

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

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Who's Business Is It, Anyway?

by Robin W. Haley

This question was put in statement form in a second-hand account that I read regarding the singing group called "Acappella". The lead singer was reported to have said, "it doesn't matter what (other) people think about our 'ministry' because it is done for the Lord." Now here is an interesting thought: as long as one claims that his actions are "for the Lord," it is nobody's business what that action is, and it is implied that it does not even matter to the Lord what that action is! With a "carte blanche" like this, anything can (and probably will) be done that pleases one's own belly, as long as it is claimed that it is "for the Lord." I readily admit, this kind of thinking scares me! Especially in view of the fact that this singing group is high-lighted at many youth gatherings and their own "concerts" draw thousands of teens and young adults!

This "anything goes" type of thinking is not new, as most of you who read this will know. In fact, is not this one of the seeds that, when germinated grows into those plants the Heavenly Father will one day uproot (Matt. 15:13)? Surely so! Usually, there has to be some reason why so many brethren begin thinking this way. The most common (and in this case the most probable) reason such folk as our misguided young singing brother holds to this "it-is-none-of-your-business-what-I-do-for-the-Lord" reasoning, is found within the ranks of our "unity in diversity" brethren. Too many of our younger brethren in the Lord do not take the time to investigate the teachings of some "big-name" brother who holds a meeting here, a

youth rally there, or some seminar, workshop, or "lock-in." They hear so much about God's love and that "all brethren have some bit of error or other," and thus we should "accept anyone who claims to follow Christ," and so much about "dialogue and keeping lines of communication open" that they forget (if they ever knew) that the wisdom of God as found in Christ is FIRST pure (I Cor. 1:18ff; Jas. 3:17).

In all of this, I believe that I smell the typical "Christian Church" interpolation of Romans 14, which many of the previously mentioned brethren are parroting. The bottom line in this interpolation is that you cannot say one thing about or against what I do because I do it for the Lord. Too bad that so many fail to realize that the Lord does not want what I decide he does. Whatever we do "for the Lord" must be "according to *his* word."

Now as to our title: is it anybody's business what I do, as long as I do it "for the Lord?" Answer: YES! If I do *anything* "for the Lord" or "in the Lord's name" in a public manner as a means of edification, instruction, ministry or entertainment IT IS EVERY CHRISTIAN'S BUSINESS! Every Christian has the right and duty to question what I do in the name of the Lord...especially if what I do affects the spirituality of thousands of Christian teens. Here is the pitiful part: too many parents, youth ministers, preachers and elders ARE NOT questioning what they are allowing their young people to see, hear and believe!

SPECIAL NOTE: If you desire additional copies of the September 1987 issue of **Defender**, entitled "Let The Facts Speak," contact the **Defender** office, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506, or call (904) 455-7595.

Brethren, we have allowed too many to lead too many astray. We need to stop letting those who walk not in the straight ways of the Lord to lead our people, our young people into the ditch of sectarianism, emotionalism and denominationalism! If

this warning sounds too strong, perhaps you, your congregation and your young people will be next to fall for the doctrines and commandments of men (Matt. 15:9)!

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At What Cost Success?

by Eddie Helms

In our society businesses measure the success they enjoy or the lack of it on the number of their clients and the money they have made during a certain amount of time. If their expenditures exceed their income they certainly would not be considered successful and rightly so. In order to be successful, then, they modify their product to meet the needs of the consumer. This is one workable philosophy to use in the business world.

Many, however, have brought this philosophy into the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some no longer desire the pure product of God, the gospel. They desire to hear pep talks and sermonettes with entertainment provided. Since some church leaders equate numbers and contributions alone as success, to maintain these figures they modify the product God has given mankind. The result is something far inferior! Thus, these churches have gone the way of the church at Thyatira sacrificing their souls for the idol of success (Rev. 2:20). They think they are alive and successful but are actually dead as the church at Sardis (Rev. 3:1). They have no right to be recognized as a lighthouse of God (Rev. 3:5). Their man-made philosophy of success has cost them souls, the most precious commodity man has.

On what does God base success? Who among us would say Noah was not successful in God's sight, though he only influenced eight souls including himself? He was a success (Gen. 6:22)! Ezekiel's preaching did not deter the destruction and captivity of the rebellious people of God (Ezek. 2:5-3:11). Yet, no one would consider him unsuccessful (Ezek. 3:19). Stephen is another example of a man who God considers successful. He had no positive response to his sermon in Acts 7, in fact that one sermon cost him

his life. These men could have easily modified their messages and no doubt had many responses. They would have been considered successful in the sight of men, but would have miserably failed in the sight of God.

You see, brethren...successful churches are not based on numbers or financial contribution. We are only successes when we stand with the Bible. When we modify or change the Bible to suit the whims and fancies of men, we will miserably fail and it will cost us souls!

Just recently, in my area, an annual event for young people took place. These events took place on each Monday night of the month. At one event a singing group was singing spiritual songs accompanied by hand clapping, humming and pre-recordings of their voices sounding like instruments of music. One of the preachers at this particular congregation read near the close of the service Colossians 3:16 noting what they were doing was an expression of that verse. Later, this event was applauded as a success. *At what cost success?* How can this congregation hope to persuade others of the purity of New Testament worship when they have modified the message?

Israel was only successful when they were obedient to God's message and remained a distinct people. It was only when they began to measure success by man's standards did they miserably fail (1 Sam. 8:5-18). Brethren, when will we learn that God blesses when we *obey*? Let us learn that to be successful we must *obey*! Let us always strive to build successful congregations in the sight of God!

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Christian Caveat

by Steve Gunter

Modern merchants demand accuracy in the marketplace. Adequate labeling insures honesty and fair business practice. These simple precepts and rules likewise apply to the realm of religious discourse.

Our legislative assemblies have long recognized the utility of consumer protection regulations. The Food and Drug Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Federal Communications Commission are prime examples of this protection movement in American law.

No such laws exist which protect the soul of a man from evil religious merchandise. The Christian "consumer" in the marketplace of ideas must then adhere to the ancient admonition which preceded all modern day government "insurance," i.e. "let the buyer beware," *caveat emptor*.

Scripture employs the term "beware" in at least two major senses. For example it is written, "*Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*" (Matt. 23:7). Paul intended an identical meaning in Colossians 2:8, "*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*"

Paul writing to Timothy said, "*Of whom be thou ware also: for he hath greatly withstood our words*" (2 Tim. 4:15). The apostle here spoke of Alexander the coppersmith, the anti-Christian Paul Revere of the day. Peter likewise wrote, "*Ye therefore beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall down from your own steadfastness*" (2 Pet. 3:17). Both Paul and Peter enjoined an awareness and vigilance from the early day saints of the Lord.

Countless Christians have abandoned this aggressive attitude of apostolic awareness. Lowering our guard violates the strictest command of the Lord Christ himself. No man is safe who willfully forsakes the sentinel's duty to stand guard at the watchtower of faith.

Our Lord expects every elder to both be aware (take notice) and beware (stand guard) over the precious deposit of divine truth which is entrusted to every generation born since the advent of our Redeemer. Long ago an ancient band of determined men pledged to themselves, "they shall not pass," as the hostile host gathered before them. Those whose promise is to the Lord to preserve his word, his church, and his truth must take up the banner and stand fast for the faith in spite of every evil brought against us.

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Repentance And Church Growth

by Weldon Langfield

God wants his church to grow. The great commission is all the proof we need of that fact (Matt. 28:18-20). Early Christians recognized the responsibility that commission imposed for we read, "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Multitudes were being baptized. While Christ longs for church growth, however, he wants it to consist of people who have sincerely repented of their sins. In Acts 17, Paul clearly states that God "commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent." Is God interested in quality or quantity? The answer is quality! "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14).

Most congregations are blessed with many visitors. Some at times may respond to the invitation seeking to "identify" with the brethren. If they have been Christians in good standing at other places (and sometimes telephone calls are necessary to determine that) then they should be accepted with open arms. But if individuals have had a background of any type of public misbehavior, or have been non-attenders and are simply "drifting into fellowship," repentance and public confession are necessary to set their lives right with God. To require any less is to do them a grave injustice—God only forgives confessed sins (Luke 13:3). To do less is to give them a false sense of security, for their problems will certainly come back to haunt them on the day of judgment (2 Cor. 5:10). Furthermore, accepting such members weakens the church, for "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6).

Misguided saints may sometimes get over-zealous for numbers and encourage those to simply place membership who desperately need to repent and publically confess wrongdoings. Elders are ultimately responsible and must not let this happen.

It is probably cheaper and easier to get termite-infested lumber to build a house. But in a short time, the insects will spread to the rest of the wood and the dwelling will collapse. Likewise, growth comes a little faster if we urge anyone and everyone to place membership, no questions asked, yet we too will erect an unsound structure. Let us patiently build as God would have us to build. The Psalmist put it this way: "Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psa. 127:1).

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Elders That Inquire

by Lynn Parker

One of the gravest of responsibilities placed upon elders by the Chief Shepherd is found in Hebrews 13th chapter:

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: **FOR THEY WATCH IN BEHALF OF YOUR SOULS, AS THEY THAT SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT** (emphasis mine—LP); that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this were unprofitable for you (Heb. 13:17).

To watch, to be alert and vigilant on *our* behalf, in *our* interest, for *our* spiritual welfare is the burden placed upon God's overseers. These men who serve in this capacity, and do the work of elders, will one day answer for the discharge of their weighty responsibilities. This all points to the fact that there are times when elders, not out of a desire to be "busy-bodies," but by necessity considering the charge laid upon them, must make inquiries. Of *what* should elders inquire? Of *whom* should inquiries be made? For what *purpose* should inquiries be made? Consider these questions briefly.

Elders should make inquiries into any situation which affects the spiritual well-being of the congregation over which they are to oversee. They might need to inquire into an unresolved dispute between brethren which threatens to harm, even split the church. They might need to inquire into a questionable marriage before extending "the right hand of fellowship" to newcomers. Certainly elders would want to know the religious stance of any person being considered to

teach Bible classes or preach to the congregation. Elders should not be bashful in finding out the doctrinal stance of men who are to be scheduled to preach in a meeting before the congregation, and certainly elders would want to know who is speaking to our young people, and what is being taught at youth rallies, devotionals, and other similar meetings. Occasions may arise where elders should speak with brethren concerning business practices that are questionable or down-right wrong. Elders need to inquire concerning family attendance, and perhaps priorities, when chronic absenteeism becomes apparent. Elders need to know where the Lord's money is going when they agree to help mission works, and it goes without saying that elders ought to know *what* their missionaries are teaching in the field. Elders need to know how their benevolent dollars are being spent, and this may include checking into the administration and teaching at Children's homes and other like institutions.

You would not think it strange at all that a doctor would ask you health questions in order to better care for your physical welfare. Are not souls and spiritual matters of far greater importance? Brethren, elders must and will inquire into matters that directly and even indirectly affect the congregation over which they are to shepherd. Easy and comfortable? No, but in view of a coming judgment, can God's elders afford to be slack and indifferent when souls hang in the balance?

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The Holy Spirit

by Larry D. Mathis

The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person as will be seen from the following scriptures. Note carefully those things ascribed to the Spirit. (*Each reference introduced should be studied in its proper context.*) All references are from the American Standard Version.

HE (masculine gender). "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever" (John 14:16). "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26).

HAS A MIND. "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:27).

POSSESSES KNOWLEDGE. "But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among me knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:10-11).

HE SEARCHES. "But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10).

KNOWS DEEP THINGS OF GOD. "But as it is written, things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, And which entered not into the heart of man, Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. But unto us God revealed them through the

Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:9-11).

HE REVEALS. "But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10). "Which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5).

A RELIGIOUS TEACHER. "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26). "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words" (1 Cor. 2:13). Note that the Spirit "teaches" through the medium of language or words.

A RELIGIOUS GUIDE. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (John 16:13).

HEARS. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (John 16:13).

SPEAKS. "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1). "And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2). "And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (Acts 8:29).

TESTIFIES. "Save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me" (Acts 20:23).

BEARS WITNESS. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me" (John 15:26). "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16).

SHOWS, SIGNIFIES. "And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius" (Acts 11:28). "The Holy Spirit this signifying, that the way into the holy place hath not yet been made manifest, while the first tabernacle is yet standing" (Heb. 9:8).

IMPARTS KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM. "For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:8).

CONVICTS. "And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8).

MOVED MEN (carried them along). "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21).

HAS VOLITION. "But all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11).

DISTRIBUTES GIFTS. "For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit; and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discerning of spirits: to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretations of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:8-10).

CAUSES TO REMEMBER. "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26).

APPOINTED, DIRECTED GOD'S CHOSEN MEN. "And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

HE LEADS. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

FORBIDS. "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not" (Acts 16:6-7).

HE WRITES. "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men; being made manifest that ye are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh" (2 Cor. 3:2-3).

A COMFORTER. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever" (John 14:16). "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26).

GIVES LIFE. "For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:8). "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11).

HE HELPS. "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as

we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

HE INTERCEDES. "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

SANCTIFIES. "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2:13). "That I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:16).

STRENGTHENS. "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man" (Eph. 3:16).

SEALS. "In whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13). "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

FELLOWSHIPS. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14).

INVITES. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

REGENERATES. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:5-6). "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13).

MAKES ELDERS. "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord

which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

AN EARNEST OR PLEDGE. "In whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:13-14).

HAS AFFECTIONS. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Rom. 16:30).

POSSESSES GOODNESS. "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst" (Neh. 9:20).

GRIEVES. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

LIED TO. "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3).

RESISTED. "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51).

QUENCHED. "Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5:19).

BLASPHEMED. "Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come" (Matt. 12:31-32).

INDWELLS. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11). "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own" (1 Cor. 6:19).

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[Editor's Note: The following article is a reprint from the Janaury 19, 1972 DEFENDER.]

Are You Sure?

by George E. Darling, Sr.

Recently we sang the song, "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow" just before the sermon and it really threw me for a loop. I went through the sermon that I had prepared, but throughout the entire time I was

thinking: "DO WE REALLY MEAN IT?" I looked out into a sea of faces and could see many who would sing such a song of "Trying To Walk In The Steps Of My Saviour," etc. who, I am confident, (and may God

forgive me if I misjudge) DO NOT mean it. Perhaps we have painted too rosy a picture of just what it means to be a Christian. Young man, before you make a decision to become a GOSPEL PREACHER you be sure that it is what you REALLY want to do.

Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself (AND THIS IS THE POINT WHERE SO MANY FALTER) and take up his cross and follow me" (Luke 9:23). If you are going to follow Jesus you will not be popular with the enemies of Christ. You will be called *narrow*! You will suffer. You will sweat as He sweat. You will cry and tears will flow even as He cried. You will be persecuted as your Lord was before you. You will have your heart broken and possibly your blood will be shed. Keep in mind that your Lord was treated shamefully. Why should you be treated better? You cannot be popular with the world and the worldly, and believe me, you are going to find many such people who claim to be "following Jesus." They will hate you. The denominations, Hell and the Devil will try to block every move that you make toward "Standing for the Right."

ALWAYS THERE IS THE ENEMY. Jesus didn't come into a world that loved Him. The Devil knew who He was and His purpose. When He was born, there was NO ROOM FOR HIM. That was not an accident. He was born an outcast, in a stable, typical of His whole life. Satan hated our High Priest and he hates every "Priest of God" (Christian) who tries to do God's work. If a few women had not cared for Jesus He would have gone hungry far more than He did. His only "estate" at the time of His death was a seamless garment that had been given to him by a friend. Jesus was poor, despised and rejected and was disowned by His own. So don't be surprised if some who 'stand by you' turn on you like ungrateful animals.

ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO PREACH THE GOSPEL? Then keep in mind that for every preacher that can "Set A Fire" that there are hundreds of "Volunteer Fire Fighters" who will try to put it out! If you appeal to sinners both inside and outside the church to REPENT or be damned and disciplined, you will soon learn that the brethren have hired a lot of hirelings who will run to comfort these lost souls in their sinful condition and then turn on you for preaching repentance and obedience. They remind me of turkeys in a pen. If one turkey happens to get a spot of blood on his head the rest of them will pick him to death. God pity the preacher who will demand repentance and encourages the congregation to withdraw from the disorderly! When this gets around, (Don't worry, the Devil will advertise it well) these hireling cowards who call themselves preachers will jump right on him and peck until his voice and his influence is stilled, or he is KILLED!

We hear a lot about KING JESUS, but you remember that the Jesus you choose to follow was crowned with thorns, not a jeweled, golden crown. He

was the recipient of human SPIT on His face, not the costly perfumed creams and ointments of Kings. Our Saviour was robbed of His robe and hung naked. Pilate was richly robed in splendor. Jesus was scrubbed with vinegar and gall across His sacred lips in death, while even the poorest are treated with compassion as death approaches.

The world is not receptive to Christ nor His followers. Get your New Testament and read John 15:10ff. The unregenerated worldly person is just as mean today as he was when he crucified the Lord. The world hates PURE CHRISTIANITY, and GENUINE CHRISTIANS. This world will treat you, preachers and Christian brethren, just as they treated Christ and the early Christians if we follow His teaching. **BE ASSURED OF THAT! GET READY FOR IT. YOU CANNOT AVOID IT** and follow where He leads.

The line between the world and the church is growing ~~dimmer~~ as the days go by. **DO YOU WANT TO DOUBLE THE MEMBERSHIP WHERE YOU PREACH WITHIN A YEAR?** Put on every kind of a show and entertainment program you can think up. Let the bars down, let the services become "testimonial meetings." Play with the unconverted membership; emphasize BAPTISM...but play down repentance. Be a popular civic club and lodge member. Never speak out against those "little sins" such as social drinking, lying, nudity, flirting elders and deacons, dancing, gambling, mixed bathing, adultery, unscriptural marriages, etc., etc., etc. *This will get the job done.* Then you can write your report to the "papers" and BRAGG about the GREAT job you have done.

BUT... if you dare to emphasize Christian living, holiness of flesh and spirit, church discipline, elders that REALLY oversee and watch for wolves; demand a "Thus Saith The Lord" and actually TAKE A STAND FOR THE TRUTH, without any compromise...your name will be M U D. You will run off a lot of those hypocrites who sing, "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow" but do not mean it...(not all of them, some you CANT RUN OFF, regardless of how hard you try) *and they will run off to one of the "sister congregations" who are so anxious to build the attendance and contribution that they are accepted with open arms, no questions asked.* AND IT WILL ALL BE YOUR FAULT...all you did was preach the truth. Of course, these sensitive runaways will tell everyone that it was "THE WAY YOU PREACHED IT!" What a lie!

So you can see why I was "disturbed" over the song "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow." I guess I would really be disturbed if we were to sing, "All To Jesus I Surrender, All To Him I Freely Give" just before taking up the collection. I have some more thoughts I want to share with you in a future issue, along these same lines. **THE DEVIL WILL NOT GIVE UP WITHOUT A FIGHT....**

DEFENDER
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798

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"The Holy Day Of The Lord"

(Isaiah 58:13-14 & Revelation 1:10)

Robin W. Haley

All of us as Christians know that the Lord would have us to meet in fellowship, teach and study the Apostles' Doctrine, break the bread, sing, pray and offer a sacrifice of our week's material gain. We also know upon which day this is to be done, though it would appear some of our number do not find this important and forsake or otherwise forget to assemble with the saints.

The prophet Isaiah spoke for the Lord in regard to His "Holy Day" of old. Though this refers to the Sabbath Day, Saturday, yet God's desire for His people to worship Him has not changed. God said, "I, the Lord, change not" (Malachi 3:6). Though the Old Covenant has been fulfilled in Christ, God still has appointed for us a day: the first day of the week, the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10).

In Isaiah 58, verse 13 serves as the desired condition that God wants His children to choose; verse 14 serves as the blessing for deciding to worship God on His appointed day. Four times He pinpoints that from which we must turn: our pleasures, our own ways, seeking pleasure, speaking our own words. Now, what does this do to the shallow excuses we sometimes invent? What does this do to the Sunday camper, fisherman, joy rider, sleep-in'er? But one says, "Well, I can worship God among the beauty of His creation."

Oh? How does that fit in with Hebrews 10:25, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together?"

Perhaps one of the worst perversions of worship is the unscriptural practice of some who come to the church house early, eat the Supper, then rush out to enjoy the day. Has he truly communed? Did he "come together as a church" (1 Cor. 11:18)? Did he "meet together to eat the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11:20)? NO! This is but more of the false thinking that the Lord's Supper is the most important part of worship. Those who would come to an assembly, wait long enough to eat the Supper, then skip out on the rest of the singing, prayers, preaching and giving HAVE NOT WORSHIPPED! True; the disciples came together to break the bread, but is that ALL for which they came together? (Acts 20:7ff.).

Brethren, let us keep the proper, Biblical perspective of worship before us. Each part is vital! To think that one is blessed merely by eating the Supper and then leaving (getting their ticket punched??), is profaning the Lord's worship and endangering his soul. Let us always assemble together to worship WHOLLY in Spirit and in Truth.

P.O. Box 153
Scott City, KS 67871

DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 02

FEBRUARY, 1988

The New Face On The Old Anti-ism

by H. Daniel Denham

In the past few years there has arisen a "new" movement from within the mainstream of the brotherhood to make laws that God never made relative to church cooperation and support. Some of these brethren involved in this movement have in times past opposed the efforts of the anti-movement of the late 1940s and 1950s, which promulgated the *same basic* views. This new effort to bind where the Scriptures have not bound is the result of an over-reaction to the liberalism espoused by many in our current generation. The history of the Lord's church seems to confirm the social maxim: "For every action there is a reaction, and for every reaction there is an over-reaction (at least on the part of some)!" The Anti-ism of the previous era (which has ground to a halt growthwise) has the over-reaction in part to the liberal efforts of some in the 20s and 30s. There also was prevalent a very hefty dose of the party spirit and malicious envy by some of the good efforts of others. This newest expression of the Judaizing-spirit of law-making finds its origin in the fertile minds of some who have over-reacted to the current digression about us. In trying to keep the church from straying one way, they seek to push us to the other errant path, whereas both paths (that of the liberal and that of the anti) lead one away from Bible authority unto destruction and dissolution! The current form of the "new" anti-movement in actuality then is but a refurbishing of the "old" movement which has been close to suffering the moral equivalent to "heat death."

One writer pressing toward this advance away from Biblical authority has written:

Evangelistic organizations independent of the church and therefore not under the over-sight of the church or its elders, such as World Christian Broadcasting, a "missionary society" on par with

the American Christian Missionary Society of the First Christian Church of the last century is not a work of the church. *To this kind of works* would be added colleges and other secular schools in the church budget, and independent secular organizations drawing from the treasury of the Lord Jesus Christ (Emphasis mine, HDD).

This same preacher has been known to denounce any preacher training school which is under the control of a board of directors rather than an eldership as being *unscriptural*. Any church, it is averred by him and those of like belief, that contributes financially to the support of such a school out of the "church treasury" sins! He and they are opposed to congregational support of college Bible departments, etc., even as this quotation intimates. Those who support such a work are lumped into the same category with the supporters of the missionary societies of the last century. The expressions "missionary society," "secular organizations," "institutions," *et. al.*, are the buzz words used by the new movement and borrowed from the gainsayers gone before them! They castigate editors and publishers who receive support for services rendered as "digressives" and "monetary schemers." They have not yet reached the point of their predecessors relative to such "secular organizations" as orphan homes, but give them time! If a church must exercise direct control over the operation of an institution before it can be congregationally supported, then orphan homes not so constituted would have to be deemed unscriptural, as per their views. If not, why not?

The so-called parallels that this faction envisions between the missionary society and many of the objects of their crusade are purely fatuous, but they

(Continued on Page 11)

DEFENDER

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A STATEMENT OF FACT

The paper you are now reading, **The Defender**, is a publication of the Bellview church of Christ and is under the supervision of her elders.

The mailing list, the name, and all other assets of the publication are the property of the Bellview church of Christ and, therefore, are in the control and under the direction of her elders.

It is wrong in both a moral and legal sense for any person, or persons, to seize any of the assets of the Bellview church of Christ. Such behavior would be a misappropriation of property, which is a very serious offence.

THE FINAL WORD

Those on the **Defender** mailing list (which was used without the Bellview elders' permission) recently received copy of a paper edited by Max Miller and Mike Kiser. The articles in the paper were a rehash of their views of certain events that recently transpired in Pensacola. Many of our readers also recently received a copy of the **Singapore Oracle**, edited by Ernest Underwood, in which he referred to the same events. Such articles as those mentioned above "sow discord among brethren" and "cause divisions...contrary to the doctrine...."

We do not believe that the content of these articles merits a reply, except to say that those who are interested in the facts of the matter should obtain a copy of the September issue of the **Defender** "Let The Facts Speak," and read for themselves the facts, without opinions, innuendoes, and characterizations by the editors. We believe that our readers are convinced that the matter has been aired enough. Therefore, we cite for your consideration:

Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

The scriptures are specific as to the actions to be taken when brethren sow discord, cause division, walk disorderly, and act as busybodies in other

men's matters:

Proverbs 6:16-19: "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

II Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

I Peter 4:15: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."

Of course, we recognize that none of the three individuals noted above are now members of the Bellview congregation over which we have oversight. Nevertheless, the actions taken by brethren Miller and Kiser, which have resulted in the division of the Lord's body, were done while they were members at Bellview. Although repeated efforts by various individuals have been made to encourage these individuals

to repent, several months have gone by without any apparent actions on their part except to continue to sow discord among brethren. Ernest Underwood continues to act as a "busybody in other men's matters," to support the actions of brethren Miller and Kiser, and to "sow discord" among brethren against the Bellview congregation, in spite of efforts by several brethren to encourage him to repent. Accordingly, the Bellview Church of Christ no longer extends its fellowship to:

Max Miller

Mike Kiser

Ernest Underwood

These actions on the part of the Bellview Church of Christ are with the sincere desire that the three individuals concerned will realize the error of their ways and repent to the saving of their souls before it is too late. The elders have no ill will toward any man,

including those who have wronged us in this situation. Rather, we desire that the responsible persons repent that their souls might be saved. Unless these individuals repent, we intend this to be "The Final Word" on this matter.

Bellview Church of Christ:

Hairston Brantley

Hairston Brantley, Elder

Bill Gallaher

Bill Gallaher, Elder

Fred Stancliff

Fred Stancliff, Elder

THE NEW FACE ON THE OLD ANTI-ISM

(Continued from Page 1)

utter the words "missionary society" like some mystical and magical incantation that is supposed to frighten any who would support those things which they speak against from giving their support. But the spell of their self-made talisman is soon broken when the proper questions are asked! Does the missionary society have the scriptural right to exist? They would answer with a firm and resounding "NO!" May an individual scripturally contribute to the support of a missionary society? Again, the answer would roar forth, "NO!" However, NOW comes the questions which they would prefer not be asked. (1) Does a college Bible department have a scriptural right to exist? (2) May an individual contribute to its support scripturally? (3) What about a school of preaching which is under the guidance of a board of directors? (4) May it scripturally exist while receiving *only* individual support? (5) Is monetary support the only thing forbidden for such institutions? (6) Is there any difference between cooperation in the area of evangelism and the area of benevolence? If so, what? (7) May congregations send funds to a secular organization in exchange for *services rendered* in helping them to fulfill their obligation to evangelize? (8) May a college be supported by a congregation, if said college is helping to provide the necessary training for preachers and teachers of the Gospel? Is the preparation of such people a work of the church? (9) May the college aid the church in fulfilling this great work? (10) Or are we to conclude that Biblical training *cannot* scripturally take place at a school not under the oversight of an eldership or specific congregation?

Let it be noted that we are not affirming that these things must be done, nor that these things are necessarily the most *expedient* means of meeting certain obligations that congregations are faced with

in Holy Writ. However, it is to point out that these are scriptural alternatives or means to meet those responsibilities, and this in spite of the diatribes coming from certain among us who would bind their opinions as though they were Divine edicts. In the times ahead let us remember the advice given to Ezekiel from above, "...fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house" (Ezek. 3:9).

P.O. Box 582
Eagle Lake, FL 33839

Bellview Church of Christ Announces
The Following Upcoming Lectureships

Second Annual West Coast Lectures

March 16-20, 1988

Theme: "Back To Jerusalem"

Speakers: Ray Peters, Curtis Cates, Hugh Shira, Billie Mac Jobe, Perry Cotham, William S. Cline, Andrew Connally, Weldon Langfield, Wayne Jackson, George DeHoff, Don Hartsell, Joe Gilmore, Foy Smith, Garland Elkins, Max Crumbley, Noah Hackworth, Wendel Fikes, Eddie Whitten, Roger Elliott, Winfred Clark, Buster Dobbs, Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Jimmy Clark, Bill Jackson, Guss Eoff.

San Lorenzo Church of Christ
977 Grant Avenue San Lorenzo, CA 94580

Third Annual Dierks Lectures

April 29 - May 1, 1988

Theme: "Christian Living"

Speakers: Lynn Mathey, Toney Smith, Tommy Mounts, Dean Fugett, Ivie Powell, Oran Rhodes, Lowell Lites, John Bowles, Charles Coats, Wayne Smith, and Leon Jones.

Dierks Church of Christ
P.O. Box 62 Dierks, AR 71833
(501) 286-2641 Charles Coats, Director (501) 286-2989

SOUTHEAST ASIA

BY WILLIAM S. CLINE

This past November 29th, seventeen Christians departed from San Francisco International Airport headed for Manila (in the Philippines), Singapore, and points beyond. Plans had been made, more than six months ahead of time, to conduct a special lectureship in Manila, and then go on to Singapore where the **Third Annual Asian Bible Lectureship** would be conducted.

Bible lectureships have been conducted before in the Philippines, particularly in the Manila/Clark Air Force Base area, but were conducted on an invitation only basis. The local people, and especially leaders in the churches of Christ in the Philippines, for the most part had not attended these lectureships. These people were interested in having a lectureship which they would feel free to attend; one that would deal with matters which are of utmost concern to the churches that are concerned with standing for the truth and against any error which might try to find its way into the Philippine nation.

Brother Manuel K. Pelayo, a Manila business man, and a very strong and active member of the Central Manila church of Christ, was the contact that made all of the arrangements for the lectureship. The lectureship was held at the *Bulwagan Pilipino* (a restaurant with a large meeting room), and the dates were December 2-4, 1987. Several Philippino preachers spoke on the program and did an outstanding job. The American preachers were favorably impressed with the ability of many of these preachers and the good work which is being done by the **Philippine Bible College**.

Among the many subjects spoken on by the preachers of the United States were: *The Work and Organization of the Church; Respect for Bible Authority; Attitude and Response Toward Error; Characteristics of a Soldier of Christ; The Organization and Methods of the Crossroads/Boston/Central London Discipling Group; The Desirability and Dangers of Current Unity Movements; Apathy and Ignorance in the Church*, and other subjects which directly relate to modern problems in the church.

The attendance at this three-day lectureship was outstanding. The high attendance was 184, and the low was only 132. These brethren were present at every session and represented forty-eight congregations in the Philippine Islands.

The people who attended the lectureship were outspoken in their praise of the material presented and expressed great appreciation to the speakers. Members of the church in the Philippines stated that the information made available to them had strengthened them in the Lord and gave to them insights

they would not have had otherwise. After a few lectures on the subject, it soon became clear to the attendees that the Boston/Crossroads movement was in the country and had already begun to infiltrate the church in the Philippines.

The lectureship program was so beneficial to the brethren and so much enthusiasm was generated, that the people of the Philippines insisted that the lectureship be made an annual affair. Churches and individuals who helped pay the expenses of the speakers have made a sizeable contribution to the future of the church in the Philippines and an important investment in eternity.

From the Philippines the group traveled to Singapore, Friday afternoon, December 4, arriving at their destination around 7 o'clock in the evening. We later learned that about two hours after we departed the Manila International Airport, a bomb, hidden in the trunk of a car, exploded at the Departure Hall, killing and injuring several people.

Happy to have arrived safely in a country which is not experiencing the political upheaval that is so pronounced in the Philippines, we set about our business of participating in the **Third Annual Asian Bible Lectureship**. Because of political problems, the lectureship had to be moved from Malaysia, where it was to be conducted originally, back to Singapore, where it had been held the previous October. The lectureship, which dealt with the subject: *The Church: The Beautiful Bride Of Christ*, was conducted from December 6th through the 10th at the *Cairnhill Hotel* in Singapore. Each lecture was well attended, and most every speaker did an excellent job in presenting the material which had been assigned.

After the lectureship closed on Thursday evening, the speakers went their separate ways. Some returned directly to the United States on Friday, December 11; others went to different countries to do mission work, and five of us—Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (with his wife Vada), Ray Peters, H. A. (Buster) Dobbs, and I—stayed in Singapore for another seven days. Brother Peters conducted a gospel meeting for the *Jurong church*, where brother Eddie Ee preaches. Brother Dobbs and I conducted a gospel meeting, Sunday through Thursday (actually, it was a two-in-one-meeting with me speaking each night to non-members and immediately following my speech brother Dobbs would speak to members of the church), at the *Lim Ah Pin Road church of Christ*, where brother *Kwan Tai Choom* is the evangelist. Also during this time, brother Rice and I attended to other business we had which involved the **Four Seas Bible College**.

On Friday, December 18, the five of us, which were

named above, moved our work-station to Hong Kong. There we made a special effort to learn all we could regarding the essentials of getting two, three, or even four missionaries to move to the New Territories of Hong Kong. These are areas which lie between the city of Hong Kong and the border of Communist China. Within this approximately twenty mile area there are several cities—200,000 to 350,000 in population—which do not have the first church of the Lord.

It looks as though it will take approximately \$40,000 a year, salary and work fund, for a man to move to this area to do mission work. However, since the dollar value is constantly falling and price increases are always abundant, it may take more than this for a man to be able to begin a work in the New Territories. Also, since there are no English speaking schools in the New Territories, the prospects will need to have either no children, or very young children who can begin learning the Cantonese language at a very early age. The missionaries who move to this area will be able to "get around" with English—this has been an English speaking colony for nearly one hundred and fifty years—but he will not be able to work among the local people without a good command of the Cantonese language. And since Cantonese is the hardest of the Chinese dialects to learn, a new missionary will need to devote at least two years to intensive language study.

I say all of this to emphasize that we are looking for men to go to this area, and we want to do all we can to encourage mission work there as well as in other areas of Southeast Asia, but I stress that such missionaries will have to be of a special character to be successful in the work in the New Territories. Brother Ray Peters—who works under the oversight of the *Airport church of Christ* in Valdosta, Georgia, as a missionary to Southeast Asia—and I would like to hear from any young couple who are sound in the faith and believe they would be interested in working in this area. We can furnish much information that can help them in making a decision regarding mission work in this part of the world.

While we were in Hong-Kong we visited brother and sister Don Thornton. Brother and sister Thornton have been working in the New Territories for approximately two years now. They have begun a work in *Yuen Long*, and it is there that our *Bibles for China* are stored. With the help of an interpreter, brother Peters and brother Dobbs spoke at *Yuen Long* on Sunday; they did a masterful job of preaching. It was first time either of them have had to use a translator!

In a phone call from brother Thornton, received the day before this writing, January 31, we learned that two more precious souls have been baptized since we visited with him in *Yuen Long* the last of December. Just one more example of the great work

which is being accomplished in this part of the world.

The church at *Yuen Long* is presently renting its meeting place and have been looking for a better location. Recently, they found such a location and are going to try to purchase the property as soon as funds permit. Brother Thornton said they need to raise a down payment of \$15,000; once this is done, he believes this local, young church can make the monthly payments. There may be some of our readers who would like to help these brethren raise this down payment by either contributing personally or finding one or more congregations who would help. If there should be any who can and will help, please contact the Bellview elders at 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506. They will be more than happy to put you in touch with brother Thornton's sponsoring congregation—Sherrod Avenue in Florence, Alabama—which is in charge of collecting all contributions for the property purchase.

While at *Yuen Long* we picked up several Chinese New Testaments, and the next day were successful in getting all of them across the border, at the new and modern city of Shenzhen, and into Communist China. However, because we were so closely watched, we were able to distribute only five of the testaments. (Note: It is illegal to give to a resident of China a Chinese Bible which has not been authorized by the Chinese government or published outside China. Some brethren have trouble understanding this. They seem to have the idea that one can drive across the border with a thousand Bibles, set up on some busy street corner, and give the Bibles out as fast as the people pass by. Wonderful thinking! I wish it were that way, but it is not, and the prospects of such seem to be in the distant future, especially when we know of instances in recent months where people have been arrested for possessing a Bible not authorized by the Chinese government. The Chinese government neither makes it easy for Christians to give Bible to nor teach the people of Communist China, but we must keep trying and do all we can, for we have the responsibility to take the gospel to the whole world.) The rest of the Chinese Bibles were brought back with us and taken to Taiwan by brother and sister Rice to be given to the missionaries there who can make good use of them in their work among the Chinese speaking people.

On Tuesday, December 22, brother and sister Rice went to Taiwan, where brother Rice conducted gospel meetings until their return to the states on January 9. The rest of us returned to the U.S., finally arriving home on the night of December 24.

The Bellview church is directly involved in the work of three of the men who made this journey. Bellview sponsors the work of brother Rice, as they have done for nearly a decade, and perhaps most know that he has been directly involved in mission work in Southeast Asia for 33 years. Brother Peters is

a member of the Bellview church and receives a significant contribution each month toward his work from Bellview. This writer has now worked with the Bellview church for over nineteen years, and each trip I have made to Southeast Asia—four within the last twenty months—they have made a generous contribution toward my travel fund. The Bellview church is not large in numbers, but it is a giant among churches when it comes to conviction, dedication, sacrifice, and determination to preach the gospel to the whole world. I am certain that hardly ever have so few done so much for the cause of Christ as has the good church at Bellview.

Brother Peters will return to Southeast Asia the last of May and will work in that area for approximately two months before returning home. Because of an overload of work, it looks as though brothers Rice, Dobbs, and I will not be able to return to Southeast Asia until May/June of 1989. (Incidentally, brother Dobbs is now working full time in evangelistic, missionary, writing, and training work under the

oversight of the Fleetwood church in Houston, Texas, a church where he served as an elder for many years.) Our present plans are to make a missionary journey of several weeks duration to Europe late this summer. This trip is made necessary because a number of brethren in Europe have sent out a call for help in dealing with matters that threaten the peace, harmony, and future of the church there.

We trust that those who have helped support the works mentioned herein with both prayers and money are encouraged by the ongoing of the work and the solid, Bible base on which it continues. Perhaps others will become interested and involved in helping preach the gospel among the nations of the world (Mark 13:10). It is every Christian's responsibility, in every generation to do all he can to preach the gospel to every man. If we do not do that, we will be called into judgment to answer for our misdeeds.

P.O. Box 17200
Pensacola, FL 32522

WILL YOUR MANSION STAND EMPTY?

Robin W. Haley

Jesus, the shepherd and guardian of our souls has said that he went to prepare a place for us. This place is in his Father's house. Many times we have sung that grand spiritual song, "When We All Get To Heaven." Surely we remember the line: "In that mansion bright and blessed, He'll prepare for us a place." What faithful child of God does not sing this song and feel the excitement of knowing that even now, there stands a place prepared for them, with their name written within the Lamb's book of life and a crown of righteousness when this life is over? What a thrill to realize that God loves even me to this extent that Jesus his Son has a special abode fixed and waiting.

Sadly, however, we must recognize that there will be many of those mansions that will not be occupied. How many times we have seen those of the Lord's church fall away into the "doctrines of demons" and follow the "commandments of men" rather than the doctrine of Christ? Or those who may not physically leave the fellowship of the saints, but by their actions and lifestyles fail to be followers of Christ, reject sound Bible teaching and the authority of those who have watch over their souls?

Some are pleased to worship (?) on the Lord's day morning, but don't expect them at Bible Class or back that evening nor at the Mid-week meeting. No! "The Bible does not command that!" So *they* say. Do not

ask them to participate in the local work of service, helping the destitute, feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, practicing hospitality or teaching the lost. No! "That is not my talent." So *they* say. Do not expect to see their bank draft in the offering plate. (Their's is usually that double folded or crumpled one-dollar bill that is pushed under the other contributions).

It never ceases to amaze me how these of this persuasion could never imagine that their mansion will stand empty! They comfort themselves in the thought that if they eat the Lord's supper, and yet are no more involved than that in the Christian life, that the Lord will, yea **MUST** include them in eternity. Beloved, be not deceived, God is not mocked! Whosoever shall sow to the flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption. Those whose Christianity is merely a matter of convenience are sowing to the flesh. Again, those who sow sparingly shall also reap sparingly. Let us take warning from the letter to the seven churches of Asia. If the Lord can add to his Book the name of any saint who repents and lives, he surely will strike out the name of those who "play church" all of their lives. Brethren, repent and live! With this, you will never wonder if your mansion will stand empty!

P.O. Box 153
Scott City, KS 67871

SEVENTH ANNUAL SOUTHWEST LECTURES

April 10-13, 1988

THEME: "The Book of Proverbs"

Sunday, April 10

- 9:30 a.m.—Wisdom Cries for Man's Attention (Chapter 1) Joe Gilmore
10:30 a.m.—God Gives Wisdom Out of His Mouth (Chapter 2) Bert Thompson
1:30 p.m.—Panel Discussion
6:00 p.m.—The Strength of God's Man (Chapter 24) Paul Sain
7:00 p.m.—The Counsel of the Lord Shall Stand! (Chapter 19) Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Monday, April 11

- 9:00 a.m.—Keep Thy Heart With All Diligence (Chapter 4) David Brown
10:00 a.m.—Fear of the Lord, Beginning of Wisdom (Chapter 9) Mark Lewis
11:00 a.m.—God's Things, Better Than Silver, Gold (Chapter 8) Leonard Mullens
1:30 p.m.—Alcohol—The Adder's Sting (Chapter 23) Don Walker
2:30 p.m.—The Behavior of the Prudent Man (Chapter 27) Garell Forehand
3:30 p.m.—Desire of the Righteous Is Only Good (Chapter 11) Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
7:00 p.m.—In All Thy Ways Acknowledge God (Chapter 3) Bert Thompson
8:00 p.m.—Introduction to Proverbs Guy N. Woods

Tuesday, April 12

- 9:00 a.m.—Loving Instruction and Knowledge (Chapter 12) Bill Jackson
10:00 a.m.—Beauty of Quietness and the Merry Heart (Chapter 17) Shan Jackson
11:00 a.m.—Ways of Man Before the Lord's Eyes (Chapter 5) Frank Dunn
1:30 p.m.—Self-Control: Man Ruling His Own Spirit (Chapter 25) Ken Hope
2:30 p.m.—The Commandment, A Lamp and Light (Chapter 6) Tim Ayers
—(Ladies Class) Irene Taylor
3:30 p.m.—Condemnation of Pride, Haughty Spirit (Chapter 16) Lynn Blair
7:00 p.m.—Death and Life In the Power of the Tongue (Chapter 18) Joe Gilmore
8:00 p.m.—Blessings Are Upon the Head of the Just (Chapter 10) Robert Taylor, Jr.

Wednesday, April 13

- 9:00 a.m.—The Integrity of the Just Man (Chapter 20) Mac Deaver
—(Ladies Class) Irene Taylor
10:00 a.m.—A Way Seeming Right Unto A Man (Chapter 14) Robert Taylor, Jr.
11:00 a.m.—The Lord Is Far From the Wicked (Chapter 15) Roy Deaver
1:30 p.m.—The Way of Transgressors Is Hard (Chapter 13) Glen Williams
2:30 p.m.—God Rewards The Fool and Transgressor (Chapter 26) Dub McClish
3:30 p.m.—God Requires Justice and Judgment (Chapter 21) Billy Balke
7:00 p.m.—God's Law, Keeping From Adultery (Chapter 7) Ferman Carpenter
8:00 p.m.—The Value of a Good Name (Chapter 22) Tommy Hicks

Included in the lectureship book:

- Salvation to Those Who Walk Uprightly (Chapter 28) Garland Elkins
The Perseverance of the Righteous (Chapter 29) Oran Rhodes
Add Not to God's Pure Words! (Chapter 30) Wayne Price
God's Worthy Woman (Proverbs 31) Bill Jackson

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DO YOU LOVE YOUR CHILDREN?

Terry A. Martin

In one episode of Little House On The Prairie, Mr. Olesen tells Charles Ingles that Mrs. Olesen wants to give her two children all the things that she did not have when she was a child. "There's nothing wrong with that," responded Mr. Ingles. "Yes there is," said Mr. Olesen, "because as a child she had everything!"

It is only natural that we should want to provide our children with only the best things in life. The Bible says, "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8). Providing for the needs of our family is one way of showing our love to them.

But caution needs to be exercised. While we are busy giving our children all the things we did not have, we may be depriving them of things truly necessary to proper development. We need to be careful as we walk the thin line between "motherly love" and "smotherly love."

Have you ever noticed how some parents smother their children with unbelievable gifts and opportunities. These are the children that get any and everything they ask for. Their bedroom is loaded with forgotten gifts. These same children take piano, violin, and dancing lessons. They belong to 4-H clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and play in every organized sport that comes along. Sometimes these activities are even allowed to prevent the child from attending Bible Study. Their parents are afraid to say "No!" Therefore, the child is pampered and spoiled with whatever is the fashionable thing to do at that moment. **WARNING: Constantly giving your child everything he asks for is NOT the best way to show**

your love.

I am sure you know that raising children is a difficult task. As baby takes his first steps, we are there to extend a helping hand. We watch nervously as they take their first wobbly ride on a bicycle. Then there is the first time in school, the first time away from home overnight, the first time alone in the family car. Life is filled with a lot of trying moments for parents. We always need to be there with a helping hand, but we must never stand in the way of our child's independent development. **WARNING: *Being overly protective is NOT the way to show your love to your child. This is especially true when they have reached adulthood.***

Parents, do you love your children? Sure you do! But how are you going to show that love to them? Hopefully you will not try to show your love by endless gifts and yielding to the child's every whim. I pray that you are not a parent who wrongly tries to show their love by being the overly domineering, protective parent who never lets the child grow up.

We need to show our love to our children by: 1) telling them we love them; 2) caring enough to discipline (Prov. 13:24); 3) being able to say no; 4) providing for their physical needs (1 Tim. 5:8); 5) showing them respect (Eph. 6:4); 6) helping them grow into an independent person (the time comes when we need to cut the apron strings, Gen. 2:24); and, 7) instructing them in the ways of righteousness (Matt. 16:26).

4117 S. 7th
Terre Haute, IN 47802

DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 03

MARCH, 1988

That The Brethren Might Know - # 2

Goebel Music

On September 15, 1987, I wrote and mailed an article to many of our brotherhood periodicals entitled, "That The Brethren Might Know." I also hand delivered it to some elders of the great metroplex area of Dallas-Ft. Worth. I believed "then," and I have not changed my mind, that we are TO UPHOLD THE RIGHT AND OPPOSE THAT WHICH IS WRONG! LOVING AND HATING WHAT GOD LOVES AND HATES!

It is not mine in this brief article to reiterate, repeat and reword, that first article, as perhaps many of you who read this will have read it. I think it *first* appeared in the October issue of the DEFENDER, but since then has appeared in several of our papers and also in some church bulletins from Tennessee to California. That first written discourse was outlined from the following sentence: "Some PROMINENT PERSONALITIES of a POWERFUL PEOPLE are in PUBLIC PARTICIPATION which PROVES PARTNERSHIP in error, and must PAY the PRICE of such adulteration of the gospel of Christ."

The Brotherhood Needed To Be Informed

I set this forth very simply: (1) Richland Hills is invariably conducting "seminars" or "workshops" with people from diversified states coming there to..., and (2) Richland Hills goes to various states conducting the same. The brotherhood needs to be informed for they are, indeed, both influencing and affecting it.

The Brotherhood Needs To Be Kept Up To Date

Many have asked, "Did these men actually go through with their assignments?" "Did they actually participate in the N.A.D.C.E. & the T.S.S.A.?" "Did the elders at Richland Hills know they were going to do this?" "Did they realize that this was a totally

denominational organization with about 33 different ones participating?" "Wonder if these men went there to teach them the truth of God and win them from (out of) their error?" And the questions have been numerous!

Yes, these men went and spoke (delivered their messages). Yes, they participated in both the N.A.D.C.E. and the T.S.S.A., that is, no one nor all in both, but both had participants from Richland Hills. Yes, the elders knew about it. Not at the first, but when they learned of it, discussed the same, etc., the participants "went forth" with their blessings! You can secure the tapes and "hear for yourself" as to the message delivered, and some of us have done just that. Yes, they were fully aware of both of these organizations being denominational!

The Brotherhood Needs To Know If Any Local Action Was Taken

Many of the local elderships were both shocked and saddened at the public participation of Richland Hills in such an open and flagrant way in denominational activity. Many very godly elders knew that this could not be "swept under the rug," as other things had been done. Not only can we be condemned for failing to preach the truth, we can also be condemned for our failure to follow other divine exhortations and charges.

The eldership at Richland Hills received numerous letters! Godly elders wrote begging, pleading, admonishing and even rebuking them for "giving greeting" to such who "bring not the teaching (doctrine) of Christ." To prove this point, note the following dates of some of the letters:

1. September 9, 1987.
2. September 14, 1987, date mailed.

3. September 16, 1987.
4. September 20, 1987.
5. September 28, 1987.
6. October 20, 1987.
7. November 25, 1987.

I deem it best, at this time, to refrain from mentioning the names of the various elderships. This may come later in another article or discussion. I do want to say, however, that at least one eldership—there could be others that I know nothing about—has written, given them a date to respond, has written again and may even now be planning a third letter to them. Indeed, a tremendous amount of long-suffering and patience has been shown the eldership at the Richland Hills church.

The Brotherhood Needs To Know The Course Of Richland Hills

One of our faithful gospel preachers, brother Lynn Matheny, tried for two days to talk to one of the men speaking at the already mentioned events. He finally did get to talk with Jon Jones, but this availed nothing. On September 11, 1987, he talked with Roger Dean, one of the elders, and also sent him some of the advertisement of the T.S.S.A. Since he heard nothing from brother Dean, he then called him on October 23, 1987. This was when the “bottom line” was given to Lynn, “...they went with our blessing and approval.”

As of the date that I am writing this article, February 15, 1987, not a single church has had any “official” (and I say this for a reason that may be made known later) word from the eldership at Richland Hills! Not only did brother Matheny ask brother Dean to be sure and let his elders hear from said eldership, but some of the elderships **ASKED FOR A RESPONSE TO THEIR LETTER!** It seems to me, when such Christian love, patience, concern and yearning to uphold the truth of God by these elderships were made known, that it would only be the natural Christian courtesy, manner of life, to respond to their fellow brothers in Christ! There have been times when “they” have sent out letters and asked for a response! What if nobody ever responded to any letter, especially to one of real genuine

Christian concern and love? Are some so big and powerful that they think they can just “Do as they please” without any reproof from anyone? Why wouldn’t elders want to answer letters directed to them?

The Brotherhood Needs To Know The ‘What If’...

It is not my intention at this particular time, yet I realize that time may come, to reproduce or to quote from some of the letters elderships sent to them. This may need to be done so the brotherhood as of a certainty will know the charges made and also the warnings in their letters.

Suffice it to say, unless repentance is manifested, forth coming, then this congregation of God’s people will be identified as those who have “gone into fellowship” with denominational error and local churches will be advised of the same. Fellowship will then be withheld from them and they will be exposed for espousing error and the teaching of Romans 16:17-18 will, as well as II John 9-11, come into play. No one has the right to **BID GODSPEED TO ERROR**, so states the beloved John in II John 9-11. Indeed, we are to have no fellowship with the **UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS** (Eph. 5:11)!

We beg, plead, pray for and urge Richland Hills (and these letters are not to be taken into their pulpit and made light of, and I realize I might need later to also explain this statement) to be faithful to the “doctrine of Christ.” The alarm has been sounded and the **WORD OF GOD WILL BE UPHELD**, yea, at any and all cost! Souls are at stake, time is swiftly moving on and we must not let time take us having failed in our Christian responsibility, both to the brethren and to the world!

May God help us all, wherever, whenever and with whomsoever we find error and truth in conflict that we not sheath the sword of the Spirit until the battle has been fought and truth upheld! Once again, people will be destroyed for lack of knowledge; therefore, I write this second treatise **THAT THE BRETHREN MIGHT KNOW.**

5114 Montclair
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DEFENDER

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Did Jesus Build An Invisible Church?

Robin W. Haley

It seems many brethren believe Jesus built an invisible church which exists everywhere and somehow, there is a mystical, invisible membership which will emerge from all the denominations and join Him in the air when He returns. This is pure ecumenicism and is the exact parallel to saying "Oh, we will all go to Heaven... we just go by different routes." Ever hear that before? Is that what the Bible teaches? Did Jesus really add people to His 'invisible' church from among all the religious world, denominations and cults alike?

It gets more tiresome for this writer to continue to hear my brethren and 'pious' religionists spouting these high-toned phrases of sophistry claiming brotherhood and fellowship with any and all who happen to say "Jesus is Lord!" I am convinced that we need less sophistication and more determination to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). Let us hear fewer words like 'dichotomy,' 'dualism,' and 'catechumen' and more words like 'truth,' 'obedience,' 'repentance,' and 'faithfulness'! Let us all as preachers, teachers, elders and writers do as God told the prophet, "Write... and make it PLAIN!" (Hab. 2:2).

What does the previous paragraph have to do with our title? Simply this: the truth about Christ's church is being hidden among the rubbish of human wisdom, with the multi-syllable words and 'irenic' spirit of compromise. Those who contend that the church of our Lord is made of those in all denominations who 'have the same convictions we do' (??) teach that all these are just as 'saved' as members of the "Church of Christ" (I use this in a sectarian way!). They have made the Lord's bride nothing more than one denomination among many. Shame on those who do not know better! These people need to study their Bibles more. Did Jesus build something that we could not actually see, to which we could not point? Did He call us into something that has no definable borders? Are we members of something that we have to just guess where it is and is not? What does the Bible teach?

Isaiah says that the church would be something into which people would stream. Not only that, but those streaming in would tell others to come along. The church, then, was to be something people could locate, investigate and decide upon to enter (Isaiah 2).

On Pentecost, Peter spoke to the Jews about "that which ye both see and hear" (Acts 2:33). We know he referred to the Holy Spirit, but where was the Spirit pointing? To the church! Now, we are NOT suggesting that people today find the church by listening for "the sound of a mighty, rushing wind," but we do contend that there is something distinctive about what is heard in the church. It is the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1), the teaching of the Lord (Acts 13:12), the *whole* counsel

of God (Acts 20:27). When people hear this, they can know that they have found the church, and there is NO other place the whole truth is found (1 Tim. 3:15).

Without question, truth is universal. We admit many have some truth here and there. But it is ONLY in the church where the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth is found, preached and practiced. We also do not deny that there have been some who have obeyed the Lord in baptism for the remission of sins, thus becoming children of God and being added to the spiritual body of Christ. But, they can by no means claim salvation. Why? Because (1) though they had at one time obeyed that part of Christ's doctrine, they apparently were not committed to it (Rom. 6:17); (2) though they had obeyed the Lord at one time, they no longer walk in the same manner as He walked (Col. 1:10; Eph. 4:1; 5:15; 1 John 2:6); (3) though they listened to the call of the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14), they no longer lead a disciplined life, nor follow the traditions of the apostles (2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6), but rather the traditions of men (Matt. 15:7-9). Simply put, they have "gone too far and abide not in the doctrine of Christ" (2 John 9), thus they no longer have God. Jesus said in John 8:31, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples." What is one called who does not abide in His word? Certainly not a disciple. Luke records for us that "the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). If one is not a disciple, he therefore is not a Christian. Peter tells us 'Christian' is THE name by which we glorify God (1 Pet. 4:16). If one is not a disciple, thus, not a Christian, he cannot glorify God. Not until he repents can he be considered a disciple, thus a Christian. In this way he can once again glorify God and the name of Christ.

Our question now becomes, "Is the spiritual body of Christ a visible body?" YES! Every reference to the body of Christ involves being able to see and to recognize fellow members of that body. It is NOT the case that one can drive down Main Street and point to every building where denominations meet and say "that is part of the church... and this another part..." but it IS the case that one can go into a town where the true church meets, find where they meet and say, "This is where the Lord's church will be found come Lord's day!" Who can deny it? The building is not the church, but we can *see* where the church gathers. Acts 14:27 tells us the church was something to which Paul could report, because they could be gathered together and seen! The Bible does not teach Jesus built a church that could not be seen. We can know where it is and is not. We do not have to guess who is and who is not a part of it! Enough of this ecumenicism!

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Slang And The Pulpit

Weldon Langfield

Recently a gospel preacher, in an apparent effort to demonstrate how "in touch" he was with youth, commented, "We can't, as you young people say, just 'do our own thing'." Similar statements which try to incorporate teenage slang into sermons and articles are not uncommon. The problem with the foregoing statement is that teenagers have not used that phrase for twenty years. When that expression was being used by the rebellious and worldly among the younger generation, today's teens were yet to be born. Certainly the "do your own thing" comment, in spite of the good intentions of the speaker, must have been received by the young people with bewildered amusement. The above statement and similar such comments have led this writer to conclude that it is best not to attempt to relate to young people by the use of slang for the following reasons:

First, slang usage among young people changes rapidly and is therefore almost impossible to keep up with. The above illustration well shows how an effort to appear in step with the times can become a brittle anachronism. We live in a neighborhood with several teenagers. Five years ago, the term here for something good was "bad-o" (which, in light of Isaiah's statement, "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil" [Isa. 5:20]), may not be advisable slang). Then about three years ago the term in vogue was "awesome." Everything was awesome, from Disneyland to a double-dip ice cream cone. Now the word is "rad" (an abbreviated form of radical, describing something positive). Most preachers have enough to do without spending the time necessary to keep up with the latest jargon.

Secondly, the benefits of using slang correctly are dubious. Imagine, if you will, a gospel preacher who, desiring to "communicate" with the teenagers in the audience, refers to some aspect of Christianity as being "rad." What reaction could he expect? Will the entire youth group suddenly be bonded to him with a powerful loyalty? We doubt it. A few of the teenagers would probably think: "This guy's really relating to us." The more discerning among the youths would probably recognize that the term is unnatural and awkward when being used by the preacher. They might even wonder, "Why doesn't this man act his age?" To the rest of the congregation the term "rad" would probably seem alien at best and frivolous at worst. Such misguided attempts to be "all things to all men" (1 Cor. 9:23) actually hinder communications, then, with the majority of worshipers.

Finally, the word of God does all the communicating that needs to be done. There is no instance, to the best of my knowledge, in which an inspired man ever used

youthful slang to "relate." Likewise, when we speak "as it were the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11) we're going to do all the communicating God wants done. The gospel, not some turn of a phrase, is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). That's *everyone*—young and old alike.

Certainly there is a need to exhort and encourage young people. The apostle John set the example as he inscribed, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one" (1 John 2:14). John achieved that goal by the simple dignity of the inspired word and so can we.

2913 Brock Way
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Important Information For Those Planning To Attend The Bellview Lectures

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Free housing in the homes of Christians will be provided on a "first come, first served" basis (call our office at: 904/455-7595, or write at: 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32506). The following Motels are available nearby and are providing **special rates** for individuals attending the **Bellview Lectures**. **Rodeway Inn** (I-10 at Pine Forest Road) offers the following prices (tax not included): \$28.00—1 to 4 adults per room; includes free breakfast; children stay free. Their phone number is 904/477-9150. **Hospitality Inn** (4910 Mobile Highway) offers the following prices (tax not included): \$32.50—1 to 4 people per room; includes free breakfast; children stay free. Their phone number is 904/453-3333. When checking into either of the above motels, show them this advertisement for these special rates, or when calling for reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the **Bellview Lectures**.

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

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An attended nursery will be provided during all lectures for children up to school age. **Children must not be left in the nursery during meal breaks and unscheduled hours.**

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

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

BELLVIEW LECTURE BOOKS

The **Lectureship book, "Are We Moving Away From The Cross Of Christ?"** will be available during the **Bellview Lectures** and afterwards by mail. It will contain twenty-eight chapters and approximately 320 pages. Everyone who attends the **Bellview Lectures** will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

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May 11-15, 1988

"Are We Moving Away From The Cross Of Christ?"



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MOFFITT



COATS



KELLY

WEDNESDAY

- 7:00 P.M. Brethren, We Are Drifting Joe Gilmore
8:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The Spirit Of The Cross?
..... Guss Eoff

THURSDAY

- 9:00 A.M. Ways To Apostasy Mike Hatcher
10:00 A.M. The Hope Of The Cross Roger Jackson
11:00 A.M. Let Us Follow The Jerusalem Pattern
..... George DeHoff
1:30 P.M. The Principles Of Restoration Are Always Valid
..... M. L. Sexton
2:30 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Doctrine On Prayer?..... Dean Kelley
7:00 P.M. The Responsibility Of Elders Jerry Moffitt
8:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The Kind Of Preaching
Demanded By The Cross? Harold Davidson

FRIDAY

- 9:00 A.M. The Organization And Work Of The New Testament
Church Wayne Coats
10:00 A.M. My Old Church Roy Deaver
11:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The Certified Gospel?
..... Ken Willis
1:30 P.M. The Book Of Galatians (1) Winfred Clark
2:30 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Standard For Steadfastness To The Faith? Bill Jeffcoat
7:00 P.M. The Enemies Of The Cross Foy L. Smith

FRIDAY CONTINUED

- 8:00 P.M. The Cross Challenges Us To Live A Pure And
Dedicated Life George DeHoff

SATURDAY

- 9:00 A.M. Despise Ye The Church Of God? Ira Y. Rice Jr.
10:00 A.M. The Book of Galatians (2) Winfred Clark
11:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The Preaching Of The
Cross? Jimmy Clark
1:30 P.M. The Purity Of New Testament Worship
..... Eddie Whitten
2:30 P.M. The Present Unity (Union) Movement
..... H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
7:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The Discipline Of The
New Testament? Curtis Cates
8:00 P.M. The Authority Of Elders Roy Deaver

SUNDAY

- 9:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Pattern For The Home? John Priola
10:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Concept Of Respect For The Bible?
..... H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
6:00 P.M. "I Marvel That Ye Are So Soon Removed."
..... William S. Cline
7:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Emphasis On World Evangelism? Ray W. Peters



JEFFCOAT



RICE



J. CLARK



CATES



CLINE



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FLEE, FAN, OR FIGHT

Dan Huddleston

Of the first twenty-five years of my life upon this earth, all that I can remember hearing from our pulpits was sound doctrine. I heard the pure, sweet, simple gospel. I heard about undenominational Christianity, and how one in the twentieth century could be a Christian just like the Christians of the first century. In those days everywhere you went, you could hear the same beautiful gospel message.

However, during the last several years, I have heard many strange sounds emanating from our pulpits, classrooms, colleges, and universities. When we began our work in Zambia, the brethren could see the difference in my preaching and in the preaching of the other missionaries who were also in that area. Several of my Zambian brethren asked me if these other missionaries were really Christians. After I heard them speak a few times, I realized why they had asked this question. Thus, I have come to the conclusion that there are three types of preachers in the Lord's church today.

FLEE

I have found many preachers who would rather *flee* than *fight*. They say that it is unloving to "fight the good fight of faith" or to "earnestly contend for the faith." They also think that to "hold fast the form of sound words" like the preachers of the past did causes strife and division. Therefore, they say that they must always preach only positive things and never preach anything negative. Bill Coss asked one of these preachers if he knew the two major problems that the church faced today. Not wanting to hear anything negative, he shouted "I don't know and I don't care." Bill then informed him, "You have gotten them both."

Peter calls these preachers "wells without water." He tells us that their preaching consists of "great swelling words of vanity" (II Pet. 2:17-22). These preachers promise us that their way is the way to liberty, but they have actually polluted the way of life and given license to sin. They "speak evil of those things which they know not" (Jude 10), and they spend hours in the pulpit arguing (debating) against our good brethren who debate the adversary. Well did our Lord speak about these "hireling" preachers when he stated:

But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep (John 10:12-13).

FAN

The second type of preacher that I have noticed is the one who loves to *fan* the flames of liberalism. He has sat at the feet of other liberals who have drunk

deeply from the wells of German rationalism and the so-called "new hermeneutics." He has become an expert at cover-up and covert warfare to spread his cancerous liberalism. When sound brethren talk with him to point out his error, he denies and deceives. He has shifted sin and heresy under the realm of opinion and tradition, and it has become difficult for him to admit that any sin is a sin. One of them recently told me that the church had no false teachers, and that such passages as II Timothy 4:1-5; II Peter 2, and the epistle of Jude did not have any reference to false teachers in the Lord's church. Later he stated that he thought we should fellowship all Christians including those in error and those in the Christian Church (Independent and Disciples), because II John 9-11 has reference only to those "who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" (v. 7). He has failed to read verses 4 and 6, and also I John 1:6-7; 2:11; and III John 3.

You will never hear these brethren preaching sermons about the one church, sin, or hell. They despise and ridicule the sound preachers of the past and present. They call sound preachers and sound preacher training schools church splitters and legalists. One of them declared from the pulpit that all the brotherhood periodicals like *Contending For The Faith*, the *Defender*, *Gospel Light*, *Sound Words*, *Christian Worker*, and the *Firm Foundation* were RAGS. However, he did say that he liked *Image* and read it.

These preachers love big salaries as they think that "godliness is a way of gain." They desire to "restructure" the church, but instead they have made "shipwreck" of the faith like Hymenaeus and Alexander. They love to have the preeminence among men as did Diotrephes, and like Diotrephes they prate against sound preachers with "malicious words" of contempt and forbid them to preach in their congregation. Peter and Jude point it out quite well that these preachers who have "forsaken the right way, and are gone astray" will receive the same wages of unrighteousness reserved for Cain, Baalam, and Korah—"the blackness of darkness for ever."

FIGHT

Then there are the preachers who love to "fight the good fight of faith" and who love to "earnestly contend for the faith." As one gospel preacher put it, these are the ones who will *defend* the kingdom as well as *extend* the kingdom. Any preacher who will not defend the kingdom at the same time he is attempting to extend the kingdom is following a "strategy of defeat" rather than a "strategy of victory." The preacher who will "fight the good fight" is not

DAN HUDDLESTON NAMED DIRECTOR OF ZAMBIA BIBLE TRAINING CENTER, AFRICA

Zambia Bible Training Center is pleased to announce that Dan Huddleston has been named as its new director. This comes due to the retirement of the former director and founder, Lloyd Henson. Henson, a missionary to Zambia for 18 years, will remain with ZBTC to work in other much needed areas. Henson founded the school 12 years ago, and has worked diligently to train men to be sound gospel preachers who can support themselves in a country with severe economic difficulties. ZBTC has produced some of the most sound gospel preachers in the country. Huddleston vows, "The students at ZBTC will be taught the old Jerusalem gospel as they were in the past. We will continue to train men who will DEFEND the kingdom as well as EXTEND the kingdom."

Huddleston comes to ZBTC after a teaching tenure at Namwianga Christian Secondary School and Bible College in Kalomo, Zambia. Huddleston received his Bible training at Bellview Preacher Training School and at Alabama Christian School of Religion. He preached his first sermon at the age of 15 in Lexington, Oklahoma. He has done stateside mission work in Louisiana and Colorado, has served congregations in Oklahoma and Texas, and has preached in meetings, lectureships, and on other occasions in various states. He has contributed articles to several brotherhood publications. Huddleston and Henson are planning to publish a monthly journal dedicated to edifying the Lord's church and defending the kingdom. It will be mailed to all the congregations in Zambia at no charge. ZBTC has a print shop which has been in operation for many years. It mails out tracts and Bible correspondence courses, and serves as the only brotherhood printing source in Zambia. Wayne Jarnagin, who joined the staff six months ago, serves as the print shop supervisor.

Dan and his wife Dorothy (Davis) have three children. Lisa, 16, teaches Bible classes. Brian, 14, and Derek, 13, have both been preaching for over three years. When the Huddlestons left Namwianga, they had to leave behind more than half of their support and the vehicle that they were using. Therefore, they are in desperate need of your help. Part of the needed funds will be used to sustain his family and part as a work fund to take students to the villages to preach and teach, which would also require a vehicle (Dan says that he can get a used one for about \$6,000).

If any congregations or individuals are interested in helping them with this wonderful work for the Lord, please contact their sponsoring congregation immediately. You may mail inquiries or checks to the Bellview church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506, or you may wish to write Dan personally at Zambia Bible Training Center, Box 60641, Livingston, Zambia, Central Africa.

ashamed to proclaim the blessed gospel of Christ for he knows that it is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." He is not ashamed to be called a Christian only. He knows that the "manifold wisdom of God" is to be declared "by the church" (Eph. 3:10). He knows and teaches that Jesus died for and built only one church (Matt. 16:18-19; Acts 20:28). He knows and proclaims that Jesus is the head of the one church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). How long has it been since you heard a good sermon on the undenominational nature of the church or on the sin of denominationalism? Well that's too long!

The faithful proclaimer and defender of the faith shows his love for God and for the souls of men by "speaking the truth in love." R. L. Whiteside stated:

Much is said about preaching the truth in love, and so it should be preached. But in love of what? The preacher should so love the truth that he will not sacrifice any of it nor pervert it, and he should so love the people that he will not withhold from them even one unpleasant truth. He that does either of these things loves neither the truth nor the people. We frequently fool ourselves; we think we do thus, and so, to spare the feelings of others, when it is our own feelings that prompt us.

One does *not* speak the truth in love by *not* mentioning certain verses or doctrines in the Bible because he is afraid of "offending" or "hurting the feelings" of some who might hear that preaching. When Jesus was upon the earth and walked among men, many were offended by him and his doctrine. In Matthew 13:54-57, we find that the people were astonished at Jesus' mighty works and wise words, yet they were offended by them. Many of his own disciples were offended at his doctrine. These stated their disbelief in John 6:60 when they declared, "this is a hard saying; who can hear it?" In verse 64 Jesus stated, "But there are some of you that believe not." Do you see that when you, I, or anyone is offended by any of Christ's teachings it is unbelief? Remember the Israelites of old who could not enter the promised land because of their unbelief (Heb. 3:19). Neither will we be allowed to enter the promised land of heaven if we are offended by any of the teachings of Jesus. "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb. 4:11).

CONCLUSION

Never be guilty of fanning the flames of liberalism and never flee from those who are. Always preach "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) to save the lost and to keep the saved from turning back to "the weak and beggarly elements" (Gal. 4:6) and "departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12). Our duty, yea our responsibility, is not to "test the wind" to see what pleases men, but to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2).

*Director, Zambia Bible Training Center
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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 04

APRIL, 1988

Put Away That Wicked Person

Bobby Liddell

Recent events have focused attention on the subjects of fellowship and discipline. Sadly, many are not informed on these subjects since: 1) they have not taken the time from a materialistic life to search the Scriptures; 2) some preachers have not preached the whole counsel of God; and 3) some elders love to have it so. Caught unaware and ill-informed, some say, "I don't believe we ought to practice church discipline."

ALTERNATIVES

Indeed, there are some alternatives to heeding the apostolic command of I Corinthians 5:13, and putting away from the faithful that wicked person.

1. *Perfection.* If all lived in perfection, without sin, such actions of discipline certainly would not be needed. Such is not the case, and cannot be the case that one might live a sinlessly perfect life since all have sinned (Rom. 3:23).

2. *Perversion.* Another alternative, but not a scriptural one, is to pervert God's word. Paul spoke of the curse attendant to preaching "another gospel" (Gal. 1:6-9). The scriptures might be twisted in an attempt to show such purging is not taught, but such is done in vain.

3. *Penitence.* The *only* scriptural alternative is penitence on the part of the wicked and their seeking forgiveness in accordance with God's will. Only then can fellowship with the faithful in Christ be maintained. These are God's conditions of fellowship by walking in the light (I John 1:7-10).

ATTITUDE

Attitude is of utmost importance. One might follow a certain Bible-directed action but still be lost because of a wrong and sinful attitude. Those walking by faith will have the following attitudes.

1. *Concern.* Servants of God cannot avoid respon-

sibility concerning a brother as Cain sought to do in the long ago (Gen. 4:9). If that brother's house were on fire, salvation from the flames would be sought for him. When his soul is in danger of everlasting fire, can any right-thinking man be unconcerned?

2. *Correction.* There also must be an attitude of correction to restore a brother (Gal. 6:1). Not by taking vengeance in malice for hatred and spite, but by restoring "such an one in the spirit of meekness," do the faithful seek to correct the wayward.

3. *Conviction.* The attitude of the redeemed must be one of conviction. If every judge and jury in the land ruled against truth on this matter or any other, blood-bought brethren must have the conviction to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29), regardless of the consequences.

AIM

The aim of discipline is clearly revealed.

1. *To Save A Lost Brother.* First and foremost, the aim of discipline is salvation. "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 5:5).

To Save The Church. To save the church, the old leaven must be purged (I Cor. 5:6,7), that the church might be pure, holy, and without blemish (Eph. 5:27).

To Save A Lost World. It must be shown that the church of the Lord does not support, promote, condone, uphold, nor overlook sin (I Cor. 5:9-13). If the distinction between the church and the world cannot be shown, who would heed the call to leave the fellowship of sin in the world only to enter the fellowship of sin in those claiming to be the church?

AGREEMENT

Agreement must be had for church discipline to be

as God would have it.

1. *Following.* Brethren must agree in following God's plan by the authority of Christ with any final actions being taken publicly (I Cor. 5:4).

2. *Facing.* There must be agreement in facing the problem in the light of God's word and dealing with it in the spirit of obedience.

3. *Fellowshipping.* Likewise, agreement must be had in fellowshipping the righteous and withholding fellowship from the impenitent according to I Corinthians 5:9-11. Only then will discipline be effective in its efforts to save the lost.

God commands discipline (Rom. 16:17; II Thess. 3:6); government condemns it (Acts 5:29); and godly men comply, not with the dictates of unrighteous men, but with the will of the Living God. When

children of God are in agreement with God's word, understanding the proper aim and with the proper attitude, there is no alternative, of which God approves, to the practice of this Bible doctrine, but penitence on the part of the wicked in his returning to a faithful walk in the Son. Such a return should be sought patiently, plainly, promptly, prayerfully, pleadingly, and properly. May we all determine to know God's will and do it (Luke 6:46).

*P.O. Box 118
Parrish, AL 35580*

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Bobby Liddell and his family will be moving to Pensacola in the near future to begin work with the Bellview church. Brother Liddell is an evangelist of outstanding ability and we look forward to working with him in the kingdom of Christ.]

Liberalism: A Present Danger

Trent H. Wheeler

Liberalism is an ever-present danger in the Lord's church. Those individuals who reject the verbal, plenary inspiration of the scriptures, disregard the distinctiveness of New Testament Christianity, deny the virgin birth of Christ and the prophecy of that birth (Isa. 7:14), stress emotionalism over Biblical authority, and weave everything into their teaching except the word of God, are destroying the foundation upon which the church was built. Roy Deaver put it well when he related how liberalism works on the church much the same way that termites work on a house, by the time you realize that there is a problem, the whole foundation needs repair.

The source of our problem began with our secular educational system but it did not stay there long. Soon many of the men teaching in our Christian Colleges and in our Schools of Preaching were promoting the liberal line of thinking they picked up in the so-called institutions of higher learning. It did not take long after that for this kind of thinking to enter into the pulpits and Bible classes of our land. What started out as a small spark in the secular education system has now become a consuming fire in the Lord's church.

One may wonder how is it that such damnable doctrines entered into the Lord's church?

1) Men began to seek the knowledge of men and disregard the knowledge of God. They became guilty of leaning upon their own understanding (Prov. 3:5; 28:26).

2) False teachers pulled away disciples while many of the members of the Lord's body followed after these men "having itching ears" (Matt. 7:15; II Tim. 4:3; Acts 20:29-30).

3) Many elders of the church failed to heed the warning of Paul in Acts 20:28-30. "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. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

4) Members of the Lord's church are no longer students of God's word. Paul encouraged Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Too many in the Lord's church are suffering the same consequences that Hosea wrote of: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I

DEFENDER

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will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of God, I will also forget thy children" (Hosea 4:6).

Liberalism is a deadly threat to the foundation of the Lord's church. The time is long past when sound brethren need to pick up the sword of the spirit and return to the battlefield. Elders, deacons, and preachers need to "mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have

learned: and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17); "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly" (II Thess. 3:6), and "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned: that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say" (Titus 2:7-8).

9301 Sheldon Road
Plymouth, MI 48170

Instruments Of Music In Heaven?

Larry D. Mathis

Advocates of mechanical instrumental music, in Christian worship, say that, "Harps will be in heaven, so it cannot be wrong to use musical instruments in worship to Almighty God in the church today." Their proof is Revelation 5:8-9; 14:2-3; 15:2-3.

HARD PRESSED

Those who insist on instruments of music in worship truly are "hard-pressed" for Biblical authority: (1) Since they are unable to find the practice authorized in plain passages of the New Testament, they turn to the Old Testament for consolation, or (2) They go to the book of Revelation (which is a book of highly figurative language) for proof. This is an open admission that the New Testament, nowhere, in plain simple language commands the use of instruments of music in worship to God.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION IS HIGHLY SYMBOLIC

To say that one must exercise great care in interpreting the book of Revelation is an understatement, for it is clothed in figurative language and is unlike any other book of the New Testament. To briefly illustrate our point—the book of Revelation mentions a great red dragon, an old serpent, beheaded souls underneath an altar, horses, frogs, birds, a sea beast, a lamb, an earth (land) beast, the four beasts, twenty-four elders, thrones, a great whore, a mighty angel, a radiant woman with child, hail, fire, brimstone, a flood, blood up to the mouth of a horse, and "harps." This is but a sample of the things described in this book of prophecy.

Are the advocates of instrumental music in Christian worship willing to accept the conclusion that anything and everything that is mentioned in Revelation (or heaven) permissible and authorized in the church, on earth, in worship? We think not! If "harps" are authorized in Christian worship, what about the other items just enumerated? And, what about "golden bowls of incense," "a golden censer," a "golden altar,"

and the "sea mingled with fire?" Should these things be added to our worship too? This is totally ridiculous. There is as much authority for one as the other in the church—none! Also, babies will be in heaven but the church knows nothing of infant membership.

SO-CALLED "PROOF TEXTS"

In the so-called "proof texts" John is describing a celestial company, not an assembly of Christians coming together on earth, to worship God; hence, nothing they are doing, that is, simply because they are doing it, can properly be cited as an example governing the worship of such an assembly of Christians. What is, or what may be in heaven, is no criteria for what should be in the church now. The church had been established for a number of years when the book of Revelation was penned. And, from the beginning the church praised God in song without the use of mechanical instruments. Our worship must be determined by instructions and examples which are set out in plain, simple, literal New Testament language.

WHAT DID JOHN HEAR?

Question: "John, just exactly what did you hear?" John replies, "I heard a VOICE." Question: "John, are you sure you did not hear all kinds of mechanical instruments, such as the banjo, guitar, organ, harp, horns, drums, etc.?" John said, "I heard a VOICE." Question: "John, did you hear playing?" John said, "I heard a VOICE." Question: "John, what was the voice doing?" John replies, "The VOICE which I heard SUNG as it were a new song." Question: "John, what did the voice, which you heard singing, sound like?" John answers, "As the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder...the voice of harpers harping with their harps." Question: "John, did you actually hear waters and thunder and harps?" John said, "It was AS waters, thunder and harps."

If John heard literal harping on harps, did he not likewise hear literal thunder and literal waters? Why

include the "harps" in worship and leave out the "thunder" and the "waters?" If harps are literal, in the passage, then the thunder and the waters are literal too!

John heard "A VOICE," as the voice of many waters, a great thunder, and harpers. The voice was SINGING, not playing. The beautiful melody, the volume, and harmony of the song, which was being sung, was comparable to the melody, the volume and harmony of "the voice of many waters...the voice of a great thunder...the voice of harpers...."

CONCLUSION

The "heaven argument" like the "Old Testament argument" for mechanical instrumental music in Christian worship falls flat and fails under scriptural investigation. The church of our Lord is a New Testament, not an Old Testament, institution. We are governed by the New Testament, not the Old Testament, or what is, or will be in heaven. When will men learn?

1200 Cleary Avenue
Metairie (New Orleans), LA 70001

Will My Lodge Save Me?

John Waddey

Many have turned to fraternal lodges to seek a proper relationship with God and man. The most prominent lodge of all professes to be "a religion" and even offers an eternal reward in heaven to all who faithfully fulfill their vows. Since this will be questioned by many, I offer the PROOF:

It (Masonry) is the universal, eternal, immutable religion such as God planted it in the heart of universal humanity. (*Morals and Dogmas of Freemasonry*, Albert Pike, page 219).

Upon receiving the Masonic apron the recipient is told,

If you wear it without soil or blemish, you will be received at the pearly gates of heaven and there be presented with the pure white robe of righteousness. (*Tennessee Craftman*, page 62).

To the honest, God-fearing soul who has become involved in such an institution, I offer the following truths from God's word:

1. "For neither is there any other name under heaven given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Salvation is only in Christ...this excludes all lodges.

2. Speaking of religious institutions which God had not planted, Jesus said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13). This would include "religious" lodges.

3. "Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the *savior of the body*" (Eph. 5:23). That body

is Christ's church (Eph. 1:22). Christ saves *the body*; but there is *one body* (Eph. 4:5). That body is the church. If he saves only the *one body*/church then he will not save the lodge.

Jesus said, "The word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). Again he said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the*

(Continued on Page 38)

Important Information For Those Planning To Attend The Bellview Lectures

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The following Motels are available nearby and are providing **special rates** for individuals attending the **Bellview Lectures**. **Rodeway Inn** (I-10 at Pine Forest Road) offers the following prices (tax not included): \$28.00—1 to 4 adults per room; includes free breakfast; children stay free. Their phone number is 904/477-9150. **Hospitality Inn** (4910 Mobile Highway) offers the following prices (tax not included) \$32.50—1 to 4 people per room; includes free breakfast; children stay free. Their phone number is 904/453-3333. When checking into either of the above motels, show them this advertisement for these special rates, or when calling for reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the **Bellview Lectures**.

BELLVIEW LECTURE MEALS

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

BELLVIEW LECTURE NURSERY

An attended nursery will be provided during all lectures for children up to school age. **Children must not be left in the nursery during meal breaks and unscheduled hours.**

BELLVIEW LECTURE EXHIBITS

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

BELLVIEW LECTURE AUDIO AND VIDEO TAPES

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

BELLVIEW LECTURE BOOKS

The **Lectureship book**, "Are We Moving Away From The Cross Of Christ?" will be available during the **Bellview Lectures** and afterwards by mail. It will contain twenty-eight chapters and approximately 320 pages. Everyone who attends the **Bellview Lectures** will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

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

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8:00 P.M. The Authority Of Elders Roy Deaver

SUNDAY

- 9:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Pattern For The Home? John Priola
10:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Concept Of Respect For The Bible?
..... H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
6:00 P.M. "I Marvel That Ye Are So Soon Removed."
..... William S. Cline
7:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
Emphasis On World Evangelism? Ray W. Peters



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A Great Deliverance

Elbert R. Garretson

For many years Joseph had been exiled from his family. Most of the time that he was away from his father, and the house of Israel, was spent in Egypt. First, he had been enslaved by Potiphar, whose wife had lied against him; Second to this, he was exalted, as Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 41:41). Pharaoh made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh. In all that was taking place, "the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy..." (Gen. 39:21). The faith of Joseph and the blessings of God, which attended him, have vastly directed the events of history.

The years passed; Joseph and his brothers were grown men. God had revealed to Joseph the knowledge of the years of plenty, then of the years of famine. "And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the storehouses..." (Gen. 41:56). Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy corn in Egypt. Joseph knew his brothers, but they knew him not. They had sold their brother. In time, they must bow down before him. They were accused of being spies and of having come down to Egypt to spy out the nakedness of the land.

This episode was being developed for the good of Ancient Israel. It was being developed for the good of mankind. It was a long-range plan. It was to involve the Old Testament, and the Old Testament people. It would eventually involve the New Testament and the New Testament people.

Joseph made himself known to his brothers at their second appearing. Genesis the 45th chapter records this emotional meeting. Every man was told to leave as Joseph identified himself. They were troubled at his presence. They remembered their selling him. Conscience can deal a heavy blow. Fear can also bring a retribution. Joseph emphasized the point of guilt, "...I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt" (Gen. 45:4). Joseph had more in mind than their guilt. This also is true with the heavenly Father, as he deals with the guilt of the whole human race. "God did send me before you to preserve life" (Gen. 45:5). Joseph was Godlike. He had salvation, redemption and preservation in mind. We, as Christians, should have the same goals. The world and often the church suffers for a lack of this spirit and purpose. Two years of the deadening famine had passed, but Joseph reminded them, "There are yet five years, in which there shall be neither earing nor harvest" (Gen. 45:6).

Perhaps the most important statement of this entire episode may be this one, "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your

lives by a great deliverance" (Gen. 45:7).

THE GREAT DELIVERANCE

It was a Divine accomplishment. From Rameses to the Red Sea and through the sea as the waters parted, indeed it was a great deliverance. They were led by Moses three days journey into the Wilderness of Etham. They were "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). Moses was a type and shadow of Christ (Deut. 18:15, 18). The church in the wilderness was a type of the church of Christ. Jesus promised, "Upon this rock I will build my church..." (Matt. 16:18). The record is clear, it is beautiful and eternal. The promise to Abraham was kept in and through Christ, and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). This is a simple record. It is eternal. It must be taught, preached and believed. We see the great deliverance in the New Testament. The great deliverance from Egypt portrayed the greatest deliverance of all: the deliverance from sin.

Man preaches the gospel as he sees and proclaims these truths. It is salvation in and through Christ now. It is today. It is not a future "millennial kingdom" idea. The gospel IS "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). It is the only hope for Jew and Gentile alike. "He put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9).

The church today must make this her strong affirmation. This must be the thrust of the church today or else we die. We live as we believe and act to manifest to all mankind this great deliverance.

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Will My Lodge Save Me?

(Continued from Page 36)

will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). In judgment, lodge membership and doctrines will be of no value, you will be judged by the New Testament of Jesus. Even more, since the lodge claims to be what it is not (*i.e.*, the true religion that can save man) it shall be rooted up by God. Jesus said, "If the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. 15:14). The lodge cannot save you! But it can cost you your soul.

Christ alone can save. The church of Christ is the family of the saved (1 Tim. 3:15). Only the Truth of the Bible can enlighten and free men from sin (John 8:32; 17:17). Why not be simply a Christian?

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Who Will Pay The Bill?

Robin W. Haley

I was startled to read the encouragement given by one brother in the November 1987 issue of *The Latin American Crier*. He pleaded for us to start "wash, bike, hike or prayer-a-thons" to help finance the Lord's work. This article, as well as countless others will chronicle the current "fad" of gaining financial support from unbelievers in order to perform works of benevolence and evangelism. One wonders just who really gets the glory for such work. Does the Lord? He would if his people "give themselves first to the Lord," and then "give of their own accord" out of the "abundance of their joy" (2 Cor. 8:5,3,2). Thus, they would be doing "all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17), and this "upon the first day of the week" (1 Cor. 16:2). However, this is not the pattern we are seeing in this new fad. Rather, we are seeing the Lord's people falling for the hype and gimmickry of sectarianism. We believe that it is those "taking a walk" who receive the glory, not our Lord.

Have they given themselves first to the Lord? We think not. Not that we question their sincerity nor earnestness, but we do question their judgment in this method of raising money for the Lord. For one to "give themselves to the Lord" necessarily demands that they give themselves to him for obedience (Rom. 6:16). But obedience must be rendered to his will (Rom. 12:2). The will of God is silent regarding "seeking sponsors" to pay so much per mile for the saints to "take a hike." Nor does it speak of bazaars, car washes nor any of the other myriad of "tricks for

treats!"

I read of some teens who were "taking steps to end world hunger." While on their trek they came across one who, after hearing more about their venture, "wrote out a check on the spot" (a quote). Too bad this one did not hear what he needed in order to save his soul from hell. Incidentally, helping to feed those who are hungry in order to teach them the gospel is one thing, but "taking steps" to "end" something that Jesus said would always be here seems to me to be an exercise in futility. How many souls are being fed along with the stomachs?

Who will pay the bill? If King David would not offer to God that which cost him nothing (2 Sam. 24:24), how can some believe that God will be glorified and pleased with something which cost *them* nothing? Letting unbelievers pay for the Lord's work is not only unscriptural, but it is a slap in the face of God and shows a lack of faith and commitment on the part of those involved to give to their own works!

Our brother in the *Crier* said he hopes to see more of this gimmickry. I shall stand on the record just here to say let us see an *end* to this unauthorized methodology. Rather, "let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart" (2 Cor. 9:7). After all, "God is able to make all grace abound" (2 Cor. 9:8), and we will not have to ask the unbelieving, disobedient world to pay the bill for the Lord's work!

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The Reformed Church of Christ

Steve Gunter

Conformity is slavery to fashion. Anti-conformity is negative slavery to fashion's whim. Either case constitutes a violation of the basic principle of our creation and purpose. All divine religion (patriarchal, Mosaic, Christian) posited the free-will of human beings (Gen. 1:27; Josh. 24:15; John 8:32). Conformity robs man of choice. It permits one to escape the rigor of independent thought and decision.

The apostles of Christ demanded transformity from those who adopted the Christian life (Rom. 12:1). Transformists live as did our Lord, within yet above this world. The traditions of men meant nothing to the life of Christ. Matthew 15:9 records the Savior's strict statement against "keeping the commandments of men" and hence failing to keep the true commands of the Father. How many today will surrender the binding, dead weight rules created by councils of men

in exchange for the purity and simplicity of the Bible and the Bible only?

The time has come when right reason and love for the Lord demand a challenge to the *reformers* now at work among the churches of Christ. Modern forces have abandoned the uniquely transforming power of the gospel for other gospels and other philosophies. Scripture forbids such (Rom. 12:1; Eph. 5:11).

The desire of the brethren to be "like unto their neighbors" has proven irresistible in many metropolitan churches. One finds "reformed" churches multiplying in these metro centers. Scripture entrusts elders with "mouth-shutting" power (Titus 1:11). We must move vigorously at once if we are to save some ere the night of doctrinal darkness has fallen upon them.

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 05

MAY, 1988

Does The Church of Christ Believe In Music In Worship?

Larry D. Mathis

One asks, "Why doesn't the church of Christ believe in music in worship?" As you know, this question is raised because we do not use mechanical instruments of music in our worship services.

The real issue does not involve "not believing in music." It is incorrect, and a misrepresentation, to say, "The church of Christ doesn't believe in music." As a matter of fact, yes, we do believe in music in worship, and, yes, we do have music in our worship services.

The question is not, "Why doesn't the church of Christ believe in music in worship?" but, "Why does the church of Christ 'sing' only?" "Why does the church of Christ have vocal music exclusively in their worship services?"

ONLY TWO KINDS OF MUSIC

In regards to the totality of music, there are two kinds: (1) vocal, and (2) instrumental. Singing is music—it is vocal music. From some of the questions asked, it is obvious that many have never even considered this fact.

In Christian worship the Lord never authorized instrumental music, he authorized vocal music only. This point needs further clarification for even some brethren seemingly have not caught on in some places.

Although our Lord authorized vocal music in worship, it must be further pointed out that he authorized A CERTAIN TYPE OF VOCAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP, that is, SINGING. To illustrate: "HUMMING" and "WHISTLING" are both vocal, but they fail to meet the Lord's requirement to "SING." Would not "percussion" type sounds made

"vocally" also fail to meet the Lord's requirement to sing? The New Testament teaches that we are to "SPEAK," to "TEACH," and to "ADMONISH" in our singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Anything that fails to do what the Lord commanded (though vocal) cannot be what he wants in worship.

A QUESTION OF BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

This issue involves much more than likes and dislikes in worship to Almighty God. Mechanical instruments of music are excluded from our worship services because of deep religious convictions. God has clearly outlined in the New Testament what he wants us to do as we approach him in worship. Everything must be done with his approval, with a "Thus saith the Lord" attitude. See John 4:23-24; Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; I Corinthians 14:15; Romans 15:9; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; 13:15; James 5:13.

NO DIVINE AUTHORITY FOR MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS

There is no divine authority or approval for instruments of music in Christian worship today. Jesus never did authorize or command the use of such. Christ authorized "singing" only in the New Testament.

Did the apostles of Christ ever authorize, or command, or use mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship? Absolutely not! The Holy Spirit guided them into "ALL TRUTH" (John 16:13; 14:26), but he never guided them to use mechanical instruments in praise to God. Obviously, then, such is no part of the truth. No New Testament writer ever

Bellview Welcomes



Bobby Liddell

Brother Liddell began work as Bellview's minister May 1, 1988. He was the minister at the Parrish Church of Christ in Parrish, Alabama for the last five years. The elders in Parrish told us of their regrets to lose his services, but highly recommend him as one who is sound in The Faith and tireless in his efforts to advance the Cause of Christ.

He has a background of cabinet shop work and work as an electrician in construction and mining before attending the Memphis School of Preaching. His education includes studies in Electrical Engineering at Walker College in Jasper, Alabama and at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. He holds a B.A. and M.A. from Alabama Christian School of Religion, Montgomery, Alabama. He is continuing with post-graduate work there.

Brother Liddell has preached in several states in gospel meetings, vacation Bible schools, Lectureships, Evangelism Workshops, Bible Bowls, Youth Meetings, Youth Camps, Radio and Television Programs, and participated in missionary efforts in Manila and Singapore.

We welcome him into our midst along with his wife, Joan and their three children, Anthony Allen, Nathan Gant, and Keri Jayne.

Beginning with the next issue of this publication, Bobby Liddell will be the new editor.

—The Elders

Music In Worship

(Continued from front page.)

practiced or sanctioned the use of instruments in Christian worship.

The apostle Paul preached the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20,27), but he did not declare instrumental music to be authorized by God. Those who walk by God's counsel will not use such either for it is innovative and sinful.

No apostolic church used mechanical instruments in worship. Name one New Testament church that used mechanical instruments of music in worship to Almighty God with his approval. It cannot be done. There is absolutely no divine authority for instrumental music in Christian worship—it is clearly forbidden and can be traced, not to the New Testament for its origin, but to the Pope of Rome.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Man is not a legislator for God: he must not make laws for the Lord; he must not legislate as to the way men shall worship Jehovah. God knows more about what pleases him than does mere man! God has told us in his word what he expects and man had better not tamper with it (Deut. 4:2; Gal. 1:8-9).

Those who refuse to listen to God; who refuse to abide in the doctrine of Christ, "HAVE NOT GOD" (2 John 9). The command is to "sing" (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), not "play." Playing mechanical instruments is something the Lord did not command. Those who "play" have gone beyond God's written word and have become rebels.

To do all "in the name of the Lord" means to act by his authority (Col. 3:17; Acts 10:48). One cannot play mechanical instruments in worship by our Lord's authority for he did not authorize such.

Some say, "Let's have singing and instrumental music too." However, that will not do—it would be more than what the Lord commanded. Others say, "Instrumental music is better." May we ask, "Better to whom?" "Are we trying to please men?" "Are we trying to entertain spectators?" "Are we putting on a performance?"

We need a greater desire to please the Lord, not man (Gal. 1:10). We are instructed to praise God with the fruit of our lips (Heb. 13:15), not with a piece of machinery (Acts 17:24-25).

Instruments, such as the organ, flood the building with sound that prevents the worshippers from even hearing their own voices, much less the voices of others, thus, they disobey God's command to "teach"

DEFENDER

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and "ADMONISH" while singing!

Did the early Christians sing or play in worship? Did they obey or disobey God? You know as well as I do that they obeyed him by singing, not playing, in worship.

There is absolutely no divine authority whatsoever today for instrumental music in Christian worship. The organ was introduced by the Pope of Rome—it was not authorized by high heaven: it is an Italian corruption of the gospel of Christ. We believe in music in worship, and we have it. We "sing" as the Lord directed.

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The Truth About Instrumental Music

Weldon Langfield

The most obvious difference between the church of Christ and man-made religious bodies is the absence of instrumental music in our worship services. Some conclude that we can't afford organs or pianos; others feel we just don't like them. Actually, the reason for their non-use is that God does not want them in the worship of His church. Why?

Because Of The Authority Principle

The Bible teaches, simply stated, that whatever is not authorized by God is disallowed. This principle is found throughout the word of God. Solomon wrote, "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:6; see also Rev. 20:18-19). John wrote, "Whoever goes onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God" (1 John 9). Paul likewise wrote, "That in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written" (1 Cor. 4:6). We, then, must remain within the limits of what the scriptures authorize.

Because Of The Kind Of Music God Wants

In each instance of musical worship on the part of followers of Christ in the Bible, only singing was practiced. Before the crucifixion, the Bible says of Christ and the disciples, "And when they had sung a hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives" (Matt. 26:30). Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14:15). Both the Ephesian and the Colossian congregations were commanded to simply sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). James exhorted, "Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise" (James 5:13). It is no more correct to add instruments to Christian worship than to add cupcakes to the Lord's Supper. God has authorized

only vocal music in worship to Him.

What About Instrumental Music In The Old Testament?

Careful Bible students realize that God both authorized and commanded the use of instrumental music in Old Testament times. Psalm 150 is one of many passages which indicate this. There, Israelites were commanded to "Praise him with trumpet sound...psaltery and harp...timbrel... stringed instruments and pipe..." etc. Yet in the Old Testament, the burning of incense, a physical priesthood and animal sacrifices were all necessary to please God. It must be remembered the Old Law was nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14). *We are under the New Testament now, and must obey its precepts.*

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Where's Why?

Steve Gunter

The modern method of inquiry has destroyed truth-seeking. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim. 3:16). "Great is the mystery..." A multiplicity of mysteries exist to tantalize every man into a search for the truth which should illuminate every such matter. What has killed the curiosity of man?

Paul pleaded with his apprentice, "O, Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so-called" (1 Tim. 6:20). Students of rhetoric (speech) have challenged the false foundations and unexamined postulates of modern so-called science. In each case, science is found to contain intuitive, unproven elements rendering it less than the absolute-and-certain truth its disciples would have our children believe.

Einstein illustrated this principle quite well in January, 1933, in a lecture to world class scientists assembled at Oxford University. "My theories", he explained, "originated from deduction not by observation." First he conceived the *idea* of relativity then tested it in real world conditions. Science is a matter of persuasive debate, not inductively discovered absolute-once-for-all truth.

False science seeks a wordless world and an inhuman mechanistic society. Our schools produce evermore illiterate and thoughtless children. Our cities are centers of barbarism. The "value-free" concept has wormed its way into every academic area of education. A wordless world will be Satan's playground. It has

been his goal since his lying in the Garden (Gen. 3:1-5). The Lord himself warned us of his efforts to deprive language of meaning (John 8:44).

Satan's assault upon the Word is no less powerful now than in the beginning. He challenged the Lord himself as Matthew so ably recorded in Chapter Four of his gospel. He stalks our soul, said the Apostle Peter (I Pet. 5:8). He is a sinister spirit totally committed to our eternal separation from Jesus Christ and the City of Light. Gospel preaching alone and that of the most vigorous variety can now save the sundered churches of Christ. Back to the future must be our plea. Back to the Bible. Back to the Apostles. Back to basics. This and nothing less than this will remove the rubbish and revive the righteous saints of God.

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What Is Freedom In Christ?

Robin W. Haley

As Americans, we know a great deal about freedom. We love and cherish freedom. After all, we live in "the land of the free!" Freedom grants certain rights and demands certain obligations. Our rights or privileges are based *not* upon our own desires, but upon the *limits* placed on society and the resulting *order*. Just so, we live in peace because of "law and order." Law is that legislation formulated and handed to the people. Order is that law enforced. The result is peace in a civilized society. The opposite is chaos, anarchy, rebellion and turmoil. Every straight-thinking person wants the former, not the latter.

As Christians, we enjoy the best freedom. This is the freedom which is rich beyond compare and endures forever. This is the freedom from sin, the freedom as found only in Christ! Sadly, American Christians understand more about democratic freedom than they do Christian freedom. This is fairly easy to prove. In fact, you can prove this to yourself even now as you read. Do you agree with the basis of freedom in our country as described in the first paragraph? If so, you are capable of understanding Christian freedom. But, are you willing to apply these same two principles of law and order? Are you willing to recognize that Christian freedom is based upon law, the law of Christ (I Cor. 9:21), and upon order or enforcement of that law, effected through obedience (Heb. 5:9; John 8:36)?

Too many believe in a different form of freedom.

Many who claim to be Christians preach and teach a freedom that is based on what they call a freedom *from* law, a freedom built upon a perverted view of God's love, a "law of no law." They say, "We have the right to believe and practice as *we* choose." (In the following article, we shall explore what the Bible teaches about "our rights.")

This rebellion against God's law is also a form of freedom. It is the freedom Paul speaks of in Romans 6:20, "For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness." When anyone, Christian or non-Christian, presents themselves to sin as obedient servants, they are free regarding righteousness. Of course, we understand that Paul is teaching that this kind of freedom is actually bondage!

Reader, do not be fooled into believing in this sort of "freedom" as though you may live as you please, while naming the name of Christ. "For freedom did Christ set us free" (Gal. 5:1). "For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use *not* your freedom for an occasion for the flesh" (Gal. 5:13). Please understand that when you became a Christian, you were called to freedom, but *not* to freedom *from* law, nor to do as *you* please! Remember the words of Galatians 5:16,17, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; **THAT YE MAY NOT DO THE THINGS THAT YE WOULD** (that you please, NASV)."

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"I Have The Right!"

Robin W. Haley

Surely, you have heard people say this. Perhaps you have said so yourself. In certain contexts, this is a valid declaration. But, in other contexts, this may not be a true statement. For example, the kidnapper-rapist facing prosecution and prison or death may foolishly demand, "You can't do this to me...I have my rights!" Most of us realize that his rights (privileges) became forfeit when he broke the law, and that now society has the obligation to punish him or they too will be breaking the law.

Within the spiritual kingdom where Christians live, there are rights and privileges also. The first right granted us came just prior to our obedience to the gospel. Consider John 1:12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God." (Most of us are familiar with the abuse of this verse by those who teach a "faith only" religion. We are not entertaining thoughts on this abuse just here.)

John makes clear that the privilege was given to those who accept the claims Jesus made regarding himself, to become children of God. That is, people who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, have the *authority* to be saved. The word translated "right" (power, KJV) is the same word Jesus used in Matthew 28:18 when he made reference to his authority.

Here then is a vital lesson: that our rights are based solely upon authority. Where we have been authorized, we have the right. Where authority has not gone, we have no rights. (This, of course, within the realm of the spiritual.) We would now remind the reader of Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Doing *anything* in the name of Christ is doing that which *he* has authorized. Thus, we have the *right* to do that which he has authorized, and this, **IN HIS NAME**.

Not everything men do "in the name of Christ" is with his authority, because they act without scriptural license. Thus, they have no right to so act. Those who contend for the right to do as they please, and then have the boldness to attach our Lord's precious name to their actions, **ARE NOT** acting within their "rights," but are being rebellious.

Friends, let us walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). The word translated "sight" in this verse also means "appearance." Therefore, we walk *not* by the things which appear to be good, but those things **THE FAITH** authorizes as "good, acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2). May our Lord help us to understand exactly where our rights allow us to go and how we may go there.

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Humility: Gateway To Service

Weldon Langfield

A plaque recently observed hanging in an office read, "It's hard to be humble when you're as great as I am." That rather flippant wall decoration serves as a reminder that humility is illusive—when we feel confident we've obtained it, we've lost it. Humility is greatly misunderstood by the world. The term conjures up pictures of "sissy-like" effeminacy—traits opposite to the dynamic self-confidence desired by so many today.

The Greek word often translated "humble" literally means "low-lying." (W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 238.) Sometimes rendered "lowly," the word is not associated with weakness as it seems to be in the English language. Christ was "humble in heart" (Matt. 11:29 NASB), yet "all authority" (Matt. 28:18) had been given to him. In light of those passages, humility has been described as "power under control." It involves *choosing* a submissive, yielding way of life.

HUMILITY IS THE GATEWAY TO SERVICE

All great servants of God in the Bible were men and women of humility. Abraham's life of godliness began with submission to God's orders to leave his homeland. "So Abraham went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him" (Gen. 12:4). Likewise, Isaac was a very humble person. That did not stem from weakness on his part—"And the man waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great" (Gen. 26:13). Isaac's neighbors, the Philistines, envied him and stopped up his wells. He could have responded with proud defiance—Abimelech, the Philistine king, entreated, "Go from us: for thou art much mightier than we" (Gen. 26:17). But the patriarch humbly left that area. Isaac's new neighbors, however, contended over

another well his men dug. Again, he humbly left the well to them. Because of contentious neighbors, Isaac abandoned yet a third well (Gen. 26:14-22).

Moses likewise was very humble, "above all the men that were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). In Pharaoh's court he was apparently quite powerful, as he had access to "the treasures of Egypt" (Heb. 11:26). Yet Moses relinquished all to lead a band of unwilling slaves on an arid, rigorous trek of four decades.

On and on the list goes. We know of no one in the Bible who rendered significant service to God who wasn't characterized by great humility.

ADVERSARIES OF HUMILITY

Cockiness, defined by Webster as "jaunty conceit," is an adversary of humility. This attitude is sometimes associated with men short of stature. It should be realized that by being cocky one does not make himself a bigger person but only a smaller one. Zacchaeus, "little of stature" (Luke 19:3), offers a fitting example of humility as he declares, "Half of my goods I will give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted ought of any man, I restore fourfold" (Luke 19:8).

Small thinking wars against humility. Some think so little of themselves that they are easily impressed with their accomplishments. Even relatively minor achievements sometimes "go to the heads." Interestingly, a characteristic of the "greats" of the Bible was the ability to handle substantial blessings from God without becoming arrogant. Abraham and Isaac did not permit themselves to become puffed up over the enormous wealth God gave them, nor did Moses become conceited over the power he wielded among the Israelites.

Pride in poverty can rob one of humility. Diogenes, the ancient Greek, wandered through the streets of Athens with nothing more than the clothes on his back looking for "an honest man." It is said that he once strode over the carpets of Plato's fine house declaring, "I trample the pride of Plato." "True," said Plato, "but with a greater pride." Plato was right—poverty does not necessarily mean humility. Solomon wrote, "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason" (Prov. 26:16).

The wrong attitude toward riches is an adversary to humility. Paul admonished Timothy, "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded" (I Tim. 6:17). Conceit over position is an enemy of lowliness. Before God humbled him, Nebuchadnezzar arrogantly declared, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling-place, by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?" (Dan. 4:30). Finally, an attitude which refuses correction is at enmity with humility. Solomon wrote, "He that correcteth a scoffer getteth to himself reviling; And he that reproveth a wicked man getteth himself a blot" (Prov. 9:7).

CULTIVATING HUMILITY

In order to be the kind of people the Lord wants us to be, we must possess a humble spirit. There are four things we can do that will help us cultivate a deep and abiding sense of humility in our own lives. First, we must be careful not to assume a level of importance we may not have. Christ advised that it is better to take a back seat at a banquet and be invited to the head table than to be sent back to a more humble seat (Luke 14:8-10). That principle also holds true in the "banquet of life."

Secondly, we cultivate humility by putting the concerns of others before our own. God tells us that we are to be "preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10). Thirdly, to be nurtured, humility should be sought by prayer. Agur set the example when he prayed "Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is needful for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, 'Who is Jehovah? Or lest I be poor and steal, And use profanely the name of God'" (Prov. 30:8-9). Finally, a study of great personalities of the Bible aids in the development of humility. From such a study one develops faith (Rom. 10:17) that only the humble are extremely useful to God.

CONCLUSION

True spiritual maturity and righteousness are made possible by humility. Solomon wrote, "When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom" (Prov. 11:2). Let us strive to follow Peter's admonition: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (I Pet. 5:6).

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The Divided Kingdom

Larry D. Mathis

After the death of King Solomon, the nation of Israel split north and south. Thus, two kingdoms emerged.

This chart is an attempted chronology of the Divided or Dual Kingdom. The date of the division is variously placed between 983 B.C. and 931 B.C. Please keep in mind that there are difficulties in the chronology of the period; these dates are approximate.

Israel (the ten tribes—also known as the Northern Kingdom or Ephraim), had a total of nine dynasties. Each new dynasty is in bold type. All the Kings of Israel were wicked.

Judah (the two tribes—also known as the Southern Kingdom), had one dynasty (The House of David). The good Kings of Judah are marked with an *.

Kings Of Israel

1. **JEROBOAM I.** 931-910
Reigned 22 years.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 11:26-14:20; 2 Chron. 9:29-13:22.

2. **NADAB.** 910-909.
Reigned 2 yrs.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 15:25-28.

3. **BAASHA.** 909-886.
Reigned 24 yrs.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 15:27-16:7; 2 Chron. 6:1-6.

4. **ELAH.** 886-885.
Reigned 2 yrs.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 16:8-10.

5. **ZIMRI.** 885.
Reigned one week (7 days). Died in a siege.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 16:10-20.

6. **TIBNI.** 885-880.

7. **OMRI.** 885-874.
Omri & Tibni are usually listed under Omri as a 12 year reign.—Bad. Some list it as a 4 year reign for Tibni and an 8 year reign for Omri. 1 Kgs. 16:16-27.

8. **AHAB.** 874-853.
Reigned 22 yrs.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 16:28-22:40; 2 Chron. 18:1-34.

9. **AHAZIAH.** 853-852.
Reigned 2 yrs.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 22:40, 51-53; 2 Kgs. 1:1-17; 2 Chron. 20:35-37.

10. **JORAM (JEHORAM).** 852-841.
Reigned 12 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 3:1-3; 9:14-25; 2 Chron. 22:5-7.

Kings Of Judah

1. **REHOBOAM.** 931-913.
Reigned 17 years.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 12:1-14:31; 2 Chron. 10:1-12:16.

2. **ABIJAH.** 913-911.
Reigned 3 Years.—Bad. 1 Kgs. 15:1-8; 2 Chron. 13:1-22.

3. ***ASA.** 911-870.
Reigned 41 yrs.—Good. 1 Kgs. 15:9-24; 2 Chron. 14:1-16:14.

4. ***JEHOSHAPHAT.** 872-848.
Reigned 25 yrs.—Good. 1 Kgs. 22:41-50; 2 Chron. 17:1-20:37.

5. **JEHORAM (JORAM).** 848-841.
Reigned 8 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 8:16-24; 2 Chron. 21:1-20.

11. **JEHU**. 841-814.
Reigned 28 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 9:1-10:36; 2 Chron. 22:7-12.

12. **JEHOAHAZ**. 814-798.
Reigned 17 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 13:1-9.

13. **JOASH (JEHOASH)**. 798-782.
Reigned 16 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 13:10-25; 14:8-16; 2 Chron. 25:17-24.

14. **JEROBOAM II**. 793-753.
Reigned 41 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 14:23-29.

15. **ZACHARIAH**. 753.
Reigned 6 months.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 15:8-12.

16. **SHALLUM**. 752.
Reigned 1 month.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 15:13-15.

17. **MENAHEM**. 752-742.
Reigned 10 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 15:16-22.

18. **PEKAHIAH**. 742-740.
Reigned 2 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 15:23-26.

19. **PEKAH**. 752-732.
Reigned 20 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 15:27-31; 2 Chron. 28:5-8.

20. **HOSHEA**. 732-722.
Reigned 9 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 17:1-41.
The Northern Kingdom came to an end in 722 B.C. (when Samaria fell), and the people were carried as captives to Assyria (2 Kgs. 17:23).

6. **AHAZIAH (AZARIAH, JEHOAHAZ)**. 841.
Reigned 1 yr.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 8:25-29; 9:27-29; 2 Chron. 22:1-9.

7. **ATHALIAH (QUEEN, "USURPER")**. 841-835.
Reigned 6 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 8:18, 25-28; 11:1-20; 2 Chron. 22:1-23:21; 24:7.

8. ***JOASH (JEHOASH)**. 835-796.
Reigned 40 yrs. Good. 2 Kgs. 11:1-12:21; 2 Chron. 22:10-24:27.

9. ***AMAZIAH**. 796-767.
Reigned 29 yrs.—Good. 2 Kgs. 14:1-14; 2 Chron. 25:1-28.

10. ***UZZIAH (AZARIAH)**. 790-739. Reigned 52 yrs.—Good. 2 Kgs. 15:1-7; 2 Chron. 26:1-23.

11. **JOTHAM**. 750-731.
Reigned 16 yrs.—Good. 2 Kgs. 15:32-38; 2 Chron. 27:1-9.

12. **AHAZ**. 735-715.
Reigned 16 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 16:1-20; 2 Chron. 28:1-27.

13. ***HEZEKIAH**. 715-686.
Reigned 29 yrs.—Good. 2 Kgs. 18:1-20:21; 2 Chron. 29:1-32:33.

14. **MANASSEH**. 695-642.
Reigned 55 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 21:1-18; 2 Chron. 33:1-20.

15. **AMON**. 642-640.
Reigned 2 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 21:19-23; 2 Chron. 33:21-25.

16. ***JOSIAH**. 640-609.
Reigned 31 yrs.—Good. 2 Kgs. 22:1-23:30; 2 Chron. 34:1-35:27.

17. **JEHOAHAZ (SHALLUM)**. 609.
Reigned 3 months.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 23:31-33; 2 Chron. 36:1-4.

18. **JEHOIAKIM**. 609-597.
Reigned 11 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 23:34-24:5; 2 Chron. 36:5-7.

19. **JEHOIACHIN (CONIAH, also JECONIAH)**. 597.
Reigned 3 months.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 24:6-16; 2 Chron. 36:8-10.

20. **ZEDEKIAH**. 597-586.
Reigned 11 yrs.—Bad. 2 Kgs. 24:17-25:7; 2 Chron. 36:11-21.

The Southern Kingdom came to an end in 586 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and carried its people captive to Babylon (2 Kgs. 25:1-11).

"With What Kind Of Water Ought We To Be Baptized?"

Robin W. Haley

This question is under consideration because there are those who contend that "living water" is the only proper water in which penitent believers may be baptized. (I have never heard of this before moving to Kansas, though I'm sure it is not unique to this state). Our first order of business is to define "living water." If we are to do Bible things in Bible ways, and call Bible things by Bible names, then by *all* means, if we are to be baptized in "living water," let us do so. But, we must allow the Book to give us the definition of "living water." This it does.

"Living water" is found (referred to) four times: John 4:10,11; John 7:38; Rev. 7:17. Of these, *none* refers to nor reflects baptism. The first two deal with what Christ offers us to *drink* so that we need never thirst again. This has a spiritual application to being partakers of him and eternal benefits, *not* to an act of obedience as is baptism. The next, John 7:38, has reference to the gift of the Holy Spirit, as verse 39 of that chapter explains. The last deals with that which will sustain us, along with that food which the Lord will feed us. This, to my understanding, is very similar to our first two references, and is applied to eternal life in heaven.

What is meant by "living water" by those who contend for it? By "living water" they mean water as in a brook, stream or river; water that flows. They object to water that is silent, as in a pool or "baptistry." What is the basis for this position? *None* from the scriptures. Perhaps their reasoning is that since there were no "baptistries" in the first century then we ought to baptize in like manner, follow their example and go to a flow of water. This fails them too, however. There were baptistries in use by various sects of the Jews, even before Jesus was born. In Jerusalem itself, there are no flows of water but there are some pools: man-made and natural.

Where were the people baptized on Pentecost? The Bible does not say. Where were they? In Jerusalem, where there were neither rivers nor streams. Were they baptized? Yes—about 3,000. In what? Water! What water? Perhaps the pools of Siloam, Bethesda or Rogel. Perhaps they traveled 18 miles to the east to the Jordan.

We know we *must* be baptized. We know we must be baptized in *water*, not cooking oil. Yet, the Lord did not specify what kind of water. We could go on, but I hope this will suffice. Brethren, let us practice Acts 17:11! "Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received

the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

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THE BELLVIEW LECTURES

Bobby Liddell

The 1988 Bellview Lectures were a great success! Each speaker had made diligent preparation to emphasize the theme, "Are We Moving Away From The Cross Of Christ?" Good attendance characterized each session as godly proclaimers of the saving gospel presented the truth in love. Visitors from at least a dozen states and from overseas heard no uncertain sound as these men of the book spoke without fear or favor, because of their love for God, his word, the Lord's church and the souls of all men. Brother William S. Cline, director of the lectureship, and the elders of the Bellview church are to be highly commended for the outstanding program of lectures and the selection of speakers, sound men, loved and respected for their faithfulness and ability.

What a great blessing to hear the preaching of the cross by men who have not departed from the "old paths," but who stand now where they have stood for forty, fifty, or more years. Plainly and simply, they called men back to the Bible, back to the message of the cross. As brother Roy Deaver said, "I have not left my old church, my old church has left me." "Old time" gospel preachers and young alike were united in their plea for brethren to go back to the preaching and the practice of the gospel of the cross.

Time and again, brethren from the pulpit and the pew referred to these as "the best lectures ever." We thank God for them and are encouraged by the many complimentary remarks concerning the work of the Bellview church. Brother George DeHoff, one of the speakers, said, "Your lectureship was great in every way...I shall continue to pray for the work and boost it at every opportunity." Many months of labor by so many good brothers and sisters made sure that all went smoothly. The lectureship truly

was a labor of love by the entire church.

The great lessons presented shall continue to bear fruit for many years for they were preserved on audio and video tape. A handsomely bound book of almost three hundred pages also was printed. Tapes and books are available. You would certainly benefit by securing copies and hearing/seeing/reading these tremendous messages of faith, hope, encouragement and warning by valiant soldiers of the cross. Many have bought copies to give to friends and family. We pray that much good might come for many years through this lectureship; that God may be glorified and that souls may be saved through the blood of the crucified Christ.

Brethren should take heart that there are yet those who have not bowed the knee to worldliness, to denominationalism, to unity at the price of truth, to a social gospel, to ear-tickling fables or to any other man-made, soul-stealing doctrine. There are yet those who preach the whole counsel of God and who would do so if it cost them their very lives. There are yet those who would rather be commended by the few for their faithfulness than to be extolled by the thousands for their "progressiveness."

In times of upheaval, when so many "Christians" are making known publicly what has been in their hearts for so long; that is, a desire to leave the narrow way and become like their neighbors around them, let us be encouraged, beloved brethren, to not move away from the cross of Christ. One of my favorite songs says, "Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain (willingly, happily) would take my stand." At Calvary is seen the greatest manifestation of love ever. As our brother, Paul, said, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).

Effective Communication

Roger Jackson

One of the biggest problems of younger preachers is how to fill up thirty minutes twice a week. After some experience is attained, that all changes as the problem ceases to be how to fill up time and becomes how to communicate accurately with the hearers. Paul said, "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face" (2 Cor. 3:12,13). His desire was to communicate. God always has desired to communicate accurately with man, because men are responsible for understanding that communication (John 12:48; Eph. 5:17). Because of its importance, God always has communicated in the same way that human beings communicate with each other; *i.e.*, with words (1 Cor. 2:9-13). God never has used subjective experiences as His vehicle of communication. And even when He used different languages in a context in which some would not understand what was being said, He directed that an interpreter be present (1 Cor. 14:27). In the same context, Inspiration specified that communication should be distinct and certain (1 Cor. 14:7). The fine art of communication should be cultivated by every gospel preacher in preference to oratorical acclaim.

What is communication? Communication takes place when you transfer an idea or message from your mind to the mind of the listener and retain the accuracy of that idea or message. Some would add the reciprocal aspect, but that involves dialogue and rapport. Jeremiah said that the way of man is not in himself (Jer. 10:23). Since we are not qualified to direct our own steps, or to counsel the Almighty, God's communication to us has been in the form of a monolog.

When men communicate with each other, they seek to avoid a loss of meaning in the exchange of ideas. We do that by carefully selecting words and expressions that have the same association of ideas in the listener's mind as ours. It is a lot like dealing with blind people; you never put an unusual environmental arrangement in front of them. This is what Paul (inspiration) meant when he said, "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth; but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words" (1 Cor. 2:13, ASV). He is

saying that inspired men used earthly ideas to express spiritual truths. Thus, the streets of gold in heaven are not gold at all, but that describes the value and beauty in language we can use as a comparison.

No one should deliberately speak in evasive or unclear terms. But some men do exactly that! One of the reasons for doing so is that the speaker has changed his convictions on some matter and does not wish to expose himself too soon. Thus, he uses language that is ambiguous. It fits in a "gray" area and is neither fish nor fowl. Some astute people will recognize the "language of Ashdod" and warn the hearers where the speaker's new approach will carry him. A few will listen, while the neophytes will ignore the warning. The false teacher might further strengthen his appeal by verbal attacks upon the exposing opposition. In the long run the truth comes out when the false teacher feels he has a large enough following to go public and pointed. If the following does not materialize, he might back up and claim he was misunderstood. All of us suffer from being misunderstood sometimes, because the problem of accurate communication never can be totally eradicated. However, if men want to be understood, they can be. And when the use of a term causes confusion and misunderstanding it certainly should be avoided in the future. Moreover, when a preacher knows its use will cause misunderstandings, why would he deliberately use it?

I do not know anyone who insists upon a set of terminology (nomenclature) as an identifying mark of some clique in the church. We hear a lot about "shibboleths" and the such. When men begin to use words in a context which we do not ordinarily use them or use words that are not real words (like tellstial), we wonder where he got them, and are sure that communication will be lost, or at least suffer at best. We all have been taught that the church was "established" on the day of pentecost in A.D. 33. We all have understood that the speaker meant it had its absolute beginning at that point (Acts 2:47). This is the kingdom of God of Matthew 16:18. But now one comes along and says the kingdom was not "established" until A.D. 70. When we object, he says he meant it was not completely established, *i.e.*, estab-

DEFENDER

Bobby Liddell, Editor

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lished with "power" until A.D. 70, but had absolute existence in A.D. 33. Communication is lost! It is plain to the casual observer even that by "establish" the preacher means "confirmed." He has used "establish" in a context in which it never has been understood to mean what he affirms. To change meanings thusly, without an explanation, is deceptive. It should be noted that the false theory that teaches that the church was not "established" in power until A.D. 70 implies it was not established at all until A.D. 70, the objections of its chief architect to the contrary notwithstanding.

To further pursue this matter of word definitions (the fallacy of equivocation), which destroys communication, we remind the reader of the denominational practice of defining their own terms. In the Bible one cannot find the denominational concept intended by the terms "saint," "sanctification," "bishop," "sacrament," or "church." Preachers who are wise realize very early that the majority of people to whom they preach came out of denominationalism, and when they use terms that these human churches have appropriated to their peculiar doctrines, even if they are Bible words, the average man in the pew will place a denominational construction on them. Hence, the message he gets is not the one the preacher intended to communicate. For instance, I avoid referring to one of the elders where I preach as a pastor. I know what I mean, but run the risk of being misunderstood and jeopardizing communication. Why not call him an elder? Would that not help communication? When I do refer to the elders or one elder as a bishop(s), I try to remember to quickly

explain that an elder and a bishop are synonymous terms.

As a listener, nothing aggravates me more, or serves to destroy communication more, than a preacher who speaks for forty-five minutes and does not let you know his subject or thesis until he is five minutes shy of his conclusion. We do not do that when we write do we? Do we just jump in and start writing and let the reader figure out what we are talking about somewhere near the end? Then why do it in the pulpit? **TELL THE PEOPLE WHAT YOU INTEND TO DEVELOP.** If you do not, the listener will probably catch on near the end and then spend the rest of his time trying to assimilate the material under the heading after the fact. It is not easy.

Politicians learn to speak in what is called "glowing generalities." They rarely state anything specific unless their polls show an overwhelming majority favors it. They learn to use "catch" phrases that, when examined, are meaningless—but they sound good. George Wallace said, "Stand up for Alabama." Well, what does that mean? It means different things to different people, but one thing we Alabamians know, we want to stand up for Alabama! So thousands go to the polls every four years to "Stand up for Alabama." They have translated the phrase into, "Vote for George Wallace." Sadly, we have a lot of preachers, who do the same thing. It sounds good, gets a pat on the back and a raise, so they do it. And what have they said? Nothing. Communicate, brother, communicate.

*940 Old Wood Road
Oxford, AL 36203*

The Churches of America

Steve Gunter

Students of American history will recall that early time in our national life in which, for a time, all partisan political rivalry ceased. Historians label this unusual episode, "The Era of Good Feelings." The lull did not linger long.

A similar religious concord and peace prevails across American communities far and wide. The churches of America seem determined to unite despite any and all division, doctrinal or otherwise. Never before has the ecumenical movement appeared so successful. Pulpits exchange, congregations merge, a grand unification effort seemingly has resolved religious disputation and wrangling. The "interfaith" movement grows daily, evidence of ecumenism's appeal to the biblically illiterate generation now reaching middle age in our nation.

Is this religious integration; *i.e.*, the melding of diverse faiths into one super-amalgamation, (amalgamate meaning the clumping of dissimilar objects into one "united" form) to be the fate of the Lord's unique church?

Christians never despise unity (John 17:17); however, neither should we ever tolerate the most minute error of evil in the body of Christ (Gal. 1:6-8; Eph. 1:22-23). The church must resist the sweet siren of union-in-division. The plea of true faith ever must be, stand fast in the faith once delivered and await the coming of the King who shall remove all tares and evils from his kingdom in that day (Matt. 13:30).

*1202 Royal Drive
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Preacher Wanted Advertisements

Louis Rushmore

Picture the following excerpt from an advertisement in a fictitious brotherhood journal of about 3,500 years ago; the classified section of the prestigious *Hebrew Herald* reads:

LAWGIVER WANTED, to free Hebrews from slavery and lead the way to the Promised Land. Candidate should send resume with salary history. Salary will be paid commensurate with education and experience.

The preceding is *exactly* what brethren today would have placed in the imaginary *Hebrew Herald* were they contemporary with Moses and the captive Hebrews of his day. In which case, Moses neither would have become their liberator nor lawgiver and guide to Canaan; those Hebrews and our brethren still would be in bondage to Pharaoh for their part.

The terminology "salary history" and "commensurate with education and experience" exhibits ignorance of Biblical matters when applied to the requisition of a preacher. Brethren err when they intend to *hire* a gospel preacher as though they were bidding on the old gray mare at the local livestock auction. Seeking the most for the least may be good business, but it is not the Bible approach to the work of a preacher with a local congregation. The faithful preacher, while he cannot be bought, deserves to be supported.

The apostle Paul sometimes supported himself as a tent-maker (Acts 20:34; 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:8) so that he could preach the gospel. On some occasions he "robbed other churches" (2 Cor. 11:8,9). The apostle sustained himself or was supported by the cooperative efforts of congregations, enabling him to devote himself to his labors for Christ. He was not hired and paid according to his salary history or commensurate with his education and experience. Similarly, churches today should invite preachers to labor with them and sustain them and their families adequately so that they fully can devote themselves to the preaching of the gospel.

There are several false concepts often companion to the spirit of "hiring a preacher." One, brethren go about hiring a preacher as though they were bartering for Manhattan with the Indians. Questions such as "How much money are we going to have to pay you?" and "How much will you charge for preaching two lessons and teaching two classes a week?" are out of order. The alternative is to support the preacher and his family so he can fully give himself to godly service (1 Cor. 9:3-14).

Two, hiring a preacher often equates to the unwritten constraint and requirement that he preach the gospel to please men (Gal. 1:10; Acts 4:18-20; 5:29). That such is precisely the case is painfully evident to the increasing number of preachers who are being fired for preaching unpopular truth. The

admonition of the apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:1-8 is certainly needful today.

Three, when hiring a preacher takes preeminence over supporting a preacher in the minds of the brethren, another serious problem occurs. Brethren often suppose that the preacher is hired to do the evangelizing, visiting of the sick, and whatever else for which the congregation is responsible. However, it is not possible for any preacher to do the first part of any evangelism, benevolence, or edification outside of what it is his own personal duty to perform.

Every child of God must serve God personally and fully according to his individual capacity, opportunities, and potential. The basic differences between a preacher and other brethren are these: (1) a preacher may have more publicly exhibited talents, and (2) a preacher who is supported has more time afforded him to serve God. Otherwise, preachers and other brethren have the same generic responsibilities, strengths, and weaknesses.

It is sometimes said that an unsound preacher is not worth whatever he is paid, and an faithful gospel preacher is worth more than whatever he could be paid. If such is so, let the churches simply *sustain* a preacher and his family so he can fully give himself to the ministry of the Word.

Truly, the faithful preacher cannot be bought. Furthermore, he is *compelled* to sound forth the messages of God, without primary consideration of salary or personal welfare (Ezk. 3:1-14,27). "And if I say, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain" (Jer. 20:9, ASV). God's faithful preachers preach for the sake of preaching, or because they *must* preach, and should not be treated like hired hands or even something purchased.

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The Second Greater Kanawha Valley Lectureship

August 9-12, 1988, the Washington Street Church of Christ in St. Albans, West Virginia, will host **The Second Greater Kanawha Valley Lectureship**. "Let Us Walk In The Old Paths" (Jeremiah 6:16), is the theme.

Speakers will be: Gary Colley, Andrew Connally, Mac Deaver, Roy Deaver, H. A. "Buster" Dobbs, Garland Elkins, Gilbert Gough, Frank Higginbotham, Goebel Music, Johnny Ramsey, Terry Varner and Thomas Warren. Several of these men will also participate in a daily forum, Tuesday through Friday evenings.

We plan to have an "Early Risers" Fellowship each morning for fellowship and a discussion of questions and topics of interest. Singing will precede the evening lectures.

For a brochure or more information, contact James Brinkley (304-727-5966), or Donald Mash (304-727-0761, 722-2333). A limited number of rooms are available in Christian homes, at no charge. Audio and video tapes of the lectureship will be available.

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The Highers-Blakely Debate

Garland Elkins

This debate was conducted at Neosho, Missouri, as most of us know. Although instrumental music was the specific issue in this proposition, the point at issue is really the question of authority. The deeper issue than instrumental music (though to use the instrument in Christian worship is absolutely sinful, as brother Highers so effectively pointed out) is a flagrant disrespect for Bible authority on the part of the Independent Christian Church or any and all others who use the instrument.

Brother Alan Highers' work in this debate truly was outstanding, fantastic and great. He not only knows the truth, he knows how to present it. Not only so, but he recognizes error, and his love for the truth, his opposition to error and his courage to defend the truth combine to make him a capable debater. The Independent Christian Church will not soon forget him, nor will they doubt that they have been involved in a battle. I have seldom, if ever, seen or heard a man teach more error than did, and does, Given O. Blakely. Just to mention a few of his errors: he denies that authority is needed for what we do in religion; he contends that God has set no bounds for worship; he contends that worship is just an emotion, etc. Brother Highers showed statements from Independent Christian Church preachers in which they contended that the use of the rosary beads would not necessarily be sinful or that meat and potatoes would not necessarily be wrong on the Lord's table.

Our brethren conducted a lectureship during the mornings of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. These lectures were well attended, and interest was very good in the subjects discussed. Two of us spoke each day for thirty minutes each, and this was followed by an open forum. The Independent Christian Church

conducted a lectureship in Joplin the afternoons of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Among other things, one of the preachers refused to answer the question as to whether he believed in the inerrancy of the scriptures. Another would not say that sprinkling and pouring are sinful or that tea would be sinful on the Lord's table or that it would be sinful to use the rosary in worship, etc. Don DeWelt said that the instrumental issue is "a dead issue among our people." Question: Isn't it amazing that since the Independent Christian Church claims (per DeWelt) that their mind is made up regarding this issue that some of our brethren are so determined to fellowship them anyway? It appears that Hosea's statement applies to the vast majority of the Independent Christian Church. "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hosea 4:17).

Someone might ask, then, why debate them? For many reasons, but I mention only a few. In the first place, we are commanded to "contend for the faith" (Jude 3). In the second place, there are, of course, some among them that are honest, and we want to assist in getting them out of error. "And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22, 23). Also, by exposing them to the truth, whether they obey or not, their blood will not be upon our hands (Acts 20:26, 27). Further, it is an eye-opener to our brethren to learn just how far away from the truth they actually are. Some among us have thought that "instrumental music is our only difference." If this were true, that would be enough to cause them to be lost (James 2:10). However, instrumental music is only one of a multiplicity of errors held by the Independent Christian Church.

Before the debate, brother Highers wrote our elders requesting that they send me to the debate and that I bring our tracts on the subject of instrumental music and give a number of them away during the debate. Our elders agreed to that, and also the elders of the Obion, Tennessee, congregation agreed to pay for 1,000 of those tracts. Since Getwell paid for 1,000 of the tracts, 2,000 of our five tracts on instrumental music were available to any and all who desired them. Many people will profit from the reading of these tracts. Though much more could be said about the debate, the bottom line is that truth prevailed in a mighty way, and brother Highers did a commendable job. The word does not return void, and to God be the glory.

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Thursday - July 21

1:00 p.m. Devices Of Satan..... Garland Elkins
2:00 p.m. When Brethren Refuse To
Be Warned Bill Clayton
3:00 p.m. ICM—A Trojan Horse..... Joe Nichols
3:45 p.m. Discussion Forum..... Elkins, Dobbs,
Nichols, Clayton
7:30 p.m. The Mission Of The Church
..... H. A. "Buster" Dobbs

Friday - July 22

9:30 a.m. Restoration is "On-Going?"
..... Ernest West
10:30 a.m. Bales/Hicks Doctrine Randy Kea

1:00 p.m. Respect For Divine Authority

..... William S. Cline

2:00 p.m. Church Discipline Neil Kucera

3:00 p.m. Latest Developments In

Boston/Crossroads Eddie Whitten

3:45 p.m. Discussion Forum Kucera,

..... Whitten, Cline

7:30 p.m. The Current Digression Continues

..... Goebel Music

Saturday - July 23

9:30 a.m. Grace And Law

..... H. A. "Buster" Dobbs

10:30 a.m. Dangers Facing The Church

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Speakers include: Curtis and Annette Cates, Jimmy Clark, Wayne Coats, Charles Crump, Barry Cunningham, George DeHoff, Garland Elkins, Joe Gilmore, Marty Glenn, John Harris, Alton Hayes, Ronny Johnson, Ron Laughrey, Glann Lee, Don and Jane McWhorter, James Meadows, James Pilgrim, Aubrey Prestidge, Clyde Ray, James Rogers, Robert and Irene Taylor, James Thompson, James Watson, Eddie

Whitson, Roy Williams and Gracie Young. Those on the forum include: Brooks Boyd, Wayne Coats, Mitchell Covington, Wayne Dunaway, Garland Elkins, Joe Gilmore, Richard Hooks, Eugene Jenkins, Jimmy Kennedy, Elbert Lewis, James Meadows, Gary Shaver, Gordon Smith, Dewayne Spivey, Sorrell Wesson, and Bill Williams.

A book is being published by the *Firm Foundation Publishing Company* and will be available for a pre-publication price soon. Lodging will be made available in the homes of area Christians and the lectures will be taped. For further information, contact Roger Jackson, Lectureship Director, at (205) 831-0375 or (205) 831-0651.

Review Of Moffitt-Billingsly Debate

Dub McClish

On February 19-20 brethren Jerry Moffitt and Dan Billingsly engaged in a public oral debate as part of the second annual SHENANDOAH LECTURES, conducted by the Shenandoah Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas. The issue debated was the amenability of alien sinners to the law of Christ. Moffitt affirmed (and Billingsly denied): "The Bible teaches that as is the Christian, the alien sinner is under law to Christ and is amenable to the whole new law." Billingsly affirmed (and Moffitt denied): "The Bible teaches that as is the Christian, the alien sinner is under law to Christ, but is not accountable to the whole new law until baptism." At stake are such matters as whether or not alien sinners are accountable to Christ's marriage law (Matt. 19:9).

Moffitt demonstrated that the law or covenant of Christ (the new covenant) is simply the gospel. He pointed out that since the gospel is addressed to all men (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15) all must be accountable to it. He further stressed the authority of Christ over all men (Matt. 28:18) and that he exercises his authority through his law (the new covenant, the gospel). He argued forcefully that all men who have lived since the cross (including unbelievers) will be judged by the words of Christ (the new covenant, the gospel) (John 12:48) and that men will not be held accountable at the Judgment for that to which they were not accountable in life.

In response Billingsly taught that the only part of the gospel to which alien sinners are accountable is the plan of salvation and that they become accountable to "covenant law for the church" only upon being baptized. He argued that if alien sinners were under the law of Christ as a whole this would mean they should partake of the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:23-28) *as aliens*. He accused Moffitt (and others who have opposed his views) of teaching that alien sinners must partake of the Lord's supper. He asked where the Bible ever speaks of Christ as "King of the World," rather than King of his kingdom, the church.

Moffitt replied that no such terminology or concept exists in the New Testament as a "covenant law of Christ" only for the church and a separate body of teaching only for aliens. He showed that it did not follow that if aliens are under the new covenant as a whole that they must therefore partake of the Lord's supper *as aliens* (and that neither he nor anyone whom he knew had ever believed or taught such a doctrine). He illustrated this by showing that if Billingsly's argument had any merit, a Christian man (one under the new law as a whole, conceded by Billingsly) must be silent in the church (1 Cor. 14:34).

Moffitt then emphasized that while Christian men

are under all of the New Testament, there are parts of it that do not directly apply to them (such as 1 Cor. 14:34, which directly applies only to Christian women). He then pointed out that in the same way aliens can be (and are) amenable to the new law as a whole, while not *directly* amenable to particular commandments until certain prerequisites are met. He stressed the essentiality of observing Christ's laws in Scriptural *sequence* (e.g., Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38) (for an alien to partake of the Lord's supper would ignore the Lord's sequence) and that observing this sequence (by their not partaking of the Lord's supper) did not remove them from accountability to the law of Christ as a whole. Moffitt applied Galatians 5:3 with force: when one is under a part of a law system, he is under that law system as a whole.

In response to Billingsly's "King of the world" challenge, Moffitt referred to Christ's being "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion" (Eph. 1:21) and "ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:5). Furthermore, he cited Matthew 13:37-41 where Jesus called the world his "kingdom" in applying the Parable of the Tares.

An effective tactic Moffitt used in the debate related to Billingsly's doctrine concerning an alleged "Great Moral Law," separate from and independent of God's revealed will. (Billingsly affirms that this "law" is innate in all men apart from God's revelation and that those since the cross who die in rebellion to God will be judged by this "Great Moral Law" rather than by the gospel. This concept is practically identical with the "Law in the Heart" concept propagated by brother James D. Bales.)

In his first speech Moffitt asked Billingsly to place a copy of his "Great Moral Law" upon a tray provided so that we could read and learn what was in it. He continued calling for it in every speech. This obviously made Billingsly uncomfortable. His inability to produce his "law" dramatically demonstrated that neither it nor the doctrines built upon it exist. As a climax to the debate, in the very last minute of the debate, brother Moffitt had arranged for his moderator to place a specially prepared book on the aforementioned tray. The handsomely bound book was imprinted thusly: *The Great Moral Law*, "Translated by D. Billingsly." After feigning surprise that such a book existed, Moffitt opened it for all of the audience to see that every page was blank, graphically demonstrating the emptiness of the doctrine it represented!

This good study of the "amenability" issue is available on audio and video tape from Tom Gardner, 2229 Lotus, Fort Worth, TX 76111.

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

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JULY, 1988

Evil Surmisings

Jerri Manasco

It is unfortunate that the Bible must deal with negative qualities and expose the baser character of men in and out of the church, but that must be done when necessary. Evidently, even the early church was beset with problem people, as suggested by some of the statements made by the inspired penmen. There were false teachers and spiritual seducers (2 Tim. 3:12, 13; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; etc.). Moral errors were making inroads into the church (2 Pet. 2:14-21; 1 Cor. 5). Paul wrote of some who were, "proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. 6:4, 5). It is a study of the sin of "evil surmisings" that forms the basis of this article.

The NASV translates the phrase, "evil suspicions." Hence, evil surmisings would be inferences regarding another's behavior; such inferences being made without regard to sufficient evidence and without just cause. When one observes the sins with which evil surmisings is listed, he is acutely aware of the gravity of that sin. The evil surmiser is classified among those with perversity of mind, desolation of spirit, and a warped concept of Christianity.

Evil surmising is evidence of an uncharitable disposition. In his beautiful passage on love, Paul contends that love is a quality that "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (1 Cor. 13:6, 7). This tells us that Christians must not place the worst possible construction on another's actions or words without proper substantiating evidence. Evil surmisers; however, are capable of *concocting sin* in YOUR life if they cannot easily

detect what they are looking for! Such people never see any good in others, but will be quick to imagine all evil. This is a miserable way to live, but it is the way chosen by so many.

Evil surmisers are not as quick to grant to their brethren the same charitableness that they expect to be shown toward them. The philosophy behind this is, "You be kind to *me* and think the best of *me*, but I don't trust *you*!" Such low suspicions of our brethren rob us of the fulness of fellowship that should be enjoyed. The New Testament rule is "receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7). In the context of this statement is a strong indictment against factionism that occasions unfair judgment of one another based on personal opinions that one has toward the other (note Romans 14).

Jealousy for a faction may be fueled by evil surmisings. It is so easy to degrade and defame others to boost "my group." Mutual support is the rule of the New Testament. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:3, 4). "Lowliness of mind" and esteeming other better than self is not the way of the evil surmiser! He is so afraid that someone else is going to get ahead of him.

Evil surmisings can foster slander. The case of Job is an appropriate example. Seeing Job in the pits of despair, three friends of his heaped on him allegations of terrible sin in his life. They reasoned that such suffering could only be the divine penalty imposed for sin. These men could not wait to learn what awful deed Job had done! Job's response is most caustic; he labelled these "friends" as "forgers of lies... physicians of no value" (Job 13:4). He needed help rather than

unjust criticism (Job 16:2-5ff.). Evil surmisers today relish their negative estimates of others even when those estimates are totally groundless.

Evil surmisings are evidence of presumption. Such men presume to question the *motive* of others when they do not fully accord with them in every detail. Motive judgment and heart inspection is God's business. Of course, there is the necessity of discerning where sin and error are clearly evident. Jesus forbids presumptive accusations (Matt. 7:1-5), but in the same chapter he approves proper discrimination in

the fruit of lives (vv. 15-20). Overt sin must be dealt with (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 5:20-25), but personal suspicion of another is NOT the ground for such action!

Evil surmising is an attitude problem that needs to be addressed. If left unchecked, much harm can be done to the body of Christ. There are enough suspicions among us without manufacturing our own!

P.O. Box 166
Boaz, AL 35957

Respect of Persons

Roger Jackson

In Acts 10:34, these are the words of the inspired Apostle: "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The Lord wants His people to conduct themselves the same way. Through James, God enjoined, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons" (Jas. 2:1). One of the more prominent forms that respect of persons takes is that of blindly following a preacher. This was one of the many problems the Corinthian brethren faced, and the first with which Paul dealt. He said, "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now, this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (I Cor. 1:11,12). In spite of this perfectly clear admonition, some preachers continue to endear themselves to people in a manner as to split a congregation upon their departure, even when they are the guilty ones! Brethren these things ought not to be done!

Have we learned nothing from the Jim Bakker, Oral Roberts and Jimmy Swaggert episodes? In spite of their sinful conduct, millions of dollars still flow in. Even in moral bankruptcy, added to their doctrinal bankruptcy, they still retain millions of deluded devotees. Are we doing no better? Have we reached a point in our lives when what a man says or does is of less importance than WHO says or does it? Look around you at the protestant sects and remember that the multitudes are not what they are religiously so

much as because they think what they believe and practice is in the Bible as it is because some broad smiling, sweet tempered preacher has captured their admiration, and they know such a fine man could not teach or practice anything wrong! He is too loving! When that is our problem, someone is preaching something other than the word (II Tim. 4:2). "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (I Cor. 3:5,6). "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. 4:5).

In controversy, do we find ourselves lining up behind friends instead of the truth? "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another" (I Cor. 4:6). Faithful gospel preachers always PREACH the truth regardless of friendships and refuse to compromise it when their unbaptized friends or impenitent friends attend where they preach. It is inconsistent, to say the least, to then PRACTICE the same error by siding with a friend who is in error in a controversy. When we decide WHAT is right or wrong, according to the Scriptures, and do that first, it becomes much easier to determine WHO is right or wrong. And before some "positive only" soul responds that such is wrong, let us be reminded that I John 4:1 commands that determination. We remind weak

DEFENDER

Bobby Liddell, Editor

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preachers who compromise that they do not love their listeners if they soft pedal the truth. We preach it like it is because we love them. Well, why don't we treat our brethren the same way? When they are wrong, rebuke them (Luke 17:3), and refuse to stand by them. As a friend, your actions can have the influence which no one else can have.

It is all right to have a favorite preacher as long as such a relationship is not abused. If that preacher moves from one congregation to another within a short distance there is nothing wrong with going where he preaches to work. However, if a preacher knows that a sizeable number will follow him, it seems unwise, at best, for him to move to a place so close that the congregation from which he moves would be hurt, if not split. Let me hasten to say that I said this was "unwise" and not sinful. On the other hand, if the congregation from which he is moving is unsound, it appears that he would be terribly inconsistent to leave and yet recommend that the brethren stay! If they can stay, so can he, unless he has been fired. If someone argues that under such conditions, the departing preacher should not say, "Let all the faithful stand with me," it must be remembered what Moses did in the case of the golden calf! He said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me" (Exo. 32:26). Every preacher who stands on the Lord's side ought to persuade men to stand with him, for in so doing all will be on the Lord's side and not on the preacher's side at all.

Sometimes preachers are forced to resign instead of being fired. This is done to hide the fact that a problem exists. I appreciate men who will not let unqualified and/or sinful elders(?) get away with that maneuver. A strong man will force them to fire him, thus exposing that which they do not desire—the exposure. When those men who had imprisoned Paul found that they had broken the law in doing so, they sought to cover up their error by ushering him and Silas out of town privately. Paul would not allow it and demanded that they come and release them personally (Acts 16:35-37). Preachers ought to refuse to sneak out of town without exposing sin or being fired for preaching the truth.

Preachers often become unsound or immoral. Rather than repenting, they lie about the elders and confuse the issue to cover up their immorality or unsoundness. They depend upon brethren who respect their person to accomplish this sinful behavior. Brethren, do not allow yourselves to be so used.

It is a serious mistake for preachers to try to avoid this type of situation by refusing to form deep, personal friendships among the brethren. Some have even been abusive in their preaching in order to maintain this aloofness. They seem to enjoy ill spoken of them, assuming that it indicates they are preaching the truth; when, actually, they are only being insulting and caustic. It is true that the Bible tells us that we are

to beware when all men speak well of us (Luke 6:26), but it would seem to be just as dangerous if no one spoke well of us. A preacher cannot do his best work by being elusive and abusive. All friendships are formed at the risk of sorrow, but we must be willing to risk it for the benefits. We, "Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that do weep" (Rom. 12:15). The line of friendship is drawn at the point where it can be initiated and maintained only at the expense of truth.

We need to get back to advocating that we "hide behind the cross" and preach Christ. Friendship is wonderful, but not to be preferred above the truth. Our fellowship is contingent upon our walking in the light and those with whom we are in fellowship doing the same thing.

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10:00-10:55 A.M. Session Four, *Acts 24* Thomas Warren
11:00-11:55 A.M. Session Five, *Acts 8* Andrew Connally

12:00-1:30 P.M. LUNCH BREAK

1:30-2:25 P.M. Session Six, *Acts 26* Thomas Warren
2:30-3:25 P.M. Session Seven, *Acts 12-13* Raymond Haygood
3:30-4:30 P.M. Session Eight, OPEN FORUM I

4:45-7:00 P.M. DINNER BREAK

7:00-7:25 P.M. Singing
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8:30-9:25 P.M. Session Ten, *Acts 14-15* William Cline

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9:00-9:55 A.M. Session Eleven, *Acts 1-2* Roy Deaver
10:00-10:55 A.M. Session Twelve, *Acts 17* Mac Deaver

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2:30-3:25 P.M. Session Fourteen, *Acts 21* Mac Deaver
3:30-4:30 P.M. Session Fifteen, OPEN FORUM II

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7:30-8:25 P.M. Session Sixteen, *Acts 20* Bob Bryson
8:30-9:25 P.M. Session Seventeen, *Acts 18-19* Wayne Coats

MONDAY:

8:30-9:00 A.M. General Visitation
9:00-9:55 A.M. Session Eighteen, *Acts 5* John Baldwin
10:00-10:55 A.M. Session Nineteen, *Acts 16* William Cline
11:00-11:55 A.M. Session Twenty, *Acts 22* Leon Stancliff

12:00-1:30 P.M. LUNCH BREAK

1:30-2:25 P.M. Session Twenty-One, *Acts 25* Garland Elkins
2:30-3:25 P.M. Session Twenty-Two, *Acts 23* Tony Demonbreum
3:30-4:30 P.M. Session Twenty-Three, OPEN FORUM III

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Jehovah's Witnesses

Larry D. Mathis

Occasionally members of the church encounter the "Witnesses" (a religious organization highly skilled in door-knocking. It is said that some of the "Witnesses" devote from 15 to 150 hours per month to this endeavor). It has been our observation that members of the church, generally speaking, know very little about the false doctrines of this sect. Therefore, they find it difficult to engage in dialogue with them.

The objective of this article is to briefly identify some of the religious beliefs of this movement so that brethren will have a ready reference—a base of information to help them combat the errors of this group. Please note at the outset that this article does not claim to be an exhaustive treatment of all their beliefs; neither is it an exhaustive expose or refutation of their doctrines.

We sincerely hope that this material will benefit members of the body of Christ who are trying to teach the so-called "Witnesses" or those who are occasionally visited by the same.

CONCERNING THEIR NAME

The name, "Jehovah's Witnesses" (hereafter abbreviated JW's—no personal affront intended) was not adopted by this organization until 1931, in their convention at Columbus, Ohio. They base their name on Isaiah 43:10, "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen." And, they believe that they alone, out of all the religious groups on earth, are God's people, chosen by God and named as his "Witnesses."

However, carefully observe that later in the very same book (Isa. 62:2), Isaiah predicted the time when God's people would be called by a NEW NAME! This new name was given in the first century A.D., after the Gentiles had been offered the gospel (Acts 10). According to Acts 11:26, God's people were called *Christians first in Antioch*, not "Jehovah's Witnesses" in "Columbus, Ohio."

The name "Jehovah's Witnesses" is really a misnomer for: (1) They do not qualify as real, genuine "witnesses." Just exactly what have they "seen" more than others? They are "witnesses" of nothing except religious error. In contrast, compare the Apostle Paul who was a real witness (Acts 22:12-15; 26:15-18). And (2) Jesus told the Apostles, "Ye shall be my (Jesus) witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

CONCERNING THE GODHEAD

JW's deny that God is a triune Being. Rather, they assert that there is only one member in the Godhead, i.e., "Almighty Jehovah." This dogma causes them to

make some very unfortunate statements about Christ and the Holy Spirit (when the JW's are finished with Christ and the Holy Spirit both are stripped of Deity).

JW's teach that Christ was a CREATED BEING; that he is the only one who was directly created by God; that he is the highest, mightiest, and most glorious of all of Jehovah's creation; that he is the "Archangel" over and above all angels (the other sons of God). According to them, Jesus was the first spirit being God ever created and (after his creation), he (Jesus) shared in the creation of all other things. In their Bible (they have their own translation) Jesus is referred to as "a god"—note carefully that "god" is spelled with a small "g." This will be seen in their rendition of John 1:1. Such a blasphemous rendering is a blatant denial of our Lord's Deity. Compare Philippians 2:6 and John 5:18.

JW's also teach that the Holy Spirit IS NOT a divine person but rather, a "power," and "active force,"—they call him "God's active force" and in their writings spell his name with small letters.

Numerous passages could be cited to show that (1) Both Christ and the Holy Spirit are Deity (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14); and (2) The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-17). Note carefully the personal pronouns referring to the Holy Spirit.

CONCERNING MAN

JW's deny that man has an eternal, immortal spirit (soul) that survives and lives on after the death of the body. Truly, their doctrine concerning the "soul" of man will be quite revolting to all God-fearing people. The founder of this sect, so-called "Pastor" Russell (1852-1916), announced that the "soul" is the "breath of life"—simply that and nothing more. These people are certain that man is a "mortal" soul and not an "immortal" soul. That when a man's "breath" or "life-principle" leaves him at death, his soul has left. According to them, the wicked will be annihilated—they will never be brought to life again, but there will be a resurrection of other unrighteous dead who were of "good will" so that they will have an opportunity (or second chance) to accept Jehovah's rule and live forever. In other words, at death, man goes into a state of non-existence—complete unconsciousness. He ceases to be. For the willfully wicked it is all over but others will be given "life" again.

Actually, the word "soul," from the Greek word "psuche," is a generic word and its meaning must be determined, in any given instance, from the context in which it appears. Bear in mind that a word often has more than one meaning. For instance, in Scripture,

the word "heaven" may refer to the air where the birds fly, or it may refer to the dwelling place of God. This is exactly the case with the word "soul." It is used four different ways in the Bible. Right here, the JW's get into trouble—they restrict the meaning of the word "soul" and become downright ridiculous in their conclusions.

The word "soul" is used in the following ways in the Bible. (1) In some passages (cf., Psalm 78:50), the word "soul," does refer to physical life; *i.e.*, life that man possesses in common with animals and which is lost in death. Note: This is the way the JW's use the word. (2) In some passages the word "soul," is used as a synonym for "person" (Acts 2:41; 1 Pet. 3:20). (3) The word "soul," is used of the intellectual nature in contrast with the higher spiritual nature and the lower physical nature (1 Cor. 2:14). (4) The word "soul," is used as a synonym for the never-dying spirit; the immortal part of man; that entity which survives physical death and lives on (somewhere) forever (Matt. 10:28).

CONCERNING JUDGMENT DAY AND HELL

JW's do not believe that every accountable person will be summoned before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of the deeds done in life on earth. As earlier mentioned, they affirm that the wicked will be annihilated. Others who were not willfully wicked (good moral people, those religiously ignorant of JW's doctrine, etc.) will, in reality, be given a second chance to prove themselves after "Armageddon!" Compare this with Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10 and John 5:28-29.

They also deny that this earth will someday be destroyed by fire. JW's teach that mother earth will be restored to a "paradise" condition and those who are not of the 144,000 plan to live on earth in new physical bodies. Compare this with 2 Peter 3:10-13; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54.

Furthermore, JW's rule out hell. They deny that a place of eternal torment awaits the disobedient and wicked. Per the "Witnesses" there is no future everlasting punishment. They define the word "hell" to mean the "grave." According to them all mankind goes to hell, that is, they all go to the common graveyard. Compare Matthew 10:28; 25:41, 46.

CONCERNING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

JW's have shown a great affinity for date-setting over the years. Since their beginning they have exhibited a real infatuation for predicting the fulfillment of prophecies and for setting dates for world events. Here is a case in point. JW's do not believe in the actual, visible, literal second coming of Christ at the end of the world. They believe that his return began in the year 1914 and that it was invisible. Compare John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-12; Hebrews 9:28; Jude 14-15; Revelation 1:7.

These people say that Christ returned in 1914 and that he was recognized by them because they only had "spiritual eyes." JW's claim to have calculated this date from the Old Testament book of Daniel. This is most interesting in view of the fact that Jesus, while on earth, also had access to the book of Daniel (Matt. 24:15). Yet, our Lord, the very Son of God, plainly declared that he did not know the time of his second advent (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32). Why didn't Jesus just "figure-up" the "time" from the book of Daniel and say that it would occur in 1914? Was he less perceptive than the "Witnesses?"

CONCERNING THE 144,000

These people teach that 144,000 (known by them as the little flock) will go to heaven to live with Jesus. JW's believe the number to be exact and literal, and that a few of these, a remnant, are still on earth. All 144,000 expect to have spiritual bodies.

JW's base their dogma of the 144,000 on Revelation chapter seven. However, it should be noted that this same group is mentioned again in the book of Revelation in chapter fourteen (vv. 1-4). They want to take the "number" literally but that's all. If only 144,000 are literally the only ones going to heaven, according to the JW's interpretation of Revelation 7, then only the Jews could qualify. Note the tribes mentioned. And, further observe that no woman could qualify for heaven, per JW's interpretation, because in Revelation 14 the 144,000 are composed of "male-virgins."

All other "Witnesses" (those other than the 144,000) are referred to as the "other sheep" and these plan to live on earth when it is "restored."

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM

JW's deny that the kingdom of Christ was set up during the first century A.D., rather, they claim that it was established in A.D. 1914. Compare Daniel 2:44; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Colossians 1:13.

CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER

They observe the Lord's Supper only once a year at Passover time. Compare Acts 2:42; 20:7.

CONCERNING WATER BAPTISM

JW's baptize, but not for the remission of sins. According to them, after one becomes a "Christian" he is baptized in water to show his dedication. Compare Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21. It is interesting that they claim that the 144,000 receive Holy Spirit baptism in addition to water baptism.

CONCERNING RELIGION IN GENERAL

JW's teach that they have the truth; that they are the true religion on earth today, and they regard themselves as god's only true people on earth. Compare 1 John 4:1; Matthew 7:20-23.

CONCERNING SIN

JW's teach that human beings inherit the sin of

Adam. Compare James 1:14-15; Romans 7:9.

CONCERNING BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS

They refuse blood transfusions on the ground that the Bible forbids the "eating" of blood in Leviticus 7:26-27. Even though the verse specifically forbade the Israelite to eat the blood of FOWL or BEAST, JW's torture its meaning to include medical administration of human blood to save life—a thought obviously not intended when Moses recorded God's words. The same book that forbids eating blood (Leviticus) also says, "Ye shall eat neither FAT nor BLOOD" (Lev. 3:17). Ask them why Watchtower leaders tell them to refuse blood transfusions but allow them to eat fat.

CONCERNING THE WORD OF GOD

JW's have produced their own Bible known as the *New World Translation*. Since it was impossible for them to prove their religious beliefs by reference to the standard translations, they simply made their own. And, they refuse to reveal who wrote it because those who prepared it "wish to remain anonymous, even after death." This translation falls into the category scholars designate "Tendentious" Translations *i.e.*, it is biased, it fosters the distinctive views of a particular sect). This translation received a review in the *Expository Times* (1953), entitled, "How Not To Translate The Bible."

CONCLUSION

The so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses" denomination was started by a mere man, Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916). The movement is of human origin, not divine. Their religious beliefs consist of a conglomeration of error, including Premillennialism, Universalism, Materialism and Infidelity. These "Witnesses" are nothing but false-witnesses; false-teachers. They do not further the true word of God among men. They have not correctly prophesied any important event. And, to make matters worse, they do not know the difference between "witnessing" and "guessing." They have "seen" nothing that anyone else might not

see, except perhaps, the blinding perversions of a man-made system of false religion that constitutes a network of error—the system of no soul, no hell, no judgment for the wicked, etc. They "wrest" the Scriptures unto their own destruction (2 Pet. 3:15-18). Dear Reader, be armed, be ready when they swarm in your community (1 Pet. 3:15).

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

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Outliving Our Enemies

Alton Hayes

The problem of the proper attitude toward one's enemy has faced man throughout the ages. A story is told of a Bible class in which the teacher stated that all Christians have enemies. One older gentleman spoke up and denied emphatically that he had a single enemy. The teacher was amazed and asked, "How do you account for the fact that you do not have an enemy?" His answer, "I've lived longer than all of them!" That is indeed one way to "outlive" our enemies, but that is not what we have in mind by our title.

Christ, the perfect example of one who outlived his enemies, addressed this problem. He stated in Matthew 5:43-47:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

What do we learn from this passage that would tell us how to outlive our enemies?

Love Your Enemies

Jesus quoted from Leviticus 19:18 as to the matter of, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor." However, "and hate thine enemy" is as Robertson states, "a rabbinical inference which Jesus repudiates bluntly."¹ To outlive our enemies, we must love our enemies rather than retaliate with hate toward them.

We are led to ask, "What is meant by 'love' for one's enemy? Thayer states relative to the word translated "love" (Matt. 5:44), "...to have a preference for, wish well to, regard the welfare of...."² Barnes gives us this insight:

There are two kinds of love, involving the same general feeling, or springing from the same fountain of good-will to all mankind, but differing so far as to admit of separation in idea. The one is that feeling by which we *approve of the conduct* of another, commonly called *the love of complacency*; the other, that by which we wish well to the *person* of another, though we cannot approve *his conduct*. This is *the love of benevolence*, and this love we are to bear toward our enemies. It is impossible to love the *conduct* of a man that curses and reviles us, that injures our person or property, or that violates all the laws of God; but, though we may hate his conduct, and suffer keenly when we are affected by it, yet we may still wish well to the *person*....³

When the Christian "loves" his enemy, he does not strive to be meaner or more wicked than him. He, rather, cares for his well-being and does not wish that evil befall him. In doing this, we as Christians outlive our enemies.

Bless Them That Curse You

The word that the Savior used for "bless" literally means "to invoke blessings."⁴ Another Greek term that may be used as a synonym for our term means "to praise."⁵ Barnes says, "The word *bless* here means to *speak well of* or *to*: not to curse again or slander, but to speak of those things which we can *commend* in an enemy...."⁶ Thus, Jesus is saying that we must offer blessings and praise to one who intends only evil

(Continued on Page 60)

Preachers Encouraging Preachers

Brother Gus Nichols was a great man in so many ways, especially in the good which he did in encouraging gospel preachers. The accounts seem endless of the times and ways in which he helped men to be more confident, more prepared and more dedicated in preaching the soul-saving gospel of Christ. For many years, he taught a Friday night class for preachers at Sixth Avenue in Jasper, Alabama. Many great present-day preachers owe much to the training they received at the feet of this man who loved gospel preachers so much. Every opportunity he had, he gave younger less-experienced preachers a chance to speak and sat listening intently as if it were the greatest preaching he had ever heard.

Brother Franklin Camp has been such an encouragement to me personally, and to so many brethren who have given their lives to preaching the word. It was to brother Camp that I went to ask his advice as to whether he thought I could "make a preacher." He replied without hesitation, "I think you'll make a *fine* preacher." What if he had quashed my hopes by discouraging my efforts? What if he had laughed at the thought of my preaching? Then, and thereafter, he has been an irreplaceable source of counsel and encouragement. The very first feeble effort I made to preach was before the great Adamsville (Alabama) congregation and brother Camp was in the assembly. Because of my respect for him as a preacher, his appraisal of my sermon could either encourage me to continue or discourage me, perhaps even to the point of my giving up. His gracious compliments spurred me on.

Brother Harrell Davidson was a great source of encouragement as he introduced me the first time I spoke. He knew how nervous I was, and as he had ended his very kind and strengthening introduction, he turned to me and with a smile, said, "Preach the word, brother." Nothing else could have been so comforting and calming and encouraging. With his encouragement, the brethren helped support me as I prepared myself to preach. Through the years, his kindness and helpfulness in so many ways and in so many places have been a tremendous blessing.

Brother Frank Young has accomplished untold good by his efforts to encourage and train men to preach. For many years, he was one of the fine instructors at the Memphis School of Preaching. His advice, given to me as a student, has been tremendously helpful in facing and handling so many problems that confront the local preacher. Later, while we both lived in Walker County, Alabama, he often complimented my radio sermons and my local work and encouraged me in so many ways. Oftentimes, his counsel was sought and it was always wise and helpful. He never acted as if it were an inconvenience or a burden. The love and respect I had for brother Young as his student has grown stronger through the years because of his great encouragement.

Brother Flavil Nichols is such a great encourager of preachers by his putting forth a concerted effort to promote faithful proclaimers of the gospel. He has used his position as Editor of *Words of Truth* and as speaker on a half-hour daily radio broadcast to provide men with new opportunities and challenges to write and preach. His genuine and deep concern for his preaching brethren has helped many to do more and do it better. His praise in his introducing preachers on the radio program has helped the image of both the preachers and the church in that area. In addition, he has freely provided preachers with great and needed sermon outlines and other helps, many from his late father.

These are brethren which I have known (along with others) to be great encouragers of preachers. They have taught some great lessons, *by their actions*, as to how preachers ought to encourage other preachers. The characteristics common to them and to all who are likeminded need to be incorporated in our lives.

First, there is no jealousy on their part if another does well, as well as they, or even better. That is their goal—to encourage men who preach to be the best and to do the best that is possible. Their desire is to build up faithful men, not tear them down; to encourage capable workers in the cause of Christ; to see fellowworkers grow in ability and in influence for good.

DEFENDER

Bobby Liddell, Editor

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Second, they are not backbiters. Without flattering, they seek to compliment every effort put forth for good. Their purity of heart and loving kindness are manifested by their desire to lift up their brethren to greater heights. They do not say good things to the preacher's face and evil things to everyone else, nor do they seek to exalt themselves by debasing another.

Third, they have a desire to see the gospel preached faithfully. As Paul said, "How shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14). One reason that I am preaching today is because of a sermon brother Bob Duncan, another great encourager of preachers, preached several years ago at Adamsville on "The Need for Gospel Preachers." He often encouraged young men to prepare to preach, both from the pulpit and privately. Subsequently, from the Adamsville congregation, many have gone out to preach and the Adamsville church has for many years supported men who were training to preach.

Fourth, they realize that preachers are not in competition, but are fellowservants. Paul manifested a gracious spirit in Colossians 4:7-18. Notice what he said about his brethren. He called Tychicus a beloved brother, faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord who could comfort their hearts. He called Onesimus a faithful and beloved brother. Aristarchus was his fellowprisoner. He bade them receive Marcus, for he, and Justus, and the others were his fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God and had been a comfort to him. Epaphras, he said, was a servant of Christ who laboured fervently for them in prayers because of his great zeal. Luke, he termed the beloved physician. To Archippus, he said, "Take heed to the

ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it." What encouragement for those brethren individually and for the church.

Fifth, they understand the need for encouragement. When a man has left his job, sold his home, uprooted his family, and perhaps spent two to four years in preparation to preach, he usually begins with a work that is small, difficult and low-paying. The stress associated with such a position heightens the need for encouragement. Mistakes, due to lack of experience and wisdom, will be made and can be very discouraging. Unexpected opposition may be encountered. Opportunities to speak outside the local congregation may be few. Those who have been down the same road can be a great source of strength, comfort and help and should actively seek to provide these benefits.

Faithful gospel preachers should do all within their power to encourage other faithful gospel preachers. The task before God's church is so large and the workers are so few. Let us encourage men to begin to preach. Let us encourage men to continue preaching. Let us show our appreciation, our fellowship, and our best wishes for every faithful gospel preacher. Let us come to their aid, supplying their needs as we have ability. Only good will come from it. Let us never be so small, so insecure, so faithless, so unloving, so blinded to the needs of our brethren and a dying world that we discourage faithful gospel preachers. Thank God for them and may God bless them!

Bobby Liddell
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A Critique of "How Christianity Grows In The City"

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In 1985, brother Alvin Jennings mailed over 15,000 copies of **How Christianity Grows in the City** to churches of Christ, in which he espoused a humanly-devised plan of church organization and evangelism. The book, outlining a modified Roman Catholic plan of organization with a Crossroads plan of evangelism, was dedicated to the infamous Boston Church of Christ holding them up as a "model to all the believers."

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OUTLIVING OUR ENEMIES

(Continued from front page).

for us and one who literally curses us.

James wrote that the Christian has no right to curse his fellowman:

But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be (James 3:8-10).

When cursed, we must praise or bless. We will outlive our enemies by doing this.

Pray For Them

One may pretend to love his enemies and feignly offer his blessings upon them. Jesus, however, went beyond this in stating that we must "pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

Prayer offered in our enemy's behalf shows that one is striving to outlive him. As Christ hanged on the cross of Calvary, He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Stephen, as he was stoned by his enemies, prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:6). A supplication given for our enemies shows that we are striving to outlive them.

Remember: "Vengeance Is The Lord's"

God told his enemies in the Old Testament, "To me belongeth vengeance" (Deut. 32:35). Paul wrote the brethren at Rome giving them God's warning, "Dearly beloved, avenge not ourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). Again, we read in Hebrews, "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord" (Heb. 10:30).

When we begin to retaliate against our enemies, we have overstepped our authority. Vengeance is the Lord's! A remembrance of this will help us outlive our enemies.

Conclusion

Christians, throughout the ages, have had enemies and persecution. When we "fight fire with fire" we are in agreement with the world. Yet, when we love, bless and pray for our enemies with the knowledge that God will repay, we have moved closer to Christ. This is the way that we shall outlive our enemies.

ENDNOTES

¹Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Broadman Press, 1930), p. 49.

²Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Zondervan Publishing House, 1974), p. 3.

³Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament* (Baker Book House, August 1973), pp. 60-61.

⁴Thayer, p. 259.

⁵W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Vol. 1 (Fleming H. Revell Company, 1966), p. 133.

⁶Barnes, p. 61.

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"Thanks For Writing"

A friend of mine receives the publication entitled The Defender and highly praises the articles. I would like to have my name on the mailing list.
Peggy Clar, Lynch, KY

While I was in school at the Southwest School of Bible Studies in Austin, TX, I received your publication, Defender. I have enjoyed it tremendously and would like to continue receiving it. My new address is.... May God bless you in this good work.

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Please send Defender to the following addresses and thank you for your sound articles.
Larry Wood, Rankin, TX

The Defender is a necessary effort in times like these.

Steve Gunter, Bentonville, AR

The 1988 Bellview Lectureship book is (as your actual lectureship is said to have been) a statement of dedication to the sound proclamation of truth! Thank you for making these lectures available through book and tapes.

It seems to me (as a new convert to Christ's church and a former Catholic—raised and educated in Catholic institutions—therefore, a student of the Bible who cannot read enough and hear enough lectures, etc.) that amongst the publications within the brotherhood, there exist some, which through compromises and the ardent determination to compete with modern media, stick out like a sore thumb.

Such is not the case with The Defender! Thank you for making your publication one that can be counted on to defend the Cross of Christ closely; holding the inspired word dearly and securely as it should be preciously held, proclaimed and defended.

We receive such fine and sound publications as The Spiritual Sword, Therefore Stand, The Christian Courier, Reason and Revelation, etc., and it is a privilege to add The Defender to that list.

We don't have much financially (in fact, we're up here watching our farm crops bake in drought) but from time to time, we'll try to send a small contribution to help you with your costs. Enclosed is a check for that purpose.

Thank you, and our prayers are ever with you.

Marilyn and Michael Sollars, Ohio

Seventh Annual Denton Lectures Preview

The Pearl Street Church in Denton, TX will host its seventh annual lectureship in November 13-17, 1988. This year's lectures will be on 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon. A wide variety of material will be covered by 34 speakers. The Pearl St. elders aim for these lectures to provide fundamental and sound Biblical teaching to help all who hear, see or read them to grow spiritually and to combat the profusion of doctrinal error both within and without the church. As in the past, a book (approximately 500 pages) of these lectures will be published. All of the lectures will also be available on audio and video cassette tapes.

This year's speakers will be David Brown, Curtis Cates, Darrell Conley, Andrew Connally, Roy C. Deaver, Garland Elkins, Foy Forehand, Steve Gibson, Perry Hall, William M. Hatcher, Alan Highers, W. N. (Bill) Jackson, Wayne Jackson, Dub McClish, Mike McElroy, James Meadows, Richard Melson, J. Noel Merideth, Dave Miller, Jerry Moffitt, Goebel Music, Bubba Phillips, Johnny Ramsey, Oran Rhodes, Ira Rice, Jr., Jack Scott, Jr., Robert R. Taylor, Jr., Bert Thompson, Mike Vestal, Tom Wacaster, Don Walker, Thomas B. Warren, Marvin Weir, and Gary Workman.

Housing in the homes of local Christians will be provided as long as it lasts. Water and electrical hook-ups and holding tank dump for RV units will be available on our property by advance reservation (we had 33 units last year). A staffed nursery will be provided for all sessions. Signing for the deaf will be available for many sessions. Please plan to come and please help us publicize this SEVENTH ADL, which will be one of the finest and strongest Bible lectureships anywhere. Further inquiries may be addressed to: Church of Christ, 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201; phone numbers: 817/387-3531; 387-1429.

1988 Firm Foundation Lectures

**Theme: *The Gospel According To Luke —
"That You May Understand The Saviour"***

Place: *Bellwood Church of Christ, Murfreesboro, Tennessee*

Dates: *September 21-25, 1988, Wednesday - Sunday*

Schedule of Events:

WEDNESDAY, September 21

7:00 P.M. Singing

7:15 P.M. That Ye May Know The Truth Curtis Cates

8:00 P.M. The Virgin Birth Ray Peters

THURSDAY, September 22

9:30 A.M. The Baptism Of John-From Heaven Or From Men? Tom Bright

10:15 A.M. What Went Ye Out To See? Bobby Liddell

11:00 A.M. Beware Of Covetousness Jimmy Clark

1:30 P.M. The Mission Of The Saviour J. T. Marlin

2:15 P.M. Withstanding Temptation And Rejection Al Brown

7:00 P.M. Singing

7:15 P.M. Is A Man Worth More Than A Lamb? William S. Cline

8:00 P.M. Repentance: One Of The Most Difficult Commands In The Bible George DeHoff

FRIDAY, September 23

9:30 A.M. Launch Out Into The Deep Jerry Martin

10:15 A.M. The Olivet Discourse Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. How Can You Say That? Joe Gilmore

1:30 P.M. Unprofitable Servants Noel Merideth

2:15 P.M. Jesus Is Lord Of All Wayne Coats

7:00 P.M. Singing

7:15 P.M. His Face Was Set Toward Jerusalem Harrell Davidson

8:00 P.M. How Readest Thou? Noah Hackworth

SATURDAY, September 24

9:30 A.M. A Greater Blessing Daniel Denham

10:15 A.M. Where Is Your Faith? Weldon Langfield

11:00 A.M. The Ruler Who Refused A Crown Ron Harper

1:30 P.M. The Last Supper Eaten: The Lord's Supper Instituted Gary Colley

2:15 P.M. Accountable Stewardship Ken Willis

7:00 P.M. Singing

7:15 P.M. The Lost Christ Foy Smith

8:00 P.M. Can You Recommend Your Religion? Winfred Clark

SUNDAY, September 25

9:00 A.M. Excuses Are Only Lies Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

10:00 A.M. We Must Count The Cost Guss Eoff

7:00 P.M. Singing

7:15 P.M. The Crucifixion Of Christ Jim Laws

8:00 P.M. The Bodily Resurrection Of Jesus H. A. Dobbs

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"Peters Reports After Missionary Effort In Far East"

Ray Peters

"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27).

The word, "rehearsal" means to "repeat." Paul and Barnabas repeated "all that God that done with them" in their missionary journey (Acts 13-14:26). The purpose of this article is to rehearse or to repeat the things accomplished for the cause of Christ in a missionary trip that was made into the South Pacific and Southeast Asia area by this writer. The trip covered the period of May 18 through July 26, 1988 and involved five countries: Samoan Islands, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

SAMOA

First stop on the trip was in America Samoa. My good friend and missionary there is Jimmie Hill and family. The work in this area is about twenty years old. In twelve days, I preached twenty lessons on the combined three islands of Samoa, and conducted day classes, that were requested, on the Crossroads/Boston Movement. At night, the lessons were mainly designed to edify the members of the church, but at the same time to teach the lost. We had over one hundred on one occasion and the attendance and interest were usually good throughout the meeting. Luaa Soli, the local evangelist at Nuuli, was my translator. The meeting in Nuuli, A. M. Samoa, went May 22-26, Sunday-Thursday. On Friday, May 27, I took a short flight to Apia, Western Samoa for a three-day meeting there. Western Samoa is more rustic than America Samoa and is referred to as the "real Samoa." The congregation is very small in Apia but was very receptive. Jimmie, Luaa, and I flew out Sunday afternoon for another Western Samoan Island and the town of Salelologa (Sally-la-longa). We landed in a driving rain on a grass field and we could see the brethren sitting and waiting in the "fale," an open air house with a thatched roof. During the meeting, the High Chief and his wife, and two others came forward and knelt, as is their custom, and then made an oral confession. The meeting went May 29-June 1, and on the last night the Chiefs, through my translator Luaa, expressed their appreciation for my coming and stated that they were edified. I flew back to A.M. Samoa, where it was good to be with Jimmie, Linda, his wife, and Julie, their 4-year-old daughter. They are doing a good job and are adapting very well in the mission field.

SINGAPORE

After stopovers in Honolulu and Taipei, Taiwan, I arrived in Singapore, June 5. (I had lost a day because

I crossed the International Date line). I spent June 5-July 1, in the beautiful, but hot, city, island, and nation of Singapore. During that time, I taught five days a week in the Four Seas College and held a meeting at the Jurong congregation (where Eddie Ee is the preacher). Also, on Thursday nights, I taught a class at Lim Ah Pim Road congregation (where Kwan Tai Choom is the preacher). I went with David Chew, the President of Four Seas College and preacher, into Malaysia and preached in Kluang. This was a congregation started by Ira Y. Rice, Jr., in June of 1955. I spoke in Chapel a couple of times and led singing at FSC. I enjoyed being with the students and brethren Kwan, Ee, and Chew and getting to know them better. Things went well, and the mission to edify and do good was accomplished.

INDONESIA

On July 1 it was off to Jakarta, Indonesia. Barry Hatcher (he and his family arrived there last October) met me at the airport. Don and Judy Waggoner have lived in Indonesia for eight years and have recently moved to Jakarta. I preached at Jalan Sumatra congregation Sunday, July 3. Then it was off to Bandung, which is in the mountains and was much cooler. We took a beautiful train ride through the mountains to the small city (it is only 3 million people whereas Jakarta is 17 million) of Bandung. I taught 5 hours a day in an extension of the Jakarta Bible School, and had a two-day meeting. I taught Monday-Friday, and rode the train back to Jakarta on Friday, July 8. While in Bandung, Barry and I saw Pat McGee, a long-time friend and a missionary to Indonesia for over 20 years. It was hard to leave cool Bandung and go back to very hot Jakarta. To say that Jakarta is filthy is being nice, but the people are beautiful and very receptive. It is true that Indonesia is a Muslim country, but much headway is being made toward teaching many the Truth. It was good to be with the Hatchers and the Waggoners. Barry is working hard in learning the language and starting a school in Jakarta and is doing well adjusting to life in Indonesia—it is different!

PHILIPPINES

I arrived in Manila on July 13. The very next night, brother Manuel Pelayo, my contact in Manila, had me set up for a three-day meeting with a deaf congregation! So, Thursday-Saturday, with the help of a signer, I preached to one of the best listening audiences I ever preached to—even though they were deaf! Sunday, July 17, I preached at Central and Metro Manila congregations. Tuesday, July 19, I had a 5 hour, very curvy, bus ride to Baguio City. This is

the location of Philippine Bible College where I spoke in chapel, and taught Thursday and Friday nights for 4 hours on the Holy Spirit, as well as, preached at the congregation at Baguio City. Eusebio Danicalá, the president of Philippine Bible College, was very gracious in his reception of me. This opened the door for further contact and teaching there. Then it was back to Manila on Saturday, July 23, to preach at Marikina congregation where Gideon Rodriguez, the young Gospel preacher that accompanied me to Baguio City, preaches.

SUMMARY

In 69 days I preached and taught 108 hours! It is not my intent to make more out of the trip than it was or to lessen the import of the trip—only eternity will tell. However, looking back and reflecting on the events, I can't but feel as the historian Luke commented, "...rehearsed all that God had done with them." I am thankful to have had the opportunity to go and be used in edifying and teaching in a part of the world where 3 billion people live—you can never get away from people there. There is a great need to go back and do more teaching and preaching—they beg for me to come back. Truly, the "fields are white unto harvest!"

4852 Sauflley Road
Pensacola, Florida 32506

August 8, 1988

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Ray Peters is involved full-time in missionary efforts in the Far East. His sponsoring congregation is Municipal Airport Church of Christ, 302-A Copeland Road, Valdosta, Georgia 31601. Should you desire to know more about this good work, to have brother Peters come and speak, or to have a part in his work as a supporter, please contact brother Peters at his Pensacola address, or by calling 904-455-0859.]

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7:30-8:25 P.M. Session One, *Acts 6* Andrew Connally
8:30-9:45 P.M. Session Two, *Acts 9* Thomas Warren

SATURDAY:

8:30-9:00 A.M. General Visitation
9:00-9:55 A.M. Session Three, *Acts 7* Andrew Connally
10:00-10:55 A.M. Session Four, *Acts 24* Thomas Warren
11:00-11:55 A.M. Session Five, *Acts 8* Andrew Connally

12:00-1:30 P.M. LUNCH BREAK

1:30-2:25 P.M. Session Six, *Acts 26* Thomas Warren
2:30-3:25 P.M. Session Seven, *Acts 12-13* Raymond Haygood

3:30-4:30 P.M. Session Eight, OPEN FORUM I

4:45-7:00 P.M. DINNER BREAK

7:00-7:25 P.M. Singing
7:30-8:45 P.M. Session Nine, *Acts 10-11* Noel Merideth
8:30-9:25 P.M. Session Ten, *Acts 14-15* William Cline

SUNDAY:

9:00-9:55 A.M. Session Eleven, *Acts 1-2* Roy Deaver
10:00-10:55 A.M. Session Twelve, *Acts 17* Mac Deaver

11:00-1:30 A.M. LUNCH BREAK

1:30-2:25 P.M. Session Thirteen, *Acts 3-4* Roy McConnel
2:30-3:25 P.M. Session Fourteen, *Acts 21* Mac Deaver

3:30-4:30 P.M. Session Fifteen, OPEN FORUM II

4:45-7:00 P.M. DINNER BREAK

7:00-7:25 P.M. Singing
7:30-8:25 P.M. Session Sixteen, *Acts 20* Bob Bryson
8:30-9:25 P.M. Session Seventeen, *Acts 18-19* Wayne Coats

MONDAY:

8:30-9:00 A.M. General Visitation
9:00-9:55 A.M. Session Eighteen, *Acts 5* John Baldwin
10:00-10:55 A.M. Session Nineteen, *Acts 16* William Cline
11:00-11:55 A.M. Session Twenty, *Acts 22* Leon Stancliff

12:00-1:30 P.M. LUNCH BREAK

1:30-2:25 P.M. Session Twenty-One, *Acts 25* Garland Elkins
2:30-3:25 P.M. Session Twenty-Two, *Acts 23* Tony Demonbreum

3:30-4:30 P.M. Session Twenty-Three, OPEN FORUM III

4:45-7:00 P.M. DINNER BREAK

7:00-7:25 P.M. Singing
7:30-8:25 P.M. Session Twenty-Four, *Acts 27* John Baldwin
8:30-9:25 P.M. Session Twenty-Five, *Acts 28* Robert Taylor

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 09

SEPTEMBER, 1988

It Was A Sad Day

Lynn Parker

This past December I, along with 3 other preachers dedicated to the "old paths," attended a meeting in Tyler, Texas, which was billed as a review and planning session for the annual *Summer Youth Series* for the East Texas area. What we heard at that meeting was alarming because it impressed on us the great extent of Bible ignorance and apostasy within the Lord's church. As I recount that meeting here in this article, my prayer is that each and every Christian will be concerned to the point of action to stop the current digression, and keep in mind that this is no longer an isolated incident.

At the meeting, when the "chairman" asked for comments and suggestions, several of us expressed concerns over some of the speakers who delivered messages to young people containing "uncertain sounds" or downright error (such as one speaker telling the audience of young people, "The spirit is gonna be moving here tonight!"). We also expressed our concerns over some of the speakers being suggested for the current year for the same reasons. Likewise, the previous year's agenda had included the singing group ACAPELLA which incorporates into its performances the imitation of instrumental music and they were being suggested to appear on the current year's program. All of our suggestions and criticisms were offered in a Christ-like atmosphere and with all kindness. Our concerns were met with hostility from several of the brethren present who, quite apparently, were only against folks who are against something. Below are some of the comments we received from the group of approximately a dozen men:

"I hope they're (the singing group ACAPELLA) not as judgmental of you as you are of them."

"The Bible doesn't say that you can't do this"

(imitate instrumental music).

"What's the difference between imitating instrumental music and using a songbook in worship?"

"I personally have a problem with it (the imitations of instrumental music) but the kids like it."

"I heard some things said that I didn't agree with (by last year's speakers) but I'm not going to make it a test of fellowship."

"You'll never be able to find a speaker we'll all agree with."

"You can't reach kids with the Bible alone."

"A lot of what he (one of the speakers) had to say was real good."

"We need dynamic speakers that the kids can relate to."

"Just opening up the Bible will turn kids off."

Brethren, it soon became evident that we were not even on the same page doctrinally with the majority of those present, and certainly were not rehearsing together the fundamentals of a "like precious faith." Things as basic as how to establish Bible authority, the law of exclusion, the need for scriptural authority for all we do, and the limits of fellowship were obviously not understood by many present even though EVERY SINGLE MAN PRESENT was in a position of teaching or preaching in their respective congregations. As it became clear to the few of us that no planning session would be successful until these doctrinal matters were settled, we suggested to the group that a group Bible study be held at which elders from every congregation would be present. This suggestion was met with ridicule and rejection by comments such as the following:

"I don't think a Bible study will get us anywhere."

(Continued on Page 67)

The Will Of God

(Romans 12:2)

As God's creation, we must be *aware* of God's will for us, but we must go beyond being aware of God's will to the point of *understanding* what God's will is. Having been made aware of and having gained an understanding of God's will, then we are to be *submissive* in obedience to the will of God.

Learning the will of God should produce a **CHANGE** in our lives. No one can ever be the same as he was before after he has learned God's will. A change is demanded. The will of God demands a *change of masters* ("And be not conformed to this world:"). No longer are we to follow the will of self (Jer. 10:23; Pro. 14:12). No longer are we to be formed by the world of sin (1 John 2:15-17). We should not let the world mold us to fit it, but we should be in accordance with God's form (Rom. 6:16-18). No longer are we to be fashioned by the wickedness of society (Jas. 4:4). We should learn from the people of Israel who disobeyed God by the desire to be like the world round about them, and suffered the wrath of God.

The will of God demands a *change of manner* ("but be ye transformed"). Not only should our masters change, but our manner of life must also be changed to the point that we are pleasing to God. The will of God brings a new concern (Matt. 26:39; John 6:38). No longer are we concerned about worldly things, but spiritual things have become our priority (Matt. 6:33; Col. 3:1,2). The will of God begets a new creature (Jas. 1:18; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15). Obedience to God transforms our life. The will of God builds a new character (II Peter 1:4-11; I John 3:8-10).

The will of God effects a change of masters and manner because it demands a *change of mind* ("by the renewing of your mind"). Only when we change our mind to serve God and no longer serve sin will we make a change of masters and manner. This change of mind is intellectual. God's will appeals to our intellect (John 6:44, 45). God's will appeals to the other aspects of our being, but it also appeals to our intellect because of its truthfulness, accuracy and evidence

presented. This change of mind is inward (Rom. 12:1,2; 8:16). No longer are we to be governed by the outward man of the flesh (II Cor. 4:16-5:10), but the flesh is to be governed by the inward man of the spirit. This change of mind is influential (Pro. 23:7; Matt. 12:34). Our every aspect of life in word and deed is influenced by the thinking of the mind. For our actions and words to be those of a new creature, we must have a renewed mind.

Learning the will of God presents a **CHALLENGE** in our lives ("that ye may prove"). The word "prove" means to examine with the expectation of thus approving. The will of God challenges us to *enquire*. Before we can prove or approve, we must enquire into God's will. We should enquire by daily searching (Acts 17:11; Psa. 119:97). As we need our daily bread, so we need the bread of life daily. We should enquire by diligent seeking. Our enquiry should not be haphazard, spasmodic, nor half-hearted (Psa. 1:1,2; John 5:39). We should enquire by dedicated studying (II Tim. 2:15 [give diligence]). Our study must be dedicated; therefore, it must be regular, in depth, and with the goal of understanding God's will better that we may be more pleasing to him.

The will of God challenges us to *examine* the evidence. We are not asked to believe and live by that which is not supported by evidence, but to examine the evidence which has been presented (John 20:30,31). We are challenged to make a thorough examination (Acts 17:11); a thoughtful examination (Psa. 1:2); and a truthful examination (II Cor. 4:2).

The will of God challenges us to *endorse* that about which we have made enquiry and which we have examined. This endorsement is made by acceptance of God's word (Acts 2:41); by approval of God's will (Psa. 119:11-16, 172); and by application of God's way (Psa. 119:105; I John 1:6-10). It is not enough to accept and approve, we must then make application of God's way to our life.

Learning the will of God presents a **CHARGE** we must obey. This charge from God is *profitable* to man

DEFENDER

Bobby Liddell, Editor

The Defender (USPS 935-520) is published monthly (except December) by the Bellview church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798. Second Class Postage Paid at Pensacola, Florida. Subscription free. All contributions to be used in operational expenses.

("what is that good,") Man profits because of riches that are real (Eph. 1:3, 7; 3:8; Heb. 11:26); because of a relationship that is right (II Cor. 6:14-18; I John 1:3; I Pet. 2:17; Rom. 5:1, 2; 6:16-18); and because of the reward that is reserved (I Pet. 1:3-5; Matt. 25:46; II Tim. 4:7, 8). This charge from God is *pleasing* to God ("acceptable"). Its purpose pleases God; that is, the salvation of men's souls (Luke 19:10; Matt. 20:28). Its promise pleases God; that is, the abundant life of the saved both now and hereafter (John 10:10). Its preaching pleases God (I Cor. 1:21). This charge from God is *perfect* ("perfect, will of God."). God's will is full (II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Pet. 1:3); finished (Jude 3; Rev. 22:18, 19); and final (John 12:48).

The will of God demands a change in our lives, challenging us and charging us in the way of God. No one can ever be the same after he has learned the will of God.

Bobby Liddell
6474 Grenewell Street
Pensacola, Florida 32506

It Was A Sad Day

(Continued from front page)

"We don't need to get elders involved."

"The only reason y'all want a Bible study is to try and convert us liberals" (their terminology, not mine—LP).

"We don't have to agree on every doctrinal matter to work together."

We departed with each member of the group generally agreeing to write in his suggestion as to how to proceed to a central location, after which everyone would be informed of the majority decision. Four of us that had registered sincere and legitimate concerns NEVER HEARD ANOTHER WORD ABOUT THE SERIES UNTIL IT HAD BEEN PLANNED AND FINALIZED—all without a word to any of us.

The whole episode saddened us. It deeply grieves faithful Christians when unity is destroyed by departures and disregard for God's Word. Perhaps some youngsters are "turned off" by serious Bible study as was suggested by one "youth minister" present at that meeting last December. If that be true, I believe I know why it is: they simply are reflecting the same disrespect and disregard for the truth of God's Word they have seen in many parents, elderships, preachers, and teachers in this day of widespread error.

Yes, it was indeed a sad day. But if we will be loyal in our fight against error, we will one day rejoice in the ultimate victory as we stand around the Throne!

Route 1 Box 12
Jacksonville, Texas 75766

The Pure Church

Ronnie Hayes

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). Why be concerned about the purity of the church? Is there a danger that one could worship improperly? Christ said to the scribes and Pharisees, "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:7-9). Since there is the danger of the church becoming impure, if the church is to remain pure, it must remain pure in at least four areas: word, work, worship and its world relationships.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORD

There would be no way for the church to remain pure without the proper word or doctrine. This is why Paul told Timothy, "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsufferings and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2). Why was it important for Timothy to "Preach the word?" Look at verses 3 and 4, "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" (II Tim. 4:3-4). Yes, if we fail to preach the word, the church is in danger of becoming impure! Paul gave warnings to Timothy concerning the word. "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 1:3). "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2). "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:14-15). Peter also said, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Pet. 4:11). If we are going to speak as the oracles of God, we must faithfully preach God's word.

THE CHURCH AND ITS WORK

The work of the church is another area in which we must remain pure. What others teach or practice does not lessen our responsibility to work. Christ said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). We have three areas of work to which we must give our attention: (1) Benevolence (II Cor. 9:13; Jas. 1:27; Gal. 6:10); (2) Evangelism (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16); (3) Edification (Eph. 4:12, 29). As we stand before God on the day of judgment, we will be judged according to what we have done in this life. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). Let us not be found that day to be those that refused to work.

THE CHURCH AND ITS WORSHIP

For the church to remain pure, it must also remain pure in its worship. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). We emphasize "must worship him in spirit and in truth." We know the truth on the items of worship: singing, praying, teaching, giving and the Lord's supper. We practice these things every Sunday, as well we should. There is no doubt that we practice "the truth" part of John 4:24 but do we understand and practice "the spirit" part of this verse? John 4:24 is not speaking about "getting the Holy Spirit" as the Pentecostals would want it to say. It says we are to be in the right frame of mind or attitude. What we need to see is that we cannot live just any kind of life during the week and expect our worship to be accepted of God. We must learn, for our worship to be acceptable, **OUR LIFE MUST BE RIGHT.** We see this principle as Christ delivers the sermon on the mount. "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5:23-24). Peter tells us that our prayers will be hindered by a life that is wrong. "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (I Pet. 3:7). A good illustration of worship that was not acceptable because of the life being lived is found in Jeremiah 7:1-16. Notice especially verses 9 and 10. "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?" (Jer. 7:9-10). Brethren, we cannot live an ungodly life and expect our worship to be acceptable.

THE CHURCH AND ITS WORLD RELATIONSHIPS

Then in the last place, our relationships with the world must be the kind that are pleasing to God. We are not to be conformed to the world. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2). We are not to be unequally yoked together or influenced by the world (2 Cor. 6:14-18). We are to seek and save the lost. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). With all the controversy over "fellowship or Fellowship," it seems many forget to consult God about our world relationships. With whom should we have fellowship? "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). Only those walking in the light have fellowship with God and with one another in Christ. Neither you nor I can add to that number or take away from that number and be pleasing to God.

Christ is coming back for the pure, spotless and sinless church. **IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP IT THAT WAY!**

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Bellview Church of Christ Announces:

Second Annual Central Valley Lectures Planned

The Eastside Church of Christ of Stockton, CA will host the **SECOND ANNUAL CENTRAL VALLEY LECTURES**, September 29-October 2, 1988. Difficult texts in Matthew through Romans, and Galatians will be studied with seventeen speakers from all parts of California.

The aim of this lecture is to provide fundamental and sound Biblical teaching to edify all who attend and who will have access to the lectures through the audio and video tapes and the lectureship book (approximately 200 pages).

Housing is available at several motels nearby. Parking space for RV's will be available in the church parking lot; however, no hook-ups or dumping stations are provided. For further information, contact Donald Hartsell, Sr., P. O. Box 5099, Stockton, CA 95205, or phone 209-941-0697.

1988 Firm Foundation Lectures

Theme: *The Gospel According To Luke —*

"That You May Understand The Saviour"

Place: *Bellwood Church of Christ, Murfreesboro, Tennessee*

Dates: *September 21-25, 1988, Wednesday - Sunday*

Schedule of Events:

WEDNESDAY, September 21

- 7:00 P.M. Singing George DeHoff, Jr.
7:15 P.M. That Ye May Know The Truth Curtis Cates
8:00 P.M. The Virgin Birth Ray Peters

THURSDAY, September 22

- 9:30 A.M. The Baptism Of John-From Heaven Or From Men? Tom Bright
10:15 A.M. What Went Ye Out To See? Bobby Liddell
11:00 A.M. Beware Of Covetousness Jimmy Clark
1:30 P.M. The Mission Of The Saviour J. T. Marlin
2:15 P.M. Withstanding Temptation And Rejection Al Brown
7:00 P.M. Singing Wayne Coats
7:15 P.M. The Lost Christ Foy Smith
8:00 P.M. Repentance: One Of The Most Difficult Commands In The Bible George DeHoff

FRIDAY, September 23

- 9:30 A.M. Launch Out Into The Deep Jerry Martin
10:15 A.M. The Olivet Discourse Roy Deaver
11:00 A.M. How Can You Say That? Joe Gilmore
1:30 P.M. Unprofitable Servants Noel Merideth
2:15 P.M. Can You Recommend Your Religion? Winfred Clark
7:00 P.M. Singing Leon D. Schrei
7:15 P.M. His Face Was Set Toward Jerusalem Harrell Davidson
8:00 P.M. How Readest Thou? Noah Hackworth

SATURDAY, September 24

- 9:30 A.M. A Greater Blessing Daniel Denham
10:15 A.M. Where Is Your Faith? Weldon Langfield
11:00 A.M. The Ruler Who Refused A Crown Ron Harper
1:30 P.M. The Last Supper Eaten: The Lord's Supper Instituted Gary Colley
2:15 P.M. Accountable Stewardship Ken Willis
7:00 P.M. Singing Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
7:15 P.M. Is A Man Worth More Than A Lamb? William S. Cline
8:00 P.M. Jesus Is Lord Of All Wayne Coats

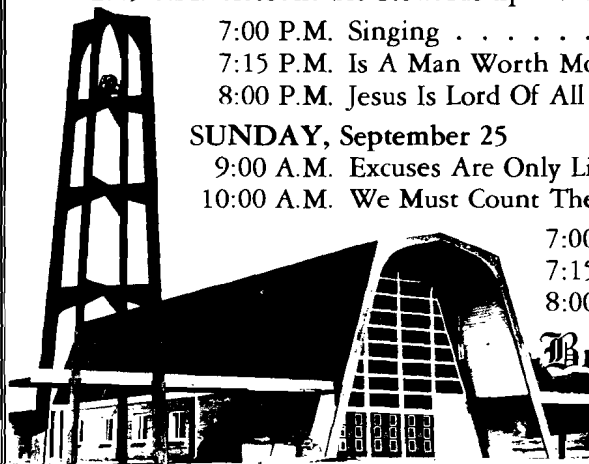
SUNDAY, September 25

- 9:00 A.M. Excuses Are Only Lies Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
10:00 A.M. We Must Count The Cost Guss Eoff
7:00 P.M. Singing George DeHoff, Jr.
7:15 P.M. The Crucifixion Of Christ Jim Laws
8:00 P.M. The Bodily Resurrection Of Jesus H. A. Dobbs

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8884-S

Members' Support On Moral Issues

Larry D. Mathis

The people of God have always had to face great moral issues. And so it is today. We are urging individual Christians to help us fight all corrupting influences of our society. Of all people on earth, Christians should stand up for what is right, for the church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15)! It is not simply the responsibility of a handful of preachers and elders, it is the obligation of every member of the body of Christ to do so. Until the members of each local congregation accept this challenge the church will never reach her full potential for good among men. A better world begins with me. If members do not support the truth on moral issues, who will?

What choices are before us? (1) We can ignore the issues. Such of course, is foolish thinking. (2) We could simply surrender. Such is unthinkable. (3) We can stand up and fight for what is right. This is what God would have us to do (1 Tim. 6:12).

By "support" we mean that members are to uphold and defend the truth on moral issues; they are to lend assistance or help to those who are fighting for the right: they are to serve as a foundation or prop for those who are teaching the word of God; they are to keep the truth going themselves. Our support must be more than a wringing of the hands. It must be more than a pessimistic outlook on what the world is coming to. It must be more than an occasional timid sermon on such issues. An emotional outburst in a church bulletin or a brotherhood journal will not suffice. We must put our words into action.

In our efforts to support the truth on moral issues we must constantly remember that the ethical code of Christianity came from God and not from men. All moral questions must be tested by the Divine Standard. While the thinking of the masses may have changed on moral issues, the teaching of the Bible forever remains the same.

The Christian Is Different From The World

To be pleasing to the Heavenly Father the Christian cannot be neutral on moral issues. He must take a stand. The child of God is "a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). He is commanded, "Love not the world" (1 John 2:15-17). "Keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing" (2 Cor. 6:17). "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (1 Cor. 7:1). "Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11-12). "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22). "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). "Set your affections on things above"

(Col. 3:2). "Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27). "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-15). "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15). "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9). "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:14-16). "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

Dear member, are you willing and ready to fight all moral evil? If not, you will answer to God for your decision on judgment day.

Some Things Members Can Do

We should try to learn what the issues are. Members need to get informed. Blind zeal is seldom productive and often destructive (Rom. 10:2). Make sure that each matter under consideration is really a moral issue, and not just a hobby or an opinion of some radical brother.

Carefully and prayerfully consider what a Christian could and should do in each case. Then, to the best of your ability do what is right.

Join hands with others who have launched a Christian counterattack against moral corruption.

Pray for your preacher and elders to stand up for the truth. We need men who will publicly lead the members into affirmative action. Let them know that they have our support.

Ask the elders to bring in qualified Christian leaders to educate and inform the congregation.

Be willing to invest your funds in this fight.

Honor church discipline. Withdraw fellowship. Do what God said to do in this matter.

Some Things Preachers Can Do

The local preacher needs to convince the brethren of the great importance of their being supportive of his preaching on moral issues. He needs to make sure that he is really identifying real moral issues and not riding a hobby or promoting personal opinions.

He should preach enough on positive things that Christians should do (those things that are good and right), that when he preaches against things which are immoral, the members will respectfully listen, and will be convinced that they should support his preaching. Our preaching must be both positive and negative,

but a preacher could be so negative all the time that brethren reach a point that they are apt to ignore him!

Preachers should stress that the moral guidelines of God's word came from the infinite mind of our Maker. All the restrictions he places on us in the Bible are for our good and protection. Our God knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows that certain things will hurt us and even destroy us. Living right morally is a matter of trusting God. It is believing that God knows what is best for us, and that he knows what will hurt us and destroy us. Jesus came that we might have life more abundantly; he did not come to deprive us of the good life (John 10:10). Living right profits us in this life (1 Tim. 4:8).

Some Moral Issues That Especially Concern Christians Today

The following is but a sampling of the many moral issues we face today. All Christians must rise to the occasion and take a stand against these evils.

PROFANITY. Vulgar language is a great problem in our society. It is a degrading sin against God. Those who swear bring contempt upon God, offend others, and belittle themselves. Christian, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth" (Eph. 4:29). See Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 24:15; 19:12; Matthew 5:34, 37; 12:36, 37; Romans 12:14.

PORNOGRAPHY. Christians are to think on things that are pure (Phil. 4:7). Pornography will not help us to obey this command. Pornography promotes all types of sexual sins. It distorts sex from its God-given purposes into vulgar lust. It exploits women. It promotes crimes of rape, violence and murder. It even promotes sexual abuse of children. See Hebrews 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Matthew 5:27-28; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3.

ABORTION. Abortion clinics show a low view of human life. A fetus is a human being from the moment of conception. Since a fetus is a human being it must possess a soul. The Bible makes no distinction between a fetus of two weeks, ten weeks, or twenty weeks, but refers only to a child in the mother's womb (Psa. 139:13-16; Luke 1:41, 44). An induced abortion constitutes murder and violates God's law on the sanctity of life (See Exodus 20:13; Matthew 19:18; Romans 13:9).

DANCING. Dancing amounts to lasciviousness and is a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). Anything which has the tendency to arouse unlawful desires in an individual is lasciviousness. The word means, "wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females, etc." One guilty of lascivious conduct must repent of it (2 Cor. 12:21). Paul not only said that the specific things he mentioned would keep people out of heaven but "such like" (Gal. 5:21), or, things like that which he had just mentioned.

SOCIAL DRINKING. Christians (of all people) should be the last ones to affirm "social drinking."

But some are doing so today. We are told that, "social drinking is okay, drunkenness is what is condemned in the Bible." The truth of the matter is, drunkenness is a matter of stages or degrees. Persons begin to be drunk when they begin to drink! If it take six beers to make one drunk, then one beer makes one one-sixth drunk. There has never been an alcoholic who didn't take his first drink (See Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-32).

ADULTERY. Unscriptural marriages are a great problem in society and in the church. However, such "marriages" cannot be continued in with God's approval. We must ever teach that God recognizes only one reason for divorce, whether it be saint or sinner, and that is for fornication (Matt. 19:9). The church is allowing the world to influence her, and those with the worldly view of marriage and the home are attempting to fill the church with adulterers and adulteresses. Bible teaching does not allow a New Testament church to tolerate fornication in its midst. Study 1 Corinthians 5 carefully. Members of the church must take a stand against adultery and all sexual sins.

INDECENT CLOTHING. God's standard concerning modest apparel applies to BOTH men and women—there is no double standard in purity! Christians must not ape the world in the wearing of immodest apparel. Paul said, "Adorn in modest apparel" (1 Tim. 2:9). This means to be, "well arranged, seemly, modest"; "respectable, honorable"; that which may "...be regarded as genuinely moral and respectable." Now, what about the woman who dresses in such a way that she invites men to lust after her? Is she free from blame? How could any woman wear shorts, halter tops, tight pants, see-through clothing, or modern swim attire, and not contribute to lust? What makes one think that the attire used by prostitutes does not have the same effect on men when such is worn by "Christian" women? In Solomon's day, clothing identified the prostitute! (Prov. 7:10). It is a shame and a disgrace the way some sisters (and for that matter some brothers), dress to come to the assembly of the saints. What do they mean by this? How does your clothing identify you? As a child of God? Or, as a child of Satan? The Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and must not become an instrument of lust (1 Cor. 6:19). Members of the church must take a stand against immodest, indecent clothing!

Conclusion

God's people must stand up and fight against all moral evils. God has given us his word to direct us. We cannot afford to be neutral or indifferent. God seeks for men to "stand in the gap" and fight the enemy (Ezek. 22:30). Let every dedicated Christian rally to support the truth of God on all moral issues.

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER, 1988

[*EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Leon D. Stancliff has preached for over forty years. He holds the B.A. degree from David Lipscomb; the M.A. degree in Natural Science; and the Specialist in Education degree in Administration and Supervision. He has taught science in grade school and for a number of years served as a university professor until his retirement from Middle Tennessee State University at Murfreesboro, last year. He has authored **Biblical Prophets In Outlined Notes, A Commentary On Revelation**, and other works.*

*Recently, brother Stancliff, very graciously consented to speak while visiting Bellview, where his brother Fred serves as an elder. His lesson on Genesis One was so well received, he was asked to write a series of articles dealing with science and religion to be printed in **The Defender** over the next several months. We are happy to present this first article and commend it to you for your reading.]*

Is Science a Friend or Foe of Christ?

Leon D. Stancliff

INTRODUCTION

My fellow Christians, will you lend me your ear (or your eye) for a few minutes? For over one third of a century now I have taught science classes at grade school, high school and university levels. Simultaneously, I have preached the gospel of Jesus Christ. It would be interesting to know how many times I have answered the question, "Is it really possible to harmonize science and religion?" The answer to the question is a resounding **Yes**.

I have been invited to share some of my thoughts with the readers of the *Defender*. It gives me the greatest of pleasure to do so. This is the first of what will be a series of articles. If you find this one to be of profit, we will offer you others.

MANY CHRISTIANS ARE SUSPICIOUS

A number of years ago I requested permission from the elders of a congregation where I was worshipping to present some class work on science and religion. One of the elders found out that I intended to discuss evolution along with other things. Without even taking the time to find out what the nature of my comments was to be, he refused to allow the class to go forward. I had intended to resist evolution rather

than to promote it. Nevertheless, he said there would be no "science falsely so called" discussed in a church where he served as an elder. I cancelled the class in accord with his wishes.

This is not an isolated case. Through the years I have noted a sort of subconscious feeling that, a warfare exists between the cause of Christ and science in general. I believe this to be a tragedy. I would like to reduce the tension between true science and true religion.

TRUE RELIGION AND TRUE SCIENCE

There is true religion, and there is false religion. There is also true science, and there is false science. The conflict is not between true science and true religion. The warfare comes about when either *false* science, *false* religion, or *both* false science and false religion enter the scene.

It was Jehovah himself who instituted both science and religion. It was he who created the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1). It was also he who instructed man to dress and keep the Garden of Eden. Again, it was he who commanded man to have dominion over this earthly home. There are those who accuse Christians

(Continued on Page 75)

Opposing Error

One is not a Christian who does not actively oppose error in every good and right way available at his disposal and in accordance with his ability. Christ actively opposed error as he went about doing good. He was busy in teaching against error and in opposing wrong and could have done no less and be the sinless Son of God. He did not hesitate to label a hypocritical false teacher as such. He did not hesitate to point out false practices and doctrines. He did not bid God speed (II John 9-11), to those in error nor did he encourage them in their error in any way. He did not overlook error and pretend it was not there nor did he look at error and pretend it was not error. He did not let personal ties cloud his view for he was not "such a close friend" that he would let sin go unchallenged. He did not let money silence his opposition. The power, position, popularity or possessions of those in sin did not alter his stand in the least. In all this, he did not sin in his opposition of error. He was not wrong to condemn wrong nor was he wrong in having his stinging condemnations of false doctrines and false teachers written down so that all might see and read and be warned.

He, who showed the greatest love, was not unloving in his opposing error. He was not unkind for he did not hate enemies of God and of good, but loved them and the souls of all men enough to point out the difference between evil and good. He gave his life on the cross of Calvary for sinful men—not that they might be condemned, but that they might be saved. He, who made forgiveness possible, was not of an unforgiving spirit in his opposing error. He taught against a mote-searching, fault-finding, unloving and unforgiving spirit; thus, one can not rightfully claim to be a faithful follower of his and be of such an attitude (Matt. 6:14-15; 7:1-5).

His followers are to be like him, as far as humanly possible, following his perfect example (I Pet. 1:21-23). One who claims to be a Christian and who does not actively oppose error is either deceived (having accepted Satan's pseudo-Christianity), ignorant (not knowing the difference between good and evil or the Christian's responsibility) or a liar (being hypocritical) in his claim to be a "Christian." Regardless of who one might be and of what position he might hold, if he

is not actively opposing error in good and right ways available at his disposal and in accordance with his ability, he is not a Christian, but is a traitor to the cause of Christ and should, if he continues in his fellowship of error, rejecting every effort to bring him to repentance, be marked and avoided (II Th. 3:6-15).

Error begets error. The first step into error is usually not the last. Once the first barrier is taken down, succeeding ones fall much easier. "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13). Seldom can they be turned around, yet Christians must seek to so do. Every faithful Christian, who knows the reality of Heaven and Hell, will pray and work to bring men *out of error and into truth*. Their hearts will be burdened, their pillows tear-stained, their pleadings and warnings earnest, their prayers fervent as they seek the salvation of those in sin.

What then of those preachers, elderships and congregations who want, for whatever reason, to maintain fellowship with those brethren *known* to be in error? Has such a relationship ever resulted in the reclaiming for Christ of the brethren who have left the light to walk in the darkness of devilish doctrines? Can such a relationship be sustained without dreadful cost? Can it be productive of any good? Do the "benefits" of an earthly concord with error outweigh the losses and liabilities—the forfeiture of God's blessings, the spotting, wrinkling and blemishing of the Lord's church; thus, the loss of influence for good, the guilt of leading others astray, and ultimately, the eternal loss of precious souls? (II Cor. 6:14-7:1).

Lack of opposition to error will NEVER accomplish any good, but will ALWAYS result in wrong gaining footholds, making inroads, and winning victories. Lack of opposition to error has resulted in lost souls, lost churches, lost colleges and lost good works of many kinds. Truly, spiritual strength and courage to stand for the right will mean the loss of some "friends" and their support, but if being right means being alone, one had better be right. If being right means being financially bankrupt, one had better be right. If being right means being ill-spoken of, one had better be right. If being right means being in the minority, even in the church of Christ, one had better

DEFENDER

Bobby Liddell, Editor

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be right. One is never right in doing wrong and one is never wrong in doing right. One is not a Christian who does not actively oppose error in every good and right way available at his disposal and in accordance with his ability. God, through Paul, said it this way, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

Bobby Liddell
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Pensacola, FL 32506

Is Science a Friend or Foe of Christ?

(Continued from front page)

of believing they have the right to abuse nature in obedience to this command. God did not command us to abuse it. He commanded us to have dominion over it. The keeping of that command implies that we learn all we are capable of understanding about the world of nature. The understanding and control of nature is what true science is all about.

Of course, God also instituted the procedures for proper worship. He has continued to direct us in every age. We have been fully supplied with all that is necessary to make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15). Man makes a serious mistake when he decides he must add to that which God has given. It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps and so we must have religion.

It is when man's pride overcomes his rationality that the conflict begins. The high priests of humanism are not spokesmen for true science when they utter

their anti-Christian blasphemies. Nor is the preacher a spokesman for true religion when he fails to see that there are voices in nature crying out as loudly as his own that God is both wise and powerful (Psa. 19:1-8 and Rom. 1:20).

Real science is neither a god to be worshipped, nor a Pandora's box. It will neither answer all of our questions or release some new evil upon us every time we open it up. Real science is neither moral nor immoral. It is but an instrument in the hands of men. Used properly, it is a fantastically powerful tool for good. When immoral men gain control it can be just as powerful for destruction. Much depends upon the heart of the men who attempt to use it.

TRUE SCIENCE IS OUR FRIEND

True science is our friend, dear reader. There are two main branches of science. One is *pure science*. The other is technology. Pure science observes nature and then draws logical conclusions and explanations from those observations. When those conclusions and explanations are correct we have at our fingertips the information required to realize something of the majesty of the mind of God. Technology makes practical applications of the facts, laws, and theories pure science produces. Through the power of technology we go to *all the world* by plane, by automobile, or even by television. Technology allows us to *print Bibles* by the multiplied millions. It allows us to heal the sick and feed the hungry. Surely true science is our friend. It is wrong to fight it. It is also wrong to worship it. Let us use it for the service and glorification of God!

A Critique of "How Christianity Grows In The City"

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In 1985, brother Alvin Jennings mailed over 15,000 copies of **How Christianity Grows in the City** to churches of Christ, in which he espoused a humanly-devised plan of church organization and evangelism. The book, outlining a modified Roman Catholic plan of organization with a Crossroads plan of evangelism, was dedicated to the infamous Boston Church of Christ holding them up as a "model to all the believers."

In response, brother Wayne Coats has written **A Critique of "How Christianity Grows in the City."** In 1987, the Pearl Street church in Denton, Texas, oversaw the mailing of some 15,000 copies of brother Coats' book to congregations worldwide. Now, brother Coats, in an effort to inform brethren as to the true nature of the Crossroads/ Boston movement, is making this much needed volume (235 pages) available in lots of 12 or more for only \$1.00 per copy (plus \$2.50 postage per dozen). **Orders must be for at least 12 copies.** For orders above 12 copies, add .20 per copy for postage. Send orders to: **Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32506.**

4002-B

Thou Hast Lied Unto God

Roger Jackson

After the Apostles had suffered the threatenings of the Sanhedrin Council, they returned to the company of the believers to report. The congregation lifted up its voice with one accord and praised God for the courage that had been demonstrated (Acts 4:1-30). Following this unity of praise, there was a continuation of the distribution of their goods to the poor started in Acts 2:44, 45. It is at 4:36 that we first learn about the benevolent Barnabas. Amidst this sharing, there arises a grievous sin. Ananias and Sapphira broke the bond of peace by lying about the price that a piece of ground had brought in sale, implying by action and stating by word of mouth that it represented the total amount (Acts 5:1-5). Acts 5:4 delineates the seriousness of their error; "...thou hast not lied unto men, but to God." This is an elliptical statement. They had lied to men, but the more important matter was that they had lied to God, and to demonstrate that, the sin is spoken of as if it were only relevant to God. Although the matter is told to men, liars ought to always remember that the most important thing is that they lie unto God.

We learn from this event that no matter how warm and wonderful the peace and unity might be, there will always be those among us whose hearts are not with us (I John 2:19).

Will a man lie to God? If God assumed the appearance of man and could be seen face-to-face no one would lie to him (we suppose). Men forget that God is omniscient as well as omnipresent (Gen. 16:13; Psa. 139:7-11). He even knows every idle word we speak (Matt. 12:36, 37). Men have stood in the great face of God and lied about where they were and what they knew (Gen. 3:8; 4:9). When he returned from his Amalekite debacle Saul had the nerve to say, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord" (I Sam. 15:13b). He knew that he had done no such thing. It is strange that sinners can be shown the error of their way and still maintain their innocence. Those who do so add to their sin the sin of lying to God (I John 1:6).

Most people do not want to lie to God, but it is not true that all men share that sentiment. Not for one minute do we doubt the truthfulness of the fact that many unscrupulous men are lying to God, albeit some explicitly and others implicitly.

False teachers lie to God. Since the word of God is the truth (John 17:17), that which is its opposite or substitute is a lie. No man or angel has the right to preach such a thing (Gal. 1:6-9). The motive of false doctrine is given in I Timothy 4:1-4—people just cannot stand the truth. The character of false doctrine is given in I John 2:21—all kinds of lies. And the result of false doctrine is given in II Thessalonians

2:11, 12—those who believe it will be lost, not excused. Perhaps we will stop courting false teachers as if they are not so bad when we understand they are liars. Our text tells us what God did with the first liars in the church (Acts 5:1-11).

Charismatics have lied to God. When a man stands up and gives his "experience" explaining what God has done for him by way of the miraculous, there are at least two people who know without doubt that he is lying: He knows it and God knows it. It doesn't matter if he claims that he has seen and conversed with enough angels to pay our national debt at a dollar a head, if they contradict what God has said in His word they are all liars and those who follow the advice will be as odious to God as the old lying prophet and his young disciple (I Kgs. 13:18). Have neither respect nor regard for false teachers, brethren (Deut. 18:22). In Ezekiel's time there were men who were saying God had spoken when He had not—at least not by them (Ez. 13:6, 7). In Acts 19:13-17 a group of boys tried to act like they had something they did not have and did not know anything about, and they got caught. We are still catching Sceva's grandsons every time they try debating the issue.

Hypocrites have lied to God. I mean Swaggart, Bakker, Roberts, *et al.* Repeatedly, these men, and others like them, show themselves to be the fakes they are, and yet people still send them millions. Why! I think Jeremiah said it best: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, AND MY PEOPLE LOVE TO HAVE IT SO" (Jer. 5:31, emphasis added). Of course their followers are not God's people (with the exception of a few apostates), but the message cannot be missed. Those who have come to their senses have seen the sheer hypocrisy gone to seed (Matt. 7:1-5; Rom. 2:17-24).

There are deliberate derilects among God's people who implicitly lie to God, and we are generally letting them get by with it.

Preachers may be guilty of lying to God. When a man calls himself a "gospel preacher" and he soft pedals the gospel, waters it down and makes it so mushy it doesn't even resemble the truth, he is lying to God. He isn't a gospel preacher! He ought to quit claiming that he is. The man who allows some spineless brother or sister who does not want his sectarian friends to be offended by hearing the truth, threaten, intimidate, or "brow-beat" him into backing off, is not a gospel preacher, and a liar if he says otherwise (II Tim. 4:2).

A deacon who wears the "title" and does not serve as the work demands is a liar. The Bible plainly says it is a work (I Tim. 3:8-10). The men who try to be

deacons when they are not qualified lie when they accept the designation "deacon" when they know good and well they are not.

An elder who does not meet the qualifications (there is no such thing in reality) yet attempts to serve in that capacity is lying to God (I Tim. 3:1-7). The elder who will not oversee the flock (Acts 20:28), guard it from false doctrine (I Pet. 5:1-5), and be ready to give account for every soul that is his charge (Heb. 13:17), is not an elder. If he will not do his duty he is lying to God to claim to be an elder.

Every Christian who refuses to live as the Bible directs, and who knows better, is lying to God. They are literally living a lie. The church is burdened with

too many (one is too many) "professing Christians." They do not act or speak as Christians should. They are not involved in soul winning. They do not attend worship services as they should, and in many other ways demonstrate that they are anything except Christians. When a person professes what he knows he does not practice, he is living a lie.

None of us should want to lie to God. Great care must be taken not to do so. The words of our mouths, the meditation of our hearts and the actions of our hands need to be directed by the Lord (Psa. 19:13, 14; Luke 19:8; Acts 8:22-24).

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The Substitutions of Jereboam

Eddie Helms

Man often learns by his mistakes and the mistakes that are seen in the lives of others. One reason that history is taught to school-aged children is to learn from the successes and from the failures of the past. Jehovah God has given unto man an inspired history book by which man can learn (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:6). In this Great Book man learns that God was sorely displeased when people substituted God's way with their own. Man learns that when substitutions are made, he is severely punished (Gen. 4:1-8; Lev. 10:1-2). Man learns that when God gives directions unto his people to follow, man should not change that way for some substitute or alternative (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19). We find an example of this failure to hearken unto God in the life of Jereboam, the son of Nebat (1 Kings 12:25-33). Jereboam provided substitutes for the people which turned out to be sin (1 Kings 12:30). What substitutes did he provide for them and what can we learn from those mistakes?

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PLACE of worship (1 Kings 12:27-29). Jerusalem was God's appointed place of worship (Deut. 12:5-14; 1 Kings 11:32). Jereboam said "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem" (1 Kings 12:28, A.S.V.) so he made two calves, placing them in Dan and Bethel, providing substitutes for the children of Israel.

Man provides substitutes today for God's appointed place. Denominationalism, cultism and spiritualism are all alternatives that suit the many desires of man. For those who desire a social atmosphere, humanitarian goals and the combining with a little religion, man has provided for himself the Salvation Army and Masonic Lodges as alternatives to God's appointed place.

In the New Testament Age, however, God's ordained

place for man to worship and serve him is the church of God's Son, Jesus Christ! Man is to glorify God in this appointed place (Eph. 3:21). All the saved are in this body where all spiritual blessings are found (Eph. 5:23-27; Acts 2:47; Eph. 1:3; 1 Cor. 12:13). Corporate worship is to take place in the public assembly of God's body of the saved, the church (1 Cor. 11:18-20; 16:1-2; Acts 20:7). Why would anyone want to forsake this assembly for any alternative (Heb. 10:24-25)? In Acts 20:28 we learn that Christ's blood purchased the church... **HIS CHURCH!** The Baptist Church belongs to them, the Methodist Church belongs to the Methodists, the Masonic Lodge belongs to the Masons and the Salvation Army belongs to those folks. Christ did not die for these substitutes! Brethren, if we substitute these groups for the church it will become a sin for us!

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PRIESTHOOD (1 Kings 12:31; 13:33-34). God had appointed Aaron's sons to the office of the High Priest and the other families of the Levites performed the various duties around the tabernacle (Num. 4; 18:1-7). However, Jereboam appointed priests from tribes other than the tribe of Levi, which became a sin (1 Kings 13:34).

Denominationalism has a system something like the system of Jereboam. The clergy/laity distinction is the product of denominationalism. The pastor system of denominationalism is a substitute form of the already substituted form of Catholicism where the members are required to "pray through" the priests to receive salvation. The pastor concept is that each member must call on the pastor with his needs. Many times in the Lord's church our actions and ideas are not far from this denominational concept of the "preacher being the pastor."

Brethren, the Lord teaches through His Word that each Christian is a priest, yea, the entire body of Christ is a kingdom of priests (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:5-6; 5:9-10). All have the privilege as individuals to offer acceptable sacrifices to God (Heb. 13:5; 1 Pet. 2:5).

Let us not substitute God's New Testament system of church government. The Bible teaches that God has selected elders (pastors, bishops, presbyters) as God's leaders of the church, and *not* preachers (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-2; Heb. 13:17; James 5:13-14).

Many have given over their responsibility of evangelism to the preacher, thinking that their contribution has paid the preacher to do their part. What is this but a substitution like that of Jereboam? Do not substitute God's selection and obligation of every member evangelism with the idea that someone else can do your job for you! The great commission was given to every member (Matt. 29:18-20; Acts 8:4; 1 Cor. 15:58; Titus 2:14; Phil. 2:14-16). Let us appreciate the responsibilities and the obligations we have as God's priests and do away with the substitutes and alternative ideas!

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PERSON of worship (1 Kings 12:28-29). The king made two golden calves placing one at Dan and the other at Bethel. This reminds us of the folly of Aaron in Exodus 32:4-8. Israel served the god Baal (1 Kings 18:21). Israel served materialism (Jer. 6:13). All these were substitutes and all substitutes are sin (Isa. 43:10-13). Jehovah God is the person of worship (Exod. 20:2-5).

Man must never substitute the person of his worship. Man must worship and serve the Creator God of the universe and not the creature (John 4:23-24; Matt. 4:8-10; Rom. 1:24-25). All substitutes will fail! Materialism will fail (Luke 12:20-21). Trusting in self will cause one to lose his spiritual life, therefore it will fail as a substitute (Matt. 16:24-26; Luke 9:23-25). Trusting in man will also fail (2 Tim. 2:16-19). Don't settle for anything less than that which God gives and blesses man with, for all will fail except God! "...I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Heb. 13:5b-6, A.S.V.). Do not settle for any substitute (Rev. 22:8-9).

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PATTERN of worship (1 Kings 12:32-33). Jehovah God gave unto Israel laws concerning the religious festivals including the requirements of the worship to be carried out by them during the seventh month (Lev. 23). God had demanded strict adherence to the pattern (Exod. 25:40) and He always demands obedience (Heb. 2:1-3).

Substitute patterns are numerous today when it comes to the worship of God. It seems that many have the "Jereboam Complex." The New Testament shows God's pattern of worship. The New Testament is the

covenant enacted upon better promises and is a better covenant than the Old Testament. Therefore, it behooves us today to conform to the pattern of worship given us by Almighty God (Heb. 8:5-6).

The New Testament pattern commands God's people to worship on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). It was on this day that the first century saints gathered together to partake of the Lord's supper. To partake of this memorial feast on any other day or to propose to ponder upon the elements which represent the body and the blood of the Lord only on special occasions or once every quarter, is to reject the pattern given by Jehovah God.

God's church is to be supported by free-will offerings collected upon the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7). In this day of substitution and rejection of authority, many money-making schemes are advanced in the name of religion. One may see walk-a-thons, fast-a-thons, car washes, garage sales, spaghetti suppers and even gambling in the form of bingo used to raise funds for the church. And, brethren, many would be surprised to know that even in the church of the Lord some of these actions are being condoned in some areas! These substitutions are sin!

The Lord's people are to come together and sing with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). God has given the type of music He desires as far as New Testament worship is concerned and all the references in the New Testament require vocal music. Yes, and the Bible gets even more specific than vocal music. The record says to "sing" and "speak," using words that teach and admonish. Some, however, want to add something else, having undoubtedly the Jereboam complex. In the church today, there are some who are substituting the Divine command to sing, choosing to sing and hum, sing and clap and to sing with recorded sounds of voices mimicking mechanical instruments of music. Hand clapping, humming and vocal bands are additions to the command to sing! Brethren, you cannot speak to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs through the sounds of percussion instruments nor can you teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs through hand clapping. You can only speak, teach and admonish one another through verbal communication, through words, just as God has commanded! May we always be found striving to conform to the pattern and always contending for that pattern (Jude 3).

Jereboam's religion was a religion of substitutes which was a religion of sin. It was a religion which brought condemnation because it was a false religion, having its origin in men rather than in God. In order to be pleasing to God, men must be doers of God's word (James 1:22). Men must be followers of the way of Jesus rather than the ways of Jereboam (John 8:31-32). Let's not substitute His way for our ways, but

Know Truth Or No Truth

Steve Gunter

Titanic battles for truth often rage "far from the madding crowd" as it were, and only much later will the consequences filter into the mind of the public at large. The public, not privy to the particulars of the debate, accept whatever "shakes down" from the higher planes of discussion with little or no dissension of elaboration. Such certainly proved to be the case with the initially obscure written works of Immanuel Kant, who flourished in the 17th Century (the infamous "Age of Reason"). Kant's book, the mis-titled CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON, was forerunner to a heresy making havoc of the Lord's church today.

Kant gave life to the philosophy of pragmatism. The pragmatist claims to *know* that one *cannot* know *anything*. The mighty paradox contained within pragmatism escapes the attention of careless contemporary philosophers who so eagerly bash and berate steadfast believers in the Lord.

Our Lord certainly *knew* better when he said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Likewise the apostle Paul knew better when he wrote, "...for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (1 Tim. 1:12).

Christians have knowledge of truth. It is ever error of the highest order to admit pernicious pragmatism into our papers, our pulpits, and into the population at large. The popularity of pragmatism is no cause for mystery. The lax and loose society perceives toleration of every opinion as the hallmark of healthy minds and wholesome hearts. The narrow lens of revelation removes this evil philosophy from our consideration. John 17, Ephesians 4, chapter after chapter and verse upon verse, the scriptures demand not something less than truth, not anything more than truth, but the truth and all the truth which is that knowledge that shall bring us salvation in Christ, the Son of God and the church (singular) his body (Eph. 1:22, 23).

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Ye Shall Be As Gods

Steve Gunter

Nature provides a prior period of gestation ere new life issues forth in the carnal kingdom. Likewise, in the realm of ideas, a time of natal development precedes the appearance of an idea in physical form. Certainly such has been the case in the history of religious concepts.

For an example, one might consider the lengthy gestation of the gospel itself. As early as Genesis 3:15 one reads the promise of God concerning the Redeemer Messiah who will smash the head of the evil one and restore lost men to their Creator and Father. Such passages flow from Genesis 12:1-3, God's pledge to Abraham, right up to the pathfinder of Christianity and its forerunner, John the Baptizer (Matt. 11:10-14).

Satan has worked steadily since man lost innocence in Eden. The gestation of modernism is likewise lengthy, its immediate physical form dating from the days of the secular-minded French Revolution, 1789, and its godless apostles, Diderot, and the other French humanist intellectuals. The foul contagion of physical modernism has since spread over the earth from this initial point.

Satan snared Mother Eve with his "Ye shall be as gods" lie (Gen. 3:5). The very same secular lure has beguiled an entire generation of preaching brethren who daily conspire to compromise the faith, dilute the doctrine, and even cast doubt on the credibility of inspiration itself.

We must "ride to the sound of the guns," with the banner of the Book unfurled. Truth and nothing but truth can save us now.

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

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About Defender

Bobby Liddell

DEFENDER is published monthly, except the month of December, and is mailed each month to thousands of homes subscription free. The elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, Florida, oversee all aspects of the publication. Bobby Liddell, minister of the Bellview congregation, serves as Editor. The Bellview church pays all costs of typesetting, printing, mailing, and the numerous other incidentals, with the help of interested individuals who make financial contributions from time to time. Members of the Bellview church donate hundreds of hours each year to the publication of this paper.

The purpose of *DEFENDER* is to spread the gospel of Christ, to encourage men to faithfulness, to stand for the right and to oppose error; thus, we are "set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). Incidental to that, we are happy to offer news of lectureships, meetings, books and other events of note to our readers. We strive to treat with fairness and from a Biblical perspective all issues. We hold no malice toward any man, but in genuine love for the souls of all men, we send forth this paper.

We appreciate those who take the time to write in response (see "Thanks for Writing"). We encourage you to help us make this the best possible effort for the cause of Christ it can be. If you know of others who would like to receive *DEFENDER*, please let us know. We do not ask for donations, but we do use all donations for publication costs, which are substantial.

We know that not all, not even those who are members of the Lord's church, will agree with our purpose and the content of the paper. We seek to please God, and if that pleases men, then, fine, but if not, we shall still seek to please God. Be assured that, even in dealing with that which is unpleasant, we still seek to be kind and exhibit the true spirit of

Christianity. We shall never compromise the truth to gain favor, nor shall we overlook sin, to prevent one's being our enemy. As long as God blesses us with this opportunity, we shall strive with all our might to present the soul-saving word of God in the very best way within our power. We solicit your prayers to that end.
Bobby Liddell

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S. Suba
Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Face To Face With Genesis 1

Leon D. Stancliff

INTRODUCTION

In a previous article, *Is Science a Friend or Foe of Christ?*, I pointed to the danger which arises when false science, false religion, or both of these enter into the religion/science scene. Tremendous damage can be done when unnecessary and artificial warfare is set up. I also tried to make it clear that true science is the friend of Christ.

In this article I would like to notice another difficulty, of the opposite type. In an effort to harmonize science with religion, there are some who twist either the scriptures, or religion into pretzel shape. For example, a book salesman gave me a complimentary copy of a book which he was sure I would find extremely rewarding. The book was called, *The Genesis Answer*. The author was obviously well meaning. However, by the time he finished his attempt to make some of the teaching of modern science fit into the first chapter of Genesis, he had, in my estimation, compromised both genuine science and true religion.

If we are going to understand the first chapter of Genesis, we will have to sit down before it as a little child. It must be allowed to say just what it was

intended to say, rather than what we must make it say, to fit with present scientific concepts. Let us use several verses from the first chapter of the Bible to illustrate the kind of thing which happens.

GAP THEORY

Radioactive dating procedures have caused much of the scientific world today to accept enormously long periods of past time. We run into such numbers as twenty billion years for the age of the universe. On the other hand, adding up the days and years listed in the scriptures would lead us to believe in a much shorter age. Archbishop Usher calculated about four thousand years until the arrival of Christ. Usher is not alone in his calculations. Isaac Newton also made similar calculations. My own addition, using literal dates listed in the scriptures, falls within one hundred years of those of Usher and Newton.

What then does God's "little helper" do? He looks at the first and second verses of Genesis one and finds that the earth *WAS* without form and void. He then makes a comprehensive study of the word translated "was" and finds that in certain places the word is translated "became." Now he has an escape route.

DEFENDER

Bobby Liddell, Editor

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God's original creation must have been perfect, but was later ravaged by the entry of sin. It must have "become" waste and void because God had it for this so-called pre-Adamic sin. Thus the first and second verses of Genesis One could refer to an original creation and a later renewal. He can even throw all of the dinosaurs in between verse one and verse two??

If the curious student will gather together all of the various translations available to him, and note how the word "was" in verse two has been rendered, he will be impressed. Nearly without exception, even the most liberal translators have translated the word as "was" rather than "became." The first two verses of chapter one of Genesis are not teaching that there is a great gap of time between an original creation and a later renewal. "Gap Theory" is simply an effort to make the scriptures say something they did not intend to say.

You say, "What shall we do then?" Surely modern science cannot be wrong! Let me tell you that after having experienced many years of close companionship with both science and the scriptures, I would rather trust the Holy book revealed by the mind of God than the accumulated logic of human wisdom. One day we shall come to understand that "word of prophecy" (I Peter 1:20) is more sure than any other source of knowledge.

Radioactive dating depends upon the uniformitarian principle that all natural law has operated in the past

as it does today. This *may not be* a valid assumption.

DAYS WITHOUT THE SUN

Let us look at another example. Very early in the creation record we are told that God said, "Let there be light...and God divided the light from the darkness,...and he called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night, and the evening and the morning were the first day." Moving on down the chapter, we find that in the fourth day God made the sun, moon and stars. The sun and the moon were to rule over the day and the night. Now our "little helper" has another problem. How does he make modern science harmonize with the above?

It is very simple. He simply decides that God really created the sun and the moon on the first day when light and darkness were divided. Then he explains that what happened on the fourth day was not the creation. It was the "peeking through" of the sun and the moon. They had been there all the time. But only on the fourth day could they be seen.

Why must we try to limit God in such manner? God can produce light without the sun and the moon. Watch the tail of the firefly. It cannot only illuminate an entire bedroom; it divides the light and the darkness, going on and off periodically. Once again we have attempted to force God into the mold of human capabilities and reason. His thoughts and abilities are infinite. Ours are not.

The Schools Of The Prophets

Larry D. Mathis

The very mention of the idea that some of the Old Testament prophets "went to school" will likely be questioned by some. This, no doubt, is a new concept for many of our people. In putting forth such a proposition there is absolutely no intention whatsoever on our part to appear dogmatic, yet, at the same time we do not hesitate to say that we are fully convinced that such schools did exist in Old Testament times.

We suggest that this subject may be unfamiliar territory to some due to the fact that our knowledge of these schools comes from incidental references in the Old Testament. While it is true that we must turn to incidental references to learn about The Schools of The Prophets, the fact remains that, when those incidental references are collected, they constitute a considerable body of material for contemplation. Shortly, in this article, we will cite those incidental references, so that we might learn more about these schools.

What Purpose Did These Schools Serve?

These schools developed some three thousand years ago within the nation of Israel and became a great and vital spiritual force for good in the days of such great men as Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha. Evidently these schools were organized for the training of young men in spiritual matters in order that they might assist in awaking and reforming apostate Israel. These schools were made up of interested individuals who gathered around a great prophet to learn from him.

Samuel Was The Founder Of The Schools Of The Prophets

Prophets appeared from the earliest times and were scattered throughout Old Testament history. For example, "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied" (Jude 14-15). God informed Abimelech that Abraham was "a prophet" (Gen. 20:7). And, Moses was "a prophet" whom Jehovah knew face to face (Deut. 34:10). While a number of prophets had

appeared long before Samuel, it was not until Samuel that a line of continuous prophets began (Acts 3:24). It is our studied conclusion that: (1) Prophets sprang up here and there before the time of Samuel; (2) That beginning with Samuel a continuous line of prophets began; and (3) Samuel was the founder of The Schools of The Prophets. A close examination of the books of First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings, we believe, will abundantly show this to be the case.

Biblical Allusions

Several Biblical allusions are made to these prophetic students. They are referred to as the "company" (KJV) or "band" (ASV) of prophets. One who attended these schools was known as one of the "sons of the prophets" (I Kings 20:35), or as a "servant of the man of God." (II Kings 6:15). To illustrate, in First Samuel 10:9-12 we learn that King Saul met "a *band* of prophets" and that "he prophesied among them." Then in First Kings 20:35 we read of "a certain man of the *sons* of the prophets." Also, Second Kings 2:3,5 states that "the *sons* of the prophets that were at Bethel (and Jericho) came to Elisha." According to Second Kings 4:38, when Elisha came to Gilgal the *sons* of the prophets sat before him. And, Second Kings 5:22 speaks of two young men of the *sons* of the prophets.

The Directors Over The Various Schools

Those who taught and served as directors or headmasters over the various Schools of The Prophets were called "father" or "master." When Saul, following his anointing as king, prophesied among the prophets, the question was asked, "And who is their *father*?" (I Sam. 10:12). In Second Kings 2:3 we read, "And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, knowest thou that Jehovah will take away thy *master* (that is Elijah) from the head today?" Compare Second Kings 2:5. And, on one occasion when the sons of the prophets were engaged in the construction of a new school building, and the ax-head of one of the young men fell into the water, he said, "Alas, my *master*! for it was borrowed" (II Kings 6:1-7).

The headmasters of these schools were well known prophets such as Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha.

Five Known Schools

We know of five Schools of The Prophets. There was a school at Ramah, and apparently some type of dormitory as well. "Naioth" is thought to be a reference to such a dwelling (I Sam. 7:17; 19:18-24). There was a school at Gibeah (I Sam. 10:5). Both of these schools were associated with Samuel.

There was a school at Bethel and at Jericho (II Kings 2:3,5,15). These schools were associated with Elijah and Elisha.

And, it seems that Elisha also had a School of The Prophets at Gilgal (II Kings 4:38-41).

The Student Body

It seems that those who attended The Schools of The Prophets, generally speaking, were young, married men. This is learned from the following verses: Second Kings 5:22 says, "Behold, even now there are come to me from the hill-country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets." And in Second Kings 9:4 we read, "So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-Gilead." At least some of these young prophetic students were married and had children. This is seen in Second Kings 4:1-7 where the text reads, "Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha...the creditor is come to take unto him my two children to be bondmen."

Department Of The Students

Scripture indicates that these prophetic students held their headmasters in high regard; they treated their teachers with respect and were very loyal in carrying out their assigned tasks. To illustrate: Elisha was Elijah's servant and was known as the one "who poured water on the hands of Elijah" (II Kings 3:11; I Kings 19:19-21). Also, from Second Kings 9:1-10, we learn that Elisha, the prophet, placed enough confidence in one of his prophetic "sons" to commission him to anoint Jehu as king over Israel. These are examples of the type of loyalty these students exhibited.

Curriculum, Tuition, Finances, Etc.

There are no specifics outlined in the Scriptures as to what the admission policy was, or of what the course of study consisted, or as to whether or not the students paid any tuition. Nothing is said about the operation of the schools and the matter of finances. The law of Moses did not make any provision for the support of such Schools (it did make provision for the support of the Levitical priesthood).

From piecing incidental references together, it seems that the course of study in these schools consisted of the following: (1) worship; (2) preaching and service; (3) perhaps music?; and (4) the law of Moses. See I Samuel 10:5; II Kings 4:38; 9:1-ff.

Student Upkeep

As we mentioned earlier, these young prophetic students, generally speaking, were married men with families to care for. So far as their income is concerned, they may have been self-supporting—engaging in agricultural pursuits, or they may have depended on free-will offerings from those they spiritually benefited. It was customary to give the man of God something for his service.

We learn from First Kings 19:19 that Elisha plowed with twelve yoke of oxen, and from First Samuel 9:5-8 that it was considered obligatory to give a present to the man of God.

Also, in First Kings 4:1-7 we note that the "father" or "master" of The Schools of The Prophets showed

fatherly care for the sons of the prophets and also for their wives and children. Through the assistance of the headmaster, on this occasion, the wife of one of the prophetic sons was able to pay her debts.

And it appears that those who attended the schools lived in a kind of commune and ate in common, or dormitory style. When Elisha came to Gilgal a dearth was occurring "and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him." Elisha said, "Set on the great pot (dormitory cooking), and boil pottage for the sons of the prophets." Elisha said, "Pour out for the people, that they may eat" (II Kings 4:38-41).

Growing, Thriving Schools

From Second Kings 6:1-7 we learn that The Schools of The Prophets were growing and thriving. On this occasion the students requested permission of Elisha to build a chapel? schoolhouse? or dormitory? The text reads, "And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell before thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee,

unto the Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye."

Conclusion

It is evident that these schools played an important role in preparing men to reform apostate Israel. Though they were not specifically commanded by the law of Moses, they had a place, and evidently God honored the work they did. We need good schools among us today where men can train for service in the kingdom. Thanks be to God for all of the faithful schools (that teach Bible) among us, and that prepare great servants in the church. They are worthy of our support.

[The material contained in this article is not original with this writer. I have drawn heavily from articles written by Rex A. Turner, Sr., and Robert R. Taylor, Jr. I wish to express my thanks to them for their work.]

The Gospel's Gimmicks

Jerri Manasco

The world is full of gimmicks to attract the crowds. "Buy one, get one free" draws a crowd! Daily we are saturated with all sorts of gimmicks that tend to appeal to our covetous nature! It is often refreshing, however, to hear an advertiser say, "No gimmicks, no frills, just plain old good service...." It's past time for the Lord's church to learn this simple approach: no gimmicks, just plain old scripture teaching.

The gospel needs no gimmicks to make it effective. The parable of the sower presents the word of God as the effective means of reaching the hearts of people (Luke 8:11-15). It is interesting to note that Jesus tells of the sower who sowed the SEED (that is, the word of God, verse 11) and then allowed the soil to process the implanted seed as it would. This of course does not imply that the sower did not make adequate preparation of the soil previously, but it does mean that the seed is what must bring forth the fruit; the soil determines whether that seed will germinate, grow, and bring forth fruit.

Gimmicks can't transform bad soil into fertile ground. Even so, gimmicks cannot transform the resisting heart into a receptive one. Jesus didn't offer the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-22; Luke 18:18-30) a matching set of jeweled cuff links if he would come and be a follower of his. I fear that had some of the brethren of our present times been there, they would have recommended some such approach to "get people like the rich man interested."

When Mark recorded the Great Commission, it is truly clear that the emphasis is upon the preached word with the results being left up to the hearer of that word. "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15,16). The preacher is to preach the gospel; the hearer then has the option of believing or not believing. How simple that is! Yet in our present time, we have those experts and specialists in church growth who seem to think that that just isn't enough! If the hearer won't "respond" to the simple preaching, then hold up some sort of persuasive device that might entice him or her to be "baptized." Those with the gimmick approach have misread the text in Mark 16:16. Where Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized *shall be saved*," the gimmick philosophy says, "Preach the word, then do what you have to do to get all the numbers you can." The offer of Jesus is salvation TO THOSE WHO WANT IT; the offer of the gimmick gospel is to get all the people interested anyway you can. But for those who want a gimmick, let me offer three such "gimmicks":

Simple preaching is quite a "gimmick." The preaching of the cross is the power of God to save (I Cor. 1:18; Rom. 1:15,16). God chose to save through the "foolishness of preaching" (I Cor. 1:21). Paul chose to preach the gospel without wisdom of words, *i.e.*, without some pet gimmicky approach that

he thought would enhance the message (I Cor. 1:17). We have reached such a state in many areas of the brotherhood that if the preachers there DID start preaching the word, someone would think that THEY were using some gimmick and wonder what they were up to! It is surprising how the preaching of the unadulterated gospel is viewed as it is in the Lord's church today. It's time to get back to it.

The example of Christian living is a "gimmick." Now there's a "gimmick"! Instead of churches trying to find some gimmick or seeking some church specialist (?) to get the community interested in the

church, it might do well for the local membership to do some serious heart searching. It might be time for their preacher to start rebuking sin and lukewarmness in the ranks. The problem in too many cases is not that the church doesn't have a sufficient message to offer, but the church doesn't have a suitable life to go with it. Holding forth the word of life as blameless and harmless Christians is about the best "gimmick" there is to silence the critics and make an impression on the neighborhood (Phil. 2:14-16; I Pet. 2:12; 3:14-17).

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"The Three R's" Of Trouble

Jackie M. Stearsman

Problems are a part of the real world. God permits them and forms our character in the process. When we conform to his directive we become a vessel of honor, but when we do not we are unfit for his association (Rom. 9:21-23; II Tim. 2:20-21).

I. The Reality of Trouble

Some have been conditioned to think that any sign of trouble is an evidence of failure to all parties involved. It is true that when trouble comes there is a failure in the lives of many people, but this is not always the case. Job was not the sole cause of his problems and neither was Jesus.

A. Jesus Had Trouble

He came to be identified with our afflictions and to provide us with insight and deliverance from destructive troubles (Isa. 53). Consider his words carefully:

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (John 12:27-28).

"When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me" (John 13:21).

B. The Prophets Had Trouble

Jesus gave special recognition to those who would have trouble because they faithfully followed him. He encouraged them by focusing their attention to the faithful prophets in the past.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you"

(Matt. 5:10-12).

C. The Early Church Had Trouble

Numerous passages reveal how extensive the trouble was. To the faithful, Jesus provides a means of peace amidst problems.

1. Trouble with the world

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

"But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled" (I Pet. 3:14).

2. Trouble with false brethren

"Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:" (Acts 15:19).

"Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:" (Acts 15:24).

3. Managing trouble prepares one to help others

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (II Cor. 1:4).

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;" (II Cor. 4:8-9).

"For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears" (II Cor. 7:5).

4. Rest from trouble is assured

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels..." (II Thess. 1:6-7).

Read the Lord's extended admonitions and exhortation to the Apostles recorded in Matthew 10 and John 15:18-16:26.

D. We May Expect Trouble

We have the same type problems the prophets and early church had. They had problems from within and problems from without. They had problems when they preached the truth and men and women did not wish to comply with it.

Trouble will always come as the natural consequence of disobedience: "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (Isa. 48:22).

The Lord does not look with favor on those who cause trouble—neither should we (II Thess. 1:6-10).

II. Trouble Is Revealing

"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (I Cor. 11:19).

To have been a part of the community of Corinth in the days of Paul would have meant that our character would have been tested by the problems and troubles of that day. Only by complying with revealed truth could we have become and remained the people of God.

By the trouble at Corinth the genuine as well as the false, fake, and fraudulent were revealed. It will ever be this way. God has so designed it (I Cor. 14:37-38).

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Cor. 3:10-17).

III. Trouble May Be Rewarding

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:2-4).

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Psalm 119:71).

"For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent; for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you. Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and the exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all. For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth. And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things" (II Cor. 7:8-16).

Conclusion

May we never forget that problems and trouble are a necessary component of our world. Let us never lose sight of the truth that problems come to all. When trouble confronts us, we will manifest to those observing either that our character is molded by the will of God or that it needs to be.

What happens to us is never as important as what we permit God to make of us in the process.

When we feel that troubles are too great let us remember that problems are real; that problems are revealing; and that problems may be rewarding.

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