each other. If one of those two congregations quits walking in the light, then the congregation walking in the light must, to be pleasing to God, withdraw their fellowship from the other congregation. God, because of His nature, will not fellowship anyone or any group that is walking in darkness. It would, thus, be wrong for one who is in fellowship with God to fellowship one in darkness. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

is not so much over the matter of masculinity as it is an attack of the Lordship of Christ Jesus. Even when Thomas made the confession in John 20:28, “My Lord and my God” the ILB could not put “...My God and my God” so they had Him say, “My Sovereign and my God.” In other words, the translators (?) could not even find a consistent mistranslation for the term: LORD!

2. In the Scripture where God is referred to as our “...heavenly Father...” (i.e., Mat. 6:14,26,32; 15:13; 18:35; Luke 11:13), the ILB changed every passage to read either “heavenly parent” or “parent in heaven.” We all know that John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that **he** gave **his** only begotten Son....” But, in the ILB it reads, “For **God** so loved the world, that **God** gave the only begotten Son....” I was relieved they did not follow the *Inclusive Language Lectionary* here. It states: “For **God** so loved the world that **God** gave **God’s** only Child....” They took away God’s masculinity; retained Christ’s masculinity—but, then notice 1 John 4:9 in the ILB: “This is how the love of God was shown to us. **God** sent the only begotten **Child** into the world so that we might live through **God’s Child**.” One thing that this mistranslation will never be accused of...and that is consistency!!!

3. Even the Holy Spirit does not escape the butchery of the ILB. In John 16:13 Christ made the Holy Spirit’s gender beyond question, listen: “Howbeit when **he**, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he** will guide you into all truth: for **he** shall not speak of **himself**; but whatsoever **he** shall hear, that shall **he** speak: and **he** will shew you things to come.” Seven times the masculine gender of the Holy Spirit is specified. You would need professional help to miss that truth so the ILB brings that professional help to light: “The spirit of truth will come and guide you into all truth. The spirit of truth will not speak alone, but will speak what has been spoken above and show you things to come.” The unscholarly “scholars” had to know where all the masculine pronouns were located in order to side-step each and every one so conveniently!

4. You would think that E.R.A. (Evil Right Away) and N.O.W. (Nasty Old Women) would be content to leave Satan in the masculine form. Even though Christ identified him as “Your FATHER the devil.” In John 8:44, the ILB has changed the language (as they promised they would do): “You are the children of your parent the devil...your parent was a murderer from the beginning...there is no truth in your parent...when your

parent speaks a lie...the parent of liars....”

5. Men and/or man is changed to human or humans: i.e., Mat. 4:4; Mark 1:17; 11:30-32; Rom. 5:12 and the list goes on.... “Son Of Man” is changed to “Son of Humanity”: i.e., Mat. 24:36-44; 26:22-25; Mark 14:21 and the list goes on....

6. Even Adam loses his “manhood” in Romans 5:12, the ILB reads: “Sin entered the world through one **human**...and so death passed on to all **humans**.”

7. According to this travesty of a version the husband is no longer the head of the wife. Ephesians 5:25 reads in the ILB “For the husband is essential to the wife, even as Christ is essential to the church...” While the statement is true, that is not what the Greek text actually says. This version has made no attempt to be honest with the original language. It is a dishonest handling of the text and a deceitful thing to dare put the name Bible anywhere on it’s cover!

8. 2 Timothy 2:2 was one of the late brother Eldred Steven’s favorite passages. He quoted it often: “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.” Every time I hear or read that passage I am reminded of one of the greatest men of God I’ve ever known. Imagine my horror at reading it in the ILB: “Commit to faithful Christians what you have heard from me among many witnesses....” The word “Christians,” to my knowledge, is not found in any Greek manuscript anywhere in existence on the face of this earth! Again, notice there is no attempt whatsoever to be faithful to the Greek in this document they dare to call the Bible!

9. Obviously they could not stand for the “work-man” to remain in 2 Timothy 2:15, so they have perverted that text also: “Study to show yourself approved by God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, correctly teaching the truth.” Well, the ILB does not correctly teach the truth and every worker listed under the heading of “Editors, Proofreaders and Contributors” needs to know that as workers, workMEN or work-WOMEN they are not approved of God in the mishandling of His most Holy Word. On that page in the ILB listing all those who contributed it states: “Many women and a few good men have helped in the preparation of this version.” These many women and few men remind me of the bottom of a double-boiler—they are all steamed up; but they don’t know what’s cooking!

10. We have often turned to Matthew 23:9 to show that it is without Biblical authority to refer to men using

religious titles such as Father, reverend, doctor, etc. However, the ILB is going to make a travesty of any logical reasoning in this area; listen to this twisted reading: “And call no one on earth your parent, for you have one parent, and that parent is in heaven.” This will prove to be helpful to those who want to contend that for parents you can have either two “mothers” or two “fathers.” There are already textbooks in the public school systems teaching that little “Susie” or “Johnny” came home to “mom and mom” or to “dad and dad.”

11. Perhaps one of my greatest concerns about this new “book” is the door it seeks to open in the qualifications for the elder and deacon in the Lord’s church. 1 Timothy 3:2 states in clarion tones, “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife...” How many times have we studied in classes and heard that qualification enumerated from the pulpit? But, now the ILB is going to change the charge of God; put your ear down here: “Bishops must be blameless have only one spouse...” Titus 1:6 has always been understandable; “If any be blameless the husband of one wife...” But, the ILB has so perverted the language: “They must be blameless married to only one spouse...” You will note that by this language a woman could conceivably (pardon that wording - JLW) meet the qualifications as an elder. By the way, the context in the ILB has deleted every personal pronoun in the masculine genders (i.e.,

he, his, etc.). The deacon has certain qualifications incumbent upon him. Notice 1 Timothy 3:11-12, “Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife...” but, the ILB has once again done away with God’s directive—are you listening? “Even so their spouses must be respectable, not slanderers, but sober and faithful in all things. Ministers must have only one spouse...” You do not have to be a genius to figure out that many congregations will be ready to throw the NIV’s out of the songbook racks and replace them with the ILB.

This brief article has only mentioned a few of the manifold errors contained within the pages of the ILB. For now, it is only available in the New Testament, and that’s way too much. Yet, they are planning to do the same sort of thing with the Old Testament, as well. Out of curiosity I turned to Luke 13:34 in the ILB—it reads, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you—how often I have longed to gather your children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not let Me.” I was shocked and surprised—I expected it to read: “As a hen and/or rooster doth gather it’s brood...” If they come out with the Old Testament let’s watch these passages: Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Psalms 119:160...hmmn!

Voices From The Past:

From *Defender* editorial; February 25, 1972, pages 2-3.

ELDERS CAN STOP THE SPREAD OF LIBERALISM

William S. Cline

We firmly believe that the elders of the local congregation have the divine right and responsibility to determine what shall be taught and who should do the teaching (Acts 20:28-31). Much of the trouble that we are presently experiencing could be avoided if elders of local congregations would be more careful of who does the teaching and preaching and what is taught. Preachers known for their liberal views should not be used in meetings, lectures, youth rallies or any other function that the church has. It is time that the elders take away their audiences. But, not only do we need to take away audiences; it is high time we heed the command of John. By inspiration he wrote, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the

Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11). Throughout the brotherhood it has been the common practice in many circles to use men for meetings, lectureships, youth meetings, etc., who are known to espouse liberal views. One day elderships will answer for their flagrant disobedience to John’s injunction. There can be no right in fellowshiping false teachers.

The church needs elders who will stand up and be counted; elders that will stop the mouth of the gainsayer. Thus elders that are following New Testament doctrine will not only cut off the false teacher’s audience and pay, they will mark him as such and will have

no fellowship with him. In Romans 16:17 Paul said, "...mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." In Titus 3:10-11 he said, "A man that is a heretic [false teacher] after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." We have no choice in the matter! If we fellowship false teachers, we disobey God. When will elders be as concerned about obeying Romans 16:17 and Titus 3:10-11 as they are about obeying Acts 2:38?

The elders that tolerate false teaching and corrupt practices share the guilt of the false teacher or the evil doer (2 John 11). I recently read of an eldership that would not fire their preacher, even though they knew him to be a rank liberal. Their excuse was, "If we let him go, we are afraid he will leave the church of Christ and go into some denomination." Their first responsibility, as we see it, was not to fire him, thus letting him go to some other congregation of the Lord's people to teach his false doctrine. This has been done too many times during recent years. The elders should first seek to convert him to the truth of the teachings of Christ. If that cannot be accomplished, then they have no alternative but to withdraw fellowship from him (thus firing him at that time) and mark him as a false teacher. If this act of New Testament discipline fails to bring him to repentance for the salvation of his soul then he may as well be in a denomination. Elders must obey New Testament teachings. And if following the will of Christ drives a man to a denomination, then to a denomination he must go. False teachers cannot be tolerated or harbored in the church of Jesus Christ! May God have mercy on such spineless elders!

Never has there been a time when those who have the oversight of the Lord's church should be more

careful in what the church is being taught then and now. Elders should know every person that teaches both from the pulpit and in the classroom. They should be acquainted with every piece of literature that is being used. When some of our literature is copied from sources that do not believe in the inspired Word it is easy for error to creep in. It would be a giant step in the right direction if elders would refuse to buy any material from those who are printing false doctrine. When they learn that they cannot sell the material then they will stop printing it.

Among the qualifications of elders is the one that states, "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convict the gainsayers" (Tit. 1:9). Paul continued in verse eleven talking about these false teachers and the responsibility elders had to them by saying, "Whose mouths must be stopped...." Not only must elders know the Word and be able to correct the false teacher, they first of all must be able to recognize error when it is taught. Just recently I heard of a preacher who taught from the pulpit the direct operation of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word. There were elders in that audience that did not even notice that error was being taught! If that is the caliber of elders the Lord's church has today, then may God help us! I am thankful for godly elders that know and love the truth. They are willing at any time and in any way to defend it. May their number increase and their faith and courage wax strong in these days of trial and turmoil.

Elders, the question as I see it resolves itself around this point. Shall the church continue to teach and practice a "thus saith the Lord," or shall we change our teaching and practice to suit the whims of contemporary man? You overseers hold the answer.

Make Plans to Attend:

The Twentieth Annual Bellview Lectures
The Doctrine of Christ Versus the Doctrines Of Men
June 10-14, 1995

Important:

Mailing list Update

Please note: ALL who receive *Defender* **must** let us know of their desire to continue receiving *Defender* by no later than May 1, 1995. You may simply return your mailing label or drop us a card with your name and your complete address (including zip code). Those who fail to do so will be deleted from the mailing list.

Also note: When we receive notification from the Postal Service of a change of address or address correction (because we were not notified by the subscriber) you are dropped from the mailing list. This has been the practice since January 1991 and will continue. If your address changes or you move and do not inform us; we must assume that you are not really interested in receiving *Defender*.

It has been several years since we updated the mailing list of *Defender*. Effective January 1, 1995 we faced a stiff increase in paper prices and also an increase in the cost of mailing. There may be some who no longer wish to receive *Defender* or those who do not read it. It is not good stewardship of the Lord's money to send the paper to those individuals. We want to send the paper to all those who wish to receive it and those who will benefit from it. It is not our intention to delete those names from our mailing.

Defender is a work of the Bellview Church Of Christ. They have taken on the financial responsibility of this paper, thus the paper is provided free of charge. Also, the good brethren here expend their efforts in preparing the paper for mailing. The church here is happy to do this to advance the cause of Christ. Many have helped in this great effort by sending contributions to aid us with the expenses. This has been and continues to be greatly appreciated. Through God's grace and your help, we shall continue sending the paper free of charge to all who wish to receive it. Your understanding and cooperation shall be greatly esteemed. Thanks in advance.

Michael Hatcher — editor

Southwest Lectureship

The Southwest church of Christ is pleased to announce that the 14th annual Southwest Lectureship will be held April 9-12, 1995. The theme for this years lectureship is "Music in New Testament Worship." Speakers from five states have been invited to come and lecture to an expected record number of brethren who will gather in Austin from across the nation to attend this years lectureship series.

During the lectureship a public demonstration of the Firm Foundation on computer CD-ROM will be conducted, and exhibits of various brotherhood publishers, mission efforts, and works from around the country will be on display (*upon prior approval*). In addition, the sermons and lessons delivered during this series will be published in hard-back book form and will be available during the lectureship along with audio and video tapes of this years as well as past Southwest Lectureships.

The annual Southwest School of Bible Studies Supporter's Dinner will also be held on lectureship Tuesday, R.V. and camper spaces are available at the Southwest building. For additional information and accommodations you may contact: Gary Colley, Lectureship Director at Southwest church of Christ 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas, 78748-5399/ Phone (512)282-2438 or Fax (512)282-2486.

Make plans to attend these Lectureships:

Memphis School Of Preaching Lectures

March 26-30 Memphis TN

"Shall We Restructure the Church Of Christ"

North-East Oklahoma Lectures

April 7-9 Sapulpa, OK

"Things Which Do Not Change"

Southwest Lectures

April 9-12 Austin, TX

"Music In New Testament Worship"

Bellview Lectures

June 10-14 Pensacola, FL

"The Doctrine Of Christ Versus
The Doctrines Of Men"

Houston College Of The Bible Lectures

June 18-21 Spring, TX

"Isaiah"

“TO WHOM THEN WILL YE LIKEN GOD”

Isaiah 40:18

Allen Webster

The pen wilts, the mind shrinks, and the tongue stammers at the thought of describing the God of the Bible. Words do not exist in any language to adequately portray Jehovah God. Christians probably do not study about God as much as they should. By better understanding the Lord, our faith will deepen and our desire to worship Him acceptably will grow. “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee” (Job 22:21). The Old Testament uses six names for God—Elohim, El, Shaddai, Elion, Adonai, Jehovah (5,321 times). These are generally translated as: God, Lord, Almighty, Most High, and Jehovah in the English Bible. The Psalmist describes His works as: terrifying (66:3), incomparable (86:8); great (92:5), manifold (104:24), and marvelous (139:14). Certainly, “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him” (89:7).

The Bible pictures the “Great I Am” in many ways to increase our understanding of Him. Perhaps none is more clear than the frequent illustration of God as a loving Father (Luke 15:11-32). When we have good earthly fathers, we get a picture of what our heavenly Father is like.

OUR FATHERS ARE GIVING MEN—SO IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. “Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” (Mat. 7:9-11).

OUR FATHERS ARE FORGIVING MEN—SO IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. “...Even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32). He is faithful and just to forgive us (1 John 1:9).

OUR FATHERS ARE CORRECTING MEN—SO IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. “...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of

him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?” (Heb. 12:5-7).

OUR FATHERS ARE PROVIDING MEN—SO IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. “Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?...And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” (Mat. 6:26-30).

OUR FATHERS ARE PROTECTING MEN—SO IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord... He will not suffer thy foot to be moved...” (Psa. 121:1-3). The story often called “the parable of the Prodigal Son” might be better termed “the parable of the Loving Father” as this is it’s primary application. Even though the son had wasted his substance and shamed his family, the Father anxiously awaited his return with open arms and forgiving heart. This characteristic in God is so strong that John could say, “God is love” (1 John 4:8). Other verses emphasize this truth: “God so loved the world that he gave...” (John 3:16); He “commended his love toward us...” (Rom. 5:8); “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (1 Pet. 5:7).

Meditate on these truths. Pray to the Father in praise of His greatness, awe of His power, and gratitude for His kindness. Grow in love toward Him and always, always, do those things He asks of you.

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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Defender



“I am set for the defense of the gospel”

Volume XXIV

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Number 3

MARRIAGE, ANNULMENT, AND REMARRIAGE?

Burt Jones

The purpose of marriage and its function was, and is, a design of God, that man's desire for companionship might be satisfied. God looked upon this desire and said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Gen. 2:18). This means that the **SOCIAL** purpose of marriage is that of companionship. In **BIOLOGICAL** intent, marriage was designed to perpetuate the human race, more specifically, for procreation. The third purpose of the ties of wedlock is that of preventing **IMMORALITY**.

Those willing to submit themselves to the Author of the marriage relationship, to become His in relation and in life, understandably want to know what our Lord revealed concerning marriage. Within that relationship is provided the things for man's highest good and happiness here. In the right relationship with our Lord and Savior is provided the highest happiness and ultimate bliss in the life to come.

Herein lies the rub. The newest arrival on the auction block of hedonistic behavior resulting in the “selling of our souls to Satan,” and so stated by brother Buster Dobbs, is the strangest anomaly of the marriage/remarriage question)) **ANNULMENT!** I will elaborate directly.

The word “hedonistic” was mentioned. This philosophy known better as Hedonistic Utilitarianism espouses the perverted doctrine that men and women are under two masters, pleasure and pain. It holds that people not only ought to avoid pain at any cost and devour all the pleasure they can, but that they **WILL** do such. This amounts to a declaration that every person is compelled to say, “Whatever brings me pleasure is good and, so, I will do it, but whatever brings me pain is evil,

so, I will avoid it.” Now enters the supposed “escape” from a painful marriage relationship. To annul, from the Latin word *Ad Nullus*, meaning “not any,” is to obliterate; to reduce to nothing; to declare or make legally invalid.

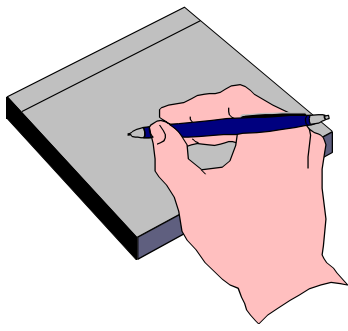
Many of our brethren are now grabbing at this device of man to avoid that pain so shunned by those hedonists. Well-intentioned mothers and fathers load just-eloped John and Mary into the car and make a trip to the family attorney who assures them that this rather indelicate matter can be dispatched post haste with the swirl of an annulment pen. They depart the lawyer's office, thoroughly relieved, or perhaps hoping upon hope, that the marital union of these impetuous youngsters simply **NEVER WAS!**

Question: Are young John and Mary now divorced, or are they still married, or are they in some connubial never-never land? An officer of the civil court, “the powers that be” (Rom. 13:1), has declared, and duly recorded their marriage as over; void; non-existent; **ANNULLED!** Logic dictates that IF their ill-conceived marriage is over, then John and Mary are not man and wife any longer. Therefore, surely God will understand this youthful indiscretion since it was not legally labelled **DIVORCE**, and thus scripturally allow these budding young adults to later select their **REAL** spouse.

If we state that the legal instruments of man supersede the divine ordinances of God, then we are of all men most pitiable.

Since there is one exception and one exception only to the rule of marriage and subsequent re-marriage (Mat. 19:9), man is not qualified to offer another

(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Withdrawing Fellowship

In the first two articles we have established that fellowship can be on a congregational level. We also observed that one congregation withdrawing from another congregation does not infringe upon the autonomy of a congregation. We studied that fellowship ultimately resides in God (1 John 1:3-8). As we or a congregation walks in the light, they have fellowship with God. If an individual or a congregation stops walking in the light, then they no longer have fellowship with God.

We need to consider the seven churches presented by John in the Revelation. There are seven congregations presented for our consideration. Of the seven, Jesus had only commendation for two (Smyrna and Philadelphia), only condemnation for one (Laodicea) and the other four Jesus had both commendation and condemnation. Of these seven, consider specifically the church at Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7). At the time John wrote, Ephesus still had fellowship with God. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:5). God uses the figure of a candlestick or lampstand to show His presence and fellowship. The lampstand's purpose was to uphold and dispense light (Homer Hailey, *Revelation*, p. 123). Thus, to remove the lampstand would mean to take away the light (John T. Hinds, *A Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, p. 38). Remember from 1 John 1:3-8 that the one who walks in the light (upholding and dispensing light) has fellowship with God. The one who walks in darkness (no longer upholding and dispensing light) does not have fellowship with God. God was giving Ephesus time to repent of leaving their first love.

If they did not repent, Christ would come and remove their candlestick. His presence would no longer be with them and He would no longer have fellowship with them.

Now place yourself in another congregation with whom God has fellowship (possibly Smyrna or Philadelphia). This church is walking in the light (1 John 1:7), thus having fellowship with God and Christ. They are, by God's instructions, fellowshiping those who walk in the light and withdrawing their fellowship from those walking in darkness. They are following Paul's instructions to, "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). They have had fellowship with the church at Ephesus, because they were walking in the light (1 John 1:3-7). Since both congregations were walking in the light they each had fellowship with God, and thus, fellowship with each other. Ephesus leaves its first love (Rev. 2:4). God calls upon them to repent and do the first works (Rev. 2:5). God warns Ephesus that if they fail to repent and do the first works, He will come and remove their candlestick, no longer have fellowship with them.

Time passes and Ephesus does not repent. Christ being faithful to His promise comes in judgment upon them and removes their candlestick. They no longer have Christ nor fellowship with Him. That one who no longer has fellowship with Christ, no longer has fellowship with God (2 John 9) and walks in darkness. How can the congregation who has "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove[s]" it, continue to fellowship Ephesus, a congregation who is in darkness? Those who contend that one congregation cannot withdraw fellowship from another congregation teach, by implication, that a congregation walking in the light must have fellowship with a congregation walking in darkness. They are teaching that this congregation walking in the light (such as Smyrna or Philadelphia) cannot withdraw its fellowship from the congregation walking in darkness (such as Ephesus, if they failed to repent). They are teaching that a congregation has fellowship with someone that God will not and does not fellowship. For a congregation to fail to withdraw fellowship from another congregation (that is walking in darkness) would be sin. They would be failing to abide by God's command in Ephesians 5:11 and bidding God speed to wickedness (2 John 9-11), thus a partaker of their evil deeds. They would no longer be in fellowship with God.

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

exception. The very use of the word “exception” and its meaning demands that there can never be a second exception.

Brethren, the parties affected by an annulment are legally, and in the eyes of civil jurisprudence, totally and unequivocally **DIVORCED THROUGH ANNULMENT PROCEEDINGS**.

According to Matthew 19:9b, those persons with previously “**ANNULLED**” marriages who enter into another marriage, by clear implication must know that this new marriage is unscriptural, that they are committing adultery, and so long as this union is intact, so is the sin! Incidentally, immersion, or a subsequent entering into the Body of Christ, does not somehow sanctify a relationship which violates New Testament teaching. There is Bible precedent in dissolving a marriage. It was done (Ezra 10:3ff).

Finally, if Christianity will sanctify a new marriage where one or both parties have been the participants in earlier annulment adjudication, will it sanctify all other relationships? Will it sanctify an extortion relationship; a different kind of criminal relationship; a different kind of immoral relationship?

No, in all this we find the teaching of Scripture is to put away unholy relationships, even if the affected party must follow the precepts outlined in Matthew 19:12. Scripture says “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” and “come ye out from among them, and be ye separate” (1 The. 5:21; 2 Cor. 6:17-7:1).

It may be a “hard row to hoe”, but not nearly so difficult as risking hell by entering into an unapproved marriage and dying in the same thinking that the route of **MARRIAGE, ANNULMENT, AND REMARRIAGE** ran parallel to the strait way acceptable by our Lord.

PO Box 985, Moundsville, WV 26041

Voices From The Past:

From *Defender*; February 25, 1972, pages 1,4.

IN THESE DAYS OF LOVE EVERYBODY

George E. Darling, Sr.

The preacher who, in reality, when put to the test, believes nothing, unless it be “live and let live”; usually stands for nothing, or at least for less than he professes to believe. He looks for worldly friendships and makes a special appeal for those in the “money bracket”; seeks the easy; sails with the wind, floats down stream; is a hail fellow well met; runs in the middle of the road; carries water on both shoulders; smiles a sickly smile and sweetly talks of peace even with the Devil; is blown about by every wind of doctrine; (especially if it looks as though it will be more popular and more money will come in from that source); forms an unholy alliance with the “would be scholars”; ceases to speak out on worldliness; becomes a denominational lover and steers clear of saying anything that might cause one of them to realize that they are lost; refuses to expose sectarianism’s damnable false beliefs; invites the “faith only” heretics and “Jehovah’s Witnesses” as well as the “Sweet Spirited” Campus Evangelism affiliates to occupy his pulpit; refuses to preach what God’s Word teaches on marriage, divorce and re-marriage; and smiles on the Devil’s method of entertaining lost souls. That person cannot understand why a faithful gospel preacher stands out

against such things nor can he understand why any preacher would separate himself from a preaching brother of long acquaintance, because of **CONVICTION**.

Conviction that is built on the Word of God does not change in order to advance the man who stands behind what he believes. The losing of friendships, held dear through the years was the lot of Paul, and it will be the lot of every man who steadfastly refuses to “Let the bars down” and fellowship everybody and everything that claims to be “Sweet Spirited.”

Let us remember in these days of **LOVE EVERYBODY** (even the Devil, if he smile sweetly and publicized his humility) that God’s Word is still our standard; and if it means that we lose every friend we ever had on God’s green earth for the sake of Christ and His church, then so be it.

Some people can be quite “chummy” with a preacher who is unfaithful to his marriage contract. One who is **so nice** he cannot live in the same house with his own wife of his youth is dealt with very tenderly. They can show mercy and hobnob with preachers who deny the simple and plain teaching of the New Testament. (Of

course under their breath they do not agree with him, doctrinally, yet allow him to address the congregation week after week?????)

They can be merciful and friendly with the biggest compromisers that exist on the face of the earth and do it with impunity, even going so far as to place such on programs in prominent places, thus jeopardizing every soul that hears them. They can be kind and merciful with preachers who are as worldly as the devil. They can be 'tolerate' with those who are rebellious, as factious as Hymenaeus and Alexander, deceitful as the Archangel of hell and as big a liar as Belial. These love everybody advocates who are so merciful with the deliberate and well known wrong doers are so quick to draw the trigger on any person, preacher, elder, deacon, teacher or whatever, who says, "No, I am going to take my stand on the Bible, taking its truth, refusing to become a partaker in their evil ways." There is no MERCY OR LOVE for that man. He is to be a cast out from that time on. He is accused of being evil spirited, narrow minded, egotistical, overbearing, unkind, hard to get along with, having a "fat lip" and a "quick pen," and anything else that will do him injury to the one with whom they speak.

Sin is referred to at least 689 times in the Bible, and the preacher who condemns sin in any sinner, is either going to cause that one to REPENT or REBEL! No true Christian expects to be shown love and mercy from the sinner who is caught in his sins, and rebels and determines to continue in them. According to the Word of God, sinners go to hell because they will not repent of their sins, and that includes the lovely and lovable sins of the "heavy contributors" in the church who want to live as the devil but still want to shut the preacher's mouth on the subject of their sins.

Make plans to attend these Lectureships:

Jackson Church Of Christ Lectures

May 4-7 Jackson, KY

"The Christian Home"

Houston College Of The Bible Lectures

June 18-21 Spring, TX

"Isaiah"

McLoud Church Of Christ Lectures

September 8-10 McLoud, OK

"The Church Christ Built"

Annual Denton Lectures

November 12-16 Denton, TX

"Matthew"

Important:

Mailing list Update

Please note: ALL who receive *Defender* **must** let us know of their desire to continue receiving *Defender* by no later than May 1, 1995. You may simply return your mailing label or drop us a card with your name and your complete address (including zip code). Those who fail to do so will be deleted from the mailing list.

Also note: When we receive notification from the Postal Service of a change of address or address correction (because we were not notified by the subscriber) you are dropped from the mailing list. This has been the practice since January 1991 and will continue. If your address changes or you move and do not inform us; we must assume that you are not really interested in receiving *Defender*.

It has been several years since we updated the mailing list of *Defender*. Effective January 1, 1995 we faced a stiff increase in paper prices and also an increase in the cost of mailing. There may be some who no longer wish to receive *Defender* or those who do not read it. It is not good stewardship of the Lord's money to send the paper to those individuals. We want to send the paper to all those who wish to receive it and those who will benefit from it. It is not our intention to delete those names from our mailing.

Defender is a work of the Bellview Church Of Christ. They have taken on the financial responsibility of this paper, thus the paper is provided free of charge. Also, the good brethren here expend their efforts in preparing the paper for mailing. The church here is happy to do this to advance the cause of Christ. Many have helped in this great effort by sending contributions to aid us with the expenses. This has been and continues to be greatly appreciated. Through God's grace and your help, we shall continue sending the paper free of charge to all who wish to receive it. Your understanding and cooperation shall be greatly esteemed. Thanks in advance.

Michael Hatcher — editor

The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men

Twentieth Annual Bellview Lectures

June 10-14, 1995

Saturday, June 10

7:00 PM	It Makes a Difference in Doctrine	Garry Barnes
8:00 PM	The Doctrine of Christ Is Understandable	Clifford Newell, Jr.

Sunday, June 11

9:00 AM	Unity and Fellowship	Eddie Whitten
10:00 AM	Morals	Paul Vaughn
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	New Hermeneutic Versus Christ's Doctrine	Buster Dobbs
3:00 PM	Divorce and Remarriage	Noah Hackworth
4:00 PM	Jehovah's Witnesses Versus Christ's Doctrine	Joe Gilmore
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Pentecostalism	Stephen P. Waller
8:00 PM	Why the Church Is Not a Denomination	Stanley Ryan

Monday, June 12

9:00 AM	Methodism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Bobby Liddell
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Premillennialism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Howell Bigham
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	Emotionalism Versus Proper Emotions	Dub McClish
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on Emotionalism	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Evolution Versus Christ's Doctrine	Garry Brantley
8:00 PM	Modesty	Robin Haley

Tuesday, June 13

9:00 AM	Independent Christian Church Versus Christ's Doctrine	Ken Chumbley
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Christ's Doctrine of Knowledge Versus Agnosticism	Mac Deaver
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	The Holy Spirit	Tom Bright
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on The Holy Spirit	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Feminism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Burt Jones
8:00 PM	Catholicism Versus Christ's Doctrine	John Shannon

Wednesday, June 14

9:00 AM	Presbyterianism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Keith Mosher
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Calvinism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Daniel Denham
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	The Divided Assembly	David Brown
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on The Divided Assembly	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	The Doctrine of Christ	Darrell Conley
8:00 PM	Baptism	Guss Eoff

Bellview Lectures Information

HOUSING

Free housing in the homes of Christians will be provided on a "first come, first served" basis (call our office at: 904/455-7595, or write at: 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526). The following Motel is available nearby and is providing *special rates* for individuals attending the *Bellview Lectures*. Hospitality Inn (4910 Mobile Highway) offers the following prices (tax not included) \$38.00-\$45.00—1 to 4 people per room; includes free breakfast; children stay free. Their phone number is 904/453-3333. When checking into the above motel, show them this advertisement announcing these special rates, or when calling for reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the *Bellview Lectures*.

MEALS

The women of the *Bellview Church of Christ* will provide a free lunch from Monday through Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants and a map will be available at the registration table in the foyer.

EXHIBITS

Limited reservations will be accepted subject to approval of *Bellview elders* and available space. Exhibits are expected from schools, children's homes, book stores, publications, and other projects of general interest to the brotherhood.

TRANSPORTATION

If you will be flying to the Pensacola Regional Airport and will need transportation, please call or write our office. We will arrange to meet you at no charge if we know when, where, airline, flight number, and the number in your party.

BOOKS

The Lectureship book, "*The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men*" will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* and afterwards by mail. It will contain twenty-six chapters and approximately 350 pages. Everyone who attends the *Bellview Lectures* will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

AUDIO AND VIDEO TAPES

All lectures will be recorded on cassette audio tapes and video tapes. These tapes may be purchased during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail order afterwards. Order blanks and price information will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail upon request. (We request the cooperation of all who attend the *Bellview Lectures* in keeping the pulpit area free of privately-owned recorders and microphones.) If you would like to make your own recordings, please see one of our sound technicians, *Richard Parker* or *Bill Crowe*, in the recording room.

TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 38118 MARCH 26-30, 1995

“HEAVEN’S IMPERATIVE OR MAN’S INNOVATIONS: SHALL WE RESTRUCTURE THE CHURCH OF CHRIST”

Sunday, March 26

9:30-10:20 AM	Has the Lord’s Church [the church of Christ] Been Restored?	Eddie Whitten
10:30-11:30 AM	Shall We Walk in the Old Paths?	Steve Ellis
6:00- 7:00 PM	The Bible Only Makes Christians Only and Only Christians	Thomas B. Warren

Monday, March 27

9:00- 9:50 AM	Declaring War on the Pattern of the Lord’s Church	Winfred Clark
10:00-10:50 AM	The Truth About the Truth	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	She Took the Fruit Thereof, and Did Eat (Women’s Class)	Racine Warren
11:00-11:50 AM	Truth—How Should It Impact My Life and Yours	Lindsey Warren
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1: Morals—God’s Unchanging Law on Honesty, Gambling	Billy Bland
	Class 2: The New Hermeneutic Heresy—Where Do They Plan to Take Us?	James Rogers
	Class 3: False Teaching on Baptism	Ted Knight
	Class 4: Safeguarding Young People Against Liberalism	John Curtis
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	Innovations in Worship—Drama, Holy Wow, Celebration	J. K. Gossett
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1: Influence of “New Conservatism” [Modernism] on the Church	Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
	Class 2: Is the church of Christ a Denomination?	Wade Webster
	Class 3: She Became His Wife; and He Loved Her (Women’s Class)	Maggie Colley
2:10- 3:00 PM	Declaring War on the Identity of the Lord’s Church	Terry Hightower
3:10- 4:00 PM	Open Forum	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATION SINGING	
7:30- 8:30 PM	The Liberal Agenda: What Is It?	Tom Holland

Tuesday, March 28

9:00- 9:50 AM	Declaring War on the Exclusiveness of the Lord’s Church	Roy J. Hearn
10:00-10:00 AM	The Truth About the Truth	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	Every Wise Woman Buildeth Her House (Women’s Class)	Lois Duncan
11:00-11:50 AM	Truth—Does It Change with Culture?	Arnold Sexton
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1: Morals—God’s Unchanging Law on Alcohol and Other Drugs	Adolphus Walker
	Class 2: The Core Gospel Heresy	David B. Jones
	Class 3: False Teachings on Love	Terry Joe Kee
	Class 4: Safeguarding a Congregation Against Liberalism and Apostasy	Paul Sain
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:00- 2:00 PM	Innovations in Worship—Frequency of Lord’s Supper, Absolving Sins, etc.	David Pharr
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1: Influence of Pseudo Science on the Church	T. J. Clarke
	Class 2: Is The Easy to Read Version a Tool of Liberals?	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
	Class 3: And He Said Unto the Woman, Thy Faith Hath Saved Thee (Women’s Class)	Dorothy Mosher
2:10- 3:00 PM	Declaring War on the Organization of the Lord’s Church	Jim Laws
3:10- 4:00 PM	Open Forum	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	

7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATION SINGING
7:30- 8:30 PM	Shall We Restructure the Church?

Bobby Duncan

Wednesday, March 29

9:00- 9:50 AM	Declaring War on the Fellowship of the Lord’s Church	Dub McClish
10:00-10:50 AM	The Truth About the Truth	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	Give Unto Thy Handmaid a Man-Child, Then I Will Give Him Unto Thee (Women’s Class)	Irene Taylor
11:00-11:50 AM	Truth—Are the Scriptures Verbally Inspired, or Collections of Scraps	Roy Sharp
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1: Morals—God’s Unchanging Law on the Sanctity of Human Life	Warner Kirby
	Class 2: The Denial of Eternal Punishment Heresy	Ronnie Hayes
	Class 3: False Teachings on the Abrogation of the Law of Moses	Richard Gibbs
	Class 4: The Mouths of False Witnesses Must be Stopped	Joe Cox
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	Innovations in Worship—Contemporary and Instrumental Music	Bobby Liddell
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1: Influence of Denominationalism on the Lord’s Church	Lee Davis
	Class 2: Is The Community Church Movement According to the Pattern?	Wayne Coats
	Class 3: The Woman Left Her Water Pot (Women’s Class)	Annette Cates
2:10- 3:00 PM	Declaring War on the Designations/Name of the Lord’s Church	Joe Gilmore
3:10- 4:00 PM	Open Forum	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATION SINGING	
7:30- 8:30 PM	Change Agents in the Church	Gary Colley

Thursday, March 30

9:00- 9:50 AM	Declaring War on the Preaching of the Lord’s Church	Wayne Coats
10:00-10:50 AM	The Truth About the Truth	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	Go Thy Way; From Henceforth Sin No More (Women’s Class)	Corinne Elkins
11:00-11:50 AM	Truth—Is It Sectarian to Defend the Truth?	Jack Wilhelm
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1: Morals—God’s Unchanging Laws on Adultery and Homosexuality	James Hudley
	Class 2: The Outrageous Scandalous Grace Only Heresy	Sidney White
	Class 3: False Teachings that Christians Are Not Under Law and Rules	Stanley Ryan
	Class 4: The Cowardice and Perfidy of Those Maintaining Silence in the Midst of an Apostasy	Harrell Davidson
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	Innovations in Worship—Women in Leadership Roles	Rod Rutherford
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1: Influence of Materialism on the Lord’s Church	Gilbert Tripp
	Class 2: What is the Future of the Lord’s Church?	J. A. McNutt
	Class 3: This Woman Was Full of Good Works (Women’s Class)	Carol Mangrum
2:10- 3:00 PM	Declaring War on the Mission of the Lord’s Church	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
3:10- 4:00 PM	Open Forum	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATION SINGING	
7:30- 8:30 PM	The Price of Truth: Eternal Vigilance	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

SOUTHWEST LECTURES

April 9-12, 1995

“Music In New Testament Worship”

Saturday, April 8			Tuesday, April 11		
Youth Day					
Sunday, April 9					
9:30 AM	Establishing Bible Authority—“New Hermeneutic”(?) (Bible Study)	Perry Cotham	9:00 AM	The Division Over the Introduction of Instrumental Music	Darrell Conley
10:30 AM	Proper Attitude Toward Worship	Gary Colley	10:00 AM	Implications of the Divine Command to Sing in the New Testament	Al Macias
CONGREGATIONAL DINNER				Ladies: The Christian’s Garden of Contentment	Irene Taylor
2:00 PM	Area Wide Singing		11:00 AM	In-depth Study of Colossians 3:16-17	Joe Gilmore
6:00 PM	Instrumental Music in the Old Testament	Joe Gilmore	1:30 PM	Review of Hardeman-Boswell	
7:00 PM	God’s Design in Singing (Beauty and Simplicity of the Voice God Created)	Joseph Meador		Debate on Music	Bill Lockwood
Monday, April 10				Discussion Forum	Taylor/Dobbs
9:00 AM	The Absence of Instrumental Music in Temple Worship (Implications)	Garland Elkins	2:30 PM	SWSBS SUPPORTER’S DINNER	
10:00 AM	The Divine Command of the New Testament to Sing	Glenn Hitchcock	4:30 PM	SINGING	
	Ladies: The Influence of One	Irene Taylor	6:15 PM	Are Solos, Quartets, and Choirs Scriptural?	Buster Dobbs
11:00 AM	In-depth Study of Ephesians 5:19 (<i>Psallo</i> and <i>Psalmos</i>)	John Moore	8:00 PM	What About Harps in Heaven?	Garland Elkins
1:30 PM	Review of the Instrumental Music Debates of Foy E. Wallace, Jr.	Noble Patterson	Wednesday, April 12		
2:30 PM	Discussion Forum	Gilmore, Elkins	9:00 AM	What About Vocal Bands?	Lindell Mitchell
6:15 PM	SINGING		10:00 AM	Instruments in the Home—Why Not the Church?	Royce Williamson
7:00 PM	The Restoration Movement—Valid Today?	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.	11:00 AM	Is Instrumental Music An Aid?	Dub McClish
8:00 PM	The Kind of Music in the Early Church	Glenn Hitchcock	1:30 PM	Review of M. C. Kurfee’s Book On Instrumental Music	Buster Dobbs
			2:30 PM	Discussion Forum	Sain/Lockwood
			6:15 PM	SINGING	
			7:00 PM	Review of Old Testament Passages on Music in Worship	Paul Sain
			8:00 PM	Review of New Testament Passages on Music in Worship	Bill Lockwood

R.V. Hookups Available; Audio/Video Tapes Available; Brotherhood Displays (on prior approval); Lectureship Books Available
Call Southwest at (512) 282-2438 or Fax our office for further information at (512) 282-2486.

The First Annual North-East Oklahoma Lectures

April 7-9, 1995

“Things Which Do Not Change”

Friday, April 7			4:30 PM Unchangeable Avenues of Worship		
7:00 PM	The Unchangeable God	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.	<i>Fellowship Upstairs</i>		
8:00 PM	The Unchangeable Will of God	Dub McClish	Sunday, April 9		
Saturday, April 8			9:30 AM	The Unchangeable Nature of the Home	Ed Johnson
9:00 AM	The Eternal Purpose of God	Bill Lockwood	10:30 AM	Until Death Us Do Part	Jack Williams
10:00 AM	The Kingdom	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.	<i>Dinner On Your Own</i>		
11:00 AM	The Unchangeable Structure of the Church	Garland Elkins	2:00 PM	God’s Unchangeable Desire for Obedience	Ron Cosby
<i>Noon: Dinner Upstairs</i>			3:00 PM	Remember Now Thy Creator	
1:30 PM	Question/Answer Panel	Elkins/McClish/Bright		Men:	Jim O’Connor
2:30 PM	Fellowship, Membership, Discipline	Tom Bright		Women:	Judy O’Connor
3:30 PM	Women’s Liberty and Limits in Leadership		4:00 PM	Question/Answer Panel	Cosby/Johnson/O’Connor
	Men:	Jack Williams	5:00 PM	We Are His Workmanship	Cliff Lyons
	Women:	Lana Williams			

Audio-Video Recordings Will Be Available;
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Book Displays;
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Some Housing with Area Christians
918-224-2024 or 224-4376

Defender is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (904) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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Defender



"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume XXIV

April 1995

Number 4

THE ROLE OF LECTURESHIPS IN THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT

David Lee Henderson

I was recently involved in a conversation with a fellow brother in Christ in regards to the multiplicity of Lectureships in the brotherhood of the churches of Christ. He explained that he is retired, and that he and his wife love to travel. They both also love the Lord and the truth of His Word, and they therefore combine their joys of travel and truth by attending numerous Lectureships annually. He noted that with the multiplicity of Lectureships available, that if one had the money and time, he could travel to Lectureships almost every week of every year. For those who do not understand the importance of these efforts, perhaps the abundance of week-long discussions and preaching (i.e., Lectureships) seems unnecessary. Yet, in order to appreciate Lectureships, one must recognize the role of such efforts in the Restoration Movement of the 19th Century. In 1906, the U. S. Government listed as two separate groups, the CHURCH OF CHRIST and the CHRISTIAN CHURCH. This was the first "official" recognition that the American Restoration Movement of the 1800s was no longer united. The "glory years" of this effort to return to simple New Testament Christianity was 1832-1849. During this 17-year span, the two basic branches of the Restoration effort, the followers of Barton W. Stone and the followers of Alexander Campbell, were united in one basic concept: New Testament Christianity. These two groups of truth seekers differed on such thoughts as names (Stone's group preferred to be called "Christians"; whereas Campbell's people were partial to the term "Disciples"), still, they were united in practice and fellowship until 1849.

Yet, the next 20 years brought three "death blows" to the unity of God's people: (1) 1849—the birth of the

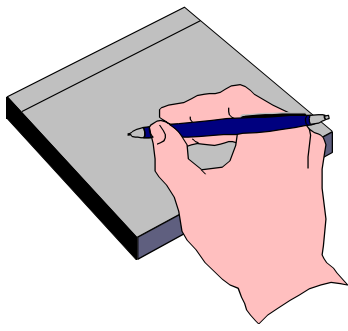
Missionary Society, an unscriptural organization separate from the local church for the purpose of Evangelism; (2) 1859—the introduction of the mechanical instrument into the worship of the church; and, (3) 1861-1865—the War between the States. By the late 1860s, the progressive liberal element had gained a strong toehold in the Northeast, while the conservative brethren were more numerous in the South.

The situation in the North was particularly drastic. The Progressives viewed the Conservative views as being not so much biblical as "Southern." Thus, the Liberals were able to gain many Northern brethren to their philosophies and practices merely based upon the strong feelings following the bloody Civil War. The growth of liberalism in the North resulted in somewhat of a showdown between two leading brethren of that region, Ben Franklin and Isaac Errett.

Franklin was a strong public debater and a prolific writer in the 1860s and 1870s. No one championed the Conservative Cause in the North during this crucial time more capably than Ben Franklin. Most church Historians credit his paper, the *American Christian Review*, as being the most influential journal in the North during the post-war era. The *Review* was predominantly pro-local church Evangelism and pro- Acappella singing until Franklin's passing in 1870. Needless to say, the progressive Northerners found Franklin's "southern mentality" somewhat behind the times.

Thus, these liberal brethren rallied around Isaac Errett and in 1866 formed the *Christian Standard*, a journal whose specific purpose was to battle the influence of Franklin's *Review*. (So often Conservative

(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Withdrawing Fellowship

In our consideration of one congregation withdrawing fellowship from another congregation, we have deliberated on the fact that fellowship can be congregational in nature. Since one congregation can fellowship another, it can withdraw that fellowship without infringing upon the autonomy of congregations. We studied that when a congregation no longer walks in the light, then it is the obligation of others to withdraw their fellowship from those walking in darkness. We then pondered the situation concerning the seven churches in Asia revealed in Revelation chapters two and three. God was going to withdraw His fellowship from Ephesus if they did not repent. Those who continue in fellowship with God could no longer have fellowship with Ephesus and still have fellowship with God. They must withdraw their fellowship.

Let us notice specifically the Bible's teaching concerning those who cause divisions and factions. Paul, by inspiration of God, writes, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3:10). The ASV translates it thus, "A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse." The NKJV has, "Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition." The word translated heretick, factious man, and divisive man is the Greek word referring to someone who causes divisions, a schismatic person. It does not necessarily refer to one who is a false teacher, although a false teacher does cause division and comes under this category. It is anyone who causes division over anything, including false teachings. The command is to reject or refuse this man after two admonitions. This is the Greek word *paraitou* from *paraiteomai*. This word means to shun, avoid, refuse, reject, dismiss, drive out.

Again Paul instructs, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). We have the obligation to do two things to those who cause divisions and offences. Offences refers to any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall (anything that arouses prejudice or becomes a hindrance to others, or causes them to fall by the way.) First, we have the obligation to mark them. "Mark" is the Greek word *skopein* from *skopeo*. This word means to look at, behold, watch, contemplate, observe, to fix one's eyes upon, direct one's attention to. We are first to direct people's attention to those who cause divisions and offences. Second, we are to avoid them. This is the Greek word *ekklinete* from *ekklinō*. This word means to turn away from, deviate, to turn aside, to keep aloof from; to shun one. After directing people's attention to one who causes divisions and offences, then we are to stay away from, shun them.

Considering the actions of these two passages, it sounds much like what the church was to do to the immoral man of First Corinthians chapter five, withdraw fellowship. Notice that the phrase "withdraw fellowship" is not found relating to this immoral man. However, the terms used and the action taken make us realize they were to withdraw fellowship from him. By the terms used above, and other places, and the action taken, we realize that we are to withdraw fellowship even though it is not specifically stated.

Let us make an application of these passages. There is a man who is causing divisions and offences within a congregation. The elders of that congregation have the obligation to fix the congregation's eyes upon that man. The congregation then has the responsibility to reject him or to avoid him. They have the obligation to withdraw their fellowship from that man. If there is a man causing divisions and offences within the church universal; the elders of every congregation have the same obligation, to mark and avoid him, withdraw fellowship from him. If we multiply this situation, instead of having only one man we now have two men causing divisions and offences, the elders have the same responsibility. Instead of having only one or two men what if we have one hundred or two hundred. Do our obligations change? Of course not! If all these get together making up a congregation, our obligations remain the same, mark and withdraw from them.

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

brethren are criticized for opposing liberal ideas, yet in the Restoration Movement it was the Progressives who formed a journal to oppose the Conservatives!!!) For more than a decade, the *Standard* and the *Review* debated such issues as the Missionary Society and mechanical instruments in worship to God. Bill Humble wrote on page 53 in his book, *The Story of the Restoration*: The *Review* was conservative in spirit, more biblical in its approach, and committed to preserving the faith of the past. The *Standard* was more liberal in tone, admitted many new practices as expedients, and were less hostile to departures from traditional ways.

Franklin's passing in 1878 brought an end to this particular chapter of Restoration History, yet his influence lived on. By the time of the split in 1906, the liberal Progressives (the Christian Church) far outnumbered the conservative brethren (the church of Christ), particularly in the North. Yet, one is led to question if there would have been any churches of Christ in the

North if Franklin's *American Christian Review* had not sounded the cry on behalf of the "old paths."

So what does this glimpse of our historic past have to do with the role of Lectureships in the Restoration Movement? Brethren, the Restoration Movement lives on!!! We must ever strive to preserve the pure, simple, powerful New Testament Gospel both in **philosophy** and in **practice**. Just as there was progressive liberalism running rampant through the brotherhood in the late 19th Century, so this philosophy has been resurrected to haunt the church of Christ in the late 20th Century!!!

Conservative Annual Lectureships champion the cause for Biblical Conservatism much like the *American Christian Review* did in the 1870s. Just as Franklin's efforts helped to assure a sound brotherhood even after a major split, so Biblical Lectureships will help to assure that the true church of Christ will endure whatever awaits us in years to come. **GOD BLESS SOUND LECTURESHIPS!!!**

AN ALLEGORY

Michael Hatcher

There was a congregation of the Lord's church in a city. The church had peace and tranquility. They took seriously the commands of the Bible and tried to the best of their ability to live according to them. The elders of the church performed their duties of overseeing the work. They watched for the souls of the members of the church, engaged in seeking the lost, fought errors, and lead the church in doing right. The deacons served the church well. It was an ideal place in which to worship and work for the Lord.

One day a family moved to town. They placed membership with this congregation to work and serve under its elders. This family was enthusiastic and personable. Everyone liked them from the elders to the children. They seemed very religious and concerned for the church. They took part in all the activities of the church.

Soon the elders asked the man to teach a class. As he began teaching, there seemed some strange things. While teaching in the class he taught the Calvinistic doctrine that we "have been a sinner from birth." Then he added that man has a "sinful nature." Later he taught the premillennial doctrine that Jesus is coming back to this world to "restore everything." He taught "when perfection comes," "the times will have reached their

fulfillment." He went on to teach the Pentecostal doctrine that we are "all given the one Spirit to drink." Also, he taught their practice of "testifying about God."

Then he started teaching the denominational doctrine of salvation by faith only. He said, "that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." He then taught that the gospel reveals "a righteousness that is by faith from first to last."

There are some members of this congregation who sound out a warning to the others. They say this man is teaching denominational doctrines. These doctrines are such that if we believe and obey them they will cause us to lose our souls. In rebuttal, people talk about how kind and loving the man is. Many say that the man says things in a way everyone can understand him, and that he is easy to listen to. They also say that some of the older teachers just are not up on the latest words and thus they are hard to understand. They accuse the ones sounding out the warning as being "old-fashioned," "legalist," "unloving," etc.

Now the question is before the elders of the congregation. What are they to do? They search the Scriptures and see their responsibility. They understand God gave them the obligation to stop the mouths of those who do not teach sound doctrine (Tit. 1:9-11). As a

result, they no longer allow him to teach the Bible class, arguments to the contrary notwithstanding. The man believes and teaches things that are contrary to sound doctrine (Tit. 3:10-11). If he influences those under the elders care, they will give account for their lack of doing God's bidding (Heb. 13:17).

This story is not all that uncommon. The only difference is that instead of a family and a man we would substitute the *New International Version*. This perversion of God's Word teaches all the things taught above. Actually, I quoted the words directly out of the NIV. The order in which they appear above is as follows. Psalms 51:5; Romans 7:18,25 and 8:3,4,5,8, 9,12,13; Acts 3:21; First Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 1:10; First Corinthians 12:13; First Corinthians 2:1; John 3:16; and Romans 1:17.

There are very few elderships that would allow a man to stand in the pulpit or Bible class and teach the doctrines above. Yet, when it comes to a so-called Bible, they think that nothing should be done. As a

result of this thinking many elderships have allowed the NIV into classrooms and in the pulpit to teach its ungodly doctrines.

Beloved brethren, when will we wake up to what is happening? These perversions are having a great impact on the thinking of our members. Elderships need to beware and be warned. They have a great responsibility in seeing that the things taught are right. They are to stop the mouths of false teachers. The NIV is a false teacher. Thus, according to the Bible, they **MUST** stop its mouth. Take it out of the pulpit and classrooms. They **must** make sure that what teachers and preachers use is a correct translation of God's Word, and not denominational doctrines under the guise of the Bible.

If there are NIV's in use where you serve as an elder, gather them together and have a good old-fashioned book burning (see Acts 19:19). Do not stand in jeopardy of losing your soul for not stopping the mouth of a false teacher in the veneer of a Bible.

HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM and CORNELIUS

Graham Cain

Most preachers that I have heard on this subject have affirmed unequivocally that Cornelius and all those that were with him were baptized with the Holy Spirit (read Acts 10:44-46 and 11:15-17). I do not believe such was the case and will put forth some questions and observations that may stimulate further study. This is not a subject where we must, of necessity, hold the same view, so a difference in understanding should cause no one to be upset.

The Nature of God's Promises

First of all, before there can be a "promise," there must be a promisor (one who makes a promise). There must also be a promisee which is one to whom the promise is made. Obviously then, a promise could not be made to Mr. A and then given in fulfillment to Mr. B. There are four points that stand out relative to God's promises.

1. There are some that have not yet been fulfilled.
2. The ones that have been fulfilled have been only to those to whom they were made.
3. The ones yet to be fulfilled shall be only to those to whom they were made.
4. The promise of Holy Spirit baptism was made to the apostles *only* (Acts 1:4-5)!

Therefore, Holy Spirit baptism was not, is not and cannot be given to "Pentecostal" groups nor to any others of this age or past ages. It was promised to the **apostles**. We have used this obvious truth to show the fallacy of the claims to Holy Spirit baptism for many years. Would not the same truth with the same argumentation be applicable to the matter of Cornelius and his friends? If not, why not?

A Look at the Facts

In listing what actually happened as recorded in Acts chapters ten and eleven, please note the following facts:

1. Peter spoke to them (10:34-43).
2. While he was yet speaking, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," (vs. 44).
3. Astonishment resulted, "because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost" (vs. 45).
4. The Jews knew that the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles because, "they heard them speak with tongues" (vs. 46).
5. Peter stated that this amazing development caused him to remember "the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (11:16).

6. Peter went on to explain and defend his actions in this matter by saying, “Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us” (11:17).

We are usually advised at this point that the expression “like gift” means “exactly the same gift in extent and fullness.” Question: What exactly **was** the gift? It was, of course the ability to speak in tongues. What else? **Nothing!** Then to what did verse 16 refer? Evidently it reminded Peter of Pentecost when this same, exact gift or tongues was that which was poured out upon the apostles, causing great excitement and attention among the people who witnessed that great demonstration. These, then, received exactly the same gift (speaking with tongues) that the apostles received in Acts 2:4.

Further Questions

Was there anything, other than tongues in the case of Cornelius and his friends that was like the events of Pentecost as recorded in Acts chapter two?

- Was there “a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind” (vs. 2)?
- Did “cloven tongues like as of fire” appear and set “upon each of them” (vs. 3)?
- Were those of the household of Cornelius from hence forth guided “into all truth” (John 16:13)?
- Did the Comforter “teach [them] all things” (John 14:26)?
- Did all of them (or any part of them) have the power to perform miracles? To impart the Holy Spirit to others in any way by the laying on of hands?

In both cases the Spirit was “poured out” directly from God but that, apparently, was what it took to convince the Jewish mind that Gentiles were included in the gospel of God’s grace. This was the way that God “bare them witness” as Peter explained in Acts 15:8 at the council in Jerusalem.

Look at the Duck

We have long known that when we see a feathered creature which looks, walks and quacks like a duck we have just about a 100% chance of being correct when we conclude that it, in fact, is a duck.

Using this nomenclature, coupled with common sense, let’s examine the things that transpired on the two occasions. We see clearly that they did not:

1. Look the same	How then—can we insist that they <i>were</i> the same?
2. Sound the same	
3. Produce the same	

Speaking in tongues is not Holy Spirit baptism just as a quack is not a duck. Each is an element, or a constituent part of the whole.

In Conclusion

Note further that the Bible does not **say** they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. The evidence does not **show** that they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Their subsequent actions do not (by silence of the Bible) **indicate** that they were, and it is not necessary to assume that they **needed** to be, in order to fulfill Joel 2:28.

These are not things that have to do with our salvation. They are questions of interest, however, and might possibly assist us in stimulating and sharpening our skills in interpretation of the text. Anything that will prompt us to a deeper study of the Holy Scriptures is always beneficial.

2244 Mountain View Dr. Hurst, Tx. 76054

Important: Mailing list Update

Please note: ALL who receive *Defender* (including those who receive bundles) **must** let us know of their desire to continue receiving *Defender* by no later than May 1, 1995. On this date, all those who have not contacted us; will be deleted from the mailing list, this will be the last issue you receive. To let us know, you may simply return your mailing label or drop us a card with your name and your complete address (including zip code). Those who fail to do so will be deleted from the mailing list.

We express our appreciation to all those who have written notes of support and encouragement to us. We also appreciate the financial support many have sent. While the Bellview Church of Christ has taken on the financial responsibility of the paper to provide it free of charge to any who wish to receive it, there are many expenses relating to its publication. Those who donate their money, however great or small, help ease the burden. For this we are eternally grateful.

Michael Hatcher — editor

The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men

Twentieth Annual Bellview Lectures

June 10-14, 1995

Saturday, June 10

7:00 PM	It Makes a Difference in Doctrine	Garry Barnes
8:00 PM	The Doctrine of Christ Is Understandable	Clifford Newell, Jr.

Sunday, June 11

9:00 AM	Unity and Fellowship	Eddie Whitten
10:00 AM	Morals	Paul Vaughn
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	New Hermeneutic Versus Christ's Doctrine	Buster Dobbs
3:00 PM	Divorce and Remarriage	Noah Hackworth
4:00 PM	Jehovah's Witnesses Versus Christ's Doctrine	Joe Gilmore
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Pentecostalism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Stephen P. Waller
8:00 PM	Why the Church Is Not a Denomination	Stanley Ryan

Monday, June 12

9:00 AM	Methodism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Bobby Liddell
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Premillennialism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Howell Bigham
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	Emotionalism Versus Proper Emotions	Dub McClish
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on Emotionalism	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Evolution Versus Christ's Doctrine	Garry Brantley
8:00 PM	Modesty	Robin Haley

Tuesday, June 13

9:00 AM	Independent Christian Church Versus Christ's Doctrine	Ken Chumbley
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Christ's Doctrine of Knowledge Versus Agnosticism	Mac Deaver
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	The Holy Spirit	Tom Bright
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on The Holy Spirit	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Feminism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Burt Jones
8:00 PM	Catholicism Versus Christ's Doctrine	John Shannon

Wednesday, June 14

9:00 AM	Presbyterianism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Keith Mosher
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Calvinism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Daniel Denham
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	The Divided Assembly	David Brown
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on The Divided Assembly	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	The Doctrine of Christ	Darrell Conley
8:00 PM	Baptism	Guss Eoff

Bellview Lectures Information

HOUSING

Free housing in the homes of Christians will be provided on a "first come, first served" basis (call our office at: 904/455-7595, or write at: 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526). The following motel is available nearby and is providing *special rate* for individuals attending the *Bellview Lectures*. Quality Inn (6911 Pensacola Blvd.) offers the following prices (tax not included) \$35.00—1 to 4 people per room; a restaurant is located in the hotel and several other restaurants are located nearby. Their phone number is 904/479-3800. When checking into the above motel, show them this advertisement announcing this special rate, or when calling for reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the *Bellview Lectures*.

MEALS

The women of the *Bellview Church of Christ* will provide a free lunch from Monday through Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants and a map will be available at the registration table in the foyer.

EXHIBITS

Limited reservations will be accepted subject to approval of *Bellview elders* and available space. Exhibits are expected from schools, children's homes, book stores, publications, and other projects of general interest to the brotherhood.

TRANSPORTATION

If you will be flying to the Pensacola Regional Airport and will need transportation, please call or write our office. We will arrange to meet you at no charge if we know when, where, airline, flight number, and the number in your party.

BOOKS

The Lectureship book, "*The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men*" will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* and afterwards by mail. It will contain twenty-six chapters and approximately 350 pages. Everyone who attends the *Bellview Lectures* will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

AUDIO AND VIDEO TAPES

All lectures will be recorded on cassette audio tapes and video tapes. These tapes may be purchased during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail order afterwards. Order blanks and price information will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail upon request. (We request the cooperation of all who attend the *Bellview Lectures* in keeping the pulpit area free of privately-owned recorders and microphones.) If you would like to make your own recordings, please see one of our sound technicians, *Richard Parker* or *Bill Crowe*, in the recording room.

Voices From The Past:

LET THE CHURCH BE THE CHURCH

George W. DeHoff

The business of the church is to preach the Gospel of Christ. It exists for this purpose. Without the Gospel men are lost. The Gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). There is nothing else which the church does but that it is secondary to preaching the Gospel. There is nothing else the church does but that some other organization is doing the same thing—and sometimes doing it better. If the church is not going to conduct a militant campaign of preaching the Gospel it might as well go out of existence; and that is what it will do unless it preaches the Gospel.

COLLEGES, SOUP-KITCHENS, ETC.

It is not the business of the church to operate colleges, soup kitchens, relief stations, summer camps, youth centers, entertainment bureaus, ball teams, and such like. The church must preach the Gospel and “visit the fatherless, and widows in their affliction.” If the church goes into the entertainment business in an attempt to reach the people (reach them with what?) men of the world will say, “That is real Christianity.” If the church opens a soup kitchen, worldly people (who believe men are saved out of the church as well as in it and do not know what it is all about anyway) will say, “That's real Christianity”; but if the church preaches the Gospel, men of the world will be displeased. That is the purpose of Gospel preaching; to cause them to become displeased with their condition and to become Christians.

TRUTH MAKES FREE

Every inch of ground which we now occupy has been gained by Gospel preaching, by a campaign of teaching the facts to be believed, commands to be obeyed and promises to be enjoyed. Every Christian should teach,

preach, dispute, confute, rebuke, exhort, and whatever else is necessary to get men to see the Truth, and to know the difference between Truth and error. This is the work of the church.

Make plans to attend these Lectureships:

Jackson Church Of Christ Lectures

May 4-7 Jackson, KY

“The Christian Home”

Bellview Lectures

June 10-14 Pensacola, FL

“The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men”

Houston College Of The Bible Lectures

June 18-21 Spring, TX

“Isaiah”

Kanawha Valley Lectures

August 1-4 St. Albans, WV

“The Work And Worship Of The New Testament Church”

McLoud Church Of Christ Lectures

September 8-10 McLoud, OK

“The Church Christ Built”

Annual Denton Lectures

November 12-16 Denton, TX

“Matthew”

Needed!

Indication of interest in purchasing the book **Mac Deaver—Marion Fox Debate on the Nature of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit**. Send prepublication order to: Bible Resource Publications, PO Box 2273, Spring, TX 77383.

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
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Defender



"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume XXIV

May 1995

Number 5

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

Shan Jackson

Even the most casual student of God's Word realizes that Christ first promised and then built His church. His discussion with Simon Peter, as recorded in Matthew 16 verse 18, emphasizes this fact. Jesus said, "upon this rock [the confession of Peter that Jesus was the Christ] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And, that same student also soon realizes that Christ's church is the same as Christ's body. Both descriptions refer to the same blood bought institution. The church is the body and Jesus is the head. That student also soon realizes that this institution Christ purchased with his blood was planned and designed by God even before earth's time began and will last until earth's time ends. Later Paul will write concerning this fundamental fact with these words, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).

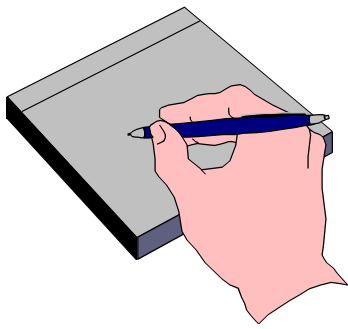
With that fundamental premise entrenched we come to our first bone of contention, namely, what is the purpose of the church? Now, without getting into semantics let me say, many people do not feel that the purpose of the church today is the same as it was in the past. Today, we see more and more Christians relying on the knowledge and study of a selected few, thereby accepting less and less responsibility for their own usage of God's Word. The days of the "Bible toting, Bible quoting" brotherhood are long gone which allows easy access to the "new style" preacher whose smooth style and salesmanship approach to preaching is readily accepted. Gone are the traits of the noble Bereans who, "searched the scripture daily" (Acts 17:11).

Of course, there are numerous other differences we could mention between the church of yesterday and the church of today. Where once we only spoke where the Bible did now those basic Scriptures, to some, do not seem so crystal clear. For the most part today's sermons no longer mention the Bible stand on church attendance, Bible knowledge, self-denial, homosexuality, divorce, unscriptural remarriage, and such like. True Bible concepts are being replaced by man's misconception about "freedom" and "liberty" within religion. Where the Bible stresses that we are all to "speak the same thing" man suggests that we can achieve unity in diversity. And, with this apathetic and arrogant style in our preaching, the next generation of Christian soldiers will have smelted their armor into banquet goblets. Brethren, either we address these issues today or our children will not see them as issues tomorrow.

Where once the church stood as a beacon of truth for all the world to see now it seems best, at least to some, to not make waves in the religious community. In fact, some are even bold enough to suggest that perhaps those outside the body are really on the right track. Remember, salt that has lost its savor is good for nothing.

Today we see that honesty has uprooted loyalty. Loyalty to Christ and His Word is no longer essential as long as we are honest and sincere in our error. Brethren, God at one time winked at ignorance but His winking days are past. Today He commands all men to repent and be loyal to His divine truth. Honesty is a noble trait, but wrong actions, even from an honest heart, are still wrong.

(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Withdrawing Fellowship

I believe in the previous four articles I have established the right and the responsibility of one congregation withdrawing from another congregation. Let us notice some arguments made in response to this principle.

Some argue the Bible never says to withdraw fellowship from another congregation. I certainly admit this. However, I ask did the church at Corinth withdraw fellowship from the immoral man of First Corinthians five? If you answer yes; I want to know, how you know they withdrew fellowship from him? Neither the word fellowship nor withdraw (nor any of their forms) are found within that chapter. The only time the word withdraw is used relating to fellowship is First Thessalonians 3:6 and First Timothy 6:5. Yet, we recognize the idea of withdrawal in many other passages by the terminology used. Why would some say we can mark congregations who no longer walk in the light, but not withdraw from them? The same passage which tells us to mark tells us to avoid (Rom. 16:17). The word avoid carries the idea of withdrawing our fellowship from them. Also, Ephesians 5:11 tells us to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.” Others, would add that we have no example in the New Testament of one church withdrawing from another. However, examples are not the only way the Bible authorizes. The Scriptures also authorize by direct statement and implication. God’s Word has commanded us to do this by direct statements and implications (see previous articles).

Some falsely claim that we set ourselves up as God, passing judgment upon another’s servant (Rom. 14:4). Do we make such a claim when it is an individual? If

not, why not? To do so is not to set ourselves up as God, but to conform to what God says He will do. God removes the candlestick (Rev. 2:5), not us. He has instructed us upon what basis He does this. When they no longer walk in the light, causes offenses contrary to the doctrine, etc., God removes their candlestick. When God no longer has fellowship with a congregation, we adhere to what God has done by withdrawing our fellowship from them.

Some would ask how we can know if a congregation is out of fellowship with God. This is an important question for it determines if we withdraw from that congregation or not. “When a church with deliberate purpose of forethought engages and willfully persists in anything that is contrary to the doctrine of Christ, said church does not have God in the doing of it (2 John 9-11). The same would be true of a church that ‘stumbled’ into error, but refused to repent after being taught the truth on the matter.” (David P. Brown *The Church Enters the Twenty-First Century*, Bible Resource Publications, 1994, p. 78). When a congregation, like an individual, no longer walks in the light (1 John 1:7) as revealed in the New Testament, then it no longer has fellowship with God.

We must start practicing this basic principle of the New Testament. We have far too many who are sitting on the fence of compromise. They wish to hold onto the faithful but are not willing to take their stand against liberal men and congregations. An example of this is when men from liberal congregations come during a gospel meeting, they will ask them to lead in prayer so as not to offend them. Instead we offend God. Another is when we continue to advertise meetings and activities from the liberals in our bulletins. We must for the good of the church actively begin marking and withdrawing from apostate men and congregations. As we fail to publicly mark and avoid (withdraw), we, by our silence, encourage and partake in their evil (2 John 9-11). Often preacher know those congregations and individuals who are liberal, but they never inform the congregation they work with. Thus, most members are unaware of where dangers come from. By failing to take the God approved action we cause others to be lead astray by their false teaching and eternally lost. Let us start naming names and congregations of those who go astray, not out of a spirit of hatred or bitterness, but out of our love for God, His Word, and the souls of man.

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

Are we wrong to call sin sin? Are we insensitive because we call attention to someone's damning false assertions? Are we casting stones because we desire to be saved and help others find salvation as well? Are we too embarrassed to tell the people what the Bible says anymore? How and why have we allowed denominationalists like Swindoll, Schuller, Dobson, as well as our own brotherhood denominationalists to tell us their version of God's message? Why have we allowed them to be quoted more than Peter, Paul, and even Jesus? "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:9). Are we so uncomfortable with the truth that

we feel truth should be left unsaid? Are we now ashamed of the gospel? At one time a loyal follower said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God" (Rom. 1:16).

Christ's clear purpose is being redefined by many in the brotherhood today. They will not and cannot speak where the Bible speaks for various reasons. They certainly cannot be silent where it is silent by writing the things that they write. My brethren, we must strive to restore God's light to the candlestick of our lives so that all may appreciate its brightness. We must seek the "old paths" of New Testament Christianity and renew our purpose toward God and our fellowmen.

P.O. Box 904 Palacios, TX 77465

Voices From The Past:

From *Christian Worker* editorial; April 1990, page2.

PREPARING FOR A SMALLER BROTHERHOOD

Bill Jackson

Before someone tries to rename me, let me state that "I am not Chicken Little, running around crying that THE SKY IS FALLING!" I do not believe that the sky is falling. I do know that many congregations are fallen, and more will fall; and I know many members of the church have done and are doing the same. Sadly, in spite of all the publicity given to the marks of apostasy in our time, some are still prone to chalk it up to "preacher excitability, and exaggeration." They state that after documentation of more than 160 congregations having had internal problems due to the Crossroads/Boston Movement errors. Some will still say, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

I am stating no more, in this article's heading, than was in the mind of Paul and others as they worked in the first century, and pointed to the coming great apostasy. Paul spoke of the departures from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1), and that due to men who have tired of sound doctrine, and wish to hear something else (2 Tim. 4:1-4). Peter spoke of false teachers who will bring in damnable heresies, and that "many shall follow their pernicious ways" (2 Peter 2: 1-2). The Lord had waning faith in mind in looking to His return and asking, "when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). Our Lord, and the apostles, were laying before us the matter of the church, as a result of apostasies, being smaller than in an earlier time.

We do not see how any informed member can

doubt it. There cannot be great apostasy and the church still be growing in number. There cannot be all the weakness associated with departures from the faith, and great spiritual or numerical strength at the same time. Having fallen from the "top ten," the church will fall further unless there is, very soon, a turnaround that we cannot now see. In fact, being "in the top ten," and pridefully desiring to remain so, or to climb even higher, no doubt encouraged some to soften all stance in order to be more pleasing unto men, and to gain the numbers that will be so impressive that we'll remain high in denominational favor. After all, the denominational papers and magazines were the ones keeping the count, and some in our ranks wanted to keep these in a favorable mood toward us. But, didn't Jesus warn, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" (Luke 6:26)?

We must then prepare for a smaller brotherhood. When the apostasy has run its course, that's what we'll have. But, it will be a more faithful brotherhood, loving God and loving truth, and still holding onto and preaching exactly what we believed and preached since Pentecost, 33 A.D. It will still be the body of the Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), charged with making known to lost men the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10). It will be

(Continued on Page 5)

The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men

Twentieth Annual Bellview Lectures

June 10-14, 1995

Saturday, June 10

7:00 PM	It Makes a Difference in Doctrine	Garry Barnes
8:00 PM	The Doctrine of Christ Is Understandable	Clifford Newell, Jr.

Sunday, June 11

9:00 AM	Unity and Fellowship	Eddie Whitten
10:00 AM	Morals	Paul Vaughn
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	New Hermeneutic Versus Christ's Doctrine	Buster Dobbs
3:00 PM	Divorce and Remarriage	Noah Hackworth
4:00 PM	Jehovah's Witnesses Versus Christ's Doctrine	Joe Gilmore
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Pentecostalism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Stephen P. Waller
8:00 PM	Why the Church Is Not a Denomination	Stanley Ryan

Monday, June 12

9:00 AM	Methodism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Bobby Liddell
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Premillennialism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Howell Bigham
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	Emotionalism Versus Proper Emotions	Dub McClish
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on Emotionalism	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Evolution Versus Christ's Doctrine	Garry Brantley
8:00 PM	Modesty	Robin Haley

Tuesday, June 13

9:00 AM	Independent Christian Church Versus Christ's Doctrine	Ken Chumbley
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Christ's Doctrine of Knowledge Versus Agnosticism	Mac Deaver
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	The Holy Spirit	Tom Bright
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on The Holy Spirit	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	Feminism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Burt Jones
8:00 PM	Catholicism Versus Christ's Doctrine	John Shannon

Wednesday, June 14

9:00 AM	Presbyterianism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Keith Mosher
10:00 AM	Determining Christ's Doctrine	Roy Deaver
11:00 AM	Calvinism Versus Christ's Doctrine	Daniel Denham
<i>Lunch Break</i>		
2:00 PM	History of Man's Doctrine	J. E. Choate
3:00 PM	The Divided Assembly	David Brown
3:45 PM	Open Forum Discussion on The Divided Assembly	
<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 PM	The Doctrine of Christ	Darrell Conley
8:00 PM	Baptism	Guss Eoff

Bellview Lectures Information

HOUSING

Free housing in the homes of Christians will be provided on a "first come, first served" basis (call our office at: 904/455-7595, or write at: 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526). The following motel is available nearby and is providing *special rate* for individuals attending the *Bellview Lectures*. Quality Inn (6911 Pensacola Blvd.) offers the following prices (tax not included) \$35.00—1 to 4 people per room; a restaurant is located in the hotel and several other restaurants are located nearby. Their phone number is 904/479-3800. When checking into the above motel, show them this advertisement announcing this special rate, or when calling for reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the *Bellview Lectures*.

MEALS

The women of the *Bellview Church of Christ* will provide a free lunch from Monday through Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants and a map will be available at the registration table in the foyer.

EXHIBITS

Limited reservations will be accepted subject to approval of *Bellview elders* and available space. Exhibits are expected from schools, children's homes, book stores, publications, and other projects of general interest to the brotherhood.

TRANSPORTATION

If you will be flying to the Pensacola Regional Airport and will need transportation, please call or write our office. We will arrange to meet you at no charge if we know when, where, airline, flight number, and the number in your party.

BOOKS

The Lectureship book, "*The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men*" will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* and afterwards by mail. It will contain twenty-six chapters and approximately 350 pages. Everyone who attends the *Bellview Lectures* will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

AUDIO AND VIDEO TAPES

All lectures will be recorded on cassette audio tapes and video tapes. These tapes may be purchased during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail order afterwards. Order blanks and price information will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail upon request. (We request the cooperation of all who attend the *Bellview Lectures* in keeping the pulpit area free of privately-owned recorders and microphones.) If you would like to make your own recordings, please see one of our sound technicians, *Richard Parker* or *Bill Crowe*, in the recording room.

(Continued from Page 3)

the body maintaining the New Testament's marks for the church, in name, in organization, in work, in the plan of salvation taught, and in the form of New Testament worship. It may not be the body once positioned on Main Street, downtown in a large city, having long since had to move once again into the frame building down some side street and across the tracks, but it will be the body of Christ, and faithful to the Lord. It will be the body known by the Lord, and to be claimed by Him when He next appears (1 Cor. 15:24). A congregation does not have to be great in size to be either faithful or blest by God!

There will remain, I fear, one confusing element.

SHOULD SPECIFIC NAMES BE CALLED WHEN EXPOSING ERROR?

Bill Lockwood

Gospel preachers are occasionally upbraided by name for criticizing a specific denominational dogma by name or pointedly exposing a false teacher. Sometimes, opponents of religious error are specifically and severely censured for daring to pin-point before listeners the specific error they have in mind. "People will be offended" it is urged, "if they hear their favorite idol exposed, if you will offer broad generalities, the fold will make application themselves." By this reasoning I am to conclude that not only was every preacher in the Bible much too grumpy and cross to be swayed by this curlicued rationale, but in practice it amounts to keeping the fold satisfied by making exposures broad enough to thwart specific applicability in the minds of those who need it. Add to this is the fact that most sectarian practitioners are wholly unacquainted with the particulars of their own sectarian creed, so much so, that unless dissatisfaction within their own mind is "raised" by the nudity of their teachings, they will never be motivated to forsake it.

BUT YOU ARE NOT AN APOSTLE!

It is at this juncture that someone, occasionally other preachers, insist I should not ever speak with the plainness of an apostle, "for you are not an apostle. They were inspired and you are not." Now, for a moment analyze this spell-binding trumpery. In effect, it says: "since inspiration guided apostles to call

Unlike some hobbyistic movements, so anxious to leave the church that they readily adopted some other religious name, the trend in modern-day liberalism is to keep the designation "church of Christ." Some few, in demonstration of "freedom" will be "the Family of God...Fellowship Cathedral...House of the Carpenter..." etc., but doubtless most will retain the wording "church of Christ." Those who are traveling will have to do more careful advanced planning as to where they'll stop for worship. But still, if worship is important—and it is—the planning is worth it. We will have to do that planning, for the brotherhood will be smaller!

names, but due to a lack of it I am prone to make mistakes." Is this logical?

1. The conclusion (do not call names) does not follow from the premise (I am not inspired). Though it is true that none today are inspired, it does not follow that my potential knowledge of the truth is less than what was possessed by the apostles. Actually, Paul **insists** that when we read (study) we can **KNOW HIS MIND** in the vital matters of salvation (Eph. 3:3-5). Peter agrees with him when he teaches that non-apostles have a "like precious faith" (2 Pet. 1:1). Inspiration guided apostles to reveal truth infallibly, which truth can be learned with as much certainty by students of the Word as dwelled in the twelve. The very purpose of the revelation being written was that we might gain certitude. Hence, if inspired men as well as Jesus do not show me **HOW** to preach, whom shall I follow?

2. If the reasoning of Mr. Opposer is coherent, I cannot oppose or expose false doctrine **IN ANY FASHION**. These who have "cast truth to the ground" on this have not even prepared for their own landing. For, in their toilsome strain to remove my defense (apostolic precedent) they have unwittingly eliminated their own. Why? Because the reason given (they are inspired, you are not) equally applies with as much force to **ANY OPPOSITION** offered against false doctrine in **ANY WAY**. If it is blameworthy to expose

specifically, it is just as culpable to oppose false doctrine in ANY SENSE.

3. If there is logic to their method, I could not even preach the truth! For, the moment you go beyond mere suggestion and insist you are correct about some truth, I will be happy to show that YOU are not inspired as were the apostles and cannot therefore preach with the same assurance. Why, friends, EVERY SINGLE STATEMENT IN THE BIBLE must be interpreted in some way by us)) and since none of us is an inspired interpreter, we must console ourselves to the flummery of suggestion and guesswork. This is just where the mistake under review leads. Hence, the only ground of complaint about name-mentioning becomes a trap-door of infidelic agnosticism.

4. If lack of inspiration with men today forbids us from being specific in applying principles of exposure, then we cannot even oppose by specific designation Atheism, Mohammedism, Hinduism, etc. But we hear no complaints on this one when it is done. This gives me the sneaking suspicion that all the hoopla is produced by pressure from the denominational world. "Yes, go on and mention the false Messiah 'Mohammed' by name, just do not breathe a word about a false teacher nearer home." But in a Muslim country the advice is reversed, demonstrating that all the clap-trap is merely "accommodation theology."

5. If it is wrong to mention religious groups from the pulpit, one could not do it in a debate either)) even with the opponent sitting directly in front of you begging you to come to the issue! Instead, you must be bound by paper chains of ambiguity and uncertainty. Now, I recognize the fact that I must

accommodate the material to fit the occasion for interest's sake, but that in no way touches the point here made. If it is wrong in a Sunday sermon, it is wrong in a Sunday debate.

6. One of the most humorous things to me is the notion which has imbedded itself in the hearts of some whereby it is actually supposed that it is wrong to identify a doctrine by its sectarian bearer; rather, we must hint at it. But if liability to mistake forbids the specific name from being called, then the same reason forbids hinting in general terms. This must be true because in order to hint at a thing, the speaker must have a definite idea in his mind)) and when a listener perceives the innuendo or application, it brings the same result as if the attack was frontal. In other words, it requires an EQUAL amount of certainty in my mind to pass out pulpit clues about a doctrine as to label it forthrightly; yet the objection offered says that my lack of inspiration forbids me from specifics lest I err! If I cannot drop a denominational name because I am uninspired and unlike an apostle; then I cannot give clues in that direction either.

CONCLUSION

None of the above is a recommendation for the same tactic in every place, but an answer to a foolish idea. Further, it all highlights the REAL REASON complaints are given, that many of us no longer wish to be a militant body of people who not only teach but cast down strongholds of imaginations. And, let it be noted, we should never be ugly or unkind, but "reprove, rebuke, and exhort."

211 N. 5th St. Marlow, OK 73055

THE SHIP WILL NOT SINK

Tommy J. Hicks

Perhaps the best remembered statement made by J. D. Tant is, "Brethren, we are drifting!" Tant meant that the grand old ship of Zion, the church, was departing from her course, "the faith which was once for all delivered," and slowly, but ever so surely, going into the treacherous waters of error. Paul dealt with this very consideration when he exhorted us, through Timothy, to be "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning

faith have made shipwreck" (1 Tim. 1:19). Has the ship of Zion drifted into perilous waters since Tant made his famous statement?

Today, the ship of Zion is a doctrinal derelict. Her bulwarks have become impuissant because of ignorance. Seeing her vulnerability, the enemy fleet has sent forth its destroyers from denominationalism to sink her. The cannonballs of Calvinism have penetrated her once strong sides. The marines of Modern-

ism fearlessly stand on her deck, and the lancers of Liberalism are within her hull. Many of her crew have gone over to the other side (some who have not, are sympathetic to it).

Yet, those who have not surrendered are still wielding the sword of the Spirit. These cry out, "We have just begun to fight." They are "set for the defence of the gospel" (Phi. 1:17) and will "Fight the good fight of the faith" (1 Tim. 6:12) and, they will be victorious. Using the Bible for their compass and the map it provides to show the course God has chartered, these never surrendering soldiers of the Savior will do their best to bring the ship of Zion back into safe and tranquil waters. As long as Christ is the anchor, the ship cannot drift and will be safe.

To get back on course we must have preaching that is scriptural and not sectarian, doctrinal and not denominational, exegetical and not existential, apostolic and not apologetic, sure and not subjective, correct rather than cute, powerful and not puny, fearless and not frivolous. It is going to take preachers who are not taking "popularity polls" every week to see "how they're doing" with the brethren. When brethren complain, "Why don't you preach positively," he will unhesitatingly reply, "I will **positively** preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." If a brother he loves accuses him of "preaching people to hell," he will be heartbroken because in truth he is trying to keep people from ever going to hell. He realizes it is the preacher who refuses to take a stand for the truth against all error, who pats people on the back while they sin, who could preach any one of his sermons in any of the denominational Churches without them ever knowing that he was not one of them, is the one who is really "preaching people to hell." Though the brethren do not like to hear his "negative" sermons informing them of what is wrong, he takes heart remembering that Paul urged Timothy

to do this very thing and then said, "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now...Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching, Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4:6,16). At any rate, he should expect criticism from his brethren, because it has always been true even from Moses to John, the apostle of love. Come what may, it will be the efforts of the faithful, blessed by God, which will keep the ship of Zion from being taken by the enemy.

P.O. Box 459 Gainesville, TX 76241-0459

Make plans to attend these Lectureships:

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June 10-14 Bellview, FL

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Versus The Doctrines of Men"

Houston College Of The Bible Lectures

June 18-21 Spring, TX

"Isaiah"

Kanawha Valley Lectures

August 1-4 St. Albans, WV

"The Work And Worship of
the New Testament Church"

McLoud Church Of Christ Lectures

September 8-10 McLoud, OK

"The Church Christ Built"

Annual Denton Lectures

November 12-16 Denton, TX

"Matthew"

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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Pensacola, FL 32506**

Defender



"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume XXIV

June 1995

Number 6

SHALL WE FORBID NOT THEM THAT FOLLOW NOT US) TODAY? A CONTRAST BETWEEN GALATIANS 1:6-9 AND MARK 9:38-40

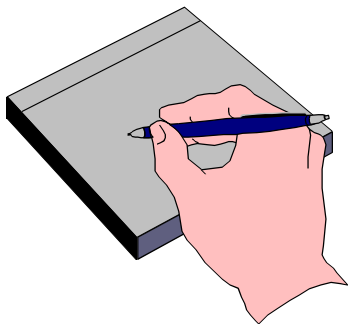
Robin W. Haley

When faithful brethren need to give warning to the church regarding false teachers and compromising brethren, there will from time to time come a plea for us to just accept one another. These pleas usually come from those who are either convinced by liberals that any kind of warning given is an act of "judgment" and ought not to be done, or from those who are ignorant of what God's Word teaches regarding such warnings and their necessity.

Fairly common in this plea is an attempt to justify having fellowship with error by citing such passages as Mark 9:38-40. That text reads, "John said unto him, Teacher, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followed not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us" (ASV). This text is usually used to show that John was being narrow minded and that when we forbid to have fellowship with those in denominational error, we too are being narrow minded. Second, this text is used to show that Jesus would have us to accept anybody/everybody into fellowship. Of course, this passages teaches no such thing. Rather there were some who were possessed of God's power having received it from Jesus, but we were not told (nor were the apostles) when they received such. Whatever shall those who so contend (that this text teaches fellowship with any/all) do with such passages as Galatians 1:6-9? Here Paul strictly forbids any kind of fellowship with those who would teach a different doctrine or gospel.

Note a few things about this man that John tried to forbid. First, he was casting out demons. Not just anyone could do such a thing. These apostles knew that he was actually casting them out. Thus, he was no fraud like those with whom we today must deal. Second, he was using the name of Christ. Not everyone had that right nor authority. Consider what happened to the seven sons of a certain Sceva, "And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, a chief priest, who did this. And the evil spirit answered and said unto them, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and mastered both of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded" (Acts 19:14-16). Third, why did John forbid this man? Not because of his work nor because he used Jesus' name, but because "he followeth not us." John was indeed being narrow minded, but he was wrong. The fact remains that this man was doing a great work in Christ's name (that is, by His authority), and was thus acceptable to God and Christ. Does this same situation still exist today? NOT AT ALL! Fourth, Jesus said this man was doing real, legitimate miracles, and doing so in His name (with Christ's permission, authority and power). Anyone who acts by the authority of (in the name of) Christ today, is in complete fellowship and harmony with Christ and all that belong to Him. The big question then seems to be: "What does it mean to act in the name of Christ?"

Any time one would act in the name of another,
(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Organization

Recently I received some material from an individual concerned with a paper handed out to the congregation of which he was a member. He was deeply concerned with this material. This material is based upon a book *Confusion or Consensus, (The search for the Bible pattern of congregational decision-making)* by Vance E. Trefethen. I do not have this book and have not seen a copy of it. Thus, this response is made from the material sent to me discussing this situation. It was in a paper entitled *the Christian News* (Vol. 4, Issue 2). The article under question is entitled, "Revisiting—The Men's Business Meeting." Portions of this will be taken from a personal conversation with the person who sent the material. The basic theme presented is the need to eliminate the men's business meeting and incorporate the entire congregation (men and women) into all decision making procedures. It also promotes the idea that when a congregation has elders those elders are also subject to the entire congregation (men and women).

Prior to discussing this specific subject, some Bible principles are in order. Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). Since the headquarters of the church are in heaven, there are no earthly headquarters. Jesus, the head, established or built the church (Mat. 16:18). The Bible uses the term church in a universal sense (Mat. 16:18). The Bible also uses the term in a local sense. We can divide this into two parts. It is used in a local sense concerning an area (Gal. 1:2) and concerning a congregational basis (Rev. 1:4). There is no earthly organization higher than the congregational level. Within the congregation God ordained elders and deacons (Phi. 1:1).

As one studies these two works they recognize there is a vast difference between them. These two works nor

their qualifications are interchangeable. Elders are the ones within the local congregation that have authority. As one studies the words God uses for the work of elders, he realizes that God has placed decision making (concerning expedient matters) into their hands. While the word translated elder (*presbuteros*) does carry the meaning of older, it also shows authority. Authority is inherent in the word translated pastor or shepherd (*poimen*), even though the major thrust is how they do their work. The word translated bishop or overseer (*episkopos*) expresses this decision making right or the elders. The definition of this word is, "a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian or superintendent." There are other terms and phrases relating to the position and work of elders. They are to take heed to the flock (Acts 20:28), watch for the souls of the flock (Heb. 13:17). They have the responsibility of being over us in the Lord (1 The. 5:12) and ruling over us (Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 5:17). Paul also states they are stewards (Tit. 1:7) along with being watchmen (Acts 20:31) in guarding the flock against evil men. We see authority in the work they have been commissioned to do; feed (Acts 20:28), tend and exercise the oversight (1 Pet. 5:2). As one views the responsibilities of members toward elders which God established, he again sees authority. We have the obligation to esteem them for their work's sake (1 The. 5:13). We are to follow or imitate their faith (Heb. 13:7). Then we have the command to obey them and submit to them (Heb. 13:17). All these responsibilities show us that the elders have the authority in decision making. I am sure there are other words used relating to the eldership and their authority, but these suffice. These men cannot make laws God has not made. However, with every God-given obligation, there are matters of expedience or human judgment. The elders are the ones who make decisions concerning these expedient matters, carrying out the laws God made.

The word deacon means servant. All of God's children are to be servants. Those who hold the office of a deacon are men who "are chosen to be '*servants specially selected*' to do work above and beyond that laid upon every member of the church, with such work being given them by the elders." (Bill Jackson, *Elders: Those Who Watch Over Souls*, Sain Publications, p. 40). They do not have authority in decision making as do the elders. The elders can delegate authority to them to make decisions in the work they have been selected to perform. However, their work remains under the authority of the elders of the congregation. MH

(Continued from Page 1)

it is by that one's authority to proceed. The root of the word "authority" is author. An author is an originator. Thus, to act by one's authority is to follow what the author originated. This man of Mark chapter nine was doing what Jesus had authored: casting out demons with the power of God. This text cannot fit our situation today for two main reasons. First, because the specific situation does not exist. That is, there are no demons to be cast out today. Second, the general application will not fit for the man who was forbidden by John would today be a brother in Christ, a Christian, not merely a denominational member. If it is the case that to act by the authority given means to accomplish what an author originated (and it does), then it follows that one acting by the authority (in the name of) Christ today would be one who is accomplishing what Jesus has originated in His Word, the Bible. Therefore, anyone who today does not follow what the Bible teaches regarding the work, worship, salvation, and so on, cannot follow Christ, is not acting in His name nor is he trying to accomplish what Jesus originated! Thus, we cannot have any kind of fellowship with him. He must be forbidden to so act, speak and work. Unless and until he is willing to obey the Lord (Mat. 7:21; Heb. 5:9), he cannot be in fellowship with God, Christ nor God's people, the church (1 John 1:3,6-7).

There is never a time when we ought to forbid a brother who is doing the Lord's will, even though we may not "know him from Adam." There have been many times oversees that I have come across brethren I did not know. Yet, from hearing them teach/preach I knew they were doing what was right. Again, I have encountered some who were reported to be brethren who, when they taught, had to have their mouths shut (Tit. 1:11) because they taught error. Those continuing in that error were not to be received nor fellowshiped (2 John 9-11; Eph. 5:7,11).

Fifth, this man was not lightly speaking evil of Jesus. That is, he was teaching just what Jesus told him to teach, speak, and do. Any today who bring not the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9) is not to be received because in effect, he is speaking evil of Christ's Word in that he does not see fit to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). This is where Galatians chapter one come into play. Here is that text: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel only there are some that trouble

you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:6-9).

We must take note of at least three words here. First there is "different." This is from a Greek word "heteros" and means "the other of two; one not of the same nature." Next, there is "another." This word comes from *allos* which means "one." Paul is saying that some would teach a doctrine that is different in nature than the one gospel of Christ. Third, there is "pervert." This is the Greek word *metastrepho* which means "to pervert; turn around." There really are no other "gospels," but there are perversions of the one gospel, thus making them imitation or adulterated messages.

This then is how we must conclude. When one comes among us and we do not know him, we can listen to what he says and how he says it. If what he says is according to godliness (1 Tim. 6:3), we may permit him to continue to teach/preach. He is not to be forbidden. But, if it is different from what the Bible teaches, we must not permit him to go farther. He must be taught more correctly the way of God (Acts 18:26), or he cannot have fellowship with us. He is to be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17). Please do not make the mistake of thinking that Jesus does not want us to contend with the denominations just because they are not "of us." It is not the case that Jesus would tell us today to "forbid them not," but would indeed have us to fight the good fight (1 Tim. 6:12), war the good warfare (1 Tim. 1:18), and be set for the defense of the gospel (Phi. 1:17) against all plants that the heavenly Father had not planted (Mat. 15:13).

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“CHRIST IN YOU”

Al Brown

THE HONOR OF OUR CALLING

“God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). To have Christ dwelling in us is, without doubt, the greatest and most exalted honor anybody could have. It is difficult to even grasp the full extent of this statement. This is no mere apostle, nor an angel who would dwell in us, but Christ Himself—the Creator and Sustainer of the universe—the author and finisher of faith—the King of kings and Lord of lords—the Son of God who is God. He is the one who is “worthy...to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:12). He is the beginning and the end—the eternal God—the one who says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Rev. 3:20).

The greatness of the blessing is emphasized even more when our unworthiness is considered. The Creator made man from the dust of the ground. He was created upright, innocent, holy; now he is unholy, unrighteous, and worthy of death because he is full of sin and rebelliousness. How great is the grace and mercy and love of the Son of Man that He would condescend to dwell in the sons and daughters of men? This is not just an occasional visit to which He has reference. The Greek word used in Ephesians 3:17 is *katoikeo*, which means **to settle**. Christ would honor us by living within us permanently—to settle in our hearts. This does not refer to a brief visit.

“Christ in you,” simply stated, means that if Christ is in us, we are living in submission to His will and controlled by His principles and influence. Christ is in you and me when His teachings control our lives. The concept is expressed in Second Corinthians 5:14f: “For the love of Christ **constraineth** [controls, compels] us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.”

“Christ in you” is the grand aim of the religion of Christ and is a recurring theme in the New Testament. Paul wrote: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but **Christ liveth in me**: and

that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me” (Gal. 2:20). Galatians 4:19 contains the same theme: “My little children, of whom I am again in travail until **Christ be formed in you**.” He emphasized this again when he declared the reason why he proclaimed Christ: “admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present **every man perfect in Christ**” (Col. 1:28). Paul’s prayer for all Christians was “that **Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith**; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that **ye might be filled with all the fulness of God**” (Eph. 3:17-19).

The concern of many seems to be: “Shall I go to church—Bible study—visit—teach—be careful about my speech and conduct, especially before outsiders?” All these things are important and are necessary in the Christian’s life, but if we have to even ask such questions—especially, if we try to excuse our failure to do any of these things, Christ is obviously not in us. Christ’s greatest joy was in doing the will of His heavenly Father. This is what He meant when He said, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (John 4:34), and this should reflect our attitude as well.

“Christ in you” goes much deeper than external acts: it has to do with attitudes and aspirations. It affects what we really want to do and our basic desires. This is true because if Christ is really in us, we are trying to mold our attitudes, wants, aspirations, and priorities so they will be identical to the way Christ was when He lived among men. This is the grandest aim the most noble and satisfying aspiration toward which men can strive: this is to become like God Himself—the longing of mankind from the beginning! The difference is, that this offer to become a partaker in the divine nature is at the invitation of God—not in rebellion against Him.

If we would be successful in this quest, we must come to know Christ as He was when He was in the flesh. This is basic. We must see Him as He is portrayed in the Gospel in all His simple, yet sublime dignity, beauty, and manliness. He was all God could

be and still be in the flesh. At the same time, He was all man can and ought to be because He bears the image of God. He was love personified—as only divine love can be, yet He was also infinitely righteous and just.

He challenged His followers to take on the divine nature when He said: “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (John 13:34). As we study His life and mold ours in His likeness, we are impressed that His love expressed itself toward men in benevolence, compassion, humility, tenderness, kindness, patience, having a forgiving spirit and a willingness to sacrifice. His love for His Father was expressed in faithfulness, meekness, righteousness, sinlessness, and being true, courageous, and obedient. He abhorred sin. He longed to do His Father’s will; in fact this gave Him His greatest joy. We must duplicate these qualities and attitudes if we would have Christ in us.

Hence, it is improper to ask, “How near the ideal do I have to get?” This implies doing only enough to squeeze by—only enough to stay out of torment. If this is the attitude a person has, he cannot possibly be like Christ. Christ’s main motive was not “doing only enough of God’s will to get by.” It was the compulsion of love—the desire to please the Father in every way, and this is to also be our ideal (cf. Col. 1:10f; 2 Cor. 5:9). Bear in mind that the unfeigned desire to make this noble goal a reality in one’s own life is absolutely essential. Therefore, the proper question is: “How near am I to letting Christ rule my life; how much closer can I get than I am now?”

KILLING OUT THE OLD— —PUTTING ON THE NEW

The one great aim of Bible study, worship, the building of the body of Christ—even the work of service is to “attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13). Indeed, the bulk of the New Testament is written for this purpose—that we might have the mind of Christ (Phi. 2:5). We are to have His attitudes, desires, character, and aims. Christians are expected to incorporate the traits given in the New Testament into their lives for the simple reason that these qualities are the characteristics of Jesus when He walked in the flesh.

Conversely, the traits of the “old man” (cf. Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-9), which are to be killed out of the

Christian’s life are the very opposite of Jesus’ character. Such worldly qualities are “not even [to] be named among you, as becometh saints” (Eph. 5:3). The “new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth” (Eph. 4:24) is simply “the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Col. 3:10). This is just another way of saying that Christ is in us, controlling our lives.

While it is obviously God’s purpose that “Christ be formed in you” (Gal. 4:19), such does not happen automatically. Some may have been disappointed to learn that Christ was not fully formed in them the moment they were baptized. They may think that now it is too late for them to become like Christ, but this is not the case. We must realize it takes time, especially when we consider what is involved. The “killing out of the old man” indeed begins at initial repentance, but it is also a continuing process—a **long**-continued process.

This is emphasized in Colossians 3. Paul said in verse 3: “ye died,” but verses 5-9 states they were still in the process of putting to death the old man. In the same way, John says that if we walk in the light, the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). Then he insists: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us....If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (vv. 8,10). We never completely finish this dying process while we are in the flesh. In fact, the Christian is continually fighting a battle with the desires of the flesh as Paul indicates in Galatians 5:17: “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would.”

This, however, does not mean we are not making progress in letting Christ control our lives. The apostle assures us: “But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory [or, from one degree of glory to another], even as from the Lord the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18). This same truth is taught in Ephesians 4:12-16.

We can become like Christ. In fact, it is imperative that we do, for this is our hope of glory. Slowly but surely, as we grow spiritually, Christ increasingly controls our lives, and we have the hope of glory. God can, and will, forgive our failures if we are truly

striving to submit to the reign of Christ (1 John 1:7-9). While He may not expect sinless perfection while we are in the flesh, He does expect a humble, submissive spirit, a willingness to repent of all failings, sins, and shortcomings, and a conscientious, strenuous effort to imitate the nature of Christ (cf. 2 Pet. 1:3-11; Phi. 2:3-8; 3:7-14).

On the other hand, those who disbelieve or rebel against the teachings of Christ and His apostles, cannot possibly have Christ in them for the simple reason that Christ is not controlling their lives. A classic example of such infidelity are those who have embraced the “new hermeneutic.” They parade themselves as being so dedicated to Christ, yet they refuse to live by His teachings. They cry, “The man—not the plan;” and this seems so **humble** and **self-effacing** to the gullible and unsuspecting who are taken in by their lies. Their sneering, scornful contempt for God’s Word (“the plan”) is a sure sign of their unbelief, simply because acceptable faith, which underlies the entire religion of Christ, comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Their bitter animosity to even the most basic command of God marks them as infidels to the religion of Christ regardless of what they claim.

Jesus said, “He that heareth you [i.e., the apostles] heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me” (Luke 10:16). The inspired John said essentially the same thing: “We [the apostles] are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error” (1 John 4:6). The teaching is clear. Those who reject the apostles’ teaching are rejecting Christ Himself, and those who reject Christ are rejecting God. If men teach any doctrines not taught by Christ and His apostles, or pervert (twist) the Word of God in any way (Gal. 1:6-9), they do not have the approval of God (cf. 2 John 9-11), and those who follow, encourage, or endorse what they do or teach are as guilty as they are. Christ can never dwell in such people, for their faith—if they ever had any of the acceptable variety—is shipwreck, and they stand under the curse of God (Gal. 1:8f).

In contrast, Paul prayed “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph. 3:17). The key, then, to having “Christ in us” is faith. It is by faith that we open the door of our hearts and receive with meekness His divine truths (James 1:21). It is by faith that

we apply His teachings to our lives in all our problems and difficulties—our trials and temptations—our opportunities to do His will. It is by faith that we rely on His promises to bless and keep us.

It is upon the basis of faith that we long for the glorious appearing of our Lord when we will be united with Him in eternity (Phi. 3:20f). In Paul’s life, Christ dwelling in him and the life of faith were inseparable. He said, “Christ liveth in me...I live by faith” (Gal. 2:20). To the extent, then, that we walk by faith, absorbing His noble principles and putting His divine truths into practice, to that degree Christ is in us, controlling our lives, and this is our hope of glory.

PO Box 39, Spring, TX 77383

CORRECTION!!!

In my article *An Allegory* in the April 1995 issue I stated that I had quoted the NIV directly. It has come to my attention that I did mis-quote First Corinthians 2:1. I had, “testifying about God.” The word in the NIV is “testimony” not “testifying.” My article should have read, “Also, he taught their practice and he ‘proclaimed to [them] the testimony about God.’” I will mention that the point of contention is not the word testimony nor testifying but the change from using “of” to “about.” This change takes the testimony from the objective gospel of Christ to the subjective personal testimony that a personal feels about Him. This is Pentecostalism.

A second clarification is the use of Psalm 51:5. My copy of the NIV reads as I gave it in the article. However, someone sent me a photocopy of their NIV which reads, “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” This reading is even worse than, “Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” This is the reading of my NIV printed for the American Bible Society by Zondervan Bible Publishers, copyright 1978. Both readings teach the Calvinistic doctrine of Total Hereditary Depravity, which is the beliefs of the translators. Instead of translation, they wrote their doctrinal bias into the text.

I hope this clarifies the situation and I am sorry for the mistake.

Michael Hatcher — editor

“TRADITIONALISM”

David Lee Henderson

While visiting with a dear friend in Christ recently, he began boasting of how much progress his local congregation has made in tearing down “Church of Christ traditionalism.” He was most excited when he proudly testified that his home church allows people to place membership even those who are not baptized!!! Needless to say, it nearly broke my heart to see yet another close acquaintance join the ranks of the present day Apostasy within the church of Christ.

Exactly what is “Church of Christ traditionalism”? Furthermore, is **traditionalism** necessarily wrong? Indeed, the Bible does say “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after **the tradition of men**” (Col. 2:8). Yet, again the same Bible commands “that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after **the tradition** which he received of us” (2 The. 3:6). Obviously, the rightness or wrongness of **traditionalism** cannot be determined except that the **standard** upon which one’s traditions are based is clarified!!!

“The tradition of men” (Col. 2:8) refers to false doctrine as taught by men. The Colossian letter was written to a church which was being challenged by the then present day false doctrine known as “Gnosticism.” Gnostics taught that Jesus could not have lived on earth in the flesh, for the flesh is evil. Paul refutes that heresy unequivocally when he stated, “in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9). Any false doctrine is a “tradition of men,” and thus founded upon “philosophy and vain deceit” (Col. 2:8). Present day “traditions of men” which are hounding Christ’s blood-bought body include: Premillennialism; “once saved, always saved”; “all positive” preaching; instrumental and/or non-verbal accompaniment to singing “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (cf. Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19); fellowship to those who are not faithful members of the church of Christ;

and “non-repentant” salvation in regards to the continuous sin of living with an unscriptural mate. Such traditions as these are oftentimes espoused by those who claim to be “non-traditionalists,” yet they are traditionalists of the worst kind in that they teach and practice “traditions of men” (Col. 2:8)! Heed the Holy Spirit’s warning in regards to such traditionalists: “**BEWARE!!!**” (Col. 2:8).

Apostolic traditions are not only good traditions, but more importantly, they are the Word of God (cf. 2 The. 3:6; 1 The. 2:13). Paul commended the Thessalonian brethren in that they received his preaching “not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God” (1 The. 2:13). On the other hand, he made it plain that God’s people are not to tolerate those “non-traditionalists” who set aside Apostolic traditions. We must remember “no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Since the apostles and the other New Testament authors “spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” then if one rejects their traditions, then he rejects the traditions of God. Rejecting the traditions of God is sin, for “if any man 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” (Rev. 22:19; cf. Gal. 1:8-9; Deu. 4:2). Since one will lose his soul’s eternal salvation for rejecting the traditions of God, is it any wonder that Paul wrote “that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us (2 The. 3:6)?

God bless every **TRADITIONALIST** among the church of Christ who has the courageous conviction to, “Hold fast the form of sound words” (2 Tim. 1:13). On the other hand, God forbid that we follow “the traditions of men,” all the while making the hypocritical claim to be “non-traditionalists”!!!

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Defender



"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

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I PERMIT NOT A WOMAN...TO REMAIN SCRIPTURAL!

Robin Haley

Roland H. Rowland, "elder" of the Quail Springs church in Oklahoma City and who had a past association with Oklahoma Christian University of Science and Art, has written, *I Permit not a Woman...To Remain Shackled*, a treatise on what he believes are changes that need to be made in the Bible and the church in order to accomplish his feminist agenda. That, at least, is the conclusion I have drawn after reading this book.

One of the first things that we notice about this book is the title being a perversion of what Paul told Timothy (1 Tim. 2:12). "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." Throughout the book, the author tries to teach that Paul really meant the opposite of what he told Timothy...that God really does want women leaders in every part of the leadership and worship of the church. Bible students will surely recognize this as the same old lie the devil told to Eve. He simply added one little word. In the present case, Rowland has added three words.

I suspected how this book was going to go when I read his dedication. It was dedicated to only women (who, he says, have had their talents arbitrarily buried by unthoughtful church leaders), save for a feeble plea for men to search for the truth of what he has written and have the "will and courage and wisdom to work for constructive Biblical changes in the church of our Lord." Plainly put, he fails miserably to bring his desires to fruition in having us to believe what he has written. When writers charge the church with "inconsistencies in our teaching and practice," I know already what they are about to write. They are going to try to convince us

that the church is a denomination, that it has not truly been restored nor that human reason nor logic is appropriate in determining God's will for the church. All he does actually is put forth "speculations," "what if's," "what would be wrong with's" and blatant false doctrines asserted in support of so-called "biblical changes" that he believes would be pleasing to God.

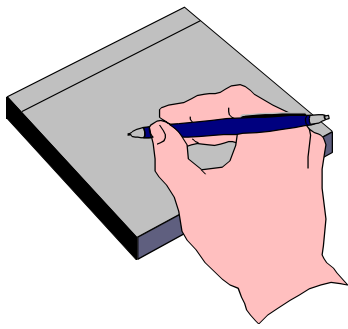
The book stumbles and falls flat, along with his reason for writing, in the second paragraph of his introduction. The third paragraph tells it all, and the remainder of the book is mere support (?) for his faulty foundation. What is the foundation? One that he had a hard time "wrestling" with young missionaries, scolding older "well seasoned" missionaries for allowing women to pray and take a lead in private and public devotions and worship. By this, he says, he knew something was wrong with "our traditional arguments." What more need be said? The whole premise is subjective, emotional reaction to what for him was an awful situation.

Filled with Error

Frankly, there is so much error that a simple article or even series of articles could not cover it. I shall try to summarize the mistakes and warn the reader to leave this book where it belongs: in the trash.

The first point Rowland makes is that all the blame for this "trouble" in the church is due to the love of money. This, he says, is the reason that the Lord's church does not have women as leaders and elders. Though there may be materialistic people in the church, he does not prove what he alleges. There is no truth in

(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Organization

In the last article, we discussed the organization of the church of our Lord. Jesus is the head of the church, thus there are no earthly headquarters. Within a local congregation there are to be elders and deacons who meet the qualification given by God in First Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Scriptures teach that within the local church the elders are the overseers, those who have the God given authority to make decisions. Let us notice some abuses presently taking place.

Some have the mistaken idea of preacher authority. While most preachers verbally reject this doctrine, many practice it. Also, many elderships relinquish their authority. Thus, many preachers think if the work is to get done, he must do it. Preachers work under the direction of the elders. When they attempt to take control and make decisions, they usurp the God given authority of the elders. If there is a “power struggle” between the preachers and elders then the preachers are in the wrong. Preachers have the authority to “preach the Word.” Elders have the authority to make decisions for the congregation, including whom to ask and have for their preacher and when to ask a preacher to leave. Congregations and preachers must be taught to respect that authority, even when they do not agree with the decision (as long as the decision is within the realm of expediency).

Some would have a committee of “faithful men” or “honorable brethren” come in and decide (“arbitrate”) matters when there is a dispute within a congregation. This is another unscriptural practice. There is simply no authority for it. God never authorized an outside group of men to settle matters within a congregation when disputes arise. Eventually this would make this group of men nothing more than a papal council. There is nothing wrong with elders seeking advice or council from individuals or groups of men, but any decisions reside

with the elders. It is also the decision of the elders when and to whom they should seek advice. However, elders do not have the right to abdicate their God given authority of decision making. When elders submit themselves to a decision of a group of men, you have an unauthorized arrangement and thus sin.

Some elderships relinquish their authority to make decisions concerning the congregation to a men’s business meeting (or some form of a men’s meeting). This arrangement is also unscriptural, as there is no authority for it. In this arrangement the elders are submitting to the congregation, not the congregation submitting to the elders. It mainly happens when elders are too cowardly to make decisions and stick to them. Again, wise elders will seek the advice of the men of the congregation and possibly others by whatever scriptural means they determine. However, the elders are the ones God ordained to make the decisions.

In the material under review in these articles (see June 1995 editorial for documentation of this material) there are five methods given as to how decisions are made within most churches of Christ. “(1) Men only business meetings; (2) elders and deacons meeting; (3) elders, deacons and preacher’s meetings; (4) elders, deacons preacher(s) and men’s meetings; (5) those without elders or deacons, the preacher makes the decisions.” I immediately know that when the only scriptural method of congregational decision making is omitted, that the author is either rebuking a congregation for not being guided by biblical precepts or trying to bring about change within the Lord’s church. Sadly, the later is the case in this situation. There is never any mention of the God ordained authority established within the Bible. The author does state that the Bible does not authorize men only business meetings as a means for decision making for the congregation. I partially agree with that statement. However, the author, in this case, desires to bring women into the decision making process. He writes, “There is a need for ‘allowing an increased role for women in the decision-making processes of local churches.’” This is directly contrary to the role of women, being in submission to and not being over the man. We will study the role of women and the role of men when there are not elders in a local congregation. In that situation how are decisions to be made? Does the Bible speak of this situation? While the Bible does not speak to that situation specifically, we learn from the principles God gives that men are to make the decisions. We will continue this study in future articles.

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

the charge that the doctrine which prevents women from taking leadership roles is built upon a "power structure" rather than upon the Bible.

In the next chapter, he places the reader upon the horns of a faulty dilemma, asking 86 questions but permitting only a "yes" or "no" answer to them. This is the old trick of asking a perfectly innocent husband, "Have you stopped beating your wife...only answer 'yes' or 'no.'" Obviously, he cannot answer, nor can Rowland fool us with this fallacious trap.

In chapter three, he refers to everything as "authority" but the Bible and then alleges that "we have all stopped looking for truth...that we dare not claim the New Testament church is fully restored," etc. and so on. Just where does he think truth is to be found? Why does he not use the Scripture to try to "prove" his assertions?

Chapter four is found to be an attack upon the Lord's church with no Scripture to prove any of what he says. The only verse used is to belittle the argument made from it which shows the proper role of women. Thus, rather than "prove" anything, he is happy to assert and belittle Scripture, pitting the Bible against itself, which is really only pitting God against Himself. He concludes with the typical wail of those who claim "human reasoning is not what we need...we need truth!" How foolish some become.

I have to admit that Rowland does a fair job of showing the inconsistent practices of some brethren in his next chapter. This one deals with the use of women and instruments of music in "private" rather than "public" settings. The answer for this inconsistency is simple; just because some brethren are inconsistent (and thus in error) does not take away from the fact that neither women nor instruments have any role to play in the spiritual leadership of the church in worship.

Of the more inane assertions, few can beat chapter seven where he proceeds to tell us about something even the Bible does not even mention: apostolic women. This is not the term he uses initially, but he concludes by asserting "surely there must have been some women apostles!"

For the most part, the remainder of the book deals with various alleged prejudices which he perceives men have against women. None of the things he refers to have anything at all to do with worship as God has directed. So, when he appeals to these so-called prejudices to call for change in the church, he fails in showing

why such a call is valid, not to mention the validity of the changes themselves! He concludes by telling us of REAL AUTHORITY—the women of the "Restoration Movement." My, now that will really set us straight! Added to this is the detail of the present status of some women in secular positions, and a few in unscriptural positions formulated by some congregations.

Finally, his pipe-dream of chapter 20. I wonder what he had in that pipe when he styles "an unusual but not unscriptural scene" as that which would be pleasing to God. What he described sounds more like what I left in the Christian Church. It certainly was no kin to what we find practiced nor taught in the Book Divine. With what he states in the next to the last paragraph we agree totally: "Truth will win out!" Indeed, there is precious little (if any) truth to be found in this book. But *God's book* still is able to cut to the quick of the garbage and expose it for the trash that it is. May we continue to search the Scriptures to see whether any of these things be so. Let us "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 The. 5:21) and never be shackled by the wishes and whims of the men who think they know better how to run the church than does the Lord.

912 E. Teresa Sapulpa, OK 74066

Editors note: Robert Rowland has since moved to Newport, Oregon.

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EMOTIONALISM VERSUS PROPER EMOTIONS

Dub McClish

INTRODUCTION

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines "emotionalism" as "unwarranted expression or display of emotion."¹ The same dictionary defines "emotion" in the following words:

Any of the feelings of joy, sorrow, fear, hate, love, etc....any strong agitation of the feelings actuated by experiencing love, hate, fear, etc., and usually accompanied by certain physiological changes, as increased heartbeat, respiration, or the like, and often overt manifestation, as crying, shaking, etc.²

Clyde Narramore defines emotion as follows: "An experience or mental state characterized by a strong degree of feeling and usually accompanied by motor expression often quite intense. Any of various complex reactions with both psychical and physical manifestations as fear, anger, love and hate."³

The Bible student immediately recognizes the validity of emotion in Christianity in such terms as joy, sorrow, fear, hate, love, and even anger. These all have their part in the thinking and behavior of Christians. Emotion is also related to such elements as sincerity and enthusiasm. However, another term in the definition that catches our attention is "feelings." Surely, none can confuse with Christianity a religion which does not involve the feelings of the individual!

The question, then, is not whether one's emotions ought to be involved in his life as a Christian, but to what degree should they be involved?

EXAMPLES OF EMOTIONALISM IN RELIGION IN GENERAL

An illustration of emotionalism and the excesses to which it can lead is seen in the antics of the 450 prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (1 Kin. 18:25-28). They cried unto Baal an entire morning, they leaped about their altar, and they cut their flesh in their religious frenzy. Another illustration of ultra-emotionalism in religion is Shakerism, the sect founded in England in the mid-eighteenth century. It is so called because of the frenzied dances its devotees practiced when they became emotionally stirred. A great religious "revival" took place on the Kentucky frontier at Cane Ridge in 1801. An estimated 20,000-30,000 people came from all directions to hear eighteen Presbyterian preachers, plus several Methodist and Baptist preachers. The "conver-

sions" were more like "convulsions."⁴ The preaching produced excessive emotionalism which resulted in bizarre behavior in the hearers. This included screaming loudly, then falling to the ground for several minutes as if dead, violent jerking of various parts of the body, causing one to grunt loudly and which usually evolved into dancing to the point of collapse, and a laughing and singing session.

In more modern times emotionalism in religion is generally identified with Pentecostalism. When I was a child, Pentecostals were commonly called "Holy Rollers" because they would sometimes get down on the floor and roll about in their unrestrained emotionalism. Such practices in their assemblies as swaying back and forth, raising the arms and vibrating the uplifted hands, crying out spontaneously with "hallelujahs" and "praise the Lords," and speaking in an unintelligible gibberish which they describe as "ecstatic utterance" (and mistakenly identify with the gift of tongues in the New Testament), are all manifestations of emotionalism gone to seed.

EXAMPLES OF EMOTIONALISM AMONG BRETHREN Some General Indications

Sad to say, the church of the Lord is not free of those who thrive on emotionalism and who cannot seem to rise above the sensual and animal level of emotionalism. One of the earliest excuses made for introducing instruments into worship in 1851, was that organs and bass fiddles would "add greatly to the solemnity of worship, and cause the hearts of the saints to be raised to a higher state of devotion."⁵ This demonstrates how the attempt to stir the emotions has been confused with "spirituality" in the minds of some for a long time. Since at least the late 1960s, some brethren have been aping the sects in their religious emotionalism, bringing these into congregations where they were allowed to do so. The imbibing of false doctrines concerning the direct operation of the Holy Spirit was behind much of this. Some alleged that they were "nudged" by the Holy Spirit to go to a certain street corner where they would meet a stranger they could teach. Sheer emotionalism (rather than spirituality or the Scriptures) led them to such things as dimming the lights, lighting candles, burning crosses, humming during the Lord's supper,

having “responsive readings,” “testifying,” changing the order of worship every week, and doing away with a Gospel sermon in the assembly in favor of an insipid panel discussion. An elder in one church even suggested moving the Lord’s supper from the assembly to the Bible classes because the small groups would make it “more spiritual.” Clearly, such folk could not distinguish between “spirituality” and “emotionalism.”

Emotionalism and Worship

The drift away from respect for biblical authority over the past twenty-five years has precipitated a major digression and apostasy from the Truth in every direction. A prominent part of this falling away has been the assault on scriptural worship by the liberals, an assault which springs to a great degree from emotionalism. The rantings of two of these outspoken religious rebels are representative of many. At the 1990 Nashville “Jubilee,” Marvin Phillips went out of his way to ridicule and destroy respect for structured scriptural worship. In this speech he really set the benchmark for advocating that we operate solely on the emotional level in worship. His topic, “Putting Celebration Back Into Worship,” gave to the perceptive, a clue to what he would say. According to one brother who heard the tape of this lecture and wrote a review of it, he spoke as follows:⁶

1. He talked about the “special singing” by the “Heaven Generation Singers” and “Spirit” that performed during the Sunday morning worship at the Garnett Church in Tulsa, where he preaches. He also told of the presentation of an American flag by a Boy Scout troop in the same assembly and declared that God wanted such things there.

2. He ridiculed the five items of scriptural worship and said, “Deliver us from whoever taught us that.”

3. He ridiculed the idea of saying, “It’s time to begin our worship.” (Apparently he believes in the heresy that suggests that everything a Christian does is worship.)

4. In a blasphemously revealing statement, he said, “Church is always supposed to be a party.” He went on to make a mockery of worship by saying that while someone was singing “Amazing Grace” someone else might, in the same assembly be hugging Grace and telling her how much he loves her.

5. He declared that the return of the prodigal son in Luke 15, was really a description of a “church service going on.” He used this to advocate music and dancing, claiming that of the twenty-three times dancing is mentioned in the Bible, only five times is it condemned,

and then only because the dancers had the wrong attitude! (Guess who the elder brother who objected to the music and dancing represents in the church today? You are right if you suppose it to be all of us who oppose the liberal agenda of these apostate innovationists.)

6. He held the Pentecostals and other charismatics up as examples of how to grow. He said they were growing, not because of their doctrine, but because of “celebration, warmth, love, feeling.” (The reader is urged to note how he is pushing unvarnished emotionalism here.) In the same context he implied that doctrine is unimportant because people do not care about it as long as they are made to feel good.

7. He pontificated that it is scriptural both to tithe and to clap the hands while doing so. However, he urged people to **really** turn their emotions loose when a congregational financial goal is exceeded. Not only is it fine to clap, but to jump up and down!

8. He said we need to “rethink” music in worship and “reconsider special music in our worship services.” By this he means the use of such things as solos, quartets, and choirs. He made some of the same arguments against congregational singing that those who use the instrument have used for generations. Why does he want to use the special music performances? My judgment is that he wants to use this as a means of breaking away from what he perceives to be drab and boring worship. In other words, he wants to put some spice and some excitement in it. In a word, he is aiming at what will appeal to the senses and the feelings—raw emotionalism.

9. He praised the Acappella singing/instrument-imitating group and Jeff Walling, pointing out how they could draw crowds. All who have kept up with these fellows know that their chief appeal is that they are adept at stirring the feelings and emotions, especially of the youngsters who attend their performances. Those in the Acappella audiences are encouraged (and often comply) to dance in the aisles, sway, and clap to the “gospel music” of the group. Jeff Walling is somewhat like a religious cheer leader at a religious pep rally. The emotions are stirred, but the souls are not fed with the bread of life. In fact, what they are fed at such rallies is often downright poisonous.

The other reprobate who has done his part to move the church toward unmitigated emotionalism, especially in worship, is Rubel Shelly. He has made enough heretical statements in the last twelve years to serve as

subject material for a large set of books, but we will notice some excerpts from only two sources: (1) the speeches he made at Richland Hills Church of Christ in Fort Worth, Texas, February 3-4, 1990⁷ and (2) *The Second Incarnation*, a book he co-authored with Randy Harris.⁸ Consider the following forays into absolute emotionalism:

1. He talked much about the need for “renewal” and “invigoration” from the Holy Spirit, saying, “we’ve got to be open to the Spirit of God and we have to seek the fulness of the Spirit of God.” He went on to say that whole churches must be open to the Spirit and move among the members.

2. He depicted the church’s worship practices as “tired” and “uninspiring” and said we must make way for an “exhilarating experience.”

3. He opined that worship should be an existential moment, an existential experience, an existential event. (For “existential,” read “subjective,” “feelings-oriented,” “the event or experience of the moment,” all of which heavily depend upon sheer emotionalism.) He called worship “a mysticism” and said that “rationalists” (referring to us old mossbacks) have forgotten that the heart must be in worship.

4. He said that worship must become an “encounter experience” with God, a “holy **WOW**.” He contrasted this with getting to the assembly and “going through a boring routine, predictable, you know what’s coming next...the sermon is about as remote from life as can be. It addresses the 1940s **Head On**.” He continued: “If you understand who God is, worship is spontaneous and unavoidable...it’s [for the second time, DM] the holy **WOW**.”

5. He denigrated the songs we sing in worship, calling them the “stuff we do in our music.” He said many of them were not worth doing because they are “theologically abhorrent and obscene” (There’s nothing subjective or emotional about that outburst, is there?). In place of the old songs he praised “contemporary Christian music” as “wonderful” and said we needed to get it into our worship.

6. His description of the confession period, followed by the pronouncement of absolution is a combination of the emotionalism of a Pentecostal meeting crossed with the high church dogma of Roman Catholicism. Here is his description of how they do it at Woodmont Hills in Nashville: Shelly announces there will be a period of confession and tells God there are some who need to “do business” with Him and that He

needs “right now” to listen to them. Shelly then confesses to God for those who are doing wrong things in their families, for those carrying such “secret vices” (he dare not say “sins” lest someone feel guilty, DM) as alcoholism, homosexuality, and greed. After confessing their “vices” for them, he then does a “priestly absolution” (his words, DM) over them. This is followed by a song, such as “It Is Well With My Soul” (What, an old “traditional” song rather than a “contemporary Christian” number), sung by a choir, a soloist, or the congregation (which, it matters not to Shelly). I would not be a bit surprised if they dimmed the lights and had the choir do a little humming to create just the right atmosphere for this “community confessional”! Such things, he avers, will “break some calcified molds.” I trust that the reader will not miss observing the foundation of utter emotionalism, rather than Scripture upon which this idiocy rests.

7. He and Randy Harris write that our “tired, uninspiring event called worship...must give way to an exhilarating experience of God.” Furthermore, worship in churches of Christ (except Woodmont Hills and similar superior congregations, of course) is “scandalous” and “dull and boring” to him and his ilk and “unattractive to non-Christians.” The way to overcome this is to replace it with “raucous celebration,” “spontaneity,” “hubbub,” “shouts,” “dances,” “Jubilation,” “applause and cheering,” singing by “one person or a small group to the larger,” “dramatic celebration of God,” and “a narcotic trip into another world.” Again, please note that all of these are grounded in subjective opinions which confuse what pleases God with the selfish desires of men, all of them rooted in emotionalism.

8. Whom is responsible for all of this nonsense suggested in the name of “worship”? Why, the Holy Spirit, of course! To those who would object to such foolishness, they say that we must not “stifle, close off creativity arising from the Spirit of God.” All of these wonderful innovations in worship are due to the “invigorating presence of the Spirit’s fresh breezes.” They go on to say: “When the Spirit of God is present, it will not always be possible to determine the atmosphere in advance. Leaders may intend and prepare for a service of one sort, and God may bring about another end to his glory.” They declare further: “We must allow the Spirit of God to quicken our assemblies with freshness and life.” Only those who are utterly blind spiritually can fail to see that they are taking the traits of unbridled emo-

tionalism run amuck and ascribing them to the Holy Spirit of God.

Emotionalism in Preaching

In addition to the injection of emotionalism into worship by the liberals, there is the excessive use of emotionalism by some preachers. This influence is also coming from liberals, as I have already demonstrated in the discussion of the push for emotionalism in worship. The instance in which Shelly described his confessing the sins of the congregation and then absolving them is a case in point. The appeal of many liberal preachers, especially of the younger set such as Jeff Walling, is that they are “so dynamic”! Never mind the shallowness or outright error of their message, there are some who must have an entertaining and what they consider to be a “dynamic” man in the pulpit to hold their interest. All of this is based on emotionalism in both the preacher and the hearers. However, to be fair, not all of the emotionalism in the pulpit is coming from those who are trying to turn the church into a “do your own thing” religious democracy. Preachers who are doctrinally sound have also been known to engage in antics and exercises aimed more at the emotions than the intellect.

ENDNOTES

¹Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary (New York, NY: Barnes L. Noble, Inc., 1992), p. 467.

²Op. cit.

³Clyde M. Narramore, *The Psychology of Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1961 reprint), p. 279.

⁴Earl I. West, *The Search for the Ancient Order* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Co., 1949), 1:23.

⁵West, 1:309.

⁶Virgil Hale, “Marvin Phillips and ‘Jubilee,’” in *Light for Living*, East Corinth Church of Christ Bulletin, Corinth, MS, 11/19/89.

⁷All quotations are from Goebel Music, *Behold the Pattern* (Colleyville, TX: Goebel Music Pub., 1991), pp. 284-322.

⁸Rubel Shelly and Randall J. Harris, *The Second Incarnation: A Theology for the 21st Century* (West Monroe, LA: Howard Pub. Co., 1992).

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Editors Note: Thanks to brother McClish for his

excellent article which he prepared for the 1995 Bellview Lectureship book. We will print part two in August DEFENDER.

NOTICE!

We encourage everyone to buy a 1995 lecture-ship book titled, *The Doctrine of Christ Versus The Doctrines of Men*. It contains over 400 pages written by 26 faithful men. The cost of the book is \$14.00 plus postage (\$1.75 per book). Notice the price is now the original price, not the pre-publication special.

Also notice the clearance sale on the 1988 and 1989 books. These are now only \$5.00 each plus postage. The 1988 book is titled *Are We Moving Away From the Cross of Christ?* The 1989 book is titled *In Hope of Eternal Life*. If you do not have these books, now would be a great opportunity to buy them, before they are sold out.

NEW BOOK!

There is a new spiral bound book out titled *Hatcher, Schweitzer Exchange*. This book is an exchange of letters between Michael Hatcher and Keith Schweitzer (a Lutheran). The basic topic concerned the teaching of Total Hereditary Depravity, but also deals with other subjects. This book may also be ordered from Bellview Church of Christ, for \$3.00 plus postage.

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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Defender



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EMOTIONALISM VERSUS PROPER EMOTIONS (II)

Dub McClish

Emotionalism in Reaction to the Truth

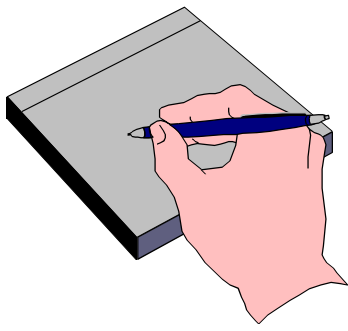
A third manifestation of emotionalism is seen in the reactions people register to various doctrines and practices of the Bible. All who have studied the Bible with those who believe and/or practice some sort of religious error have often observed such reactions. Upon learning that one must be baptized in order to be saved a man may vehemently argue with the plain statement of Jesus and the apostles (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; *et al.*). Such will often then argue that they **feel** that God is too good to condemn all those who have not had an opportunity to be baptized. So also with the Truth on instrumental music in worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), observance of the Lord's supper every first day of the week (Acts 2:42; 20:7; *et al.*), or any number of subjects.

The typical response of Pentecostals who claim to have been baptized in the Holy Spirit or to possess spiritual gifts (e.g., speaking in tongues) is for them to say that they **know** they have experienced these things because they **feel** it is so. They may even go so far as to say piously that they would not trade the **feeling** they have "right here" (with hand over heart) for a stack of Bibles! Likewise, the Mormon "elders," who ring our doorbells, testify that they **know** that Joseph Smith is a prophet and that the *Book of Mormon* is inspired because they **feel** a "burning in their breast" confirming these things (of course, it may just be indigestion!). Frequently a person who has been brought to a recognition of the Truth and what he must do to be saved will refuse because in his mind it will be some sort of condemnation of his beloved father or mother who died

outside of Christ. All such reactions are entirely emotional and represent an actual desertion of rationality.

Through the years I have seen many brethren react totally on an emotional rather than a rational level to a given truth or practice in the law of Christ. Several years ago, I worked with a church that supported a Bible chair director at the local university. I learned, after moving there, that he had sometime before said from the pulpit that he could not tell the students that instrumental music and such things as drinking and smoking were wrong. Further, I learned that he was making periodicals from liberal brethren and even Pentecostal sources available to the students. When I insisted that this man either be called upon to publicly repent or be dismissed, the atmosphere in the elders' meeting became very heated. One of the elders was a prominent local attorney and a close personal friend of the Bible chair director. When it became evident that there was some strong sentiment among the other nine elders to deal with this man, the elder-attorney finally said, "I don't care what he has done. He is my friend and I'm going to defend him. I will resign if you are determined to confront him." At that, he walked out the door of the meeting room. (Of course, he was allowed to come back to the next elders' meeting without a word being said about his "resignation.") Ironically, here was a man who was trained in his profession to think rationally and logically, but it is evident that he was operating on one level only in this matter—emotionalism.

The same reaction often occurs when it is neces-
(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Organization

In my review of the material I received (see June 1995 issue for documentation) we have noticed that elders are the ones who have the decision making role within a congregation. They do not have the right to abdicate that decision making role within the congregation they oversee. We also considered some abuses taking place within the Lord's church today.

The question we must consider is, what about when a congregation does not have elders. The first thing that needs to be said is that the congregation needs to be working toward the appointment of elders. If they are not doing this then they have perverted the organization of the Lord's church. He placed elders and deacons within the leadership of the congregation. Man does not have the right to do away with God's arrangement.

There will be times in which a congregation will not have elders. This arrangement is found within God's Word. On Paul's first missionary trip (Acts 13-14), Paul and Barnabas went through various cities teaching God's Word and establishing congregations of the Lord's church. A period of time goes by before there is the appointment of elders recorded in Acts 14:23. Also, there might be times when there are not a plurality of men who meet the qualifications set forth in Titus one and First Timothy three. During this time there should not be elders within that congregation. However, that should be a temporary situation, not permanent.

When a congregation does not have elders, then who makes decisions? While the Bible does not speak directly to this subject, the Bible does not leave us without any direction. The Bible establishes principles by which, when properly applied, we come to a knowledge of God's will. First, we know that whatever the

arrangement is, it cannot be a one man decision making process. Since God ordained elders (plural) in every congregation, God does not want a one man pastor system. We also know this from the condemnation of Diotrephes (3 John 9-10) who loved to have the preeminence. A one man pastor system gives the preeminence to that one man and takes it away from the head, Jesus Christ. Thus, the preacher does not have the decision making power.

We begin with the roles God established for the man and woman. While we recognize the spiritual equality of men and women (Gal. 3:28; Rom. 2:11), yet God created man and woman with different roles of responsibility for each. God has given man the leadership role while God gave woman the role of submission. From the creation we see these roles established. God created man, then made woman as a help meet for man (Gen. 2:18). When man sinned, God told the woman, "thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3:16). The Hebrew word translated husband (69 times) is translated man more than one thousand times. In the New Testament, God uses the order of creation to show the headship of man over woman. Inspiration writes of the order of authority, teaching man is over the woman. "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). He bases this upon the order of creation. "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (1 Cor. 11:8-9). Later Paul uses this same principle for teaching the role of women. "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Tim. 2:11-13). He then adds that the woman, "being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Tim. 2:14).

In view of the above principles, any attempt to place a woman in a leadership role is contrary to the Bible. When a woman is placed in a position of making decisions when men are present they are taking a leadership role. God gave the man the leadership position. Thus, when a congregation does not have elders, who is to make the decisions? The Bible answer is clearly the men.

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

sary for the church to withdraw fellowship from one of its members. I well remember a case of this sort a number of years ago where I served as the local preacher. A brother who was a notorious heretic had repeatedly disrupted Bible classes with his false doctrines and had even written letters to many members of the church, seeking sympathy and sowing discord. He refused the repeated pleas of the elders that he repent or else be withdrawn from. Accordingly, I was asked to preach on "church discipline" on a given Sunday morning, after which the withdrawal announcement was made. At the end of the announcement one of the members of the church stood up in the assembly and challenged the right of the elders to lead the church in the withdrawal proceedings without consulting the entire church. This man and his wife and another family or two then took the withdrawn-from brother out to lunch that day in a show of support for him, in spite of the Bible teaching they had just heard, which included the admonition, "with such a one no, not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11)! This brother completely disabled his rational faculties and reacted solely on the basis of his feelings for someone who he thought was being persecuted.

Anyone who preaches very long and stands for the Truth is going to encounter irrational and emotional reactions to what he preaches. The social drinkers and dancers often react this way to doctrine that exposes their practices as sinful, even to the dividing of congregations in some cases. The couple living in an adulterous marriage will rarely listen and submit to what the Son of God says about their spiritual condition, but will throw up all sorts of emotional smokescreens as to why they should remain together. The list of such subjects and the emotionalism that prevails in the hearts of brethren concerning them could be extended almost indefinitely.

LIBERALISM, EMOTIONALISM, AND RATIONALITY In the Secular World

One of the building blocks of liberalism, whether social, political, or religious, is unbridled emotionalism. The political liberal does not live in a real world. He lives only on a "feelings" level. He has a "bleeding heart" for every sob story. He professes a desire to feed all of the hungry, provide a house for all of the homeless, clothe all of the naked, and give everybody a guaranteed annual income. While compassion is one of the beautiful traits of the Master we are to emulate and

we are certainly given the mandate to help the helpless (Gal. 6:10), we are not to do so without qualification or condition. The liberal would help all of these unfortunate ones without questioning their worthiness as long as he can do it with someone else's money. He is oblivious to the Bible principle of "no work, no eat" (2 The. 3:10). He does not hesitate to give a man money for food when he has wasted his money to buy tobacco, alcohol, or some other kind of drug.

The attitude of the liberal is that every person should be able to choose to waste his own life and even the lives of others and suffer no consequence for it. Rather than being held accountable for his own behavior, he should be rewarded, supported, and even honored. The super-emotional liberal has not enough sense to know that the victim, not the offender, needs to be helped and the offender, not the victim, needs to be punished. Because of sheer emotionalism the social and political liberal opposes just punishment, including the death penalty, for convicted felons. To liberals down is up, out is in, black is white, left is right, and evil is good, all because they live in their touchy-feely, warped little dream world that defies rationality and realism.

In the Religious World

Emotionalism long ago took over "Christendom" in general. I can confidently rest my case for this assertion by citing one well-known slogan: "It makes no difference what you believe, as long as you're sincere." Several generations have now grown up on this teaching. Many of those in our time have taken it one step further by reasoning, "If it makes no difference **what** I believe, then why should it make any difference **if** I believe?" Hundreds of theological seminaries have for years been staffed with thousands of infidel theologians, who have produced tens of thousands of infidel clerics, who stand in pulpits every seven days and vomit up their unbelief on those assembled. Thus millions, in a nation once founded on faith in God and the Bible as the Word of God, are at worst seeking to make Him an outlaw and fugitive from this republic, or at best are living as if He does not exist. These are some of the bitter fruits of the exaltation of emotionalism, which breeds liberalism in religion.

The same culprit is responsible for the wildfire of liberalism in the church of the Lord. Liberalism is little more than universalism with a thin skin pulled over it. In his heart the liberal does not really believe in Hell. If he does, he does not know anybody who is bound for it. Furthermore, he cannot bring himself to condemn any

doctrine as false or any behavior as bad, or, at any rate, damnable. He is an ardent advocate of the “I’m okay, you’re okay” philosophy. He has turned his back on rational and logical thought which excludes any middle ground between Truth and error. You see, he believes what he does and believes in religion is right, but he also believes that what others do and believe in religion is just as right, never mind that they are directly contradictory!

What is right for one may be wrong for another and vice versa. This is precisely the ground occupied by some on the subject of instrumental music in worship. Some say that, while it would be wrong for them to use the instrument, it is right for those in the Independent Christian Church (or other denominations) to use it. It is by such irrationalism that Carroll D. Osburn, of Abilene Christian University, can write the following:

There should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who differ on whether...the Lord’s supper must be taken every Sunday, or whether instrumental music is used in worship. There should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who believe that Christ is the Son of God, but who differ on eschatological theories such as premillennialism, ecclesiological matters such as congregational organization, or soteriological matters such as whether baptism is “for” or “because of” the remission of sins.⁹

If you do not understand the learned doctor’s highfalutin’ terminology, the translation is this: “Anything goes.” Errors about worship, the Second Coming, church organization, or the plan of salvation are of no consequence. The social liberals responsible for our lax U. S. Immigration laws could learn much from Osburn and those like him. In effect, Osburn has opened wide all of the borders, repealed all of the laws, and dismissed all of the officers charged with enforcement of the same in the kingdom of Heaven! One of the things that drives Osburn (and doubtless others, especially those in academia) is the fear of being ostracized and ridiculed by their academic peers outside the kingdom for their narrow-mindedness. He gets close to admitting as much in the following statement of his ideal: “Rejecting arrogant exclusivism, Christian fellowship is extended to a broader arena.”¹⁰ (I wonder if he rejects Buddhists and Muslims, and if so, would this make him guilty of “arrogant exclusivism”?) The emotionalism behind this statement is evident. He cares not what the Book says about the exclusive borders of the kingdom of God in a hundred passages. His view is based solely on how he feels about it and how he wants others to feel about

him. Consequently, his arena is broad enough to embrace just about everybody, but it is not God’s “arena” if the New Testament means anything at all.

The hundreds of preachers who have adopted one or more of the dozens of loopholes for Matthew 19:9 on marriage, divorce, and remarriage (as erroneous as they are ingenious) serve as glaring examples of emotionalism gone to seed. Appeals are made to the difficulty of a celibate life, or how “terrible” it would be on children to break up a marriage for the sake of purity and salvation. Someone once told me that, if we did not relax our views on this subject, we would soon run out of anybody we could teach and baptize, since so many are living in unscriptural marriages. This fellow actually professed to be a Gospel preacher! How’s that for “grade A” emotionalism?

A couple once came to see me to ask me to marry them. The young man had been a Christian for several years, but the young lady had learned the Truth and been baptized only a short while before. When I asked if either of them had been married before, he said that he had not, but she said that she had. If fornication had been committed by her husband, she was not aware of it—at least this was not the cause of their divorce. When I called their attention to Matthew 19:9, the young man said, “We know what the Bible says, but we have decided to get married anyway and just throw ourselves on the mercy of the Lord.” I told our elders of the conversation and their plans. They visited with them and urged them not to get married. They got married (but not by me) and the week afterward our elders led the church in withdrawing fellowship from them. The entire atmosphere surrounding the subject of marriage, divorce, and remarriage among so many brethren is one of “how do I and others feel about it?” rather than “what does God say about it?” As with these areas of liberalism, many, if not most others can be traced to emotionalism as their root.

THE PROPER USE OF EMOTION

As indicated in the beginning of this chapter, emotions are not innately harmful or evil. God made us with emotional capacities and abilities and even instructs us, sometimes by precept, sometimes by example (and sometimes by both) concerning how to use them. Therefore, just as we have noticed the abuse of the emotions, we must also notice the proper and scriptural use of them.

We are to be kind and compassionate (Eph. 4:32), but not so much so that we practice partiality and respect of persons (1 Tim. 5:20-21) or help the undeserving (2 The. 3:10). There are many things to cause the Christian to express the emotion of joy (Acts 8:39; Phi. 3:1; 4:4); however, our rejoicing is not to be without restraint. We are forbidden to rejoice in unrighteousness, but are commanded to rejoice with the truth (1 Cor. 13:6). Even the emotions of hate and anger have a useful role when properly directed (Psa. 97:10; 119:104; Mark 3:5; Eph. 4:27). Each of the emotions could be thus dealt with. The common thread running through them all is that they are not to govern us, but we must govern them. This implies the use of the rational and reasoning faculties of the mind which God has given us. It is no coincidence that, when one lets his emotions have complete mastery, he by definition has become “unreasonable,” “irrational.” Emotionalism wars against rationality. In expressing the completeness with which men are to love God, the Scriptures teach us to love Him “with all thy mind” (Mark 12:30). This is not the same as the Bible “heart” in this passage, for it is listed separately in the same passage. The mind, in this verse, must refer to man’s intellect, his power to think and to reason. It is the mind with which one understands

JOY UNSPEAKABLE

Shan Jackson

So universally does man search for happiness and so widely does society long for it that many philosophers have declared happiness to be the final motive of all conduct, that all other motives are but shapes of this one all-prevailing motive. Still yet to what point on life's compass do men turn for such happiness and joy? Some look to the above as others to the below, some to the grandeur of the soul and others to the grossness of the senses, some to the haven of purity and others to the depths of hell. Multitudes of those who seek happiness fail in their attempt to gain it for the object of their search either is never found or comes at too high a cost. Others either fail to find it or when they do they fail to recognize what they have found. The sound of real happiness would sound strange to a devotee of worldly pleasure who thinks that following Christ is a period of gloom and sadness. For real happiness is found only in Christ. He is the source, He is the fountain from which all blessings flow. Equally true, however, is the fact that following Christ brings happiness and refusing to follow brings heart-ache and pain. Joy "is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart" (Psa. 97:11). "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace" (Gal. 5:22). "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phi. 4:4). "Believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet. 1:8).

A discussion of joy and happiness could not be complete unless one also compares the relationship between joy and faith. The relation seems to be implied in the very wording of our text. "Believing, ye rejoice." This is a relation inseparable. This is the relation of cause and effect. The believing is the cause of the rejoicing. It is the faith that brings the happiness. It is the trusting that supplies the gladness. Still, there is another step in the production of faith that cannot be overlooked. Faith is the cause of love as love is the cause of joy. In this passage we are told to whom such Christian love is shown and that is our unseen Savior. "Whom having not seen, ye love" (1 Pet. 1:8). Faith is to our soul what the eye is to our bodies. Faith is the power of our seeing. It is not just the light but the light of understanding. It sees, not just the object, but also the appreciation. This is the way in which faith in Christ produces love toward Christ. This is the faculty by which we know, appreciate, and recognize Him as Lord

and Christ. And having thus come to love Him we see joy as the fruit of our love. Following Christ, by nature, brings happiness. Love is in itself a joyous affection. "God is love." Confidence is happiness. "Believing, ye rejoice."

Let us consider also the nature of the joy which faith produces. It is, as Peter says, "unspeakable." It cannot be put into words. It is by nature an unspeakable greatness. This is also why it is often mistaken for the opposite. Because of its unspeakable calm, it is often seen by the world as grave and cold. But as someone once said, "The gods approve the depth and not the tumult of the soul." Still, as happiness can be a rather shallow word signifying what we receive by hap or circumstance the word joy reveals a deeper and fuller meaning. There is nothing boisterous or loud about Christian joy. It is not seen in jesting or comic song. It is "joy unspeakable" not just to be talked about but to be felt in the Christian's heart. Because it is glorified, it is true. It has the blessing of heaven filling it with glory. As the apostles teach, there is no other that compares, no other that approaches. It is the blessed joy that springs from a Christian's life, fed with the fuel of faith. It is a joy that rises above trouble. Suffering can afford the riches feelings. "We rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, we are in heaviness" (1 Pet. 1:6). "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Cor. 6:10). It is among our most precious possessions and is to be used by all who desire to lessen the sorrows and sadness of a worldly existence. It is our duty to be joyful and our privilege to share it with others.

P.O. Box 904, Palacios, TX 77475

NEWS RELEASE:

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES PLANNED

The Pearl Street Church of Christ in Denton, Texas will host its fourteenth major annual lectureship November 12-16, 1995. The **FOURTEENTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES** will be devoted to a study of the book of Matthew. A wide variety of material will be covered by 35 outstanding speakers from all parts of the nation, delivering 35 lectures. The aim of this lecture series is to provide fundamental and sound Biblical teaching to edify all who attend and who will have access to the lectures through the audio and video tapes and the book of the lectures. Another major aim of the

lectures is to help combat and expose religious error both within and without the church. The lectureship book (cir. 500 pages) will be a fitting companion to those of previous years.

A daily "Discussion Forum" (Monday-Thursday) will feature controversial subjects. The subjects this year will be "Is Matthew Part of the New Testament?" "Does Jesus Value a Kind Attitude Above Faithful Obedience to Him?" "Did the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 Constitute the Second Coming of Christ and the End of the World and Have the Resurrection and the Judgment Already Occurred?" "Is Open Division over Liberalism Inevitable?" After a lecture on each of these subjects on their respective days, questions from the audience will be encouraged. This year's speakers will be Tim Ayers, Darrell Beard, Bob Berard, Lynn Blair, Tom Bright, David Brown, Curtis Cates, Kevin Cauley, Gary Colley, Darrell Conley, Mac Deaver, Roy C. Deaver, Robert Dodson, Garland Elkins, Robin Haley, Michael Hatcher, Tommy J. Hicks, Terry Hightower, Lester Kamp, Bobby Liddell, Andy McClish, Dub McClish, Joseph Meador, James Meadows, Lindell Mitchell, Goebel Music, Tim Nichols, Wayne Price, Oran Rhodes, Ira Y. Rice, Gary Summers, Don Tarbet, Robert R. Taylor, Marvin Weir, and Jesse Whitlock.

Exhibit space is available for both commercial and non-commercial interests, subject to invitation and/or approval by the Pearl Street elders. Housing in the homes of local Christians will be provided as long as it lasts. Several major motels are located in Denton. Hookups (including a dump station) for travel trailers and motor homes is available at no charge on the church parking lot by advance registration. For further information, you may write to or call the Church of Christ, 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201, 817/387-3531, or call the McClishes at 817/387-1429.

COMPROMISING

Gus Nichols

As far as the denominational world is concerned, our greatest danger, no doubt, lies in the temptation to compromise and become a sister denomination with the sects around us. People want to be like the crowd. It was this desire that

led Israel to demand a king (1 Sam. 8). When we were weak the sects blustered and challenged for debate. They publicly reviewed our sermons and fought us openly and bitterly. But they soon found that their doctrines and practices were no match for the "Thus saith the Lord" which our preachers hurled back at them with withering force and power. They next began to fight us to our backs and secretly organize against us, and tried to create all the prejudice against us they could. But they saw us grow in spite of their campaign of villainy against us. Now that we are waxing popular, they are making love to us. They are now using their most powerful weapon. It is compromise. They want us to exchange pulpits with them, and, of course, be too nice to preach the truth, or point out any of their errors. They want us to join with them in the Ministerial Alliance, where compromise is the order of the day. They want us to join with them in Union Revivals where sectarians, ignorant of God's plan of salvation, do the preaching. They want us to call on them to lead our prayers, when they are in our services, regardless of whether they have been baptized into Christ or not (Rom. 6:3). They want us to recognize them as right in doctrine and practice, as though contradictory doctrines could all be right. They want us to preach on the things which all alike believe and leave off doctrinal preaching, as they call it. Now, if you do not believe there is danger in this appeal for compromise, look around and you may be surprised to find that some of us have already fallen for this sort of thing.

Then some brother in society, or standing high in the business world, brings his friends to hear "our preacher." He wants his friends to like "our church." So, he, too, wants the saving power taken out of the message. If the preacher preaches it straight, as it is in the Book, the love of God and His precious promises, together with the facts of sin and death, hell fire and brimstone, and some are offended and heard to express dissatisfaction with the preacher and the church, some may put on a move to change preachers. So, here is a danger facing the church, and tends to corrupt the gospel and please the people, rather than try to save them and please the Lord (Rom. 15:3).

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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Defender



"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

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PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF FELLOWSHIP

Tim Smith

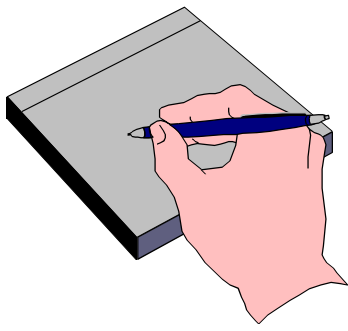
The question of fellowship has, for many years, been one around which much controversy has centered. It was addressed in the New Testament in many ways, it presented itself in the beginning of the restoration movement in the United States, and it continues today to be a question to be reckoned with. In the course of this study, we shall endeavor to gain a better understanding of what fellowship is and is not, who may and may not enjoy it with God's approval, the process by which it is withdrawn and restored, and some specific things which destroy fellowship between brethren in our day.

Fellowship is defined by Thayer (p. 351f) as: "To come into communion of fellowship, to become a sharer, be made a partner; participation, intercourse, collection, contribution." The idea being that two persons or groups of persons who enter into an agreement, share a common goal and work together to attain it, jointly participate in a given work, pool their resources or efforts are in fellowship. To illustrate this, we look to the local congregation in a given community. The fact that they are, as Christians, working together to accomplish the work of God and worshipping together indicates that fellowship exists between them. They have agreed to labor side by side under the oversight of the eldership in an effort to obey the commands of God. They are partners in a common work. They are each participating with the other in order to realize the common goal.

Fellowship may be had with the Father, for we read, "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). Fellowship may be had with the Holy Ghost, for we read, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. 13:14). Fellowship may be had with the apostles, for we read, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us" (1 John 1:3). In this connection, we read again, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). Fellowship may be had with faithful saints of God, for we read, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Thus, we fellowship the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the apostles, and the faithful saints of God. As we shall notice, this is the exclusive realm of our fellowship. We shall set forth the fact that faithful Christians may not have fellowship with any one else with the approval of God.

This fellowship that we have is both a working relationship and a relationship which depends upon shared beliefs. We read, "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9). In Second Corinthians, Paul spoke of the fellowship that was to exist between the apostles and the Corinthians on this wise, "Praying us with

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Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Organization

In previous articles we have abundantly shown that men are the elders and are the ones to make decisions (on expedient matters) within a congregation. When a congregation does not have elders then clearly, the principles of the Bible teach that men are the ones to make the decisions. Let us notice some challenges to the above mentioned principle.

Many will jump to Acts 6 as “evidence” that women are to be just as involved in the decision-making process as the men. They claim that women were involved in making a decision concerning the seven men selected to “serve tables.” The Grecian widows were being neglected in the daily ministration. This caused a murmuring among the Grecian Christians against the Hebrews. They, then bring this problem to the apostles. The **apostles** then make the decision that they would not take the time to administer to this problem. The **apostles** then make the decision that other men should work in this area. The **apostles** make the decision that seven **men** should be selected to deal with this business. The **apostles** instructed the people to find seven men who met the requirements. The **apostles** would then appoint these seven men over this work. Only after all this is it recorded that the “saying pleased the whole multitude.” It is assumed that the whole multitude included women. Next, the jump is made that the women were involved in the decisions. There is nothing in the text that demands that the women even had a part in the selection of the seven men, much less in the making of the decisions. As one considers this account, neither the men nor the women were the ones who made the decisions. The inspired apostles are the ones who made the decisions. Those who use Acts 6 to try to prove that women should be involved in the decision-making process, are reading into the passage what is not there.

It is also argued that Acts 15 gives “evidence” of women’s involvement in decision-making within a congregation. Some individuals who came from the church in Jerusalem were trying to bind the Law of Moses and circumcision upon Gentile converts. Paul and Barnabas had a great controversy with these men. Thus, the church at Antioch determines to send Paul and Barnabas along with others to Jerusalem about this question. When those from Antioch arrive in Jerusalem, the church received them. There was a meeting to consider this matter, then the church determines to send men to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas bearing the letter they wrote. It is argued that the women in Antioch must have been involved in the decision to send brethren to Jerusalem. They continue to argue that the women of the Jerusalem church must have been involved both in receiving and in the decision to send brethren to Antioch bearing the letter. The view that women were involved is based solely on assumption. Why not allow our understanding to correspond with other passages concerning women’s role?

First, when the brethren went from Antioch to Jerusalem, they did so by direction of God, not men and women making the decision. Paul discusses this meeting in Galatians 2. He says, “And I went up by revelation” (Gal. 2:2). God instructed Paul, and others, to go to Jerusalem, not a decision made by men and women of Antioch. When Paul arrived at Jerusalem, we find that he first had a private meeting with them who “were of reputation,” not the whole church. His meeting with the whole church did not come till later. After the meeting with the whole church, what makes us think that the men and women made the decision to send men to Antioch along with a letter? Certainly the greater possibility is that the apostles and elders made the decision, with the whole church submitting to their decision. The word “with” used in Acts 15:22 indicates the whole church united with the apostles and elders in this decision. That is harmonious with the totality of New Testament teaching on the subject.

God has established certain roles both for men and women. We must remain within those roles to please God. While some clamor for “allowing an increased role for women in the decision-making processes of local churches” they do so by violating the clear teaching of God’s Word. Who makes the decisions within a local congregation? The elders of the congregation. If a congregation fails to have elders, then the men of the congregation.

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints” (2 Cor. 8:4). This depicts a working relationship which was entered into between Christians who, at the time, were separated by many miles. They agreed to pool their resources and efforts to accomplish the common goal of ministering to the saints. This was a fellowship that exhibited itself in actions. Paul also spoke of “the mutual faith both of you and me” (Rom. 1:12). This dealt with another aspect of fellowship, without which fellowship is incomplete, their common faith. He told Timothy, “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). This spoke to the common faith that exists between all the faithful of God. Our fellowship is not solely predicated on what we do together, but also on holding the same truths. So, fellowship is shared by those who act together to accomplish a specific work or a set of godly works and those whose beliefs are in the truth of the Gospel.

There are many who sorely misunderstand or intentionally subvert the biblical teachings concerning fellowship. Some would have us to think that fellowship is predicated solely upon baptism. They contend that when a person obeys the gospel God adds them to the church and the fellowship (a point so far with which I do not argue), and that once they are so added they are forever within that fellowship (a point which I deny based on the teachings of the New Testament). They argue that because we cannot be certain of what truth really is, we certainly cannot withdraw fellowship from someone based on our uncertain understanding of what truth is. This is not only false, it is ridiculous. How can we “know” that they are added to the fellowship upon obedience to the gospel and not “know” what God would have us to do thereafter? If we are sure about the one, we may be sure about the other. Jesus said, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). If we cannot know when to break fellowship, can we know when to extend it? Is it not just as wrong to extend fellowship to those who are not eligible for it as it is to withhold it from those who are eligible for it?

With respect to fellowship and faithfulness, we would do well to learn a lesson from the brethren at Corinth. The record reads, “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles,

that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you...Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump” (1 Cor. 5:1-2; 6-7). Their problem, like many of ours’ today, was that sin was in the camp and they failed to act properly concerning it. To tolerate sin is to corrupt the church. They should have acted to correct the problem in order that the sinners involved might be saved and that the purity of the church might be maintained. Paul said that they should have been ashamed of themselves, but they, like many today, thought themselves to be taking the high road of tolerance. Hear another case, “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth” (Rev. 2:14-16). They had sin (false teaching) among them and they failed to act properly concerning it. Jesus demanded that they repent or lose Him as an ally and face Him as an enemy. How our people need this lesson today. It is our duty as Christians to oppose and no longer extend fellowship to all who have deviated from “the way,” whether in word or in deed. Hear again another case, “Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols” (Rev. 2:20). Their sin was that of harboring and failing to discipline an unrepentant sinner. This unrepentant sinner, like those of our day, spread her sin to others; and, so by the neglect of discipline, the church allowed the sin to infect others who should have been protected by the proper practice of biblical discipline. Brethren, many of our day shall answer for the same offense. As to where the idea that we may tolerate sin, do nothing about it, and even glory in our liberality concerning it came from, I know not. I do, however, know where it did not come from. These false concepts of fellowship will not help the church grow, they will pervert and corrupt it. Churches who fail to discipline may get more people, but they will not produce more Christians. One of the duties of a Christian is to discipline properly, therefore one failing to do so is guilty of violating God’s law and is no longer

walking in the light (1 John 1:7). A dead animal on the roadside will swell, but who would call this growth? So it is with churches, some will swell because they fail to get the rot of sin from their midst, but in eternal terms, they do not grow.

We now turn our attention to the questions of who may and may not be “fellowshipped” by the faithful Christian with the approval of God. It should be noted that we are dealing with the actions of faithful Christians, and with actions that warrant and receive the approval of God. Many claiming to be faithful routinely violate the commands of God with respect to fellowship (and a host of other matters), and we certainly do not uphold nor support them in their sin. The fact that unfaithful Christians extend fellowship unlawfully to those who do not qualify for it changes in no way our lesson.

Who is to be included in the fellowship of the New Testament Church? Those who are included in the fellowship of God are those whom we should include in our fellowship. This would include those who having heard and believed the gospel (Heb. 11:6), repented of sins (Luke 13:3), confessed Christ before men (Acts 8:37) were immersed in water unto the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). These are they who were added to the church (Acts 2:38-47), and they who “continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship” (Acts 2:42), and they whose works would follow them and be remembered by God (1 Cor. 15:58). We are to fellowship those who walk in the light of God’s Word (1 John 1:7). We are to fellowship those who “abide in the doctrine of Christ” (2 John 9). We are to fellowship those who hold fast the faithful Word (Tit. 1:9). In the beautiful and rich 119th Psalm we read, “I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts” (Psa. 119:63). The word “companion” means “one who agrees.” The Psalmist said that he was “in agreement” with those who fear God and keep God’s commandments (precepts). Such is a good rule of thumb for us to apply today. We, too, are in agreement (companions, partners, in fellowship with) them that fear God and keep His commandments.

Just as we are in fellowship with those listed above, we must not be in fellowship with all who fall outside those lines as drawn by God in Scripture. “One is as obligated to reject a brother whom God rejects as he is to receive a brother whom God receives” (Sermon, C. P. Bennett). There is a point at which, according to the New Testament, fellowship may (and indeed must) be broken (withdrawn) between brethren. God revealed

this clearly for us. It is possible for a child of God to so live as to remove himself from the fellowship of God and the church. Paul spoke of one being “delivered to Satan” in First Corinthians 5:5. Paul, himself, feared being overcome and rejected because of sin (1 Cor. 9:27). He spoke of some who had made “shipwreck of their faith” and were delivered to Satan (1 Tim. 1:19-20). Of the lazy man, Paul wrote that he “hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel” (1 Tim. 5:8). First Timothy 5:15 speaks of one turning aside after Satan. Hebrews 6:1-6 speaks of one who fell away from the truth and was never restored. James 5:19-20 speaks of one who erred from the faith being restored. Second Peter 2:20-22 speaks of one becoming a Christian, apostatizing, and then being in a worse condition spiritually than he was in before becoming a Christian. All of these verses point up to the fact that there is the possibility of a Christian leaving the fellowship of God and His people. Such persons so living are still brethren, but brethren from whom the faithful have withdrawn their participation.

Having established that faithful Christians may fellowship God and other faithful Christians, let us notice specifically some of those with whom faithful Christians may not (with the approval of God) have fellowship. Faithful Christians may not have fellowship (with the approval of God) with persons in the world (i.e., those who have never obeyed the gospel). Our fellowship is hinged to our common actions and faith. Those in the world do not share with us in either, else they would not be in the world but in the church. We may not fellowship them because they are not in fellowship with God. Those in the denominational world are persons whom we may not (with the approval of God) fellowship. They have not obeyed the gospel, and they are not in Christ, therefore they are not in fellowship with God. Both of these cases cited heretofore (those in the world and those in denominations) are examples of people who have never been in our fellowship, therefore we cannot “withdraw” our fellowship from them. The following cases will deal largely (unless otherwise noted) with brethren, unfaithful members of the church, with whom we may not (with the approval of God) have fellowship, and from whom we must (in order to maintain the approval of God) withdraw our fellowship.

The Bible tells us that those who teach things contrary to the doctrine of Christ are people from whom we must withdraw our fellowship. Jesus told of the awful aftermath of false teaching in Matthew 15:9, “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the

commandments of men.” Herein we see that those who teach error pervert or make vain (meaningless, to no avail) the worship of God. May we with the approval of God extend fellowship to those who render vain the worship they offer to God (and the worship offered God by their followers)? Hear John, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11). To transgress is to go beyond, and this is seen clearly in the following phrase, “and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ.” John (by inspiration of the Holy Ghost) tells us that one teaching things not found in the doctrine of Christ (the New Testament) is a person with whom we are not to have fellowship. We are not to welcome them (“receive him not into your house”), and we are not to encourage them in their error (“neither bid him God speed”). Are not many of our brethren guilty of welcoming them when they invite these false brethren to preach, teach, and pray in their midst? We read of some who recently “traded pulpits” with sectarian preachers (those who never were in fellowship with God or His faithful); we read of churches having known false teachers (such as Max Lucado, Reubel Shelly, and etc.) for “Seminars” (they are certainly not Gospel Meetings); and the like. All such practices violate the teaching of God in these verses. If one is not teaching the truth, we have no right to have him teach, preach, or pray for us. Is it possible for us to invite one who is teaching error to conduct a “Seminar” for us and in so doing not give him the impression that we support him? Brethren, these things are not optional. John uses words hard to be misunderstood, they are emphatic declarations prohibiting us from extending fellowship to those who are teaching things that are wrong. It matters not the circumstances, to extend fellowship to these brethren is sin.

Another passage which warrants consideration in this connection is found in Romans 16:17-18, wherein Paul wrote, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.” Those under consideration here were ones who, by their error, divided the church. We have those in our midst today. Consider

those who suggest that we should “re-unite” with the Independent Christian Church. They suggest that we should just overlook the fact that they use the mechanical instrument of music (and etc.) and accept them “as God has accepted us.” When they preach and practice this error they force faithful Christians to oppose them, thus causing division with their error. What should be done with them (and with all who teach any dividing error)? They should be “marked” as false teachers and “avoided.” Do we mark and avoid them when we invite them to preach, teach, or pray in our midst? We mark them alright, and we should be marked and avoided for doing it! Teachers of error divide the church and fail to serve Jesus. We must therefore, according to these verses, withdraw our fellowship from all who divide the church with false teachings.

Paul tells again of what is to be done with false teachers in Titus 3:10-11, “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” Herein the church is obligated to “reject” a man that is an “heretick.” A “heretick” is one who teaches something that is wrong, an error. If a man is known to have taught error, should we invite him to teach, preach or pray in our midst? When they are invited to preach, teach or pray in a congregation, may it properly be said that the congregation has “rejected” him? It is incumbent upon us to withdraw our fellowship from the teachers of error.

There are many errors taught in our day, largely because we have failed to obey the commands of God concerning withdrawal of fellowship. Among them we see that we are still having to fight the battle over the mechanical instrument of music. We have some “Johnny-come-latelies” in our midst who would have us relegate the mechanical instrument to the level of a matter of opinion. They speak of “instrumental brethren” and “non-instrumental brethren.” Based on the above cited verses, we must withdraw our fellowship from these false teachers because they are “transgressing” the law of Christ. We are told plainly in the New Testament what kind of music to offer in worship to God and they are guilty of going beyond that for which we have authority and adding another kind to the worship. It is not possible for us to extend fellowship to those who teach that the mechanical instrument of music is acceptable in Christian worship with the approval of God. May we obey God’s Word with respect to this matter and withdraw fellowship from all who teach this error.

There are those among us who advocate the use of women teachers and preachers in the presence of men. The Bible is plain concerning this, for we read, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (1 Tim. 2:11-12). Again we read, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law" (1 Cor. 14:34). Those who use and advocate the use of women teachers/preachers must be opposed, and we must withdraw our fellowship from them in order to maintain the approval of God.

There are still those among us who advocate the tired old error known as "unity in diversity." They contend (?) that it is alright to agree to disagree. Their argument bases itself on the contention that we can never say that we have an absolute knowledge of the truth on any given subject, therefore, if we see it differently we see it differently—there is no reason to divide. I wonder if Paul knew this when he withstood Peter to the face? What about Jesus in dealing with the Pharisees? If it be retorted that Paul was inspired and Jesus was God on earth, remember that Peter was not inspired in his error, and the Pharisees were not "Gods," and yet both Paul and Jesus expected them to know what to do and to do it! When one decides to "agree to disagree" over the plan of salvation, the proper items of worship, the work of the church, or any other matter about which God (in His Word) has spoken, we must withdraw our fellowship from him until such time as he repents of his heresy.

There are many in our midst who need to be withdrawn from based on their perversion of the work of the church. To see some congregations, it seems that they are going about to do everything except what they should be doing. We now have gymnasiums and sports complex buildings (usually called office complexes or family life centers) which house our "church league" ball teams. To begin with, there is no authority in the Bible for the church to engage in recreational activities. We are authorized to preach to the lost (Mat. 28:19), edify the saved (Rom. 14:19), and help the needy (Jam. 1:27). We are not given the responsibility of providing for the physical fitness or psychological happiness of the world or membership. Such things are not works of the church and should not be engaged in. With respect to churches of Christ having "teams" in "church leagues," the very subject we are studying precludes us from doing so. To enter into an agreement, a partnership, a league with

denominationalists for the purpose of playing ball games is to enter into fellowship (which means joint-participation) with them and is sin. It is time that we mark and avoid, withdraw from, and reject those who pervert the work of the church by dragging us into every evil alliance that comes along. We need to be reminded that the church is not God's little country club; it is a working institution. May our erring brethren give up these unscriptural practices and be restored to faithfulness, and may the faithful refuse to fellowship them until such time as they do.

We are told in the New Testament that open sins break fellowship between brethren. Remember the case in First Corinthians 5, wherein fornication was the sin? Paul commanded that the fornicators be put away from among them in order that the sinners might be saved and the church purified. Churches today must learn this lesson: If you have open sins committed by your members, you are obligated to either restore them to repentance or withdraw fellowship from them. God did not leave this to the discretion of the individual congregation any more than He left baptism to our discretion. Those who practice public sins are not in fellowship with God, and we won't be either if we maintain fellowship with them.

Personal offences may break fellowship between brethren, as Jesus said, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Mat. 18:15-17).

Basically, as we conclude our look at some **PRAC-TICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF FELLOWSHIP**, the matter may be summed up as follows: We may (and indeed must) extend fellowship to all who are faithfully walking in the light of God's Word, having obeyed the gospel and continued therein; and, we may (and indeed must) withhold/withdraw fellowship from all those who have not obeyed the gospel or are not being faithful to it, either by word or deed. These are serious matters, and it is needful for us to deal with them now, lest we be carried away into the errors of denominationalism by our neglect.

1272 Enon Road, Webb, AL 36376

THERE IS MORE TO “DOING GOOD” THAN MEETS THE EYE

Eddie Whitten

**“BUT GLORY AND HONOR AND PEACE
TO EVERY MAN THAT WORKETH GOOD”
(ROM. 2:10)**

Paul precedes our text by condemning the works of faction, disobedience and unrighteousness stating that wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish shall come upon every soul that worketh evil. He then gives our text which included all men and warns that God is no respecter of persons (Rom. 2:12; Acts 10:34). There are many people today who feel they are doing good works in acts of benevolence, compassion and philanthropy. These *are* good works! But the question is whether these are the good works of which Paul speaks.

There is, according to Paul in verse 13, a qualifier attached to the “good works.” He says that those who are “hearers” of the law are not the ones who will be justified but those who are “doers” of the law. There is the catch. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works?” (Mat. 7:22). The sincere, honest, religious doers of many mighty works were not justified. Why? Because, as Jesus explains, they did not do the will of the Father who is in heaven (Mat. 7:21). It is not just “good works,” but “*good works which are according to the law!*”

Today we live under the law of Christ, the New Testament. God has not left us with an ambiguous, vague law by which we are to do His will. He wants us to be saved, but He is the one who has defined the works we are to do. If we will do His will we can expect “glory, honor, and peace.” It is up to us—God

is no respecter of persons. We can obey Him and reap His blessings or we can go our own way and reap His wrath. The choice is ours. Make the right choice. That is the greatest work man can do!

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“Preaching God Demands”

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June 16-19 Spring, TX
“Isaiah (II)”

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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4850 Sauflay Field Road
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Defender



"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume XXIV

October 1995

Number 10

CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC: THE NEW TROJAN HORSE

Gary W. Summers

Last Saturday a "Family Adventure Seminar" was held at a congregation near here. The morning session was quite profitable for the first hour-and-a-half, as the one conducting it warned of the entertainment media and the influence we let it have over our lives and especially the lives of our children. The material was excellent and combined with pertinent Scriptures.

But suddenly, it was as though a cold wind swept through the room, which should have chilled everyone present but apparently affected very few. The speaker began to argue passionately that parents get their children involved in listening to Christian rock music.

To be sure, he prefaced it by saying that there was no agenda to get instrumental music accepted into our worship, but that our young people need a healthy alternative to the seedy rock music found on most popular stations.

Following is how the presentation worked. A video from Focus on the Family was played which **low**lighted the worst of rock music. The words were flashed on the screen (with obscenities partially deleted), while a portion of the song was played. Selected songs were "Me So Horny" by 2 Live Crew, "Cop Killer," "Suicide Solution" by Ozzy Osborne, and a few others that have received a great deal of publicity.

These were contrasted on the video with words from Christian rock music that protested abortion, advocated biblical morality, and exalted Jesus. Obviously, if the only criteria between the two things presented on the "Learn to Discern" video by Robert

DeMoss was the words (and it was), it's a no-brainer to decide which is better for kids.

After the video was completed, the speaker continued to sing the praises of Christian rock music as an alternative to the other. Following are some of his tools of persuasion.

1. Youth groups in churches of Christ all over the country are promoting Christian rock music for their young people. A group of 50 youths at White's Ferry Road are really into it. (Wow, an endorsement!)

2. A young girl was addicted to sex from the age of fifteen. She began listening to Christian rock music, and now she's cured. (Double wow, a testimonial!!)

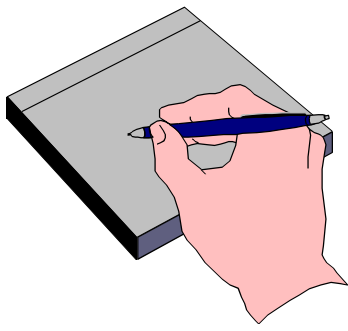
3. Young people are going to listen to rock music (Substitute "have sex" for "listen to rock music," and see if this argument sounds familiar); you can't stop them. They're going to do it; so why not let them listen to something with wholesome words instead of those profane lyrics?

After a few minutes of these exhortations, some of the brethren began to agree with the concept; some of them were already listening to this music with their children. Since no one seemed disposed to offer any objections, I spoke.

A Fair-Minded Discussion?

"I want to inject a note of discord into this discussion. Is instrumental music sinful?" In the context of the discussion, the speaker surely knew what I meant, but he hedged by saying that instrumental music is not

(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

God Works

God is the ruler of the universe. Daniel told king Nebuchadnezzar, “That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan. 4:25). This was because of Nebuchadnezzar’s pride. He must learn that God is the ruler of the universe. The same is true today. “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God” (Rom. 13:1).

God, as ruler of the universe, has always worked within the world. God exercises His control to bring about His desired will, in compatibility with man’s free will, by working in the affairs of man. Daniel, in a wonderful prayer, stated that God controlled everything, even to the raising up and destroying of kings. “Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what *is* in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him” (Dan. 2:20-22). The realization that God is working and controlling the world is the basis for James’ teaching, “For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that” (Jam. 4:15). We must ever live with the thought that God rules in (is in control of) our affairs, yea the whole world.

The question is not; does God work in the affairs of man, but how does He do it? God has worked by two methods throughout history. God has worked through

the avenue of miracles and through providence. A miracle is the transcendence, setting aside, overruling or interference of the processes of nature, for the moment, by a Force superior to nature, a supernatural power, God. Providence is God’s working within the processes of nature. Providence does not transcend, set aside, overrule or interfere with the processes of nature. God is still working but He is using the processes of nature to bring about His desired intentions. Often Pentecostals believe that unless God works a miracle, He is not working. Sadly, some of our own brethren fall into the same trap. They accuse those who deny the occurrence of miracles today, as denying the power of God. The truth is that they are the ones who deny the power of God. They falsely believe that for God to work He must perform a miracle. That denies His ability to work within the laws of nature.

Miracles, in the Bible, are fairly easy to find. When God created the universe and man (Gen. 1), that was a miracle. When Moses brought water from a rock (Exo. 17; Num. 20) or when Elijah (1 Kin. 17) or Elisha (2 Kin. 4) raises one from the dead, it is a miracle. Miracles are when Jesus walks on the water (Mat. 14), raises Lazarus from the dead (John 11), heals the infirmed, etc. These were true miracles, not the fakes we see today. No one denied or challenged the miracles recorded in the Bible. This cannot be said of the so-called modern-day miracles. They are not only challenged but have repeatedly been shown to be fake. Through the miracles of the Bible God is working to bring about His desired will.

Providence is more difficult to observe. However, there are clearly passages that show the providence of God. After Joseph is sold into slavery and later elevated to a position under Pharaoh, his brothers come to buy food. After moving to Egypt and the death of Jacob, his brothers come to him with a lie telling him their father told them to ask forgiveness from him. Joseph says their selling him into captivity was the providence of God. “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive” (Gen. 50:20). The entire book of Esther speaks volumes concerning the providence of God. In that record, Mordecai says, “and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?” (Est. 4:14b). God had arranged everything to bring Esther to the kingdom to bring about deliverance for the Jews. The New Testament likewise speaks of the providence of God in such passages as Romans 8:28;

1 Corinthians 10:13; Matthew 28:20; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 3:12 and many others.

Brethren, let us always remember that God is still in control. God is still going to work out His desired will in the affairs of man today. While the forces of evil are all around us, and even through all the problems we face in the Lord's church today, let us remember that God is in control and will work things out in the way He desires.

MH

(Continued from Page 1)

inherently sinful. That is true; so I reworded the question: "Is using instrumental music in singing praises to God sin?"

His answer was something like: "We're not advocating instrumental music in worship." I countered with: "Is there a difference between in and out of the assembly?" He responded: "This is not the time for a discussion of this nature."

"Aren't you just exchanging one sin for another." He repeated that this was not the time for discussion. Pray tell, when was the time for it? He had spent twenty minutes advocating as strongly as he knew how getting young people in the Lord's church to listen to Christian rock music. When will the parents present that day hear the other side, since he chose to silence any opposition?

Objections to Christian Rock Music

1. The phrase "Christian rock" is a misnomer. "Rock" music is secular; Christian songs are spiritual—the two don't mix. It's as inconsistent as the phrase "theistic evolution," which is supernatural naturalism.

2. God did not authorize the use of musical instruments in our worship of God. Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 are universal statements that are applicable in a number of situations. The singing referred to herein may be done in the assembly or out of it. The exhortations are not limited to one context any more than 1 Timothy 2:8 is ("I desire that **men** pray **everywhere**").

3. There is no scriptural justification for brethren to conclude that it is wrong to sing with musical accompaniment in the assembly but all right to gather around the piano at home or a guitar at camp. Where ever Christians meet, they are to sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord.

4. If it is unauthorized (and therefore sinful) for Christians to use musical accompaniment in singing

psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, can it be right to approve of others doing so?

5. To be more precise, it's a matter of fellowshiping error. Why is it that God's people always want to be like the nations around them (1 Sam. 8:20)? All of the religious denominations are now participating in this newest craze; so it's time our young people joined them. Right; we wouldn't want to be distinctive, would we? Anyone who thinks that our young people can listen to this music, buy it, attend the concerts, etc., without it affecting them is incredibly naive. How long will it be before some want to form their own Christian rock band? How much longer yet will it be until they begin to say, "We sing these songs with instruments all the time; why can't we do it in the assembly?" Christian rock music is nothing more than the latest form of the Trojan Horse.

Arguments Refuted

1. The workshop emcee appealed for acceptance of this practice by the fact that brethren in various locales were doing it. So what? The same thing could be said about any false practice. Instrumental music itself crept in little by little.

2. Christian rock music got a young girl off of illicit sex. Should we offer those who have tried LSD, marijuana? Whereas much of rock music is sinful (which is a good reason to turn it off at that point—as well as the television), some of it does no harm. But it is always wrong to add instruments to spiritual songs. One sin is simply being exchanged for another that is deemed lesser.

3. Kids will listen to rock music anyway. Not all of them do, but even if they did, why not teach them to exercise good judgment rather than give it up altogether (the same goes for country music)? It is a false dilemma to say it's either 2 Live Crew or Christian Rock. There's quite a bit in between.

4. "But it's only entertainment; the purpose is not worship." It has already been argued that the reason for listening to Christian rock is that the words are inspiring and uplifting. Shall we say edifying? Does it admonish and teach? Sounds like a spiritual song.

5. On what basis is Christian rock music authorized? Who will set forth an argument, the conclusion of which is, "The Bible authorizes my children and me to listen to Christian rock music?"

312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES

NOVEMBER 12 - 16, 1995

STUDIES IN MATTHEW

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

9:00 AM	Jesse Whitlock	The Book Of Matthew—An Introduction
10:00 AM	Dub McClish	Matthew, the Man
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM	Andy McClish	Jesus Teaches In Parables (13:1-58)
3:00 PM	Tim Nichols	John Beheaded and Various Travels and Miracles of Jesus (14:1-15:39)
4:00 PM	Kevin Cauley	Sundry Miracles and the Call of Matthew (8:1-9:38)
5:00 PM	DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM	Lester Kamp	Answering False Doctrines: Are we forbidden to judge anyone about anything (7:1-4)? Was the ability of the Lord to work miracles dependent upon the faith of the recipient (9:22,29; 13:58)? Did Jesus promise to build His church on Peter and did He give him more authority than the other apostles (16:18-19)? Must one go to false teachers privately before exposing their publicly-taught false doctrines (18:15-17)?
8:00 PM	David Brown	Jesus Chooses and Commissions the Apostles, Extols John (10:1-11:30)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13

9:00 AM	Lynn Blair	Jesus Confronts His Enemies and Works Many Miracles (12:1-50)
10:00 AM	Don Tarbet	Difficult Passages: Were Hosea 11:1 and Jeremiah 31:15 specific or only incidental prophecies of events surrounding Jesus' birth (2:15,17-18)? Where is the Old Testament prophecy that Jesus would be called a "Nazarene" (2:23)? Do we have "guardian angels" and are angels still with us (4:6,11; 18:10; cf. Heb. 1:14; <i>et al.</i>)? When did demon possession begin and end, how did it relate to disease, what was its purpose (4:24; 8:28-34; 9:32-33; 12:22-28,43-45; 15:22; 17:15-20)?
11:00 AM	Goebel Music	The Life and Work of John the Baptizer
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM	Tommy Hicks	Answering False Doctrines: Was Isaiah 7:14 only an incidental prophecy concerning the Virgin Birth (1:22-23)? Was (is) Holy Spirit baptism for all, since John promised it to more than the apostles alone (3:11)? Is baptism in fire part of Holy Spirit baptism (3:11-12; cf. Acts 2:3-4)? Should the law/prophets be obeyed in the kingdom/church (5:19)?
3:00 PM	Discussion Forum Curtis A. Cates	Did the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 Constitute the Second Coming of Christ and the End of the World and Have the Resurrection and the Judgment Already Occurred?
3:45 PM	Curtis A. Cates	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM	DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM	Bobby Liddell	The Church Promised by Jesus and His Transfiguration (16:1-17:27)
8:00 PM	Terry M. Hightower	Jesus' Teaching on Offenders, Offenses, Forgiveness, Divorce, and Riches (18:1-19:30)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

9:00 AM	Robert Dodson	Jesus Tried by Gentiles, Crucified, Buried (27:1-66)
10:00 AM	Gary Colley	The Great Sermon on the Mount—Part II (6:1-34)
11:00 AM	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.	Difficult Passages: Does "the Son of man coming on the clouds" refer to the Second Coming (24:29-33)? Was the "field of blood" bought by the council or by Judas (27:3-8; cf. Acts 1:16-18)? Did Matthew ascribe a prophecy of Zechariah to Jeremiah (27:9-10; cf. Zec. 11:12-13)? Did the women run from the empty tomb and proclaim the resurrection (28:8; cf. Mark 16:8)?
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM	Tim Ayers	Jesus Enters Jerusalem In Triumph, Cleanses the Temple (20:1-21:46)

3:00 PM	Discussion Forum Lindell Mitchell	Does Jesus Value a Kind Attitude Above Faithful Obedience to Him?
3:45 PM	Lindell Mitchell	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM	DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM	Bob Berard	The Great Sermon on The Mount—Part I (5:1-48)
8:00 PM	Garland Elkins	Jesus' Teaching on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

9:00 AM	Oran Rhodes	The Genealogy, Birth, and Infancy of Jesus (1:1-2:23)
10:00 AM	Darrell E. Beard	The Work of John and the Early Work of Jesus (3:1-4:25)
11:00 AM	Tom L. Bright	Two Judgment Parables and The Judgment Described (25:1-75)
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM	Roy C. Deaver	Difficult Passages: What is "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" (12:31-32)? Did Jesus hide the Truth from certain ones (13:10-15; cf. Luke 10:21-23)? Did Jesus forbid withdrawing from ungodly brethren and command us to leave them alone till The Judgment (13:28-30; cf. 18:15-17)? Is "made themselves eunuchs" literal or figurative? If figurative, are "born eunuchs" and "made eunuchs by men" also figurative? If not, why not (19:12)?
3:00 PM	Discussion Form Mac Deaver	Is Matthew Part of the New Testament?
3:45 PM	Mac Deaver	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM	DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.	Jesus' Final Confrontation with the Jews and His Judgment Upon Them (22:1-23:39)
8:00 PM	James Meadows	Jesus' Discourse on the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Coming (24:1-51)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

9:00 AM	Wayne Price	Difficult Passages: Will there be equal or degrees of rewards and punishments (20:9-15; cf. 10:40-42; 11:22-24; Luke 12:47-48; Heb. 10:29; <i>et al.</i>)? How is the apparent discrepancy resolved concerning the number of blind men healed at Jericho (20:29-34; cf. Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43)? Did Jesus send for, the disciples bring, Jesus ride on, and Zechariah prophesy two animals or one (21:1-7; cf. Mark 11:1-7; Luke 19:29-35; Zec. 9:9)? Who was the "Zachariah" the Jews killed (23:35; cf. 2 Chr. 24:2-21; Zec. 1:1)?
10:00 AM	Joseph Meador	Jesus' Last Passover, the Lord's Supper, The Jews Arrest and Try Him (26:1-75)
11:00 AM	Marvin Weir	Answering False Doctrines: Was the church established while the Lord was on earth (18:17)? Do Jesus' warnings about travail and tribulation and such like refer to the "rapture" (24:8-9,21,29,40-41)? Do we have signs by which we can predict the time of Jesus' Second Coming (24:4-44)? Are we accountable to the Great Commission, since it was originally given to the apostles and they fulfilled it (28:18-20; cf. Rom. 10:18; 16:26; Col. 1:6,23)?
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
2:00 PM	Michael Hatcher	The Lord Is Raised, Commissions the Apostles (28:1-20)
3:00 PM	Discussion Forum Gary W. Summers	Is Open Division In the Church Over Liberalism Inevitable?
3:45 PM	Gary W. Summers	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
5:00 PM	DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM	Robin Haley	The Great Sermon on the Mount—Part III (7:1-29)
8:00 PM	Darrell Conley	The Book of Matthew—A Summary

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DAILY DISCUSSION FORUMS ON CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS

IS THE *CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE* IN “GOOD HANDS”?

Jesse Whitlock

In the pages of the *Christian Chronicle* (August 1995, pp. 14-15), there appeared a two-page spread called, “The Men’s Movement.” The authoress is Lora B. Postelwait. The thrust of the article is to promote and encourage Christian men to join hands with an interdenominational conglomeration commonly called “Promise Keepers.”

The article begins by describing a typical “worship scenario” at one of the Promise Keepers conferences:

Fifty thousand men packed into a sports stadium rise in unison. They shout, stomp their feet and cheer on their victor. Beach balls fly through the arena. The slap of high-fives resounds through the air. These 50,000 men are yelling...for Jesus Christ.

Sounds like true worship to me! I am sure this is what Paul had in mind when he wrote, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14:40). And, of course, we realize that all terms and designations are found in the Word of God. First Peter 4:11 reminds us, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” Listen to a few terms from the article with all Scripture references listed after: “Men’s Leadership Ministries” (...), “Promise Keepers Okla. State Task Force” (...), “Point Man” (...), “Wake-Up Call” (...), “Promise Keepers” (...), “Spiritual Shepherds” (...). Surely, we can see that this is interdenominational language, i.e., “the language of Ashdod.”

Before looking at the seven promises allow me to point out that the idea of having men to assume their rightful role in the family is commendable. However, it is such only because it was commanded in the Bible multiplied centuries before the idea of all-denominational conference (at \$55 a head) was dreamed up by the denominational founders, Bill McCartney and Dave Wardell. The article speaks of the dream:

In 1993, this colossal dream was realized when more than 50,000 men filled the Colorado University stadium to hear speakers and singing groups, to pray and to encourage each other.

The majority of the speakers and singing groups are from various man-made denominations. Guess what accompanies the singing groups? Just how does a New Testament Christian pray with and encourage denominational men? How does one address God as “Father” if he is not one of God’s children? When I am asked why I refuse to join local ministerial alliances and/or “Promise Keepers” my answer remains the same:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 9-11).

Yet, one so-called minister among us is quoted in the article as saying: “The major thrust of excitement for me was to see that what Jesus prayed for in John 17 can be achieved—that we would all be one and lay aside our differences.”

I could not help but wonder if this man comprehended the real meaning of the Lord’s prayer. Christ prayed, “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” (John 17:21). There are unique differences that help identify the Lord’s church as being the body of Christ. If we “lay aside our differences” then the Lord’s church would be what many erring brethren are working toward; just another denomination among many.

The two-page spread in the *Christian Chronicle* even highlighted “THE SEVEN PROMISES TO WHICH PROMISE KEEPERS PLEDGE THEMSELVES: Promise Keepers believes that Christian growth begins by making promises. These are the seven promises that they encourage men to uphold. A Promise Keeper is committed to:....” We are going to note all seven with a brief comment.

1. **Honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to His Word, through the power of the Holy Spirit.**

I have no trouble with the first part of the statement. However, not the last seven words. This teaches the Calvinistic idea of a leading of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word, which is contrary to Ephesians 6:17. Notice the statement includes “obedience to His Word” and then adds the last seven words. I reject this creed of Calvinism!

2. **Pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.**

This is redundant to any New Testament Christian in view of Galatians 6:1-2; Hebrews 3:13; etc. But, notice the word “brothers” in this setting of all denominations coming together. I am not persuaded the Bible

allows me to call one a “brother” who has not been baptized into Christ for/unto/in order to obtain the remission of sins.

3. Practicing spiritual, moral, ethical and sexual purity.

Aren’t these things already commanded? (Jam. 1:26ff; Tit. 2:11ff; 1 Tim. 5:22; etc.). If I should “join up” with Promise Keepers I would be in violation of this promise since I would be united with those who do not preach God’s truth, do not practice God’s truth and do not prefer God’s truth! I would become spiritually impure (cf., 2 John 9-11).

4. Building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values.

There is nothing new in this statement. See Ephesians 5:22ff; 6:4ff; etc. What does this unauthorized man-made creed provide that is not found in the teaching of the New Testament? Promise #4 is redundant and superfluous.

5. Supporting the mission of the church by honoring and praying for his [spiritual shepherds] and by actively giving his time and resources.

This inter-denominational conglomeration denies the Bible’s teaching that there is but one church. They must, of necessity, believe that God approves all the conflicting and contradictory faiths (the man-made denominations). Promise Keepers cannot obey the injunction of First Timothy 3:15 where the Record reads: “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

When I look at the term [spiritual shepherds], (the brackets supplied by them—JLW), I remember the “prayer partners” concept of the old Crossroads/New Boston movement, i.e., a mentoring concept, supposed superior spirituality. You would think my brethren would have learned the lesson after our double-cross at the Crossroads; but you just can’t warn some brethren! Crossroads advocated “Lordship” baptism, saying if you were baptized into Christ it would not do, you must accept Him as Lord. Listen, you cannot separate the two! Peter proclaimed in Acts 2:36, “God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Christ is Lord! But, how many different kinds of baptism are represented in one meeting of Promise Keepers? Your guess is as good as mine!

6. Reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

This is ecumenicalism, i.e., the old “unity in diversity” mentality that some among us have promoted for

years. It means we can teach and believe different doctrines and still have unity in Christ! God disagrees: Galatians 1:6ff; Amos 3:3; 2 John 9-11; 1 Corinthians 1-3; etc. I submit no Gospel preacher can take part in this concept of holding hands with error and still be found pleasing to God. We cannot pretend the denominational barrier does not exist. It does!

7. Influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

Those who sign the pledge do not obey fully either the commandment or the commission. The command is to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.” Consider this in light of First John 5:3, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” Yet, the Great Commission (Mat. 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18) points out that one must believe and be baptized into Christ in order to be saved. How many of the thousands of men who assemble for one of these “beach-ball banging bashes” would affirm the necessity of the one baptism for salvation? If this final point were fully obeyed then the Promise Keepers movement would disband immediately!

Many are now thinking that these seven promises are inter-denominational in direction. That brings us back to our main point of this writing. Let us ask it again. Is the *Christian Chronicle* in good hands? Some may contend that they were just reporting religious news in a religious paper. But, in the September issue (1995) page 18, the editorial title is: “Editor defends *Chronicle*’s Promise Keepers center spread.” Howard Norton stated in part:

...a moral and ethical movement can be good and worthy of our support...we [churches of Christ—JLW] usually tend to be followers rather than leaders...those of our people who choose to wage a significant fight against evil threats to the community must enter into some kind of relationship with highly principled Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians or Catholics...

I have often used bulletin, newspaper, radio and pulpit to speak against abortion, drug abuse, gambling, liquor by the drink, horse racing, etc. But, not because any man-made denomination has led the way—but because God’s Word demands that such evil be opposed by all New Testament Christians. I have often spoke of the evils of dancing, social drinking, instrumental music in worship to God, mixed swimming, using God’s name in vain, etc. Yet, I do not know of many man-made religious groups that are leading the way before me. Do you? Is it the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians or Catholics? I think not!

Howard's defense included a quote from the article: Lora B. Postelwait, author of the *Chronicle's* article on the men's movement, hit the nail on the head when she said, "More than ever, the estrangement of men from their roles as husbands, fathers and moral leaders is being cited as reason for the breakdown of family and society."

I went back and re-read the article. Then I noted the closing acknowledgment of the authoress in italics:

Lora B. **Postelwait** is the owner of The Write Image, a public relations and desktop publishing firm. A graduate of Oklahoma Christian, Lora now lives in Rochester Hills, Mich. where she attends the Rochester Hills congregation with her husband, Dan **Isenberg**.

(The emphasis in the quotation is mine—JLW). However, in light of the editor's defense of the article written and the direction of the article itself, I believe we need to take careful note of her last name and her husband's last name! After noting that her name and her husband's name are not the same take note of these words: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing" (Eph. 5:22-24). What name does the church wear that belongs to Christ? Does not she wear the name of Christ?

Here's a question for the editor of the *Chronicle* and those who think the publication is in good hands. If you are in agreement with the thrust that men should be better "husbands, fathers and moral leaders" why not have a woman to write such an article who respects her husband enough to wear his name?

Is the *Christian Chronicle* in good hands?

P.O. Box 1782; Ardmore, OK 73402

Note: The author delivered a lesson on September 17, 1995: "Why I Am Not A Member of the Group Called Promise Keepers." A copy can be obtained for \$2.00 (tape, shipping & handling), through Central Church of Christ at the above address or by calling (405)223-3289.

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

A LACK OF CONFIDENCE

David Lee Henderson

How sad that so many in the church have lost confidence in God's Word to direct the affairs of the church! This gross lack of confidence is shown by way of the **burdens** which some brethren place on the church, concerning which God's Word never spoke. For example, the entire "Youth Ministry" philosophy burdens the church with a work which the Bible dictated to the family. It is the responsibility of parents to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Pro. 22:6; cf. Eph. 6:4), yet the church is paying out millions of dollars annually to "hire" a job done which God gave the family to do. Why has the biblical plan been disrupted by man's plan? I suggest that it is due to a lack of confidence in God's Word!

Again, the idea of "church entertainment" places a burden on the church which God's Word gave to the family. The Bible is basically silent as to the subject of entertainment; therefore this work would logically be a responsibility of the God-ordained institution for companionship, which is the family (Gen. 2:18). That being the case, then why do churches of Christ erect gymnasiums and organize "church" softball teams? I suggest again that it is due to a lack of confidence in God's Word!

Brethren, parties for the youth, softball, and even building gymnasiums are not evils, but neither are they works of the church. If one wishes to entertain young people, play softball, or even build a gymnasium he should do so at his own expense and leisure, and not burden the Lord's church with works of the home. The present day fad among many in the church of Christ to exploit Christ's body by burdening it with responsibilities of the home is sinful, and exhibits a lack of confidence in God's Word regarding the role of both the family and the church!

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Defender



"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

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THE CROSS OF CHRIST MADE OF NONE EFFECT

Jesse Whitlock

Paul wrote in First Corinthians 1:17-18, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." It is the preaching of the Gospel; hence, the preaching of the cross of Christ that convicts and converts the sinner. We need a return to preaching in the perspective of First Corinthians 2:2 today, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

How does one go about this business of making the cross of Christ of none effect? I realize there are numerous ways. I would ask you to consider one for now. There are those who simply deny the Bible's teaching about the time of Christ's return for the purpose of judging this world. We know that the false prophets are legion. By misapplication and failure to study passages from Daniel, Revelation and Matthew many attempts have been made to predict the time of Christ's final coming:

1. WILLIAM MILLER set the date for 1843 and was wrong. He then set the date for 1844, but was wrong again.
2. CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL (founder of Jehovah's Witnesses), said the date had been 1874 (a secret and invisible coming of Christ). However, he later set the time for 1914. Both of these dates were wrong.
3. Various false prophets set dates in 1910, 1918, 1925 and 1931, etc. As a matter of fact,

false prophets are found in abundance in every century from the first to the present indicating Christ would come in that time.

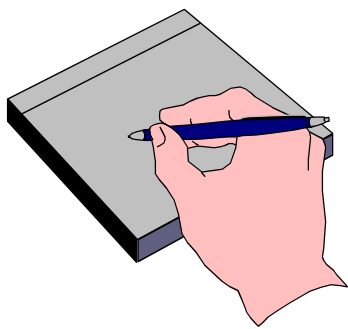
4. HAL LINDSEY made a fortune in his book and movie: *The Late, Great Planet Earth*, in which he set the date for Christ's return as being by or before 1988.

5. BILLY GRAHAM had previously set the date shortly after 1950. Seeing he was obviously wrong, he jumped on the Hal Lindsey band-wagon. Guess what? Wrong again!

6. JOSEPH SMITH (Mormonism) said the time was 1891.

Already the false prophets are working on still another date for the final return of Christ. There are those who now insist 1995 is the time of the end. Surely the year 2000 is going to be the target date for many. Notice all the prophets previously listed have a perfect record: Every date dead wrong! To realize this all we need to do is look to see the earth still stands where it has always stood. With Christ's return this earth will cease to exist. Psalm 102:25-26, "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens [are] the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." Again, Isaiah 51:6, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment." Now, please notice Second Peter 3:10, "But the day of the Lord will come

(Continued on Page 3)



Notes From The Editor

*Michael
Hatcher*

Miracles

It appears that miracles are one of the most misunderstood items of our day. Part of the difficulty lies in the usage of the word. Webster's Dictionary gives us several usages among which are, "a remarkable event or thing; marvel." *Universal Dictionary of the English Language* gives us, "a strange, wonderful, extraordinary thing or event; a marvel." Thus, the world speaks of just about anything and everything as a miracle. Today when there is a discussion of birth we invariably hear the phrase, "the miracle of birth" inserted into the conversation. Because of the advancements made in the field of science, we hear of the "miracle" of science or technology. If someone survives a serious car wreck, it was somehow a "miracle." We have gone to such extremes as stating that a certain catch or play in a sporting event was "miraculous." Thus, people become easy prey for those who teach that we should expect a miracle today. Sadly, some members of the Lord's church have been influenced by the way the world uses the term miracle and they likewise use it in the same way. They are like the Jews of Nehemiah's day. "And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people" (Neh. 13:24). Peter instructs us to speak as the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11). When we use "miracle" in these ways we are speaking in the language of Ashdod, not the language of God.

What is a miracle? In the last issue we gave the definition of a miracle as is used in the Bible and some examples of miracles. A miracle is the transcendence, setting aside, overruling or interference of the processes of nature, for the moment, by a Force superior to nature, a supernatural power, God. True miracles are when someone raises the dead, walks on the water, brings water from a rock, turns water into wine (non-alcoholic,

or grape juice), restores body parts, etc. The "miracle worker" of today cannot do such things as this. True miracles ceased.

When one realizes the purpose of miracles, he will understand they ceased. There is a threefold purpose of miracles. First, there is the purpose of revelation. Revelation is taking the mind of God and revealing it to man. Peter discusses this in First Peter 1:10-12 and again in Second Peter 1:21. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost." Second, there is the purpose of inspiration. Inspiration is taking the mind of God and making it known to man unmixed with error. Inspiration and revelation go together, you cannot have one without the other. Paul discusses inspiration in Ephesians 3:1-12. Paul received the mystery of God by revelation. They, and we today, can understand that revelation by reading what he wrote (inspiration). This is also the discussion of First Corinthians 2:7-15. The third purpose of miracles is confirmation. The Spirit through miracles confirmed the Word as divine revelation. The miracles thus proved, verified, or authenticated that the message was from God. This is our Lord's statement in Mark 16:15-20 (especially v. 20). "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following." Also Paul discusses this in Hebrews 2:3-4, that God bore witness to the apostle's word by working miracles through them.

When we realize the true purpose of miracles, we then understand that miracles have ceased. God's revelation to man has been completed. We have that revelation in the Bible. The Bible is an inspired book. Thus, there is no more need for inspired men. Last we have a word, the Bible, that has been confirmed. It does not need re-confirming nor continued confirming. We then conclude that there is no need for miracles today. Additionally, the Scriptures teach that when we have the completed confirmed inspired revelation of God to man (the Bible) then miracles would cease in First Corinthians 13:8-13 and Ephesians 4:7-15. Only by the laying on of the hands of an apostle could one be empowered to perform miracles. A careful study of Acts 8 shows this to be true. Philip who had the hands of apostles laid on him enabling him to perform miracles, worked miracles and preached in Samaria. The Samaritans obeyed the gospel. The apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria to impart miraculous powers to the Samaritans. Philip could not do so, it had to be the laying on of an apostle's hands. Study these additional

passages concerning this subject, Acts 19; Romans 1:11; First Corinthians 9:1-2 and Second Corinthians 12:12; and Second Timothy 1:6. Thus, when the last apostle died and the last person to whom they laid hands on died, there were no more miracles. Miracles today do not occur.

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(Continued from Page 1)

as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” Finally, in Revelation 21:1, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.”

Therefore, the false prophets are exposed and marked by the powerful Word of God. We see the hopelessness of trying to set the time for Christ’s final coming in Christ’s own words of warning. He stated in Matthew 24:36, “But of that day and hour knoweth no [man], no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” He declared in Matthew 24:42, “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” Hear Him again in Matthew 24:44, “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Some have dared to ask the question of whether or not God can tell time. I believe that God can tell time. I also believe that God knows His time frame better than anyone on earth. God’s only begotten Son stated clearly that no man on earth knows the precise time when Christ will return! Christ does not know that time. The angels in heaven do not know that time. Jesus said His “Father only” knows the time!

There is a new breed of false prophets in the past few centuries predicting a new “time frame” for the end. It is a novel and daring approach. Rather than going forward they have gone backward in time, to the date of A.D. 70. This is the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies under General Titus. In this new horde of books we are told that Christ’s final coming, the final judgment, the final abode for all men was settled once and for all in A.D. 70. A casual acquaintance with Scripture proves this theory to be heresy. Was the earth burned up (2 Pet. 3:10)? No! Were all the dead raised from their graves (John 5:28-29)? No! Was all mankind judged and consigned to either heaven or hell in that day (Mat. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10)? No! Now, really think about this one: Was the last enemy destroyed? First Corinthians 15:25-26, “For

he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” If Christ returned for the final advent in A.D. 70, then it follows, the last enemy (death) has been destroyed (no longer exists). I have put this question to the A.D. 70 errorists on several occasions. It puts the heretic between the proverbial rock and the hard place. It must be either physical death or spiritual death, i.e., sin. Which of these is non-existent today? If you say there is no physical death, you have lied. Lying is a sin (Rev. 21:8); since sin is spiritual death, you are still wrong!

No wonder the world is confused about this subject. Even the false prophets cannot find agreement in their heresies. Some look to future dates. Now, this new breed of false prophets are going back to the future! If Christ’s final coming and consummation of all things took place in A.D. 70, as these false prophets assert, then all their debates, writing, preaching, lecture-ships, etc., are all a waste of time. If the final judgment took place in A.D. 70, then my sentence, your sentence, their sentence were all sealed and set for all time and eternity in A.D. 70. Even if you or I could be persuaded to believe this heresy, what would it profit? There is not one thing that you or I could do to change the judgment given by God in A.D. 70. Not one!

The A.D. 70 errorists placed themselves in the same category with our friends caught up in Calvinistic and Jehovah’s Witnesses error. We are dealing with the concepts of election and non-election. The teaching that certain ones were elected to be saved and others were not elected. The Jehovah’s Witnesses found themselves in a dilemma when it was figured that the 144,000 were already in heaven! The late brother Marshall Keeble has a good answer to the concept of predestination as taught by Calvinists and now, Kingettes. He said, “The elect are the whosoever—wills and the non-elect are the whosoever—won’ts.” Isn’t it a shame that we must now use the same rebuttal, not only with Calvinistic false preachers, but with those of our own number who have gone out from us? If the final judgment took place in A.D. 70, then why try to win me over to your heresy? The only plausible answer I can find is that this is a hobby horse. I know the A.D. 70 errorists insist that this is no hobby. I was recently given a business card (second hand) belonging to a preacher in this movement. It gave the usual information, name, location, times and phone. Now, in order to reach this preacher in his study you MUST DIAL the usual prefix and then: 7070. Out of the hundreds of thousands of millions of

possible number combinations, what are the odds? Seventy-seventy! What are the odds?

We started with Paul's writing in First Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." When I hear the preaching, read the articles and listen to the tapes of this A.D. 70 foolishness, I wonder if they would not like to re-write the apostle Paul? Perhaps they would

have him to say that he "determined not to know any thing, save the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70." This present heresy has made the cross of Christ my Lord to become of no effect. How tragic to take Christ and His cross out of the picture. How sinful to replace the cross of Christ with the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

607 McLish; Armored, OK 73401

THE "ENCOUNTER WITH GOD" STRATEGY—WILL IT WORK?

Robin W. Haley

The "Encounter With God" strategy is an evangelistic method used by a denominational group in Central America. We were treated to its "success" story in the September 1994 issue of the *Christian Chronicle*. This article asks the question, will this strategy work for us in our efforts to do mission work? According to brethren Bob Waldron and Dr. Gary Sorrells, who direct a ministry for "Great Cities" out of Amarillo, Texas, "Yes, it will work" and would be a good tool for Christians to use in their mission work. This is the conclusion one would reach from reading brother Waldron's report as he reviewed this evangelistic method. He ends up endorsing it, the problem with such I shall attempt to divulge. Though the article regarding this "strategy" was merely for information, still it lends approval of its methods for evangelism, which methods are not authorized by the Lord.

We are told that Waldron and Sorrells have been studying this movement for several years. What brings this denominational group to the attention of these brethren? Apparently it is their "great success" in accumulating huge numbers of followers. That always seems to be the motivator for pragmatic preachers: "What will get the numbers?" We ought never be more concerned with getting numbers for the report back home than truth to the people.

Having given a brief history of this movement, brother Waldron goes on to cite its ten-step method. Much of what is found within this methodology is good material, but not especially earth shaking, as many brethren have used similar techniques for some time. But there were three points that brother Waldron ought to have corrected. He leaves the impression that these points would be proper to be incorporated by Christians in the task of evangelizing the world. First, let me

enumerate the ten steps: 1) pray; 2) utilize a ministry team; 3) mobilize the middle class; 4) pick a good location; 5) construct buildings that point to God; 6) conduct momentum evangelism; 7) have powerful public preaching; 8) "disciple" new believers immediately; 9) cultivate missionary vision; and, 10) teach financial stewardship. All of these sound good at first, until we examine a few of them. There are three that have some flaws. We want to take a closer look at numbers two, three and eight.

We question the validity as well as the wisdom of "ministry teams." This is structured with a leader who has two or three assistants (not associates) who do the preaching and "other ministry." "Therefore," we are told, "the church is built about the ministry, not about a personality." Just the opposite would actually be the case. Where there is "a" leader, there will be personality. When he has "assistants," there will be delegation, and thus, more personality. Where do they get the idea that the church is to be built about a "ministry"? I seem to recall reading that, "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). The church is to be built upon and around Christ. If missionaries followed this "ministry team" model, very soon they will find themselves with the "Bossroads" [Boston/Crossroads—editor] cult-type structure.

Again, we find questionable the "targeting" of one class of people. We are told that this is where one finds leadership and money. "After a solid base has been achieved among the middle class..." Hold it! What if this base does not materialize? How long shall the "leader" and his lackeys strive to build this base? What happens when there is one or several who find what they have to offer is valid, but belong to the lower

class? Just put them on hold? We continue the quote: “After a solid base has been achieved among the middle class, outreach is extended to the masses of lower class people.” How nice. How long after? Is this respect of persons? Do these brethren remember what James said about showing this kind of favoritism to those better off than others? “My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring, in fine clothing, and there come in also a poor man in vile clothing; and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing, and say, Sit thou here in a good place; and ye say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool; Do ye not make distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?” (Jam. 2:1-4). What is the end of such respect? Listen to the Lord’s brother again, “but if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin” (Jam. 2:9). What about the upper class? Are they to be approached at all?

Finally, what about this nonsense of using a noun as a verb? How does one “disciple” a believer? This makes as much sense as “table a door.” Does not brother Waldron know that to be one is to be the other? A disciple is a believer; a believer is a disciple. We suspect more of this cult garbage that has convinced some that to be a true, totally committed “disciple” (super-Christian), a believer must submit to his superior for a season. As Paul would ask, “What saith the scrip-

ture?” (Rom. 4:3). Look and learn: “and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women” (Acts 5:14). Were these disciples? “Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias” (Acts 9:10). Was this man a believer? “And when he was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples” (Acts 9:26). Were these disciples, later called brethren, believers?

Now, let us be sure to note that these ten steps were not authored by brethren Waldron and Sorrells. Brother Waldron only reported on this “strategy.” But let us also take note that he did not refute these three points of their “methods” which are not biblical. Rather, he concludes his report thus: “Churches of Christ could dramatically improve their mission efforts in Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America and certain places in Asia if after making the necessary cultural adaptations, they would adopt the **Encounter With God** strategy.” But, brother Waldron, what about the necessary biblical adaptations? This unqualified endorsement of this denominational group’s technique makes one wonder about your claim on the back of this *Christian Chronicle* center-fold. There you claim you are doing everything “by the book.” Do you believe that **Encounter With God** is by the book? If so, what you advocate is error. We desire to give you the benefit of the doubt. We would that you be more clear on this “methodism” for evangelism.

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THE CONLEY-LUTHER DEBATE: AUTHORITY

Gary W. Summers

On August 14th-15th, in San Antonio, brother Darrell Conley debated Michael Luther, a member of an aggressive group called Catholic Response, which preoccupies itself with defending the Roman Catholic Church. This article will deal with only one of the subjects covered in the first two nights of the debate: authority. This issue is one that is absolutely crucial to correct worship, doctrine, and holy living. Following is a brief description of how it entered the discussion.

The proposition which brother Conley affirmed the first evening was: “The church of which I am a member is the one true church of Christ in which alone is to be found salvation (and which recognizes the Bible as the only authority in faith and practice),” The first overhead chart he used was a quotation from “Catholic Facts,” *Our Sunday Visitor*, published in 1927, which read: “If

it is not identical in belief, government, and etc., with the primitive church, then it is not the church of Christ.”

Next, he showed briefly that we are identical with respect to belief (in obeying the gospel) and in government (elders and deacons, autonomy). In his second speech he introduced a chart showing that the Roman Catholic Church is not synonymous with the first century church because they have added a multitude of things, among which were: acolytes, cardinals, popes, nuncios, beads, images, relics, incense, sprinkling, sacraments, the rosary, shrines, crusades, penance, candles, praying to Mary, Lent, ashes, Mass, celibacy, and more. This point is clear to most of us. The Bible does not mention these matters; therefore they are unauthorized (Col. 3:17).

What would Mr. Luther say in defense of having added all those things which were not part of the worship and doctrine of the New Testament? Like his namesake, he said: **“THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY** that there could not be a pope. The Bible does **NOT** say that you can not pray to Mary or to dead saints. Who says that infants cannot be baptized? **THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY IT!** Who says the church cannot use sprinkling as baptism? Who says the church could not be centered in Rome? The Bible does **NOT** say any of these things. If the Bible does not prohibit it, then we are free to do it.” Are you listening, brethren? This is not a minor point; it is the crux of the matter. Does it remind you of, “The Bible doesn’t say you can’t use mechanical instruments of music”?

In reality, there are only two alternatives: either we need New Testament authorization for what we teach and practice (whether explicit or implicit); or we may feel free to do whatever the New Testament does not specifically forbid. The problem of using mechanical instruments of music has never been the **issue**; correctly understanding biblical authority is the issue. If the demand is made for a specific repudiation of every wild, fanciful idea someone may invent in religion, then everything will be permitted.

“Moses Spoke Nothing”

In the first speech of the second evening brother Conley made the point: “What is not taught explicitly or implicitly in the Scriptures is implicitly forbidden.” He then illustrated the point with Hebrews 7:14—“For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.” The verse applies to the above statement in the following way. God appointed Levites as priests. **Implicitly**, His appointing members of one tribe excluded men from the other tribes from being priests. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. He could not be a priest. Why not? Jesus could not be a priest because God had spoken **nothing** concerning men from Judah being priests. **HE DID NOT AUTHORIZE ANYONE FROM ANY OTHER TRIBE TO BE A PRIEST!**

But Jesus is a priest, you say. Yes, but for Him to become one, God had to change the law (Heb. 7:12). Jesus could not be a priest under the Law of Moses; it would have violated God’s principles of authority for Him to have made an exception—even for His own beloved Son! Therefore, He changed the law, and Jesus is now a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:17). This principle of authority is not something that man dreamed up so that he could amuse himself with entertaining philosophical games, nor was it invented

by the restorers of the early nineteenth century: it is God’s own system. Luther missed the point entirely, saying that David prophesied that Jesus would be after the order of Melchizedek (Psa. 110:4); therefore, it was foretold. The reason for citing Hebrews 7:14 had nothing to do with whether or not Jesus’ priesthood was foretold (which it was); it was to show **how God authorizes**. If a doctrine is not taught explicitly (command, direct statement) or implicitly (example, implication), then the practice is implicitly (indirectly, not directly by a “thou shalt not”) forbidden. In other words, we are responsible for reasoning correctly (drawing the proper conclusions) with the Scriptures.

The question is not, “Where does the Bible say, don’t do it?”; rather, it is, “Where does God authorize it?” The New Testament does not authorize either explicitly or implicitly the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship or any other addition the Catholic Church has incorporated over the centuries. All of the innovations stand or fall together. No one can rightly adopt one out of the group without being stuck with the entire family. The principle taught by Hebrews 7:14 is both Divine and (therefore) valid.

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AMERICA'S RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN THE 1990S

Walter Slayden

History records numerous examples of man rejecting the authority of God and trying to improve on His methods. Cain, Balaam, and Korah (Jude 11) all denied the authority of God, believing they had the right to circumvent His commands and do things their way. God's reaction to their folly (Gen. 4:12; Num. 31:8; 16:32) should have convinced man that God is not happy with those who reject what He has to say. Nadab and Abihu thought that "close" was good enough but found out that God means exactly what He says (Num. 3:4).

In spite of these records of God's wrath, many give little thought to how God has instructed man to worship Him. There are even congregations of the Lord's body who place the assembly "body count" above teaching the truth that is needed to set people free (John 8:32). Those among us who need to fill large cathedrals or attract enough dollars to support numerous programs turn (as they have in the past) to the denominations for the latest marketing concepts. These newest fads for attracting large numbers are copied from man rather than taught by God.

What are the latest methods? What do the experts in "growing" churches tell us that America is looking for in the 90s? A recent magazine article focused on what the "baby boom" generation is looking for in religion as they reach middle age and search for some sort of meaning in their lives. One organization called the Church Growth Movement (CGM) says that what people are looking for is a place where "individuals can satisfy their need for intimacy yet identify with a large successful enterprise." (Kenneth L. Woodward, "A Time To Seek," *Newsweek*, December 17, 1990, p. 52.) They advocate what is called a "megachurch" with a multiplicity of programs all provided under the same

roof.

A large denominational congregation in the southwest tries to fulfill those needs. The article says that this group:

Which claims a membership of 17,000, tries to be all a megachurch can be. It supports 64 softball teams and 48 basketball teams and fields an additional 84 teams in volleyball, soccer and flag football. There are also periodic golf tournaments and a year-round snack bar called Second Helping. The hub of this activity is the church's Family Life Center, which is equipped with six bowling lanes, two basketball courts, an indoor jogging track, racquetball courts, weight and aerobic rooms, and separate areas for crafts and games—plus a music wing for its orchestra and 500-member choir. (Kenneth L. Woodward, "A Time To Seek," *Newsweek*, December 17, 1990, p. 52.)

Paul warned in Second Timothy 3:4 that in the last days men would become "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." God help us to realize that the gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16) and needs no help from us. Let us not search the world over to find proselytes only to make them "twofold more the child of hell" (Mat. 23:15) because we aren't teaching them the truth. In spite of what man may think that he needs, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only thing that can save him from eternal damnation.

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NEWS RELEASE:

Truth for the World, a media mission work under the church in Olive Branch, Mississippi, has begun a 15-minute weekly program over WSM Radio, 650 AM, in Nashville, Tennessee. It is aired 8:15 Central time every Sunday with Jim Dearman as speaker.

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MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

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