

# *Defender*



*“I am set for the defense of the gospel”*

*Volume XX*

*1991*

January

April

July

October

February

May

August

November

March

June

September

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST PRESENTS

# DEFENDER

Volume XX

January 1991

Number 1

## Important Mailing List Update Information

**Please note: ALL who receive *Defender* must let us know of their desire to continue receiving it by no later than March 1, 1991.** You may do this by returning your mailing label or by dropping us a card with your **name** and your **complete address including zip code**. The names of those who fail to do so will be deleted from the mailing list. Why not stop right now and reply if you wish to continue receiving *Defender* and you will not miss a single issue? It will only take a moment of your time.

Note also: each time we receive notification from the U.S. Postal Service of a change of address or address correction (because we were not notified by the subscriber), we are charged thirty cents. Your sending a change of address to us saves us at least thirty cents (and sometimes more). We must assume those who do not notify us of their address change are not really interested in receiving *Defender*. Thus, from January 31, 1991 onward, the names of those who fail to send us a change of address will be deleted from the mailing list.

**Why?** It has been a number of years since we have updated our mailing list. That being the case, some may receive *Defender* who no longer care to receive it. Others may have moved or passed away and yet the paper still goes to that old address. Others may not care to receive it but had their name placed on the list by someone. In those cases, *Defender* ends up in the waste can.

Certainly you would agree it is not wise to print and mail papers that are not being read. Thus, in order to use the Lord's money in the best possible way and to make sure that those who receive *Defender* are those who really want to receive it, we have adopted this new policy.

Be assured, we do not want to delete from the mailing list a single name of those who profit from *Defender*. The simple fact is that from time to time, mailing list updates are necessary for efficient operation. We want to keep sending *Defender* to you for the good that can be accomplished through it. Please help us by letting us know of your desire to receive it.

This new policy is not because of financial necessity. We would not want our readers to think we have fallen on hard times. The contribution by the good brethren at Bellview has exceeded the budget submitted by the elders by over two hundred dollars a week through 1990! A challenging budget has been submitted for 1991 and we plan to exceed that. We hope to accomplish even more in this new year to the glory of God and the increase of the kingdom.

God has blessed us with the ability to send out free of charge thousands of copies of *Defender* each month to addresses around the world. Many of our readers have helped in that effort and for that we are truly thankful. Thus, as *Defender* enters its twentieth year of publication, through God's grace and with your help, we shall continue sending the paper free of charge to all who wish to receive it. Let us know if you do.

Your understanding and cooperation shall be greatly appreciated. Thanks in advance!

BL

## Editorial

### A New Year

1991! It seems almost impossible that 1990 is over and a new year has begun. Time goes by so swiftly and with its swift passage our lives on this earth so soon end. Inspired men recorded: "My days are swifter than a weaver's

shuttle, and are spent without hope” (Job 7:6). “Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not” (Job 14:1). “Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (Jam. 4:14).

**A New Year for *Defender*.** This issue marks the beginning of the twentieth year of publication. While we hope to have accomplished good over the last nineteen years, plans are to improve *Defender* to be the best it can be in 1991. The mailing list update will improve the efficiency of use of the Lord’s money (See page one. Please note we do not wish to discourage anyone from receiving *Defender* who wants it, but to avoid waste by not mailing the paper to those who do not want it and who do not read it.) We shall continue to print only those articles which are of certain sound, true to the Book, by faithful brethren and which are beneficial to our readers in their quest to serve God faithfully. May we never waver in our commitment to so do.

**A New Year for the *Firm Foundation*.** Some weeks back, several brethren met to discuss the future of that great and enduring publication. Although faced with almost insurmountable problems, the *Firm Foundation* continues with new plans and new hopes for 1991. Positive steps have led to a January, 1991 dateline and a workable plan of on-time editions. Due to Bill Cline’s continuing health problems, H. A. (“Buster”) Dobbs will be editing the paper with Bill Cline now serving as “Editor Emeritus.” Eddie Whitten will serve as Business Manager. The editorial and writing staff is unchanged, but the editorial office is now in Houston, Texas. The new address for the *Firm Foundation* is: Firm Foundation Publishing Company, P O. Box 690192, Houston, Texas 77269-0192. The new phone number is (713)-469-3540. Manuscripts should be submitted to the above address.

Business matters should be directed to this address: Mr. Eddie Whitten, Firm Foundation Publishing Company, Box 210876, Bedford, Texas 76095-7876. His new *Firm Foundation* phone number is (817) 498-8512.

A letter from the editors and staff writers of the *Firm Foundation* said, in part, “Our readers are the most important component of the entire enterprise. We deeply appreciate your sympathetic understanding, and patience, and pledge to publish the paper on a regular schedule. Your continued support is essential to the success of this journal. The *Firm Foundation* magazine provides an important service to the church. We are dedicated to presenting to our valued readers a periodical of highest quality. The articles will be informative, stimulating, and encouraging.... As a new year dawns, we turn the page, and start afresh. For over a hundred years, children of God through the pages of the *Firm Foundation* have pressed for a restoration of the ancient order. The paper is a needed tool for a loyal church. This decade will present problems to be solved, false doctrine to be corrected, truth to be upheld, and suffering saints to be cheered. We hoist the blood stained banner of truth, and face the future with hope and courage. ‘If God be for us, who can be against us?’”

We need the *Firm Foundation* to continue and the *Firm Foundation* needs us, brethren. If you already subscribe, look for the January, 1991 issue. If not, why not send in your subscription today? Send \$12.00 per subscription to the above business office address. Churches may order bundles at the reduced rate of \$10.00 per subscription.

## Three Facts About the Judgment

*Eddie Helms*

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. 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? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Mat. 7:21-23—ASV).

Our day is a day of self-imposed agnosticism. That is, there are those who say one cannot know what will take place at the judgment. One cannot really know who will be consigned to heaven and who will be consigned to hell, according to this false view. One can know, for God has revealed His will on this matter (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:1)! One must be obedient to the Gospel in order to be saved (Mark 16:15-16). God cannot lie (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18). Therefore; if one is obedient to the Gospel, he will be saved, and if one has not been obedient to the Gospel, he will be lost! Mankind can know these things with the utmost of certainty!

There are statements of the Lord that speak to this point and give unto man three facts about the judgment.

**From the Words of Jesus, We Know the Speaker of the Judgment.** It will be none other than the righteous Judge Himself, Jesus Christ (Mat. 7:23). God has “appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). Thus, the inspired words of Paul, penned by Luke, concur with the Lord. Paul, when writing to the Romans, also identifies the speaker of the judgment to be Jesus Christ (Rom. 2:16).

**Jesus Also Reveals the Standard of the Judgment.** Jesus says the will of the Father will be the standard (Mat. 7:21). Thus, the judgment will be according to the truth (Rom. 2:2) and will be impartial and righteous (Rom. 2:5, 11). Those living in the Christian age will be judged according to the Gospel (Rom. 2:16). The words of Jesus will judge man at the judgment (John 12:48) and that can be known assuredly beyond a shadow of a doubt!

**What Will Be the Subject of the Judgment?** Can man know? Absolutely! Jesus says the works of man will be the subject of the judgment (Mat. 7:22). Many will think they have done things by the authority of the Lord (“by thy name” or “in thy name”). The point is, the works of man must be authorized by the Word of God in order to be acceptable to Him (Col. 3:17; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17). One can know that he will give an account of his works before God on that day (Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10)!

Away with all the false doctrines that say man cannot know what God requires of His creatures! Faith is not a “leap in the dark” or a “better felt than told” concept! We can know about the judgment and other things of God because these things have been revealed (Heb. 11:1). The question should be, How have you responded in view of this knowledge of the judgment?

*212 E Cedar Street Livingston, TN 38570*

## The Safe Channel

*Allen Webster*

The story is related of a ship’s passenger on one of the Great Lakes becoming alarmed as they passed near a rocky shore. Fearing that rocks were hidden beneath the water’s surface, he approached the captain. “Do you know where all the dangerous rocks are?” “No,” replied the captain, “but I know where the safe channel is.”

Likewise, we need to find the “safe channel” in religion, put ourselves in it and stay there. We know that the New Testament reveals this path (John 14:6; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Others build their hopes on the ever-shifting sands of popular opinion and creeds of men, but we intend to stay within the safe channel of clear Bible teaching.

**The Name We Wear Is a Safe Name.** We read in the Bible that Christ’s followers were called “Christians.” “And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26; see also Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). Others take chances on calling themselves after the names of men or methods. Some try to become “hyphenated Christians” inserting some adjective to describe the kind of “Christian” they claim to be. Friend, that is not found in the Bible; therefore, it is not safe (cf., 1 Cor. 1:10:13). All should wear the safe name of “Christian.”

**The Plan of Salvation We Teach Is a Safe One.** We read in the New Testament that sinners were told to “believe and be baptized” (Mark 16:16) and “repent and be baptized” (Acts 2:38). We read that men made the good confession after hearing the gospel preached (Acts 8:36-38). We know that it is safe to do the same things to obtain salvation. Others gamble that they can be saved by “faith alone, before and without water baptism.” Some insist on a “personal experience with the Holy Spirit.” Many feel that leading a good moral life is “plan of salvation” enough. All should unite on the safe undisputable plan.

**The Worship We Practice Is Safe.** To study, pray, sing, give and partake of the Lord’s Supper is within the bounds of revelation. We can read of early Christians doing these very things. “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine [teaching] and fellowship [including giving], and in breaking of bread [the Lord’s Supper], and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). We read Paul’s command to teach and admonish one another with spiritual songs (Col. 3:16).

Many want to venture out of the bounds of Scripture by changing God’s formula for worship. Some want to add other activities into it (testifying, choirs, solos, entertainment). Most want to add an instrument of music to the singing. Others want to take from the New Testament’s plan by having the Lord’s Supper only once a quarter or once a year. All should practice scriptural and safe worship.

**The Life We Lead Is a Safe One.** By seeking to imitate Jesus in every aspect of daily living, we know we are safe. By being honest, kind, compassionate, fair, meek, humble and cheerful we have the “mind of Christ” (Phi. 2:5). By refraining from lying, gossiping, murmuring, filthy speaking and cursing, we possess the “mouth of Christ” (1 Pet. 2:22). By abstaining from fleshly lusts (alcohol, smoking, fornication, adultery, illegal drugs) we imitate the “manner of Christ” (1 Pet. 2:11, 21). In short, we try to speak, dress, act and think as the Bible reveals that the Lord did.

Some exclaim that “Jesus lived in a different world than we do, our ‘new morality’ can be substituted for His.” Many “Christians” advocate social drinking, mixed swimming, immodest dress and smoking, but by so doing they stray from the safe channel into the rocky waters of “situation ethics.” All should unite on the “safe” morality of Christ.

Why gamble with your soul?? Make your salvation both sure and steadfast—**practice “safe” Christianity as revealed in the New Testament of Christ.**

*Route 1 Box 38; Tiptersville, Mississippi 38674*

## Bible Course

**Free Bible Study Course Conducted Through the Mail.** To receive your Bible Correspondence Course from the Bellview Church of Christ, send your request to:

Bible Correspondence Course  
c/o Harold Maxey  
20 Emory Drive  
Pensacola, FL 32506

## Legal Excuses

*Ronnie Hayes*

As I sat listening to the speaker, I could not help but think, “How rude!” The lady sitting in front of me constantly squirmed and twisted. I thought to myself, “If I had no more interest in what was being said, I would just leave.” When the lecture was over, I watched as she got up. She could barely get up for she wore a heavy back brace and had difficulty walking. It was at this point it occurred to me why she could not be still—it was not lack of interest, but discomfort. I relearned a valuable lesson that day, **“Don’t judge a book by its cover!”**

However, some times I am hard headed and soon forget. Soon afterwards, I held a Gospel Meeting and on Sunday morning there was a little old lady who came in for the worship hour. As I preached, it looked as if she were half asleep or very disinterested in my sermon. At the close of the service, they were going to have dinner on the ground and when introduced to this particular lady, I could tell she was not even going to stay and eat with us. Only after she was gone did I learn the truth. She was very sick and was dying of cancer, but the ones who spoke of her said she loved worship so much, that even when she did not feel able to go, she went!

About two weeks later, I received a call telling me she had passed from this life. The one who called said she remained faithful until death. Once again I re-learned the lesson, **“Don’t judge a book by its cover!”** Not only did I learn this valuable lesson, but I could see other valuable lessons that could be learned from the actions of these ladies.

They were willing **laborers** in the vineyard of the Lord. Many spend their time seeking ways to get out of work, instead of working for the Lord. These ladies did not have that attitude. If they had, they would not have been where they were! They realized there is rest at the end of their labor. “Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Heb. 4:11). “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Rev. 14:13). “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not

to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

They were Christian ladies **longing** for something better. They did not long for this old world. “Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17). I am afraid there are those who claim to be Christians, who, if given the opportunity to go on to heaven and give up the things on earth, would want to stay on earth! “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Mat. 6:19-21).

Just exactly, for what do you long? You can tell by the action of these ladies they longed for the Word of God. This is why they were there. Jesus describes this kind of person, “Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Mat. 5:6). Many who claim to long for God’s Word never open it to study. Listen to the Psalmist as he describes his longing for God’s Word. “The law of thy mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver” (Psa. 119:72). “O how love I thy law! *it is* my meditation all the day” (Psa. 119:97). “Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psa. 119:105). “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness” (Psa. 119:172).

These ladies not only longed for a study of God’s Word but they longed to worship God. “God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Some might look to have the aches and pains of these ladies so they would have a **legal excuse** to stay at home. With these ladies, it was not so. They were going to be there, regardless! Where will you be when it comes time to worship God? “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).

I also learned these were Christian ladies with a great **love**. First of all they had a great love for Christ. “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). They were willing to do what was asked of them. Their love for Christ was stronger than any thing else. “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Mat. 6:24).

What do you love? To find out, ask yourself: (1) Where do I spend my time? (2) On what do I spend my money? (3) How do I use my energy? Keep in mind this verse, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Mat. 6:33).

They also had a great love for their fellow man. Paul loved others, “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved” (Rom. 10:1). He lived a life that exemplified this (2 Cor. 11:23-28). We must do the same.

The next time you think about staying at home because you have a little headache or you had to work all day or whatever excuse you may come up with, think about these lovely ladies.

*Route 1 Box 135 Bear Creek, AL 35543*

## Correspondence

“It would mean a lot to me to receive your monthly publication of *Defender*. My minister gave me a copy...With sincere appreciation and love in our Savior.” Sue McDaniel, Jonesboro, Texas.

“You have a good paper and I appreciate your stand for the truth.” James Lowery, Mobile, Alabama.

“I enjoy the *Defender* paper, having read it from its beginning. Florida is my home state...I am also a graduate of the Florida School of Preaching. Keep up the good work you are doing!” Marlin Kilpatrick, Suffolk, Virginia.

“...small donation enclosed for *Defender*. Thank you for helping me do the Lord’s work for the last several years.” Geneva Lancaster, Center Hill, Florida. (She has been active in jail ministry for some time).

“I appreciate receiving the *Defender*. Please keep me on your mailing list for the new year.” George LeHew, Washington Court House, Ohio.

# FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING

## SIXTEENTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

JANUARY 21-24, 1991

### THEME: UNDERSTANDING THE WILL OF GOD

#### MONDAY—January 21

- 9:00 “Rules of Bible Interpretation”  
Roy Deaver, Austin, TX
- 9:45 “Understanding the Sayings of Jesus”  
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, AL
- 10:45 “Can We Understand the Bible Alike”  
Chris Steele, New Port Richey, FL
- 11:30 LUNCH
- 1:30 “Some Things We may Never Understand”  
Daniel Denham, Eagle Lake, FL
- 2:30 “Understanding The Grace of God”  
Eugene Clevenger, Abilene, TX
- 3:30 “Difficult Texts Explained”  
Jackie Stearsman, Lakeland, FL
- 4:30 DINNER
- 7:00 “Understanding Providence of God”  
Ted Wheeler, Englewood, FL
- 7:45 “Understanding The Love of God”  
Wendell Winkler, Montgomery, AL

#### TUESDAY—January 22

- 9:00 “Rules of Bible Interpretation”  
Roy Deaver, Austin, TX
- 9:45 “Understanding the Sayings of Jesus”  
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, AL
- 10:45 “Understanding The Mission of the Church”  
Demar Elam, Madison, AL
- 11:30 LUNCH
- 1:30 “Understanding Gods Attitude Toward Sin”  
Jack Tittle, Rocky Mount, N.C.
- 2:30 “Understanding the Indwelling Godhead”  
Bobby Duncan, Adamsville, AL
- 3:30 “Difficult Texts Explained”  
Wendell Winkler, Montgomery, AL
- 4:30 DINNER
- 7:00 “Perverting The Doctrine”  
Larry Williams, Bradenton, FL
- 7:45 “Revelation and Inspiration of The Will of God”  
Jim Laws, Memphis, TN

#### WEDNESDAY—January 23

- 9:00 “Rules of Bible Interpretation”  
Roy Deaver, Austin, TX
- 9:45 “Understanding The Sayings of Jesus”  
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, AL
- 10:45 “Hindrances to Proper Understanding”  
Bobby Liddell, Pensacola, FL
- 11:30 LUNCH
- 1:30 “Understanding Book of Philemon”  
Winfred Clark, Athens, AL
- 2:30 “Understanding Gods will for the Work of Preachers”  
Curtis Cates, Memphis, TN
- 3:30 “Difficult Texts Explained”  
Eugene Clevenger, Abilene, TX
- 4:30 DINNER
- 7:00 “Understanding Leads to Unity—Not Diversity”  
Bruce Harris, Garden City, MI
- 7:45 “Understanding the Greatness of God”  
Demar Elam, Madison, AL

#### THURSDAY—January 24

- 9:00 “Rules of Bible Interpretation”  
Roy Deaver, Austin, TX
- 9:45 “Understanding the Book of Jude”  
Winfred Clark, Athens, AL
- 10:45 “Understanding Gods Will in Caring For the Needy”  
Cletus Stutzman, Mount Dora, FL
- 11:30 LUNCH
- 1:30 “Passages of Scripture Misapplied”  
Paul Eubanks, Orlando, FL
- 2:30 “Proper Attitudes Aid Understanding”  
Tom Blewett, Vinton, VA
- 3:30 “Difficult Texts Explained”  
Curtis Cates, Memphis, TN
- 4:30 DINNER
- 7:00 “All Men Are Amenable to The Will of God”  
Harold Rodriguez, Sarasota, FL
- 7:45 “Understanding the Severity of God”  
Bobby Duncan, Adamsville, AL

## Contributions

Frank Boyd—\$20.00, Wilber Girod—\$10.00, M. T Windsor—\$10.00, James Beverly—\$10.00, James Lowery—\$25.00, Robert Yarbrough—\$20.00, Church of Christ, Pacific, Missouri—\$10.60, Geneva Lancaster—\$5.00, Lucille Simpson—\$10.00, Ronald T. Keever—\$5.00, N. I.—\$50.00, Loran Shoemaker—\$10.00. Thanks for your help!

# Lectures

**Sixteenth Annual Florida School Of Preaching Lectureship**, *Understanding The Will Of God*, January 21-24, 1991, South Florida Avenue Church of Christ, 1807 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, Florida 33803, (813) 683-4043: Lectureship Director, B. C. Carr.

**Freed-Hardeman University Lectures**, February 28, 1991, Freed-Hardeman University Henderson, Tennessee 38340.

**Fifth Annual West Coast Firm Foundation Lectures**, *For Such A Time As This*, March 13-17, 1991, San Lorenzo Church of Christ, 977 Grant Avenue, San Lorenzo, California 94580: Contact Joe Gilmore (408) 264-1866 or Noah Hackworth (415) 572-9957.

**Twenty-Fifth Annual Memphis School Of Preaching Lectureship**, *Great Lessons From New Testament Characters*, March 31-April 4, 1991, Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38118, (901) 362-5139: Lectureship Director, Curtis A. Cates.

**Tenth Annual Southwest Lectures**, *God Hath Spoken*, April 14-17, 1991, Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748, (512) 2822486: Lectureship Director, Bill Jackson.

**Sixteenth Annual Bellview Lectures**, *The Church Triumphant*, May 12-15, 1991, Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526, (904) 455-7595: Lectureship Director, Bobby Liddell.

## Faith Without Works

*Alan Wright*

Do you have a saving faith? Edward Robinson rendered Hebrews 11:1, "Faith is confidence as to things hoped for; conviction as to things not seen." We must be thoroughly convinced that God gave His Son to die. We must be confident that God can and will keep His Word to us. Our faith must be as Abraham's, who "staggered not at the promise of God...being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:20-21). Such faith brings righteousness and overcomes the world. Not all faith is saving faith. It is not enough merely to believe in the existence of God, the deity of Christ, and the inspiration of the Bible. Our faith must lead us to action. It must cause us to do that which God has commanded us.

Faith without works is profitless. "What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (Jam. 2:14). Faith will not save a man who does nothing. Saving faith is more than simply believing in the facts. It is a response to the gospel. When we hear the gospel, we are convicted of sin, and learn the way of salvation. Hearing the gospel should create within us a love of God. This in turn motivates us to obedience and righteousness. We enter into a covenant with God in which we agree to do his will and he forgives of our sins and makes us his own. Thus the gospel saves, faith saves, repentance saves, obedience saves, and so on. They all work in harmony.

Faith without works is hypocritical. "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, <sup>16</sup>And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?" (Jam. 2:15-16). Here is a man who sees another in distress. He knows what he needs to do. But, even though he expresses sympathy and wishes him well, he does nothing. Does this man have real love? Of course not. The point is obvious. There is a big difference between saying and doing. Jesus said, "Not every one that **saith** unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **doeth** the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 7:21).

Faith without works is dead. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jam. 2:17). Have you ever left your headlights on? I did that once. When I tried to start the car, nothing happened. The battery was still there. It looked just like any other battery, but it was dead, which meant I was not going anywhere. In the same way, a man may believe every word in the Bible, but if his faith is dead, he is lost. Paul wrote, "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but **faith which worketh** by love" (Gal. 5:6). Do you have a living active faith which seeks to do God's will?

*Route 7 Box 1710 Baxley, Georgia 31513*



# DEFENDER

Volume XX

February 1991

Number 2

## Armageddon?

*Bobby Liddell*

The headline read, "Is World About To Collapse—Bible Scholars See Doomsday" The view of "some Christians" quoted was the Middle East crisis would lead to the cataclysmic Battle of Armageddon, the Second Coming of Jesus and the end of time. Such wild speculation in the media and among our neighbors behooves a closer look at this perverted view of Armageddon, a part of the false doctrine of Premillennialism.

Armageddon is found once in the KJV. The ASV more closely renders: "And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-magedon" (Rev. 16:16). Strong says Armageddon is a symbolic name meaning mount of Megiddo. Megiddo is found eleven times in the Bible and Megiddon once. The location (an area twenty miles by fourteen associated with the Plain of Esdraelon or Valley of Jezreel) has seen some of the most famous battles in history, many of which are recorded in God's Word (Jud. 5; 7; 1 Sam. 31; 2 Kin. 23; 2 Chr. 20). Is this the earthly geographic location of a final carnal battle—the "Battle of Armageddon"?

Revelation 16 does not teach a carnal battle in a specific geographic location. It does not teach two hundred million Chinese will fight with wooden clubs against a "revived Roman Empire" (the European Common Market nations as supposed by premillennialists) led by the "Anti-Christ" (whom they identify with a man now living) resulting in blood to the horses' bridles for two hundred miles from Jerusalem. Revelation 16 has nothing to say about Saddam Hussein or the present Middle East crisis. It does mention three frogs coming out of three mouths (mouths of the dragon, beast and false prophet—v. 13), but verse 16 says nothing to support the false premillennialist viewpoint on "Armageddon."

Did God intend everything in Revelation to be taken literally? Surely none would so claim. What about those three frogs? Was Revelation not written to first century Christians—men and women under intense persecution, facing even death for their faith—with a message of hope? Was it not written in a code discernible by them (using symbols and figures such as Har-Magedon) to reveal God's Word to His children while concealing understanding from their enemies? Thus, the predicted overthrow of enemies of Christians could be given without bringing upon the brethren further persecution. The use of the word "overcome" (found in various forms thirteen times) gives the theme of this book to embattled saints: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7).

Shall God wage carnal warfare at Megiddo? Does Almighty God need an army to accomplish His will? Can He not speak and it be accomplished immediately? "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36). Paul said, "(For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)" (2 Cor. 10:4).

A spiritual battle between good and evil, God and Satan, began long ago and continues today. Revelation, the final Word from God to man, says God and His children shall overcome. In the last day, at the second (and final) coming of Christ (Heb. 9:28), an eternal spiritual victory shall be gained.

Now, what about those three frogs? Are they literal? No, but if so, I should certainly hope CNN were there with their video rolling!

## Contempt for the King

John 19:1-7

Though guilty of no crime, Jesus suffered scourging at Pilate's command. By scourging, the flesh would be torn and the bones bared by repeated blows to the victim's stretched naked back. The instrument used was a multi-tailed whip the ends of which held bits of lead or sharp pieces of metal or rock. Isaiah 53:5, by inspiration penned some seven hundred years earlier, obviously pointed to this brutal beating: "With his stripes we are healed." Perhaps Pilate sought to appease the Jews by the unmerciful scourging of Jesus. If so, his plan failed.

Added to those terrible wounds was the piercing of the thorns pressed into His skin and even worse, the wounds of contempt, scorn and mockery. Gold, frankincense and myrrh were the costly gifts presented by wise men at His birth. In preparation for His death, foolish men brought Him a crown, but not a crown of precious metals and jewels. Nor was it a crown of royalty, honor or earthly position. His crown was a crown of contempt—a crown of thorns—brutishly crushed upon His head by the rude mocking hands of the unbelieving and disobedient

Purple, the color of wealth and position, was the robe put upon Him. No doubt, the purple turned black where it touched His precious blood, and quite probably, with its removal came pieces of the Savior's flesh. Within their power, they thought, they could crown Him and array Him in purple and then, just as easily, remove those "royal" vestures to show Him only man again. Every man has seen the face of contempt and the guilty laughter such as that which surely must have accompanied their cry, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Continuing in their abuse, with their hands they smote Him. What hands! In eternal torment, those soldiers, no doubt this very moment look upon their hands with pitiable lamentations and unending never answered prayers. What hands! Hands that did not uphold and comfort the suffering Lamb. What hands! Hands that did, not humbly fold before the Son of God. What hands! Hands that never worked to do the Master's will nor reached up to Heaven nor out to man. Cursed hands that were cruel tools of contempt.

Pilate presented Jesus, scourged, smitten, wearing the crown of thorns and purple robe, to the howling mob. Pilate said, "Behold the man!" The blood thirsty throng failed to behold Him as He truly was for their eyes were blinded with contempt for the sinless Savior. They did not behold His innocence, meekness, love and vicarious suffering. Their united reply, "Crucify, crucify," became the dirge of death. The din of condemnation overpowered the voice of Justice and Mercy. Now, for the third time, Pilate said, "I find no fault in him."

The Jews answered him, "He ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." To the Jews, He was not the Son of God then and to those who hold to Judaism, He is not now. Their charge was that He blasphemed by claiming to be the Son of God which was a violation of their law punishable by death (Lev. 24:16). The Jews were the real blasphemers for they spoke against and denied the true Son of God. Many men today, with hearts like those of the Jews that day, reject His deity. Others say, like Pilate, "I find no fault in him." Yet, they also find no favor in Him and no room in their hearts and lives for Him. They find no reason, according to the wisdom of the world, to serve Him, and certainly no reason to sacrifice to stand with Him and for Him.

How do we behold the King today? Do we hold Him near with love and reverence? Do we view Him as one to be called upon only in times of most desperate need? Or do we hold Him in contempt, rejecting Him as King of our lives and mocking His deity?

One has well said, "Christ will not be your Savior until he is you King." Is He your King?

## God Loves the Church

*Shan Jackson*

Feel the hurt in David's cry as he faces Jerusalem and longs for the love and comfort of God's sanctuary. "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD" (Psa. 84:2). He even longed to be as the little birds that nested in and about the temple. He could even wish himself with them as we consider the tenderness of his cry. "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine

altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God. Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house” (Psa. 84:3-4).

Today, the church is the spiritual home for God’s children. Not the temple in Jerusalem but the church supplies the source of comfort for His chosen. Still, David’s words ring true, “Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house.”

Blessings attend our dwelling together in God’s house. The joy can be so precious, the feelings so warm, when joining together with others “of like precious faith” to worship the Father. What can bring a greater joy than assembling with Christ to remember His purpose; assembling with Christ to remember His cause; realizing that we are His children and therefore, belong to His family?

However, this joy does not come without obligations. No feeling comes without debt. These emotions come from knowing God and doing His will. And a knowledge of this truth will “make us free” (John 8:32). The very fact that God has an earthly home for His children convinces us that He is pained when any prodigal refuses to dwell therein. The very fact that God has built His church on the earth teaches us that he wants His people in it. God loves the church. “The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob” (Psa. 87:2). “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). “No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church” (Eph. 5:29). My brethren, if God so loved and cherished the church, His church, can anyone afford to be found outside its numbers? God loves the church and wants His children in it. Furthermore, His blessings are for those in it as well. “Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house.” However, these blessings also run parallel with one’s attitude of reception. One should neither expect home-blessings when there is no home nor when he is not home. Dwelling in the house of God, having a home in Zion, one must put himself in the attitude to receive the blessings of God’s spiritual house. Likewise, some of these blessings are further manifested in the comfort afforded in the church.

What a sadness fills our hearts when we hear of a man without a home. There is no sickness more bitter than home-sickness; thus, complicating the restlessness and uneasiness of a soul without God’s home. The need is to be at home. This is the natural way. And we all have but one home. This means that we have no home if we absent ourselves from the assembly. To have a home means we live there, we serve there, we do all for its best. Home and devotion run hand in hand. Church and Christians cannot exist apart.

We also find comfort in the church as a feeding place for our souls. It is God’s truth that nourishes, it is God’s will that sustains. Without it, our soul’s well being soon withers and dies. Our souls need the church as our bodies need life’s bread. And a Christian who neglects the spiritual nourishment thus to be obtained must inevitably become weak in faith, cold in love, and sick of spirit. Such comfort can be only found in God’s sanctuary. It serves as God’s supply-house of sustenance by which we grow spiritually strong.

But a third point of spiritual comfort that the church affords is in the area of sympathy, comfort, and help. God intends that not only the brotherhood but also the congregations serve as a buffer against the evils and discouragements of the world. A place to laugh with those laughing and to “weep with them that weep” (Rom. 12:15). God calls His church a family, the blessed family of the Almighty. A family where love, sympathy, and help are only a heartbeat away. And let us not forget that there is a sympathy and love, encouragement and help, found in the church that is not found anywhere else in the world. The church, by means of individuals, may have faults and shortcomings but the church of our Lord is perfect in design, in purpose, and in effectiveness in carrying on until the Lord’s return. Blessed, very blessed indeed, are all that dwell in Thy house. They will be still praising Thee.

*PO Box 904; Palacios, TX 77465*

## Correspondence

“I would be grateful if you would make the following **debate announcement** in *Defender*.

“A public debate on ‘congregational benevolence’ is scheduled for June 3-4, 6-7, 1991 (7:00 PM each night). The sessions on Monday and Tuesday nights will be held in the building of the church of Christ on Sparkman Drive in Huntsville, Alabama. The proposition will be: ‘The Bible teaches that a church of the Lord’s people may make a contribution from its treasury, to a home for orphans.’ Roger Jackson affirms and Thomas N. Thrasher denies.

“On Thursday and Friday nights the discussion will be conducted in the building of the Union church of Christ near Somerville, Alabama. The proposition will be: ‘The Bible teaches that, in benevolence, a church of the Lord’s people is restricted to the relief of needy saints only.’ Thomas N. Thrasher affirms and Roger Jackson denies.

"For additional information, write to Thomas N. Thrasher, PO. Box 1941, Decatur, Alabama 35602 or call (205) 353-3085." Thomas N. Thrasher, Decatur, Alabama."

"Would appreciate it if you would put me on the mailing list...Thank you!" Mark Swartz, Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

"Please continue to send the paper. Enjoy the good articles and sound writers." Earl Godwin, Albertville, Alabama.

"I continue to enjoy and profit from your two publications...and desire to continue to receive both. I am enclosing a small contribution to assist in this good work." O. D. Giles, Collinsville, Alabama.

"Please continue sending me the *Defender*. We enjoy it and it really is read at my house. Enclosed is a token gift to help with the publishing and mailing expenses." Coleman L. Hargrave, Baker, Florida.

"Please keep my name on the mailing list...Thank you very much for this service." Earl E. Robertson, Glasgow, Kentucky.

"I enjoy the paper!" Wayne Crawley Morrison, Tennessee.

"I appreciate the fine articles in the *Defender*. Please continue sending it." Garvin Smith, Manila, Arkansas.

"Thanks so much for all the years I have been blessed by reading *Defender*. Please continue and God bless you and your work." James Godfrey Dalton, Georgia.

"We would like to continue to keep getting the *Defender*. We pass it on to others. It has been left in hospitals and on buses. It is a joy when we see people reading it..." U. L. and Dorothy Allen, Newbern, Alabama.

"I enjoy receiving the *Defender*. Please keep my name on your list. You are doing a great job!" Janice Goolsby Adamaville, Alabama.

"I look forward to the articles written by such fine Christian men." Mary Lou Huffman, Lake City Arkansas.

"I appreciate [*Defender*] and enjoy reading it every month." Dub McClish, Denton, Texas.

"It's a pleasure to receive a paper that isn't ashamed of the gospel, the church, or living as a child of God should live. To find such a paper is getting scarce as "hen's teeth." A. B. Carroll, Pinellas Park, Florida.

"I commend the good work of this paper and its editor! Please continue to send it..." Gary Colley, Tupelo, Mississippi.

"Please continue sending me *Defender*. Thank you and keep up the good work." Ken Butterworth, Birmingham, Alabama.

"We enjoy the *Defender* each month." Roger Hamlet, Selmer, Tennessee.

"I enjoy [*Defender*] very much. May God bless you in presenting the truth." William C. Cooke, Monterey, Tennessee.

"The paper is encouraging and uplifting." Sue McDaniel, Jonesboro, Texas.

"Please continue the *Defender* and thank you very much. It is a great publication." Joe Duncan, Mobile, Alabama.

"I enjoy your articles very much and have always found them informative and sound in doctrine. Thank you." Joe Britt, Baxter, Tennessee.

"We enjoy reading [*Defender*]. It is one of the best papers we get. Keep up the good work." Joe Paschal, Manchester, Tennessee.

"...I really appreciate your efforts in producing this great paper—**true** to God's revealed Bible." Glenn Martin, Louisville, Georgia.

—**Don't Forget to Send in Your Update!**—

## Lectures

**Fourth Annual Upper Cumberland Lectureship**, *Digression: Things Which Suppress It And Things Which Support It*, March 8-10, 1991, Livingston Church of Christ, 215 East Main, Livingston, Tennessee 38570, (615) 823-1441: Lectureship Director, Eddie Helms.

**Fifth Annual West Coast Firm Foundation Lectures**, *For Such A Time As This*, March 13-17, 1991, San Lorenzo Church, of Christ, 977 Grant Avenue, San Lorenzo, California 94580: Contact Joe Gilmore (408) 264-1866 or Noah Hackworth (415) 572-9957.

**Twenty-Fifth Annual Memphis School Of Preaching Lectureship**, *Great Lessons From New Testament Characters*, March 31-April 4, 1991, Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis,

Tennessee 38118, (901) 362-5139: Lectureship Director, Curtis A. Cates.

**Tenth Annual Southwest Lectures**, *God Hath Spoken*, April 14-17, 1991, Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748, (512) 2822486: Lectureship Director, Bill Jackson.

**Sixteenth Annual Bellview Lectures**, *The Church Triumphant*, May 12-15, 1991, Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526, (904) 455-7595: Lectureship Director, Bobby Liddell.

## Contributions

Willie Kitchen—\$10.00, Todd Buttermore—\$50.00, Ave Burns—\$15.00, Glen Williams—\$15.00, Earl Godwin—\$5.00, O. D. Giles—\$15.00, Coleman Hargrave—\$10.00, Thomas Starkey—\$5.00, Robin Haley—\$5.00, William Graham—\$10.00, O. J. Honaker—\$10.00, Bob Evans—\$15.00, Daisy Steen—\$5.00, Shirley Bailey—\$50.00, Arah Pounds—\$20.00, Dallas Wyatt—\$20.00, Jesse Brown—\$15.00. Thanks!

## Bible Course

**Free Bible Study Course Conducted Through the Mail.** To receive your Course from the Bellview Church of Christ, write:

Bible Correspondence Course

% Harold Maxey

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Pensacola, FL 32506

## Important Mailing List Update Information

**Please note:** *All who receive Defender must let us know of their desire to continue receiving it by March 1, 1991.* You may do this by returning your mailing label or by dropping us a card with your **name** and your **complete address including zip code**. The names of those who fail to do so will be deleted from the mailing list. Why not stop right now and reply if you wish to continue receiving *Defender* and you will not miss a single issue? It will only take a moment of your time.

**Note also:** *effective January 31, 1991, the names of those who fail to send us a change of address will be deleted from the mailing list.*

Be assured, we do not want to delete from the mailing list a single name of those who profit from *Defender*. The simple fact is that from time to time, mailing list updates are necessary. We want to keep sending *Defender* to you for the good that can be accomplished through it. Please help us by letting us know of your desire to receive it.

Thus, as *Defender* enters its twentieth year of publication, through God's grace and with your help, we shall continue sending the paper free of charge to all who wish to receive it. Let us know if you do. Your understanding and cooperation shall be greatly appreciated.

Why not take a moment and mail back your label or complete address right now?

Bobby Liddell, Editor.

## Guy N. Woods Appreciation Dinner

Guy N. Woods will be honored Monday, April 1, 1991, at the Memphis School of Preaching Lectures. Brother Woods has always been one of my favorite preachers. He is a lover of Truth, preacher, debater, author, editor and great Bible scholar. A number of prominent, true and tried friends of the Lord and of brother Woods will participate in the program. Everyone is invited to be present to express appreciation for Guy N. Woods and for the truth for which he stands. The dinner will take place at 4:30 PM at the School.

# Hereditary Total Depravity

*Terry Claunch*

We will let those who espouse this doctrine define it for us. "By this sin (eating the forbidden fruit) they (our first parents) fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions" (Presbyterian Confession of Faith). Mr. Ewing goes further, "The whole soul of man is entirely depraved, corrupt, and alienated from God, a child of wrath, an heir of hell, and going astray from the womb, conceived in sin, an enemy of God, having a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; the understanding darkened, the affections earthly, and the whole man sensual and devilish" (*Gospel Plan of Salvation*, T. W Brents, p. 124). The question is not how many hold this view. The question is, "Is it taught in the Word of God?"

Hereditary Total Depravity is false because God is the giver of our spirits: "shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9). God "formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zec. 12:1). Hereditary means we receive certain characteristics from preceding generations. One does not inherit from Adam "original sin" regardless of what the Confession of Faith or anyone else may say. Can you imagine the Father of our spirits, giving us spirits "entirely depraved, corrupt, and alienated from God" "the one who "formed the spirit within man?"

Hereditary Total Depravity is false because of the parable of the sower. "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). How is it possible for God's Word to fall into a good heart if the theory of Hereditary Total Depravity is true?

Hereditary Total Depravity is false because one will not stand in Judgment and be condemned because of Adam's transgression. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son" (Eze. 18:20). In that great day we shall "appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). Who will answer for Adam's sins? He will. Who will answer for your sins? No one but you. This false doctrine needs to be exposed and rejected. Those who believe and/or preach it need to repent.

## TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

MARCH 31-APRIL 4, 1991

### MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

4400 Knight Arnold Road • Memphis, Tennessee 38118

#### THEME: "GREAT LESSONS FROM NEW TESTAMENT CHARACTERS"

##### SUNDAY, MARCH 31

9:30-10:20 AM	<i>Apostles</i> "Peter, Who Traveled Both High and Low Roads"	Rex A. Turner, Sr.
10:30-11:30 AM	<i>Courageous</i> "John the Baptist, a Man Who Preached and People Believed on Jesus"	E. L. Whitaker
6:00- 7:00 PM	"Jesus Christ, the Master Teacher of the Ages"	Thomas B. Warren

##### MONDAY, APRIL 1, 1991

9:00- 9:50 AM	<i>Apostles</i> "Andrew, A Soul Winner for Christ"	Douglas Slms
10:00-10:50 AM	"Jesus Christ, Who Dealt with Crucial Issues"	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	"Elisabeth—Aged Mother; Mary—Called Blessed" (Women's Class)	Dorothy Mosher
11:00-11:50 AM	<i>Courageous</i> "Stephen, Who Defended the Faith Even Unto Death"	John Barcus
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1— <i>Helpers</i> "Onesiphorus a Refreshing Oasis in Paul's Life"	J. A. McNutt
	Class 2— <i>Converts</i> "Ethiopian Nobleman, Who Was Sincerely Religious Yet Lost"	Eddie Helms
	Class 3— <i>Developing Characters</i> "Prodigal Son, Who Was Sick of Home, Homesick, and Came Home"	John Ferguson
	Class 4— <i>Rulers</i> "Pilate, with Whom Policy Prevailed Against Principle"	Bill Lyons
11:50-1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	<i>Good Men</i> "Nathaniel, in Whom Was No Guile"	Glenn Posey

1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1— <i>Apostates</i> “The Rich Man, Who Refused to Feed a Poor Beggar” Class 2— <i>Believers</i> “The Blind Man, an Example of True Faith in Christ” Class 3—“Mary Magdalene—Many Virtues; Drusilla—Disregarded Marriage” (Women’s Class)	Tom German Noah Hackworth
2:10- 3:00 PM	<i>Evangelists</i> “Philip, from Table Server to Gospel Preacher”	Corinne Elkins
3:10- 4:00 PM	“Open Forum”	W Wayne Coats
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	Garland Elkins
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30- 5:30 PM	“The Scriptures’ Own Testimony to Their All Sufficiency”	Guy N. Woods
TUESDAY APRIL 2, 1991		
9:00- 9:50 AM	<i>Apostles</i> “John, Son of Thunder Rechanneled by the Lord”	Bobby Liddell
10:00-10:50 AM	“Jesus Christ, Who Dealt with Crucial Issues”	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	“Samaritan Woman—Offered Living Water; Bernice—Shameless and Incestuous” (Women’s Class)	Brenda Rutherford
11:00-11:50 AM	<i>Courageous</i> “Paul, Whose Evangelistic Zeal Brought Suffering”	Harrell Davidson
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1— <i>Helpers</i> “Epaphroditus, Kind Friend Who Nearly Died Supplying Paul’s Needs” Class 2— <i>Conversions</i> “Saul of Tarsus, Who Called on the Lord” Class 3— <i>Developing Characters</i> “Simon the Sorcerer, Who Went from Sainthood to Simony”	Rod Rutherford Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
	Class 4— <i>Rulers</i> “Caiaphas, a Blind Leader of the Blind”	Robert R. Taylor, Jr. Steve W Wiggins
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	<i>Good Men</i> “James, a Great Lead. in the Jerusalem Church”	Jimmy Bates
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1— <i>Apostates</i> “Judas, Whose Materialism Led to a Heinous Crime and to His Own Place” Class 2— <i>Believers</i> “Zacchaeus, Who Understood Repentance” Class 3—“Mary of Bethany—Did What She Could; Herodias—Vile and Immoral” (Women’s Class)	Paul Vaughn Michael Gifford
2:10- 3:00 PM	<i>Evangelists</i> “Barnabas, a Good Man”	Corinne Elkins
3:10- 4:00 PM	“Open Forum”	Kenneth Gossett
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	Garland Elkins
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30- 5:30 PM	“Jesus Christ, Whom We Should Desire to See”	Andrew M. Connally
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 1991		
9:00- 9:50 AM	<i>Apostles</i> “Matthew, Who Left All and Gained All”	Dub McClish
10:00-10:50 AM	“Jesus Christ, Who Dealt with Crucial Issues”	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	“Phoebe—Servant of the Church; Woman—Touched Christ’s Garment” (Women’s Class)	Annette Cates
11:00-11:50 AM	<i>Courageous</i> “Silas, an Example of a Faithful Sacrificial Preacher”	Elliott Glasgow
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1— <i>Helpers</i> “Tychicus, Faithful Brother Who Comforted the Saints” Class 2— <i>Conversions</i> “Cornelius, Who Insisted on Hearing and Obeying All the Lord’s Commandments” Class 3— <i>Developing Characters</i> “Apollos, a Deficient Man Willing to be Taught” Class 4— <i>Rulers</i> “The Herods, a Family of Continuing Iniquity”	Wesley Simons Curtis A. Cates Jonnie Hutchison Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	<i>Good Man</i> “Nicodemus, a Rules Who Came to Jesus by Night”	T. J. Clarke
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1— <i>Apostates</i> “Ananias and Sapphira, a Husband and Wife Team of Iniquity” Class 2— <i>Believers</i> “Joseph, Husband of Mary, a Man of Admirable Obedience” Class 3—“Syro-Phoenician Woman—Begged for Crumbs; Lydia—First Convert in Europe” (Women’s Class)	Bill Becker Terry Hightower
2:10- 3:00 PM	<i>Evangelists</i> “Timothy, Who Warred a Good Warfare and Preached Sound Doctrine”	Irene Taylor
3:10- 4:00 PM	“Open Forum”	Cliff Lyons
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	Garland Elkins
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30- 9:30 PM	“Jesus Christ, Our Perfect Example”	Goebel Music
THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 1991		
9:00- 9:50 AM	<i>Apostles</i> “Thomas, Whose Faith Was No Leap in the Dark”	Joe Gilmore
10:00-10:50 AM	“Jesus Christ, Who Dealt with Crucial Issues”	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	“Dorcas—Beautiful Benefactor; Martha—Noble Servant” (Women’s Class)	Janis Dearman
11:00-11:50 AM	<i>Courageous</i> “Luke, Whose Faith Never Wavered”	Raymond Hagood
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1— <i>Helper</i> “Aquila and Priscilla, a Husband and Wife Team of Righteousness” Class 2— <i>Conversions</i> “Philippian Jailer, Who Obeyed Promptly” Class 3— <i>Developing Characters</i> “John Mark, the Defector Who Ultimately Made Good” Class 4— <i>Rulers</i> “Agrippa and Felix, Who Were So Near Yet So Far”	Guy McDade Dean Gittings Ronnie Hutchison Phil Davis
11:30- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	<i>Good Men</i> “Jude, Who Contended for the Faith Once Delivered”	C. W. Bradley
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1— <i>Apostates</i> “Demas, Who Went from Devotion to Desertion” Class 2— <i>Believers</i> , “Philemon. Who Could be Entreated” Class 3—“Anna—Grew Old Gracefully; Widow—Sacrificial Giver” (Women’s Class)	Joe Nichols Jim Dearman Irene Taylor
2:10- 3:00 PM	<i>Evangelists</i> “Titus, Who Spoke, Exhorted, and Reproved with All Authority”	David Pharr

3:10- 4:00PM "Open Forum"  
 4:00- 7:00 PM INTERMISSION  
 7:00- 7:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
 7:30- 8:30 PM "Jesus Christ, Who Respected His Father's Will"

Garland Elkins

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

# SIXTEENTH ANNUAL BELLVIEW LECTURES

## "The Church Triumphant"

May 12-15, 1991

### SUNDAY, MAY 12

9:00 AM The Church Triumphant—Shall Be Triumphant At Last  
 10:00 AM The Church Triumphant—How Can I Help It Triumph?  
 7:00 PM. SINGING  
 7:15 PM. The Church Triumphant—Pictured By The Prophets  
 8:00 PM. The Church Triumphant—The Church That Jesus Loved

Shan Jackson, Palacios, TX  
 Ken Willis, Chattanooga, TN

Flavil Nichols, Jasper, AL  
 Willie Bradshaw, East Point, GA

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 Curtis Cates, Memphis, TN  
 Stephen Law, Rockmart, GA  
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Ray Peters, Pensacola, FL  
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 Alton Hayes, Munford, AL  
 Ira Rice, Memphis, TN  
 Eddie Whitten, Bedford, TX  
 Bobby Gayton, Cartersville, GA

Winfred Clark, Athens, AL  
 Guss Eoff, Independence, MO



# DEFENDER

Volume XX

March 1991

Number 3

## Is it Possible?

*Shan Jackson*

As Christians, we believe every word Christ uttered, but is it possible He was pulling our spiritual legs in Luke 12:15? Is there really a chance that man's life "consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"? From our world around us and from the way we see men killing others and destroying themselves to possess wealth, we would naturally assume the opposite is true. We see men sacrificing family relations, friendships, and personal reputation in order to gain life's "things." No river is too wide to cross and no mountain too high to climb as long as wealth is the prize. From loneliness to the brink of war men will do anything and everything to obtain things. Still, we are plainly told a man's life is more than things. Such a shame to see so many people using so much energy to obtain something that Christ says is not essential.

However, let us realize the Bible does not condemn or even discourage the possession of wealth. In fact, nothing is ever said against wealth. It is the "love of money" not the money that is the "root of all evil." What it does say is that physical wealth does not determine spiritual abundance. It is not one's possession of things that is wrong but that one's allowing the things to possess them.

This being true, of what does a man's life consist? First and foremost, man's life consists of his Christianity. As simple as that sounds it still captures the true essence of man's possessions. If he is not a Christian, he is a failure. With millions in the bank, his life is naught without Christ. Because of his Christianity, he will also fill his life with other treasure. For instance, the treasure of leading others to the same Christian call. The foolish farmer wanted to tear down his barns and build bigger ones so he could take his ease. His problem was selfishness. He "selfished" himself to death and every selfish man is standing in those same shoes. His problem was he relied on the abundance of things. He had cultivated the erroneous idea that life and wealth were synonyms which is the opposite of what Christ was teaching. The best and only possession man should strive for is life eternal. And the best use of his physical wealth, talent, and desire is to bring others to that same spiritual understanding. The abundant opportunity afforded us is the opportunity to follow the Great Commission of our Lord. Only this will insure us our true richness toward God.

Man's life also consists of perfecting his Christian character. "Covet" implies strong desire and Christians are to strongly desire spirituality. Man's life consists of coveting earnestly true spirituality. The traits of peace, love, joy, patience, etc., are desired traits of a Christ-like spirit. A man's life is never better spent than in a lifetime of polishing and perfecting his character. Things physical are trivial but things spiritual are eternal. Man's life consists not of trivial things.

If a man's life consists of finding Christ and leading others to Christ, and perfecting his Christian character, then also his life must consist in helping others better mold their Christian character as well. The poorest man in all the world is not the man with the least money. Nor, is it the man who possesses in himself the least character. The poorest man in all the world is the man who becomes a stumblingblock or uses means to drag down the character and spirit of others. Likewise, the richest man has not the most wealth but rather is a man that finds Christ, leads others to the same spiritual fountain, perfects his Christian character and helps others with the same task. Poor indeed is every one who "layeth up for himself treasure and is not rich toward God." But rich indeed is one who is rich in faith, rich in love, rich in good works, yea, "rich toward God."

## Choice of a King

John 19:8-18

Jesus stood before Pilate awaiting His judgment. Though Pilate had said, “I find no fault in him,” the Jews cried out, “He ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.” Pilate’s fear prompted the question to Jesus, “Whence art thou?” Pilate’s wife had sent him an unusual message: “Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him” (Mat. 27:19). Pagan Pilate’s superstitious fear caused him to want to know more about this Jesus, but Jesus gave no answer.

Unlike Pilate, the Jews knew the Scriptures about the Messiah which found fulfillment in none other before that time nor since but Jesus, yet they rejected Him. John, by inspiration penned: “He came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:11). Their greater knowledge and responsibility meant their greater condemnation in rejecting the prophesied Messiah. Why would they, God’s chosen nation, aware of the hundreds of prophecies concerning the Messiah reject Him as King and choose another?

Pilate sought to release Jesus, “but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar” (John 19:12). Such a charge of treason against Pilate was sufficient for the Roman Caesar, Tiberius, to have Pilate and his entire family put to death. Pilate, facing the choice of giving in to the Jews and crucifying Jesus or probable execution before the jealous Caesar, was not willing to give his life for truth and Christ. Suppose Pilate, tormented in flames this very hour, had the opportunity to make that decision again. Would he crucify Christ? Would he think only of earth and physical life? Would not his thoughts center on eternity? Surely, his choice would be the right one this time. The Jews also made a choice—their choice of a king. They hated the Roman conquerors and Caesar, their ruler, yet they chose Caesar over Jesus.

They would have chosen anyone over Jesus, so great was their hatred for Him. All who reject Christ as King will find their foolish choice facing them at Judgment and barring their way into Heaven. Instead of Pilate, Jesus will judge them. “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son” (John 5:22). “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:30-31). In contrast to their demanding Christ’s physical death, He shall command the eternal death of the wicked; that is, those who have chosen another king (Mat. 25:31-46; 6:24).

Jesus said, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). Sinners at the Great Judgment Day standing in condemnation before the Righteous Judge would choose Jesus as their King, but too late. They then will surely acknowledge him as King of kings and Lord of lords, but, again, too late. Paul wrote: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phi. 2:9-11).

Whom (or what) shall we choose as King of our lives? Shall it be the Lord Jesus Christ? Any other choice will rob us of the joys of Christian living now and will result in eternal destruction in the fires of Hell. Choose Christ as King and you shall choose life and joy.

BL

## Lectureships (Are They Worth It?)

*Dave Krug*

Brotherhood lectureships seem to be popping up over the country these days, and it appears many congregations have been bitten by the “Lectureship Bug.” As we observe the rise of more lectureships we must stress there is also a rise in the various objections and criticisms toward them which need to be addressed! We shall examine some of these complaints to see if they are warranted or not. We also need to ask an important question concerning

lectureships which is, "Are they worth it?" There is, no doubt, much time and energy involved in putting a lectureship program together, not to mention the cost and sacrifice made by many Christian individuals. Instead of focusing on discussing the positive aspects of lectureships, we shall deal with six common complaints.

**"They Are a Big Waste of the Lord's Money!"** Lectureships do cost money and there is no denying that. Large amounts of the Lord's money are utilized in order to provide such things as lodging, air fare, etc., for visiting preachers who are summoned from throughout the country. Some have said there is no sense in putting that much money into lectureships when the money could be spent on other godly things. Such comments make us think of what Judas Iscariot said concerning the expensive ointment that was used to anoint Jesus in John 12:5, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" This is not to suggest those who lodge complaints against lectureships are in league with Judas Iscariot, but we as God's children should examine the good features when evaluating lectureships.

Sound lectureships offer excellent sources of encouragement and strength for the brethren, and we need all the encouragement and strength we can obtain while living in this present world! Before we think of leveling objections and criticisms, let us remember the old adage which states, "It is easy to be an umpire who calls balls and strikes on everyone else." Actually, lectureships consist of numerous gospel meetings with different speakers all rolled into one event. They are not wastes of the Lord's money, no more than it is a waste of the Lord's money to pay a preacher to come conduct a gospel meeting.

**"They Tend to Be Aimed Toward Respect of Persons!"** It does appear many of our well established lectureships seem to prefer "big name preachers" with expectations of having the same ones return year after year with a few exceptions. There is the tendency for others to view these lectureships as catering to well known preachers. On the other hand, these well known preachers are usually highly educated and capable of speaking on the various topics assigned to them. (My suggestion on the matter is lectureships need to incorporate the use of all preachers who stand strong in the faith and not just the popular). Preachers who are not well known may feel the reason they are not invited is those who coordinate these programs do not deem them capable or because they are not well known. We need to be extremely careful not to have a respect of persons (Acts 10:34; Jam. 2:9).

**"Congregations Use Them to Gain Recognition!"** Of course, this accusation hinges on Matthew 7:1 which says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." We should think cautiously of what we say especially in areas where we do not know if a thing is true or not! This accusation is not founded unless it can be proven to be correct! What does the Bible say about jealousy, and envy? Solomon wrote in Proverbs 14:30, "A sound heart *is* the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones." James said, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth" (Jam. 3:14). Let us be careful with our words!

**"They Are Used by Brethren for Profit!"** This complaint is in reference to those who set up displays at lectureships in order to sell their books, cassette tapes, records, etc., for profit. Some have problems with this arrangement. Their complaint is one that does need to be addressed. It is true some brethren set up places in which to sell items. Some may view selling at the lectures in the same light as those who were cast out of the temple by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 21:12-13: "And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." Study reveals this passage as being strictly taken out of context when applied to selling items at lectureships. If there is anything unscriptural about selling items at lecture programs, where are the Scriptures? If certain members believe it is wrong they need to: (1) refrain from purchasing items at lectureships; and, (2) no longer attend these functions if they are offended. (I do believe the selling aspects could be taken too far!)

**"They Solicit Funds from Other Congregations!"** Some are avidly opposed to assisting other congregations with financial support for their lectureships! Some feel if congregation A plans a lectureship they should not expect congregations B, C, or D to help them foot the bill. After all, it is congregation A's program in the first place. However, a vital question needs to be evaluated: "Is it wrong for congregation A to ask other congregations to help with expenses?" Congregations B, C, and D are not obligated unless they so desire. We must be hesitant in labeling something as being wrong unless otherwise proven by scripture.

**"They Draw Too Much Emphasis from the Brotherhood!"** A great amount of emphasis is placed upon lectureships, especially the larger programs. Much advertising is usually the norm with most of these programs, but it is important! There is no difference from placing a great amount of emphasis on gospel meetings. When con-

gregations announce their upcoming gospel meetings they usually do not mail out flyers announcing it past a fifty mile radius. On the other hand, churches that sponsor a lectureship will reach out to congregations in other states as well as locally!

**In Conclusion.** After addressing some of the objections and criticisms aimed toward brotherhood lectureships, I would like to state for the record that I truly endorse these godly programs throughout our country! After attending such lectureships as the ones in Denton, Texas; Fort Worth, Texas; and Christiansburg, Virginia, I have come from them greatly refreshed and encouraged! If you have not attended any of the outstanding lectureships you do not know what you are missing. Brotherhood Lectureships (Are They Worth It?)—They Certainly Are!!!

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Bible Correspondence Course  
% Harold Maxey  
20 Emory Drive  
Pensacola, FL 32506

## What about Mixed Swimming?

*Allen Webster*

The older preacher said, “The problem is, they desire to be chased, not chaste.” He was right on target! Most people of the world want to be “noticed” and the quickest way to do that is to be “undressed” in the presence of the opposite sex. Consider a part of a column ran in the *Dallas Morning News* some time back: “Last June the Merit Report asked both men and women their reasons for going to the beach. More than 60 percent of men and women agree that men go mainly to watch. When it comes to why women go, the sexes differed. Men were apt to say women go to be watched (42%). Women reported they go to sun themselves more than anything (42%), although 30 percent said “to be watched.”

The Merit report discovered that 57 percent of men judged the swimsuits worn by women to be “just about right.” Amazingly, 33 percent of men voted the suits to be too revealing. 59 percent of women think their swimming suits are too revealing and only 33 percent judge their suits to be “just about right.” From this we see the majority of men and women agree the swim wear is too revealing and women are going to be observed by men. Could it be people of the world are more honest about their thoughts than some church members? Let it be said swimming is not wrong in and of itself. It is an enjoyable activity and good exercise. As long as each person is out of the view of any of the opposite sex (excluding family) it is permissible. The issue at the heart of this question is not swimming but modesty.

**“What Saith the Scriptures?” By Example.** The darkest chapter in King David’s life began by looking upon Bathsheba in her “bathing suit.” Surely, there was a private spot for her to bathe, but it appears she did not seek to find it (2 Sam. 11:1-5). While ultimate guilt is on the one who lusted (lusts), she (those) who dressed (or undress) in such a provocative manner was (will be) also condemned. What man would say that he is stronger than “a man after God’s own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14) or what woman would dare say that David was just “dirty-minded?”

**By Command.** “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety..” (1 Tim. 2:9). This teaching cannot be obeyed while wearing the swimming fashions of today at public places. Modest apparel shows the good heart of a godly person (male or female) while immodest clothes show an evil, unconcerned heart (Pro. 23:7).

**By Principle.** Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves (similar to modern swimming attire), yet God was not satisfied. He clothed them in animal skins (Gen. 3:21). The Hebrew word (*ore*) indicates a covering from the shoulder to the knee, thus giving a divine precedent for modesty.

God’s Old Testament priests were forbidden to climb up the altar steps lest their nakedness be discovered (Exo.

20:26). Later they made linen breeches to wear under their robes (Exo. 28:40-41). In Bible times, one was considered naked if his undergarments were showing (John 2:17—ASV footnote) (cf., “gumnos” [naked] in *Arndt & Gingrich Greek Lexicon*, p. 167). Today, all Christians are priests (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:9) and must be equally careful not to expose too much.

To “make bare the leg” and “uncover the thigh” was considered “nakedness” and equated with “shame” in the Old Testament (Isa. 47:2-3). The thigh extends to the knee, therefore the Christian should wear clothing that covers to the knee (even when sitting or stretching).

The Bible draws a clear connection between visual observation and lust. Dressing in such a way as to cause lust is condemned as lasciviousness (Gal. 5:19) and will lead another to commit mental adultery (Mat. 5:28). It would be better to die than to cause another to stumble (Mat. 18:6).

“Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 The. 5:22).

What about mixed swimming? No serious Bible student could read the above mentioned scriptures and fail to see the conduct of the shameless and shameful world around us is wrong. Christians must have **no** part in mixed swimming! They should not even go to places where others are undressed in modern swim fashions. If people are to notice us, let it be because of our characters and never because of our immodest attire! Let us dress to the glory of God.

*Route 1 Box 38; Tiplersville, MS 38674*

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“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 5:16).

## Correspondence

“I appreciate the paper and the good sound teaching in it. Keep up the good work and may the Lord bless you.” Paul Howard

“Your publication is appreciated—keeping the brotherhood aware of what is happening in the churches of Christ. Appreciation is also extended for your defense of the truth on every occasion it is necessary to do so. Thanks for sending me the *Defender*.” Helen S. Riik

“...we enjoy reading it very much. It is one of the best papers we receive.” Mrs. Luther Stevens.

“I really enjoy the good lessons. When I finish, I take it to church and give it to...one of our elders. He has kept them all to go back to get a lesson--good helps, he says.” Grace Jones.

“I want to let you know that I appreciate the fine biblical articles that you have had in the *Defender* in the past and I look forward to receiving it each month.” Leamon Stewart.

“I don’t say it often enough, but I do appreciate the fine quality of your publication.” T. J. Clarke.

“We appreciate your soundness in the faith.” Northwest Church of Christ.

## Lectures

**Twenty-Fifth Annual Memphis School Of Preaching Lectureship**, *Great Lessons From New Testament Characters*, March 31-April 4, 1991, Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38118, (901) 362-5139: Lectureship Director, Curtis A. Cates.

**Tenth Annual Southwest Lectures**, *God Hath Spoken*, April 14-17, 1991, Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748, (512) 2822486: Lectureship Director, Bill Jackson.

**Sixteenth, Annual Bellview Lectures**, *The Church Triumphant*, May 12-15, 1991, Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526, (904) 455-7595: Lectureship Director, Bobby Liddell.

## Contributions

Betty Williams—\$15.00, Hairston Brantley—\$125.00, R. A. Townsend—\$5.00, Vergil Cretsinger—\$10.00, H. W. Pierce—\$20.00, B. R. Shepherd—\$1.00, Bill Anderson—\$10.00, Georgia Dashner—\$5.00, Rita

Dunahay—\$25.00, W. A. Osburn—\$5.00, Dorothy Bise—\$10.00, Kathy Marshall—\$5.00, John Hamilton—\$5.00, Ernest Bradley—\$10.00, Evelyn Hamer—\$10.00, W. S. Kitchen—\$10.69, Mary Chilton—\$10.00, Neil McBride—\$5.00, Edward Tyler—\$10.00, Aubrey Barnett—\$5.00, Blanche McBride—\$10.00, Rembert Allen—\$25.00, Virginia Avery—\$5.00, A.B. Howell—\$10.00, L. D. Dashner—\$25.00, Floyd Stokes—\$10.00, Michael Sollars—\$10.00, Mickey Harrison—\$10.00, Geneva Rakes—\$10.00, Louis Lankford—\$10.00, J. E. Carr, \$1.00, Orvin Conner—\$5.00, Frank Whitfield—\$20.00, Robert Cannon—\$10.00, Ector Watson—\$10.00, Arney Salyer—\$5.00, Floyd Britton—\$5.00, Doris Jacobs—\$5.00. Thanks for your help!

# SIXTEENTH ANNUAL BELLVIEW LECTURES

## “The Church Triumphant”

May 12-15, 1991

### SUNDAY, MAY 12

9:00 AM	The Church Triumphant—Shall Be Triumphant At Last	Shan Jackson, Palacios, TX
10:00 AM	The Church Triumphant—How Can I Help It Triumph?	Ken Willis, Chattanooga, TN
7:00 PM.	SINGING	
7:15 PM.	The Church Triumphant—Pictured By The Prophets	Flavil Nichols, Jasper, AL
8:00 PM.	The Church Triumphant—The Church That Jesus Loved	Willie Bradshaw, East Point, GA

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7:15 PM	The Church Triumphant—According To God's Eternal Purpose	Joe Gilmore, San Lorenzo, CA
8:00 PM	The Church Triumphant—The Only One Of Which You Should Be A Member	Foy Smith, Riverside, CA

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## A Sound Congregation

### *Roger Jackson*

Each of us would like to believe he is a member of a sound congregation. By “sound” we mean faithful to God’s Word. Such soundness is required of individual Christians in 2 Timothy 1:13: “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (cf., 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 John 4:1-2). If it is the case that every member of a congregation is required to be sound, then the congregation is required to be sound. The Lord addressed seven churches of Asia regarding their soundness in Revelation 2-3. I fear many congregations today are in the condition of Isaiah 1:6: “From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is no*

soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.”

What is the standard most people use when they are looking for a congregation with which they can work and worship? Some are looking for a congregation with some program for the children. I hope they are not like one lady who said she had never found a congregation that provided what she required for her children! Others attend where they do because they “feel spiritual” there, whatever that means. I expect entertainment or emotionalism plays a large part in it. Some go where they “feel at home” and others cite convenience or the popularity of the preacher as their reason. The last figures I saw revealed that about three (3) per cent of the people interviewed attended because of the preacher.

How many people actually care whether or not the Bible is respected and preached where they attend? Many elders do not even care because they never ask that question when in the process of interviewing new preachers.

Is the congregation where you attend a sound one? How do you know? Do you care? The investigation is not an easy one. Unsound congregations will get it stopped if they can. We do not advocate violating a congregation’s autonomy, but if we are required to try the spirits (1 John 4:1), then that includes congregations, does it not? What opposition do you suppose such an investigation will encounter?

Investigators will be called “watchdogs” or “little popes” at best. They will be told to mind their own business and the brethren in the local congregation will take care of their own problems. There are at least two things wrong with that: (1) History has taught us that “they” will not take care of it, but will usually cover it up like Highland in Abilene or Madison in Nashville. (2) History has also taught us that unsound congregations send out apostles and/or solicit help and cooperation from other congregations.

What are some of the appeals unsound congregations make to verify their soundness? You will not find very many appealing to the Bible. Not a one will debate the matter.

Longevity is no defense. If so, the Judaizers surely missed a great appeal when they were trying to destroy the faith. Size will not suffice. If so, the Roman Catholics have us beat “hands down.” Still we hear, “They are growing, so they must be doing something right.” Well, what about popularity? That is no good, because Jesus’ disciples were tremendously unpopular, and yet they had the truth.

How would you determine soundness in a congregation? In Matthew 7:16 the Lord gave the standard, “Ye shall know them by their fruits.” What about the faithful proclamation and adherence to the Word of God? A congregation can rise no higher than its elders and preacher (1 Tim. 3:5; 2 Tim. 4:1-2). The preacher teaches it and the elders see that it is obeyed. What did Isaiah say? “From the sole of the foot even to the head.”

*Route 3 Box 882; Somerville, AL 35670*

## THANKS!

The response to our mailing list update has been great. We must say we were not expecting the scores of letters and notes of commendation concerning our work through *Defender*. Thanks for your vote of confidence, brethren. You have encouraged us to do our very best in the service of Christ by this means for we know our work is helpful and is appreciated by you, the greatest people on earth.

Thanks also for the many contributions sent in to help in our publication and mailing costs. Your unsolicited contributions will help greatly in our sending out *Defender*. We deeply appreciate your help. The response has been so great and the contributions so many we simply have not had the time to reply to each one. Until we are able to write you personally, please accept our, “Thanks!”

BL

# DEFENDER

Volume XX

April 1991

Number 4

## The Preacher's' Salary

*Bob Duncan*

*(The following article is a reprint from the November, 1974, **Defender**. Some of the dollar amounts have changed with inflation, but the principles are still true. Editor.)*

The subject of this article is one about which little is preached or written. One who preaches on the subject leaves himself open to the accusation that he is preaching for money. But in failing to teach on the subject we have done an injustice to the brotherhood. The church cannot survive without preaching. Yet many capable men are leaving full time preaching to earn their living in secular work. This adds to the acuteness of the preacher shortage. Others are working under financial burdens that hinder their effectiveness. And there is a constant shift of preachers from one congregation to another. Doubtless this situation exists for a number of reasons, but it is certain that our failure to teach our brethren regarding the preacher's salary has made its contribution.

The brethren at Adamsville where this writer preaches have been far more generous in this respect than the writer deserves, and those who know the circumstances understand that it is not to these that the things said in this article are directed. But it is the conviction of this writer that brethren generally need teaching in regard to this matter, and that most of our brethren will do better when they are taught better.

It is taken for granted that those who read this article are already in agreement with the idea that it is scriptural for preachers to be supported from the treasury of the church (1 Cor. 9:4-14; 2 Cor. 11:8; Gal. 6:6; etc.). Consequently this article does not deal with the scripturalness of the matter, but with certain matters of judgment involved in the application of Bible teaching. We would emphasize the fact, however, that even under the law of Moses God demanded that just wages be paid to strangers and brethren alike (Deu. 24:14; 25:4; Jer. 22:13). And in the New Testament strong language is used in rebuking those who refused to pay their laborers (Jam. 5:4). Of how great a sin, then, is one guilty who would hinder the payment of just and reasonable wages to one who preaches the glorious Gospel of Christ?

### Comparing Salaries

There is certainly nothing wrong with comparing the salary of the preacher to that of other members of the congregation. In doing so it is important that his salary be compared to those with approximately the same amount of education, experience, natural ability, drive, and who work about the same number of hours, and have about the same amount of job-connected expense that the preacher has.

Also there are several things which must not be overlooked in making such comparisons. It should be remembered that retirement plans, and group life and health insurance, paid in part or in whole by employers generally, are not usually a part of the church's arrangement with the preacher. While these items often constitute a major part of a contract between management and labor, they are seldom given any consideration in hiring a preacher or setting his salary.

It should be remembered that the preacher is required to use his automobile in connection with his work. And with the price of gasoline what it is today, this is a major expense.

While the preacher's income is not diminished by such things as weather conditions, strikes, lay-offs, supply and demand, etc., neither is it increased by overtime, production, time and a half for holidays, etc. If he is fortunate enough to preach in a few meetings he receives a little extra income, provided the meeting does not cost him more than he is paid for his services.

Besides wanting to set the proper example in the matter of liberality, most preachers have strong convictions



about the matter of giving. And while many members of the church contribute from three to five per cent of their incomes, most preachers contribute at least fifteen per cent. In addition to this, when there is made a special appeal for some good work, the preacher is usually among the first to respond.

It is usually preferred, of course, that the preacher's wife not be employed outside the home. Yet she can usually be depended upon to buy a gift for every new bride and every new baby in the congregation.

### **Housing**

The fact that churches sometimes own a house for the preacher has caused some to set the preacher's salary too low. Naturally, if a congregation owns the preacher's house it does not expect to pay him as much as if he furnished his own house. But the difference should not really be very much. Take for example a congregation which owns its own house, and which considers housing to amount to about \$3,000 per year. If a preacher's tenure with that congregation were five years he would have received \$15,000 worth of housing. Quite a sum! But when he moves to the next place he takes not one penny of it with him.

But suppose instead of furnishing a house they had simply paid him a full salary, and he had used the \$3,000 per year to invest in a house of his own. At the end of his five year tenure he would own quite an equity, which he could sell and be several thousand dollars richer. This would be the result of having been paid in money rather than housing. Churches which choose to own the preacher's house should take care not to penalize the preacher and his family, salary wise.

### **Inflation**

Some preachers are underpaid merely because brethren have been negligent in adjusting their salaries to keep step with inflation. For example, if a congregation hired its preacher for a reasonable salary three years ago, and are not paying him substantially more now than when they hired him, he is underpaid. And in addition to these "cost of living" raises, a preacher should be deserving of some consideration for additional years of experience and service, as characterizes employees of most organizations.

A failure to give this matter consideration is, doubtless, one of the reasons why preachers move about so much. Often a preacher who is making plans to move is heard to say: "It is not just the money, but the feeling that the brethren just don't care whether we go or stay" It is not hard to understand why this feeling exists if the brethren have shown little or no concern for the fact that the preacher and his family are living on the same income they were receiving when gasoline was twenty-five cents a gallon.

### **How Valuable Preaching?**

By their failure to see that the preacher receives a respectable wage brethren are advertising the fact that they do not consider their particular preacher a very valuable man. While we abhor the idea that preachers are anything more than human, or that they must receive special treatment, we also abhor the disposition of some to bemoan the work of preaching. Preachers are ordinary people, but their work is extraordinary—the most important in the world. If elders want to show how important they think the work of preaching is, and how highly they esteem the man they have hired to do this great work, they should begin by seeing that he is adequately paid. Otherwise they should not be too surprised to find that in the minds of some the work of preaching is barely respectable, and what the preacher preaches is not very important either.

### **Preaching for Money**

Perhaps there are some preachers who are "preaching for money." Most of the preachers we know, however, could be making more money if they were otherwise employed and without half the headache. But they are preaching because they want to preach. And in most cases they will continue to preach, even if it becomes necessary to "make tents" to support themselves and their families. They believe in the importance of their work, and they are concerned about a lost world. But their determination to preach the gospel regardless of cost furnishes no legitimate excuse for brethren to support them in a poor fashion. Our gratitude for their determination should prompt us to see that they are supported adequately.

### **Wasting the Lord's Money**

In many congregations there are those who seem to think it is their special assignment to be doubly sure that the preacher is not overpaid. After all, the money belongs to the Lord, and it would be a sin to waste it. While we are sure that no worthy preacher wants to be overpaid, we can think of worse crimes than overpaying a man who spends his life in preaching the glorious gospel of the Son of God. One that comes to mind at present is underpaying him.

*4207 Adamsville Parkway Adamsville, AL 35005*

## Respect for Gospel Preaching

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

The gospel (good news) of Christ is declared by inspiration to be “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16). Certainly, no message could be more important nor more urgent than the gospel message, thus, Christ commanded: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). If salvation is tied to hearing the gospel, and it is (Rom. 10:17), every accountable person who dies without the gospel of Christ also dies without hope (Eph. 2:12), for there is no other power unto salvation. If it is the case that those who reject the gospel shall face the wrath of God at Christ’s return, and it is (2 The. 1:7-9), then it is also true those who obey the gospel shall be blessed (2 The. 1:7). But, how shall they obey without hearing the gospel and “how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14). God’s Word, here and in numerous other instances, clearly demonstrates the necessity of and respect for gospel preaching.

That every Christian should be busy in taking the gospel to a lost world is plainly taught in the New Testament and illustrated in the lives of First Century saints: “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). Just as surely, there were those who left all and gave their lives to preaching the gospel. Though they left behind much, they gained much more of eternal worth.

Today men of like devotion have put their hands to the plough and have not looked back. Many have gladly walked away from promising careers and financial security to preach. While their sacrifices have been great and opposition strong, the rewards have been greater and they would gladly do it all again.

Men who give their lives to preach deserve the respect of all who love Christ and His church. Sadly, we live in a day when respect for all things good is at a low ebb. That attitude has affected respect for gospel preaching and preachers. Truly, some who claim to preach the gospel do not and others who do make little effort to live it, but the great majority of those who preach (certainly those with whom this writer is familiar) are men of courage and compassion, honor and honesty, serving and sacrificing to reach the lost and to strengthen the saved.

We ought to have respect for that! We ought to rejoice when the pure gospel is preached. We ought to rejoice that good men have made the decision to give their lives to preach it, and we ought to uphold their hands in so doing. If we can help such men let us help them. If we can encourage such men let us encourage them. Let us never discourage one who is preaching the word doing the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:1-5). Who knows the hundreds and thousands of souls that might be saved by their faithfully preaching the gospel of Christ?

Let us never treat faithful hard-working gospel preachers like the congregation who gave the preacher **one day** to get out of “their” house because he would not wink at arrogant adultery. Nor let us be like the rich sister who proudly proclaimed, “We don’t have to fire the preacher. We can make it hard enough on him he will leave.” Rather, as workers together (2 Cor. 6:1), let us support and encourage faithful gospel preachers everywhere and always. BL

## Preacher’s Pay

(*Figures from 1987. Editor.*) One nationally circulated “evangelical” magazine for preachers and church leaders recently devoted three articles in one issue to ministerial compensation. Doug Self in *What Is A Minister Really Worth?* calculated what a church would have to pay to contract for a minister’s services at the average hourly rate for experienced and capable speakers, counselors, home visitors and administrators. He arrived at an annual figure of \$167,500 to \$191,250.

Michael J. Springer in *Are You Being Paid Enough?* reported on a salary survey of 962 churches from a wide range of denominations. Southern Baptists had the highest average, \$50,138, with Presbyterians (\$49,934) and Episcopalians (\$46,811) close behind. At the bottom of the list were “independent Churches of Christ” with \$31,908. Only slightly higher were Nazarenes (\$33,420) and Disciples of Christ (\$34,069). Geography made a

difference, with the South and South Central regions being highest.

Walter M. Ketcham in *Negotiating For Adequate Compensation* urges letting those responsible, for setting the budget know the minister's needs and reasonable expectations. He advises: Know what others make, be flexible, show what you are worth to the church by specific examples of accomplishments, and meet personally with those responsible. (*Ministries Today*, 9/10/87).

From *Magnolia Messenger*, October, 1987

## What Is a Preacher Supposed to Do?

*Oran Rhodes*

I read a survey done by Joe Riggs of Jackson, Tennessee a few years ago in which church members were asked to state the percentage of his time they felt the preacher should spend in different works:

Sermon preparation 65%

General church work	25%
Administration	0%
Public relations	45%
Counseling	60%
Visiting non-members	80%
Visiting members	85%

All of this adds up to 360% of his time in church work. That evidently would leave very little time for a family or even for sleep. There are 168 hours in the week and thus one would need to add 436 more hours to his week in order for a preacher to get done what brethren think needs done. Someone else in commenting on this survey said: "It is also interesting to note that the highest percentage involved visiting members. Do we want pastors or preachers? Have we turned so inward, that we really want our preachers to spend 85% of their time holding the hands of the saved rather than reaching out to the unsaved?"

The main thing that comes across to me from this is that it is no wonder so many good men become discouraged and disgusted and get out of local preaching. If one were to pay attention to the desires expressed or to the complaints made, the preacher would never be able to do the work he became a gospel preacher to do. Brethren, we need to put away childish things and grow into maturity!

*P.O. Box 482; Olathe, KS 66061*

## How Does Your Minister Measure Up?

Results of a computerized survey indicate that the perfect preacher preaches exactly 15 minutes. He condemns sin, but never embarrasses anyone. He works from 8:00 A.M. until midnight and is also the janitor. He makes \$60.00 a week, wears good clothes, drives a new car and gives \$50.00 a week to the poor. He is 28 years old, is wonderfully gentle and handsome, loves to work with teenagers and spends countless hours with senior citizens. He makes 15 calls daily on families, shut-ins and hospital patients, and is always in his office when needed.

If your preacher does not measure up, simply send this letter to six other churches that are tired of their preachers, too. Then bundle up your preacher and send him to the church at the top of this list. In one week, you will receive 1,643 preachers. One of them should be perfect.

*Author Unknown*

## On Punching a Time Clock

A preacher answered the phone at home about 9:00 A.M., after being up past midnight the night before with a troubled couple. The caller said, "I wish I had a job where I didn't have to punch in at 8 o'clock every morning." The preacher replied, "I wish I could punch out at 5 o'clock every afternoon."

From *Preacher Talk*; Magnolia Bible College

# SIXTEENTH ANNUAL BELLVIEW LECTURES

## “The Church Triumphant”

May 12-15, 1991

### SUNDAY, MAY 12

9:00 AM The Church Triumphant—Shall Be Triumphant At Last  
10:00 AM The Church Triumphant—How Can I Help It Triumph?  
7:00 PM. SINGING  
7:15 PM. The Church Triumphant—Pictured By The Prophets  
8:00 PM. The Church Triumphant—The Church That Jesus Loved

Shan Jackson, Palacios, TX  
Ken Willis, Chattanooga, TN

Flavil Nichols, Jasper, AL  
Willie Bradshaw, East Point, GA

### MONDAY, MAY 13

9:00 AM The Church Triumphant—Is United In One Body  
9:45 AM The Church Triumphant—What Is Its Relationship To Churches Of Men?  
10:30 AM The Church Triumphant—Is It Essential To Salvation?  
11:15 AM The Church Triumphant—The Local Congregation Must Be Led By Qualified Men  
1:30 PM The Church Triumphant—Must It Wear A Scriptural Name?  
2:15 PM The Church Triumphant—Has Members Who Love One Another  
7:00 PM SINGING  
7:15 PM The Church Triumphant—Is It The Kingdom?  
8:00 PM The Church Triumphant—Must It Be Holy And Without Blemish?

Bobby Liddell, Pensacola, FL  
Roy Deaver, Austin, TX  
Bill Cline, Pensacola, FL  
Curtis Cates, Memphis, TN  
Stephen Law, Rockmart, GA  
Ronnie Hayes, Bear Creek, AL  
Noah Hackworth, San Mateo, CA  
Rex A. Turner, Sr., Montgomery, AL

### TUESDAY, MAY 14

9:00 AM The Church Triumphant—Helps Those In Need  
9:45 AM The Church Triumphant—What Is Its Relationship To Churches Of Men?  
10:30 AM The Church Triumphant—Worships God Acceptably  
11:15 AM The Church Triumphant—Must Teach The Truth & Oppose Error  
1:30 PM The Church Triumphant—Its Many Facets In The New Testament  
2:15 PM The Church Triumphant—Beginning In Jerusalem  
7:00 PM SINGING  
7:15 PM The Church Triumphant—According To God's Eternal Purpose  
8:00 PM The Church Triumphant—The Only One Of Which You Should Be A Member

Sam Soper, Jay, FL  
Roy Deaver, Austin, TX  
Melvin Hampton, Trenton, TN  
Harrell Davidson, Obion, TN  
W. R. Craig, Lucedale, MS  
David Brown, Austin, TX

Joe Gilmore, San Lorenzo, CA  
Foy Smith, Riverside, CA

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

9:00 AM The Church Triumphant—Preparation Prior To Pentecost  
9:45 AM The Church Triumphant—What Is Its' Relationship To Churches Of Men?  
10:30 AM The Church Triumphant—Victorious In The First Century  
11:15 AM The Church Triumphant—Effects Of Apostasy Then And Now  
1:30 PM The Church Triumphant—Has It Been Restored?  
2:15 PM The Church Triumphant—Uplifted In The Home  
7:00 PM SINGING  
7:15 PM The Church Triumphant—Grows In The Right Way  
8:00 PM The Church Triumphant—Takes The Gospel 7.b All The World

Ray Peters, Pensacola, FL  
Roy Deaver, Austin, TX  
Alton Hayes, Munford, AL  
Ira Rice, Memphis, TN  
Eddie Whitten, Bedford, TX  
Bobby Gayton, Cartersville, GA

Winfred Clark, Athens, AL  
Guss Eoff, Independence, MO

## My Aims as a Preacher

*Dub McClish*

I suppose we all have some goals or aims toward which we strive. Surely, all of us should have. I believe preachers need to study carefully the work that God has set out for then in His Word and then analyze the work they are doing. The result should be the setting of some goals and the statement of some aims that reflect what God expects of them.

Several years ago I formulated my aims as a preacher. It does me good to reflect on these periodically, lest I forget them. I also think the congregation where I preach should be reminded of my aims occasionally. The reason why I do some of the things I do and do not do some of the things I do not do is because of these aims. Therefore, the congregation is not only entitled to know them, but they need to know them. I aim to:

1. Be true to God's Word, regardless of the consequences, inconveniences, criticisms, or costs.
2. Seek God's approval above that of all others, in spite of what or how many men (or women) may disapprove.
3. Seek to gain as much understanding of God's Word as my abilities and opportunities may allow.
4. Spread to as many as I can what I have learned about God, Christ, and the Gospel.
5. Have something to say worth listening to each time I get up to preach.

6. Remember that I have a family and that I have responsibilities as a husband and a father as well as a preacher.
7. Provide a worthy and pure example of conduct for all ages of people to follow, but especially for the young.
8. Deal as fairly and as equally with every person, friend or foe, as I possibly can.
9. Refrain from being vengeful toward those who disagree with me or oppose me.
10. Learn the difference between the important and the unimportant and leave the unimportant things for last.

I am painfully aware that I do not always measure up to my aims. I am also painfully aware that I will be criticized if I do measure up to some of them. However, until someone can help me see more Scriptural and honorable aims, these shall continue to guide me.

*312 Pearl Street Denton, TX*

## A Preacher You Would Not Tolerate

*Dub McClish*

He frequently arrives a few minutes late for worship, disturbing others as he enters. He and his wife sit silently during the singing. He sometimes misses his Sunday morning Bible class because he stayed up so late on Saturday night that he just "could not" get up in time to attend. He seldom attends on Wednesday night. Sometimes he "has a headache" or is "just too tired." On other occasions there is a movie in town he wants to see or some program on television that appeals to him. He has missed a few times on Sunday evening when friends or relatives "dropped in" just before worship.

He drives an expensive car and a late model pickup, owns a summer home, a travel trailer, and a fishing rig. He lives in a more-than-comfortable house, dresses his family well, eats sumptuously, and spends a minimum of \$1,000 on the family vacation each year. However, he gives only \$10.00 per week to the Lord, and he does that only when it is convenient. He sometimes purposely does not give.

When he finds himself in the presence of those who drink, he drinks with them "to avoid offending them." When he attends denominational meetings he sings spiritual songs with their instruments and calls their preacher "Reverend," "to avoid offending them." His wife takes her walks in her halter top and short shorts in summer.

When asked to assist with the visitation program, he refuses because it conflicts with his bowling night. Besides, the last time he helped they would not do everything just like he thought it should be done.

Such a preacher would and should not be tolerated. He could only have a depressing influence on the church. Any growth in the church would be in spite of his influence instead of because of it, regardless of how powerful he might be in the pulpit.

While a congregation would not begin to tolerate such a preacher, it often tolerates other members of this sort. When the preacher applies the Word of God to such materialism and tries to root it out, brethren sometimes think he should be more tolerant. In fact, they will often listen much more to the materialistic brethren than to God's messenger who calls for repentance.

The Bible does not teach a double standard (Acts 10:34-35). The "convenience controlled" Christian should not be tolerated indefinitely, be he preacher, elder, deacon or any other saint.

*312 Pearl Street Denton, TX*

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## Correspondence

"The more I read in some of our papers and the expressions used by more and more brethren trouble me greatly. I wonder what the next five years will bring? If the liberal elements among us would repent and get back to the

Bible, we would not be compelled to resort to a 'negative' mode in our preaching and writing! I fear the fight has only begun." Jerri Manasco, Boaz, AL

"[*Defender*] has been a true asset to my growth and life in Christ's kingdom. I commend you all for its stand for the truth without compromise and I pray the Lord will continue to bless all your efforts in every future endeavor for the cause of Christ and His church." Bennie Thornton, Hampton, VA.

## Lectures

**Tenth Annual Southwest Lectures**, *God Hath Spoken*, April 14-17, 1991, Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748, (512) 282-2486: Lectureship Director, Bill Jackson.

**Sixth Annual Dierks Lectures**, *Great Lessons From The Master Teacher*, May 3-5, 1991, Church of Christ, Main Street, Dierks, AR 71833, (501) 286-2641: Contact James McRae.

**Eleventh Annual Tennessee Bible College Lectureship**, *Brotherhood Problems and Bible Answers*, May 5-9, 1991, Tennessee Bible College, Grandview Drive, Cookeville, Tennessee 38501, (615) 526-2616: Lectureship Director, Malcolm Hill.

**Sixteenth Annual Bellview Lectures**, *The Church Triumphant*, May 12-15, 1991, Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526, (904) 455-7595: Lectureship Director, Bobby Liddell.

**Firm Foundation Northwest Lectures**, *The Book That God Wrote*, August 1-4, 1991, Central Church of Christ, 1811 W Sylvester St., Pasco, Washington 99337, (509) 783-2504: Contact Ron Keever.

## Moving?

Be sure to send your change of address in plenty of time that you might not miss a single issue. Each copy returned because of an incorrect address costs us thirty-five cents. We also remove that addressee from our mailing list.

When you send in your new address, be sure to write legibly and to include your **old address** including Zip Code.

## Contributions

Genelle Woodard—\$10.00, Claude Watson—\$5.00, Harold Beale—\$10.00, Graham Cain—\$5.00, Nell Overton—\$5.00, W. J. Farris—\$10.00, Felix Campbell—\$10.00, Clarence Koehler—\$10.00, Olin Warmack—\$5.00, Kenneth Williams—\$20.00, Richard Haase—\$5.00, Glenn Jobe—\$2.00, Clyde Saucier—\$5.00, Ed Bryant—\$10.00, Mrs. J. E. Carr—\$3.00, Elsie Payne—\$5.00, Hazel Fulton—\$5.00, Luther Voyles—\$10.00, Lawrence Kilpatrick—\$10.00, Grace Scott—\$20.00, Ernest West—\$5.00, John Fuller—\$15.00, Leon Bowman—\$10.00, Leslie Valouche—\$15.00, Kenneth Edwards—\$20.00, Wilber Girod—\$20.00, and Beatrice Thomasson—\$10.00. Thanks for your help!

## Debates Upcoming

A debate on "congregational benevolence"— 7:00 PM., June 3-4, 6-7, 1991. June 3-4 at the building of the church of Christ on Sparkman Drive in Huntsville, AL, Roger Jackson affirms and Thomas N. Thrasher denies: "The Bible teaches that a church of the Lord's people may make a contribution, from its treasury, to a home for orphans." June 6-7 at the building of the Union Church of Christ near Somerville, AL, Thomas N. Thrasher affirms and Roger Jackson denies: "The Bible teaches that, in benevolence, a church of the Lord's people is restricted to the relief of needy saints only."

A debate on the A.D. 70 theory between W. Terry Varner and Max R. King is in the planning stages with details yet to be finalized. Adherents of the A.D. 70 theory teach all prophecy is fulfilled, salvation or remission of sins came in the destruction of Jerusalem rather than the blood of the cross, the church was resurrected out of the casket or grave of Judaism, the kingdom was powerless and without glory until Jerusalem fell, and all hope and judgment is complete. Robert R. Taylor, Jr. has agreed to moderate for Varner.

# DEFENDER

Volume XX

May 1991

Number 5

## Identifying Marks of the Church

*Jerry Moffitt*

To those really interested in pure undefiled Christianity, identifying marks of the church are crucial. More than that, such a study is important because we want to indoctrinate a new generation. (Commercials are used by firms to educate a new generation to the uniqueness of their product). Yet, something happened after World War II. Brethren had heard so many sermons on the church they seemed to think such sermons were no longer necessary. Now, we have a generation of age, but one that is vague on the differences between the church and denominationalism. This article is also a plea that we get back to basic, militant preaching and teaching lest we leave a generation ignorant of the uniqueness of the Lord's church and lest we leave the church anemic and open to each new strain of viral false teaching. Note these fifteen identifying marks of the church.

**1. It Had No Creed but Christ.** "Creed" means "I believe," and the only creed of the church is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (Mat. 16:16; John 20:30-31). In none other is there salvation (Acts 4:12). Only Jesus is approved of God (Acts 2:22), called to be the Son of God (Heb. 1:5). One difference in churches of Christ and denominationalism is we have no manmade creed.

**2. It Had No Rule of Faith but the Bible.** We abhor traditions of men (Mat. 15:7-9, 13) that oppose God's Word. The Word gives us the new birth (Jam. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:22-25). It gives life (Jam. 1:21; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-2). Further, it edifies (Acts 20:32), sanctifies (John 17:17), and furnishes us unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17). We have no human bylaws, catechism, or rule of faith but Scripture.

**3. The True Church Was Founded by Christ.** See Matthew 16:13-19. It was not founded by John Smith of the Baptists, John Wesley of the Methodists, nor Luther, nor Alexander Campbell, nor any other but Christ.

**4. The Church Was Founded at Jerusalem, According to Prophecy.** See Isaiah 2:1-4. Jesus told the apostles to wait at Jerusalem (Acts 1:4). He promised earlier the kingdom would come with power (Mark 9:1). He told them they would receive power when the Spirit came on them (Acts 1:8), which Spirit came in a powerful way (Acts 2:4). The kingdom and church are the same and are used interchangeably (Mat. 16:13-19; Heb. 12:23, 28). It all began at Jerusalem, not Rome, Salt Lake City, nor America.

**5. The Church Had a God-given Name.** Among others, it was called the church (Acts 8:1), the church of God (1 Cor. 1:2), the body of Christ (Eph. 4:4), the church of the living God (1 Tim. 3:15), the church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23), and the churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16). It never went by the name Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Mormon or Pentecostal.

**6. The Church Had a God-given Organization.** It was autonomous or self-governing. There was no central organization, presidency, synod or boards on earth. Locally, it had elders, deacons, evangelists, teachers and members (Phi. 1:1; Tit. 1; 1 Tim. 3; Eph. 4).

**7. The Church of the Bible Was Udenominational.** Really, it is anti-denominational. To denominate means "to divide." There is one body and that body is the church (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23). So, there can only be one church. Division is condemned (1 Cor. 1:10). Denominationalism is a deceptive umbrella under which hides false teaching and every unclean thing religiously.

**8. The Church Had Singing but Not Instrumental Music.** See Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. When one adds something of the same nature as that which God commanded that is an addition and not an aid. Mechanical instrumental music is an addition. It violates the law of exclusion as the Holy Spirit used it in Hebrews 1:5, 13.

**9. The Original Church Believed One Taught Had to Be Obedient to Be Saved.** See Hebrews 5:8-9; 1 Peter 1:22 and Romans 6:17. It never taught “faith only” It believed one was justified by works and not by faith only (Jam. 2:24). It taught faith without works was dead (Jam. 2:26). Jesus said, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 7:21). “Faith only” is a doctrine which lulls the unwary into eternal destruction and the early church had no such doctrine.

**10. The Early Church Believed There Were Certain Things to Do in Order to Receive Salvation and Become a Christian.** One had to hear (Rom. 10:17), believe (John 8:24; 3:16), repent (Acts 11:18; 17:30; 3:19), confess Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God (Mat. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10), and submit to baptism (Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). When we do what they did we receive salvation as they did. Contrary to almost every denomination, the early church taught baptism was essential to salvation.

**11. The Early Church Believed One Had to Be Stedfast or He Could Lose the Salvation He Once Possessed.** The early church: never believed a wicked son of God could receive the inheritance and go to heaven. He would be disinherited and, rather, go to hell (Heb. 3:12-14; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Pet. 3:17).

**12. The New Testament Church Never Baptized Infants.** It baptized believers (Mark 16:16), and those old enough to be disciples. The word disciple means “pupil.” They had to be pupils (Mat. 28:18-20). There is not one case of infant baptism in Scripture. Regarding households that were baptized, as in the case of the Philippian jailor, those baptized were old enough to “rejoice greatly” (Acts 16:34).

**13. The Church of the Bible Taught Spiritual Gifts Were to Cease When the Word Was Completed.** These gifts came through the laying on of the hands of the apostles (Acts 8:18), and there are no apostles today (Acts 1:21-22). Signs, **once written**, produced faith just as well as if they were witnessed (John 20:30-31). In context, the “perfect” (the written Word), came and spiritual gifts passed away (1 Cor. 13).

**14. The Early Church Had God-appointed Acts of Worship** There were no lamps, incense, bells, signs of the cross, images to bow to, reciting of creeds, instrumental music nor other shades of Judaism and paganism. When God specified what to use, that excluded all else. He specified the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20-34), singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), prayers (1 The. 5:17), giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2) and preaching (Acts 20:7).

**15. The Early Church Taught a Law of Pardon to the Erring Child of God.** He had to repent of his sins (Acts 8:22) and confess his sins to God (1 John 1:8-9). Then, he was cleansed, for repenting and confessing were part of walking in the light (1 John 1:7).

Yes, to the honest seeker of truth there is a pattern to duplicate in our generation. In their thirst to compromise, many will reject what they call “pattern theology.” Yet, when one does what those under apostolic guidance did; teaches what they taught; believes what they believed; organizes the way they were organized and uses their biblical nomenclature, that one is what they were.

There is an awesome difference between the church and denominationalism. The next generation needs to be taught to respect that difference and hate religious error as that which it is—a tool of Satan. We should not be ashamed to **indoctrinate** our young people in truth. As there are compromisers who want to blur the difference in truth and error, the church and denominationalism, may we train our young people that truth is worth contending for in a vigorous way (Jude 3). May we convince our young that we need a new generation of warriors. The times are as in the days of Nehemiah: “*every one* with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other *hand* held a weapon” (Neh. 4:17).

*PO Box 1275; Portland, TX 78374*

## *Editorial*

# Crucifying the King

## John 19:13-24

Pilate brought forth Jesus to the place called Gabbatha, or the Pavement, about 6:00 A.M., Friday morning, the day of preparation for the Passover. Pilate said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” One can imagine their rage at such a statement. Their cries were, “Take, take, crucify him.” Pilate asked one last time, “Shall I crucify your King?” In the Greek, the question is, “Your King, shall I crucify *him*?” with the emphasis on the words, “Your King.” It seems



Pilate wanted to show disapproval of their actions, but not to the point of preventing them.

“The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.” Truly, Jesus was not their King. They did not desire Him as King; thus, they refused Him and demanded His crucifixion thinking His death would end His claims and their problems with Him.

Crucifixion, the most horrible death devised by man, began. After the torment of the trials and surging, weak and weary, He bore His cross to Golgotha, “the place of the skull.” There they crucified Him between two thieves (“And he made his grave with the wicked”—Isa. 53:9). Many who were crucified lingered between life and death for days. Some went insane from the unbearable pain and thirst. Often, the Romans would leave the bodies suspended that the birds and animals might eat of the rotting flesh. The breaking of the leg bones, requested by the Jews, was a means of hastening death in view of the preparation of the Passover (v. 31).

“And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross...JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.” The custom was to place the charge against a criminal above his head on the cross, yet Christ had committed no crime. Pilate wrote in Hebrew, Greek and Latin that every Jew of every language might read what they had denied, yet what he had written.

The chief priests protested saying, “Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.” They denied His Kingship, and charged He only claimed to be King. Jesus had never claimed to be King of the earthly Jewish nation. His kingdom is not politically nor geographically bounded. He had said to Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence” (John 18:36). Pilate asked, “Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth” (v. 37). To the Jews, Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

The Romans assigned four soldiers to each one whom they crucified. The four assigned to Christ divided His garments. Customarily, they would divide all articles of clothing of the victim, but His coat was without seam and they decided to gamble for it. Unknown to the soldiers, this happened: “that the scripture might be fulfilled” (Psa. 22:18).

The simple garment, no doubt, had covered Him as He walked the dusty roads, healed the sick and raised the dead; and, when He sat at meat with sinners and publicans or taught individuals or the masses. It protected His body as He led the apostles, faced His opponents and prayed in the Garden. Now, it belonged to another. As He had entered, so He left this world naked (Job 1:21). His clothes were taken from Him. He left behind no land nor money. His body would rest in a borrowed tomb. He who was so rich gave up Heaven and became so poor that we might be rich in Him. He had given His life in teaching and ministering to others. He now gave His life for sin cursed man. Holding nothing back, He gave up His spirit (v. 30).

Do you suppose the soldier ever looked beyond the coat to the one who formerly wore it? Did he care about the life He lived and the death He died? What about us? Does His sacrifice on the cross matter to us today? BL

## Confusing Signs

*Ron Gilbert*

A few years ago, in a rural Tennessee area, there was a sign in front of a building with an unusual and confusing message. In big bold letters, the name of the community appeared, then these words, “Free Will Baptist, Christian, Church of Christ.” On occasion, people stopped to take pictures of this sign.

The sign sent out a confusing message. Some asked concerning those meeting at the building, “Are they Free Will Baptists or is this a Christian Church or a church of Christ meeting here?” A sign with one name tells something about what may be taught by that group, but when all these names appear the sign is confusing and contradictory.

Suppose a man knocked on your door and asked you to vote for him. You inquire, “What are you politically?” He replies, “I am of the Independent, Democrat, Republican, Communist, Conservative, Liberal Party” Would you be confused? Surely you would be puzzled as to where he stood.

Names are used to identify. In 1 Corinthians, Paul tells men to wear the name of the one who died on the cross,

not the name of Paul, Peter or any other man. Acts 4:12 states: "Neither is there salvation in any other name."

Jesus promised to build **His** church (Mat. 16:18). The Bible does not teach and lead men to be members of any man-made religious group. There is no authority for a "Free Will Baptist, Christian, Church of Christ." If one is a Christian, he is not a member of some man-made religious group with an unscriptural name.

There are many confusing signs along the road as we travel. Why not follow God's Word and be simply a Christian as taught in the New Testament (Acts 11:26)?

*Route 14 Box 647; Crossville, TN 38555*

## SIXTEENTH ANNUAL BELLVIEW LECTURES

### "The Church Triumphant"

**May 12-15, 1991**

#### SUNDAY, MAY 12

9:00 AM	The Church Triumphant—Shall Be Triumphant At Last	Shan Jackson, Palacios, TX
10:00 AM	The Church Triumphant—How Can I Help It Triumph?	Ken Willis, Chattanooga, TN
7:00 PM.	SINGING	
7:15 PM.	The Church Triumphant—Pictured By The Prophets	Flavil Nichols, Jasper, AL
8:00 PM.	The Church Triumphant—The Church That Jesus Loved	Willie Bradshaw, East Point, GA

#### MONDAY, MAY 13

9:00 AM	The Church Triumphant—Is United In One Body	Bobby Liddell, Pensacola, FL
9:45 AM	The Church Triumphant—What Is Its Relationship To Churches Of Men?	Roy Deaver, Austin, TX
10:30 AM	The Church Triumphant—Is It Essential To Salvation?	Bill Cline, Pensacola, FL
11:15 AM	The Church Triumphant—The Local Congregation Must Be Led By Qualified Men	Curtis Cates, Memphis, TN
1:30 PM	The Church Triumphant—Must It Wear A Scriptural Name?	Stephen Law, Rockmart, GA
2:15 PM	The Church Triumphant—Has Members Who Love One Another	Ronnie Hayes, Bear Creek, AL
7:00 PM	SINGING	
7:15 PM	The Church Triumphant—Is It The Kingdom?	Noah Hackworth, San Mateo, CA
8:00 PM	The Church Triumphant—Must It Be Holy And Without Blemish?	Rex A. Turner, Sr., Montgomery, AL

#### TUESDAY, MAY 14

9:00 AM	The Church Triumphant—Helps Those In Need	Sam Soper, Jay, FL
9:45 AM	The Church Triumphant—What Is Its Relationship To Churches Of Men?	Roy Deaver, Austin, TX
10:30 AM	The Church Triumphant—Worships God Acceptably	Melvin Hampton, Trenton, TN
11:15 AM	The Church Triumphant—Must Teach The Truth & Oppose Error	Harrell Davidson, Obion, TN
1:30 PM	The Church Triumphant—Its Many Facets In The New Testament	W. R. Craig, Lucedale, MS
2:15 PM	The Church Triumphant—Beginning In Jerusalem	David Brown, Austin, TX
7:00 PM	SINGING	
7:15 PM	The Church Triumphant—According To God's Eternal Purpose	Joe Gilmore, San Lorenzo, CA
8:00 PM	The Church Triumphant—The Only One Of Which You Should Be A Member	Foy Smith, Riverside, CA

#### WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

9:00 AM	The Church Triumphant—Preparation Prior To Pentecost	Ray Peters, Pensacola, FL
9:45 AM	The Church Triumphant—What Is Its' Relationship To Churches Of Men?	Roy Deaver, Austin, TX
10:30 AM	The Church Triumphant—Victorious In The First Century	Alton Hayes, Munford, AL
11:15 AM	The Church Triumphant—Effects Of Apostasy Then And Now	Ira Rice, Memphis, TN
1:30 PM	The Church Triumphant—Has It Been Restored?	Eddie Whitten, Bedford, TX
2:15 PM	The Church Triumphant—Uplifted In The Home	Bobby Gayton, Cartersville, GA
7:00 PM	SINGING	
7:15 PM	The Church Triumphant—Grows In The Right Way	Winfred Clark, Athens, AL
8:00 PM	The Church Triumphant—Takes The Gospel 7.b All The World	Guss Eoff, Independence, MO

## Religious Titles Are Not for You!

*Eddie Helms*

Matthew 6 and 23 show the Lord's estimation of the religion of many of the Jews. Theirs was a religion of show, pride and class distinctions which Jesus clearly denounced. The teachers and rulers of the Jews loved to make distinctions between themselves and others by an excessive display of dress (Mat. 23:5), and made efforts to show themselves distinguished and special in the places they sat (Mat. 23:6). They also made distinctions by using religious titles and degrees (Mat. 23:7-10). Jesus denounced these religious titles of distinction and the motivation

behind them! Jesus said religious titles are not for you! “be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ” (Mat. 23:8-10).

If Jesus were to come to earth today what would he say to the religious world as far as this context is concerned? He would still say religious titles are not for you!

He would say this to the ones today who seek, assume or accept the religious title of “Reverend.” Many denounce the religious title of reverend on the basis of Psalm 111:9, “Holy and reverend *is* his name.” Actually, both Hebrew words are used to describe attributes that God’s people should possess. Compare the words “holy” and “reverend” found in Psalm 111:9 with the word “fear” in Leviticus 19:3 and the word “holy” in Leviticus 11:44. It is the passage in Matthew that should be used to show the prohibition of the use of the religious title of reverend.

He would say this to the masses of people in denominationalism and Catholicism who use religious titles of distinction. The distinction between the so-called “clergy” and “laity” is a manmade distinction and, hence, is not from God! One would therefore recognize the religious titles of Pope, Father, Right Reverend, Mother Superior (and other such titles) of distinction are contrary to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Perhaps there are those even in the Lord’s church today who would hear the words of Jesus directed to them...religious titles are not for you! God’s children are brethren, joint heirs of the spiritual blessings in Christ (Mat. 23:8; Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:26-28). There are differing functions within the body of Christ and differing roles to perform. For example, a woman cannot function as an elder or a teacher in a mixed assembly (1 Tim. 2:8-15). But, there must be no hierarchy, no clergy or laity distinctions! The term brother suggests the equality of the relationship Christians have with one another. But, even this term can be used contrary to the command of Matthew 23. When one introduces his fellow Christian on a first name basis and then introduces the preacher as “Brother” Jones, is not the term brother being used in the same sense as the term reverend? One may use the term father to describe his biological relationship to someone and he may use the term doctor to describe the degree in the medical field one has achieved (Mat. 19:5; Eph. 6:2). However, when the term father is used as a religious title or the religious title of doctor is used as an appendage to one’s name, each is contrary to the Lord’s words of Matthew 23!

Let us all be in agreement with the Lord’s words! Let us all prove all things and hold fast to that which is good (1 The. 5:21)! Religious titles are not for me!

4218 McKee Road Charlotte, NC 28270

## A Word Study of “Brother”

*Tom W. Snyder*

An often used word in the Scriptures and in our speech is the term “brother.” It seems a simple word, yet simple words can be abused and need our attention. The word is used in the New Testament in a number of ways which can only be determined by the context.

**Brother is sometimes used in a family sense.** It denotes a brother or near male kinsman in the flesh. For example: Simon and Andrew were brothers (Mark 1:16). James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were brothers (Mark 1:19). Jesus had brethren of the flesh, or, more precisely, half-brothers (Mark 3:31-32). This point is the most recognized and the most important for if we understand the qualities of this earthly relationship, we can understand the other ways it is used.

**Brother is sometimes used in a national sense.** Ananias referred to “Brother Saul” in this way (Acts 9:17). Paul used this sense in Romans 9:3: “my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”

**Brother is sometimes used in a spiritual sense** to describe the relationship between those who are Christians. Sometimes it is specific in reference to a male Christian as opposed to a sister in Christ. For example, James 2:15: “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute.” Timothy is referred to as a brother (Col. 1:1; Heb. 13:23). Generally, it is used in a generic way to describe the Christian, both male and female. Peter says to: “Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood” (1 Pet. 2:17). “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer” (1 John 3:15). Brother here stands for the one, male or female, in Christ. In each case, we must allow the context to determine the sense in which brother is used.

Note these important points relative to the usage of brother in a spiritual sense.

**First, it is a relationship** Those who are brothers have the attributes of relations. That is, “the connections or associations drawing together persons, groups, or nations in personal, business, or diplomatic affairs” (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1978). The connection, of course, is in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).

**Second, it is a close and common relationship** Christ is what binds the relationship. The gospel is the method. Those who obey the gospel come into a fellowship with God and one another (1 John 1:7). Two people can be total strangers, yet in Christ they are already close and have something more powerful than flesh in common, that is, the blood of Christ.

**Third, the relationship of brotherhood implies equality** In the physical family, the strife resulting from seeking preeminence among the siblings causes nothing but problems. The parents who show favoritism immerse the family in turmoil (see Jacob’s family). We concede that in many societies the firstborn has a place of preeminence; however, in Christ the only firstborn (in the sense of preeminence within this family) is Christ (Col. 1:18). Paul proclaims that in Christ, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). Some do not like equality. They feel they must exalt themselves, but the only way to greatness in the church is through service (Mat. 23:1-12). Hence, the only positions in the church to which honor is due are places of service, such as the eldership (1 Tim. 5:17). Even then, the position of equality is to be maintained—they are not exalted to some clergy, they are brethren.

We need to be careful in our use of the term brother (or sister) that we do not use it in a frivolous manner. At the same time, we must not go to the opposite extreme and use it as a title. A dictionary gives these definitions among others: “3: a fellow member—used as a title for ministers in some evangelical denominations; 4: one related to another by common ties or interests” (*Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1965). From what we have studied from the Scriptures, we must reject the first definition because it uses brother as a title or position over others. The latter definition more closely follows God’s Word.

Some have suggested that in some settings, for instance, where there are Bible teachers, they should be called “Brother” or “Mister” as a sign of respect. Certainly, respect is due a teacher, but is that the purpose of the term brother? We have observed already the term implies equality. Notice the definition of “Mister” and the dilemma one finds oneself in when he tries to equate that with brother: “1. A title of respect used when speaking to or of a man...A form of address used without a name” (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1978). What shall we do? Lower “Mister” (a title of respect) to “brother” (equality, a relationship), or raise “brother” to the position of “Mister”?

Brother is a wonderful word to describe a beautiful relationship which disciples of Christ enjoy. Let us leave the world, with its power struggles and status symbols, out of it. Let us use Bible terms the way the Bible uses them.

*Route 2 Box 190 Byrdstown, TN 38549*

## To Which Nation Do You Belong?

*Robin W. Haley*

Actually, this article has no intentions of discussing any one nationality or race. Rather, its aim is at being a play on words—words which end with “nation.” Thus, the “nation” to which you, the reader, belong will depend upon whether you have been obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7), whether you have obeyed the gospel (2 The. 1:8).

There are three nations which would fit into the negative category and one that fits into a positive category. First, we shall consider the negative nations. To begin, there is the **condemnation**. This word is found quite a number of times in the New Testament. To sum up those who comprise this nation, we refer to Romans 8:1. Please note who is not in this nation: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Thus, the opposite must be the case: those not in Christ are in condemnation.

Second, we consider the **contamination**. These are they who have not been washed by the blood of the Lamb. They are still in their sins and are thus filthy before God. Note the close relationship between these first two nations. For one to be in **contamination** is to be under **condemnation**.

Finally, the third of these negative nations is the **Denomination**. This is a most misleading nation for one to be a citizen of because there are so many good, moral people within it. But, for one to be a part of the **denomination**,

one must be yet out of Christ, for there are **no** denominations in the Bible. God adds not one person to any denomination, but rather only to the church, the body of Christ. This takes place, of course, when one obeys the faith, obtains remission of sins and becomes a Christian.

Perhaps the reader will recognize for one to be in the **denomination** is to be under **condemnation** and still in **contamination**. There is but one solution for those citizens of these nations. They must become citizens of that one nation of which we spoke which is in the positive category This is the nation in which there is not condemnation. Contamination has been removed from all those who enter this nation. This nation and the denomination have no fellowship, indeed they are at complete odds with one another. This nation is the only one of these four which is found in the Bible which holds blessing and promises eternal life. Peter speaks of it in 1 Peter 2:9: "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation." Friend, to which nation do you belong?

PO. Box 153 Scott City, KS 67871

## Bellview Lectures Information

**Housing.** Hospitality Inn, 4910 Mobile Highway—\$34.00 for 1-4 people (children stay free), includes free breakfast—call (904) 453-3333. Be sure to tell them you are with Bellview Lectures.

Free housing in local homes provided on a first come, first served basis. Call (904) 455-7595.

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## Correspondence

"I appreciate getting *Defender* and your stand for the truth." J. Donald Mash, St. Albans, WV.

"I want to express my appreciation for *Defender* and all those who are involved with its publication. I certainly look forward each month to its arrival here in Nebraska ...I have removed myself from the Church of Christ because of its liberal teachings, and for the last year have worshipped in my own home. I am telling you this so that you can better understand how thankful I am for churches and individuals like yourselves who are defending by publication God's truths!..." Eddie L. Terhune, McCool Junction, NE.

"A line or two to express my appreciation for the *Beacon* and *Defender* for they are informative which we need to know and understand enabling us to grow in the Lord daily" Thomas Green, Westville, IN.

## Lectures

**Sixth Annual Dierks Lectures**, *Great Lessons From The Master Teacher*, May 3-5, 1991, Church of Christ, Main Street, Dierks, AR 71833, (501) 286-2641: Contact James McRae.

**Eleventh Annual Tennessee Bible College Lectureship**, *Brotherhood Problems and Bible Answers*, May 5-9, 1991, Tennessee Bible College, Grandview Drive, Cookeville, Tennessee 38501, (615) 526-2616: Contact Malcolm Hill.

**Sixteenth Annual Bellview Lectures**, *The Church Triumphant*, May 12-15, 1991, Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526, (904) 455-7595: Contact Bobby Liddell.

**Firm Foundation Northwest Lectures**, *The Book That God Wrote*, August 1-4, 1991, Central Church of Christ, 1811 W Sylvester St., Pasco, Washington 99337, (509) 783-2504: Contact Ron Keever.

**Fifth Annual Greater Kanawha Valley Lectureship**, *Study To Show Thyself Approved*, August 6-9, 1991, Washington Street Church of Christ, 601 Washington Street, St. Albans, West Virginia 25177, (304) 727-0761: Contact J. Donald Mash.

## Contributions

Wilber Girod—\$20.00, Lela Leftwich—\$10.00, Ernest Bentley—\$20.00, Dale McCaleb—\$5.00, D. W. Coin—\$20.00, Ernest Bohm—\$20.00, Odessa Russell—\$10.00. Thanks for your help!

## Book Review

*Great Lessons From ROMANS and GALATIANS* by Andrew M. Connally, 1990, Connally Publications, 204 Shadywood Lane, Seagoville, TX 75159, 110 pages, \$5.00 + postage and handling.

From the powerful and prolific pen of Andrew Connally comes another valuable volume. Forty chapters cover Romans and Galatians (twenty-two and eighteen respectively) in a pointed yet practical way. Each lesson title and text precedes the Proposition, Objective, Introduction, Body (consisting of three points on average) and Conclusion. Because of their organization and concise presentation, the lessons lend themselves easily to study and teaching.

This quotation shows the author's intent: "Romans and Galatians are powerful weapons for God's soldiers who fight in the Great Wars of Life. May God bless these lessons to His glory."

# DEFENDER

Volume XX

June 1991

Number 6

## Sowing the Seed the Word of God

*Mark Nichols Posey*

John Chapman was born in Massachusetts in 1774. The pioneers loved him and rightfully so. For forty years he gathered apple seeds from cider mills in Pennsylvania and planted them all over Ohio, Illinois and Indiana. He set up nurseries in various places and went from one to the other tending them.

Pioneer children in the Middle West had apples to eat because of John's labors. Adults and children loved him and always welcomed his visits. Indians, who were often hostile to other white men, were very protective of John because they thought his mind was different from other white men. The settlers along the way fed him, gave him shelter and told many stories about his good deeds.

Here was a man with only one mission—to carry the apple seeds of the East to the newly cleared West, so the pioneers might have the juicy fruit to eat. He lived to see thousands of acres of orchards that came from the seeds and plants in his nursery. John died at Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1845. We know John Chapman as "Johnny Appleseed."

We need more men and women like Johnny Appleseed today. Men and women that want to sow the seed to the world—not apple seed but the seed of the Word of God. Jesus says (in Luke 8:11): "The seed is the word of God." Are you sowing that seed?

Jesus commands, not asks, begs, nor pleads but commands in Matthew 28:19-20 to sow the seed to the entire world: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen"

The message is the gospel of Jesus Christ, His death, burial and resurrection as shown in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. I do not know of anything other than the gospel of Jesus Christ that can convert the soul of man. Note what James says: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (Jam. 1:21). Paul says the Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15). The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). With no message, there is no power.

The method is simply, "Go...preach/teach...baptize." We can go by plane, car, bus, foot or some other convenient method. The command is to go, not how to go. Such is the same with the tools we use. Some may choose to use filmstrips, VHS video series, correspondence courses, home Bible studies, preaching or some other effective method. There are so many good tools available to use in sowing the seed, but a tool is only as good as the craftsman. When we mold and shape a life with the gospel of Jesus Christ, that method is the best method of all.

The motivation seems to be the biggest problem. Most have no problem with the message. The method is just a matter to choose. But the motivation is the drawing line between going and staying. Getting Christians to take the gospel in hand, heart and mind to a lost and dying world is growing harder each day.

If a person is not self-motivated, what can be done? I believe in the power of example. If someone is a lazy soul-winner, give them a motivating example to follow. Jesus left humanity an example. Christians follow that good example to the best of their ability. Probably the best way to motivate an individual to evangelize is to show them an evangelistic spirit in yourself. The desire to save souls is better caught than taught. The message and method are useless without motivation.

Are you a Johnny Appleseed for Christ? If not, start sowing the seed today. Jesus said: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).

P.O. Box 376; Arab, AL 35016

## Editorial

# Christ's Crucifixion

**Companions of the King** (John 19:25-27). At the crucifixion of Christ, four faithful women stood close by Mary, mother of Jesus; His mother's sister; Mary, wife of Cleophas; and Mary from Magdala in Galilee (Luke 8:2), kept their vigil at the foot of the cross.

John, beloved disciple and inspired writer of this gospel account was also there. Into his care, Jesus placed His mother. Where was Joseph, Mary's husband? The placing of Mary into the care of John and no mention of Joseph for a space of years in the gospel narratives strongly suggest Joseph had died earlier.

Why not intrust Mary to His fleshly brethren? Jesus had fleshly brethren (half-brothers for Joseph was not His biological father). Mary was not a perpetual virgin. She had other children. Those in His own country knew of Mary, Joseph, Jesus and Jesus' brethren. They said, "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?" (Mat. 13:55-56).

John points out Jesus' brethren did not believe in Him as the Christ, the Son of God: "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him" (John 7:1-5). His brethren, at this time, were unbelievers; thus, Jesus put Mary in the care of that apostle whom He trusted and loved, John.

**Confirmation of the King** (John 19:28-37). "All things were accomplished." Jesus finished all He came to do. His work, to do the will of the Father was done (John 6:38). God's plan of Christ's coming, living and dying that through Him all men might have the opportunity to live abundantly now and eternally saw its completion. Through prophecy, God revealed the events of the Christ in minute detail. After His resurrection and before His ascension, Jesus spoke to His apostles: "These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). Even His thirst on the cross was fulfillment of Scripture (Psa. 69:21).

None other has ever lived in whose life even a few of the specific prophecies about the Messiah have found fulfillment. None other shall ever live in whose life such prophetic fulfillment shall be found. Christ fulfilled the prophecies about Him without fail. Truly, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The Jews rejected Him, but the Word of God ("in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms") confirmed Him as King of Kings and the only begotten Son of God.

Again, according to prophecy, "A bone of him shall not be broken" (John 19:36; Psa. 34:20). By such, the prophet shows Jesus to be the Passover Lamb (Exo. 12:46; 1 Cor. 5:7). Another fulfilled prophecy: "They shall look on him whom they pierced," is from Zechariah 12:10. Jesus said, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Death did not defeat Him. From it, He came victorious (Gen. 3:15). He offers victory to those who will follow Him. As Paul penned: "O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

The Hebrews writer, by inspiration, made these amazing affirmations. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14-15; cf., 9:15-17; 13:20-21).



He “delivered up his spirit.” He could have called legions of angels to destroy His persecutors. He could have come down from the cross, but He chose to humble Himself and give His life to pay man’s sin debt (Phi. 2:5-8), experiencing death for every man (Heb. 2:9). His death for the sins of mankind brought salvation and confirmed His deity as the Son of God (Isa. 53; John 3:16). BL

## What Do You See?

*Bill Brandstatter*

Many people perceive events in different ways. Some were opposed to the Middle East war. Others were in favor of it. Four eyewitnesses to an automobile accident may have different ways of looking at the same accident. The gospel accounts were written by four eyewitnesses: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Each stated the events of the life of Christ in a different manner.

Mary stood outside the sepulchre weeping when someone addressed her. What did she see? She thought the man was the gardener, when it was really Christ (John 20:15). When Lot looked at Sodom, he saw its well watered plains (Gen. 13:10). No doubt, he considered this a good place for his cattle. What he did not see was a wicked and exceedingly sinful city (Gen. 13:13).

Nehemiah viewed the dilapidated walls of Jerusalem. What did he see? He saw the need for the city to be rebuilt (Neh. 4:17). When Jesus saw the woman caught in adultery, what did he see? Others saw the sinfulness of the woman, but Jesus saw the opportunity to teach others (John 8-9). Jesus spoke in parables because people in His day were seeing but not perceiving (Mat. 13:14). What do you see when you look at certain situations?

**What Do You See When You Look at the World?** Do you see a place to be avoided at all costs (1 John 2:15-17; Jam. 4:4)? Do you see a place badly in need of the glorious gospel of Christ (Mark 16:15—“into all the world”)? Or, is your view of the world centered around looking for ways to fulfill your carnal appetites (2 Pet. 2:14)?

**What Do You See When You Look at Your Family?** Do you see merely a group of people who rely on you for the necessities of life (1 Tim. 5:8)? Or, do you see an institution ordained by God with certain spiritual obligations attached (Deu. 6:5-7; Eph. 6:4)?

**What Do You See When You Look at a Brother or Sister in Christ?** Do you see someone who is a nuisance or a troublemaker, a person whom you dislike (Mat. 5:21-26)? Or, do you see a person with whom you have a special relationship as children of God (Gal. 3:26)? Do you realize you are joint-heirs with Christ and that person of the riches of the Father (Rom. 8:17)? Do you see a person with whom you are to have a special relationship (Rom. 12:10; Gal. 6:1-2; Mat. 18:15)?

Some situations are clearly seen. Others are not clear because of the darkness that surrounds them. A person who hates his brother is in darkness (1 John 2:9). The Christian’s life can be rich and fulfilling. The relationships one to another can be beautiful. It just depends on what you see.

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## How the Devil Deals

*Eddie Helms*

Man’s enemy, the devil, is a formidable one. He is man’s adversary (1 Pet. 5:8); the “destroyer” (Rev. 9:11); the accuser of the brethren (Job 1:6-12); and, a murderer and a liar (John 8:44). Man should not be ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11). The Bible shows how the devil deals with man and teaches how man might quench the fiery darts of the evil one (Eph. 6:16). The devil dealt with the Lord (Mat. 4:1-11). How did he deal with him and what can be learned from this event?

**When the Devil Deals with Men, He Offers Enticements.** He “offered” Jesus the kingdoms of the world. How incredible are the deceptions of the devil! Jesus is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the world being His already! He is already the King! The enticements had no power over Him and He fought them with “it is written.” The devil offers enticements to men today. James describes how the devil, as a shrewd fisher of men, lures man to sin by enticing bait (Jam. 1:13-15). Let man learn to say no to the devil’s lures with “it is written” (Psa. 119:11)!

**The Enticements of the Devil Are Appealing.** After fasting for forty days, the Lord's performing a miracle to provide food for Himself and to "prove" His divinity could certainly be appealing. Sin was appealing to Eve in the Garden. The pleasures of sin appeal to men today (Heb. 11:25). Men must, however, look at the rest of the story. We need to see the consequences of serving the devil and participating in sin.

**The Appealing Enticements of Sin Have Strings Attached.** "If thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Mat. 4:9). The string attached to all sin is that man will become a slave to the devil himself (Rom. 6:16). Another string is sin severs one's relationship to God (Isa. 59:1-2). Jesus, knowing this, did not sin (Heb. 4:15). The Bible gives man ample warning today. Let us learn this lesson!

The Bible teaches if one "cuts a deal" with the devil, the results are deadly. Of course, the devil never tells this side of the story. God tells man, "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). The devil never speaks of the shame, remorse and the horrors of hell that await the ones who serve sin instead of God (Dan. 12:2; Mark 9:43-44; Rev. 14:9-11; 20:15; 21:8).

Yes, man has a formidable foe, the devil. The Bible shows man the complete "hand" the devil deals! God has provided a weapon much more powerful that can overcome the enemy! Man has the Word of God, the same weapon the Lord used Himself (Eph. 6:17; 2 Cor. 10:3-5). Dear reader, use the Word of God and overcome the deals of the devil through faith (1 John 5:4)!

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## Moderation

*Larry Middlebrooks*

Today, there comes a call for moderation in the church of our Lord. Brethren who believe and teach the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God are termed by some "extremists" or "legalists." The modern religious movements of intellectual liberties, individual freedoms from restraint and the new exegesis of the Scriptures directly contradict the very doctrine of Christ that the apostles died to protect. The Word of God is not a mediocre book limited in scope and effect.

Modern (mis)translations and the "new hermeneutic" are undermining the very foundation of the church. Such perversions are destroying the unity of the body and the faith of many. If faithful Christians do not take a stand against these false views, the Lord's church will cease to be the Lord's church. I, you or both of us may misunderstand God's Word; however, if we understand God's Word, we will understand it alike. Jesus plainly states: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Some well educated men vocalize new and modern views that oppose sound doctrine. When men say there are Christians in all denominations and the Lord's church should fellowship all religious groups because they are all our brothers, faithful brethren must take a stand. There is no room for moderation when doctrinal error is involved. False brethren are denying the very doctrine of Christ saying the doctrine of Christ which has held the churches of Christ in America united for nearly two hundred years is in error. It is not a time for moderation in the church, but a time to return to the old paths of first century Christianity. Faithful Christians, as Paul, must be: "set for the defence of the gospel" (Phi. 1:17). Paul was not a man of moderation where error was involved. He could not and would not stand idly by and see the gospel of Christ suffer (Gal. 1:6-10).

Many follow well known brethren and do not ascertain the message they assert. The Bible reveals false teachers can appear as angels of light: "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:13-14). Some brethren are so open-minded to every new idea they are destroying the church. The trend in many congregations is toward liberalism, modernism or some other "ism" that will build a "modern" church.

Elders must take their responsibilities seriously. Some let their duties fall into a category of a popularity contest and become entertainment counselors and promoters. What has happened to the biblical commandments for the qualifications and duties of elders (1 Tim. 3:1-11; Tit. 1:6-9)? "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Congregations appoint unqualified men to the eldership. Perhaps a man met some

of the qualifications, but not all. Perhaps he was the best man in the congregation, but if he does not qualify in all aspects, he should not be appointed.

Elders have responsibility in: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Tit. 1:9). Likewise, the elders' wives must qualify: "Even so *must their wives be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" (1 Tim. 3:11). There is no authority for moderation in the qualifications and duties of elders.

The defense of the gospel has fallen, almost totally, upon the shoulders of faithful gospel preachers. Yet, when a faithful gospel preacher points out doctrinal error or sin in a congregation, many times the preacher must move.

Dear brethren, study to show thyself approved unto God, rightly dividing his word, for whom do we seek to please, men or God? "For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). Preach the Word!

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## "Give Attendance to Reading"

*Steve Miller*

Paul instructed Timothy to continue reading the Scriptures (1 Tim. 4:13). Paul's advice included reading the Old Testament Scriptures. Regular reading of the Bible is essential to growing spiritually. Reading could also include reading uninspired literature pertaining to knowledge of the Word of God.

The spiritual weakness that is a hindrance to church growth today is a lack of Bible knowledge. Thirty minutes on Sunday morning is clearly not enough for the whole week. If this is all you study the Bible you are undernourished and are in a sick condition being underfed spiritually. Growing spiritually is done through studying the Bible. Helpful to that growth are books pertaining to the Bible along with gospel papers.

It is easy to see that some brethren do not read any literature such as gospel papers. This trend shows brethren are not interested in the progress of the church or the lack of progress that concerns the church of our Lord. By reading, we stay alert to the forces of evil that constantly plague the church.

Elders, are you prepared to answer a question on the Boston/Crossroads movement if some member were to ask you? Could you explain the sinful compromising of some of our brethren with the Christian Church? Do you know enough about the modern versions of the Bible to protect the flock from the dangers in them? Many elders, preachers and Bible class teachers are simply in the dark about current trends in the church. Brethren, let's start reading.

The Bible is perfect (2 Tim. 3:16-17) and reveals what God wants us to do (John 14:15). By studying the Bible we can know how to "rightly divide the word" (2 Tim. 2:15). When we lack in Bible knowledge, the walls start to cave in. False teachings start creeping in and unscriptural practices (instrumental music, women preachers, special days, choruses, etc.) are accepted as gospel and taught by "grievous wolves" who try to deceive sincere people by blinding them to the truth.

Brethren, this is happening right under our noses. If there was ever a time to get back to the Bible, surely, it is now. I pray you will "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim. 4:15).

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## In the Likeness of Henry and Cranmer

*Tom W. Snyder*

The sixteenth century saw the beginning of many protestant denominations. They are referred to as protestant because they 'protested some of the actions of the Roman Catholic Church. When it became evident the Catholic Church would not be changed on a point of doctrine, the protesters formed another church which could agree with them. For the most part, it was a noble effort; however, they did not go far enough. They should have gone back to the New Testament and restored the New Testament church instead of trying to reform error.

One effort was not so noble. The Church of England had its beginning simply because a man did not want to keep

his wife. King Henry VIII wanted a divorce from his wife, Catherine of Aragon, so he could marry another. The church said, "No": Henry said, "Yes," and as King, passed a law making himself the supreme head of the Church of England. He divorced Catherine and appointed the Lutheran, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. Cranmer, in turn, sanctioned the King's marriage to Anne Boleyn. There remains little difference between the Catholic Church and the Church of England.

What has this interesting bit of history to do with us? There are many today who have the spirit of Henry VIII and Thomas Cranmer. Many want a divorce for reasons other than fornication (Mat. 19:9). The church of our Lord says, "No" (because the Scriptures say so): they say, "Yes," so they set about to establish their own ways and find a Thomas Cranmer to sanction their actions. That they are finding such teachers should not surprise us, for Paul the apostle said: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

The church of Christ is being split asunder today because of this spirit. Let us have the spirit to live only by God's Word, preach only God's Word (2 Tim. 4:1-2), and fellowship only those who are walking in God's Truth (1 John 1:7; 2 John 9-10).

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## Forsake Not

*Robin W. Haley*

That absenteeism is the most common problem every congregation of the Lord's church faces is readily agreed to by all. There surely are no preachers, elders or other concerned Christians who are not at least to some degree frustrated by the blatant forsaking of the assembly by faint-hearted brethren. This article shall consider again those things a Christian misses by not assembling with the saints as he/she ought.

The very least a Christian has turned his back upon is the privilege of coming before the Creator of all things, as a faithful child in worship and giving a sacrifice of praise in the name of Jesus. What person would throw away an invitation to have an audience with the President, or perhaps with a monarch, let alone an invitation to actually converse and sit at table to eat with such? The main problem is those afore described have not really thought through nor taken seriously their relationship with God, what the purpose of worship is, nor what their duty is to their God and Savior.

Those who forsake the assembly miss out on the fellowship designed to last eternally. It seems really strange how some act like they could not care less about the brethren, whether in worship or other planned fellowships, by never or rarely ever showing up. Yet, they think they will go to Heaven with those same brethren and be together **forever**!

Closely linked to fellowship, the Christian who forsakes the assembly also misses out on edification. Edification is strictly personal. It is not so much the design of worship, but it is one of the "built in" benefits or "by-products" of worship.

A third item forsaking brethren miss out on is instruction. This is usually the point about which some, who try to justify their sin, will quibble. They allege they can get as much or more out of their own personal Bible reading at home as at worship. This writer finds it hard to believe that those who forsake the assembly actually take time at home to study their Bible. If they truly studied their Bible, they would soon learn of their error, repent and not forsake any longer!

The fourth and fifth aspects of worship the lazy member misses are those of privilege of giving and the sobering proclamation of the death of our Lord in the Supper. The dedicated Christian knows the joy and reward of dutiful, bountiful and sacrificial giving to the Lord's cause. It is the grateful Christian who would not within his or her power, willfully forsake meeting with those of like precious faith about the Lord's table.

Now, though it is (or should be) obvious to all that outright disobedience is involved, we shall list those sins involved in forsaking the assembly.

1. There is the foremost disobedience of Hebrews 10:25, from which our title is taken.
2. There is the failure to edify the brethren when opportunity was present to do so.

3. There is the willful disobedience of not giving as per 1 Corinthians 16.

4. There is the failure to eat the Lord's supper as was a part of the apostles' doctrine and practice which all faithful first century Christians followed (Acts 2:42; 20:7, etc.).

The most frightening point in all of this is: Christians who willfully forsake the assembly and, thus, willfully sin in all the areas listed above will miss Heaven. That is the point made in the context of Hebrews 10:25 as verse 26 clearly teaches.

Reader, if you are guilty of the sin of forsaking the assembly on the first day (or any assembly of the church) we implore you: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness" (Acts 8:22) and cease that which is so obviously sinful!

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## Baptism and the Bible

*Jerry Jenkins*

Baptism is viewed by many as a meritorious work by which man earns his redemption. If this were a Biblical teaching, then baptism would have little to do with man's salvation. It is true that baptism is an action performed by man, but then so also is faith, repentance, confession, etc. Biblical baptism is a test of faith, an act of godly submission, an accepting of God's grace, a prerequisite to salvation.

### **Does the Bible Mention Baptism?**

Perhaps the first question which should be investigated is: "Does the Bible ever mention baptism?" The Bible does mention baptism, in fact, the word baptism occurs in 22 verses, baptisms 1 verse, baptize in 7 verses, baptized in 51 verses, baptizeth in 2 verses, baptizest in 1 verse and baptizing in 4 verses. The word "baptizo" occurs (in all forms) more than 100 times. It is mentioned by 6 different writers in 11 books. Baptism is a Bible subject. There are 8 different baptisms mentioned in the Bible: (1) baptism of Moses (1 Cor. 10:2); (2) baptism of John the Baptist (Mat. 3:11); (3) baptism of suffering (Mat. 20:22); (4) baptism of fire (Mat. 3:11); (5) baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5); (6) baptism of Jesus' disciples (John 4:1); (7) baptism for the dead (1 Cor. 15:29); and, (8) baptism commanded by Jesus which has to do with our salvation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Mark 16:16).

### **Does the Bible Mention the Mode of Baptism?**

The Bible states that baptism is a burial. Paul stated in Colossians 2:12: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." To the Christians at Rome, he stated: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

Both the Hebrew and Greek languages have a word which means "to sprinkle." The Hebrew word is *zawrak*. When Job's friends came to visit him in his affliction, the text states: "And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him [Job] not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven" (Job 2:12).

The New Testament word for "sprinkle" is *rhantizo*. It occurs 3 times in the book of Hebrews (9:19, 21; 10:22). The words "sprinkle" or "pour" are never used in the Bible for that act of faith commanded by Jesus and His followers for redemption. The word employed is *baptizo* which means to bury.

### **Does the Bible Command Infant Baptism?**

The following always characterized Bible baptism: (1) Only the taught were proper subjects for baptism (Mat. 28:18-20); (2) Only those old enough to believe in Jesus were proper subjects for Bible baptism (Mark 16:16); (3) All subjects baptized in the Bible first repented of their sins (Acts 2:38). An infant does not have the ability to meet any of the above Bible characteristics.

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## Correspondence

“A wonderful preacher friend of mine recently presented your April and May editions of *Defender*. THIS PUBLICATION IS TERRIFIC! I am a 1988 graduate of FHU, and have recently begun my first full time work...Since arriving I have been battling the liberal element’ on almost a daily basis...DEFENDER (especially the May issue) has helped me in my work to teach the Word as unerringly as possible. Please place me on your list of subscribers...and please accept this \$15.00 contribution for your continued success. May God continue to bless your efforts and the efforts of all those who diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6).” TC, MO

“I enjoy reading all issues of your paper and look forward to future issues...Your time, effort and work for the Lord is appreciated. God bless you and your staff.” Mark Posey, Arab, AL

“We are planning to leave for Tanzania, East Africa in September...Thanks so much for your work in DEFENDER and with the lectureship and books.” Eddy Gilpin, Mammoth Spring, AR

## Lectures

**Firm Foundation Northwest Lectures**, *The Book That God Wrote*, August 1-4, 1991, Central Church of Christ, 1811 W Sylvester St., Pasco, Washington 99337, (509) 783-2504: Contact Ron Keever.

**Fifth Annual Greater Kanawha Valley Lectureship**, *Study To Show Thyself Approved*, August 6-9, 1991, Washington Street Church of Christ, 601 Washington Street, St. Albans, West Virginia 25177, (304) 727-0761: Contact J. Donald Mash.

## Contributions

George LeHew—\$5.00, Tommy Driver—\$12.00, Richard Watson—\$5.00, TC—\$15.00. Thanks for your help!

## Book Review

**Review 1.** *The Bible And The Baptist Manual* by Eddy Gilpin, PO. Box 251, Mammoth Spring, AR 72554, 89 pages, \$3.00 + \$1.00 postage and handling.

Brother Gilpin compares (and contrasts) some of the teachings in *The Standard Manual For Baptist Churches* (1951 edition by Hiscox) with the Word of God. He asks, “If the two are seen to be in complete harmony, one must ask, ‘Why have both?’ If the *Standard Manual* is shown to add to God’s word, does it not then teach too much and should thus be rejected on that basis? Again, if it is shown to teach less than the Bible teaches, does it not then teach too little and, accordingly, should be cast aside as a deviation from inspired truth?”

Each section begins with a notation from the *Standard Manual* giving page number and either the note number or subject heading followed by the quotation. A careful examination of the quotation in the light of the Truth of God’s Word follows.

*The Bible And The Baptist Manual* clearly and lovingly exposes the inconsistencies of the doctrines from men held to by many in the Baptist denomination. It should prove very helpful in the Christian’s preparation to oppose

such error and to reach those souls enslaved by denominational false teaching.

**Review 2.** *Is It Possible For Christians To Worship God Acceptably In A Denomination?* (Tract), by Andrew Connally, 1990, Connally Publications, 510 N. Kaufman, Seagoville, TX 75159, \$15.00/100.

Brother Connally originally prepared this material for a lecture in the 1991 Bellview Lectures. Because of its quality and timeliness and the tremendous good that could come from its wide distribution, we encouraged him to publish it in tract form. In it, he shows denominations are: (1) of human origin; (2) wear unscriptural names; (3) teach an unscriptural plan of salvation; and, (4) teach and practice unscriptural worship. "Now, how in the world could a child of God be acceptable to God, living, working, supporting and worshipping in a denomination? It is impossible. No Christian should ever be found worshipping in a denomination. For it is sin!"

## A Report on the 1991 Bellview Lectures

*Bobby Liddell*

The 1991 Bellview Lectures, May 12-15, are now history. Even so, we trust the powerful lessons presented on *The Church Triumphant* shall for many, many years to come continue to do good and bring joy to God by extolling the Christ and His blood-bought body, *The Church Triumphant*. As the Spirit, through Paul, revealed: "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:21).

The Bellview congregation extends sincere appreciation to each and every speaker for the manuscripts prepared for the lectureship book and for the excellent presentations of their assigned topics. Faithful to God and His Word, they manifested love for the souls of all men, redeemed or lost and have contributed to the spread of the gospel in a way which only eternity shall measure.

A genuine spirit of love for one another pervaded the entire lectureship. What a blessing to be with those of like precious faith and to be encouraged by such a study. Thanks be to God and to Him be the glory. We rejoice that not only those nearby but also a number of brethren from other cities and states attended. We hope you shall be among that number next year for we are already looking with anticipation to the Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures, May 9-13, 1992.

Audio tapes (\$56/set) and video tapes (\$44/set) are available. Copies of the 1991 lectureship book, dedicated to Roy Deaver in appreciation of his help and friendship to the church at Bellview over the years, are still available. See back page for details.

**Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures, May 9-13, 1992.**

# DEFENDER

Volume XX

July 1991

Number 7

## Our Fathers Worshipped in this Mountain

*Bobby Liddell*

Jesus, enroute to Galilee from Judaea, passing through Samaria came to Sychar to Jacob's well. It was about the sixth hour; his disciples had gone into the city to buy food; and he, tired from his journey, eat by the well. A Samaritan woman came to draw water and Jesus asked her for a drink. The woman, thinking it strange for one of the Jews to make such a request said, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). Such a request did seem strange (for example, when the disciples returned they, " marvelled that he talked with the woman"—John 4:27). Hatred between the Jewish and Samaritan races was so great Jews often crossed the Jordan to circumvent Samaritan cities when traveling north and south rather than pass through their land.

Jesus told her of water far better than that from Jacob's well—living water which He could give: "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Jesus replied, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." When she replied she had no husband, Jesus revealed He knew of her five husbands and of her presently living with one who was not her husband. "The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." Then, she said, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (John 4:1-20).

**The Temple on Mount Gerizim.** The Samaritan woman, well aware of the difference in the designated places of worship for Jew and Samaritan, knew also the reason for the enmity between the two races. The ancestors of the Samaritans came into the land, brought there by King Esarhaddon (Asnappar of Ezra 4:10) of Assyria following the captivity of the ten tribes (c. 721 B.C.), and intermarried with the Israelites left in the land. 2 Kings 17:20-41 gives a history of this forced transmigration and ensuing problems.

The Samaritans claimed to serve the Lord, but their worship was a hodgepodge gleaned from the idol worship of various factions and nations mixed with elements of the worship of the God of the Israelites. Of them, 2 Kings 17:32-34 says:

So they feared the LORD, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel.

In ensuing years, the Babylonian kingdom supplanted the Assyrian and in time, the MedoPersian replaced the Babylonian. In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, according to the prophecy given by the Lord through Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10): "the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus" who made a proclamation which allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and aided them in the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 1:1-4).

Isaiah prophesied of the role of Cyrus, calling him by name, some one hundred fifty years before the birth of the Persian king (Isa. 44:28; 45:1). In fulfillment of the prophecy, under Cyrus' decree, Zerubbabel returned with 49,987 former captives; set up the altar; renewed the offerings and laid the foundation of the temple (Ezra 1-3). The Samaritans sought to be s part of the work of building the temple and appealed to their "sacrffice" to the Lord on equality with that of the Jews as reason for their inclusion (Ezra 4:1-5).

Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple



unto the LORD God of Israel; 2Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye *do*; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us. Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

The Samaritans, outraged at being rejected as coworkers in the temple reconstruction, succeeded temporarily in halting the building of the temple. Some years passed until the Jews appealed to Darius the king, whose search found the original decree of Cyrus, and whose new decree enabled the finishing of the temple by the Jews. "And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king" (Ezra 6:15). The children of Israel kept the dedication of the temple with great joy, set the priesthood in order and renewed the offerings and feasts.

Subsequently, Artaxerxes, king of Persia, issued a decree that empowered Ezra to, among other things, "set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that *are* beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know *them* not," and "beautify the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem" (Ezra 7:25-28). With Ezra, returned more former captives who offered burnt offerings upon their return to Jerusalem. Soon, Ezra learned:

The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands...they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of *those* lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass (Ezra 9:1-2).

In response to the ungodly intermarriages of the people, Ezra said: "I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished" (Ezra 9:3). At the evening sacrifice (also a time of prayer), Ezra fell on his knees and prayed to God saying:

O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem. And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this (9:6-15).

The people wept very sore and determined their course to follow God and to: "make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them...and let it be done according to the law" (Ezra 10:3). A method by which this determination would be accomplished was proclaimed and the process began. Ezra lists over one hundred of the sons of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the porters, and Israel who had taken strange (foreign) wives and some of whom had children by them.

One of the Israelites who married a foreign wife, according to Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XI,

Chapter vii, 2) was Manasseh, brother of the high priest, who married Nicaso, the daughter of Sanballat. (The time frame, during the reign of Alexander the Great, presented by Josephus is in disagreement with that of Nehemiah 13:28 which shows Manasseh as a contemporary of Nehemiah: “And *one* of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, *was* son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me.”) Sanballat, “a Cuthean by birth; of which stock were the Samaritans also,” sent by Darius, king of Persia, thought this marriage would safeguard his continued security with the Jews.

The elders of Jerusalem gave Manasseh the choice of divorcing his wife or forfeiting the priesthood. When Manasseh approached his father-in-law, Sanballat promised he would preserve Manasseh’s priesthood and make him high-priest and governor if he would remain married to Nicaso. Josephus continues: “He also told him further, that he would build him a temple like that at Jerusalem upon Mount Gerizim, which is the highest of all the mountains that are in Samaria....” Knowledge that many of the priests and Uvites were involved in intermarriage with foreigners greatly disturbed the people of Jerusalem. The guilty priests and Uvites rather than renouncing their evil, “all revolted to Manasseh, and Sanballat afforded them money, and divided among them land for tillage, and habitations also; and all this in order every way to gratify his son-in-law” (*Antiquities*, XI, viii, 2).

Sanballat built the temple on Mount Gerizim and made Manasseh priest. Shechem, “a city situate at Mount Gerizim and inhabited by apostates of the Jewish nation,” became the chief city of the Samaritans. To it, those Jews who regarded the administration of the Law in Jerusalem as too strict fled for safe haven with the liberal Samaritans and found reception with open arms .

...if any one were accused by those of Jerusalem of having eaten things common, or of having broken the Sabbath, or of any other crime ad like nature, he fled away to the Shechemites, and said that he was accused unjustly (*Antiquities*, XI, viii, 7).

The connection of the Samaritans with the Jews was one of convenience. In times of trouble, they quickly denied any association, but when “brotherhood” served their purpose, they as quickly claimed kinship. When they perceived the Jews under accusation by King Antiochus, they sent him the following epistle.

To king Antiochus the god, Epihanes, a memorial from the Sidonians, who live at Shechem. Our forefathers, upon certain frequent plagues, and as following a certain ancient superstition, had a custom of observing that day which by the Jews is called the Sabbath. And when they had erected a temple at the mountain called Gerizzim, though without a name, they offered upon it the proper sacrifices. Now, upon the just treatment of these wicked Jews those that manage their affairs, supposing that we were of kin to them, and practised as they do, make us liable to the same accusations, although we are originally Sidonians, as is evident from the public records. We therefore beseech thee, our benefactor and saviour, to give order to Apollonius, the governor of this part of the country, and to Nicanor, the procurator of thy affairs, to give us no disturbance, nor to lay to our charge what the Jews are accused for, since we are aliens from their nation and from their customs; but let our temple, which at present hath no name at all, be named the Temple of Jupiter Hellenius... (*Antiquities*, XII, v, 6).

King Antiochus agreed and the temple of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim became the Temple of Jupiter Hellenius. There it stood until destroyed by John Hyrcanus (c. 128 B.C.) in his expedition against Syria (*Antiquities*, XIII, ix, 1).

Mount Gerizim continued to be the site which the Samaritans held as consecrated; thus, the Samaritan woman said, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain” (John 4:20). The Samaritans created many legends and traditions about Gerizim. They contended that from its dust God formed Adam, that the flood did not cover it, that in fact it was the mount named Ararat upon which the ark came to rest, and that it was the site of Jacob’s wrestling the angel (Guy N. Woods, *Commentary on John*, p. 81). As “proof” of the authenticity and correctness of worship on Gerizim, the Samaritans claimed to have the only legitimate copy of the Pentateuch (known today as the Samaritan Pentateuch). In it, certain textual changes give Mount Gerizim, the site of their spiritual center, a significance supposedly attributed by God not found in the Massoretic Text. Thus, they erred in the place and practice of worship. In rejecting the other books of the Old Testament they limited their knowledge of God to that found in the first five books.

Through the centuries, conquerors systematically annihilated the race until the Samaritans “now form a small community in Nablus of not more than 200 souls. Their great treasure is their ancient copy of the law” (*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV Pentateuch, The Samaritan, pp. 2312-2318).

**The Wickedness of Unauthorized Worship on Mount Gerizim.** Worship on Mount Gerizim was perverted and wicked. That the Samaritans' "fathers worshipped" there did not make it accepted of God. It sprang forth from a bed of unbridled idolatry and disobedient disregard for the authority and Law of God. Its priesthood began with reprobate malcontents who refused to repent of the evil of disobedience to God's law about marriage and who chose to allow their emotional ties to overrule their submission to the will of their Creator. Its high priest, Manasseh, preferred preservation of his "priesthood" to preservation of his soul. Worship on "this mountain" continued through the upholding of a perverted "Bible" which bolstered their contentions for a consecrated site and worship on Gerizim.

Men built the temple of Gerizim, according to the will of man and had neither God's direction or approval in so doing. The temple resembled the temple in Jerusalem that it might be accepted by those who wanted something "close" to the worship of the Jews. Although claiming to worship God when such a facade was convenient to them, the Samaritans later sought and gained approval from King Antiochus to dedicate their temple to Jupiter Hellenius. The Samaritan worship became the sanctuary of those Jews who thought God's law was too strict and its upholders too narrow-minded and dogmatic, and who, no doubt, appreciated the "open-mindedness" and "loving acceptance" of the Mount Gerizim worshippers. Interestingly, the Samaritans were "brothers" of the Jews when it served them to be so and made claims for an equal inheritance among those who served the Lord. "For we seek your God, as ye *do*; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither" (Ezra 4:2). Zerubbabel and Jeshua said it well: "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel" (Ezra 4:3).

God did not authorize worship on Gerizim. Such worship came from the wrong source; manifested the wrong spirit; and, centered at the wrong site. The Samaritans based its continuance on legend and tradition of men; to which the woman now appealed. About such worship, Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). Thus, he shows that God does not authorize or accept all that men call "worship."

**The Wickedness of Unauthorized Worship Today.** "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

This passage plainly illustrates the simplicity and clarity of God's message to man. Those who are true worshippers: (1) Worship God; (2) Worship God in spirit (firm the heart with sincerity); and, (3) Worship God in truth (according to the Word of God). Others may "worship," may even claim to "worship" God, but will worship "in vain" (Mat. 15:9) if not "in spirit and in truth."

Sadly, today, too many men commit the same sin as the Samaritans all the while claiming to "worship God." Like the Samaritans of old they: (1) Hold as authority the unscriptural traditions of men; (2) Follow their will instead of the will of God; (3) Run to perverted "Bibles" (ill-translated and denominationally slanted versions) for "proof" for their unauthorized worship while rejecting parts of the Word of God which are contrary to their teaching and practice; (4) Place emotional ties over obedience to God (especially as it applies to God's law on marriage); (5) Have a corrupt "priesthood"; (6) Want to be "brothers" with God's true children and claim a common spiritual heritage when it serves their purpose; (7) Deny "kinship" with God's people when that serves their purpose; (8) Seek to maintain some semblance of "closeness" to true worship that they might fool the gullible and ignorant; and, (9) Loose where God has not loosed continually tending more and more to liberalism.

To such men, God's children must say, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship," and, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house [the Lord's church—1 Tim. 3:15—which Christ built—Mat. 16:18] unto our God." To all such men, the invitation is given to leave the man-made creeds, evil traditions and perverted doctrines of men and come to Jesus (Mat. 11:28-30). Obey the truth (1 Pet. 1:22-23), live by faith and worship God "in spirit and in truth."

Men lost in sin and worshipping in vain can leave their error and come to Christ to receive forgiveness and to begin to worship acceptably. Notice the influence of the woman in bringing many of the Samaritans to Christ.

Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?...And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did...And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy

saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world (John 4:29-42).

You can come to Christ in obedience to his will and be pleasing to God that you might be saved now and eternally. Forsake unauthorized and perverted worship instituted by men and worship God in his “mountain” (the Lord’s church—Isa. 2:2-3) in “spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

(Condensed from a chapter in “*What Does God Authorize In Worship?*”, *Bellview Lectures*, 1990.)

## Editorial

### “I Want to Go Home”

Our little girl, Keri, had been at camp all week and on the way back we spent the night at Memaw’s house (Memaw must be Greek for grandmother) before making the trip from Birmingham to Pensacola. Awaking from sleep ill with a virus, she rushed to my arms and her first words were, “I want to go home.”

Few words touch our hearts as the word, “Home.” It represents peace, safety, love, comfort and rest. We speak the word with joy and think of it with fondness. It stirs the heart of the soldier on foreign soil. It causes the aged to reminisce in precious memories. It is the safe harbor in a tumultuous sea and a warm hearth in a cold dark world. It brings those scattered together for Thanksgiving. It is the place we want to go when we need to find peace and love.

Keri was crying because she was tired, sick and sad and she missed her mother who was waiting for us at home. She knew if she could just go home everything would be better. As I sat up with her, I thought of the Christian’s home, Heaven, and how we long to go there where everything will be better.

One of my favorite passages is Revelation 21:4: “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Another favorite is 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10, a passage of timely hope and eternal comfort!

What a great blessing to know someday we shall go home where God shall wipe away all tears. In this life, even Daddy’s (who some say are not supposed to cry) shed tears because of sickness, sorrow, pain, betrayal, loss and disappointment. There is no place in Heaven for such things. Surely, there shall be no reason to shed tears there. I want to go home where there shall be no tears, don’t you?

As we travel the weary road from birth to death, we become tired and long for the eternal home. We seek the comfort of the Father’s loving arms where we can rest in safety. Remember Lazarus comforted in Abraham’s bosom in Luke 16? John recorded: “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Rev. 14:13). The faithful fear, not death for as Paul, they may say: “For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain” (Phi. 1:21). I want to go home where we shall rest, don’t you?

A child in pain wants to go home. Why? The child knows hurts are healed at home. So, in Heaven, all the hurts suffered in this life shall be healed and pain shall be no more. It is not unusual to hear before an open casket, “He is not in pain anymore.” For the majority, these are but words of false hope, but for the faithful follower of Christ, they speak the truth. I want to go home where there shall be no more pain, don’t you?

Death enters our earthly home bringing great heaviness of heart and the almost unbearable burden of grief. We miss the ones we love and long to see them and embrace them again, but they have left the earthly home forever. What a comfort to know in Heaven death shall be no more. Rather, the faithful shall be reunited at home eternally. I want to go home, don’t you?

Keri enjoyed camp, but camp is not home. She loves to visit Memaw’s house, but home is much better. God created earth to be inhabited by man: “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good” (Gen. 1:31). He ordained the institution of the home and it was good, but Heaven is better. The earthly home is but a foretaste of that home which is eternal. Should we then wonder why men and women of faith desired: “A better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city” (Heb. 11:16)? As weary pilgrims, they longed for home, Heaven, where everything would be better, don’t you?

BL

# Franklin Camp Preachers' Scholarship Fund

*Bobby Duncan*

Our late beloved brother Franklin Camp was a man of many good works. He was known throughout our brotherhood for his brilliant mind, vast knowledge and tremendous understanding of the Bible, and his sagacity in the application of Biblical truth. Those of us who knew him well knew him as a warm and gentle person whose soul glowed with love for God, the church, and all mankind. One of the things closest to his heart was training and encouraging young men to preach the gospel. For the past three decades he has conducted a preachers' class on a weekly basis, with preachers coming from miles n every direction to attend.

A preacher's scholarship fund has been established in his memory and under his name to help deserving men prepare themselves to preach the gospel. It will not be tied to any one Christian college or preacher training school, but may be used to help support preacher students in different schools.

The fine elders of the church in Adamsville, Alabama, men who sustained a very close relationship to brother Camp during the latter one-third of his life, and whose lives have been greatly influenced by him, have chosen to set up this fund as one of many works the Adamsville church is doing. The Adamsville church has already committed itself to a contribution of \$10,000. Since it will be a work of the church, the elders will oversee it and determine how it will be used. This arrangement will also make it possible for churches which wish to contribute to the fund to do so. All contributions to the Franklin Camp Scholarship Fund, by churches or individuals, will be acknowledged, and the names of all contributors will be sent to sister Camp.

What better way could there be to honor the memory of a man like Franklin Camp than to contribute to a fund to help train preachers?

The last sermon brother Camp preached was at Adamsville on Sunday morning, May 5. He spoke on some things the Bible teaches which had been reinforced by his own experiences. It was a classic! This sermon, and his last Bible class, which he taught that same morning, were recorded both on audio and video. When you mail your contribution to the scholarship fund, you may wish to request a copy of this audio tape.

Checks should be made to Adamsville Church of Christ and earmarked for the Franklin Camp Scholarship Fund. They should be mailed to Adamsville Church of Christ, 4207 Adamsville Parkway, Adamsville, Alabama 35005.

## Step Salvationists?

*Jerri Manasco*

There was a time when the denominational world hurled the accusation against gospel preachers and other members of the church of Christ that we are "water salvationists" and "works salvationists." Sometimes these accusations came from people who knew better. Sometimes they came from people who were simply unaware of the facts in the case.

Now we are confronted with a whole new problem—that is, it is the old problem in a new suit! The greatest danger is that which rises from within. Jesus pointed this out (Mat. 12:25) as did Paul (Gal. 5:15; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:1ff.). The time has come for the internal danger to assert itself. We who preach the gospel plan (**Yes, Plan!!**) of salvation are hearing some of our own brethren accusing us of being step salvationists!

We have long presented the truth that to be saved one must be taught the truth, must believe it, must repent of his or her sins, must confess Christ, and must be baptized for the remission of sins. Now we are being told that this "step salvation" is putting the emphasis on our works instead of on the work of Christ. If that is true, then we have made a terrible mistake. But the fact is the Bible does indeed teach us that there are steps to salvation.

Is it wrong to present an orderly statement of what you learn from the Bible? Is it improper to study what the Bible says on a given subject and then set forth the careful and organized analysis of what you have gleaned?

Do those who stand opposed to the steps of salvation use the same reasoning in their sermon presentations? Do they not have steps in their sermons? Don't they plan their sermons in logical order so that one step logically and necessarily follows another? Preach without "steps" and see what the results will be!

What about preparation for eternity? If the Bible does not offer clearly defined "steps" then how shall we

prepare? Preparation involves intelligent ordering of spiritual priorities—i.e., steps! One must forsake sin, become a Christian and grow in his/her spirituality. Aren't these "steps"?

No, we are not contending that there is any one verse that spells out the steps in "1-2-3" fashion. However, if the Bible is a book for intelligent people given by the very God of order, can we not, through careful study, arrive at logical and necessary conclusions? Is the Bible a garbled book, or is it a thorough and adequate revelation of God's expectations of and for man? (2 Tim. 3:16-17). We can know the truth (John 8:32), but is the truth merely a hodgepodge of love statements from heaven? No, the truth is something to be obeyed (1 Pet. 1:22), but that truth must be carefully delineated in **the Book** in order to be obeyed with any meaningful results!

If there are no "steps" then how does one know that the Old Testament necessarily came first, then the cross, and then our spiritual blessings? Granted these are the divine steps to insure our salvation, but how did we discern these steps? **Through Bible study!!** Are we overstepping the bounds when we set forth the proper order of events as taught in the Scriptures? In the same way we ascertain the logical and necessary sequence of steps to salvation.

Is it anti-biblical and illogical to show that we must meet certain terms in a certain order? Can the unbeliever be baptized? Can the impenitent be baptized? Can one become a believer before he/she has come into contact with the message that breeds faith (Rom. 10:17; Acts 15:7; 18:8). Read Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16 and you can see which thing comes first, which follows, etc. Surely one can see that there are steps!

Are we depending on "steps" to save us? **No! No!** We are depending on the grace of God to save us (Eph. 2:8-9; Heb. 2:9; Tit. 2:11). But it is God's grace that has given us the **Word** of salvation (Acts 13:26). God has given us the **Word** of His grace (Acts 14:3; 20:32). In His grace God has shown us the **way** of salvation. There steps to be acknowledged. Which part of this majestic plan shall you sidestep and still get to heaven?

*Route 7 Box 428; Boaz, AL 35957*

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## Contributions

Frank and Sandra Boyd—\$10.00, J. B. Aired, Jr.—\$10.00, Wynema Chenault—\$5.00, Ronald Keever—\$5.00.  
Thanks for your help!

## Correspondence

"Let me say how glad I am to see DEFENDER devoting an entire issue to the subject of preaching. There is too little teaching and preaching on the subject. Perhaps if brethren had more teaching on preaching, the preachers would be staying longer. Keep up the great work!" Bill Brandstatter, Ironton, MO.

"Will you please put my name back on the mailing list for DEFENDER. I enjoy it very much. I enclose ten dollars to help pay expenses." J. B. Aired Jr., Piedmont, AL.

"We do appreciate receiving the DEFENDER and all the work that goes into it and all the good it is doing. We would appreciate your placing our name back on the mailing list and are sending a small donation to help defray the costs. Thank you for your stand for the Truth." Frank and Sandra Boyd, Murfreesboro, TN.

"Recently I became aware of the good job you do on your bulletin and the DEFENDER. Would you please put me on the mailing list of both papers. Also, if possible, could you send an extra copy regarding preachers and their work. It was an excellent issue (and) will truly be a classic for years to come." Keith McNeely, Farmington, MO.

"Please put the following on your mailing list ... Thank you for your help in preaching the gospel, defending the faith and helping Christians to remain sound in the faith." Lawrence Williamson, Moss, TN.

## Lectures

**Firm Foundation Northwest Lectures**, *The Book That God Wrote*, August 1-4, 1991, Central Church of Christ, 1811 W Sylvester St., Pasco, Washington 99337, (509) 783-2504: Contact Ron Keever.

**Greater Kanawha Valley Lectureship**, *Study To show Thyself Approved*, August 6-9, 1991, Washington Street Church of Christ, 601 Washington St., Saint Albans, West Virginia 25177, (304) 727-0761: Contact Donald Mash.

**Ohio Valley Lectureship**, *Praise Ye The Lord*, August 12-16, 1991, North End Church of Christ, 1301 West Virginia Ave., Parkersburg, West Virginia 26104, (304) 422-0489.

**Denton Lectures**, *Studies In First And Second Samuel*, November 10-14, 1991, Pearl Street Church of Christ, 312 Pearl St., Denton, Texas 76201, (817) 3873531: Contact Dub McClish.

**Bellview Lectures**, May 9-13, 1992, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, (904) 455-7595: Contact Bobby Liddell.

## Serving Christ in the Golden Years

*Bill Brandstatter*

We live in a highly technological society. As a result, more people are living longer than ever before. The ways to prolong life increase almost yearly. The consequences of this are mixed. Some folks resent growing old, others resent old folks. Some societies shun the elderly. Others enable the golden agers to be productive well past "retirement age." Because of the large amount of elderly here in the United States, there has been a shift in some areas from youth to the elderly. More nursing homes are going up in some areas than playgrounds. A large elderly population may affect business, politics, and public opinion. In an age that is so youth-centered, we need divine directives to assist in the cultivation of the proper attitudes toward the retirement years.

There is a place in God's kingdom for the aged. The business world may consider a person too old at 65, but not God. He has always used senior citizens to accomplish great works. Moses did his greatest work between 80 to 120. John wrote the book of Revelation when he was near 100. Anna the prophetess was still serving God in the temple at the young age of 84 (Luke 2:36-38). If you are a senior citizen, you are needed in the church today. Every congregation desperately needs the help of golden disciples. A senior citizen often has more time to devote than do the younger folks who must meet certain job and family schedules. The wisdom that younger folks have not yet gained knowledge can be found often in the over 60 group. Because of life's experiences, an older Christian is often able to understand the needs of certain people better. The downfall of Rehoboam occurred primarily because he "forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him" (1 Kin. 12:13). A person who has obeyed the gospel early in life and has remained faithful over the years has knowledge in the Bible that can't be replaced. Older women are needed to "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2:4-5). Older men who meet the qualifications are needed in the position of elders. These men can assist young men in the same fashion as the older women to learn the responsibility of being an adult, and a parent.

There is glory, beauty, and dignity in advanced years. Such qualities in old age do not come by accident. Nor are they the result of it. A graceful old age is the yield of a well-cultivated, properly grown, and nurtured Christian life.

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# DEFENDER

Volume XX

August 1991

Number 8

## Christian Fellowship

*Larry D. Mathis*

Fellowship (*koinonia* in the Greek), is defined as: “association, joint participation, sharing.” Thus, to be in Christian fellowship with another is to be his partner, a joint participant, his associate. This means that church (Christian) fellowship is predicated on agreement. One is not an associate, a joint participant, or a partner with another when his conscience forbids him to share in what that individual is doing. How could a faithful child of God be a partner, in Christian fellowship, with atheists, false teachers, disruptive divisive brethren, or immoral church members?

### **Christian Fellowship: Inclusive and Exclusive**

The very idea of fellowship considers the possibility that one may be included in it or excluded from it. Some things and individuals can be fellowshiped with God’s approval, others can not. The New Testament draws the boundary line and faithful Christians will honor and respect what God has revealed therein. God’s children must seek to include in fellowship that which God has included and exclude from fellowship what he has excluded.

To propose a fellowship that is more extensive and far reaching than what God has authorized is to effect a pseudo-generosity, an extreme. Conversely, to propose a fellowship that is more limited or stringent than what God has authorized is to spawn another extreme; it is to effect a “holier-than-thou” or super-righteous stance.

### **No Fellowship with the World**

Christians are “in the world” (John 17:11), but are “not of the world” (John 17:16). They have been “called out of the world” (John 17:6), by the gospel (2 The. 2:14), into one body—the church of Christ (Col. 3:15; 1:18; Mat. 16:18). Christians are “sent into the world” (John 17:18), with the glorious gospel—in hope of saving the world (Mat. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).

Though Christians must make contact with those in the world in order to convert them, God has strictly commanded us to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Eph. 5:11). Paul wrote: “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...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord” (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

### **No Fellowship with False Churches—false Religions**

Jesus Christ built his own church (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16; Acts 20:28). Not one of the manmade religions, sects and/or denominations in existence today can be found in the New Testament. Actually, every human religion on earth today is in competition with the church of the New Testament which Christ built nearly 2,000 years ago. Jesus prayed against all divisions and sects among believers (John 17:20-23). The inspired apostle Paul warned against sects and parties and divisions as “works of the flesh” and said they “shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21, ASV). Christians cannot fellowship apostate churches/ religions with God’s approval.

### **No Fellowship with Judaism**

Christ desired and prayed for unity among those who believe in him, and who accept the apostles’ doctrine; i.e., believe on him (Jesus), through “their word” (John 17:20-23; cf. Acts 2:42). Paul said Judaism was the “Jews’ Religion” (Gal. 1:13-14), That religion was nailed to Calvary’s cross and was taken out of the way (Col. 2:14). Anyone today who rejects Christ, Christianity, or the New Testament for the Old, cannot be fellowshiped by



Christians.

### **No Fellowship with False Teachers**

The Lord's church must not adore, use, nor promote any known false teacher (whether in or out of the church). Any and all who abide not in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11), are to be: (1) marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17); (2) withdrawn from (1 Tim. 6:3-5); and, (3) given no encouragement or endorsement whatsoever in their error (2 John 9-11). In the first century A.D., Hymenaeus and Philetus taught in error that the resurrection was past and had overthrown the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:17-18). Now, do you think the apostle Paul considered these false teachers to be in fellowship with him, or with other sound brethren? Are we to suppose that Paul invited them in to hold a gospel meeting, or to lecture the churches back then? Absolutely not!

### **No Fellowship with Immoral Church Members**

"I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11). "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:13).

### **No Fellowship with Disorderly Church Members**

"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. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you" (2 The. 3:6-7). A "disorderly" person is any member of the church who ceases to walk in the light—one who is walking contrary to the truth of God (1 John 1:7). Contextually, Paul has in mind a member of the church who is too lazy to work for his food (2 The. 3:11-12), but, a member of the church may be "disorderly" in other ways too. For instance, aren't people who habitually willfully forsake the assembling of themselves with the saints "disorderly?"

### **Whom, Then, May We Fellowship?**

The question is, "Whom, with God's approval, should Christians fellowship?" The answer is:

(1) Those, and only those, who have obeyed the gospel; only those who are God's children—Christians. Those who have not obeyed the gospel are not Christians and are not in God's church family. Therefore, children of God do not have the right to extend family privileges to those who are children of the devil. To become a child of God (a Christian), one must hear the gospel (Rom. 10:17); believe (Heb. 11:6); repent (Acts 17:30-31); confess Christ (Rom. 10:10; Mat. 10:32-33; Acts 8:37); and be baptized (immersed) into Christ for the remission of sins. Acts 2:38 says: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The Lord adds such a person to His church (Acts 2:47).

(2) Those, and only those, who are continuing to "walk in the light" after conversion (1 John 1:7). When it becomes apparent that one has ceased to walk in the light (to follow the truth), and refuses to repent, then he must be refused the fellowship of the church. The right hands of fellowship may be extended and they may also be withdrawn or withheld (Gal. 2:9).

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## *Editorial*

# **We Can Take the Gospel to the World!**

**The Mission of the Church Is to Save Souls.** The church accomplishes its divinely given mission through the various aspects of its divinely appointed work all of which are means to evangelize. Members of the Lord's church, collectively and individually, can do what God commands them. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phi. 4:13). Just so, today, through Christ, saints can do all things necessary to please God in living the Christian life. Included in that life is the responsibility of taking the Gospel to the world.

**The Problem Is Not That We Can't, but That We Don't.** God has given His children a work to do and we deceive ourselves and make God a liar if we say it is impossible. Surely, we shall not, in seeking to win souls to Christ, take the Gospel to the world if we expect "No!" instead of "Yes!", or if we look for defeat instead of victory. Thank God, we do not serve a God of defeat, but a God of victory. How many Bible examples must we see before

we come to trust in God who brought His people out of Egypt with a mighty hand, gave them the promised land, preserved David whithersoever he went, delivered the Hebrew youths from the fiery furnace and Daniel from the den of lions, raised Christ from the tomb and strengthened Paul to face the most grievous of opposition?

Our children displease us when they say they **can't** do what we have told them to do when they can but they just don't want to. We are wise enough not to require of them that which they are unable to do, aren't we? Thus, they displease us—not because they **can** not—but because they **do** not because they **will** not.

Is the Creator of man wise enough not to require of him what man can not do? If it is the case that God does not require of His children what they can not do, and if it is the case that God requires of His children that they take the gospel to all the world; then, it follows that God's children can take the gospel to all the world (cf., Mark 16:15-16).

**The World Is a Big Place.** Let us not think the only way to win souls is to go abroad. Neither, let us think we must convert everyone at home before we go abroad. Jesus told his apostles they would begin preaching the Gospel in Jerusalem and radiate to Judaea next, then Samaria and, finally, to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8). Only a few years later, Paul could write: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister" (Col. 1:23). Beloved, jets and satellites did not carry the Gospel to every creature, but loving obedience and steadfast determination did.

**Love Is the Key.** Recently, in addressing a group of young students, I emphasized the necessity of love in personal evangelism for love compels Christians to evangelize. All the classes one might take may better prepare him in approach and may better instruct in methods of evangelism, but will be unproductive without love. God's children must fill their hearts with a burning compassion for the souls of men if they would be saved and bring others to salvation.

Yes, we can evangelize the world if we love enough, have faith enough to trust God who said, "Go...and preach the gospel," and are determined enough to see the job through. The Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), and fiery punishment awaits those who obey not the Gospel (2 The. 1:7-9). Without hearing the Gospel none shall believe and obey, "And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:13-17).

**Let Us Be Ready to Help.** Sound men want to carry the Gospel to the world. All they need is a little help, someone to encourage them and to pray for them. Yet, some say, "You can't find anyone who wants to do mission work." Maybe those folks have looked in the wrong place. Just in the last few weeks, among my limited acquaintance, one brother has left to do mission work in a small town in the mountains of Colorado, another announced his plans to go to Tanzania, another to a northern city where the church is struggling and others prepare to take the Gospel to Latvia. Read the article on Page 7 about the work of Paul and Riki Vaughn. Helping sound men is one way to accomplish the great task before us.

We **can** take the Gospel to the world. Let us work for the saving of souls who shall otherwise enter eternity without having heard of Christ.

BL

## The Christian's Treasure

*Marlin Kilpatrick*

The Christian has in his possession the greatest of all blessings, the knowledge of God. This knowledge is obtained by learning the will of God, as it is revealed through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Unless one understands the Biblical message of the eternal God and his will, he can never enjoy the blessing of eternal life.

Paul declares, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7). The "earthen vessels" to which the apostle refers are the apostles and other inspired men of God. While it is the case that the days of inspired revelation of God's Word, the Scriptures, has ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10); we do have the Christian's treasure preserved in the Bible.

Most people think of their treasures as things of great value. This value may be real or simply sentimental, but to each of us it is something with which we do not wish to part. Since we do not wish to part with our earthly treasures and we also recognize the need for our being responsible for their safe keeping, is it not also true that we have the responsibility to see that our Christian's treasure is safely preserved?

The Christian has the responsibility to guard his treasure. This is necessary lest it become perverted (Gal. 1:6-9). As an evangelist, Timothy was instructed by Paul, "But watch thou in all things" (2 Tim. 4:5). Our Lord warned of wolves in sheep's clothing (Mat. 7:15). There are some among us today who must be watched, exposed, and, if necessary, withdrawn from. These false brethren, if allowed to have their way, will destroy the effectiveness of God's Word. Thus, the guardianship of God's Word is the responsibility of each and every faithful Christian.

Our responsibility toward our treasure also requires daily meditating upon God's Word. The giving of diligence to become better students of God's Word has always been necessary (cf., 2 Tim. 2:15). To the contrary, ignorance is not bliss! Ignorance of God's will destroys His children (Hos. 4:6). The Christian delights in God's law and like the truly blessed individual that he/she is, there is meditation therein both day and night (Psa. 1:2).

The faithful Christian knows the value of defending God's Word. It has never been the case that God's Word needs no defense. Those among us who would so declare, are simply "whistling in the wind." The gospel of Christ is under attack today more than ever. The New Testament anticipated the attacks upon the gospel. The apostle Paul declared that he was "set for the defence of the gospel" (Phi. 1:17). Jude, in his short but sorely needed epistle, exhorted the faithful to "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3). If the gospel of Christ is to be kept pure, it will be necessary to defend it, both privately and publicly.

Dear reader, of what value would our treasure be if we do not apply, personally, the teachings of this wonderful knowledge of God? The gospel is to be heard, believed, and obeyed (1 Cor. 15:14). When we apply its precepts in our daily living, others will see true Christianity, Jesus said, "let your light shine before men" (Mat. 5:16). Our influence upon others will be directly proportional to our application of the principles of righteousness as set out in the gospel of Christ.

The faithful Christian is concerned about guarding the truth, for he knows that only thorough obedience to it can he be saved (John 8:32). A perverted gospel lacks saving power! He is also concerned about developing greater knowledge of God's Word, for through such knowledge he becomes more proficient in service to his Maker.

Brethren, let us not be deceived by thinking that the Word of God needs no defending, for such will never be the case. It is time that we begin to challenge all who pervert the truth of the gospel. A perverter of the truth should be exposed, not greeted and encouraged (cf., 2 John 9-11). Our failure to defend the Bible and its message of salvation, will cost us our soul's salvation.

Precious people, it is still the case that the blessing of eternal life will be given to those and only to those who, "...do his commandments..." (Rev. 22:14). May we all resolve to live more closely to Him who made us and died for our redemption—the Christ of Calvary.

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## Moving?

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## Are You Liberal or Conservative?

*Steve Miller*

This question is probably asked more in relation to members of the Lord's church these days than anything else. "Is he a liberal or a conservative?" Why do we have to use labels and names other than "Christian" or "brother"

when we identify members of the Lord's church? You can easily find the answer to these questions by simply looking around at the condition of the church. We have always had and always will have people who have little or no respect for the authority of God's Word; whose practices are unauthorized by God; and, who loose where God has bound. This is liberalism. The opposite of this is anti-ism which binds where God has loosed. In this article we shall look at both liberalism and what some people term conservatism.

Today when a preacher or writer uses labels or names to identify a specific group, many will cry, "You can't call names or label people." These folks overlook the fact that one either stands firmly on the Word of God, or falls short or goes beyond what is written. Labels and names simply identify where people stand. In speaking of calling names, brother Fred Dennis wrote back in the 1940s that, "We have some 'softies' among us today who seem to think it is an almost unpardonable sin for a preacher or writer to call the names of false teachers and hypocrites; but it seems to me we have some mighty good precedents for this in the New Testament" (*Fifty Short Sermons*, Vol. II, 1944, p. 129).

Our Lord and Savior called the Sadducees and Pharisees names in Matthew 23. He called them hypocrites, blind guides, fools, blind, serpents and vipers. In Acts 7, Stephen told the Jews that they were "stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears" (Acts 7:51). There is no doubt that we have examples of this in the New Testament. The heart of the matter seems not to be the using of labels and names, but the motives behind practicing it. We agree with brother Dennis once again. "If we call names simply to ridicule or get smart or something of that kind, of course, that will be sin; but if we are trying to save souls, why not point out the erroneous teaching and who it is that teaches that?" (p. 129).

The proper motive needs to be behind the practice of calling names and using labels. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even Christ*" (Eph. 4:15). The Holy Spirit revealed through Paul that love should be behind speaking the truth.

When we take a look at what happens when people reject the authority of Christ and do their own thing in the Lord's church, we see many things that are becoming all too common in our worship services today. For example, someone who loosens where God has bound will see nothing wrong with instrumental music in our worship to God. They seem to have no problem with women leading in public prayers. They are not bothered by fellowshipping denominations and religious error. They don't even bat an eye at the denominational sermonettes coming out of our pulpits where men have stopped preaching the Word. When we examine these attitudes, we quickly see that there is no end to doing things which are unauthorized in God's Word. The apostle Paul warned the Ephesian elders "after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29). Paul was referring to false teachers when he said "grievous wolves." Today when people in our own congregations are teaching and practicing that which can not be supported by Scripture and especially when they are trying to force these ways upon the saints of God, we should be aware that they are "grievous wolves" who are fulfilling their own desires by doing what pleases them instead of trying to do what pleases God.

Therefore, when someone jumps up and wants instrumental music in our worship to God, we clearly see they are rejecting God's authority on the matter. They overlook the fact that God has said what kind of music He wants in worship to Him. In taking the Bible as our only rule of faith we know that he wants us to sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15; Mat. 26:30). When someone or a group of people in a congregation want the women to take more of a leading role in the worship, we should recognize them as people loosing where God has bound because they are teaching and spreading something that is not in harmony with God's pattern. The Bible plainly shows that women are not to usurp authority over the man (1 Tim. 2:11-12). Also when brethren (including elders, deacons, preachers) condone practices of the denominations and congregations of the Lord's church who have left the "old paths;" we see once again they are leading God's people into grave danger by subjecting them to false doctrine and errors from Satan himself. (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11; 2 The. 3:5-14; Rom. 16:17-18; Mat. 15:9). The Bible clearly shows the Christian's attitude toward those people who are not in the "doctrine of Christ" (2 John 9). When it comes time to hear a lesson from God's Word in our worship, we are often disappointed by what we hear. It seems that sometimes we leave our assemblies knowing more about what Washington, Lincoln or Edgar Allen Poe said than what Paul, Peter, John or our beloved Savior Jesus Christ had to say. This is tragic because people are not hearing convicting sermons that make them think about their relationship with God. When they hear plain Bible preaching they will hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16). Yes, it is sad to see members of the church ashamed of the gospel

that has the power to save men's souls. But when we look at the liberal side today very little surprises those of us who are striving to do only what God authorizes (Col. 3:17).

We have clearly seen some things a "liberal" practices and teaches in the body of Christ today. I mentioned earlier in the article that we would compare what was involved in liberal and conservative terms. If you wonder why the conservative beliefs and practices were not discussed, let me direct you to the answers with scripture quotations because there you will find what the conservative believes and practices.

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## The "I Gave at the Office" Syndrome

*Eddy Gilpin*

Many times, when someone is asked to contribute to a cause, one can hear the joking response, "Not me. I gave at the office." While this response is used often in a humorous manner, it is also a means used by many to avoid contributing to such causes. While contributing to causes of the outside world (if right within themselves) is neither here nor there, one's contributions to the spread of the gospel and assistance in benevolence are essential factors of eternal consequence. And yet, even though the subject is one of vital importance, far too many simply brush it aside with the "I-gave-at-the-office" attitude.

Some in the Lord's church have the idea that as long as they flip a token sum in the collection plate each Sunday morning they have fulfilled their obligation to God, self and their fellow man. When approached at any other time with an opportunity to assist in some worthy effort for the good of the kingdom, theirs is the standard reply, "I gave at the office." From where did such a mentality originate? It certainly does not come from a study of the Scriptures. The Bible reveals a ready disposition to service by those faithful in the infant age of the church. Notice the attitudes prevalent in these first century congregations.

The believers saw the pressing needs of the church during the very age of its establishment in the city of Jerusalem. In Acts 2, the Word reveals that they "had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need" (vv. 44-45). Did they suffer from the "I-gave-at-the-office" syndrome? Not in the least! They saw a need and they responded accordingly. What did they do? They sold their possessions and gladly surrendered the funds therefrom to further the cause. What was the result? Not only did they please God by their actions, but they had the favor of all the people (v. 47), People took notice to the fact that here were people who truly believed in the cause which they espoused. Do people of the world take such notice of the church today? ,

In Acts 4:32-37, the Bible reveals the background of the account of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). The record reveals that the need for assistance was still prevalent and obvious In the city of Jerusalem. The text demonstrates the attitude of the Christians who saw that need. They "were of one heart and one soul" (should we be any different?), "were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own;" (are our possessions **really** ours?), "but they had all things common" (v. 32). Was this a "socialistic" system? Not at all. It was a situation in which there was a need, and a response to that need. This is not a "communal" pattern for the church in which every member must surrender everything he owns to some governing body once he becomes a member. However, every possession that each owns does, in actuality, belong to another (1 Cor. 6:19-20). This text further reveals the result of that response. "Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need" (vv. 34-35). Had these people contracted the "I-gave-at-the-office" syndrome? Certainly not. Just think what the lasting results of such might have been. The church might very well have "died on the vine" having never gotten off the ground in Jerusalem had it not been for the faith of these brethren. However, thanks to their support of the truth and of those who were in need, the gospel was indeed taken to "Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Another point of interest along this line from the text of Acts 4 is a look at Joses. Joses (surnamed Barnabas by the apostles) was a Levite. According to Mosaic law, a Levite's land ("the field of the suburbs of their cities") was

not to be sold, as it was to be a “perpetual possession” (Lev. 25:34). However, knowing that the Law of Moses had been blotted out at the cross (Col. 2:14) and seeing the need at hand, Jesus quickly sold his land and laid the money at the apostles’ feet (Acts 4:36-37). This land had probably been in his family for generations. Yet, he did not hesitate to dispense with it when the need arose. He could very easily have said, “I gave at the office,” but he did not do so.

Many others in the New Testament could be cited for their sacrificial giving in times of need. When the time for harvest arose, the means and laborers were provided. If they had not been, perhaps no reader of this article would know “the riches of Christ.” Now what about us? When I say “us,” I mean those of us who are average American citizens. We “own” far more than any other average citizen of any other country. Many households even have multiple cars, televisions, boats, etc. Many households even have multiple houses. We possess lands, businesses, corporations and such like. We have food in abundance and waste enough to feed someone else. We have not just clothing, but wardrobes. We spend more on a vacation than most people of the world make annually. We are consumed with recreation, along with its high price tag. We indulge regularly in “the finer things of life.” And, yet, when a need arises for assisting someone in dire need, providing for the spread of the gospel, furthering the cause through the printed word, assisting in the training of a faithful gospel preacher or some other avenue, “We gave at the office.” How must our Lord feel when He sees such stingy attitudes by far too many brethren?

In Colossians 3:5, Paul commanded, “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and **covetousness**, which is **idolatry**.” Covetousness is often thought of as being the inordinate desire for that which another possesses. But, while that is a form of covetousness, the most prevalent form is revealed in the attitude that: “What I have is mine, and I am going to keep it.” This latter attitude concerning one’s possessions is just as much covetousness as is the former. Paul, through the Spirit, says such covetousness is idolatry! It is indeed sad to think that on the day of judgment many will be destined for a devil’s hell because of their worshipping at the temple of treasures, their service to the shrine of savings and their bowing at the palace of possessions.

This writer is not suggesting we should all sell everything we own and give the money to a worthy cause. What I am suggesting is that each of us re-evaluate our own lives and make adjustments accordingly. The church needs such, we are responsible so to do and the Lord expects it. Living in a land of plenty provides so many comforts and freedoms from worry. Yet, it also provides responsibility for assisting those who do not enjoy such. Paul said, “As we have therefore **opportunity, let us do good**” (Gal. 6:10). Such an attitude would forevermore eradicate the “I-gave-at-the-office” syndrome.

There are scores of faithful congregations and individual Christians across this nation who contribute greatly of their time, efforts and finances to worthy endeavors for the spreading of the kingdom. Think where the Lord’s church would be without them. But, then again, think where the church would be if every congregation and individual were like them.

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## Which Highway?

Isaiah 35:8

*Robin W. Haley*

I would venture to say that surely the majority of communities are located on or very near some state highway. The community in which I live has at its very center two state highways that cross. From where I live, one cannot get to Garden City, which is south of us, by going north on 83, nor by traveling east or west on 96. Likewise, one cannot drive to Dighton by heading north, south or west on 83 or 96.

There are two highways that cross in the spiritual realm as well. One of them is a “state” highway. It is called an apostate highway. It is at cross purposes with the only other highway at mankind’s disposal upon which to travel. As in all things spiritual, there are only two ways one can go. We are either with or against the Lord. There are only two roads (paths) on which we can travel: a straight and narrow or a wide and broad way (Mat. 7:13-14). Here, then, is the point of this article. One either travels upon an “apostate” highway, leading to destruction, or on that highway

prophesied in Isaiah 35:8. Note what God says through the prophet: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." It does not take much in-depth Bible study to learn Isaiah was speaking of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Friend reader, upon which highway do you travel at present? Are you on that "state" highway which will only lead to destruction and ruin, the loss of your soul; or do you, today, walk the highway of holiness, that straight and narrow path that leads to life eternal?

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## Which Way Is God?

*Bill Brandstatter*

Imagine a lost soul traveling on life's highway looking for help. He consults many different sources. The traveler looks to the psychic, the soothsayer and the fortune teller, all to no avail. Finally he consults a Christian. If the Christian were you could you instruct the traveler how to be saved? Could you show him the way to God (Mat. 7:14)? Peter and John in directing the traveler would state: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The Athenians traveled the same highway as our traveler. They looked for help and salvation in many gods. Paul told them: "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device" (Acts 17:29). The Christian needs always to be ready to tell someone what God expects them to do to be saved (1 Pet. 3:15). Are you ready? Could you help the traveler, or would he have to consult another source? Could you show a lost soul the way to God?

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## Mission Point: Breathitt County, Kentucky

*Paul Vaughn*

In November 1991, this writer and his wife, Ricki, will be moving to Jackson, Kentucky, to help in establishing the Jackson Church of Christ. This is the only church of Christ in the county.

Breathitt County is located in the Appalachian Mountain region of Eastern Kentucky. The city of Jackson is the county seat. Jackson is a growing city with a rich mountain heritage.

There are one hundred and eleven religious groups in Breathitt County. Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostals and the Christian Church are the main groups. The majority of the people, 85%, have no religious affiliations (figures taken from Baptist Home Mission Board, Louisville, Kentucky). Breathitt County truly is "white already to harvest."

The work in Breathitt County is overseen by the Lothair Church of Christ in Hazard, Kentucky. Land has been purchased and the brethren from congregations in Perry and Leslie counties are committed to building a church building by November 1991.

At this time, monthly support and one-time moving expenses need to be raised. If you are willing to support the work in Breathitt County, Kentucky, please contact: H. B. Greer at the Lothair Church of Christ, 342 Lytle Blvd., Hazard, Kentucky, 41701, phone 606-436-4375; or Paul Vaughn, 425 Lincoln Avenue, Georgetown, OH 45121, phone 513-378-6407.

With your help and God's blessing, a great work can be done in Breathitt County, Kentucky. Please pray for this new mission work.

*425 Lincoln Avenue Georgetown, OH 45121*

*(Editor's Note: Brother and sister Vaughn have done a great work in the five years they have been at the Brown County Church of Christ in Ripley, Ohio. They established the church there with six members and have grown to twenty-six. We encourage brethren to help them in this good work in Breathitt County, Kentucky.)*

# DEFENDER

Volume XX

September 1991

Number 9

## Is There Such a Thing as One True Church?

*Allen Webster*

This is one of the most important questions which could be asked. If the answer is “No,” then one need not be concerned about “church affiliation.” If it is “Yes,” then one must find the true church to enjoy spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3), including salvation (2 Tim. 2:10).

How may one determine the answer to this inquiry? If he asks for opinions, no justified conclusion will be reached. If he consults creeds, he will not find a trustworthy answer. If he looks to his forefathers’ traditions, he may well find mistaken practices. Where can one turn?

Each must look to the Bible alone to find reliable answers. It is inspired (2 Tim. 3:16), true (John 17:17), and worthy of being followed (2 Peter 1:3). It claims to be the authority in spiritual matters (Isa. 8:20; 1 Pet. 4:11).

When we ask our question of the Bible, it replies: **“Only One Church Was Prophesied.”** The Old Testament contains many promises of the coming kingdom or church (cf., Isa. 2:1-4; Dan. 2:44). One beautiful picture of it is a shepherd and his flock (Eze. 37:24). God predicted that He would set one Shepherd and King over all His followers (both Jews and Gentiles). This was fulfilled in the church, where Jesus is both the Shepherd of the flock and King of the kingdom (John 10:11, 16; 1 Cor. 15:24-26).

**“Only One Church Was Promised:”** Jesus said, “upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mat. 16:18). He never promised to build many churches; He promised only one. It follows that this one would be the one true church. It was established on the first Pentecost after His resurrection (read Acts 2) and one can read of its history, doctrine, and practices in the epistles (Romans-Jude).

Someone might object saying, “I thought all the different churches made up the one church He promised to build.” No, this cannot be because His church was not to be divided. He prayed for all His followers to be “one” (John 17:20). He rebuked those who were divided (1 Cor. 1:10-13), commanding them to “speak the same things” and be of “the same judgment.” Churches wearing different names, teaching different doctrines, obeying different plans of salvation and worshipping in different ways cannot make up the one church that Jesus promised.

**“Only One Church Was Produced.”** Following that eventful Pentecost day, one reads of only one church. It met in different localities, but all God’s followers taught and practiced Christianity in the same way (Acts 2:42-47).

Paul even wrote that there was one church. He first identified the church as being the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), and then affirmed “there is one body” (Eph. 4:4). Notice further that Jesus is said to be the head of the “body,” not “bodies” (Eph. 5:23). Read Ephesians 5:23-30 and underline each time the words “the,” “a,” and “it” (all singular) are used in relation to the church. This proves that there was one church in the first century.

Now we must contemplate if there is one true church today. In order to determine if the true church exists today, one must simply compare what the pattern (New Testament) says with what is being taught and practiced. When he finds the one church that measures up to the pattern in such essential matters as: how to be saved, how to worship, and how to live the Christian life, he knows that he has found the right one.

Since the denominational concept is unscriptural, any church that claims to be a denomination can not be the one true church. Further, any church whose name is not found in the Bible can not be the true church (cf., Rom. 16:16). Any church that demands more or less than faith, repentance, confession, and immersion for salvation, cannot be the true church (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:37). Any church which teaches that one cannot fall from grace is not the true church (Gal. 5:4). Any church that does not worship by singing, praying, studying, giving and partaking of the



Lord's Supper each Sunday (Acts 2:42; Col. 3:16), cannot be the Lord's church.

Please consider these matters carefully and do not let any one tell you what to believe. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phi. 2:12). May the Lord bless you in your search for truth.

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## Editorial

### "He Abhorreth Not Evil"

The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, *that there is* no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth *are* iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way *that is* not good; he abhorreth not evil (Psa. 36:1-4).

"To smooth over one's own conduct to one's conscience...is to smooth one's own path to hell" (Charles Spurgeon). Such happens when one "abhorreth not evil." What are the characteristics of such an one?

**Evil has control of his heart.** Evil will not condemn itself, thus, the wicked man does not view sin as abhorrent. He sees evil as good and good as evil. The reason: that upon which one sets his heart becomes the object of his love, and what condemns his heart, the object of his hatred.

**He has no fear of God.** The wicked act as if God is blind, deaf and powerless. They neither fear displeasing Him nor facing Him in judgment. Yet, the very terrors of hell shall be theirs for eternity. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31).

**He deceives himself.** He sees himself as a good man. He may see himself as a respectable man. He may even see himself as an exemplary man. By deceiving himself, he soothes his conscience by self-flattery. Woe be unto the one who says otherwise. Yet, by and by, he shall be known for what he really is. If not in this life, he shall surely be found out at judgment.

**He sins with his tongue.** To himself, he justifies his iniquitous speech. A lie told by him, to him, becomes the truth as if spoken by God Himself. He finds no difficulty in telling and repeating the most ridiculous of falsehoods—if it furthers his ambition. The tongue, to him, is a wicked weapon which he unleashes against any who cross him.

**He has forsaken wisdom.** The perverse conduct of such an one causes others to wonder, "Has he taken leave of his senses?" Especially is that true in the case of one who, before his descent into evil, walked in wisdom. What a contrast! The way of sin is the way of folly, contempt and shame. The way of righteousness is the way of wisdom and respect. One can not be wise and continue in sin. He can not be wise and condone sin in others. One can not be wise and not abhor evil.

**He cares not to do good.** The wicked man is not interested in doing good. He is interested in doing evil, opposing good and, perhaps more so, in opposing those who do good. One who: does not abhor evil; fears not God; and, flatters himself in his own eyes is self-centered and conceited. Generally, he thinks he knows everything and is quick to admit it. With such an attitude comes pride closely followed by jealousy and envy.

Thus, he opposes those who do good, especially when they are praised for it. He will tear up the world if necessary, tell despicable lies and drive wedges of division to oppose the righteous. All the while, he continues to justify himself to himself and to those who, like maggots, feed on the same putrid refuse.

**He schemes and dreams of evil.** Because his heart is filled with wickedness, he devises wicked plans. Cunning craftiness is his method. Advantage is his goal. Hateful lies and twisted words become the tools of his wicked tongue. No deed is too unsavory as long as it accomplishes the fulfillment of his dream.

**He chooses evil over good.** With equal opportunity to choose either evil or good, he chooses evil. He chooses the way of evil and he chooses for his companions those who walk in the way of evil. A mutual hatred of good may be their only bond without which they would, themselves, be at enmity one with the other.

**"He abhorreth not evil."** How may one avoid such a deplorable state? Look back to the points listed and compare them with the characteristics of a righteous man. The righteous man: (1) has a heart controlled by God and filled with love for Him; (2) fears God and seeks to please Him; (3) examines his life in the light of God's truth; (4) speaks words of righteousness using his tongue to bring glory to God; (5) walks in wisdom; (6) is careful to do

good and rejoices with those who do likewise; (7) meditates upon God's Word and makes plans to serve Him; (8) chooses good over evil; and, (9) abhors evil.

Let us all determine to: "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9).

BL

# Learning to Pray

*Winfred Clark*

If you were allowed to make a request of the Lord, what would you ask? If you were going to ask for some special skill what would it be? Would it be, "Help me to overcome worry," or the like? Would you want to know how to make more money?

We have the account of one who comes to the Lord and requests that he teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1). It is very obvious that this one did not believe that prayer was merely a useless exercise. He would not believe that prayer only places one in a reflective or submissive mood. This one would believe prayer would avail something.

You will notice that our Lord would take the time to teach. He would say, "When ye pray, say" (Luke 11:2). Jesus would not engage in that which would be of no value. The very fact that He would take the time to teach would show us the value Jesus would place on prayer.

**There Is the Essential Nature of Prayer.** When one has read this section of the book of Luke he will have no doubt concerning the need for prayer. You will see that Jesus would say, "When ye pray" (Luke 11:2). He did not entertain the idea that one did not need to pray. The necessity of prayer is easily seen. At another time He would speak a parable, "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). He would not teach men to do that which was not necessary.

Did not John the Baptist teach his disciples to pray (Luke 11:1). Here was a man who enjoyed many advantages. He was filled with the Spirit from birth (Luke 1:15-17). He was a great prophet He had the honor of baptizing the Lord. But with all these advantages you will find him teaching men to pray. He saw the need for prayer.

The disciples surely came to see this great need. They walked in the physical presence of our Lord and they still saw the need for prayer. The need for prayer is an established fact that does not need to be overlooked by any of us.

**There Are Certain Elements in Prayer.** There is not only the need to pray, there is also the need to pray properly. This would surely be one of the things the disciples would have in mind when they said, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). They would want to be sure they included in their prayer those things that needed to be included. They would also want to be sure they excluded those things that ought not be in prayer.

What then are some of those essential elements that should be included in prayers? Can we determine this from what Jesus would have to say on the subject? I believe we can.

**Right relationships are maintained.** This is surely implied. Notice what he will have to say. "Our Father which art in heaven" (Luke 11:2). Here is a phrase that implies at least two relationships. One is that relationship that we sustain to God the Father. This would mean that we have entered into that relationship where God is indeed our Father. That would mean one does all that he can to protect that relationship. He will do nothing to mar the harmony of that relationship.

There is also the relationship that one sustains to those of like precious faith. Notice that it is "our" Father. Great care is to be exercised to be sure that this relationship is kept in proper place. Remember that Jesus spoke of the man who comes with his gift to the altar and remembers that his brother has something against him (Mat. 5:23-25). His prayer could surely be affected if that relationship is not right.

**Responsibilities are respected.** We are responsible to honor God's name. When Jesus says, "Hallowed be thy name," He would have us glorify the character of God. This would mean we respect in a responsible fashion the nature and character of God. We hold Him in reverence. We will support His kingdom. His will is done on earth by all who are the disciples of the Lord. We know that we are responsible to do His will and we will not be satisfied to do less than this. You will surely find this kind of thing in the life of our Lord. He not only expressed this but you will find that He exemplified this in His own life. Go with Him to the garden of Gethsemane and listen to what He would have to say. There He would pray, "let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mat. 26:39). But that is what he has taught us to pray.

So we can see from all of this that responsibilities are to be met by those who are in that proper relationship with

the Father.

Requests are to be kept simple. Take a look at the simplicity of the prayer our Lord would have us to pray. He would have us say, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Luke 11:3). That is about as simple and basic as anything could ever be. We can all understand this and have no difficulty.

These requests will have to do with the present. Notice that it is our "daily" bread. We can thus know that God is concerned about our daily needs. He is concerned about our bodies in which we live from day to day. This would also mean that God would expect us to pray each and every day.

These requests will also have to go with the past. This is found in, "Forgive us our sins." That would involve our falling short, our missing the mark, our not living as we should live.

These would also face the future. This is found in, "Lead us not into temptation."

We can thus see prayer would ask for provisions that are needed on a daily basis. There would be prayer for pardon as we fall short of the glory of God. There is also prayer for protection against sin and the evil one as we live from day to day.

As one will stop and view these matters, he will be able to see there are some very essential elements to be incorporated in our prayer life. We will be better for having prayed in this way.

**There Is Encouragement to Pray.** As you stop to read the eleventh chapter of Luke you will find a great deal of encouragement to pray. In verses 5-11 you will find six times that he will underscore results obtained by prayer.

**Look first at His illustration.** The first is based on friendship. There was a custom of the East that is being used where one comes in the middle of the night needing assistance. He asks that his friend arise and help him. He is reluctant to do so but will do so anyway. God is not like a reluctant friend that one must force to do something against his will.

There is also the illustration of sonship. He would use the father and son relationship. No father would mock the desires of his son. Even an evil father will do what he can for his son. God our Father is far superior to any earthly father with all of his human limitations.

**Look at His exhortation.** He will say, Ask, Seek, Knock (Luke 11:9). The idea is keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking.

**Look at His affirmation** (v.13). Here he says the Father gives. He gives to those who ask. There is absolutely no doubt about it.

When you take the time to look at these and other passages you can see just how important prayer is to the life of God's people. It was something that Jesus practiced constantly and never wavered in doing so. He encouraged these disciples to do likewise and they in turn would teach others to do the same.

We would all want to do what we are supposed to do in a better way. We can surely learn from the Lord how to pray.

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## Moving?

Be sure to send your change of address in early. Each copy returned costs us thirty-five cents. We also remove that addressee from our mailing list.

## Lessons from Paul's Prayer

*Eddie Helms*

In the book of Colossians, Paul, the inspired penman, wrote to the faithful brethren in the city of Colosse (Col. 1:2). In this letter, he made note to them that he gave thanks unto God for their faith, their fruit and to their faithful preacher, Epaphras, who was also a fellow servant of the apostle Paul (Col. 1:4; 6-7). What can we learn from these three points of Paul's prayer?

**Paul Prayed, Thanking God for Their Faith** (Col. 1:4). The Colossian faith was not faith only. It was an active and obedient faith toward God and man. It was a faith that was grounded in the gospel (Col. 1:5,23; Romans 10:17). It was to be a growing faith as they daily walked in the ways of Christ (Col. 2:6). Paul taught them that this faith

would be nourished by a grateful heart in appreciation for newness of life they enjoyed in Christ (Col. 1:12; 2:7). This type of faith encourages others (Heb. 10:25). Christians today need the kind of faith for which Paul thanked God! May we learn this from the prayer of Paul!

**Paul Prayed, Thanking God for Their Fruit** (Col. 1:6). In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul penned, “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control” (ASV). The Lord Jesus said one having His words abiding in him would glorify the Father and bear much fruit (John 15:1-8). Bringing forth fruit is possible when one is joined to or married to Christ (Rom. 7:4). Godly, fruitful lives are characteristic of the lives that Jesus said are lights to a world of darkness (Mat. 5:14-16; Phi. 2:15). The Christian life is a life of excellence! It is an exceptional life! It is a life that stands out in a crowd and makes a difference. May our lives be the kind of lives that are fruitful! May they be the kind that impact this wicked society in order to give God the glory and to save many souls!

**Paul Prayed, Thanking God for Their Faithful Preacher** (Col. 1:7). A faithful preacher preaches all the will of God (Acts 20:27). He does so without fear or favor of men (Gal. 1:10). He labors not as a hireling, but he is motivated by the love of God and the souls of men that all might “stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” (Col. 4:12). A faithful preacher is one who will preach God’s Word whether or not the congregation wants to hear it (Eze. 2:4-5). Though the majority may be speaking of desiring another message, the faithful preacher must speak as Micaiah and say, “As Jehovah liveth, what Jehovah saith unto me, that will I speak” (1 Kin. 22:6, 14). The majority today seems to be preaching and desiring other messages. Today’s fashionable topics should be, “We Need More Mysterious Things In Worship” according to Lynn Anderson who spoke on the 1990 Nashville Jubilee. Royce Money would have more sermons such as, “Teaching Young Men and Women To Be Good Lovers” to be preached in the church of today, according to some comments made concerning his part in the 1990 Jubilee. A faithful preacher, however, will preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:2)!

Would it not be great if the prayer of Paul could be prayed concerning every single congregation of the Lord’s body? What a difference the people of God could make if that were the case! Brethren, let us learn from the prayer of Paul and exercise our faith! Let us commit ourselves to the bearing of fruit for the Lord! Let us give ourselves to the task of teaching and living the truth of God to the glory of His great cause!

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## Jesus, the Master Teacher

*Shan Jackson*

There was something that set Jesus’ teaching apart from the others of His day. His message, His flair, His style, but more than that it was His ability to cause His audience to react. This reaction was generally on one of the two ends of the emotional spectrum. Either they would react with obedience or they would react with anger, but seldom would they react with apathy.

A statement made about Jesus’ teaching that best captures His ability was recorded in John 7:46. Jesus was teaching in the temple; soldiers are sent by His enemies to arrest Him; the soldiers return without Him, and their excuse attested His ability: “Never man spake like this man.”

If today we were asked to find one word that best explains Jesus’ ability to teach I suppose I would use the word “boldness.” Though His message was simple and direct, not highlighted with fancy illustrations and stories, it was still delivered with boldness. Boldness as witnessed by the multitudes, boldness as seen by His chosen disciples, boldness even as appreciated by His followers today, is based on authority and truth. Along these lines we also mention Acts 4:13. Boldness was demonstrated by Peter and John, and when the nonbelievers realized that Peter and John were ignorant (by their standards) the Bible says they marveled, “and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.”

However, just as the apostles found boldness in the knowledge of His person, we can find boldness in the knowledge of His teaching. Jesus assured us that we “shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you [us] free” (John 8:32). This being true, then we should never overlook or ignore a part of His teaching, or add our opinions and traditions in place of His truth. Furthermore, a knowledge of this truth should stimulate us to a boldness unseen since the days of Peter and John. When teaching truth we should strive with unwavering boldness showing no fear

of rebuke or the condemnation of man or brother. Jesus wants lambs in our obedience but lions in the promotion of His truth. Boldness in defending His Word shows the world our courage and our love for Him and His church.

Jesus is accurately called the **Master Teacher** because of His tremendous ability to capture and hold the hearts and minds of His faithful followers. Because of love unparalleled in man's history His desire is for His message to show the way that leads to eternal life. His teaching, above all else, should cultivate an unquenchable desire to think and to act. However, to find answers a Christian must be diligent in his study and dedicated to its message. Christ's ability to be the **Master Teacher** is also not unseen by our world today. Our current world continues to be shaped by His First Century instructions. It is not only how He taught but what He taught that sets Him above all other teachers combined.

Truly, "Never man spake like this man," because Jesus' doctrine was not his but his Father's. "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" was His statement that needs to be echoed and reechoed throughout the world. His doctrine, that which He taught and told others to teach, came from the Father. Christ had no separate understanding of truth than that of the Father and that is the only truth we can deliver in His name and with His authority. "All authority," Jesus said, is His, "both in heaven and in earth" (Mat. 28:18-20), and it is with that authority we carry His message to all the world as did His apostles of the first commission. Jesus accepted God's will and teaching as His own and we must do likewise. Like Paul's exhortation to the young preacher, we are also compelled to "Preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2). "The word" is Christ's Word, which was God's Word, and to preach any other word is sin!

In man's attempt to become super-thinkers and super-teachers he has taken to himself the ability to alter God's words. He had added and subtracted, glossed and illustrated, until in many cases the truth cannot be distinguished from the glamour and glitter. In almost what seems to be a brazen attempt to out think God, man has alienated himself from reason. Man's most earnest cry should be "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) but is often, instead, "What can I say about Bible teaching that will elevate me above my peers so that I seem superior to them in spiritual insight and Biblical interpretation?" (i.e., "The New Hermeneutics," etc.). Such line of thought comes not from diligent study of Christ's message but from personal ego and idealistic stupidity. God is, and remains, our only truth. Jesus is, and remains, our only standard. The Bible is, and remains, our only guide. To search for truth, standards, and guidance elsewhere is a vain search to no avail.

God's Word is designed to be used and understood. This understanding, however, is often difficult and requires diligence and hard work. His milk flows with ease but the meat often requires searching to the very core of the Scripture. Such searching require correct attitude as well as dedication and many today have neither. However, a knowledge of God's truth is for all Christians and not just a few neo-rabbinical, new age thinkers for the brotherhood.

Our desperate love for God's truth will carry us over any and every obstacle the devil hurls into our path. Boldly we point the lost to the **Master Teacher** for truly never a man spake as He.

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## Are You Suffering by Living Godly?

*Steve Miller*

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). Wait a minute, I didn't think Christians were being persecuted today. I thought being persecuted meant being beaten physically and that only happened back in the first century. The people who truly strive to live godly today know this verse still has meaning. It is true that those of us here in the United States are not beaten physically for being a Christian, but that is not exactly true in other parts of the world. There are definitely other forms of persecution that godly Christians can identify with right now.

A name that comes up when we think of persecution in the early church is the apostle Paul. "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem" (Acts 8:1). The death Saul (Paul) was consenting to was that of Stephen. Remember in the seventh chapter of Acts that the people who stoned Stephen "laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul" (Acts 7:58). "As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison" (Acts 8:3). The apostle Paul persecuted Christians before he became one. Then, after becoming a

Christian, he was persecuted severely for preaching the gospel. “Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it” (1 Cor. 4:11-12). Paul knew he had to suffer it because when true Christians take up their cross (Mat. 16:24) and follow Jesus Christ they are going to suffer from time to time.

What does it mean to live godly? “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Tit. 2:12). Living godly requires that we keep all of Jesus Christ’s Commandments (John 14:15), “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 The. 5:22), stay away “from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Pet. 2:11), and follow the perfect example that has been set before us (1 Pet. 2:21-22).

Discerning right from wrong, living right in Christ Jesus and putting God first in our lives (Mat. 6:33) is living godly. B. W. Johnson says “if the church was less worldly it would be more persecuted” (*Johnson’s Notes*, p. 281). If we are involved with worldly things we are far from living godly like we should. Throughout the Scriptures there are lists of various works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-10). Living godly in Christ Jesus requires us to stay away from these practices as well as the others mentioned elsewhere.

When a Christian lives godly like God’s Word informs us to, many people will be envious and jealous toward him because of this. When Paul listed the fruits of the spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, he went on to say “Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another” (Gal. 5:26). Even when we live right and do our best to live the Christian life, people will still look down on us because they have not been living right.

When a Christian is living godly in that he is standing for the truth and holding sound doctrine many will persecute him for doing so. It seems people have stopped asking the questions, “What does the Bible say?”, or, “Is this right in the sight of God?” For some reason, we have moved away from the practice of the Bereans found in Acts 17:11, “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Some members of the church would rather please themselves with a thus saith an opinion rather than a “thus saith the Lord” (Col. 3:17). Yes, when we follow the Bible way and speak as the “oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11), sectarians, heretics, and worldly members of the church will speak evil of us.

Too often, even our own family members (even some who claim to be Christians) will turn against us because we are trying to please God rather than the world. John tells us that Jesus Christ had disciples who decided to no longer walk with the Master. “From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him” (John 6:66). People do this very thing today by drawing a line somewhere and following Jesus up to that point. Then, when it comes time to confess Christ by upholding the truth, preaching the Word, or maintaining sound doctrine, many will stop there and then condemn those who bear their cross and follow Christ no matter what.

If we want to escape persecution for the cause of Christ all we have to do is go along with the crowd that doesn’t stand for anything. If we escape persecution on account of not living godly while we are here on this earth, we can be sure we’ll pay dearly in the world to come.

*9874 Knowlton Road; Garrettsville, OH 44231*

## “Church of \_\_\_\_\_”

*Ron Gilbert*

Most preachers notice signs along the highway as they travel. In particular they notice signs that identify religious groups. Many times one can tell a great deal about a religious group’s beliefs by the sign in front of their building. For example, a sign that says, “Old Time, Spirit Filled Pentecostal Church”; gives one a good idea of what is taught there. Sometimes a sign may say, “Premillennial,” which also helps our understanding of their beliefs.

Most churches that meet in buildings on main or busy roads know how difficult it is many times to keep their signs in good condition. Last year a young man was driving home from working on the third shift and fell asleep destroying the sign in front of our building.

A few months ago while passing a building in our area, I noticed a sign with part of the name missing from it. This sign read, “Church of \_\_\_\_\_” The last word was missing from the sign. A few weeks later the word “God” was again placed back on the sign. During the time part of the sign was missing, I passed the building several times and

many things came to my mind as I observed the sign that said, “Church of \_\_\_\_\_.”

First, the thought came that so many in our day and age feel that there is nothing in a name and that one religion is as good as another. Many in our society would like to have a “Church of \_\_\_\_\_” (fill in the blank). Another thought that came to mind upon seeing that sign was that “God” was not connected to the sign, or that “God” was separated from that sign. How sad indeed that because of man’s failure to respect and obey God’s Word, God has separated Himself from man-made religious groups and indeed “God” is missing from the lives of many. Is “God” missing from your life?

*Route 14 Box 647; Crossville, TN 38555*

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## Are We Drifting?

*Lynn Blair*

The words of God given in Hebrews 2:1 serve as an important warning to us: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.” The American Standard might be more accurate on that last part of the verse when it says, “lest haply we drift away *from them*.”

The idea of drifting is a valid concept. Since Jesus is the same yesterday, and today, yea and forever (Heb. 13:8), His church should follow that same idea. Instead we find the church drifting in many places. Recently, an elder in a congregation in central Texas was talking about a man (a teacher there) who was teaching a doctrine this elder knew to be false. The elder said to me, “Thirty years ago I would have beaten my chest and thrown him out, but now I won’t!”

I have an aunt who recently heard some gospel preaching for the first time in years (she had been attending more liberal congregations where she simply did not hear it)! She said, “It is just like stepping back in time twenty or thirty years.”

Oh yes, we could many times stand some improvement in our attitudes, but the truth (which is the Word—John 17:17) must not, in fact, can not change. The sad thing is there are literally thousands in the church who either do not know the difference or think that all preachers preach the same watered down mush that they are hearing Sunday after Sunday! I know because I have talked to friends and kinfolk over the last few years, and I have heard it myself!

An uncle told me, “Nobody preaches on dancing anymore.” I assured him I did and to be thankful. I do not know whether he believed me or not! I walked into a church building recently that had “Church of Christ” on the front. In fact I had preached a sermon or two there many years ago. I noticed an immediate difference when I walked into the auditorium. There was a grand piano beside the pulpit! And behind all of that was where the choir sat! And on the side of that were the flags—American and so-called Christian! I am glad I was not there for a worship service!

I could literally go on and on, but the point is this: “Can we drift or slip?” You better believe it. How can we avoid slipping or drifting? Back to the original text of this article—by giving “the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard”!

May we, like the Bereans of old, be more noble in that we receive the word with all readiness of mind, and examine the Scriptures daily, whether these things are so (Acts 17:11).

*P.O. Box 96; Redwater, Texas 75573*

# DEFENDER

Volume XX

October 1991

Number 10

## Pornography!

*Jerri Manasco*

The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* defines pornography as “written or graphic material intended to excite lascivious feeling.” Lascivious means anything obscene or which tends to stir up lustful passion and includes movies, television programming, or literature that has as its central content the portrayal of sexual activity as a type of entertainment. In short: pornography is immorality of the media!

There are multitudes of defenders and a host of arguments designed to justify the production of, and participation in pornographic productions. Do the defenses of pornography really provide justification for such things? Are graphic portrayals of immoral actions really justified? Christians cannot hide from these issues!

Pornography is often churned out under the stamp of being an “art form.” Now, really! Do the fans of such productions actually sit and praise the noble quality of the “art” they are beholding? Do they really find themselves acclaiming the “artistic” form of that which their eyes are feasting upon? **Be serious!!!**

Pornography is sometimes justified on the ground: “It’s all in your mind. It’s what you perceive it to be.” In other words, as long as you do not see it as obscene, then, it is not pornography! This means ultimately we can not actually place limits on anything and nothing is really to be considered as objectively unclean. So, there goes morality!

I agree that it **is** in the mind! Jesus says that sin is in the heart (Mark 7:20-23). Solomon observes that the heart is where the action is: “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life” (Pro. 4:23)!! Yes, it **is** in the mind! Many minds have become so corrupt they are beyond moral recovery. Paul described a state of being so consumed with the flesh it is “past feeling” (Eph. 4:18-19). This is an accurate description of a society that has become so calloused that conscience has shut down. Have we reached that point already in America?

I would hasten to add to this if it is all in the mind in the sense the advocates of pornography would have it, at what point will it become “obscene?” How crude will it have to be to be pornographic? If it is simply a matter of “taste,” at what point will the taste become sickening? If it is simply a matter of preference, at what point will it become something not preferred? **There can be no stopping place!**

Some would justify pornography on the ground it is a “private matter.” I would agree there are some intimate things that are private and would be inappropriate in public, but I cannot agree that everything is acceptable as long as one consents to it. David and Bathsheba sinned “in private” (2 Sam. 11), but this was **God’s business** and heavy penalties were imposed (2 Sam. 12:7-14). Sin is sin!

Is pornography protected by “freedom of speech?” Is vulgarity covered under that label? Is it not strange free speech does not include talking about God in some classrooms???

Pornography is sometimes defended with the argument (?) it is the portrayal of real life situations. Perhaps that is true in one sense! Yes, people do commit acts of immorality. The question, though, is this: **Does the reality of such conduct justify the portrayal of it for entertainment?** Does the fact of sin make it all right to sin? Does the prevalence of unrestrained immorality make such things acceptable? Where shall the line be drawn for right and wrong, decency and indecency?

Does pornography develop better citizens? If young people watch such things, will they become better acquainted with the qualities that carved out the greatness of America? Does pornography contribute to moral vitality? Does pornography enhance a man’s respect for womanhood? Does pornography ease female fear and suspicion toward the male? Does pornography contribute to peace of mind and assist the formation of peaceful attitudes? Does



pornography foster useful time investment (Eph. 5:15-16)? Does pornography nurture the noblest qualities of character? Does it breed self-respect and respect for others? Does it teach the virtues of unselfishness and moderation? Does it help people face life's problems?

It is not uncommon for those who oppose pornography to be called prudes and old fashioned thinkers. Those who endorse pornography commonly accuse their opponents of thinking that sex is dirty and that intimacy is sinful. How wrong they are! The Bible makes it clear that marriage intimacy is not dirty or evil (Heb. 13:4)! It is not the natural desire that God made we are discussing! It is the sexual license and careless portrayals thereof we scripturally oppose! We are not "out to get" pornographers! We are not seeking notches in a pearl-handled revolver! Our purpose is to call Christians to purity and to call upon others to realistically evaluate the issue.

Pornography appeals to the flesh. It excites lust. It paints a glowing picture of exquisite avenues of unattainable pleasures! It may feed the fantasies of sensual minds, but it cannot improve a person intellectually or morally. Does our already staggering nation need pornography? Think about it.

*Route 7 Box 428; Boaz, AL 35957*

## *Editorial*

# Funerals and Weddings

Recently, one asked the question, "Are funerals and weddings different from worship services?" In reply, I offer the following. Funerals and weddings differ from acceptable Christian worship in these ways.

**Purpose.** In Christian worship, the express purpose for our assembly is to worship God—not so in funerals and weddings. Funerals honor the dead (and assuage the grief of the living). Weddings honor the couple married. Christian worship honors God (Mat. 4:10; John 4:23-24). In Christian worship, saints gather in the name of Christ to worship God, seek communion with God, instruction in how to better live as Christians, edification, satisfaction of spiritual appetite and maintenance of spiritual fervor. On the contrary, one may attend a funeral or wedding for no other purpose than to express love, sympathy, consolation, concern and best wishes for the living or to show respect for the dead.

**Pattern.** Funerals and weddings are conducted according to human wisdom, under the authority of civil law and in keeping with local customs. That being the case, they differ all over the world. Christian worship is conducted according to God's wisdom, under the authority of His written word and in keeping with His divinely revealed pattern (Heb. 8:5; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3; John 4:24). Thus, when Christians worship anywhere in the world, they all worship the same God in the same way because they follow the same pattern.

God has given a divinely appointed pattern for worship but not for funerals and weddings. In Christian worship, God has specified we sing (Eph. 5:19), pray (Acts 2:42), give on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2), partake of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) and hear His Word (Acts 2:42; 20:7). He has not specified the time of day, length of worship, place of meeting, number and order of songs, etc.

**Practice.** Funerals and weddings may include singing, prayer, Scripture reading and application of Scripture, but they also may not. Either could be conducted lawfully with none of the above present. As Christians, we may choose to have any or all of the above in funerals and weddings in which we have a part. We may, by so doing, seek to accomplish good. We may also, without sin, choose not to include them. In Christian worship, God has prescribed the actions and attitudes of the worshipper and proscribed as well. For example, in Christian worship, through preaching, Christians seek the furtherance of the Gospel. While one, given the opportunity, may at a funeral or wedding seek to point people to God and to His Word, all must agree such is an opportunity and not the reason for the gathering.

**Prerequisites.** God has specified prerequisites for acceptable Christian worship. One must have the proper relationship with the Father (1 John 1:1-10), his fellow man (Mat. 5:22-24) and his family (1 Pet. 3:7). The worshipper must be prepared to worship (John 4:23) and participate in worship reverently, orderly and faithfully (Psa. 89:7; 1 Cor. 14:40; Heb. 10:25). God has specified no such prerequisites for funerals or weddings.

**Propriety.** While the Bible teaches the proper actions and attitudes in worship, there are some actions (and attitudes) which the world may condone in funerals and weddings which would be improper for the Christian. Wisdom dictates Christians refrain from that which may be improper, may influence others adversely or may cause

confusion about the belief and practice of the Christian or of the church of Christ. Thus, Christians should take care in that in which they have a say, even in funerals and weddings, to maintain propriety by setting forth the proper example.

**Conclusion.** As a Christian, without sinning, may attend a civic meeting where one outside of Christ reads Scripture or leads a prayer, so he may, without sinning, attend a funeral or wedding conducted by one not a member of the Lord's church. Why? Because it is not a worship service. Christians may choose to have a funeral according to local customs or to have no memorial service at all. Likewise, the bride and groom, though Christians, do not sin to forego a "church wedding" and be married by a justice of the peace.

It is not wrong to attend a Catholic funeral or an atheist memorial or to go to a wedding conducted by Baptists or Methodists. Nor does one sin if he attends a funeral or wedding where an organ is played or a chorus sings. Does that mean God would accept such things in Christian worship? Certainly not! God has prescribed and proscribed what one does in worship to Him. Funerals and weddings are not worship services. BL

## Behold and Beware of this Revision!

### *Goebel Music*

*Now That I'm a Christian* is a booklet we have, for a very long time, given to new converts (copyrighted in 1948). However, **it has been, as of 1991, revised**; that, "unless otherwise identified, all Scripture references are from *The Everyday Bible, New Century Version*...1983, 1986, 1988 by Word Publishing, Dallas, TX 75039. Used by permission" (Sweet Publishing, 3950 Fossil Creek Boulevard, Suite 201, Fort Worth, Texas 76137, p. 1). **If I did not say one single word except the name of the version** (as listed above), **that would be enough!** This is a booklet of 32 pages (the former was 35 pages), so it is impossible to mention all changes as almost every page has some (and every single one is not a concern to me). I shall categorize of few.

#### **They Stem from the Version That Is Used**

Ephesians 4:13 has "in the same faith" instead of "the unity of the faith"; and "the faith" is in the Greek, but read the verse from their chosen version.

Luke 13:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30-31 have "change your [their] hearts [his heart]" instead of the word "repentance." You can certainly "change your heart" without it being true repentance. Check the Greek word *metanoeo*.

Ephesians 5:19 is, "Sing and make music" instead of "singing and making melody." Note the generic term, "make music."

Romans 16:16b says, "All of Christ's churches send greetings to you" instead of "All churches of Christ." I ask, "How many churches did Christ purchase?"

Matthew 10:32 is rendered, "if anyone stands before other people and says he believes in me, then I will say that he belongs to me." I wonder why "Confess me before men" is removed? Note later "the steps of salvation" are also removed. Does "believe in" equal "belongs to me?"

Second Timothy 3:16 has "All Scripture is given by God and is" but it leaves out the word "inspired." It should be "All [or every] scripture inspired of God is." If this Version (?) is accurate, what happened to *theopneustos*? I ask, "The Bible is inspired, isn't it?"

Ephesians 4:6 is, "There is one God...He is everywhere and in everything," instead of the normal rendering "one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." Sounds like pantheism and or animism!

Colossians 1:18, instead of saying "the firstborn from the dead" is, "And he is the first one who was raised from death." I wonder what happened to others, like the widow of Nain's son, or even Lazarus?

Acts 20:28 states, "This is the church that God bought with his own death"; instead of "the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." Did God actually die?

Romans 10:10: "We believe with our hearts, and so we are made right with God. And we use our mouths to say that we believe, and so we are saved" (like the NIV, two ways to be saved! Note the omitting of both "unto" thoughts, along with "confession").

The only verse I found from a standard translation was one of the times 2 Timothy 2:15 was given. On page 18, it was given from the American Standard Version, with just a reference to the words "rightly divide the word of

truth.” They had rightly in quotes, but the other five words were listed with 2 Timothy 2:15 in parentheses, p. 25. However, prior to page 18, they had given 2 Timothy 2:15 “in full,” from their version, pp. 3 & 9.

### **They Arise from What Has Been Either Changed or Omitted**

“I will review the steps I have taken which have given me the right to be called a Christian” (remember what I earlier said about “the steps” being removed) to “I will review the way I became a Christian.” Do I have to say many today do not like the idea of “the steps” or of “the plan” of salvation? Indeed, some call us the “five fingered men.”

“To obey Christ’s commands” is changed to “to show my confidence in Christ.” Please note the removal of the word, “commands.”

Instead of “With that preparation I was baptized, to gain forgiveness of my sins,” it is rendered “with that preparation, I was baptized.” “Forgiveness of my sins” is here omitted, and this was done more than once.

“Those who obeyed the commands of Christ...were called Christians” is now “Those who follow Christ as the Son of God and Savior are called Christians.” Is obedience involved, or is “any follower of Christ” a Christian?

Two complete paragraphs (one dealing with the only rule of faith and practice...Bible authority, and the other referring to human organizations as Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Christian) are deleted (p. 7 of old booklet).

“When I became a Christian I became a member of the church of Christ” is changed to “When I became a Christian I became a part of the body of Christ.” Unless I overlooked it or just missed it, each time “Church of Christ” was used in the older booklet it was “taken out” in this revision. The exception is when it is given as “I am a part of the church of Christ.”

“Those who have obeyed the commands” is changed to “those who have been saved.” Evidently this revision dislikes such a thought as “obeyed” and “commands.”

“That there is only one church is seen from Ephesians 4:4-6 is changed to “The ‘oneness’ of the church is seen from Ephesians 4:4-6.” Sounds like ecumenicity to me.

“To ask ‘which church?’ is like asking which Christ one serves, for Christ is the head of the church,” along with the entire next paragraph about this statement is deleted. I just wonder if these folks believe anything about “one” church.

“In the New Testament the following five items of worship and only these five items are revealed to us” is also completely, totally, eradicated. If you are an astute student of what is happening among us and to us, you will readily recognize why this was done.

After listing Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:15; and, 1 Corinthians 14:15, it is written, “From these passages it is seen that the music which is in worship is singing” is changed to “From these passages it is seen that singing with the spirit and understanding.” The following eight lines that talk about “an instrument,” “that instrument;” and “any instrument” are completely extirpated, exterminated.

Beginning on the bottom of page 25 (“Further Important Considerations:”), almost all of the next two pages, (25-26), have been eliminated and dissolved as per the booklet we all once used. Note just a few thoughts extinguished.

1. Adherence strictly to that pattern, not changing, or altering the worship or organization to meet modern needs or to make the church more efficient in a changed world.
2. Two distinct philosophies or views, doing In religion that which is not specifically forbidden in the scriptures and doing only what we find authority for in the Bible.
3. Pleasing God comes by doing what God has revealed for us to do. We are not to please ourselves. If a person wants God’s approval on his work “he must do it in a way God has told us to do it.”
4. The scriptures themselves are sufficient and there is no need for a creed, confession of faith, manual or....
5. The omission of verses like 2 Corinthians 10:17-18; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 2 John 9-11; 2 Corinthians 11:3 (clearly evident are the things they obliterated and expunged).

“It should be my sincerest desire always to speak where the scriptures speak and to be silent where the scriptures are silent!” is changed to “It should be my sincerest desire always to learn the true meaning of a scripture and make the right response to it” (a sad day for biblical hermeneutics).

### **They Emanate from a Change in Emphasis**

Beginning with the “Certificate of Baptism,” it seems to me the emphasis is upon “grace,” with the idea of “commands” being annihilated. Anyone who is up on our present battle of such knows (?) why.

1. Original: “I, \_\_\_\_\_, Became a Christian by Being Baptized, upon Confession of My Faith in Christ on....”

2. Revision: "By the grace of God, I, \_\_\_\_\_, became a Christian by being baptized as a demonstration and confession of my faith in Jesus Christ on the...."

An example of this emphasis, as it seems to me, on grace (remember that obedience, commands, commandments, etc., are almost always removed, yet I know that "grace alone" is not used) is given in "I have been saved by God's grace," "That grace can save every person," "gratitude for his saving grace." Be it known I fully understand that we are saved by grace, but **it is not without man's obedience to and faithfulness to God's salvation plan**. Yes, I know no man can earn salvation, and to charge us with that is to miss the point as that is not the point herein.

The change in emphasis can be seen in quoting from the Version used. There is no way I can give every quotation; however, please note Hebrews 10:25, as it has "the Day coming." Please note the capital "D" on day. Can you imagine why this was done?

Under the organization of the church, in addition to the elders, and deacons, a separate heading is given for **Minister**. It is set aside to the left margin and in the same dark letters and a Capital, as elders and deacons.

At times you will read about "his spiritual gift of preaching," "every Christian has a gift to use in the church," and "in many different ways by Christians with many different gifts."

"Disciples" is changed to "followers." Indeed, every disciple is a follower, but not every follower is a disciple. "Household of faith" is changed to "the family of believers." This wording is of great interest for today. "In Christ" is changed to "belongs to Christ."

The distinctiveness of one church is lost, as can be seen in this quote: "To progress toward this unity or 'oneness (a goal not merely for the many differing churches, but one to be set within each congregation)."

Note these questions: "What was the message for the people of his day?" (talking about the Bible writers). "What message does he have for me today?" Is it two different and distinct messages, depending upon "his day," and upon "for me today" (our day)?

I have not touched the hem of the garment in the far reaching implications of the Version used, the things omitted, the changes made and the wording and emphasis employed. I have tried to sound forth, in all clarity, **what is happening** among us and to us as a people of God. Even such a little booklet, and we are grateful for the one by R. B. Sweet in 1948, as this one by Sweet Publishing seems to be making all the changes necessary so it can be sold to and used by any or all religious groups. You see, it not only removed the word "denominationalism," but it took out the concept as well. Indeed, the reviser abolished and wiped out: "We may do only what we find authority for in the Bible. That authority is to be by: a) direct command; b) approved example, or; c) a necessary inference" (p. 26, older booklet). Even though I would not have worded it thus, the fact this is omitted is sufficient to prove my point.

The above is, basically and for the most part, taken from the "appendices" of my book which will be out in a few weeks, *Behold the Pattern*. I just felt we had to reach as many people/churches as quickly as possible, since when reordering no one sits down and rereads the booklet, in all probability, for we have always trusted it.

5114 Montclair; Colleyville, TX 76034

## The Great Commission and Superior, Wisconsin

*Kevin Rutherford*

As Christians, we need to realize there are over five billion lost souls upon planet earth. We also need to realize the Great Commission still applies to us today (Mark 16:15-16). When these two facts sink into our minds, perhaps we will begin working to reach out to those who are lost. Because it is the Gospel that is the only power to save man, it is the Gospel we must take to man; whether he be overseas, in our home community, or somewhere else within the U. S. (Rom. 1:16).

If you personally, or the congregation where you attend, would be interested in helping the Gospel spread in areas of this nation where the church is weak, please consider the work in Superior, Wisconsin. Superior is located on the northwest tip of Lake Superior and has a population of about 45,000 people, including those just outside the city limits.

Until July 21, 1991, there was not a congregation of the Lord's church meeting in this city. Currently, there is one couple working there to establish the church (Derrick and Melanie Temple). This couple is anxiously awaiting

the arrival of their co-workers, Kevin and Vicky Rutherford. Kevin and Vicky have moved their furniture to Superior and lack nothing to begin working in this area aside from their support. If you can assist the cause of Christ in this area with a one-time contribution, with monthly support, or would like further information, contact the Duluth Church of Christ, 2344 Nanticoke Rd., Duluth, MN 55811 (218) 722-1984. Please make checks payable to "Duluth Church of Christ" and mark them "Rutherford Mission Fund." **Thank You.**

*Kevin Rutherford; 4905 Gadwall Dr.; W Memphis, TN 38141-0746; (901) 795-7716*

## Missionary Ready and Willing. Will You Help Him to Be Able?

Larry L. Eoff, faithful and experienced brother in Christ, is ready to go to Chimala, Tanzania, East Africa to work with the Chimala mission in the preacher training school, teaching children the Bible, working in the hospital as needed and working with eight villages of people. He says: "Please, help me to do mission work in Tanzania, East Africa. I am ready to go. I have most of my travel fund. All I need is \$900 monthly support."

Surely we can help do a great work for only \$900 per month. Will you? Send all support to: Elders, Seagoville Church of Christ, 510 N Kaufman, Seagoville, TX 75159.

## Free Bible Course

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Bible Correspondence Course

% Harold Maxey

20 Emory Drive

Pensacola, FL 32506

## The Thrasher-Jackson Debate (Another Perspective)

### Part I

#### *Roger Jackson*

I was not surprised to read a review of my debate with Thomas Thrasher in *The Guardian Of Truth*, but I was amazed at brother Wayne Greeson's lack of accuracy in his account of the discussion. I do not know what his problem was, but perhaps he was asleep or otherwise inattentive because much of what he has reported is simply untrue and he conveniently left out some important facts. I appreciate the Guardian's willingness to report both sides since fairness demands it and I was misrepresented.

Brother Greeson mentions "Jackson's rule" regarding Instruction to individuals and states that James 1:27 and Galatians 6:10 could not be church benevolence except by the rule. The fact is that the "rule" states what we all taught until men adopted a hobby that would not allow it. When a passage is special legislation only the person named is authorized to do it and the work is specified. When the legislation is generic, for all Christians, both the church and individual may act. Thrasher had a tremendous difficulty with this because his only argument for four nights was that if a passage commands the individual to do a work the church has no authority to do it unless another passage names the work and extends the authority to the church. Thrasher never could tell us how Matthew 22:21 and Hebrews 2:12 could apply to church action, since both named the Individual and no other passage extends either work to the church. Brother Thrasher taught that Matthew 22:21 authorized the church to obey the laws of the land and Hebrews 2:12 authorized the church to sing, but both are addressed to individuals. He could not answer the argument.

In brother Thrasher's first affirmative, true to form, he demanded a command and an example that taught my proposition as clearly as Matthew 28:19 taught baptism is for the remission of sins. He was reminded that he could not give that kind of authority for his proposition scheduled for the last two nights. By the time Thursday night came he had changed the rules. Now he said he was only asking for authority!

The proposition for Monday and Tuesday nights was broken down into its component parts and each part was proven to be true according to the Bible. Brother Thrasher ridiculed the practice making a big show before his people claiming that if the affirmative had authority for his proposition he would not have to proceed. In such a manner, he could just cite the passage. Brother Thrasher was embarrassed (or should have been) when (t was pointed out that he had used the same procedure in his debate with Mr. Barr twenty years ago!

Brother Thrasher could not answer the arguments presented in favor of the proposition on Monday and Tuesday nights and those who obtain the tapes will observe more than eight arguments he never chose to mention. His only argument was that James 1:27 and Galatians 6:10 are addressed to the individual and therefore cannot apply to the church. However, he believed Matthew 22:21 applied to the church even though it is addressed to individuals. He was pressed to give the “rule” that allowed Matthew 22:21 to apply to the church but would not allow James 1:27 and Galatians 6:10 to apply to the church.

In his confusion he gave five rules. (1) Some unstated rule that means when a passage does not specify the individual or the church both can act. Even though Matthew 22:21 specifies the individual, this rule allowed it to apply to the church. (2) The church can only do it if the church is told to do it. (3) If the church is told to do it the church can do it and if the individual is told to do it the individual can do it. (4) He said the following rule was true with the provision “If no other passage authorizes anyone else to do it”: All passages which authorize the performance of religious acts and which make specific reference to the individual Christian, are passages which authorize the indicated acts to be performed by the individual Christian exclusively.

When this rule was given with the provision attached brother Thrasher denied it was his rule and made an irresponsible charge of perversion. He was totally unable to answer the argument that the following passages are passages he exempts from his rule: Hebrews 2:21; Ephesians 5:19; 2 John 9; Romans 13:1; Matthew 22:21. (5) His rule number five seems to have been some vague principle that allows a passage addressed to the individual, such as Matthew 22:21, to apply to the church even though it is addressed to individuals, but does not thusly apply to James 1:27 or Galatians 6:10. If the rule I stated is “Jackson’s law” why did Thrasher not have five laws of his own?

Thrasher did not seem to understand the issues because he questioned the use of Eph. 5:19 in the debate. Thrasher’s rule #3 was that the church can only do a thing if the church is told to do it, but Eph. 5:19 does not address the church! He was utterly unable, under that rule, to find a verse authorizing the church to sing. He dodged the question every time it was given and cited passages that authorized individuals to do something every time he, was pressed to give authority for the church to sing.

*(Continued in next month’s issue. Editor.)*

## The Tenth Annual Denton Lectures

Dub McClish, Director

### *Studies in 1, 2 Samuel*

November 10-14, 1991

#### **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10**

9:00 AM	Alton Hayes	1, 2 Samuel—An Introduction
10:00 AM	Dub McClish	Obedience to God’s Word
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	Eddie Whitten	The Ending of David’s Reign (2:22:1-24:25)
3:00 PM	Tim Ayers	Difficult Passages: Are 1 Samuel 10:10-17 and 19:24 contradictory? What was the “evil spirit” that afflicted Saul (1 Sam. 16:14, 16, 73; 18:70; 19:19)? Why did Saul and Abner not recognize David (1 Sam. 16:18-23; 17:55-58)?
4:00 PM	Jeff Spencer	The Ark Captured, Returned; Israel Repents (1:4:7-7:17)
5:00 PM	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Goebel Music	Consequences of Rejecting God’s Servant
8:00 PM	Andrew Connally	David’s Latter Flight From Saul (7:25:1-27:12)

#### **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

9:00 AM	Lynn Matheny	Difficult Passages: How could David have been more vile than Michal charged (2 Sam. 6:20-23)? Why was David allowed to keep Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:1-27; 12:1-25)? Since God moved David to number Israel, why was David guilty of sin (2 Sam. 24:1, 10-17)?
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10:00 AM	Thomas B. Warren	Ignoring God's Will for the Family
11:00 AM	Bob Berard	The Demand for a King and Saul's Appointment (1:8:1-10:27)
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	Oran Rhodes	Victory Over the Ammonites, the Kingdom Renewed, and Samuel's Farewell (1:11:1-12:25)
3:00 PM	Discussion Forum	
	Garland Elkins	Is Any Human Activity Involved in Salvation?
3:45 PM	Garland Elkins	Questions from the floor on Forum topic
5:00 PM	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Joe Gilmore	The Birth, Training, and Establishment of Samuel (1:7:1-3:21)
8:00 PM	Robert Taylor	A Study of Christ and His Kingdom in 1, 2 Samuel
<b>TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12</b>		
9:00 AM	Jerry Moffitt	Answering False Doctrines: "The prophecies concerning David's son refer to an earthly kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12-17)." "1, 2 Samuel ap proves 'situation ethics' (e.g., 1 Sam. 71:2, 6 8; 27:8-17; 2 Sam. 15:37-37; 16:15-19; 17:5ff 19-20)." "The treatment of the Amalekites and Agag are contrary to God's love (1 Sam. 15:3, 18-19, 33)."
10:00 AM	Richard Massey	David Anointed King, Joins Saul's Court, Slays Goliath (1:16:1-17:58)
11:00 AM	Gary Colley	David's Early Flight From Saul (1:21:1-24:22)
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	
7:00 PM	Darrell Beard	The Last Days of King Saul (7:28:1-31:13)
3:00 PM	Discussion Forum	
	Mac Deaver	Are Things Taught by Implication Bindings?
3:45 PM	Mac Deaver	Questions from the floor on Forum topic
5:00 PM	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Perry Hall	The Kingdom United Under David and Jerusalem Made His Capital (7:5:1-6:23)
8:00 PM	Roy C. Deaver	A Study of the Danger of Wanting To Be Like the "Nations" in 1, 2 Samuel
<b>WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13</b>		
9:00 AM	Tom Hicks	David's Plan To Build a Temple and the Great Messianic Promise (7:7:1-79)
10:00 AM	Bubba Phillips	Answering False Doctrines: "God accepts religious or moral behavior as long as one is sincere (1 Sam. 16:7)." "David and Jonathan had a homosexual relationship (1 Sam. 18:1-4; 19:1; 20:17, 30, 41; 23:76-18; 2 Sam. 1:25-26)." "Since David had several wives and concubines (1 Sam. 18:27; 2 Sam. 3:2-5, 13-16; 5:13-15; 11:26-27), it is permissible to have several wives now."
11:00 AM	James Meadows	Grievous Problems Among the Children of David (7:13:7-14:39)
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	Cliff Lyons	David Sins and Repents (2:11:1-12:31)
3:00 PM	Discussion Forum	
	Buster Dobbs	Is the New Testament a "Constitution" or Merely a "Love Letter"?
3:45 PM	Buster Dobbs	Questions from the floor on Forum topic
5:00 PM	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Curtis Cates	The Friendship of David and Jonathan and Saul's Hostility Toward David (1:18:1-70:47)
8:00 PM	W. Terry Varner	Absalom Rebels and David Flees (2:15:1-19:43)
<b>THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14</b>		
9:00 AM	Garell Forehand	David's Reign Over Judah (2:1:1-4:17)
10:00 AM	Marvin Weir	Difficult Passages: How can David's several wives and concubines be harmonized with God's marriage law from the beginning (Gen. 2:24; Mat. 19:5; 1 Sam. 18:27; 7 Sam. 3:2-5, 13-16; 5:13-15; 11:26-77)? Why was Achish so benevolent toward David (1 Sam. 27:1-7)? How could the already slaughtered Amalekites attack Ziklag (1 Sam. 27:8-9; 30:1)?
11:00 AM	Jesse Whitlock	David's Last Battles (2:70:1-21:77)
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	Bobby Liddell	David Extends the Kingdom (7:8:1-70:19)
3:00 PM	Discussion Forum	
	Noel Merideth	Does the Bible Set Forth "Pattern Theology"?
3:45 PM	Noel Merideth	Questions from the floor on Forum topic
5:00 PM	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	David Brown	Saul Revolts Against the Philistines, Disobeys God, Is Rejected by God (1:13:1-15:35)
8:00 PM	Darrell Conley	1, 2 Samuel—A Summary

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# DEFENDER

Volume XX

November 1991

Number 11

## Apples of Gold

*Burt Jones*

“A word spoken in circumstances that are appropriate is like seeing the image of fruit bearing a golden color enhanced by the mirrored grace of the vessel which contains It.” This is the meaning I gleaned from the beautiful and under-used passage, “A word fitly spoken *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver” (Pro. 25:11).

I have always had a deep admiration for those Individuals with a gift for the well chosen word; a person whose timely and relevant statement could diffuse a tense situation, or excite an audience, or captivate, or motivate, or encourage an individual.

There are, of course, those in history who have misused this talent to direct individuals and, indeed, whole nations with their rhetoric, such as Sadaam Hussein, Adolph Hitler, Jim Jones, etc. But, to literally be able through the simple use of words and phrases to direct the masses is an exciting thing to see.

Two thousand years ago there was a young man of Nazareth whose every syllable was as apples of gold in pictures of silver. “Never man spake like this man” (John 7:46). His words had a different sound from all the rest.

Have we ever considered in what area the charm of Jesus’ speech manifested itself? It certainly was not in His dress or because of His physical beauty (Isa. 53:2), or His academic learning (John 7:15), or because He was a good actor. It was simply because Jesus had something from God to say and He said it.

Can the gospel preacher and the Christian today speak with boldness and authority? Absolutely! Each time the Word of God is opened and a statement is read from that Book, reflected upon, taught, talked about, and urged upon the people to believe it, we have the power of every syllable of His Word reinforcing that truth. It is not because of the teacher’s authority, but because of the authority of the Word of God. As Christians, we confirm as His oracles the Scriptures and the manner of articulation chronicled in that precious Record. And so, we can speak **with authority**.

Our Lord spoke with such wonderful **simplicity**. He used words, phrases, and illustrations that the people could understand. How many gospel meetings and lectureships have we attended or taken part in, where brilliance of metaphor and a gaudy show of Greek scholarship blankets the simplicity of the deeper truths of the gospel. Our responsibility as stewards of His Word is to perpetuate the beauty, kindness and plain speech of the gospel.

Our Lord spoke with such love and equal **firmness**. He spoke plainly and He did it in love (Mat. 21:12-13; 23:14). My dad, in his rough-hewn way, used to tell me that tact and diplomacy are being able to tell someone to go to that place prepared for the devil and his angels, and have them ask you for a roadmap.

“Never man spake like this man.” He spoke of God, being the first to say, “I and *my* Father are one” (John 10:30). He claimed to have been with the **Father** before the world was (John 1:1-3), and proclaimed, not only that He was the **Son of God** (Mark 14:61-62), but that He was **equal** with the Father (Phi. 2:6).

Our Lord spake of **man** (Mat. 16:26); of man’s **enemies** (Mat. 5:44); of **salvation** (Heb. 2:3); and of a **life beyond the grave** (John 10:10; 11:25-26). Before Christ came, men were asking, “If a man die, shall he live *again*?” (Job 14:14). But, after He came and died for our sins men knew and today, can know, that they are conditionally assured a life after death (1 Cor. 15:20-22).

Finally, it appears to this writer that, as Christians, our speech should harmonize with our lives. If those around us hear high-sounding platitudes, but our actions contradict our conversation, then our “apples of gold” turn into



withered fruit, and our “pictures of silver” turn into Images of tarnished plating.

Diplomacy, good taste, and sensitive speech in no way detract from our ability to speak the truth In love. Just the contrary, it may signal the very summit of **our** spiritual maturity.

*Millersburg, Ohio*

## *Editorial*

# Profitable Service

## Matthew 25:14-30

In the parable of the talents, Jesus justly condemned the “unprofitable servant” who failed to use his blessings of opportunity and ability. The slothful servant’s condemnation was not based upon the fact he began with only one talent but that he ended with only one. As the principle of the parable shows, today, God has provided His servants with opportunities and abilities. The key is not how much have we received but how shall we react to that which we have received? How we react to our responsibilities is proportional to our faith, our desire and our relationship with the Master, Jesus Christ. Our reaction determines the reward we shall receive now and also at the final reckoning.

**Responsibility to Serve.** No one is empty handed when it comes to ability to serve God; thus, none can please God while slothful and useless in His service. The Lord lays claim to the time, abilities, opportunities and energy of His servants when He commits to them the work He would have done. He, being the Master, has an undeniable right to so do (1 Cor. 6:20; 4:2). Truly, not all have the same ability (Mat. 25:15). The two talent man did not receive five talents nor was as much expected from the one talent as from the two. Some are more able physically, mentally or otherwise by birth, training, circumstances or greater opportunity and thus have greater responsibility. God gives to each one that which he can use and requires of each one only that which he can do; hence, all can be faithful in that which they have. God requires all to so be. That being the case, honor comes not from the magnitude of our ability but from our faithful use of what we have.

**Reaction to Service.** What determines the results we shall attain and the reward we shall obtain is our reaction to service. The men with two talents and five talents held a positive view of service. The five talent man did not criticize or look down upon the others neither did the two talent man feel inferior because he did not have five (1 Cor. 4:7). They got busy with what they had. They did not fear the work at hand nor their master. With faith in him and in their work, they sought to please him by their service.

The one talent man had a negative view of service. Perhaps he thought the more gifted’s ability to do more freed him from any responsibility (Eph. 4:16), He planned to do nothing and that is exactly the plan he followed. With neither gratitude nor fairness, he hid his talent and tried to minimize its importance but he could not hide from his master (Gen. 3:8; Rev. 6:16-17). As he viewed his talent as “little,” more often than not, we fail in the “little” things (Luke 16:10-12). Many think if one simply keeps himself from wrong deeds he does well. What about the need to **do** something? May one not sin by omission as well as commission (Jam. 1:22; 4:17; Luke 12:48; 1 Pet. 3:10-11)? The one talent man’s fear came from a lack of faith. Fear hinders one’s use of his abilities and prompts one’s use of excuses (Mat. 25:24-25). One may ask why the difference In the five and two talent men from the one talent man? There was a distinct difference in their faith, their desire to serve and their relationship with the master.

**Rewards of Service.** The reward of the faithful is increased trust, greater blessings and higher service (John 15:2). No accolade of man can compare with acclaim from the Lord. There Is no higher approval. Thus, the faithful shall receive the rewards of faithful service now and the reward of Heaven after this life (Rev. 2:10; 22:3; 2 Cor. 5:10).

The rebuke of: the faithless includes removed trust. Was the master unfair? Some might argue: “This is a good man. Look at the things he has **not** done!” The Lord called him a “wicked and slothful” man. Truly, he did not waste his master’s money in immoral living. He was neither liar nor thief, but he did not use it as he could have and should have. Perhaps, he worked harder not to use it than if he had used it.

His talent was taken from him and given to the man who had ten. Though he had received only one talent, he was

held responsible for the use of that one. Many times brethren say with a smile, “I’m just like the one talent man.” What they oftentimes mean is they have **no** talent and plan on using none. Their condemnation shall be as sure and just as that pronounced on their “unprofitable” brother of old. The old saying is: “Use it or lose it.” Like the one talent man, if we do not use our blessings in Christian service, we will certainly lose them.

**Reckoning at Last.** “After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them” (Mat. 25:19). Reckoning is certain—just as certain as death. “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). Appropriately, the verses immediately following this parable present the judgment when Christ comes back: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory...And these [the wicked] shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Mat. 25:31-46). Not all shall receive the same reward but each shall receive the proper reward. As one has said, the test is not how smart nor how able but how faithful have we been. Have we done our best? God will not accept less and he does not demand more.

A servant of the master was cast out. Why? Because he was unprofitable. To where? Outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. No sane man wants to follow him, but are we serving so as to insure we shall not.

Are we “good and faithful” or “wicked and slothful” in our service. Profitable or unprofitable? We shall surely be one or the other. Friend, which are you? BL

## Contending Lawfully

*Robin W. Haley*

In his second letter to Timothy, Paul illustrates acceptable service to God in three ways: with reference to soldiers, athletes and farmers (2 Tim. 2:5). These three illustrations also serve to describe various aspects of our work of service.

As soldiers, we must “war the good warfare” and “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12). We as members of the church are an army (Eph. 6:10-17) and are engaged in war with the devil (2 Cor. 2:11; 10:3-4). Also, as athletes, we must build and have endurance to finish the race set before us (Heb. 12:1), running in such a way so as to obtain an imperishable crown (1 Cor. 9:24-25), which will be awarded when our Lord returns (2 Tim. 4:7-8). Finally, as farmers we each must cultivate the soil for planting the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:6), which results **only** in the church collectively and Christians Individually.

There is something further Paul said in the above text. That is, while thinking in terms of athletes, and keeping in mind that we have a race set before us to run, how are we to run it? Shall we run just any old way we please? Many brethren these days would have us believe that, yes, we can go about it any way we please. Some, however, want to at least refer to the “rule book” from time to time. But alas, some brethren are trying to change the rules, or at least how we are to interpret them. Thus, many innocent brethren are being lead astray by a false, faulty and divisive doctrine which does more to cause them to stumble than to “run with endurance!”

Friends, let us simply do what God through Paul has prescribed: let us “contend lawfully.” There is a rule of action for the Christian life. Rules of action are laws...“law[s] of Christ” (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2; etc.). To compete by the rules is to live according to the law. There is a set pattern. Let us live thereby and not “cheat” in our Christian service to God. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: cheaters never win!

*P.O. Box 153; Scott City, KS 67871*

## Free Bible Correspondence Course

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# Try Your Own Selves

*Lynn Blair*

Some folks never stop to consider whether they are right or wrong! That is the reason that we have such rampant immorality and vain worship in our world today. A lot of people just don't think. Paul told the Corinthians, "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate. But I hope that ye shall know that we are not reprobate" (2 Cor. 13:5—ASV). The word "reprobates" means "rejected," literally, "not standing the test."

That "faith" that we are to be in is also that faith for which Jude says, "was once for all delivered unto the saints" and that faith for which we are to "contend earnestly" (Jude 3). Paul told Timothy much the same thing when he said, "Fight the good fight of **the faith**" (1 Tim. 6:12). "Now faith is **assurance** of *things* hoped for, a **conviction** of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). It is not just a good feeling in the heart. "Faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17—KJV).

Will we stand the test? We must ever "try our own selves" and "prove our own selves" and that by the Word! "So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

*P.O. Box 96; Redwater, TX 75573*

## Upcoming Debate

January 27, 28 and 30, 31, 1992 at 7:00 P.M. in the building of the Burbank Church of Christ, 9700 Fulton St., Houston, Texas, brother David P. Brown will debate Bob L. Ross, Baptist, on the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting one of sin, converting him to Christ and sanctifying him as a child of God. The propositions are:

**Monday and Tuesday nights:** "The Scriptures teach that in conviction, conversion and sanctification the Holy Spirit operates only through the Word of God." Affirmative: David P. Brown. Negative: Bob L. Ross.

**Thursday and Friday nights:** "The Scriptures teach that in bringing men to faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit uses means, and he also exerts his personal power in accompaniment, or additional to the means." Affirmative: Bob L. Ross. Negative: David P. Brown.

## Moving?

Be sure to send your change of address in early. Each copy returned costs us thirty-five cents. We also remove that addressee from our mailing list.

## The Thrasher-Jackson Debate (Another Perspective)

### Part II

*Roger Jackson*

It is simply untrue that Jackson "avoided the question" when asked if a church could give to a college. The tapes will clearly show that it was repeatedly stated that a church could give to a college if the funds were earmarked for the Bible department. Neither was anything "vague" stated about giving to the KKK, and it was pointedly stated that benevolence is not a peculiarly religious work. I wonder where brother Greeson was when the point was stated?

Brother Greeson shows that he did not comprehend the argument on 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Revelation 2-3 and Galatians 6:2 in support of the hermeneutical principle in question any more than brother Thrasher did. It was repeatedly demonstrated that the authority for church action was given to individuals and by Thrasher's rule that is impossible. And what did Brother Greeson say about the arguments on Thursday and Friday nights showing in chart after chart the hermeneutics in question works consistently on every passage addressed to the individual? Just like brother Thrasher, brother Greeson did not mention it!

Brother Greeson is correct when he states that brother Thrasher anticipated the request for a rule of interpretation for his Thursday and Friday "saints only" proposition. The truth is I told him for two nights he was going to have

to give it and that he would not be allowed to forget that he had required a specific passage and example of the affirmative on Monday and Tuesday nights. However, brother Thrasher knew he was in a pinch and so he tried to change the rules of the game.

Thrasher said he would use the rule “hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” However, he was pressed to find just one passage that states “saints only,” just find one time where the Spirit ever said that in benevolence, the church is restricted to saints only. Needless to say, he never found for himself what he required of his opponent, and the audience knew it.

Brother Greeson completely missed the argument on Matthew 5:47. It is not true that the only non-saints the negative allowed to receive funds were children and the feeble-minded. The point was that some men among adults were excluded, but not all of them. However, according to brother Thrasher’s position, in his zeal to exclude false teachers and others, he excluded children and the feeble-minded. It would have been nice if brother Greeson had been candid enough to mention the negative argument made on the point he reviewed while he was at it. The argument was that when someone is excluded from the church treasury the person and reason are given and the person is never a non-saint and neither is the reason. When you get the tapes see if you can find the answer to that argument.

It is certainly true that brother Thrasher argued that the church is not in Matthew 5 by name, but somehow it was in Matthew 22:21 according to brother Thrasher. If brother Greeson had been in brother Thrasher’s place he would have been as unable to answer that as Thrasher was. Get the tapes and see if you can find his answer. Brother Thrasher did not use the point to his advantage as brother Greeson stated, but avoided it, perhaps to avoid the embarrassment it caused him.

It is certainly true that brother Thrasher took Matthew 5:47, Galatians 6:10 and 2 Corinthians 9:13 and gave the context, but Greeson forgot to mention that the argument was turned on him and it was shown that the church can be equally demonstrated to be in the contexts of all of these passages. Arguments were made on these passages, but instead of trying to answer them brother Thrasher resorted to his “canned” material whose bottom line was the same, “if the individual is told to do it the church is not authorized to do it.” But he did not believe that on Matthew 22:21.

Brother Thrasher characterized his opponent’s position as “metamorphosizing” James 1:27, addressed to the individual, so that it became a passage addressed to the church. Then, to his embarrassment, he was pressed to tell the audience how Matthew 22:21, addressed to the individual, became church action. His inconsistency is glaring from the beginning to the end on the tapes.

It is a total misrepresentation to state that Jackson avoided the questions. Brother Thrasher would hardly give an intelligible answer to the questions by Tuesday night. When asked for the principle on Matthew 22:21 that he had said it taught he only quoted the verse. When asked for church action he gave passages addressed to individuals. Brother Greeson needs to pay attention if he is going to report on debates. Perhaps he was confused, but neither Thrasher’s opponent nor the audience was.

In like manner we commend brother Thrasher on his willingness to debate the issues, but we would like for some fairness to be demonstrated in such reports as brother Greeson’s. His report is misleading, inaccurate and biased.

*Route 3 Box 882 Somerville, AL 35670*

*Tapes of the debate are available. Contact Roger Jackson at the above address for details.*

## The Locator Gene on the Eleventh Chromosome

*Eddie Helms*

Recent news accounts have made much ado about a gene that is found in some 70% of alcoholics. It is suggested that this is “proof” that alcoholism should be labeled a disease. One program questioned whether those who enforce DUI laws should now take into consideration the violator’s possession of this gene, and, therefore, be more lenient toward him.

Genetic research could possibly (if it has not already) uncover another gene. This one could show one has inherited from his father or mother the tendency to be quick tempered. Would God then excuse this person for his

outburst of four letter words or for his physical abuse of another person?

It has long been argued by some that homosexuality is a trait not chosen, but is a part of one's genetic makeup. If genetic research showed a gene on a chromosome in a certain percentage of homosexuals should we then allow homosexual marriages and assert that this is but an alternate lifestyle after all?

Man does inherit twenty-three chromosomes from his father and the same from his mother. These forty-six form twenty-three pairs and on each chromosome nearly one thousand genes can be found. These are the blueprint for the individual. The Bible teaches that each person is a unique individual with certain traits, talents, and abilities and is encouraged to use them to the glory of God (Rom. 12:3-8). But this is only part of that which determines the individual.

Environment will also influence an individual. What does the Bible say of the effect of the environment upon man? To receive the praise of others was the basis of the behavior of the hypocritical Pharisees (Mat. 6:1-8). The good behavior of the Christian is a factor that can help to change the lives of others (Mat. 5:13-16; Phi. 2:15-16). Evil environments can corrupt good people (1 Cor. 15:33).

The point is—accountable men, women and children are what they are by nature (physical makeup), nurture (environment) and choices made based on all this data. Man can choose to serve God or to serve Satan (Jos. 24:15; Rom. 6:16). Because each person is a unique individual, one may have to work a bit harder than the other, for example, to control his temper because of an inherited character trait or the environment in which he was nurtured. One type of individual is just as accountable to Ephesians 4:29 as the other! The homosexual has chosen that unnatural use of his body (Rom. 1:26-27). The passages that deal with the sinfulness of drinking beverage alcohol apply to all men equally (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Pet. 4:3)! By the way, did the receptor gene on the eleventh chromosome demand the individual to take his first drink?

God's definition of sin and guilt cannot be changed by faulty conclusions of scientific facts (Rom. 3:23-24; 6:23; Mat. 11:28-30; John 8:32). The act of drinking alcoholic beverages (non-medical usages) is sin (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Isa. 59:1-2). To drink is a choice made by the individual. The fact that a gene may predispose one to a life long addiction of drinking alcohol does not negate the responsibility of the Initial choice!

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## Will Ye Also Go Away?

*Chuck Northrop*

In John 6, after Jesus fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes and after He walked on the sea, the people came to Him with worldly motives. Notice Jesus' response to them in John 6:26, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." This led Jesus into a discourse about the bread of life. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (John 6:32-33). They had obviously missed the point of Jesus' message for they said, "Lord, evermore give us this bread" (John 6:34). But Jesus responded more directly saying, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). The Jews challenged Jesus' statement but Jesus defended Himself and reaffirmed that He was "the bread of life."

John goes on to record the statements many disciples made in response to Jesus claim, "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60). As a result, John says, "From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:66). Finally, Jesus turns His attention to the twelve and asked them, "Will ye also go away?" (John 6:67).

We ask the same question. With apostasy so rampant in the ranks and the problems of sin that the church is facing today, there are many falling back into the world and grasping onto the bondage of denominationalism. And so we ask, but more than ask, we plead for an answer to the question that Jesus heralded almost two thousand years ago, "Will ye also go away?" But we also ask, "Why do some leave?"

### **Some Leave Because They Really Do Not Believe**

Unbelief was the problem which Jesus was dealing with. Notice the fact that in verse 26 these Jews saw the

miracles but they were more concerned with the appetite of the body. Later John records, "The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" (John 6:41-42). It is obvious because of murmuring that these Jews did not believe. But directly concerning their unbelief, John records, "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him" (John 6:64).

So often many confuse the belief which the world teaches and the belief that the Bible teaches. The world teaches a belief that is a knowledge of facts but the Bible teaches a belief that is a knowledge of facts coupled with an action response of obedience. Jesus In response to their unbelief said in John 6:27-29,

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

This is the same thing taught in James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Remember the devils believe but they also tremble for they are not saved and they know their eternal destiny. They are not saved because their belief is not coupled with the action of obedience.

### **Some Will Leave Because They Do Not Want to Commit Themselves**

Those, in John 6, did not want to commit themselves to righteous living for they just wanted to be fed with physical food. They were not willing to partake of the body and blood of Jesus for in doing this their lifestyles would have to change. Jesus taught commitment and they were unwilling to commit themselves to feeding on the bread of life. Sadly today, we have many within our own number who are more interested in physical things than spiritual values. Jesus taught in Matthew 16:24-27:

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Commitment Is one key to stability and spiritual growth. If we are not committed to Jesus, to God, and to His Word, then we are likely to be the ones who will depart from the faith. Therefore, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2).

### **Some Will Leave Because They Are Persuaded by the World**

In John 6, one can readily see the persuasive power of the Jews. Remember, the Jews first murmured at Jesus (John 6:41) and it was the Jews that "strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?" (John 6:52) but it was the disciples who turned away from Jesus (John 6:66)! The same social pressure today has caused many "would-be" disciples not to be disciples. This world holds no hope but sadly many have sought after it. John warns, "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). Paul warned, "For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7). And James warned, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jam. 4:4). Yet, there are those whose concern is not for their own spiritual being but for the world.

### **One Last Response**

There is one response that we did not mention for we saved it for the last. It is the right response, the one Jesus wants us to give. It is Peter's response to Jesus question, "Will ye also go away?" and it is found in John 6:68-69, "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Notice that Peter's reply is three-fold. First, he said, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Second, he said, "we believe" which shows that they were mentally persuaded. And third, he said, "and are sure" indicating complete knowledge ascertained by examination that "Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Literally, it could be translated, "We have believed and have known You are God's Holy One."

Finally, we must ask, "How do you respond to this question that Jesus asked?" Apostasy is real and many are traveling down its road, but worse is the fact that many are being persuaded by those who are unconcerned about

spiritual things as were the Jews in this account. Jesus asked the twelve but I must ask it of you, “**will ye also go away?**”

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## Florida School of Preaching

1807 South Florida Avenue; Lakeland, Florida, 33803

Seventeenth Annual Lectureship

January 20-23, 1992

**Theme— “Does The Church Need Changing For The Coming Century?”**

### **Monday—January 20**

9:00 “Preaching for the Next Century”  
9:45 “Changing Our Attitudes Toward Money”  
10:45 “Preaching the Gospel and Leaving Others Alone”  
11:30 Lunch  
1:30 “One Gospel For All Men”  
2:30 “Abuses of Worship in Song”  
3:30 Open Forum  
4:30 Dinner  
7:00 “Attitudes Toward Evangelism”  
7:45 “God’s Unchanging Hand”

Winford Claiborne, Henderson, Tennessee  
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, Alabama  
Jim Ezekiel, Folkston, Georgia

Gilbert Miller, Ft. Myers, Florida  
W.D. Jeffcoat, Gainesville, Florida  
Flavil Nichols & Jackie Stearsman

Robert Lindsey, Brooksville, Florida  
Wendell Winkler, Montgomery, Alabama

### **Tuesday—January 21**

9:00 “Preaching For The Next Century”  
9:45 “Changing Our Attitudes Toward Money”  
10:45 “The Changing Role of Women”  
11:30 Lunch  
1:30 “Are We Ignoring the Qualifications of Elders?”  
2:30 “Is Truth Relative?”  
3:30 Open Forum  
4:30 Dinner  
7:00 Changing Our Moral Values”  
7:45 “Changes I Have Seen In The Last 50 Years”

Winford Claiborne, Henderson, Tennessee  
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, Alabama  
Wendell Winkler, Montgomery, Alabama

Bobby Duncan, Adamsville, Alabama  
W.E. Wardlaw, Huntsville, Alabama  
Flavil Nichols & Jackie Stearsman

Gene Hill, Auburndale, Florida  
V.P. Black Chickasaw, Alabama

### **Wednesday—January 22**

9:00 “Preaching for the Next Century”  
9:45 “Changing Our Attitudes Toward Money”  
10:45 “Must One Be Member of Church of Christ To Be Saved?”  
11:30 Lunch  
1:30 “Shall We Reject Pattern Religion?”  
2:30 “Wolves in Sheep’s Clothing”  
3:30 Open Forum  
4:30 Dinner  
7:00 “Rules For Christian Living Never Change”  
7:45 “What Preachers Can Do To Preserve The Faith”

Winford Claiborne, Henderson, Tennessee  
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, Alabama  
Jack Tittle, Rocky Mt., North Carolina

Jim Laws, Memphis, Tennessee  
Wayne Coats, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee  
Flavil Nichols & Jackie Stearsman

Samuel Roney, Tampa, Florida  
Winfred Clark, Athens, Alabama

### **Thursday—January 23**

9:00 “Preaching for the Next Century”  
9:45 “Youth Problems In Our Changing Society”  
10:45 “Changing Attitudes Toward Fellowship”  
11:30 Lunch  
1:30 “Changing Attitudes Toward Controversy”  
2:30 “Courting The Favor of Denominations”  
3:30 Open Forum  
4:30 Dinner  
7:00 “Changing Attitudes Toward The Bible”  
7:45 “The Roll of Elders in Preventing Apostasy”

Winford Claiborne, Henderson, Tennessee  
David Macy, Blue Ridge, Georgia  
Marlin Kilpatrick, Port Charlotte, Florida

Bobby Liddell, Pensacola, Florida  
Winfred Clark, Athens, Alabama  
Flavil Nichols & Jackie Stearsman

Gene Burgett, High Springs, Florida  
Bobby Duncan, Adamsville, Alabama

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