

# Defender

*"I am set for the defense of the gospel"*

*Volume XIII*

*1984*



January

April

July

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February

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# DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16

VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 1

1984

## The Image Of The Church

Dennis J. Gullledge

What has been the image of the church of Christ in ages passed? In the first century it was both good and bad. In Acts 2:47 we find that the Lord's church was "Praising God, and having favour with all the people..." However, that favorable public image had changed somewhat in Acts 28:22 where we discover that the church was that "sect...everywhere spoken against." Paul revealed that public image of the church in his day, when he wrote, "Being defamed, we en-

treat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day" (1 Cor. 4:13). James wrote to the Christians of the dispersion, asking, "Do not they [the rich] blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?" (James 2:7). So we see that the public image of the Lord's church has been both good and bad.

It seems that more and more it is being insisted by some that we need to work for a  
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# Beginning Again

Max R. Miller

Sometimes one may hear another wishing they could live their life over again. Such is wishful thinking and folly indeed. Time passed is gone forever; the past will never come before us again. It is sad that one has made such a failure of life that one would want to go back and live it again. Although one cannot live their past life again they can, in a sense, begin life anew. They can be born again.

The past is unchangeable, the future is uncertain but it always holds forth hope and promise. Today is the day of opportunity for action. "Today is the day of salvation". Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about the new life; about beginning over again (John 3:18). Nicodemus realized the impossibility of going backward and living his life again. He, as we should, was to realize that it is a "beginning again" that is most essential.

Jesus' expression, "be born again," alludes to a process; a law of birth is inherent in the statement. All that are born are born according to a certain process or law. In speaking of physical birth there is an allusion to process or law of physical birth: male and female, the planting of the seed, the reception of the seed, and after a period of time the birth of new life. Jesus alluded to God's spiritual law of the new birth, that spiritual process whereby one may become a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15).

The spiritual law and the physical law are alike in principle with each, according to law, bringing forth of its kind. The spiritual law of the new life demands that there first be the planting of the seed, then the reception of the seed which is then followed by the birth of new life. The

spiritual seed that gives life is the divinely inspired word of God. Life begets life. The living word produces spiritual life. The words of Christ "are spirit, and are life" (John 6:63) Paul informs us that "the word of God is living and active" (Heb. 4:12). The word is alive and active in the process of the spiritual birth. The word is spoken of as Peter 1:22).

The implantation of the seed is not miraculous. In fact, there is nothing miraculous about the spiritual birth. It is all according to God's spiritual law. The seed is planted through or by the process of teaching and preaching. Those who are saved the word: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). None can come to Christ for salvation without his being taught, without his learning the will of God as revealed in His word. So, the spiritual seed is the spiritual truth which ultimately brings forth new life, or spiritual life.

The spiritual seed must be planted in the right place in order for it to bring forth its fruit. As surely as a grain of corn will not take root and bring forth its fruit when sown on the black asphalt of a busy highway, neither will it bring forth its fruit when sown on fallow, thorny or rocky ground. When good seed is sown (planted) on good ground it will bring forth fruit "an hundred fold." When the word of God is received in the heart of honest men and women who want to know the truth, who want to do God's will and be saved, then it will have its fruit of spiritual life (Luke 11:415). The reception of the spiritual seed in the "honest and good heart" will have the effect of purifying the soul: "Seeing ye

## DEFENDER

Editor

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Beginning Again)(Continued from page 2)  
have purified your souls in obeying the truth  
through the Spirit...Being born again...by  
the word of God..." (1 Pet. 1:22,23).

To receive the seed is to hear its declaration of facts, believe its promises, and to obey its commands. Anything less than this is to reject the means whereby one may be born again. Such rejection is to "Quench the Spirit," is to "resist the Spirit," for that word is the revelation of the Spirit of God.

Jesus further told Nicodemus that one must "be born of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:5). The Spirit's participation in the new birth is, as we have seen, in the revelation of living truth which gives spiritual life. "Born of water" implies a birth from water, or out of water. Those who have heard, who have received the teaching of the word of God, giving heed to its commandments to repent and to confess Christ as Lord, then are buried with their Lord in the waters of baptism. Are born of water and Spirit. They then are raised from that baptism to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4); ...having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God... Any you ...did he make alive together with Him having forgiven us all our trespasses" (Col. 2:12,13).

It was for this reason and in compliance to God's **spiritual** law of the new birth that Peter said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized...? An he commanded them to be baptized..." (Acts 10:47,48)

To enjoy the "new life" one must abide by God's spiritual law of the new birth. To be a new creature one must be baptized into Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

One should not want to go back and start life again. Likely the stream of life would run along its old course. Had Nicodemus been able to "enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born" such would have had no effect on his spiritual nature, his soul. Jesus taught him that the part of man that is to be born again is that which, like the unseen wind, is invisible to the eye. It is the spirit nature, not the fleshly, that must

be born again. The same truth revealed to Nicodemus applies to many today. "Ye must be born again."

\* \* \* \* \*

## DEATH OF STEPHEN UNDERWOOD

Stephen Underwood of Scot Air Force Base, Bellville, Illinois, was killed in an automobile accident near Bellville in the early morning hours of December 30, 1983. His funeral was on the following Tuesday evening at O'Fallon, Illinois; burial was on Thursday at Dayton, Ohio.

Stephen was married and the father of two infant daughters, ages one and three. Also of his immediate family is a brother, Michael (soon to enter Memphis School Of Preaching), a sister, Jennifer Goldman of Henderson, Tennessee, and his parents, Ernest and Shirley Underwood of Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

For a number of years the Underwood family made their home in Pensacola. Some of Ernest's greatest works were done here. He has been a great friend of the Bellview church of Christ and especially a friend and helper of the Bellview Preacher Training School. For a time he was associate editor of this paper, **Defender**. His many friends in these quarters, and those the world over, wish to express to the Underwood family heartfelt sympathy and love for them in their time of deep sadness and loss. May they too be comforted by the faith of Stephen and the relation he sustained with his heavenly Father. This tragedy comes at a most difficult time for Ernest and Shirley as they had made preparations to depart January 25 for Hong Kong and begin evangelistic works in the Far East. Their departure is now delayed for a time. May the God of love and consolation comfort them all in their sorrow and loss, is our prayer.

Ernest Underwood has requested that memorials be sent to the Bellview Preacher Training School, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506.

# Born Too Soon

Louis Everette Rushmore

In recent years I have sometimes wondered if I was born too soon. This question probably first occurred to me while I was working with a fifty year old congregation, many of whose members had been converted ten to thirty years before its organization. For the most part, the members did not fuss and fight, godly values were common throughout the congregation, and God's Holy Word was held in high esteem by all of the brethren. It was a delight to boldly proclaim the gospel message before them, and they would allow no less.

In other labors too, I found myself more easily befriending older brethren, some not "aged," others elderly. On the other hand, my family and I have often found it difficult to appreciate the course in religion younger brethren sometimes seem determined to chart for themselves and others in the church. Those with whom I have been the most comfortable and agree concerning Biblical matters are older than I am, sometimes much older. More often I have been less comfortable and agreed less with younger brethren, especially those my own age. Perhaps naturally, then, I pondered whether I was born too soon.

It has been my experience that older brethren are more likely to respect the authority of the Scriptures and assess Biblical matters with respect to what God through the Spirit has recorded in His Word. Consequently, both they and I are inclined to heed what God has always intended the Christian to understand, believe, and practice concerning marriage and divorce. We know that Matthew 19:9 has not changed with the passing years. Together we approve of a persuasive gospel and deny gimmicks any place in the church (Rom. 1:16). We are with one mind offended by efforts to interject any of the following into the church: premillinealism, the A.D. 70 Theory, Crossroadism, Bible perversions mis-named translations, the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, women leading prayer before men, so-called miracles today, instrumental music in worship, open fellowship with denominations, various forms of anti-ism, rank liberalism, and every other untoward

departure from the narrow way of life. We are not encouraged to approve these things because some brethren may themselves approve them. Neither is it encouraging to faithful brethren to note that other brethren seem determined to add to the three divine missions of the church another mission, entertainment. Furthermore, I highly resent as a gospel preacher the instruction I once received from an elder to no longer preach on faith, repentance, and baptism. At the conclusion of or in the course of every sermon I preach, I have and will continue to enumerate the gospel plan of salvation.

Once when I mentioned to an 86 year old sister in Christ that I have pondered if it would have been better for me if I had been born fifty, eighty, or an hundred years earlier, her reply proved to be thought provoking. She said that though she never would have thought so she now believed that she also was born too soon! She too wished she had lived in a time when the authority of the Scriptures was more uniformly respected by brethren. She too wished the Restoration pleas were resounded today. She also wished that materialism and modernism did not have such a heavy-handed grasp on our nation and the church.

However, after studying restoration history and reflecting on some of the doctrinal problems characteristic of the first century church, I realize that in every generation there have been both the faithful as well as the less than faithful children of God. Restoration histories indicate that brethren in the beloved American Restoration Movement fostered somewhat conflicting attitudes toward the authority of the Scriptures. Consequently, brethren commonly held to three popular stances on the instrumental music and Bible Society questions. While the group of brethren with who we identify today opposed both on Biblical grounds, another equally convicted group of brethren endorsed both. But alas, the vast majority of brethren reportedly condoned Bible societies and condemned instrumental music.

The Restoration Movement knew its stalwarts of the faith as well as its radicals and middle-of-the-roaders. Hence, one generation differs little from another; man has not substantially changed since he was first placed upon the earth. God's Word always has been and is yet the sole authority in religion on which faithful men wholly rely.

Our New Testament was written in part because to some degree Christians had departed from the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42). The Corinthian church had offended in many points, beginning with the formulation of a sectarian spirit and strife (Cor. 1:10-13). They were also guilty of glorying in sin and perversion of the Lord's Supper, among other things (Ch. 5 & 11). Five of the seven churches of Asia were also blameworthy (Rev. 2 & 3).

Individuals were also noted in the New Testament for their attempt to corrupt the church, the spotless bride of Christ. The apostle Paul warned that even elders would draw disciples to themselves (Acts 20:29,30). False Christ, false prophets and anti-Christ did their share to taint the church in first century times. Judaizing teachers sought to bind laws where God had made none (Acts 15:1; Gal. 1:6-9; 2:2-5; 5:4). Some souls were even called by name for their transgressions against the church (Diotrephes, III John 9-10; Hymenaeus and Alexander, I Tim. 1:19,20). One, then, should not be surprised today that some brethren similarly despise the authority of the Holy Scriptures.

Born too soon? Perhaps even Elijah the prophet of God in his despair pondered whether he was born too soon (I Kings 19:4-10,14). God, however, assured Elijah that he had a mission to perform and that Elijah was not God's only faithful soul left in the land (I Kings 19:15-18). It appears clear that in every generation few truly travel the narrow way (Matt. 7:14,15). In every generation God's children forsake their Creator and corrupt worship and duty. Did not the family of him who walked in the garden with God soon depart from holiness? Did not Israel for whom God fought forsake the Captain of their salvation? Do not Christians even today often ignore the voice of the Spirit who speaks through the Bible? Just as surely as some of Paul's Jewish brethren went about establishing their own righteousness, some and perhaps many Christians today do likewise (Rom. 10:1-3). To whose authority then do they appeal for

their authority? Every faithful Christian, must appeal truly and exclusively to Biblical authority, the single source of a Bible, saving faith, the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). It is high time that faithful disciples fully lend themselves to the Lord in the defense of the gospel; earnestly contending for the only faith once and for all delivered to the saints (Phil 1:17; Jude 3).

Born too soon? No, not at all! The words of Mordecai most fittingly assure you and me that neither of us were born too soon; to the contrary: "For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise...from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou are come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14)?

\* \* \* \* \*

**HERE AM I: SEND ME**

Louis and Bonnie Rushmore and their young children, Rebecca, Raymond, and Robert, are planning to go as missionaries to Hong Kong or Taiwan on or about June 15, 1984. They are presently looking for one sponsoring and several supporting congregations to participate with them in this endeavor. Rushmore is a graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching and has been preaching for ten years. Inquiries are welcome and may be addressed to Louis Rushmore, 3033 Colorado Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois 60087 or call (312)662-3813.

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#### **VOICE OF FREEDOM BREAKFAST**

Annually we have a **Voice Of Freedom** Breakfast at the Freed-Hardeman Lectureships in Henderson, Tennessee. Many outstanding preachers and Bible scholars have spoken. Each one has been a friend and supporter of **Voice Of Freedom**. Each has exalted the paper in his speech.

The 1984 Breakfast will be Wednesday February 8, at 6:30 a.m. in the East Room of Gano Dining Hall. Curtis A. Cates, Director of the Memphis School of Preaching, will be our featured speaker. His topic be "Where Is The Daubing Wherewith Ye Have Daubed It?"

Consider this to be your special invitation to attend this breakfast and aid a great work--the publication of **Voice Of Freedom**.

# I Believe In The Church

Grady Miller

There is much evidence to suggest that the "church" has fallen upon hard times in America. In an age when many are professing to be born again, and despite signs of renewed religious fervor in some sectors, the membership rolls of many of the mainline denominations continue to shrink and shrivel. The United Methodist Church, for example, has lost over one million members within the past decade. The so-called "electronic church" (PTL Club, 700 Club, etc.) has drained millions of dollars from denominational coffers. Many of our religious friends are quick to profess faith in Jesus Christ, but claim no allegiance to any church. To them the church and all of "organized religion" is weak and relatively unimportant.

At whose feet can we lay the blame for these developments? We suggest that the denominational preachers themselves are to blame; they are seeing the harvest of seed they have long sown! By their own admission, they have declared that the church is of no import in the matter of man's salvation. To be sure, they insist that one ought to belong to a church, but stop short of teaching that church membership is necessary; they freely admit that one can be a good Christian and go to heaven and never be a member of their church--or any other church, for that matter! They make an arbitrary distinction between the church of God and the kingdom of God. Many accuse the church of being a substitute, a contingency plan, a stop-gap effort, and not part of God's original plan for saving men. And then these preachers wonder why the church is weak and helpless and their membership declining!

True, every church founded and ruled by man is non-essential; their eventual destruction is assured (Matt. 15:13). The church we read about in the Bible, however, is quite different! The New Testament church was built by Jesus (Matt. 16:18), wears His name (Rom. 16:16) recognizes His authority in all things (Col. 1:18), and is destined for glory (Eph. 5:25-27). The importance of that blood-bought, Spirit-filled body is seen by the following points.

The church is an essential link in God's master plan for the ages. Jesus did not fail to establish His kingdom at His first coming, and inaugurate the church as a substitute measure; He did in fact establish His kingdom--the church! (cf. Mark 9:1; Matt. 16:18,19). The church has always existed in the mind of God; it is a part of His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:11).

The saved are in the church. Since the day of Pentecost, the Lord has added the saved to His church (Acts 2:47). Where in all the New Testament is there an exception to this rule? The church is the family of God (Eph. 2:19; 1 Tim. 3:15); who will impugn the character of God by suggesting that He has children outside His family?

How sad it is that denominational churches built by men have blinded so many to the beauty of the New Testament church. The church we read about in the Bible has a God-given mission, a God-given constitution, a God-given destiny, and a God-given importance that none may deny!

**STOP TAKE NOTE:** Have you completed the request on the front page, if not, please do so now lest you overlook it and not receive the next issue of **Defender**.

## IMAGE (Continued from page 1)

more positive public image for the church of Christ. The primary concern of some is that we make the church more appealing to the masses and to those who are drunk on worldly wisdom. In order to accomplish this some would prefer that we make some basic changes in our overall approach. Let us examine three changes some have suggested that we make in order that we might win the glad hand of worldly praise and favor.

### **The Nature Of The Church Of Christ**

Some would have us change the nature of the church of Christ. This would mean altering some of the basic marks of identification of the Lord's church, such as the doctrine of just one church (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; Col 1:18); the church as the aggregate of the saved (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23); opposition to false ways and keeping the gospel pure. Some are taken with the idea that such is hurtful to our image. We are said to be "sectarian" when we speak of only one church as the Bible does. We are said to be "narrow" when we speak of being saved by full and complete obedience to the gospel of Christ, because this excludes the various ways denominations speak of being saved. We are advised, that in order to have a better community image, we ought not to be vocal in opposition to false teachers and sinful ways, and that we ought to just leave things alone and flow with the public tide.

It is not popular to be distinctive in our day and time. Yet, distinctive we must be! The Bible is a distinctive book and if we fail to be distinctive then we fail to be the Lord's church. If we want to abandon the Biblical teaching regarding the basic nature of the Lord's church which makes it a singular unit, then by all means let us blend in with the denominational world, but let us never speak of ourselves as the Lord's church, because that really is sectarianism!

### **Our Preaching**

Some would have us to change our preaching in the church of Christ. What should characterize our preaching today? What kind of preaching do we need to insure a proper public image? We need nothing more than the old Jerusalem gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). We need nothing more modern than that for the simple reason that we will all be judged by that ancient standard (John 12:48). We need to study, preach and teach that ancient gospel like never before. Its precepts must never fail to be expounded in our assemblies and

classrooms. We need a simple gospel, such as that which characterized Paul's preaching (1 Cor. 2:3-5). We also need a certain gospel which is not corrupted with an uncertain sound, a compromising tone or a confused ring (John 8:32).

However, some are telling us that this kind of preaching is hurtful to our image. It seems that the only concern some have is how we appear before men, but not how we appear before God. If our preaching is damaging to our image we would like to know how. One of our most distinctive features has always been our Bible-centered preaching. We in the churches of Christ have never been inclined to weigh our messages on the fallible scales of human opinion or "modern theology." Reminiscent of this eternal truth are the words of the late brother Eldred Stevens, from the **Spiritual Sword** lectures of 1978, when he said, "Think of the multitudes that have turned their backs on the social gospels, the sob stories, and the philosophical theories of denominationalism, and that have been drawn to us because we preached the Bible, emphasizing the old rather than the new! We must not lose that distinction."

### **Our Attitude Toward Truth And Error**

Some would have us change our attitude toward truth and error. When we begin to actively carry out the principles taught in such passages as Ephesians 6:12; 1 Timothy 1:18; 6:12; 2 Timothy 2:4 and Jude 3, some brethren become concerned that the public image of the Lord's church is being jeopardized. Yet, the obligation which is laid upon us all as soldiers in the Lord's army is that we be militant in our opposition to the forces of spiritual darkness in this world. Nevertheless, too many are insisting that we keep our silence in the face of false teachers, despite the many divine injunctions to the contrary. Too many are critical of honorable debate despite the examples of Elijah, Jesus, Paul, Stephen and John the Baptist.

The point of this article is not to dismiss all concerns for our public image. Rather, it is to insist that standing for the Bible will guarantee that we have the right public image. That image will not always be of the most positive sort. If it is, as some would like it to be, then, we truly have the wrong public image! (Luke 6:26). If our only concern as brethren is how the world sees us, we are wrong to begin with. Our first and primary concern should be how God sees us.



## **Bellview Preacher Training School**

**4850 Saufley Road    Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798**

**Max R. Miller, Director — 904-453-3426**

**COLLEGE LEVEL INSTRUCTION:** Two-year program in six trimesters, eighty-four weeks curriculum of intensified study. The two-year curriculum is a complete exegetical study of the Bible, Christian evidences, religious debate, languages and history; fully preparing the student to preach, teach and defend the truth. VA approved for qualifying veterans. Under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church Of Christ.

## **Student Book Fund Established**

Generous souls have provided means for the beginning of a book fund for students in Bellview Preacher Training School. We are grateful for their thoughtfulness and contributions. Most of the students in any or all of our preacher training schools are on meager incomes, some barely exist on scant support. The Student Book Fund at Bellview will enable our students to gather books and information that is so essential to their training for the gospel ministry. The following have contributed books or money to the fund.

Neil Nicholson	\$100.00	Jim Simmons	\$ 15.00
Lewis Blair	\$100.00	Lester E. Walp, Sr	110.00
Pat Kelley	\$ 50.00	Jerry Lindesmith	100.00

John Stacy of Lake Station, Indiana sent twelve copies of books he has authored, a total of 96 books.

Mr. and Mrs. Otis Hanes of Keys, Oklahoma through Robert Taylor sent a total of 41 books authored by brother Taylor.

**Firm Foundation** provided each student a copy of brother Hugo McCord's book, **These Things Speak**.

Students in Bellview Preacher Training School wish to express their thanks for these contributions.



# DEFENDER

**"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16**

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VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY, 1984

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## CUTTING EDGE

**Bill Graddy**

Have the preachers and all the "Voices crying in the wilderness" lost their "Cutting Edge?" (John 1:23)

By "Cutting Edge" I mean that difference between being terse and tacit. That astuteness which manifests itself in clear and concise meaning with the authority of the New Testament (Neh. 8:8).

Distinctive preaching has a "cutting edge" which makes it different from teaching. Gospel preaching is not bland and mild, but it has what has been referred to by us as the "Jerusalem ring." We know that this means a sounding forth of biblical exegesis with clarity and definiteness, "a thus saith the Lord." In the past, we have prided ourselves, and rightly so, in being able to declare and to delineate the gospel with first century understanding. Across the land today it seems that most of our preaching is so sociable and unflavourable that any religious group would not be disturbed by the message.

It has never been right to be offensive and discourteous in preaching or any other aspect of living. Although some of us may have "left our senses" occasionally while preaching, it has not been and is not now characteristic of gospel preachers to intentionally drive people from the truth.

When the preacher, the pulpit, the paper, and the institution loses its "cutting edge" they are shorn of their power. It is easy to detect this "sharpness" in these areas. Where this "edge" is manifested brethren will be informed, unified, and the truth will be preached. Elders must require and demand

this kind of preaching.

If the church is to be strong, stay strong to the glory of God, then the gospel message must have that distinctive Jerusalem sound like the apostles and preachers of the first century. It is this sort of instructions that will cause all of us to live right or leave the church. To whatever degree we fail to grow, in the main, it will be directly related to this "cutting edge." This is not a radical position. It is the difference of knowing and not knowing the truth! It is this keenness that makes us aware of "the way" (Acts 24:14). The milk and mild diet of preaching has isolated congregations. They are so bland and tasteless that members of the church are no longer living a righteous life. If these members are to be restored to their first love, it will take the "foolishness of preaching" with the "cutting edge" turned toward them to do so. A dull scalpel is useless. The lukewarm and wayward members will always flinch when the preacher wields the sharp two edged sword (Heb. 4:12).

Elders, preachers, editors, professors, school presidents, and all faithful members of the church who are trying to serve the Lord, let us keep the "cutting edge" honed with love for the truth and declare it with all the power of our being, realizing that some day soon we will stand in the august presence of God to be judged by the same word of God that we have been trying to preach to ourselves and to a lost and dying world (John 12:48; Eph. 4:15.). It does make a difference (Matt. 7:21-23).

# "WE HAVE MADE A MISTAKE"

Max R. Miller

We all make mistakes. Sometimes we are aware of our mistakes, and some times not. It is good to know of our mistakes and to correct them when we can.

We, the church, have made a greivous mistake. It needs to be called to the attention to all and correction should be made. The mistake is great. It has prevented a multitude of souls from being converted to Christ. It is great because for it many of God's children have drifted away from Christ. For it, the church of the living God suffers shame, frustration, and is filled with controversy and discord. Anything of such destructive force and consequence is evil, sinful, and should be overcome.

The mistake? Some several years ago, in the sixties and seventies, we began to hear fervent exhortations that our preachers should attain a greater degree of education; that the day for "cornfield" preachers had come to an end. No longer could preachers of ordinary educational attainments expect to fill the pulpits of the land and have the ear of modern day audiences. To engage the modern educated mind of today's professionals, technicians, brilliant and sophisticated ranks of society, one must be of equal education and possess the same qualities of sophistication and grace. The theory was: the old style of plain, book, chapter and verse preaching must go the way of the flat-top and crew cut hair styles. The modern generation must be challenged! We must stop answering questions people have ceased asking!

There began to be a change in the pulpit. The clamor was for young men who could communicate to young and aggressive minds in a style befitting of the day. The old

Jerusalem gospel lost its place in many modern day churches. Testimonials, personal interest stories, current events, promotionals, current religious thought, and such, became the themes of the pulpit. We had moved into a modern day with a church ready to embrace every form of liberalism known to man.

All this was a form of self flattery. We were tickling our own ears. We were snobbishly bragging on our own vain educational attainments. We were telling ourselves, "We are the sophisticates, we have arrived." This subtle and deceitful plea from the pew was welcomed by many in the pulpit. Not a few who stood in the pulpit thrilled to think of themselves more as counsellor and scholar than preacher. They were a cut above ordinary preacher "quoting Scripture like a parrot." Those clergymen (for, in fact, such they are) began to major in minors; it was their joy to "share a thought" more so than to "take a text." -- And their patrons loved it so!

The theme of preaching has changed in these past years. Now, how to live peacably with sin, how not to offend denominational friends, how to get along with one's conscience, how to pragmatically solve the problems of the day, all are the themes of our day.

Fewer and fewer Bible Majors came from the Christian colleges. Few of the student who came from those colleges will (or can) preach the simple message of salvation to a world lost in sin. Such, seemingly is beneath their dignity! The denominational seminary awaits their coming from which few go forth to preach, and of those who preach, to preach

(Continued on page 11)

## DEFENDER

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# MARRIAGE: MAJESTIC OR MISSEERABLE

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

It goes without saying that God initially had the former concept in mind when he presided at the wedding of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:18-24. But rebellious and ill-adjusted men and women have majored more often in the latter concept than in the former. They have turned the magic and majesty of marriage into a marred image, into a miserable institution. This is sad; it is immeasurably and inexpressibly sad. What will make for a majestic marriage? What makes for misery in matrimony? The drawing out of these contrasts forms the basic thrust of this short article for **Defender**.

Marriage is majestic when it is composed of a man and woman who love God and one another. **Marriage Is For Those Who Love God And One Another** is the title of brother Tom Warren's classic volume on marriage. Marriage is miserable when love for God is the unknown factor of the marital equation and love for each other is little more than lust for each other's body. Lust and love are not synonyms by any stretch of the imagination, nearly the whole world to the contrary notwithstanding.

Marriage is majestic when each marital  
(Continued on page 12)

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## MISTAKE (Continued from page 10)

false doctrine. Of our own Christian colleges many of the Bible faculty would fit as well into denominational schools and not a few go on to their destiny there. Yes, we have made a mistake in courting the modern mind, appeasing guilt and sin, in compromising the gospel of truth. We bear the cancer and scars of compromise in the body of Christ.

Young moderns, middle age moderns, and who ever are not above the gospel of Christ. To the vain intellectuals and sophisticated moderns: the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). Paul, at Corinth, addressed the same problem we address here, and said, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18-31). Man was never commissioned to preach anything other than the "old Jerusalem gospel" (Mark 16:15; Gal. 1:8,9).

But what about the modern, better educated generation in the church and in the world? What are their needs? The spiritual needs of man from Adam has not changed—today's world notwithstanding. The same needs of our frontier forefathers are our needs today. Man's unchanging needs are met in the gospel. The way of sin is death, always. Man in sin needs a Savior. That Savior is revealed in Holy Scripture: His plan of salvation is recorded there and there alone. He, in his

educated way, may open the book and, as Paul said, "when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ . . . as it is now revealed . . ." (Eph. 3:1-5). He may also need a preacher who is able to communicate the Savior's message to him. It is well that the preacher be learned, able to communicate in good English, to develop his lessons in a disciplined manner, and make applications of the gospel to the modern times of our century.

There should be no rejection of education; none should seek to stigmatize the educated whether he be the preacher or the hearer. There must be a rejection of vanity and conceit which, in reality, cries out, "Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isa. 30:10). Flattery is deceitful and sinful. Education, prosperity, or a modern age never shall bring man past the point where he will no longer need the simplicity of the gospel of Christ.

Kill the infection, heal the wound, salve the scar. Let us return again to the Book-of-Books, to the gospel of Christ and to our Savior. We are not too good, too well educated, or too rich or wise to hear and obey the gospel of Christ. We made a mistake in "updating" our preaching. Now, let us go back to the preaching of the "Old Jerusalem gospel."

## **MARRIAGE** (Continued from page 11)

mate climbs to higher ground and ask what he or she can do to make the spouse happy, contented and satisfied in marriage. Marriage is miserable when it is entered and sustained on the very selfish level of what can this person do to make me happy, contented and satisfied. Majesty in marriage belongs to a selfless philosophy; misery in matrimony belongs to a totally selfish philosophy.

Marriage is majestic when man considers his wife as bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh even as Adam did Eve (Gen. 2:21-23). Marriage is miserable when man considers his wife nothing but a plaything and a slave to his every whim of passion and wish for slavish service rendered to him at beckoning call. Marriage is majestic when woman considers herself as man's help meet, loves him and respects him (Gen. 2:18; Tit. 2:4,5; Eph. 5:33). Marriage is miserable when woman resists the help meet aspect, despises her husband and holds him in outright contempt.

Marriage is majestic when the Golden Rule and provides guidance between husband and wife (Matt. 7:12). There will be no physical or verbal abuse when this lovely law is in the ascendancy. The husband will not demand what the wife cannot produce or provide; the wife will not expect what is beyond the husband's power to provide. "Might makes right" will make miserable any marriage. Too many have tried this rule of Cain and found it to be wanting in every desirable facet.

Marriage is majestic when kindness, tenderhearted consideration and a willingness to pardon each other's wrongs are in the ascendancy. This is the generous gist of a beautiful statement from Paul in Ephesians 4:32. The application is wider than marriage but is surely inclusive of it. Marriage is

miserable when there is ugliness of disposition, a harsh attitude toward each other and pardon is never practiced.

Marriage is majestic when courtesy reigns. Peter charges his Christian readers to be courteous in I Peter 3:8. He had just finished marital instructions in the previous seven verses. Marriage descends into misery when common courtesy vanishes. Marriage is majestic when husband loves wife as Christ loves the church and as he loves his own body (Eph. 5:23,28). Marriage is majestic when the wife loves and serves husband as the church loves and serves its Spiritual Bridegroom, the Christ. Marriage is miserable when these precious precepts of Ephesians 5:22-33 are lacking.

Husbands and wives really decide whether their marriage will be majestic or miserable, marvelous or marred.

**A Literary P.S.** More than a dozen years ago I penned nearly three hundred pages for a book entitled **Christ In The Home**. It was an effort to help families climb to the mountains of majesty in marriage and the home and to avoid the valleys of misery in family relationships. Baker Book House of Grand Rapids, Michigan, printed that book and it went through three large printings of 5,000, 2,500, and 2,500. They let it go out of print in 1982. It is now back in print. Quality Publications of Abilene, Texas, is the new publisher. It has a new cover and some revisions have been made to bring it up to date in some of the statistics. The new price is \$5.95 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling. It may be ordered from me at P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063. For those who wish to use it in class work and order five or more at one time I will give a ten per cent discount and pay postage and handling charges.

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# MEDITATION ON SECOND CORINTHINS

Winston Temple

- I. MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL HAVE NO CAUSE TO FAINT OR TO BE DISCOURAGED (V.1), NOT EVEN BECAUSE OF:**
1. Trials and temptations (James 1:2-4).
  2. Privations of life (2 Cor. 11:23-28).
  3. The Lord will provide a way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13).
- II. THE GOSPEL SHOULD BE EMBRACED BY THOSE TO WHOM IT COMES, (V.2). CONSIDER:**
1. The Bereans (Acts 17:11).
  2. The people of Pentecost Day (Acts 2:41).
  3. Those in Rome (Romans 1:5,8).
  4. Those who rejected it (2 Thess. 2:10).
  5. If men wish peace of conscience, they should embrace it.
    - (1) It is the peace which comes from Jesus (John 14:27).
    - (2) It is the gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15).
    - (3) It gives us peace because by obeying it we are justified before God Rom. 5:1
    - (4) Jesus came to give us that peace (Luke 2:14).
    - (5) The gospel of peace is for obedience of all nations (Rom. 16:25).
  6. No man ever yet had a troubled conscience from the fact that he had embraced the gospel and was an humbled and decided Christian, but thousands have had a troubled conscience from the fact that they have neglected it. Consider:
    - (1) The rich man was troubled, but too late (Luke 16).
    - (2) On the other hand look at Paul (Phil. 4:11).
- III. THE GOSPEL IS HID TO THE LOST (V. 3),**
1. Not because the light of it is not in the world (John 1:4,5).
  2. Not because it has not been preached (Col. 1:23).
  3. It is because people reject it (John 1:10,11; Luke 7:29,30), and thus permit Satan to blind their eyes.
  4. Satan is the spirit that works in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:1)
  5. Ministers should preach the truth, nothing but the truth, lest the light of the gospel be put under a bushel (Matt. 5:14, 15).
- IV. THIS IS A DELUDED WORLD (2 COR. 4:4 C.F. REV. 12:9).**
1. It is blinded and deceived by him who is here called the "god of this world."
  2. Satan rules in the hearts of men and he rules by deceiving them (Acts 5:3).
  3. The man who seeks wealth only is deceived in regard to its value (Acts 8:20; Matt. 6:19-22).
  4. The man who is pursuing the object of ambition as his main position is deceived in regard to the true value of things.
    - (1) Such pursuing is inspired by Satan (Gen. 3:16; Luke 4:5,6).
    - (2) Examples:
      - A. Builders of Babel (Gen. 11:4).
      - B. Korah's company (Num. 16:3-35).
      - C. James and John (Mark 10:35-37).
      - D. Diotrephes (3 John 9,10).
  5. And he, or she, who pursues pleasure as the main business of life is deceived in regard to the proper value of objects.
    - (1) Pleasures of sin are short-lived (Heb. 11:25).
    - (2) There is no profit in just seeking after pleasure (Eccl. 2:1,11).
    - (3) They will choke the very life out of an individual (Luke. 8:14).
  6. A man may be deceived here, but he will not be deceived in hell (Luke 16)
  7. Men are in danger and it deepens every day and every hour (2 Cor. 4:8,12).
  8. Satan is doing all that he can to delude and deceive us, but if he succeeds, it is our fault.
    - (1) We can overcome only through faith and obedience (Phil. 4:13 Heb. 5:8,9).
    - (2) Who shall save us from this body of death? Answer: (Rom. 7:25).
    - (3) We can gain the victory and accomplish our goal if we will rejoice in hope,

be patient in tribulation and continue instant in prayer (Rom. 12:12)

**V. THE GREAT PURPOSE OF THE MINISTRY IS TO MAKE KNOWN THE GOSPEL OF THE CHRIST. TO POINT MANKIND TO THE CHRIST (V. 5).**

1. To this the gospel ministers of Christ are to devote themselves. (I Cor. 2:2).
  - (1) It is not to try to promote Christ by gimmicks ball teams, youth worship, puppet ministry, gymnasiums, social circles or any such thing, Christ is to be made known by the preaching of the Gospel and it alone.
  - (2) Man is a sinner and needs a Savior. The Gospel does not offer worldly pleasure but rather a cross (Matt. 16:24).
  - (3) We need more gospel preachers rather than a bunch of banner waving promotionalists!
2. The work of preaching the Christ rests not only on the shoulders of the one standing in the pulpit, but it rests upon every person who calls himself by that worthy name Christian (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 8:4).
  - (1) We should submit to any self-denial necessary in order to accomplish this mission (Matt. 16:24).
  - (2) It is a glorious mission (verse 5) what higher honor is there on earth than to make known the Redeemer?

**VI. THE SITUATION OF MAN WOULD HAVE BEEN DREADFUL AND AWFUL HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE LIGHT WHICH IS IMPARTED BY REVELATION (V. 6).**

1. With as much ease as he commanded the first light to be created in Gen. 1:3, He commanded the pure light of truth to shine on the minds of men.
2. Nothing is more valuable than the light of truth (John. 1:9).

**VII. THIS LIGHT IS TO BE CARRIED BY CHRISTIANS (MATT. 5:14).**

1. Not by direct operation of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the gospel, but through the gospel (Acts 16:14; Acts 11:14).
2. It is to be carried by faithful Christians (Matt. 16:18,19; Acts 8:1,4).
3. If it is not carried, it is our fault (Acts 20:26).

**VIII. WE LIVE BY FAITH (V. 8-18)**

1. We can see what our religion has cost.
  - (1) First, of all it cost the death of God's Son (1 Pet. 1:18,19).
  - (2) Secondly, it cost the blood of the prophets, the apostles and countless numbers of martyred saints.
  - (3) Thirdly, the friends of christianity have been called to endure every form of suffering: poverty, want, tears, stripes, imprisonments, and deaths have been their portions.
2. But christianity will live; nothing can destroy it (Matt. 16:18,19; 1 Pet. 1:25).
3. Christians should be willing to endure anything in order that they may become more like Christ on earth, and be with him in heaven (2 Cor. 4:10).
4. In order to support and motivate us to such endurances of trials we should:
  - (1) Have a firm and unwavering faith (James 1:6-8).
  - (2) Have a firm assurance that God has raised up the Lord Jesus, and that we also will be raised from the dead (2 Cor. 4:14). "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:11).
  - (3) Have a sincere desire to promote the glory of God, and to bring as many as possible to join in his praise and to celebrate his mercy (2 Cor. 4:15).
  - (4) Have such a belief of the truth as to be willing to speak it and defend it at all times, and in all places (2 Cor. 4:13).
5. Christians may expect to be supported and comforted in the trials and toils of life (2 Cor. 4:16).
6. We learn from (2 Cor. 4:17) how to bear affliction in a proper manner.
  - (1) They are light in character and are soon to fade away.
  - (2) Our great interests are beyond the grave.
  - (3) Everything here is temporary, changing, decaying and dying. There in heaven all is fixed, settled, and unchanging, immortal, eternal!
  - (4) If in this life only we have hope, all of the trials, tribulations and persecutions would be without meaning, but when we remember that there is heaven, the home of the eternal soul, the cares and discomforts of this world are viewed as mere necessities on the road to our heavenly home? Brother and sister, I believe it will surely be worth it all. Don't you?

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# DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil. 1:17

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## SMOOTH AND FAIR SPEECH

**Alan E. Highers**

It has ever been a characteristic of false teachers that "by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent" (Rom. 16:18). In recent years we have seen a number of brethren who made utterance with "an uncertain voice" (I Cor. 14:8), so that it was difficult to ascertain their meaning. If we charge them with teaching what their words import, they characteristically reply that they have been misunderstood, misinterpreted, and misrepresented. In some cases it appears that the higher the education, the more obfuscated the communication. While their words at times seem clear enough, they deny at other times that they meant what they seemed to say. If one says enough different things about the same issue, almost anyone can be misled into accepting the explanation.

This wavering tendency on the part of false teachers was noted in the 1970 FHC lectures by Rubel Shelly, who compared the tactics of the liberals and the antis. Of the liberals, he said:

"He is careful to appear humble, pious and genuinely concerned for the welfare of the church. By such an appealing approach, he is able to win people to himself. . .

He continues his insidious work from

within! He uses pulpits, magazines, journals and every other known tool of influence among us to win people to himself and his false doctrines. . .

But it now seems that we have developed a 'new breed of preachers' who can show only contempt and disgust for what faithful brethren have said and done in the past. These same men are speaking and writing in such a way as to create doubt and confusion in the minds of our brethren. We must not be silent while this is going on around us. We must run the risk of being labelled as 'witch-hunters' or 'keepers of orthodoxy' in order to obey the Biblical command to 'prove the spirits, whether they are of God' (I John 4:1)."

The significant, but unfortunate fact is that the foregoing words appear to be something of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Many brethren feel that Rubel is now "speaking and writing in such a way as to create doubt and confusion in the minds of our brethren," and that he is indeed the man who is showing "contempt and disgust for what faithful brethren have said and done in the past."

In order to evaluate the nature of his  
(Continued on page 19)

# IT IS TIME TO QUIT LISTENING

Max R. Miller

It is proper, courteous, and Christian to "hear out" a man. We, as a people, have always allowed others to state their case, affirm their proposition, to make their argument. Everyone with a cause wants to be heard, wants to amplify his position, wants to repeat for clarity and emphasis, wants to restate his position that there be no misunderstandings. We ourselves want to make our case understood, perhaps repeat or re-emphasize in order that others will know what we are saying, as well as what we are not saying. We all want to be heard and understood. We believe honorable men are entitled to a patient hearing.

However, to patiently hear a man is not to hear him forever and ever. There comes a time to stop listening to him, to exclude his preaching, teaching, harangues, or whatever. He has been heard--enough. Now comes the time to hear him no more.

It is the custom of false teachers to want to be heard again. "Let me explain... no, no, you don't understand..." is the common response from those who want our ear. Continuous repetition may break down the will, confuse, or make a convert to a false position. Holy Scripture teaches, yea commands, the false teacher is to be stopped, to be avoided--in short, there comes a time to quit listening to him.

Paul besought the Roman brethren to "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" [turn away from them, ASV], (Rom. 16:17). To Titus he instructed, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject" [refuse, ASV], (Titus 3:10). There is great danger in continuing to give a platform to one who causes "divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven . . ." (I Cor. 5:6,7). There is no obligation at all to hear, and hear, and hear again the false teachers. Courtesy does not demand it; pa-

tience is not forever! Rabshakeh! "Answer him not" (2 Kings 18:36).

Many brethren in the kingdom today are hearing and rehearing those who teach false doctrines. Over and over we tread the same ground with false teachers stating, restating and then explaining again their positions. A greater respect for the truth will result in stopping our ears to those who persist in their false ways.

We should stop listening to Rubel Shelly, James Bales, and all those who support their causes. The church of the Lord God should no longer open her pulpit to their teachings, no longer should she provide both a platform and an audience for those who "cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." Long ago they made their cases--such as they are. Nothing really new has come forth from those quarters. All pleas, arguments, and prayers for their repentance and consequent change of direction are at this time, to no avail. Personal letters from close friends and brothers, personal face-to-face confrontation, articles in brotherhood journals--all--have brought no change in the positions advocated by these men. It is now time (and past) to quit listening to them, to give them no more opportunity to impregnate the body of Christ with the doctrines of "Covenant passage" and "Christians only, but not the only Christians." Let them make their own opportunities, let them gather their own crowds, let them publish their own papers--if such they shall have. For us--let us quit listening to them.

Defender presents in this issue Alan Higher's excellent contrast of the two Shellys; the one of the past whom we admired for his apparent conviction of faith and sound proclamation of it; the other the one of the present day, sarcastic and contradictory. We suggest you read him here, see his inconsistency and false position, and then hear him no more, neither give him place and space to propagate false doctrines in the kingdom of God.

## DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor

Winston Temple, Asst. Editor

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SMOOTH AND FAIR SPEECH (Cont. from pg 17)  
teaching, your attention is called to the  
following array of direct quotations

showing, in parallel columns, what Rubel is  
**now saying** to audiences as compared to that  
which he **once taught**.

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**RUBEL SHELLY (PRESENT)**

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**RUBEL SHELLY (PAST)**

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**On the nature of the church:**

The restoration movement started out  
as an appeal for unity of Christians.  
Somewhere along the line, maybe fifty  
years ago, we abandoned that theme;  
and we crystalized and we became, to a  
large measure, what we set out to  
**oppose.**

(Centerville speech).

I am more than tired of hearing the  
statement made in pulpits, college  
classrooms and in brotherhood papers  
that the church of Christ is just one  
denomination among many denominations.  
**The Lord's church is not a denomina-**  
**tion. It is not a sect or party in**  
**Christendom. (FHC 1970).**

**On passing Judgment:**

God forbid that any human being pre-  
sume to sit in judgment **on the eternal**  
**destiny of another! . . .** It is an  
arrogant thing for any sinner to think  
himself fit to pass judgment on an-  
other sinner! (Ashwood bulletin).

Most people would be terribly shocked  
if anyone suggested that **many sincere**  
**religious people are going to be lost**  
**eternally.** They would likely cry,  
"Only God knows who is going to be  
saved or lost! You are judging and  
trying to play God when you suggest  
that you can know who is right and who  
is wrong in religion!" But is it the  
case that God alone knows who is going  
to be saved or lost? **Not at all!**  
The reasons for His having revealed  
His will to men through the Bible is  
so that **we too can know** what consti-  
tutes a saved state before Him.  
(Tract).

**On whether we can say anyone is lost:**

"I don't know whether she was immersed  
or not. Are you saying my mother will  
go to hell if she wasn't baptized?"  
**God forbid that any human being pre-**  
**sume to sit in judgment on the eternal**  
**destiny of another! . . .** It is an  
arrogant thing for any sinner to think  
himself fit to pass judgment on any  
other sinner! . . . My response to the  
man's question was to the effect that  
I had no judgment to make about his  
mother, him, or any other person.  
(Ashwood bulletin).

Those outside the body of Christ are  
lost! . . . **First, all men still out-**  
**side the spiritual body of Christ are**  
**lost.** They have no hope and are  
without God in the world. (Simple  
Studies - Church). The New Testament  
teaches that the body of Christ is a  
singular entity, that all saved people  
have been added to that one body by  
the Lord and that there is no  
salvation for accountable persons  
outside that body. (Tract)

**On knowledgeable, devout Christians in all denominations:**

**There are sincere, knowledgeable, de-**  
**vout Christians scattered among all**

Denominationalism is inherently sinful  
and exists in opposition to the will  
of Jesus Christ. The body of Christ  
(Continued on page 20)

SMOOTH AND FAIR SPEECH (Cont. from pg 19)  
the various denominations.  
(Centerville speech).

and human denominations are not the same and, in fact, have no fellowship between them. It is **not true that there are saved people in all denominations who, when considered collectively, constitute the "invisible body of Christ."** . . . According to the New Testament, the church of Christ had a separate and distinct existence. It **was not composed of various people who were members of rival sects**, but was composed of people with common beliefs, worship and practices. . . The Lord does not pick a few good people out of all the different denominations and count them as his body. He has one separate and distinct group of faithful people--**people who are completely separate from denominationalism and who have no fellowship with denominationalism's unholy state of affairs**--whom he recognizes as his true church.  
(Tract).

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**On whether the use of instrumental music must be confessed as sin:**

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I think of a brother of mine, for example, he preaches for a group that calls itself the Christian Church. I have fellowship with him in the **upper-case sense** because we both obeyed the same gospel. He is my brother. I think he's wrong on that issue of the instrument. We do not have fellowship, in the lower-case f, **on that**. And that instrument is a wedge that comes between our working together. A while back he came to the conclusion that he was willing to give up that instrument, **not because he believed it was wrong**. He wasn't convinced of that yet, but for the sake of unity, so that the body of Christ in that area where he was working--he could give that up. He even talked to the elders of his church about it they could give it up. Went to the preachers' meeting in that town and five preachers in town, four of the five said that wasn't good enough. **He had to renounce it as wrong and sinful**. Giving it up for the sake of unity wouldn't be enough. They wouldn't allow that, so he's right back where he was, and still worshipping with it, and the body of Christ is still fragmented in that

The use of mechanical instruments of music in worship to God is unauthorized in the New Testament and **must be regarded as sin** . . . Following the final night of the debate, three persons present indicated that they had come to see the error of instrumental music in worship as unauthorized and sinful. On the following Lord's day, they acted upon their knowledge of the word of God. A husband and wife **confessed their sin and were restored to fellowship** . . . If we walk in the light of the truth of the word of God, if we walk in uprightness before him, then we can have fellowship with one another, **then and only then** . . . But in order for the unity to exist between the two of us, or between larger groups of brethren divided over this issue, **there must be, first of all a coming to, understanding of, and submission to the truth, which is the word of God**.  
(Dunning debate).

There is no escaping the fact that **one is committing sin** when he offers an act of worship to God which is  
(Continued on page 21)

SMOOTH AND FAIR SPEECH (Cont. from pg 20)  
town. Maybe the four handled it  
correctly. I **don't think so!**  
(Memphis speech.)

not authorized in the word.  
(FHC 1977).

It would appear from the foregoing that brother Shelly is able to speak or write equally well on either side of an issue. He is apparently capable of making tracks on both sides of the creek. The tragedy is that he seems to be able to speak from either column--past or present--depending upon the occasion, the audience, and the demands of the hour.

On the one hand, although we opposed sectarianism, we "became, to a large measure, what we set out to oppose." On the other hand, the Lord's church is "not a denomination. It is not a sect or party in Christendom."

On the one hand, no human being can "set in judgment on the eternal destiny of another," but on the other hand, God is not alone in knowing who will be saved or lost in that "we too can know what constitutes a saved state before Him."

On the one hand, he will not even say that one who was not baptized is lost, but on the other hand, "all men still outside the spiritual body of Christ are lost. They have no hope and are without God in the world."

On the one hand, there are "sincere, knowledgeable, devout Christians scattered among all the various denominations," but on the other hand, the true church consists of "people who are completely separate from denominationalism and who have no fellowship with denominationalism's unholy state of affairs."

On the one hand, we ought to accept a Christian Church preacher for the sake of unity if he agrees not to use the instrument, even though he does not "renounce it as wrong and sinful." But on the other hand, the use of the instrument "must be regarded as sin," and a husband and wife who recognized this confessed their sin and were restored to fellowship" because "then and only then" can we have fellowship as people walk in the light and come to, understand, and submit to the truth!

Brethren may presumably take their pick. There is something here for everyone.

### The Church, Unity, and Compromise

We are told that there are two levels of fellowship--uppercase F and lowercase f. Uppercase Fellowship is based upon the seven ones enumerated in Ephesians 4:4-6: -- One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God. Brother Shelly, however, has his own definitions of these words. For example: "There is one faith. The faith, when that term is used in the New Testament, doesn't have to do with orphan homes; doesn't have to do with **instrumental music**; doesn't have to do with the **millennium**. The one faith in the New Testament sense is the doctrine of the atonement, the gospel." (Memphis speech).

Uppercase Fellowship, therefore, is not affected by instrumental music or premillennialism; we simply do not extend lowercase fellowship, which implies endorsement, on those points. If one doubts this is the effect of this teaching, take note: "If a person has a different view of the millennium, **be in Fellowship with him** (uppercase F). But I may not endorse and agree with (lowercase f) his view." (Memphis speech).

There is very little difference, if any, in this uppercase, lowercase bifurcation of fellowship and the Ketchersidian platform of "unity in diversity" and "fellowship without endorsement." In fact, there is an interesting if not alarming number of duplications in argument, phraseology, reasoning, and rhetoric between the two. As a case in point, look at Robert Meyers' usage of Mark 9:38-39 in the ultra-liberal book **Voices of Concern** (published by Ketcherside), and compare it to brother Shelly's application of the same passage! These striking similarities are neither accidental nor coincidental; instead, they reflect a fundamental attitude shared in common by these concomitant philosophies.

(Continued on page 22)

SMOOTH AND FAIR SPEECH Cont. from page 21)  
**Contradiction and Inconsistency**

Truth is consistent with itself, and if we are teaching the truth our statements will be consistent from one occasion to another. We cannot adapt our proclamations to the situation, and shift with the wind, so as to curry favor with whatever group we are addressing at the time; but where truth is concerned, we must stand like the Rock of Gibraltar and be willing to take the consequences. President Truman said, "If you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen." Jesus said, "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matt. 5:11). It is a defect in character to compromise on conviction or to capitulate on principle in the face of opposition, antagonism, or mere unpopularity.

At the FHC Open Forum, brother Shelly was asked about the extent of God's grace to one who has never obeyed the gospel. The following exchange occurred:

HIGHERS: What about the ignorant or gullible person that's never obeyed the gospel?

SHELLY: The person has no covenant relationship with God and **the covenant of grace is not extended to those outside the family of God.**

At home in Nashville, however, in the Ashwood bulletin, he responded to this question: "Are you saying my mother will go to hell if she wasn't baptized?" He wrote: "It is an arrogant thing for any sinner to think himself fit to pass judgment on any other sinner! . . . Some will surely find mercy in their 'ignorance and unbelief' which may not be extended to others of us because of our increased opportunity to learn and do God's will." Bear in mind that the question related to one who **was not baptized**. One wonders how that grace could be extended to such a one in Nashville, but not in Henderson!

Further, those who were present at FHC will recall that a concentrated effort was made to ascertain brother Shelly's position regarding baptism "for the remission of sins." He was repeatedly asked whether it was necessary for baptism to be "for the

remission of sins," and for the person being baptized so to understand, in order for it to be **valid Scriptural baptism**. He was finally pressed to the following conclusion:

HIGHERS: It would not be your position, then that a person who had been immersed merely because he wanted to please God, but if he thought he was already saved, regardless of whether he'd made some confession that God for Christ's sake had pardoned his sins, **you wouldn't believe that he'd been scripturally baptized**

SHELLY: I would not.

HIGHERS: I'm glad to hear you say that, and I'm glad to have it on record.

SHELLY: It has been on record in any number of sermons I've preached over twenty-five years.

Now, having heard or read the preceding exchange would any person entertain any doubt about brother Shelly's position? It would seem perfectly plain, and I believe the impression was left with the audience, that baptism merely to please God and not in order to be saved **would not be Scriptural baptism**. Further, this initial comment was made to the assembly: "Only a person who has believed in Jesus Christ, turned away from every sin of which he's conscious in his life, and has been immersed in Jesus' name **unto the remission of his sins** is, so far as I understand the New Testament, a Christian. **I have never said that any other such person is a Christian or should be recognized as such or extended fellowship in one of our local bodies.**" Again: "One is not a Christian who has not submitted himself to the New Testament requirement of **baptism unto the remission of his sins.**" (Moore debate).

Language either means what it says, or it does not. A proposition is not both true and false at the same time. Either one must be immersed for the remission of sins to be a Christian, or not. Which is it? In the foregoing statement made to the forum audience at FHC, and one statement made in debate with a denominational preacher (which should be reflective of "twenty-five years" of preaching), it is uniformly indicated that

(Continued on page 23)

the baptism must be administered "for the remission of sins" in order to be Scriptural baptism!

As it happens, however, things are cast in an entirely different light in Nashville behind the typewriter than they are in Henderson before an inquiring multitude. Unknown to me, and unknown to the host of sincere brethren assembled at FHC, brother Shelly had written an article for his bulletin entitled, WHAT ARE THEY SAYING ABOUT BAPTISM?" Here is what brother Shelly was saying about it:

"Before baptizing anyone, I try to be sure he or she understands as much as possible about the significance of the deed. I do not administer exams, however, or require the regurgitation of any particular baptismal creed.

Lately I have been bothered by two false teachings about baptism which are being circulated within our fellowship. False doctrine #1: 'Unless one expressly understands that baptism is "for (i.e., unto) the remission of sins," he has not been baptized for the right reason, is still in his sins, and needs to be baptized again.' "

Now we know. Now we learn not only that baptism need not be "for the remission of sins," but to require such an understanding is, of all things, a "false doctrine" about baptism! Pity Peter on Pentecost (Acts 2:38). Furthermore, brother Shelly informs us that he does not require the regurgitation (look it up) of "any particular baptismal creed." I wonder if some brethren who were "taken in" by brother Shelly's platitudes at the forum might not feel they have been betrayed. The day he offered his "clarification" at the forum was February 9, 1984; the date of the foregoing article is February 1, 1984. In other words, it was already written when he traveled to FHC to assure us that it was not Scriptural baptism if one was baptized thinking he was already saved!

"O what a tangled web we weave,  
When first we practice to deceive!"

Brother Shelly tells us, "I beg to be excused from both false doctrines! He was

not so direct when we were earnestly seeking to discover his position at the Open Forum! (The second doctrine he discusses is not pertinent here).

To continue with his article dated February 1, 1984:

"Several years ago I spent a couple of hours studying with an elderly man about his spiritual needs. The subject of baptism arose, and he was hopelessly confused about certain aspects of the topic--especially about its relationship to salvation. He didn't know whether he thought somebody 'just had to be baptized' to go to heaven. 'Did Jesus command baptism?' I asked, 'and will one who wants to follow Christ obey his commands?' He said, 'Of course!' He was baptized that very hour."

If this illustration is not a direct contradiction to what brother Shelly said at the forum, and to the entire impression which he conveyed, then language means only what we want it to mean and words are no longer rational expressions of ideas. Here you have a man who obviously did not think baptism was essential to salvation, and he was baptized only to obey God in the generic sense that baptism is a command. Brother Shelly knew this was his position at the very time that we were pressing him for an answer about his position on baptism. Why, why, why did he not answer forthrightly?

He himself said well: "I have more respect for the 'anti' who flies his true colors and leaves our fellowship than for the liberal who is deceitfully leading brethren astray!" (FHC 1970).

Yea, verily!

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#### NOTES

1. All statements from Rubel Shelly are exact quotations either from books, tracts, or tapes; emphasis has been added in some cases for clarity.
2. Sources are: Speech at Centerville, Tennessee, 1983; speech at Memphis, Tennessee 1984; comments at FHC Open Forum, 1984; FHC Lectures; Shelly-Dunning Debate; Shelly-Moore Debate; Simple Studies About Christ's Church; Ashwood church bulletin, and Tracts "Is the Church of Christ Just Another Denomination?" "Did Christ Establish One or Many Churches?"



# **Tenth Annual Lectureship BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL**

**May 13-17, 1984**

## *The Preaching Of The Cross*

**I Corinthians 1: 18-31**

### **SUNDAY, MAY 13**

- 9:00 A.M. The Cross: Evidence Of Divine . . . . . Bill Coss  
10:00 A.M. The Cross And The Gospel . . . . . Mitchell Temple  
7:00 P.M. The Preaching Of The Cross . . . . . Ernest Underwood  
8:00 P.M. At The Foot Of The Cross . . . . . Bill Jackson

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- 1:00 P.M. Cursed Is Everyone That Hangeth On a Tree . . . Clifford Dixon  
2:00 P.M. Obedient Unto Death, Even The Death Of The Cross . Bill Jackson  
3:00 P.M. Jesus Prepares His Apostles . . . . . John Priola  
7:00 P.M. I Will Not Leave You Comfortless . . . . . Earl Godwin  
8:00 P.M. The Atonement Of The Cross . . . . . Bill Cline

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9:30 A.M. Friends Of The Cross Of Christ . . . . . Kerwin McKee  
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1:00 P.M. Golgotha: The Place Of The Skull . . . . . Melvin Hampton  
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8:00 P.M. Nailed To The Cross . . . . . Alan Brown

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8:00 P.M. The Cross Of Christ In Time And Eternity . . . . . Jim Boyd



# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XXIII, NUMBER 4

APRIL, 1984

## A RESPONSE TO JACK LEWIS ON ISAIAH 7:14 (No. 1)

Robert R. Taylor Jr.

During 1982-83 brother Jack P. Lewis of the Harding Graduate School in Memphis, Tennessee, has written in their school bulletin two articles dealing with Version matters and a third dealing with Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22,23. I have responded to the two on Versions in *Defender* articles which appeared in *Defender*, May, 1983. This two-part series will be a response to his Virgin Birth article which appeared in the *Harding Graduate School Of Religion Bulletin*, March, 1983. Perhaps most readers of *Defender* did not have access to this article. Here is the lengthy title of his article plus all nine paragraphs. This way every reader will know exactly what he has said and none can say I am taking unfair advantage of him by just lifting here and there a statement. I could only wish that all my critics on the Version question had dealt with me in this fashion but some have not. The Lewis title and article:

**I'VE HEARD THAT YOU DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ISAIAH 7:14 PREDICTS THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND YET MATTHEW 1 SAYS IT DOES: HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS?**

Every person who believes the New Testament believes that Isaiah 7:14 predicts the Virgin Birth. Every English translation on the market teaches that Isaiah 7:14 predicts the Virgin Birth, and any statement to the contrary is either a misunderstanding on the part of the one making it or is a prejudicial slander.

The question involved is not, "Does Isaiah 7:14 predict the Virgin Birth?" Matthew 1:23 plainly declares that it

does. The question is, what does Matthew mean when he said, "All this took place to fulfill (plerothe) what the Lord had spoken by the prophet." One can attempt to impose a limiting definition on "fulfill" and can accuse all who differ with him of being unbelievers; but that does not establish the validity of his definition. Most of the discussion of the Virgin Birth question I have heard on our lecture-ships and which I have read in our journals ignore the problems of defining "fulfilled" and of establishing the validity of the definition being used.

Traditionally, beginning at least as early as the time of Tertullian (2nd-3rd cent. A.D.), it has been (sic) argued that "fulfilled" can be used in this verse of Matthew only to mean a literal fulfillment that had no predecessor in figure or any successor. However, Matthew, in chapter 2:15, says that Jesus' coming out of Egypt fulfills a statement found in Hosea 11:15: (sic) "out of Egypt have I called my son." Matthew here uses the same Greek word that he uses in chapter 1:23. In its setting in Hosea, the passage is talking about the Exodus under Moses. Matthew is telling us that that event prefigured the coming of Jesus out of Egypt. Later in chapter 2:18, Matthew uses the same Greek word with "Rachel weeping for her children..." about a statement in Jeremiah 31:15 which in its setting plainly refers to the Babylonian

(Continued on page 27)

# CIVIL LAW VERSUS DIVINE LAW

Max R. Miller

God has ordained the civil servant to be the avenger of His wrath in the social realm. "The powers that be are ordained of God . . . For he is the minister of God . . . he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God. A revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:1-7). Christ Himself taught we are to "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17). Civil law governs the society of men, binding laws of prohibition, stipulating penalties for violation, incarcerating those who violate the liberty and rights of others, even to take life from those who willfully take the life of another. Civil law is a high law, a divinely delegated authority, and all men, Christian and non-Christian alike, are subject to that power.

There is a law that is above Civil Law. The ultimate law and authority of heaven above and earth below is Divine Law, the Law of God. Civil law is to be in harmony with Divine Law. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (II Sam. 23:3). Kings, governors, and all who rule in the civil realm are to rule in righteousness for "It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established in righteousness" (Prov. 16:12). For those who endeavor to serve humanity in fairness and equity "they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasure. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword . . ." (Job 37:11, 12). God providentially deposes those who violate His royal code of righteousness.

Where Civil Law imposes law contrary to Divine Law, man is under no obligation or duty to obey. Man's rendering unto God the things that are God's supersedes his renderings unto Caesar. Peter and the apostles were arrested and by law forbidden to teach and preach in the name of Christ. These humble men, not insurrectionist, or rebels, neither practitioners of "peacable civil disobedience," simply stated their allegiance

to the higher law, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). In the face of this persecution of the apostles and the perversion of civil law, one Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, offered sage advice. "Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come of nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God (Acts 5:38,39).

Gallio, a pagan of the first century, comprehended that which many of our twentieth century jurist fail to grasp. Jews brought Paul to his court; Gallio was to make a judgment where God had already legislated, but he responded by saying, "I will be no judge of such matters. And he drove them from the judgment seat" (Acts 18:12-16).

God's law has legislated against the fornicator. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Rom. 13:9). Those who do, and are adamantly unrepentant, are to be rejected from the body of Christ. His church, Christians, are to have no fellowship with them. The adulterers continued unrepentant presence in the church subjects the whole body to defilement. Paul's advice for a situation at Corinth was: "In the name [authority] of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together [church action] . . . deliver such a one unto Satan . . . Purge out therefore the old leaven . . . put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (I Cor. 5:1-13).

The Lord's church in Collinsville, Oklahoma is a parallel to the church at Corinth. However, Civil Law has usurped Divine Law, ruling in favor of a confessed and unrepentant adulteress, giving financial judgment in favor of the fornicator and against God's Kingdom in the sum of \$390,000. (The judgment is being appealed). To identify a confessed adulteress is not to slander, neither is it a defamation of character. Catholics, Mormons and other religions for ages have excommunicated their immoral members--without the meddlings of Civil Law.

(Continued on page 30)

**DEFENDER**

Max R. Miller, Editor

Winston Temple, Asst. Editor

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**Response** (Cont. from page 25)

exiles. That event prefigured the weeping of the people of Bethlehem over their children.

With two indisputable examples of how Matthew used "fulfilled" in the birth stories to mean a typical fulfillment, why has one denied the faith if he thinks Matthew uses a third (namely, Isa. 7:14) in exactly the same way? Why should one try to pour the Lord and Matthew into his mold of definition?

As Isaiah told Hezekiah that the sign (the same word used in Isa. 7:14) that the Assyrian danger would pass was that in three seasons cultivation would be going on (Isaiah 37:30)—that is, the sign was a span of time measured by three seasons—so Isaiah told Ahaz that in the time it takes a woman to produce a child (nine months), plus the time required for the child to learn right and wrong, the danger Ahaz was afraid of would pass. The sign is the span of time involved. The name Immanuel is given the child to symbolize the help the Lord gave in giving the deliverance. This term is used (not as a name) in this way in Isa. 8:10.

Matthew, then, tells us that the Lord was revealing more in that passage of Isaiah than one would see if he had heard the statement unaided (as Ahaz did) or if he read it unaided. The birth involved in that span of time prefigured the birth of Jesus. Jesus was virgin born, and the only person in history to be so born in the technical sense in which we understand "virgin," that is, one born without a human father.

The strength of this approach to the question of the Virgin Birth is that it gives a logical solution to every problem of Isaiah 7:14. It interprets the passage in its context; it shows how the statement made could have had meaning to Ahaz in his problem; and it does not make Isaiah say to unbelieving Ahaz, "Seven hundred years from now the Lord will do something that will prove you wrong." The Greek,

Latin, and English translators have never consistently rendered 'almah by one term in all its occurrences (Gen. 24:43; Ex. 2:8; Ps. 68:26; Prov. 30:19; Isa. 7:14; Song of Songs 1:3; 6:8). While there are no cases in the Bible where this term is used for a married woman, the discussion has now shifted out to its use in the cognate Semitic languages where there are alleged cases that it refers to women not technically virgin.

The explanation given above shows how 'almah means "a young woman," the sex opposite of 'elem which is rendered "stripling," or "youth" in its two occurrences (1 Sam. 17:56; 20:22). The masculine and feminine terms are like "lad" and "lass" in English. Finally, this approach lets Matthew define his own use of "fulfilled."

This explanation is not in any sense a rejection of the Virgin Birth prediction. It is only a rejection of some people's definition of the word "fulfilled."

—Jack P. Lewis

### **My Response To The Foregoing**

It is eminently true that every believer in the New Testament believes that Isaiah 7:14 predicts the Virgin Birth. Furthermore, it is true that Matthew 1:22,23 settles it once and for all. No one therefore will fault the opening Lewis declaration. But appended to that opening pronouncement in the second sentence of his initial paragraph is a rather careless statement that I find to be amazingly amazing. He gives a blanket statement to the effect that every "English translation on the market teaches that Isaiah 7:14 predicts the Virgin Birth, and any statement to the contrary is either a misunderstanding on the part of the one making it or it is prejudicial slander." Brother Lewis has quite a reputation for making statements on controversial matters that strongly appear to be from the top of his head and not well thought through. He was taken to the proverbial woodshed by more than one writer on his sentiments about Authority and the Eldership some years back. Brother Roy Deaver did such in his **Biblical Notes**; Bobby Duncan did the same in an editorial for **Words Of Truth**; I

(Continued on page 30)



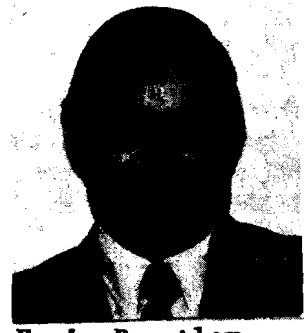
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Jackson, Tenn.



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Charles Blair  
Cottondale, Ala.



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8:00 P.M.	The Cross Of Christ In Time And Eternity . . . . .	Jim Boyd

**Response** (Cont. from page 27)  
did the same in my book on **The Elder And His Work**. If anything though, this careless sentiment even tops the Authority-for-Elders sentiments he expressed.

### **What A Shock This Must Be To Modernistic Translators**

It would doubtless be of intense interest to hear some of the modernistic translators of English Version such as the RSV, the NEB, the TEV, etc., who thought they had ridded Isaiah 7:14 of that detestable virgin birth doctrine to learn now how mistaken they were and to comment on this daring Lewis declaration. How utterly shocked they must be to be told that instead of getting rid of it, they had actually incorporated it. For a third of a century now Harry M. Orlinsky has reveled under the impression and with modernistic pride satisfied that he and his RSV colleagues had eliminated virgin from Isaiah 7:14 with the "young woman" rendering. Now brother Lewis assures him and all of us that they taught the virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14 in spite of all attempts to eliminate it. They intended to tamper with the passage and thought they had and now we are told that they taught the very thing they intended not to teach in Isaiah 7:14—the virgin birth of our Lord. Orlinsky does not believe Isaiah says one single, solitary thing about Mary as virgin and Jesus as her virgin-conceived and virgin-born Son.

### **A Critical Look At His So-Called Supportive Proof**

**Every** English translation of Isaiah 7:14 ought to teach the virgin birth of our Lord. The ones that are loyal to the Hebrew text and the lexical significance of "ha almah" in Isaiah 7:14 do so teach. Brother Lewis does not bother to tell us how a modernistic version that removes virgin from the text and injects young woman in its place can teach

the virgin birth except to say that Matthew 1:23 plainly declares that it does. But if "young woman" is the correct rendering in Isaiah 7:14 and has reference to some woman contemporary with Isaiah and Ahaz, then there can be no fulfillment of such in Matthew 1:22,23. If this "young woman" of Isaiah's day was later married and conceived the son in a marital union, then obviously there can be no link at all between her and Matthew's virgin in 1:22,23 who has conceived and will soon give birth to a Son without any man's help. If Isaiah's "young woman" of eighth century Judah was unmarried and conceived a child and gave birth to the same as an unmarried woman, then the conception and birth were of an illegitimate nature. As such she and her son surely could have no prophetic or predictive affinity with Mary and our Lord in the New Testament. If so, how, How, HOW? Furthermore, Isaiah speaks of "the virgin." So does Matthew. There is no room in either passage for a woman and her son in eighth century Judah and another and her Son in Matthew 1:22,23. If so, how, How, HOW? These modernistic versions such as the RSV, the NEB, the TEV, etc., get Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22,23 clear out of harmonious gear with each other.

We have not misunderstood the intention of modernistic translators to rid Isaiah 7:14 of the virgin birth dogma which they hate, detest and despise so deeply. And it is not prejudicial slander to expose their rank modernism on such and to show how they have gotten Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22,23 clear out of translational gear with each other. If Isaiah does not teach the virgin birth of our Lord in 7:14, then there is positively no way Matthew can teach it in 1:22,23. If so, how, How, HOW? It is my seasoned judgment that brother Lewis' misunderstanding finger is pointed the wrong direction. Likewise, his accusation of prejudicial slander also is pointed the wrong direction.

(To be concluded)

### **Civil Law** (Continued from page 26)

Why do they now believe it their place to rule on the Lord's church in Collinsville? Why do not the advocates of no prayer in public school, those who oppose the Genesis account of creation in school textbooks, all those who demand the separation of church and state also oppose the civil courts ruling on a Biblical teaching as administered by the Collinsville church? If there is to be a separation of church and state, the civil and religious (and there should be) why cannot the court see they have no jurisdiction in the case of the church withdrawing fellowship

from a confessed fornicator. Surely a miscarriage of justice with the wicked rewarded and the just condemned.

"We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Let not the church of the living God be intimidated by the judgments of the world. We commend the church at Collinsville for their past actions and their determination to continue in the way of Divine Law, doing the will of God in all things. May they also be an example and an encouragement to the body of Christ that meets in every place.

# FAINT NOT

Curtis Dowdy

In preparation for a lesson on prayer I read, "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). Immediately, I was intrigued by the word "faint," as I could recall its use in other passages. However, before we consider the others we will need a working definition.

The word "faint" is used to translate two Greek words, and both are found six times each. One Greek word means "weak or weary," and the other means "to relax." If you have seen someone faint you recognize both meanings. Thus, when it comes to prayer we must never grow weak, weary or relax; just the reverse, we must grow strong, rested and vibrant.

In a real sense our greatest enemy is fatigue. I recall reading about the case of a plane crash being due to metal fatigue. It seems that metal under constant stress in time will weaken and finally lose its strength. As Christians we are warned a number of times in this regard but no more descriptively than at Hebrews 12:12,13: "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but lest it rather be healed."

What was the problem? In short, a generation of Jewish converts have been under going the bone wearying experience of facing Jewish hostile opposition day in and day out for years. Now tired and weary they were ready to relax in their commitment to the Christ and to turn back. Beck certainly understood this when he translated the passage to read: And so, if your hands are letting go, take a firm hold; if you feel weak in your knees, stand firm and march on without wavering.

Paul reminds us, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). It is one thing to be told, but an entirely different matter to be motivated to accomplish it. The next time you feel like giving in and giving up, consider:

The Example of Christ: "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:3,4). When we become "wearied and faint" in our minds, as we all do at times, remember that Jesus had that feeling in the garden (Luke 22:42-44); that He prayed, that He was refreshed, and then went on to carry out the Father's will by shedding His blood on the cross.

Our weariness comes from trying to go it alone. We, too, can be strengthened and refreshed, just as Jesus was, through meditation and prayer. Don't give up. Jesus didn't!

The Mercy of God: "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not" (II Cor. 4:1).

Paul's ministry was demanding upon him mentally and physically, and, no doubt, there were times when he could have fainted. He tells us, "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; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (II Cor. 4:8-10). What was it that caused Paul to "hang-in-there"? He had received mercy! In II Corinthians 4:15 he speaks of the "abundant grace." Thus, our motivation is forgiveness from a loving God which inspires us to keep on.

This same Paul was told by God, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Cor. 12:9). There is a grace from God to match every need of man. Don't faint; look to the Father for help in every time of need; "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

His grace and mercy is ever available—  
**DON'T FAINT!**

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# Last Chance

## STUDENT BOOK FUND

Our readers have been made aware of our student needs for books. Most of our students are not financially able to add many books to their library. Several have contributed money, others have contributed books. For all this, either money or books, we, on behalf of our students, say, "thank you." Contributions have been received from:

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# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

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## THE SEMI—CROSSROADS SUPERCHURCH

Terry M. Hightower

In the spirit of Judah, who called upon his brothers to commit a sort-of "half sin" in selling Joseph instead of murdering him (Gen. 37:27) it seems evident that there are brethren today who are attempting to build Semi-Crossroads Superchurches. Crossroads is the congregation in Gainesville whose "master plan" involves (1) an unscriptural Old Testament name, (2) unscripturally dividing the Lord's church, and (3) aiding, endorsing, and encouraging religious error.<sup>1</sup> These pseudo-Crossroads brethren usually have some or all of the following characteristics.

1. They may be afraid to openly invite Chuck Lucas or other Gainesville members to speak at their various programs, but they will use speakers who do fellowship Crossroads and "satellite churches." They may bid Godspeed to error (II John 10-11) indirectly by announcing speakers at pro-Crossroads churches in other areas.

2. They may use singing groups such as the so-called **In His Image Quartet** which sings at Crossroads' Seminars, thus changing "the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man" (Rom. 1:23). **In His Image** is such a misnomer (Rom. 8:29)!

3. Whereas they may have formerly stood up against error on the important subject of marriage-divorce-remarriage, they now capitulate to bondservants of error--those who deny the Bible doctrine of repentance (Acts

2:38) (Jimmy Allen, Jerry Jones, J. D. Bales, et al).

4. Their leaders may make trips to Crossroad "satellites" in order to gather information on building a Superchurch having things like family life centers, evangelistic Bible talks, indoor basketball courts. First and foremost one will discover that these brethren equate success with being "fast-growing"--with ultimate success being centered on a numerical count of baptisms. "Woe unto you . . . for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves" (Matt. 23:15).

5. The elders (if any) may have at one time taken Titus 1:9 seriously: "holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, . . . able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayer." Once cautious and wary, these men may have "thrown caution to the wind" in their effort to become a Superchurch.

6. Their preacher may be a young, "promoter-type" who has neither time nor inclination to deal with "issues in the brotherhood"--you know, such "trivial" matters as anti-ism, premillennialism, adultery. He may suggest such things as "Don't say baptism--say **yield** or **submit** yourself." Usually he is very difficult to "pin down," refusing to answer important questions by others who are trying to find out where he is doctrinally.

(Continued on page 39)

# THE PASSING AWAY OF BROTHER LEE COOK

Winston Temple

Brother Joseph Lee Cook of Blackmon, Florida passed from this earth into eternity on April 27, 1984. He was 77 years of age. It is just and fitting that a few words should be written about my dear friend and faithful brother in Christ. Brother Lee, is survived by his wife, Allene, two daughters and one son.

Brother and sister Cook have been faithful followers of the Lord for many years. It can truly be said brother Cook's works follow after him. He was a sacrificial giver. This writer does not know exactly how many preachers, missionaries and orphans that have been helped by brother and sister Cook both physically and spiritually, but he does know that he himself has been helped by this family time and time again.

When this writer was preaching for the Church of Christ in Baker, Florida, brother and sister Cook were then attending that congregation. Time and time again they were trying to help promote both the church there and anywhere else they could.

On one occasion, the contribution on Sunday was about five hundred dollars above what it normally was. The question was asked why was it so high. A brother replied: "Lee has probably sold some more cows." Most of the time when extra money was needed for the cause of Christ, brother Lee would either sell something he owned, or borrow the money.

Many times, he would sell something and give every penny of what he had received to the church. Brother Lee was not a rich man. He just simply loved the Lord and His church with all of his heart.

Brother Cook was a great supporter of the Bellview Preacher Training School and also of **Defender**. If it were not for good people like brother Lee and his wife, schools, papers and such like works would greatly suffer.

Brother Lee was also a firm believer in home Bible studies and prayer. The night before, he died the next day, he and sister Cook had read and discussed the first two chapters in Exodus, and had prayer. Even though the children were grown and and gone away from home, the family devotion was still carried on. At the time of his death, he and sister Cook were in a home Bible study with one of their neighbors. Such was the man, Lee Cook.

Brother Lee was a member of the Union Hill Church of Christ, Union Hill, Alabama. He was a strong and vibrant influence in both the church and the community in which he lived. We all who have been touched by this great and good man's life will greatly miss him, but we pray for more like him and his, and may we live and die as he did, faithful in the Lord.

## DEFENDER

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# RESPONSE TO BROTHER JACK LEWIS ON ISAIAH 7:14 (No. 2)

Robert R. Taylor

In the first of this two-part series I gave verbatim an article written by brother Jack P. Lewis on Isaiah 7:14 and which appeared in the **Harding Graduate School Bulletin**, March, 1983. Then the first part of my response to it appeared. My final response will constitute the thrust of this second and final article.

## That Strategic Word "Fulfill"

The main thrust of the Lewis article under current review is not so much on **almah**, Hebrew word for virgin, as upon Matthew's employment of the word **fulfill**. It is very obvious that he rejects the straightline Messianic import of Isaiah 7:14 and its exclusive fulfillment in Matthew 1:22,23. Like all the devotees of this dual fulfillment he evasively omits informing us who the woman-son team were that partially fulfilled Isaiah 7:14 in eighth century Judah. I have been asking devotees of this dual position for **names** for years. None of them know. Even if they guess, they know, and so do I, that they have not a shred of indisputable proof for their prophetic game of guesswork. This is surely an unenviable position for scholars (?) to fill! I would give up a position that I could not defend any better than these unsuited do relative to this eighth century woman and her son who either partially fulfilled Isaiah's promise or in some evasive manner served as a type of what Mary and Jesus later experienced.

Brother Lewis thinks he has found two perfect parallels relative to bolster his position. These supposedly explain how Matthew uses **fulfill**. The first is of Jesus' being called out of Egypt (Matt. 2:15; Hosea 11:1) and Rachel's weeping for her children (Matt. 2:18; Jer. 31:15). It is true that **fulfill** is used in both of these cases but that does not establish perfect parallels to Matthew 1:22,23 and for obviously cogent reasons. Brother Lewis utterly fails to recognize the difference between two well known **historical** events in the Old Testament (Israel called out of Egypt at the time of the Exodus and the weeping that occurred on the eve of the Babylonian Exile) which served

as real types and thus which truly prefigured Christ's being called out of Egypt as a babe and the weeping that accompanied the slaughter of the innocent babes in Bethlehem and a prophecy in the Old Testament that has **no** historical occurrence in Isaiah's day and its lone or one time occurrence in the New Testament with Mary and the Lord.

Brother Lewis, regardless of his advanced degrees and his many years of teaching on the graduate level, really needs to do some more homework on types and antitypes. There is a typical fulfillment in the cases of Israel and the Exodus and the Christ who is called out of Egypt subsequent to Herod's death. There is a typical fulfillment between Rachel's weeping for her children relative to the Exile and the weeping that occurred in the slaughter of the innocents in Matthew 2. Now just where is the **type** in the Old Testament of which Matthew 1:22,23 is a typical fulfillment? Brother Lewis does not contend there was a virgin birth in Isaiah's time. He says Jesus is the only person who was "born without a human father." This but means there was **no** virgin conception and no virgin birth in Isaiah's day. But that is the very thing that would be demanded in Matthew 1:22,23 is a third typical fulfillment along with Matthew 2:15 and 2:18. If not, why NOT?

## Poor Old, Mistreated, Ignored Ahaz

Like nearly all the devotees of the dual fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 brother Lewis is concerned about Ahaz and whether the passage had any meaning to him and his problem of threatened invasion from the two powers to his north—that of Syria and Israel. Why all this worry about Ahaz? He was a despicable and diabolical character as the unfolding of his infamous life reveals in II Chronicles 28. He filled a large catalogue with his crimes and sins. Ahaz was offered help from God through Isaiah the prophet in the immediate context of Isaiah 7:14. He sneeringly and scoffingly rejected all proffered aid. Isaiah **turned** from Ahaz and addressed the house of David in verses 13 and 14. Obviously, the house of David is far more  
(Continued on page 38)

# IDENTIFYING THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Grady M. Miller

In Luke chapter two we read how the earthly parents of Jesus left their twelve year old son behind in Jerusalem as they returned home from celebrating the feast of Passover. Thinking that Jesus was in the company of family and friends, Mary and Joseph travelled a full day's journey and then made camp for the night. Upon discovering that Jesus was not among their party, they naturally hurried back to the city to find their lost son.

It was not until three days had passed before Mary and Joseph came upon Jesus, sitting in the temple and studying with the Jewish scholars. Of those days that His parents spent searching and worrying Luke says nothing, but any parent who has ever "lost" a child for any length of time will know exactly what Mary and Joseph did. They retraced their steps of the past few days: they returned to where they lodged, where they ate, the places they had visited, and asked everyone they came upon if Jesus had been seen. Time and again they would have given a description of Jesus--so tall, so heavy, the color of His eyes and hair, and what He was wearing. It would have been their hope and prayer that when they described their boy someone would say, "Yes, I've seen Him" or "I know where He is!" No doubt they also enlisted the help of whatever family and friends they had in Jerusalem in their search for their lost son as well.

## How Are Things To Be Identified?

We have related this familiar story because it introduces the important principle of identification. We may take it for granted, but there is great value and reason to be found in distinguishing marks. All people, places, and things may be classified by what they are or are not, what they have or do not have, or by some other feature.

For example, should we discover that our car is missing from our driveway and we suspect it was stolen, we would describe it to the police as precisely and accurately as possible. We would not want them to return someone else's car to us, but the one we own; therefore, we would specify the make and model, color and bodystyle, and license num-

ber. In this way we would insure that the police would not search for a green Ford with North Carolina tags if we owned a white Buick with Tennessee license plates.

Here is a principle we recognize every day. If we go to a library with thousands of books on the shelves, we may find the one we want by searching for it by subject, author, or number. In a city of thousands of homes, we find our destination by street and house number. If we go to the doctor, he will diagnose our ailment by determining what our symptoms are or are not. And, when we go to the cleaners the clerk will pass by hundreds of suits to pick out the one with our name on it.

Obviously, there are both **positive** and **negative** principles of identification. Not only can we determine what things are, but also what they are not. Consider again the example of the lost child Jesus. Had someone pointed out to Mary and Joseph a red-headed, freckled-faced teenage boy, they would have known instantly that the youth was not their son. Oftentimes we feel the need to determine what someone or something is, or is not.

Such a common sense approach may be utilized in regard to the church we read about in the Bible. While there may be hundreds of churches in existence today, by observing certain marks and identifying features we can determine which one is the church that Jesus built (Matt. 16:18), and may also judge which may be a flawed imitation of that divine institution.

## Marks That Identify The Lord's Church

The church that Jesus built is a distinctive institution. It is composed of a select people, carries on a divine work, and is organized after a Scriptural pattern. Should we find--anywhere and at any time--a group of people that fit the pattern, they must be the church of Christ. If we find a group of worshippers organized in a religious community (or, a church) that does not fit the pattern, they cannot be called the Lord's church.

What are some of the distinctive traits of the church Jesus built? What will help us get it apart from others? How can the genuine article be distinguished from the counterfeit? While a great many things might be mentioned, we want to examine these marks that matter.

**The church that Jesus built is guided solely by the authority of Christ.** Indeed, He is "the head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:22). The authority that others wield--apostles and bishops, for example--is a vested and divine authority, given to them by Jesus (Acts 1:5-8). As such, the New Testament is looked upon as binding and absolute. When a church follows the teachings of Jesus, therefore, it may be identified with that church we read about in the Bible. However, when a church presumes to originate "church law" and legislate on matters that Jesus has already given a mandate in His word, that church is clearly not the church of Christ. Councils, conventions, and the policies of men cannot rival a simple "thus saith the Lord."

**The church that Jesus built worships God in spirit and in truth.** Our God is to be praised, adored and glorified "in the church" (Eph. 3:21). The guidelines for worship are found in the New Testament. Christians are to sing praises to God, "making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). Prayers are to be addressed to God the Father (Luke 11:2) through Jesus Christ His Son (John 14:13). The Lord's Supper, the only Scriptural monument to Jesus, is to be observed on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Christians are to contribute financially to the work of the kingdom (1 Cor. 16:1,2); their offerings are to be liberal (1 Cor. 16:2) and given in a cheerful spirit (2 Cor. 9:7). And, when Christians assemble they are to build up their faith by mutual encouragement and study of the Word of God (1 Cor. 14). Any departure from the God-ordained pattern of worship--mechanical instruments of music, praying to Mary, or some other mortal, a less than weekly remembrance of the sacrificial death of Jesus by partaking of His supper--is evidence that such a people have left the foundations which are in Christ.

**The church that Jesus built believes, teaches, and practices all the doctrine of**

**Christ.** Certainly, the most common defense of the modern denominational system of many churches is the truism that all groups practice part (or even much) of what Jesus taught. How often have you heard someone say "every church teaches some truth," or "everyone has their own interpretations"? Each faction is thought to emphasize a particular teaching or stress a specific application of the gospel. But, the church of the first century was urged to speak and do **all** in the name or by the authority of Jesus (Col. 3:17). All believers were to **walk by the same rule and mind the same thing** (Phil. 3:16). There can be no Biblical justification in teaching and practicing only part of what Jesus has authorized. Should we ever find ourselves in partnership with a people content to observe less than the "whole counsel of God" we must realize that we are joined to something alien to the body of Christ.

### Conclusion

Admittedly, much of the religious world holds little concern for identifying the church that Jesus built. Many will be quick to tell you that such a thing cannot be done. Others will claim that such a thing need not be done; after all, "all churches are the churches of Christ" and "one church is just as good as another."

Then, too, when some "choose a church" it is evident that there are other factors that influence their decision. What may recommend a church? Some are spellbound by tradition, money, prestige, social status, impressive worship ceremony, cool and dignified restraint, unbridled emotionalism, and on and on we could go. Many will make their religious choice in much the same way they decide who they will vote for; one thing either greatly appeals or repulses them, and they stake their decision on that.

Nevertheless, we plead with our readers to weigh carefully what we have said in regard to identifying the Lord's church. You can so do it, and with your own Bible in hand! We challenge you to examine the church of Christ that meets in your community. "Come and see" (John 1:46). Do not "join the church of your choice." Instead, find fellowship with God in the church of His choice!

Response Continued from page 35)

comprehensive than just adamant Ahaz and his intense infidelity toward the God of Judah—Jehovah. Employment of plural pronouns adds additional weight that verses 13 and 14 are addressed to others—not Ahaz exclusive.

Brother Lewis seemingly thinks that Ahaz must have received a meaning from Isaiah's sign to him. But how? Ahaz had just turned down signs in the depths and heights (obviously supernatural in nature) and yet somehow a young woman and her son soon to be born in that age would be a meaningful sign to a rebellious and stubborn king who was totally uninterested in supernatural signs offered for help. Just what help an **ordinary** sign like an unnamed and totally unknown woman and her son in Judah would afford Ahaz is unclear in this Lewis article. Contrary to the Lewis affirmation that his typical approach to Isaiah 7:14 and his usage of fulfill in Matthew 1 and 2 solve every problem around Isaiah 7:14, it really compounds the problems. He cannot tell us who the eighth century woman was. He does not know the name of her son. He has a typical fulfillment in the New Testament for which there is no corresponding type of an historical nature in the Old Testament at all and this by his own admission!

It is absolutely amazing how concerned some people are for Ahaz and how little concerned they are for what Isaiah really said in 7:14 and what Matthew said was really fulfilled in 1:22,23.

#### Dealing With Almah

Brother Lewis says that the Greek, Latin, and English translators have never consistently rendered **almah** by one term in its seven Old Testament occurrences which are Genesis 24:43; Exodus 2:8; Psalm 68:26; Proverbs 30:19; Isaiah 7:14; Song of Solomon 1:3 and 6:8. This is true but in **all** these passages a virgin or maiden (one who has never known man, one who has been concealed from carnal knowledge with any and all men) is clearly set forth. He does not argue this point to the contrary.

He refers to the shift that has now developed. The shift is now so modernistic that some so-called scholars are even denying that any of the terms—**almah**, **bethulah** or **parthenos**—mean virgin. Brother Lewis refers

to the shift to the "cognate Semitic languages where there are alleged cases that it refers to women not technically virgin." To what age is he referring for these cognate Semitic languages? A good many of us would be interested in knowing what "extra-biblical" records he has, if any, that go back to Isaiah's day and which can have **any** bearing on the true meaning of **almah**. If he is going to refer to the usage of a term hundreds of years later and try to connect it with usage in Isaiah's day, this smacks of how men have dealt with **psallo** by making it possess a meaning in New Testament times that it had lost years earlier. Relative to this crucial matter brother Guy N. Woods who is far superior to Lewis as a Bible scholar has said,

Is there substance to the claim that **Almah** does not necessarily designate a virgin, but may indeed signify no more than a young woman? So some among us now affirm, alleging that "extra-biblical usage," supports this conclusion. The implication from this is that the word was used in Isaiah's day in nonbiblical documents merely to signify a "young woman." The truth is, there are no "extra-biblical" documents available to us from Isaiah's day, and the implication is disingenuous at best. Talmudic usage hundreds of years removed, must not be allowed to oppose an affirmation of inspiration. The effort is identical with that of those who seek to sustain the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship on the ground that **psallo** in the New Testament, and neither does the word **Almah** in Isaiah 7:14, to this point (**The Living Messages Of The Books Of The Old Testament**, The Spiritual Sword Lectures, 1977, p. 261).

(Brother Lewis could learn much if he would drive over to Getwell each fall and listen to some of the great lectures there such as the one just quoted from the inimitable Woods).

The **Biblical** usage of **almah** is the determining factor—not some shift into "extra-biblical," Talmudic usage hundreds of years later, the ever changing modernistic shifts among the so-called scholars as to what the Hebrew words of **almah** and **bethulah** either do mean or do not mean and what the Greek term

(Continued on page 39)

**Crossroads** (Continued from page 33)  
We could wonder if this type of "with-it" individual would have even been interested at all in the first century "question" concerning circumcision and Gentiles (Acts 15; Gal. 2:1).

7. The elders (if any) have allowed the aforementioned "dynamic" preacher to get the "heart and soul" of the congregation behind him and not them. He is a *de facto* or unofficial elder with possible power to "bring down" the eldership in view of their lack of "exercising the oversight" (I Pet. 5:2).

8. While they may condemn other's articles and speeches for their supposed hypercritical, facetious, negative attitude, they can run articles in their bulletin which are critical, facetious, and negative about such things as dangers in some versions of the Bible. "For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practice the same things" (Rom. 2:1).

9. While hesitant to openly endorse Crossroads or to explicitly urge the membership to attend programs in Gainesville, the elders may let their 110% pro-Crossroads members become deacons and do such urging.

10. Members of the Semi-Crossroads Superchurch often get involved with Crossroad's Family Counseling Services in adopting babies and in providing foster homes. While not intrinsically wrong (Jas. 1:27), Crossroads thereby has members of the Semi-Crossroads Superchurch under a certain obligation. It is obvious that such a situation fosters appreciation of the "Mother Church" in the minds of many and desensitizes their discerning of error. (Crossroads also does this by helping other churches financially).

11. These brethren are normally not nearly as strong in their support of Christians, churches, and/or schools that they know are opposed to Crossroadism.

To the people of these Semi-Crossroads Superchurches we ask in the word of Elijah: "How long go ye limping between the two sides?" (I Kings 18:21). Today this same

choice must be made. May God help us to make the right one!

<sup>1</sup>See Jackie M. Stearsman's articles in **The Word of Life** for January, 1981; February, 1981; March, 1981, edited by Franklin Camp. Also, my own article **Logos Churches of Christ** on Crossroads's logotype name.

**Response** (Continued from page 38)  
of *parthenos* does or does not mean and any resorting to alleged cases in cognate Semitic languages dealing with virgins.

Brother Lewis refers to *almah* and *elem*. Why did he not tell us that *elem* in its lone reference to David in I Samuel 17:56 refers to David before he was married? It is never used of David after he was a married man. Quite obviously, its other usage in I Samuel 20:22 concerning the lad and the arrows is of a boy not yet married.

### Conclusion

Brother Lewis says his explanation "is not in any sense a rejection of the Virgin Birth prediction." But it is a rejection of the straightline prediction with a one time and one time only fulfillment. If Isaiah predicted the Virgin Birth and there is none other than Jesus to fulfill such, then Isaiah 7:14 was not fulfilled in any sense—partial or typical—in the prophet's day. It was fulfilled totally and completely in Matthew's day. And this is how Matthew uses fulfilled in Matthew 1:22,23 brother Jack P. Lewis to the contrary notwithstanding. No wonder some of the preacher boys who leave our schools are filled with doubts, are confused and bewildered. They have been fed on unwholesome teaching.

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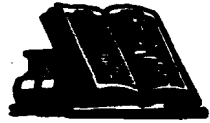
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# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

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## FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF GOD

W. Edwin Kearley

The writer of the Hebrew epistle said, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). There will be a day when all shall be sentenced to enter life or eternal death. Of the resurrection, Jesus said, "... I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). There will be a last day. Jesus tells us what will occur on the last day. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29).

Paul says that there will be a judgement of the believers' work. "For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). Despite this plain statement, many insist, when we fall into the hands of God, we will not be judged by our works. They claim that the body can not do good. They further declare judgement will be based on a momentary mental assent that Jesus is the Son of God. This is merely as assertion without any proof. It is a conclusion drawn because they have affirmed the body to be sinful and can do no good. They do not understand man's right of choice. Paul said, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. 8:10). If we are alive spiritually, we are allowing Christ to control the actions of our body. However, if we allow sin to control our actions, we are dead spiritually. The Bible says, "For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice

for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:26-27). The writer of Hebrews then makes a comparison between the law of Moses and its requirements for punishment and the great expectation of punishment under Christ. We read, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28-29). How does one trod under foot the Son of God, and count His blood an unholy thing?

After listing a long list of sins Paul said, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Rom. 1:32).

The Hebrew writer said, "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again the Lord shall judge His people" (Heb. 10:30). Jesus said, "The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:41-42).

Therefore, we must keep ourselves free from sin and refuse to consent to the sins of others. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31).

# FAILING TO BUILD THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD

Winston C. Temple

"It is time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" (Haggai 1:4). These words were spoken by Jehovah through the prophet Haggai unto the remnant Jews who had returned from Babylonian captivity. They had started to rebuild the temple some sixteen years prior to this address by the prophet, but due to opposition, they had stopped building on the house of the Lord and had built themselves houses instead.

Some of us in the church of our Lord today are like those Jews of Haggai's time. We dwell in our ceiled houses, and let the house of God lie waste. We have our homes, cars, recreational vehicles, our video games, and anything else of a material nature which we can afford, and many things which we can not afford. Many members of the church spend money on material things as freely as they pour tap water down the drain. They do not love their own souls, much less the multiplied millions of souls in the world which are lost. It is the church's responsibility to carry the gospel to the lost of the world (Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 3:10,11), but most of our members will not even carry it next door. Some are heard to say: "people just don't want truth anymore." This may be true, but does this relieve us of our responsibility in carrying it to them? The prophet condemned this attitude when speaking for Jehovah, he said: "... This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built" (Hag. 1:2).

Others are heard to say: "Well look at all the division in the brotherhood; who knows what is right?" Division exists which no one

will deny. Some division will always exist--truth divides (Mt. 10:34-36), but this writer is not convinced that we can put all of the blame on truth. Much of it is caused by laziness. We have grown fat off the good land of America. We have made the world our God. (Jesus said we can not have both God and mammon (Mt. 6:24). It is not a sin to have riches, but it is a sin to fall in love with them (I Tim 6:9,10). Too much leisure time, too many gifts bestowed on us and on our children made us lazy and full of worldliness .

We fight all types of "isms" in the church and rightfully so, but we can not get away from the fact that we have allowed (in one degree or another) ourselves and our children to be products of a sinful age.

We need to stop making excuses for not building the house of the Lord. We need to repent of our sins. More time and money is spent in just playing and frolicking, than is spent in the service of our God. Crossroadism is wrong, but, brethren, so is slothfulness (Rom. 12:11, I Tim. 5:8). We are reaping what we have sown (Gal. 6:6-8).

Is there any remedy for such a problem? Yes! Let elders, deacons, preachers and members go to work in God's service, **now!!**

"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: (Hag. 2:4).

## DEFENDER

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# DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS (No. 8)

H. Daniel Denham

## "For One Week"

From A.D. 26 (Gregorian) to A.D. 33 would give us the "one week" or seven year period. During this time, as we have seen, the gospel would be strictly Jewish in practical scope, through ultimately intended for all men. When the gospel went to Samaria amidst the winds and fire of persecution in Jerusalem and Judaea, the benefits of the Church Age were finally experienced by a people who were neither "Jews" nor "proselytes." While ethnically they had some Jewish ties (from the intermarriage of Jews and the Gentiles "of the land" during the post-exilic period) and even worshipped Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, there were still significant differences. (1) In many customs and manners they were more Gentile than Jewish. (2) Their worship was distinct from that of the Jews in Jerusalem. They worshipped on Mt. Gerizim in the Temple of Sanballat (John 4:20-22). They made use of the corrupted Samaritan Pentateuch which was designed to encourage their half-Gentile half-Jew religion. The events of Acts 8:1-25 thus mark a tremendous transition to a faith—the faith—of universal scope. It would remain the same faith or way (cf. Acts 8:1; 9:1ff; 16:17; 19:23; Gal. 1:16-25; cf. Gal. 1:6-9), but from that time onward the tide of evangelism was no longer confined to the region of Judaea geographically, nor to the Jewish people ethnically. It would sweep over to Caesarea, where the noble Gentile Cornelius and his household would be the first Gentiles to drink of the waters of life, and onward throughout Syria, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, even to the imperial city of Rome itself, and yea, throughout the entire world: so that Paul could say by divine impulsion that "every creature" under heaven has heard the glad message by the year A.D. 63. (Col. 1:6,23).

The date of A.D. 33 or 34, as the year of the work of Philip in Samaria is not out of keeping with the estimates of chronologists. B. S. Deane places it around 35 A.D.<sup>90</sup> Newman places it prior to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9), which he dates as A.D. 35.<sup>91</sup> In his *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* Ramsay dates the conversion of Saul

as A.D. 33.<sup>92</sup> This implies a date no later than this for the work in Samaria. Armstrong dates his conversion "no earlier than 34 or 35."<sup>93</sup>

An interesting date for Saul's conversion is A.D. 32. This date was suggested by Ramsay in a later work (*Pauline and Other Studies in Early Christian History*)<sup>94</sup> which may provide for the *terminus ad quem* of the "one week" to be found in the conversion of Cornelius and his household (cf. Acts 10:11). This is a view espoused by some commentators, and should not be hastily rejected; as it is the case that the infusion of the Gentiles is a key prophetic theme of the Bible. (cf. Amos 9:11-15; Acts 15:13-21; cf. Rom. 9:1-11:36; Isa. 10:22,23; 28:16; 8:14; 1:9; 59:20,21; Hos. 2:23; Eph. 2:11-3:12; cf. Acts 10:34,35; Gal. 3:26-29; Isa. 56:1-8; 62:2; John 10:16.)

However, we find the *ad quem* in the work in Samaria upon Stephen's stoning as it provided the natural step from a Jewish church to a universal one, and this readily accords with the facts of biblical history and the particulars of Daniel's prophecy. Rex Turner states,

On Pentecost, following the cutoff of the Prince in the midst of the week, the church was established, and within the next three and one-half years, the gospel was preached to the Jews, and had moved to the Samaritans. Thus, the angel Gabriel, through the prediction of the seventy weeks, gave Daniel the assurance for which he prayed. The prediction contained all the consolation and assurance which Daniel longed for, and sought for, when he began his prayer.<sup>95</sup>

## "In The Midst Of The Week"

The crucifixion of the Christ on the 14th day of Nisan in A.D. 30 would be about three and one half years from the time of His baptism in A.D. 26 (Gregorian). As noted above, three and one half years from that point would be the work in Samaria. This dividing of the "week" (the 70th week of

(Continued on page 44)

Daniel 9) is confirmed by the angel's reference to the "midst" of the week. Observe, he did not say that the cessation of "the sacrifice and oblation," which is by the "Messiah" (the "he" of the clause), that it, would be simply sometime during that "week of years," but it would be in the midst of the week. Contrary to brother King's attempt to place the cutting off or cessation of the Jewish daily sacrifices in A.D. 66 on the grounds that to such "is attributed the beginning of the war of Rome against the Jews" <sup>96</sup> (King places the 70th week between A.D. 63-70, <sup>97</sup> and this without any logical *terminus a quo* for it) Bruce states that these ceased on the 5th day of August in A.D. 70 but twenty two days before the burning of the Temple. <sup>98</sup> Josephus calls it the 17th day of Panemus (Tamuz). <sup>99</sup> This is not the midst of the week.

Brother King tries to avoid this problem by implying that the angel had reference to the daily sacrifices offered by the Jews on behalf of the health and welfare of Nero. <sup>100</sup> However, this position is only reached by assuming A.D. 63 as the *a quo* of the seventieth week in order to accommodate this Realized Eschatology position in trying to make prophecy virtually *en tota* to culminate in Jerusalem's fall in A.D. 70. One must assume a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks in order to even consider it.

Another vain attempt, this one made by Whitson in his notes on Josephus, to accommodate the A.D. 70 *ad quem* theory is the forced use of "in the midst of the week" to mean "in half a week caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease" in a durative sense, i.e. that it took three and a half years in duration or about that, marking . . . from the beginning of the war in A.D. 66, for the Romans to bring about the end of the religious sacrifices. <sup>101</sup> Also, like brother King's view, Whiston's assumes that the "He" responsible for their cessation is Titus, the prince of Daniel 9:26, but even a cursory reading of the text of Daniel 9 demonstrates the Messianic nature of the prophecy and thus the prominence of the "Messiah" in the text. The prince of verse 26 stands grammatically in a subordinate position to "the people" by whose hands the city and sanctuary are destroyed; how much more then is his presence subordinate to that of the central figure of the prophecy—the Christ!

The word "midst" means "half", and Hengstenberg renders it as such. <sup>102</sup> E. J. Young says, "The phrase does not mean 'and during half of the week' (Stuart), but in the middle of the seven, at the time when half of the seven has run its course . . . The thought is not that for half of the seven, the sacrifice ceases, but at the midst of the seven." <sup>103</sup>

### **"He Shall Cause The Sacrifices And The Oblation to Cease"**

The "He" is the Messiah, not Antiochus Epiphanes, Titus, Nero, Hitler, Kissinger, and all other such like suggested by infidels, skeptics, liberals, and premillennialists. But what do the sacrifices and the oblation refer? What sacrifice and oblation are to cease?

Brother King takes it as a reference to the daily sacrifice offered on behalf of the emperor. Is this the connection which Daniel would have made in his mind? Obviously, it is not! Furthermore, the Messiah causes "the sacrifice and the oblation" to cease, and not the Jews themselves who halted the sacrifice offered on behalf of Nero. Josephus, states the Jews had been stirred up by roguish behavior of the Roman governor Florus, that some of those that principally excited the people to go to war made an assault upon a certain fortress called Masada. They took it by treachery, and slew the Romans that were there, and put others of their own party to keep it. At the same time Eleazar, the son of Ananias the high priest, a very bold youth, who was at that time governor of the temple, persuaded those that officiated in the Divine service to receive no gift or sacrifice for any foreigner. And this was the true beginning of our war with the Romans; for they rejected the sacrifice of (on behalf of) Caesar on this account; and when many of the high priests and principal men besought them not to omit the sacrifice, which it was customary for them to offer for their princes, they would not be prevailed upon. These relied much upon their multitude for the most flourishing part of the innovators assisted them; but they had the chief regard to Eleazar, the governor of the temple. <sup>104</sup>

This is sufficient to impress the point that a multitude of the Jews caused that

sacrifice to cease, which from the time of Gaius Caligula was made daily.<sup>105</sup>

Also, as noted briefly above, such a connection would obviously not have been made by Daniel, to who the vision was given. The most **natural connection** to be made would be the sacrifices and oblations offered under the former testament. The definite articles are missing, and thus, Hengstenberg translates the expression, "will abolish sacrifice and meat-offerings."<sup>106</sup> E. J. Young comments,

The subject is the Messiah, who by His death causes sacrifice and oblation to cease. The two words are intended to represent bloody and unbloody offerings, i.e. the entirety of worship by sacrifice.<sup>107</sup>

But in what sense was such abolished or made to cease by the death of Christ? Did not these services continue until the city's destruction in A. D. 70? To these questions we now turn, the latter first.

While the Jews did continue to offer such sacrifices until the Temple fell into the hands of Titus' troops, such service was merely external. Judaism, its purpose fulfilled in the Christ was by then an ineffectual, Divinely unregarded system. The Temple was no longer God's Temple (cf. Matt. 23:38), and the entire economy was as a dead body, a corpse fit only to be devoured by the carion-eaters, (24:28). Its people and polity were no longer God's chosen ones; "they are not all Israel which are of Israel" (Rom. 9:6). A new Temple (Eph. 2:20-22), sacrifice and High Priest (Heb. 7-10), a new people and polity (Matt. 21:43; I Pet. 2:5,9; Gal. 6:16), were now regarded by Jehovah. The services under the former law, continuing from the death of Christ to the fall of Judaism in A.D. 70, were only external in form.

Christ's death **abolished** the need of these by fulfilling the law's purpose in Himself in making **once for all** expiation for sin, which expiation was anticipated in the Old Testament offerings. They thus were caused by Him to cease as the accepted medium and means by which man could approach Jehovah God.

The fulness of time had come (Gal. 4:4), and God, as it were, would no longer "smell

in the solemn assemblies" (cf. Amos 5:21,22) of Judaism, i.e. He would no longer regard the Hebraic offerings. When Christ bowed His head in death, yielding up His spirit, the beautiful and ornate veil, which guarded the secrets of the most Holy in the Herodian Temple, "was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matt. 28:50,51). That rending was complete; God was finished with the Old Testament services; a new way and a new age was beginning to dawn, and would fully arise on the beautiful and glorious day of Pentecost in Acts 2, complete with a properly probated and sanctified will replete with the full terms of pardon and pronouncement of blessing (cf. Acts 2:37-41).

### "And For The Overspreading Of Abominations"

The angel, having implied in verse 24 the end of the Judaic Most Holy and stated that the city and sanctuary would be destroyed with the decree being made sometime after the end of the 69th week in verse 26, casts the prophetic eye to the actual destruction. The angel does not place the destruction during the seventieth week, but sometime after the 69th week (verse 26). The determination or decree concerning it **did** fall in the "one week" (the 70th week, cf. Matt. 23:38; 24:1-28), but the destruction itself came some forty years later in A.D. 70.

The angel says in Daniel 9:27 "... and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." The Lord in Matthew 24:15 cites this prophecy as the **sign** of Jerusalem's "end." Its **terminus ad quem** therefore is the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 which involved the Temple then standing (cf. Matt. 23:38; 24:1-3). This fact destroys the chiliast designs of many commentators on the passage, Christ cites it, and applies it to A.D. 70, not 1990!

The word "overspreading" properly means "wing."<sup>108</sup> However, its significance here is that of the "summit" as "the summit of the Temple."<sup>109</sup> Thus, Hengstenberg translates the first clause, "And over the summit of abomination comes (the) destroyer."<sup>110</sup> The word "abomination" stands in the place of the Temple to stress the ruin to which it has come. The Temple where once God's presence and glory was manifested has in effect become the Temple of idols. The word has primarily  
(Continued on page 46)

an idolatious connotation.<sup>111</sup> Gentiles now tread upon the courts and peered into it holiest chambers. Josephus even records how the Romans brought their ensigns within the Temple's eastern gate and offered sacrifices to them.<sup>112</sup> Tertullian states that the entire religion of the Roman military camp consisted almost in the worshipping of the ensigns, in swearing by them, and preferring them before all of the other gods of the Roman pantheon.<sup>113</sup> The Roman troops were accustomed to offering sacrifices to their standards.<sup>114</sup>

"That the destroyer should be or come over the summit of the Temple," writes Hengstenberg, "we regard as a designation of its utter ruin, inasmuch as the seizure of the highest part presupposes the possession of all the rest; a stronghold, e.g., is completely taken, when the enemy has mastered its highest battlements."<sup>115</sup> Tacitus speaks of the Temple in a very interesting fashion. "The Temple was like a citadel and had its oven walls, which had been even more laboriously and skilfully constructed than the rest. The porticoes around it constituted in themselves an excellent defensive position."<sup>116</sup>

Jerusalem would be encompassed with the legions of Rome (Luke 21:20), and the city and sanctuary would suffer the horrors of Roman conquest. The "desolator," destroys, or, as E. J. Young translates it, "one making desolate"<sup>117</sup> probably refers to Titus. He adds, "This event must be regarded, not as necessarily falling within the seventieth seven, but as consequent upon the action of the Messiah in causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease."<sup>118</sup>

"The consummation," or "end,"<sup>119</sup> refers to the end of the war of verse 26. The desolation will be complete. It is "determined" in the sense of Isaiah 10:23; 28:22. And it (the determination) shall be poured upon the desolate," not the desolator as per Dispensational schemes. It is "impersonal, that which is desolate," i.e. the ruins of the Temple and city."<sup>120</sup> The purpose of the desolation, and not its actual execution is in sight. The expression "will drop down" is "always used of the cause of the destruction, the divine anger, or the divine penal sentence; never of the destruction itself."<sup>121</sup> Philologically this "dropping down" used of God's punishment of the wicked, especially of

His fiery rage over the apostasy of Israel (cf. Dan. 9:11; Mal. 2:2; Zech. 5:4; esp. II Chron. 34:21; Jer. 7:20; 42:18; 44:6), brings to mind the picture of a violent rain of fire born of Divine anger.<sup>122</sup> One cannot help but recall the graphic example of Sodom and Gomorrah where such literally occurred, and the stern rebuke of John the Baptizer given to the Pharisees and his reference to "the wrath to come" (Matt. 2:7). Such a pouring out of Divine wrath, whether literally or figuratively, presents a striking mental picture which underscores the truths that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31), and "our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). Such a pouring out or dropping down was determined, decreed, by the Son of God for the rebellious Jewish nation.

### Conclusion

It should be obvious that Daniel's Seventy Weeks do not provide prophetic cover for the Kingite nor for the Chiliast, but rather they demonstrate the exegetical weakness of the two systems.

In the prophesy the angel Gabriel in one panoramic sweep comforted Daniel with a look into his nation's future:

- (1) The city and sanctuary would be rebuilt;
- (2) The Messiah would come;
- (3) Salvation, full and free, would be made available;
- (4) The subsequent blessings of the Messianic Age—the church Age, "the times of refreshing," would come; and
- (5) The final Blood Atonment will have been offered to bring these latter things to pass.

But the city and sanctuary would be destroyed again, and made desolate by Divine Decree. One final historical note is appropriate here; the destruction of the Temple came on the same day in A.D. 70 as the destruction of the Temple under Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. Josephus says "... it was the tenth day of the month Lous, [Ab,] upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon..."<sup>123</sup> And again, "... the same month and day were now observed, as I said before, wherein the holy house was burnt formerly by the Babylonians."<sup>124</sup> Was such chance? We think not, especially in view of

the close connection of the prophecy of the Temple's desolation by the Romans and the circumstance of the desolation by the Babylonians out of which Daniel lamented and prayed.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>90</sup>Dean, B.S, *An Outline of Bible History*, p. 175.

<sup>91</sup>Newman, Albert Henry, *A Manual of Church History*, 1:87,88.

<sup>92</sup>Ramsay, William, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, p. 395.

<sup>93</sup>Armstrong, W. P., "Chronology of the N.T.," 1:648.

<sup>94</sup>Ramsay, William, *Pauline and Other Studies in Early Christian History*, p. 365.

<sup>95</sup>Turner, *loc. cit.*, p. 301.

<sup>96</sup>King, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>97</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>98</sup>Bruce, *op. cit.*, page 223.

<sup>99</sup>Josephus, *op. cit.*, p. 812.

<sup>100</sup>King, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>101</sup>Josephus, *op. cit.*, p. 812.

<sup>102</sup>Hengstenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

<sup>103</sup>Young, E. J., *op. cit.*, pp. 216, 217.

<sup>104</sup>Josephus, *op. cit.*, p. 693.

<sup>105</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 679.

<sup>106</sup>Hengstenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

<sup>107</sup>Young, E. J., *op. cit.*, p. 217.

<sup>108</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>109</sup>Gesenius, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

<sup>110</sup>Hengstenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

<sup>111</sup>Denham, *loc. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>112</sup>Josephus, *op. cit.*, p. 826.

<sup>113</sup>Tertullian,

<sup>114</sup>Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

<sup>115</sup>Hengstenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

<sup>116</sup>Tasitus, Cornelius, *The Histories*; p. 278.

<sup>117</sup>Young, E. J., *op. cit.*, p. 218.

<sup>118</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 218, 219.

<sup>119</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup>Hengstenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 431.

<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 431, 432.

<sup>123</sup>Josephus, *op. cit.*, p. 822.

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*

## APPRECIATION

We wish to express to brother Daniel Denham our thanks and gratitude for his studious work on the subject of "Daniel's Seventy Weeks."

The article which appears in this month's issue of *Defender* marks the eight and final article written by brother Denham on this vital subject.

While brother Denham was in the Bellview Preacher School, this writer tried to encourage him to study and write on the Old Testament prophets. His ability and his much studied research in history well qualified him to research the prophets and to write upon the things which he gleaned from such a study.

Brother Denham's work is to be commended to all who so desire a fuller understanding of "Daniel's Seventy Weeks."

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# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XXIII, NUMBER 7

JULY, 1984

## BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST

PERRY B. COTHAM

Recently, it was my privilege to visit and speak to the Bellview church and Preacher Training School at 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida, on the theme of the Holy Spirit and his work. Some special attention was given to the charismatic movement that has swept the nation and the world in the last few years. I presented five public lectures on the theme.

I found a very lively group of Christians, dedicated to the principles of New Testament Christianity, and desirous of defending the faith "once for all delivered unto the saints." The congregation is served by six godly elders. The response to my lessons was enthusiastic. Max R. Miller serves as the local evangelist and director of the preacher training school. I also taught some classes in the school.

The school was established in 1973 by William S. Cline; he was the school's director until he became editor of the **Firm Foundation**, which is now located in Pensacola. From this school a number of fine men have gone out proclaiming the gospel. Five men from this school are in Taiwan. In addition to Miller's work, Winston Temple and Fred Stancliff (elder) also assist in the teaching, aided occasionally by William Coss, a retired preacher. The students, therefore, receive good, sound Biblical teaching.

Inasmuch as the charismatic movement has had some influence on a number of the Lord's church and not a few congregations as a whole, at home and abroad, the elders at Bellview wish to let it be known publicly that they stand against such religious error. They are aware of the fact that about one hundred years ago mechanical instruments of music and the missionary society were introduced into the churches of Christ in America and there came about as a result of this a great apostasy from the faith. The digressive movement not only swept across the United States taking hundreds of congregations in its toll, but it also finally went into Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand, and there almost completely destroyed the churches. They recognize that history can repeat itself, that what has happened, can happen again. Who would have thought that fifty or seventy five years ago when the "Holy Rollers" and "Fake Healers" were working so actively and gospel preachers were teaching the truth concerning their errors, that by 1984 there would be a need to again teach the truth on the subject of the Holy Spirit to save some churches of Christ from apostasy over this very issue? Or who would have thought that some members of the church would become involved in the charismatic movement?

### Propositions For Debate

Before leaving Bellview, the following propositions were drawn up for public discussion, which I was happy to sign:

(Continued on page 54)

# I DIDN'T SEE THEM THERE

MAX R. MILLER

In our day most of us experience an illness and a stay or two in a hospital. The Spring and Summer found this writer in two hospitals for a total of thirty-six days. The hospitals were large, hundreds of patients lay upon beds of afflictions. Some were to die on those beds. Pain was often intense, many there were incurable, death stalked the hallways looking, waiting for its next victims. Dedicated doctors and nurses with tender and efficient care attended them. Some they helped to recover, many others were beyond human help. The poor souls needed a healer, but Alas! none were there to heal them. Of the hundreds of pain racked bodies only a few will be mentioned: One man with only a hand to care for his needs, his legs and an arm severed from his body. The stumps of his legs dripped. Another on a respirator for more than a year; he could not draw his own breath. Another down the hall all the long night through called out "Lord, Lord." His agony was intense. Nurses came to and went from his room of death, but they could not relieve his misery. One in the derision of pain called out, "Help, Help!" I passed his room. He was tied to his bed. As I passed his eyes met mine, wild-eyed with pain he called to me, "Will you help me?" I couldn't. None others could. And so it was from room to room—pain, suffering, and hovering death. There was to be no restoration of amputated limbs, empty eye sockets were to remain empty of seeing eyes—many could not be healed.

Then the television was on and a healer was demonstrating his healing powers. With neatly tailored suit, pompadour hair style, gleaming smiling face, the gift of gab, he demonstrated his power to heal; a tumor of the brain was miraculously healed; a shortened leg was apparently made to grow longer; a cancer of the spine was healed; one with stomach problems went away healed and in rapturous joy for his cure; another of poor vision was made to see. His was a marvelous

demonstration—real showmanship—applause from his vast audience, and then, of course, his plea for a "love offering" to support his healing ministry and offers to sell some of his merchandise which would surely enrich the material aspects of his viewer's life—and all that.

I began to wonder and ponder the question: why doesn't this great faith healer come to this hospital? In the time I was a patient in the Veterans Hospital I was in seven different rooms: operation, recovery, ICU, CCU, and others. I traveled over the huge building to X-ray, EKG, the pharmacy, all over. I saw in almost every room those who were agonizing under great physical affliction—but I didn't see any modern day so called faith healers or any others who claim to have divine powers to heal the sick. I didn't see them there! They were not there. Where were they? The popular healers and others of their kind were on television, before national audiences selling their prayer cloths and anointing oils, hawking their boastful claims, practicing premeditated fraud, lying and deceiving their gullible audiences, smiling as a serpent of Satan spraying their venom upon the deceived, the foolish, and desperate people.

None of the modern day faith (fake) healers have the moral character to walk the halls and visit the rooms of those such as have been mentioned; none of them have the grit, the guts, to look these in the eye or answer their desperate plea, "will you help me?" Fakes, frauds, false teachers, agents of Satan, why don't you go there and heal those of such great physical afflictions? A simple answer—they can't, they have no power to heal, only to deceive. Fakes! Frauds!

What a contrast are the howling fake healers of our times and those of Jesus and His apostles. Jesus and His apostles never received any money for healing (Matt. 8:20;

## DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor

Winston Temple, Asst. Editor

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Acts 3:6). When they healed the sick—it was instantly and free. Furthermore, they didn't have any books to sell, sold no prayer cloths, or anointing oils, no appointments were to be made. They never called for a "love offering" to support their ministry. When Jesus and the apostles healed—they healed them all—all who were sick or possessed of demons, whatever their affliction, they healed them. "And Jesus went about all Galilee . . . and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt. 4:23). "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people . . . . then came also a multitude out of the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they healed every one" (Acts 5:16).

The purpose of the healing works of Christ and His apostles stand in sharp contrast to that of modern day fakes. Modern healers heal for fame and money. Christ and the apostles performed miracles to produce belief in their hearers. The miracles of healing were to show that God was working in them, and to produce faith in the minds of those who saw them, to produce faith in Christ through their teaching. The miracle of healing (and all other miraculous powers) were for the purpose of confirming the word of God (Mark 16:19,20; Heb. 2:3,4). Miracles were the credentials of Christ and the apostles to prove to their hearers that they were the agents of the Almighty and spoke His word. Once the word was given in its completeness,

once it was confirmed by miracles, wonders, and signs there was no further need for miraculous works. Special gifts were to cease when "that (not He) which is perfect is come;" they were to continue only "til we all come into the unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:13). James declared we have the perfect (complete) law of God (Jas. 1:25); Jude reveals that "the faith" (body of doctrine, the Holy Scriptures) had been (past and completed action) "once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). This revelation was complete and sufficient (II Tim. 3:16,17).

Let the "divine healer" of today heal some man crippled from birth, one known in the community for forty years (Acts 3:1-2; 4:22), let them go to hospitals filled with hundreds of diseased, afflicted and dying people and heal them all. When they begin that kind of healing hospitals will close their doors, doctors and nurses will seek other profession—and then and only then will the modern healer present his credentials as did Jesus and the twelve to confirm that they are doing God's miraculous works of healing. Until they so do we will continue exposing their sham, deceit and false teachings. No, I didn't see them there because they were not there, neither shall they ever be there.

We Christians of our Lord's cause, are willing to discuss this subject privately or publicly, for we are ready to stand for the truth and against the false doctrines and deceitful works of the frauds who claim to have God's power to heal today.

---

## WHAT IS A MIRACLE

### IVEY POWELL

Quite frequently people will attach the word "miracle" to anything that occurs. For example, "It was a 'miracle' that we won the game." It is also used many times when things happen which man cannot explain. Possibly an automobile accident where all but one was killed, or a person is sick, near death, and recovers.

Merely because some things cannot be explained is no sign that a miracle has occurred. The birth of a child is indeed a marvelous event, but birth is no miracle. It is according to the laws of nature (Gen. 3:16). If one were to say that birth is a miracle because it cannot be explained, then what about death?

What then is a miracle? A miracle is something that the laws of nature could not do in its ordinary course. The beginning of creation was a miracle. The bodily resurrection of Christ was a miracle. The virgin birth of Christ was a miracle.

Yes, miracles did occur in the early church. The dead were raised (John 11) and hungry were fed (Matt. 14), but when the New Testament was fully delivered and confirmed, miraculous gifts ceased (Eph. 4:8-13); I Cor. 13:10-13).

\* \* \* \* \*

# CONFIDENCE, HOPE, FREEDOM, AND LOVE

## B. A. CLAYTON

In this age of nuclear bombs and missiles and violence of every kind few are the days wherein one is not confronted with various accounts depicting destruction and violence of the most sordid kinds. Some are made to experience the wildest of dreams and nightmares as they are overcome by fear and depression. Many succumb to drugs and alcohol in search of an escape. Still, others are caught up in charismatic emotionalism searching for substance in the religious realm for purpose in life. As dark as the future might appear, there is a positive and proper solution.

Jesus offered the **only** true confidence, hope, freedom, and love to mankind when he beckoned all the troubled, and those burdened with sin to come unto Him (Mt. 11:28-30), and "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). He further authenticated His concern and love as he buttressed the faith of His disciples with these words:

Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (Jno. 14:1-3).

We must never allow ourselves to become complacent and yet I observe signs of vain confidence, vain hope, vain freedom, and vain love by the implementation of men's philosophies.

The apostle Paul conveyed a message of hope and freedom to the brethren in Rome when he wrote:

But God be thanked, that ye were servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:17,18).

These brethren were being lured away from Christ and encouraged to adopt the Mosaic legislation. Paul, however, identifies the

termination of one's responsibility to the Mosaic covenant in chapter seven, verses one through six. Next, Paul warns that death is the end for servants of unrighteousness (6:20,21). However, because Jesus' death on the cross ushered in the "perfect law of liberty," they were dead to sin by the crucifixion of the old man through their obedience to the gospel as they were immersed and were made **new** (6:3-8), and free from the law of sin and death (8:2). Those fickle Galatians were also reassured of their liberty and freedom in Christ (Gal. 5:1). Likewise, must God's children remember the death, burial, and resurrection whereby we enjoy hope and freedom in Christ Jesus.

Newness of most things has held a special significance of hope, joy, life, effervescence, probabilities, etc. Accordingly, Paul's inspired word pictures were such as to fortify their faith. This overcame fear and ignited confidence. Their motivation was love for God and His Son, and freedom from the guilt of past sins. This same writer stated his boldness as an ambassador in bonds (Eph. 6:19,20). To the Philippians he wrote for him to live is Christ and to die is gain (1:21). What an attestation to and spectrum for his confidence, hope, freedom, and love in Christ.

The Corinthians were exhorted and challenged concerning love. Love was contrasted with speaking in tongues (intelligible languages), prophecy, great understanding, knowledge, faith, benevolence, and the sacrificial giving of one's body. Herein, Paul identified, all were and are meaningless without love. Love has **not**, could **not**, and will **not** fail (I Cor. 13:1-13). Jesus said what I consider the ultimate,

A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (Jon. 13:34,35).

John also wrote, "We love him, because he first loved us" (I Jno. 4:19).

Therefore, the confidence, hope, freedom,  
(Continued on page 55)

# THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE CHURCH MUST HONOR THE SCRIPTURES

## BILL GRADDY

When a Christian teaches false doctrine, every effort should be made to teach him the error of his way (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-21). After the New Testament has been taught and followed, if there is no repentance, then the final withdrawal of fellowship must be executed (Matt. 18:15-17; I Cor. 5:1-13; II Thess. 3:6). This should be made known publicly, and this person should be "marked" so that wherever he attends, the congregation will be informed (Rom. 16:17-19). If the congregations would follow (Rom. 16:1,2), then sister congregations would have all the necessary information. Note that we have authority for such, (See Acts 15:23f; 18:27; I Cor. 16:10; II Cor. 8:23). If we would practice this doctrine as the Scriptures teach, the disciplinary action would correct him or mark him every where as a false teacher. (If a false teacher in one place, why not a false teacher in another place?)

The college, home, individual, and the church must honor the Scriptures and this includes withdrawing fellowship. Are there two divine institutions wherein is salvation? No! Since the church is the only institution whereby we can be saved, all Christians, whether in a home, a school, or a business arrangement, must, "...seek first the kingdom of God." To do this, we must honor the Scriptures **first** regardless of our occupation or profession in life (Matt. 6:33; John 10:35; Gal. 3:22).

Once fellowship is withdrawn, why should a college or school let this man appear on a lectureship program? When he is allowed to speak or to be heard, this negates the Scriptures and undermines the action of the elders as executed and honored by the church. There is a responsibility to the brethren. The apostle Peter said, "Love the brotherhood" (I Pet. 2:17). To love the brethren, we must love the Scriptures (John 14:15). To allow the disfellowshipped man to speak does not violate local autonomy, but it does the Scriptures; and they are the source of our authority. The Lord's plan offers him a place for true repentance and protects the church's holiness.

Until this brother repents, he should not be used, nor given the hand of fellowship by

any congregation nor by an organization whom claim to be following the New Testament. "...with such an one no not to eat" (I Cor. 5:11). To honor the Scriptures is to honor the application of them in our lives individually, privately, publicly and in or out of the church (II Cor. 6:14). The Scriptures take precedence in our conduct at home, school, business and church. Since the church cannot extend its fellowship to a brother who was withdrawn from for teaching false doctrine and who refuses to repent, then neither should we as individuals associate with or advertise for such a false teacher. If we could, why could we not publish and promote for the sectarians? What would be the difference in publishing and selling a book of sermons by a denominational preacher than in using a brother from whom fellowship has been withdrawn to speak to any assembly where Christians are gathered? Is there any difference in using the man and in using his materials? Could a college student sell atheistic books during the summer to support himself through college? Could he sell beer? "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into you house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 10-11). Our failure to follow this teaching has made mockery of the church, dishonored the Scriptures, and lessened our efforts in every aspect of evangelism. No wonder we are not growing!

All of us, saints and sinners alike, are bound by the Scriptures (Gal. 3:22). We are to obey the laws of the land as long as those laws do not conflict with the word of God (Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7). Example: The church withdraws fellowship from a member. The member sues the church because the church made known that he was living in adultery. Even if the State ruled that the church was wrong, this would not, yea, must not keep the church from withdrawing fellowship and marking all such ungodliness! The church would not be dishonoring the State to continue this practice because we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29).

Brethren, we must obey God! To please God, we must follow his Holy Word (I Sam. 15:22). Although the world may never follow  
(Continued on page 55)

**Bellview Church** (Continued from page 49)

1. RESOLVED: The Scriptures teach that Holy Spirit baptism is a part of the new birth and is possessed by all believers today, and that miracles (such as healing the sick, speaking in tongues, and raising the dead), as done by the power of the Holy Spirit in the early days of the church, continue in the church today.

Affirm: \_\_\_\_\_

Deny: Perry B. Cotham

2. RESOLVED: The Scriptures teach that no one today is baptized with the Holy Spirit and that miracles (such as healing the sick, speaking in tongues, and raising the dead), as done by the power of the Holy Spirit in the early days of the church, ceased with the completion of the New Testament (at the end of the apostolic age).

Affirm: Perry B. Cotham

Deny: \_\_\_\_\_

3. RESOLVED: The Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit dwells literally, directly, and personally in the Christian today and that He works in addition to the word of God to lead, guide, and direct the Christian in living the Christian life.

Affirm: \_\_\_\_\_

Deny: Perry B. Cotham

4. RESOLVED: The Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit dwells in the obedient Christian today only through the word and that He leads, guides, and directs the Christian in living the Christian life only through the word.

Affirm: Perry B. Cotham

Deny: \_\_\_\_\_

Any reputable preacher, who has the endorsement of his congregation (or school of preaching), is invited to sign the propositions and submit them to the elders at Bellview, and they in turn will arrange for a four night discussion at a time mutually agreed upon. The speeches will be taped. A large auditorium will be secured for the meetings.

Please note that brother Max Miller will serve as general chairman over the debate, and that brother Winston Temple will serve as moderator for brother Cotham. The other disputant may choose whom he will to serve as his moderator.

The above propositions seem to pinpoint the issue that exists in the minds of many in regard to this subject. A person who believes in (and teaches) a baptism of the Holy Spirit today for Christians and that miracles are being performed and that the Holy Spirit dwells literally and directly in the heart of the Christian and works in conjunction with the word, should be willing to defend publicly his belief and teaching. It has often been said that a person who does not practice what he believes is a hypocrite. Therefore, the brethren at Bellview are willing to let their stand be known publicly and they anticipate a public discussion on this very vital issue. We shall see. The hour may be later than many think.

# SUCH A TIME AS THIS

## CHARLES THARP

There are many problems that face the Christian and the churches of Christ these day. There is the problem of worldliness and sin in the lives of many of us who call ourselves disciples. There is the onslaught of secular humanism in our schools, and in the things that we use for entertainment. There is the constant threat of nuclear war that is always there to haunt us. There is the realization that we are losing ground as a church when we see our young people leaving by the scores while many millions more are born and perhaps die without knowing Christ. Discouraged? Frustrated? Yes!, and right-fully so!

However, let us consider that you and I might be "come to the kingdom for **such a time as this**" (Esther 4:14b). If God is going to be a powerful, world-influencing, life changing God, and He is, then it must be through someone now living if it is done in our time at all. Is it you, is it I, is it we?

At the time Mordecai put this question to Esther, he raised the possibility that it might be through her or someone else that the Jews would be saved and God's will carried out. He never left a doubt, however, that God's will would be done.

I would like to see us meet the challenge to teach the world of Christ in our genera-

\* \* \* \* \*

### CONFIDENCE, HOPE, FREEDOM, AND LOVE

(Continued from page 52)

and love the faithful know does **not** come without obligation. For, Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jno. 14:15). Thus, it is necessary that we recognize the plight (fears and uncertainties of so many struggling in this nuclear age) of those outside the church, the weak and/or fallen in the church. And, without smugness preach the kingdom and Jesus just as those in the early church did. Can we claim to be faithful and truly be so, if we hold to this confidence, hope, freedom, and love as though we had purchased it with our own blood when, in fact, Jesus paid it all? May we be awakened to the personal responsibility of teaching the lost that they too may know the love of Almighty God.

tion. We have left evangelism on the back burner too long. We have been busy with internal problems and selfish interests too long. Certainly, we must keep the church pure, but I submit that a chief reason for our internal problems is our lack of attention to the real issue of a world going to hell without Christ.

If one has nothing to do but sit all day he will soon develop all sorts of ailments. Let us get up and get doing the Lord's business in the Lord's way.

It is indeed a shame that young men who wish to preach the Gospel must forever be begging the brethren for support while most churches are continually adding more padding to the pews, more social life to the church agenda and more money to the bank account.

It is a shame that missionaries, who are willing to sacrifice the comforts of home, must leave the harvest fields to go home to beg for support to go back to finish the jobs they have begun.

Christian, will you go? Will you help to support such a work? Will you go next door? Will you influence elders to turn their attention from things of this world to things in the world-to-be or that could be?

### INDIVIDUAL AND THE CHURCH MUST HONOR

(Continued from page 53)

Christ, it is subject to His gospel and each person will be judged at the last day by the Word (John 12:48). As Christians, we let our light shine when we obey the word of God in every facet of our lives.

If this teaching on honoring the Scriptures were practiced, how many souls might be saved from false doctrine? We discipline souls because we love them, to save the congregation and to save the disciplined (I and II Cor.). Brethren, let us be consistent in all things to the saving of our souls eternally in heaven, the sweet home of the soul!

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# DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil. 1:17

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VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 8

AUGUST, 1984

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## GOING BACK TO BETHEL

MITCHELL TEMPLE

**And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother (Genesis 35:1).**

Jacob had served his time for Laban honestly and worked hard as a laborer (Gen. 30:20,30; 31:4-14). Laban's service was hard and he had cheated Jacob, but Jacob performed his duties honestly.

Jacob had thought many times of his home land and his people. His affection for the land of Canaan was strong (Gen. 30:25). It was his native land, the land in which he was born and reared. His father and mother were there whom he longed to see. It was the land of promise and he wanted to go back. Jehovah told him to go home (Gen. 35:1).

How similar this story is with our lives. We work while upon this earth all the days of our lives for the cause of Christ (II Tim. 4:7,8). We work honestly and vigorously for Jehovah's cause (II Tim. 2:10). We overcome trials and temptations (Jas. 1:2,3). We climb many steep mountains and cross tough terrain (I Pet. 3:14; 4:13,14). We are often treated unfairly by the world and cheated and hated by many (John 17:14); but still we remain honest and true as did Jacob, and even after Laban treated him so unfairly.

And yes, we have to overcome these trials in our lives, but when the Great Shepherd

invites us to walk through the valley of death and our work and labors are ended, we are ready to go home (II Pet. 1:10,11; John 14:2,3).

All during this life, we have that desire to "go back to Bethel" (I Pet. 1:13; II Pet. 3:13,14).

We continually realize that this old earth is only a strange land to us and not our home (II Pet. 3:10,11). We are only strangers and pilgrims in this land (Heb. 13:14; II Pet. 2:11).

Therefore friend, never "take root" here. Work hard (Rev. 22:12), keep his commandments (Rev. 22:14), keep the faith (Heb. 11:6), and then go home!

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (II Tim. 4:6-8).

# WATCH DOGS OF ORTHODOXY

MAX R. MILLER

It is quite an honorable thing even for one who is in error to boldly present his views or interpretation of Scripture. Many men draw our sympathy and admiration even though they are in error; a sympathy and admiration not for their error, but because they have the courage and forthrightness of character to openly make their stand. Without deceptive means or unscrupulous methods they have boldly set forth their cause.

In the brotherhood of Christ this day there are some who espouse a cause that is not according to the truth. They boldly proclaim their error: some claiming to speak in esthetic tongues or defending the rights of others to speak in such tongues; some, in their words, "seeking to free the church from its hide-bound traditionalism" and with a free ecumenical spirit removing the boundary lines of Zion and opening the door of fellowship wider than Christ and His apostles ever did. They are busy about their work and do not want to be disturbed in order that they may achieve their goal of carrying the Lord's church into apostasy.

But, some are not leaving them alone! A large number of brethren in the church are fully aware of their devilish work. The fruit of these heretics and false teachers has been observed and identified in many areas of our land. Faithful contenders of the truth are calling their hands, challenging their false doctrines and reproving their open sin. Do they respond in an honorable way? Do they make a defense for their false doctrine? Do their actions or recriminations cause lovers of truth to admire or sympathize with them? Indeed, they do not! However, they do, in their own way, make a response to those who challenge their error.

They speak in a pious yet derogatory manner of their reprovers as "self appointed guardian of the faith," "brotherhood policemen," and "watchdogs of orthodoxy." These terms are supposed to be mean accusations against men who allegedly without cause and without love have loosed a vicious attack upon "loving brethren of benign spirits." Actually, these terms are used to deceive a

segment in the brotherhood who will fall prey to those who advocate error.

There isn't any such thing as a "self appointed guardian of the faith." **All true disciples of Christ have been appointed to guard the faith, appointed by Christ and His Apostles.** "Watching" is a Scriptural and spiritual activity (Ezek. 3:17; I Cor. 16:13; I Thes. 5:6; II Tim. 4:5). Was Paul a "self appointed guardian of the faith" when he reproved the false teachers at Corinth? What business was it of John's when he took on the churches of Asia? If orthodoxy means gospel truth then some had better be "watchers of orthodoxy" because some others are out to steal it away.

These accusations are the way the modernist has of saying "making them leave us alone." They, like a bullying kid when confronted in his mischief, claim abuse and misunderstanding by a bigoted brotherhood. Many in the church have been influenced by this deception and are sympathetic with the errorist and abusive toward those who are defenders of the truth.

Those who preach the gospel have the appointment, commission and right to expose the false teachers among us and at the same time expose their deceitfulness. Those who will not expose the error are unfaithful to their work as an evangelist.

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 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. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry," (II Tim. 4:1-5).

## DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor

Winston Temple, Asst. Editor

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# THE CHURCH IN HARD TIMES

GRADY M. MILLER

During the first few years following Pentecost, the birthday of the Lord's church, the saints enjoyed a flush of success. The opening chapters of the book of Acts tells us that the church was united (2:41-47), multitudes were converted (4:4,32; 5:14; 6:7), and the gospel preached with such conviction, proof and power that the enemies of the Cross were either reached (6:7) or routed (4:16; 6:10). Truly, the Jerusalem church was a model of a growing, thriving congregation of the Lord's children.

Before long, however, the church in Jerusalem suffered setbacks, disappointments, and discouragement. There was intolerance and persecution from without (7:54-8:1), and the even greater threat of apostasy from within (5:1-11). The Jerusalem church soon fell upon hard times that threatened to stunt her growth and influence, if not destroy her altogether.

## The First Great Crisis

The fourth chapter of Acts records a signal threat to the faith in the days of primitive Christianity. Peter and John had been arrested for preaching the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (verses 1-3), and had spent the night in jail. During their hearing the next day before the Sanhedrin council they were threatened and forbidden to "speak nor teach in the name of Jesus" (verses 15-18). Upon their return to their brethren, they "reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them" (verse 23).

The early church now faced great dangers. There was the possibility that the new faith had been discredited in the eyes of the people. After all, wouldn't you be uneasy if the elders of your congregation were all arrested and jailed? There was also a great show of force by the enemies of the church designed to intimidate and silence them. It was clear that continued preaching would bring a severe retribution upon them. Was this new movement facing the end? What would they do?

Upon hearing Peter and John's report, the **Jerusalem church immediately "lifted up their voice to God with one accord"** (verse

24). They were willing to turn the matter over to His able hands. They prayed in their hour of need; they prayed for additional courage, for power, for visible and concrete results. And God heard their prayer! Following their prayer the meeting place was shaken, they were all filled with God's Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness (verse 31).

It is significant to note that **those early believers drew even closer together in their hour of trial**. Luke tells us the "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common" (verse 32). Of course, this sharing and caring typified the Jerusalem church before (Acts 2:44-45), and perhaps throughout all those first years. But now, however, we find those first disciples demonstrating anew their commitment both to the Cause and to each other. They were persuaded of their need to stand by one another, even as they stood by the Lord. They recognized the value and power of every single member of the body, and each one determined to reach out to the other for help, encouragement, and fellowship. They realized that sharing their burden with others would help to lighten it, especially with the aid of their God.

We also read how **the early church determined to give more of themselves during this time of trouble**. Luke records that the disciples who owned property sold their possessions and laid the money at the apostles' feet (verses 34-35). Just as it takes more effort to row a canoe upstream than to drift with the current, and to pedal a bicycle up a hill than to coast down, so times of crisis and danger demand extraordinary measures. The Jerusalem saints were ready to go--and give--beyond the call of duty. No sacrifice was too great. Every member of the body was willing to bear down and shoulder an even heavier work load. "Whatever it takes" might well have been their motto.

The Jerusalem church weathered this early crisis and achieved even greater success. The voice of the apostles was not silenced; the Cause was not abandoned; the church not  
(Continued on page 63)

# THE PERSONAL INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

## WINSTON C. TEMPLE

So much has been written and is currently being written on the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit that this writer sees a need for those of us who object to this view to write down some of our objections.

1. We do not believe in a literal personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit any more than we believe in a literal personal indwelling of Jesus Christ and God, the Father (Eph. 3:17, John 14:23).
2. "The Spirit of God," "the Spirit of Christ," "Christ in you," are all saying the same thing (Rom. 8:9,10). These are phrases dealing with the Christian's relationship to God and Christ. It reveals nothing about a personal indwelling.
3. We recognize that verses such as I Corinthians 3:16,17; 6:19; Ephesians 1:13,14 state that the Holy Spirit dwells in a Christian and is his (Christian's) pledge or seal, but where does it state that He indwells them personally?
4. Why will those of the direct indwelling argue for a non-direct influence of the Spirit in the new birth and then after the new birth argue that the Holy Spirit directly, literally indwells and inhabits their persons? Why don't they go ahead and embrace the denominational view that the Holy Spirit must act directly upon your heart separate and apart from the Word!
5. Don't you brethren realize that your position is almost identical with Ben Bogard's (Missionary Baptist) position in his debates with our brethren in the past? The only difference is that you take Bogard's position only half way. He stated that the Holy Spirit operated directly on the sinner and the saint alike. You brethren of our number who believe in the personal indwelling say No! He doesn't work on us directly in the new birth. We obey the teachings of the Spirit in regard to the new

birth. We accept this by faithful obedience. Well, why don't you accept the teachings on what to do after you become a Christian by faith? Does not the Holy Spirit teach you what to do to stay saved as well as He taught you what to do to become a Christian?

6. Some of you who believe in the direct personal indwelling have come along in recent years and said that the Holy Spirit operates in **conjunction with** the Word. This is similiar to Mr. Bogard's position. If something is with something else is it not in addition to? Bogard used the word **besides** which means in addition to. If in **conjunction with** is not in addition to, then you explain what it means to us who do not believe in the direct personal indwelling.
7. If the Holy Spirit dwells in you personally, what does He do? Those of that persuasion usually say: "nothing!"
8. Question: Does your own spirit dwell within you? Does it do anything for you? You better believe it does, if it does not you are not living, but dead! Now, does the Holy Spirit do anything for you? If so, what?
9. This writer contends that the Holy Spirit never indwelled anyone in the first century with out doing something for them. He either **inspired** them or gave them **power** to confirm the message preached, or to **edify** the church (II Tim. 3:16,17; John 20:30,31; Heb. 2:2-4; I Cor. 14:3).
10. Most of the time this writer does not say too much about this, but you brethren who accept the direct personal indwelling would make poor subjects as debaters with the Pentecostals. The Pentecostals would tell you that they believe just like you do, that is, in the direct personal indwelling. They would say that the only difference is that you are living below your

spiritual fullness of the Holy Ghost.

11. Is this what you brethren want? Do you want to be Pentecostals? They are frauds! Is this what you want? When the Holy Spirit worked in the first century, His work was miraculous. His purpose, mission and work was to bring to mankind the gospel, and to confirm it with miraculous signs and wonders. He has done this! We have the complete, perfect, law of liberty (Jas. 1:25; Jude 3). Any time you take a position of direct influence from God in your life separate and apart from the Word of God you are saying as some of our number are saying: "I can not obey the Bible, Jesus or God, do it for me!" You are taking the darkness of Calvinism and Pentecostalism rather than the light of the gospel (II Tim. 1:9,10).
12. It would be so nice if you brethren would accept the teachings of the Spirit on both how to become a Christian and on how to stay one, and realize that when you are born anew you are changed in relationship from a sinner to a saint; but how? By faithful obedience to the gospel. Have you ever studied Romans? Have you noticed that it is divided into two sections? Chapters 1-11 deal with the how to become a Christian and chapters 12-16 deal with how to stay one. Can you obey these teachings by faith, or do you have to have a direct personal influence of God, or Christ or the Holy Spirit working on you?
13. Some of you may say; "Well, he is just silly; I don't believe that at all! Yes! you do! Some of you can write books with three or four hundred pages in them pushing your doctrine which you say you are not pushing! My suggestion is for you to stop writing so many books and go back and read some which have so aptly refuted your doctrine.
14. It will not do you any good to write me and say, "the Bible says it, therefore, I believe it." You can not show in the Bible where the Holy Spirit ever dwelt in a person in a non-miraculous way. As has been shown, when the Holy

Spirit dwelled in a first century Christian, He did something for them. The miraculous ceased when the New Testament was revealed and confirmed (I Cor. 13: 8-13; Eph. 4:11-16; Jude 3).

15. Let us for a moment take the "Bible says so" argument and apply it to a passage, Colossians 3:16a: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom;..." By your logic, the word dwells in us because the Bible says so! But how does it dwell? This verse does not tell! We know from other passages it dwells in us by our faithful study, understanding and acceptance of the Word (II Tim. 2:15; I Pet. 3:15; Jas. 1:21). Likewise, the Holy Spirit dwells in us today by faithful **acceptance** of His teachings, (I Cor. 2:9-14) and living out those teachings in our lives (Rom. 12:1,2). The Holy Spirit was a teacher (John 14:26). He revealed the mind of God to chosen men whom He inspired (I Pet. 1:20,21). This message was confirmed "...with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will" (Heb. 2:1-4; cf. Mark 16:15-20). Inspired men wrote the confirmed message. We can read it, and understand it (Eph. 3:1-5).
16. The only way that God, Christ or the Holy Spirit dwells in us today is by our faithful obedience to the revealed confirmed Word (II Pet. 1:5-11; Gal. 5:16; 5:22-25). Can you add? Can you walk? Can you bear fruit? Yes, you can (I John 5:3)!
17. This writer can accept a brother who believes in a personal direct, indwelling of the Holy Spirit in his person as long as he says that He (Holy Spirit) doesn't do anything for him, but as I have shown it is not a tenable position, nor is it one that can be Scripturally justified!
18. If you disagree, feel free to write. Having been involved in debating the subject, this writer has found that the non-miraculous direct personal indwelling position is really a dangerous one for a Christian to hold.

# THE BIBLE: A BOOK ON GIVING

BILL CROSSNOE

Gifts are something each of us enjoy giving and receiving. The greatest gift man will ever receive is that one from God. It is so amazing to read from His Holy Word of His many gifts from the beginning until the present time. Let us examine just a few of these.

In the beginning God gave us this great world and filled it with vast resources for our enjoyment and use throughout our lifetime. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3). "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands" (Heb. 1:10). These passages, and many others, tell us that God's special gift of this world is most rewarding.

God also gave man life. If mankind could just believe and remember the source from whence he came, he would be a much better person (Gen. 1:26f; 2:7). In the creation, God had given man dominion over every creature, (Gen. 1:26; Psa. 8:6). Nothing that was made, was made in the image of God (spiritual image), but man. When God placed man in the garden of Eden, He gave two simple commands: Not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden, and to dress and keep the garden. Such a sad note on our part, man was too weak then to follow those wonderful instruction, and still so today. Yet, God's gifts are still flowing. We just can't seem to realize that nothing belongs to man; it is only given him for use while here (I Tim. 6:7-8). When man sinned and fell from God's grace, God gave him a promise of a redeemer (Gen. 3:15). That redeemer would be God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16). He would come to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).

Even though God has always been a God of giving, yet He has always demanded that His children give to Him. One of the first things man ever did was to offer sacrifices to God (Gen. 4:3-4). The sad part of most of our lots is we don't understand the meaning of "sacrifice." This generation of people in America have never known the pains of war, hunger, cold and friendless people. We have

had it "made." But God still demands a sacrifice! Look, if you will, at some examples. The first thing Noah did after leaving the Ark of safety was make a sacrifice to God (Gen. 8:20). Abraham, after rescuing Lot, his nephew, along with others who had been taken captive, met and gave a sacrifice to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:17-20). Abraham tithed of all he had. Jacob also agreed to give to God ten percent of all he had (Gen. 28:22). This was done in order for those God-fearing people to feel the blessings involved in sacrificing. God's law to Moses was a schoolmaster given in preparation for another gift, Jesus, His son. His law to the children of Israel serves as an example for us to better understand God's law of the Christian age and His plan for man (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:6). The Old Testament begins and ends with giving.

The gospel of Christ centers around the topic of giving. God gave His Son to die for the world (Matt. 1:21; John 3:16). The Son taught the world, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). They would have to give the whole heart: they would have to give self (Matt. 16:24; 27:37). The love of the world and its vain possessions would not be acceptable to God (I John 2:15-17). The New Testament is filled with wonderful examples of sacrifice. The apostles (Mark 10:28ff); the poor widow (Mark 12:41-44); Joseph gave his new tomb for the burial of Jesus (Matt. 27:60). The early church was a church of sacrifice. They gave their possessions and goods (Acts 2:45; 4:37). Stephen gave his life as an example of loyalty to God through Jesus Christ. All of the letters written to either churches or individuals were written for the purpose of instructing them how they were to give their lives to the Lord in acceptable living. Some of the letters definitely specified giving (Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 8:1-7; 9:6-7). The book of Revelation closes with the idea of God's giving man a new home (Rev. 21).

We can be assured that God has given His part, and is still giving today (II Pet. 3:9). It is up to us to turn and follow in the steps of Jesus (I Pet. 2:21), so that we can hear those wonderful words, "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," (Matt. 25:23). Let us sacrifice while the opportunity is ours that, by the mercy of God, heaven will be our home.

# POINTS TO PONDER

CLAUDE PARKER

Life moves so fast, for most of us, that we often lose our sense of values. The less important occupies so much of our time that we neglect the things that deserve to have top priority. Here are a few points to ponder.

True love is still the only basis for lasting and fulfilling relationships. Love is not the author of slothfulness, filth, sex perversion, and such like; and a camouflage of religion will not alter that fact. As the Bible tells us, ". . . love doth not behave its self unseemly. . ." (I Cor. 13:5).

Basic honesty is still one of the

characteristics of every true Christian. Religion without it is hypocrisy. Our Lord said, ". . . cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also" (Matt. 23:26).

Simple neglect of Christian opportunities and responsibilities will be the cause of morally good people losing their souls, and will be a major negative influence upon those who are closest to them. As the Bible expresses it, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb. 2:3).

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## CHURCH(Continued from page 59)

destroyed. The days ahead would bring even greater jeopardy but the saints knew that God would see them through those evil days, even as He had delivered them in their present hour of need.

### **And What Of Today?**

In many ways this is the story of the church today. Once, the united Christians seeking to restore primitive Christianity were the fourth largest religious body in America, but no longer is this true. A few decades ago the church of Christ was reported to be the fastest growing church in America, but that is certainly no longer true. Our age is a difficult and demanding one for any church or "organized" religion. In many places and cases it seems our strength is waning while we anxiously look for a harvest of souls. Ours is a time of controversy, confusion and doubt.

What can be done? What program can we follow to revive our spirit and spur the church on to increased greatness? Why not look again to Jerusalem and determine to imitate her plan of action?

Whether our immediate concern is persecution from without, apostasy within, or even an open door of great opportunity (1

Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Rev. 3:8), here are appropriate steps to take. [1] Let every Christian and the assembled church pour out their heart in prayer to God. It can be of no little import that the early disciples continued steadfastly in prayers (Acts 2:42; 6:4), met their first great crisis with prayer (Acts 4), entrusted the seven with the care of the neglected Grecian widows with the prayers of the whole multitude (Acts 6:1-7), and prayed without ceasing as the church for the release of Peter from prison (Acts 12:5). Surely, even today His children realize that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). [2] Let every Christian be filled with a sense of unity and fellowship. A heightened appreciation of Paul's observation, "For the body is not one member, but many...But now are they many members, yet but one body" (1 Cor. 12:14,20), should make us more determined to work together and make common cause. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (Heb. 10:24). [3] Let every member of the body be active, every soldier on duty, and every worker working. "For we are laborers together with God" (1 Cor. 3:9) is to be descriptive of the entire fellowship, and not just the "faithful few." May every "joint" supply his part and contribute his "effectual working" so that the body might increase and be built up (Eph. 4:16).

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B-1230	9:30 - 11:30	Acts
B-1581	1:00 - 3:30	Hebrew History
<u>Tuesday</u>		
	8:00 - 8:25	Chapel
L-1201	8:30 - 9:30	English
B-1461	9:30 - 11:30	Apologetics
B-1420	1:00 - 3:00	Introduction to New Testament
<u>Wednesday</u>		
	8:00 - 8:25	Chapel
S-1221	8:30 - 10:30	Homiletics (I, II Tim. & Titus)
B-1230	10:30 - 12:00	Acts
B-1240	1:00 - 3:30	Romans & Galatians
<u>Thursday</u>		
	8:00 - 8:25	Chapel
L-1201	8:30 - 9:30	English
B-1420	9:30 - 11:30	Introduction to New Testament
B-1581	1:00 - 3:30	Hebrew History





# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER, 1984

## THE THRONE OF DAVID

DON K. PRESTON

Much is written and said today about the throne of David. Premillennials say, Jesus will soon come and sit on David's throne in Jerusalem. We believe this is a rejection of the accomplished work of Jesus. Consider a key prophecy as expounded by Peter in Acts 2:22-36.

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre

is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

It is generally acknowledged that Jesus was resurrected to sit on David's throne. The question is, sit when? Robert Shank, in his new book **Until the Coming of Messiah and His Kingdom** says, "Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to sit on David's throne-- not immediately, but ultimately. Meanwhile, he shares the Father's throne in heaven as he waits..." (p.33). This is error.

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# UNITY? OR POLARIZATION

MAX R. MILLER

With modern systems of communications, indeed "the world is getting smaller," —but man drifts farther and farther away from his fellows. Our modern and sophisticated age has not only seen a separation of man from man, but it has also seen a separation from the old and divine standards of morality. Personal conviction, commitment and responsibility are not the norms of our day. The concepts of brotherhood, fellowship and friendship are not the same as once held by the faithful of God. A growing and fast world finds us all drawing into our own quiet little places, guarding against invasions of privacy, living in a selfish little world all our own. With this withdrawal and separation soon are drawn lines over which we will not cross, neither will we willingly allow others to transgress. Crystalization and permanent separation becomes the polarized state of life.

Polarization, the inclination to be directly opposite in character and action, has been characteristic of the world from earliest times. Ethnically, politically, socially, the population of the world has drawn itself into its own groups, paying allegiance only to its kind, and with hostility resisting the crossing of well drawn lines of separation. Social polarization breeds prejudice, fear, ignorance, and blinds our eyes to universal truth. Social polarization crystalized causes division, it builds walls between people, it establishes permanent alienation and enmity; unhappiness, friction and social strife. Political polarization in its extremes has cursed the world with the constant carnage of warfare.

As polarization has adversely affected the world, it has had a like effect on the church of the Lord. Polarization in the church of Christ is not a modern malady. Some in the church at Antioch, Syria had withdrawn into Jewish factions (Gal. 2:11-14); at Corinth

the rich had drawn their circle and separated from the poor (I Cor. 11:17-22). Time and history would witness the polarization of sects and parties in the Lord's church which would ultimately see the body shattered into hundreds of denominations, creeds and parties of vain religion. In more modern times, with the restoration of New Testament worship, we have seen the body of Christ again fragmented by premillennial heresies, anti-ism of various colors, liberalism, and personality followers.

Perhaps no day in the history of the church of Christ has the danger of separation, polarization and crystalization of sects been more pronounced than now. The spirit of division threatens the glorious cause of Christ. We today are paying the high price of polarization. Sin and condemnation will be the cost demanded at the judgment. Friendship, mutual trust, spiritual and social fellowship, and brotherhood is all forfeited in division. Hate and resentment displaces love and brotherly kindness. Polarization affirms a lack of love and understanding, a lack of caring for one another in the family of God. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (Jas. 3:14-16).

It is easy for divisions to occur. It takes little character or dedication to polarize—only little people, who, as Ephraim of old, "one who is joined to idols" (Hosea 4:17). Self will, personal ambition, to make a name for one's self, party allegiance, favoritism, become idols and carry one away from genuine love for truth and the Christ. It is easy for many to succumb to the pressures of parties, papers, schools, and brotherhood factions. Not to polarize re-

(Continued on page 71)

## DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor

Winston Temple, Asst. Editor

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# THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

D. RAY PIPPIN

**Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

There is much controversy today concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 2:38. This passage has been misapplied as much as any in God's word, both by serious students of God's word as well as those who twist the Scriptures unto their own designs.

The Pentecostals of today claim that "the gift" is in actuality, the Holy Spirit, and therefore "true converts" today are capable of talking in tongues and performing other miraculous works. There are some within the Lord's church who believe that "the gift" of Acts 2:3 is the gift of tongues, or one of the miraculous powers of I Corinthians 12 so bestowed by the apostles either during or after baptism. This obviously is conjecture, the Bible does not state this.

So we continue to debate the issue of "the gift" in Acts 2:38. If we rule out emotion and search the Scriptures objectively the matter of "the gift" of Acts 2:38 can be resolved. No conjecture is necessary. We believe the inspired writers were specific in the total context as to what that gift was that was given to all true believers on Pentecost and until the present time.

## **God Has Always Supplied A Providential Way For Man To Be Justified**

The apostle Paul wrote the church in Ephesus that from the beginning of times God has provided a way in which man can be pleasing to God: "According as he hath chosen us in him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, **according to the good pleasure of his will**" (Eph. 1:4,5).

The all knowing mind of God, even before the foundation of the world, knew that man would disobey Him and would need a way of redemption, so God in His majestic manner set forth a plan whereby man could be justified before Him and **receive the gift of salvation** to spend eternity in heaven. God has always

used man as His agency, therefore, faithful Abraham would be chosen as that agent whereby man would receive the **promise of the gift**, which is salvation. Through Abraham's seed, Christ the Messiah, both Jew and Gentile could find permanent rest: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the **promise of the Spirit** through faith" (Gal. 3:14).

## **God's Two Promises Through Abraham**

God actually made two promises to Abraham: a land (material) promise, and a spiritual promise. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, **unto a land that I will shew thee**: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: **and in thee** shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1,2). The land promise made to the children of Israel (seed of Abraham) has been fulfilled as declared by Joshua. "And I **have given you a land** for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them: of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat" (Joshua 24:13). So therefore, the remaining promise (or gift) to be fulfilled was the **spiritual promise** to all families of the earth, both Jew and Gentile (Joel 2:28).

## **God Has Providentially Led Man To The Spiritual Promise**

In order to guide the chosen of God (Abraham's seed) it was necessary for God to establish guidelines that they should follow and which would lead them to the Messiah and the long awaited blessing: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed **heir of all things . . .**" (Heb. 1:1-2).

(Continued on Page 68)

## **HOLY SPIRIT (Continued from page 67)**

The establishment of the law of God through Moses was the final authority for God's people prior to the establishment of the kingdom of Christ and the ultimate fulfillment of the spiritual promise made to Abraham that **all families of the earth would be blessed**. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24).

The providence of God through the patriarchs, prophets, and the law of Moses set the stage for the advent of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who would fulfill the **promise** of the **salvation of all men by grace through faith** (Rom. 5:2). To this end Christ chose twelve apostles who were told shortly before His crucifixion and death, that the Holy Spirit would come and reveal to them all truth that had been hidden for ages. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall **teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you**" (John 14:26). Christ again reaffirmed that promise. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you [apostles] into all truth. . ." (John 16:13). Christ went further to inform the apostles that the kingdom (or promise) would come with power in their lifetime: "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1).

This certainly proved to be true for after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and before His ascension into heaven, He gathered His apostles together and again spoke His purpose: "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the **promise of the Father**, which, saith he, ye have heard of me" (Acts 1:4). This Spiritual promise was fulfilled shortly. The apostles assembled in Jerusalem, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place--And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4).

Of course this was the manifestation of all prophecy that the kingdom would be established in Jerusalem and all nations would flow unto it (Micah 4:1). Peter, moved by

the Spirit, stood and preached the first gospel sermon after the kingdom was established. Peter preaching to the multitude, devout men out of every nation under heaven, declared boldly: "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the **gift of the Holy Ghost**. For the **promise** is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38,39). This message was similar to that of the Hebrew writer who addressing the Jews contrasted the new covenant and the old: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the **promise of eternal inheritance**" (Heb. 9:15).

The term **eternal inheritance** was significant to the Jews of that day since they all realized God had given them an earthly inheritance in the land of Canaan which was the first promised gift made to Abraham and his seed (Gen. 12:1). The "eternal inheritance" is the second promise or "gift" made to Abraham which is the central theme of this paper. Israel was in need of a savior and Christ was that Savior; He was the end of their faith (Rom. 10:4). "This is the covenant that I will make with them [children of Israel] after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10:16,17).

### **The Gift: All Flesh Will Be Blessed In Christ**

It is apparent that the "gift" of the Holy Spirit is **salvation for all mankind**, both Jew and Gentile, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Paul writes in Ephesians: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye **heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation**: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that **Holy Spirit of promise**, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:13,14). And to the Hebrews: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might **receive the promise**" (Heb. 10:36). He further speaks: "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the

Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:22).

At this point let us draw a pin point conclusion as to what is meant by the "gift" of the Holy Spirit of Acts 2:38. Peter again preaching near the Jewish synagogues in Jerusalem stated: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, for to **give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.** And we [the apostles] are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them [Jew and Gentile] that obey him" (Acts 5:31,32).

This passage summarizes what Peter means in Acts 2:38,39, when he stated: "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. **For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.**"

If those who claim the gift was the gift of tongues, so accomplished by the apostles laying hands on all the 3000 that responded to the gospel, how could they justify the statement that the promise is to "you and your children and to all that are afar off?"

For Acts 2:38 to be applicable to us today in its proper context, the "gift" of the Holy Spirit could not be the gift of tongues. **We who are called today are the children that were referred to in this passage as being afar off (in time).** There are no living apostles today to lay hands on us, so how do we receive the "gift" of the Holy Ghost today? It would be impossible! So therefore, the gift spoken of by Peter did not refer to special gifts such as tongues but to that **spiritual promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1; that all flesh that are of the seed of Abraham would receive salvation.** As Peter stated in Acts 5:31,32, that gift was **repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins and was witnessed by the apostles and the Holy Spirit.** Peter states that both are witnesses to the fact that Christ gives **forgiveness of sins (the gift) which was not available in past dispensations.** Peter aptly states this great fact in his first general epistle: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come to you" (I Pet.

1:9,10). The apostle John refers to this fact also in his second general epistle: "And this is the **promise** that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (I John 2:25).

To further illustrate that the "gift" of Acts 2:38 was in fact **salvation** the Hebrew writer referred to the heavenly gift that was lost by Christians who have fallen away! "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the **heavenly gift**, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, . . . If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. . ." (Heb. 6:4-6). Surely one would not be naive and say this heavenly gift was speaking in tongues!

In summary, it has been shown that the gift of the Holy Spirit is **life eternal** with God forever to **everyone both Jew and Gentile**, that believe and obey the will of God by faith in Christ Jesus: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise [salvation] might be sure to **all the seed**; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham [Jews and Gentile]; who is the father of us all" (Rom. 4:16; cf. Gal. 3:14,28-29).

Therefore you have it: prophecy made (Gen. 12:1), and prophecy fulfilled (Acts 2:38). Salvation for all men, both Jew and Gentile, "as many as the Lord shall call."

It is possible of course, for us through sin, to make the **promise or gift of non-effect** if we should fall away from God: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the **heavenly gift** and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they should fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

Therefore, we are admonished to "...lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1,2).

# THE WITNESSES AND MATTHEW 24

GRADY MILLER

I don't know how long the **Watchtower** tract had been rolled up and stuck inside my front door. We seldom use that door, and the sun had yellowed and weathered the paper. Funny, but the Jehovah's Witnesses used to knock on the door, identify themselves, come in and talk about the Bible. But now, for some reason, they come and go unseen, leaving their literature behind.

No doubt you have received visits from zealous members of this dedicated cult and have looked over their literature. This tract was fairly typical of the Witness approach. It made no mention of some of their most peculiar and odious beliefs: their denial of the deity of Jesus and insistence that He is only a created being like you, me, the angels, and even the Devil; their refusal to accept blood transfusions in medical emergencies; their rejection of certain patriotic traditions, such as saluting our nation's flag. On the other hand, it did emphasize the Witness contention that we are living in the very last days of the "endtime," and have been since 1914; the coming of the Lord is to be very soon; a new world order--Jesus' earthly reign--is about to begin.

Certainly, the Jehovah's Witnesses are neither unique nor alone in their premillennial and dispensational views. They have an original wrinkle or two but, in the main, they stand in agreement with so many others who preach and teach these views of the "coming" kingdom of God.

How do the Witnesses and others argue their position? What passages do they cite to support their views? While we cannot examine in detail the whole of their error in a short article, we will notice the Witnesses' abuse of Matthew 24. It is their contention that events are taking place in our world--right now--that fulfill the predictions Jesus made in His Olivet Discourse. They argue that "many now living will survive the present world woes" to see the dawning of the millennial age. They insist that "serious Bible students" see Matthew 24 as a divine revealing of world conditions and the "signs of the times" as the second coming of Jesus draws nigh.

A proper handling of Matthew 24 will give notice to these points of distinction. First, much of the subject matter of the

chapter does not concern the end of the world but instead the destruction of the earthly city of Jerusalem. That was what Jesus predicted (verse 2) and what prompted His disciples' inquiries (verse 3). Indeed, all of the chapter down through verse thirty-five and all of the signs and warning alarms Jesus spoke of deals with the long ago destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) by the Roman armies and not events that may transpire in our generation.

Second, the complete context of our Lord's extended discourse on the mount of Olives will underscore the fact that there will be **no warning and no "signs of the times"** before the return of our Saviour. \* Indeed, this is the point of contrast between those days leading up to Jerusalem's fall and the "endtime" before the Second Coming. Jesus advised His disciples of the conditions, trends and signs that would indicate that Jerusalem faced imminent destruction. Forewarned of this national catastrophe, they would be ready to flee the doomed city. However, the last great day when Jesus comes in judgment will be altogether different: when that day will be no man--no prophet, priest, preacher, Jehovah's Witness nor any angel--can know but the Father Himself (verse 36); His coming will catch all completely by surprise (verse 37ff); in view of His unexpected and sudden appearing we must "watch therefore" (verse 42).

Matthew 24 (or possibly Revelation 20) just may be the most abused chapter in all the Bible. It makes **no** mention of the volatile Middle East, the Red Army, the United States of America or any other 20th century fulfillment of first century prophecy. The Bible is not to be held in one hand and this morning's newspaper in the other. The Witnesses twist and strain Matthew 24 to fit their cultish views rather than bringing their doctrine into conformity with the Scriptures.

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\* One disturbing indication of the widespread misconception of Matthew 24 is seen in the lyrics of the song "Jesus Is Coming Soon" [number 342 in our **Songs Of The Church**]. Do we really understand what we are saying when we sing "when these signs come to pass/nearing the end at last/it will come very fast/trumpets will sound"?

### THRONE OF DAVID (Continued from page 65)

Please note: (1) David was a prophet (vs. 30), i.e., he spoke by inspiration of the Holy Spirit (II Sam. 23:1-4). (2) He predicted (i.e. the Spirit predicted of Acts 1:16) that God would raise one of his (David's) seed to sit on his (David's) throne (vs. 30). (3) This was a prophecy of the Christ's resurrection from the dead (vs. 31). (4) God raised up Jesus in fulfillment of that prophecy (vs. 32). (5) Jesus, because of His resurrection, is highly exalted and "has received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost" (vs. 33). (6) The promise could not be speaking of David because David did not ascend, but Jesus did (vs. 34). (7) Therefore, we can positively know that Jesus is the Christ, i.e., Messiah (vs. 36).

One of the keys to proper understanding here is "the promise of the Holy Ghost" (vs. 33). Whereas most commentators say this means Jesus received the Holy Ghost upon His resurrection and ascension; this is not the meaning of the text. It means instead that the promise made to David through the Holy Ghost had been fulfilled; that promise being Christ resurrection to sit on David's throne.

This is true because it is the promise made to David concerning his seed and his throne which is in view (vs. 25-36). Second, Jesus had the Holy Spirit before His resurrection (cf. Matt. 3). In this text, the promise of the Holy Ghost was given as a

result of His resurrection. In context, this can only be the promise made by the Holy Ghost of Christ's sitting on David's throne (vs. 30-31). Thirdly, there is absolutely no hint of an interim of thousands of years between his resurrection and seating on David's throne. Fourthly, the text indicates David's throne is in heaven. Jesus ascended, was exalted, and seated according to fulfilled prophecy!

Now either Jesus received (fulfilled) the promise made to David, or Peter gave the wrong impression to his audience. The millennialists say, "Yes, Jesus was raised, yes, he was raised to sit on David's throne, but he has not yet received that part of the promise!" The Spirit who made the promise to David said through Peter that Jesus had received the promise made long ago. Not some or most of it, He has received it.

Jesus is now King on David's throne. He has the key of David (cf. Isa. 22:22; Rev. 3:7); He has the sure mercies of David (Isa. 55:3; Acts 13:33-37); He is the righteous branch of David (Jer. 23:5-6; cf. Heb. 8:6f; Rev. 4:5). He is not king by right only but, also in fact (I Tim. 6:15). If He is one day going to be on David's throne, why is he not also going to be the Messiah?

God help us to bow to Jesus the Lord, God's Messiah who now reigns upon David's throne.

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### UNITY OR POLARIZATION (Cont. from page 66)

quires genuine Christian character and a willingness to stand alone, if necessary, on the bedrock of truth with Christ. Those of that character are found "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1-3); "striving . . . for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27). Such was the character of those of the early church. They were Jews from every nation, Gentiles from the corners of the world, rich, poor, of all kind, yet they were "of one heart and of one soul . . . they had all things common" (Acts 4:32). They were of the same mind and same judgment, they spoke in unity (I Cor. 1:10).

The divisions of our day can be overcome. We all must hearken to Jesus' prayer and plea for unity—they all who believed in Him would be as one (John 17:20-23). A striving to

walk worthy of the vocation wherein ye are called will close the roads to division and allows a closer walk with Jesus. One either walks in the light with Christ, or he walks in the darkness of division (I John 1:5-7).

Our plea is that we all, all who call on the name of Jesus, discard the Corinthians partisan spirit and factionalism, and "with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2-3). Surrender the party spirit, the uncertain sounds that introduce error, the stubborn will, and seek for the oneness of the body of Christ. Christ brings unity, love, fellowship. He brings sweet peace. Let us all lose our identity in Christ; let His cause be ours.

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# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

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## WHAT ABOUT THOSE NEW VERSIONS?

GLEN WILLCUT

I recently read in a bulletin an article entitled, **Those Dangerous New Versions Of The Bible** by Rubel Shelly. May I say first, I have never met, nor written to, nor had any contact with brother Shelly. Therefore, there is no personal animosity between us. I know of him only through his writing. It is with his writing that I disagree.

Brother Shelly says there is a man whom he knew that has had a great deal of trouble understanding the Bible. He does not say which version he had so much trouble understanding. I will assume he was referring to the King James Version, because he makes mention of the archaic language he encountered. He said, the man said, "I just can't understand what I read." This man, according to brother Shelly, holds a Masters Degree. This means that he had finished High School, and had attended five to six years of higher learning at a college or university. Then a friend gave him a New International Version of the Bible. He says it became so clear, as easy as reading the daily newspaper. In a few weeks this man had learned what he needed to do to become a Christian.

I am not putting down someone who has learned the truth concerning our salvation from past sins from the New International Version. But, I find it hard to believe that the NIV is so much more easily understood than the King James Version. Maybe it is because I have been studying out of the KJV since I became a Christian in 1976. But then, I only had a G.E.D. from the Army. I

had not been to one of the schools of higher learning. As a matter of fact, I found the KJV very understandable. I had no problem understanding, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved . . ." (Mark 16:16). Or, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ." (Acts 2:38). The Eunuch did say something sort of strange when he learned the truth, ". . . what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36,37).

The Apostle Paul told the Ephesians, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ," but he also wrote to Timothy and told him to, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (Eph. 3:4; II Tim. 2:15). Bible study will always be a work. There are no easy versions that will give one instant Bible knowledge. There are some dangerous versions contrary to what some would have us believe about them.

I personally believe that the New International Version is a dangerous version! Not because someone said that it was easily understood, but because some of those things that are so "easily understood" are plainly false. Because these false doctrines cannot be taught or defended successfully from the King James Version or the American Standard  
(Continued on page 76)

# AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

MAX MILLER

Precious things are to be guarded and preserved. We often hear of the need to protect endangered species, the bald eagle, the sperm whale, and other minority creatures. The idea of any of God's creatures becoming extinct is discouraging. Let us preserve all things made of God.

The church of Christ should be added to the list of endangered species. It is a most precious thing, the only one of its kind. It is constantly threatened from without and from within. The threat is not that of extinction but that of danger, digression, and apostasy in this present generation.

Strangely, one finds two extreme attitudes toward the present danger to the Lord's church. There are those on one hand who see no dangers, see no threat to her security. They, much like Israel of old, in the face of conflict and impending destruction cry out, "Peace, Peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14). Warnings voiced against false teachers are offensive, urgent words of exhortation to draw back from defiling alliances with the world or with false religious parties draw a scornful response. There is no danger, no need for alarm! All is peace and security in the Israel of God.

On the other hand, there are those who cry the church has never faced the threats and dangers that it faces in our day. Voices of doom and despair robs the church and her people of the constant victories gained day by day. They speak as though the church cannot survive. Some in voices of mourning declare the church will be extinct by the close of the twentieth century. This should be strongly denied. The ole ship of Zion has sailed bloody and stormy seas of other ages; raging, billowy seas of foam have not overcome her in times past--neither will it in this present time. Neither view is correct. There is much cause for joy in the church today. Then, there are dangers to the church today, in fact, the same dangers she has

faced time and again in her rugged history of well-nigh two thousand years.

Regardless of the past or the future, the church today should realize the real and present danger of apostasy. It has happened before. It has happened to individual congregations of God's people that once were strong and vigorous, but in time were torn asunder and died. Apostasy marked the Lord's church in a most devastating way with a near complete apostasy of the Dark Ages. The ebb and flow of history should teach that which once happened can and may happen again.

There has ever been the temptation for God's people "that we may also be like all the nations" (I Sam. 8:20). There exists today a strong element in the church who want us to be like the nations and people about us. This is evidenced by many in the pulpit as well as in the class rooms of our schools who imbibe the denominational spirit of popular churches and academic circles. So desirous of worldly recognition and acceptance, they like Judas, for paltry sums would sell themselves and His church to those who would buy them with a smile of approval.

The temptations to cater to the world of false religion is stronger than many can resist. Some have actually denied the Lord's church and now fill a role in denominational bodies. Some have abandoned their places of teaching in our colleges and now endeavor to distinguish themselves on faculties of denominational seminaries, colleges, and universities. We should be aware of the danger of those remaining among us who are sincerely dedicated to the work of bringing denominational teaching into the church, thus perverting her doctrine and destroying God's purpose in her earthly mission. Denominational teachings are taking deep root in the vineyard of the Lord. Calvinism, premillennialism, Pentecostalism, and other perversion are among us.

(Continued on page 75)

## DEFENDER

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# I HAVE MADE THE EARTH

RODERICK L. ROSS

"I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, . . ." (Jer. 27:5).

The proclamation made by the Lord God of heaven by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah is the most basic fact of the Bible. Indeed, it is declared in the opening remark of the first book of Moses: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). If one declares to believe in the God of the Bible, if one claims to follow the faith of the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, one must accept creation of all that is by the Creator, the everlasting God.

The declaration of faith in the Creation is found from the first book of the Holy Scriptures to the closing book of God's revelation to man. The prophets of old, Jesus Christ, the apostles, and the early church are all shown in Holy Writ to accept creation without hesitation. Thus the Hebrew writers states: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3). The faith of the Psalmist should be ours: ". . . thou hast established the earth, and it abideth. They continue this day according to

thine ordinances: for all are thy servants" (Psalm 119:90,91). Jesus proclaimed His belief in creation: "But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female" (Mark 10:6). The early church declared: "Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is" (Acts 4:24). Can we do any less than show this same faith in creation and expect to be pleasing to God?

Let us with the prophet and the angels of heaven worship the Lord our God. "Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by the great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:" (Jer. 32:17). "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created" (Psalm 148:1-5).

## AN ENDANGERED SPECIES (Cont. from page 74)

The greatest threat today is that of compromise. Sound preachers who through the years have preached the truth, the truth faithfully upheld by the church of yesterday, have difficulty in retaining their pulpit in today's church. In relocating with another church they find faithful and true churches few and hard to find. The church has changed!

The compromise of faith and doctrine has created an ecumenical spirit which seeks for unity with all religious parties, disregarding their doctrinal errors. The "success" of the recent summit meeting in Joplin is an encouragement to a large segment of the church to disregard denominational lines, to cross over into forbidden fields for fellowship of every false way. Men appointed by the Christian Church bowed the knee to Baalism. A strong stand for unity on the truth would have brought a close to the sum-

mit meeting. No such voice of our brethren were heard--only feeble expressions of truth without application to the problem of that which divides. Such meetings (others are planned) are not summit meetings at all but rather meetings on the plains of Ono (Neh. 6:2). Such meetings are not representative of the Lord's church. The men called by the Christian Church are not those who represent the church of Christ. Our brethren have played in the hands of strategists who endeavor to unite us with them on the basis of their doctrines and errors. With subtleness they work a promotion to denominationalize the church of Christ and bring it into alignment with the Christian Church.

And then--there are many who will say, "It just isn't so." But it is. It is a danger. The threat of digression is strong, the reality of apostasy is evident. "Watch ye, stand -- fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong and having done all, to stand (I Cor 16:13; Eph. 6:13).

# THE JOY OF FINDING THE LOST

M. W. KISER

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The Christian is commanded to rejoice in the Lord (Phil. 4:4). Isaiah, the prophet of old, spoke of the saved of this dispensation being people who are partakers of joy. "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). It can be said of us, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:10). When our Saviour was born into this world, the angel of the Lord said to those shepherds watching their flocks and seeing His star, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10). Jesus wants our joy to be full (John 15:11). In order for our joy to be full we must lead a spiritual life, that is, allow ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit into those God-appointed realms or worship and service. The Spirit directs us, not in some miraculous way, better felt than told; but through an intelligent manner of communication--the Bible. One of the obligations placed upon us by the Spirit that we might bear the fruit of joy is that of winning the lost.

Soul winning is a work that has always

brought joy to those who are engaged in it. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weeping, bearing precious seed, shall countless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:5,6). Paul said to those Thessalonians whom he had won to the Lord; "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (I Thess. 2:19,20).

Jesus spoke three powerful parables in Luke 15 (known as the parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son) that teach us a needed lesson concerning God's sorrow over those that are lost; but also God's joy over the lost being recovered from sin. Study carefully Christ's words: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (vs. 7); "Likewise, I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (vs. 10); "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found" (vs. 32). God invites us to share in His great work of recovering men from the sepulchres of sin and His joy in their being saved.

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## NEW VERSIONS (Continued from page 73)

Version, the denominational translators put their creeds (or false doctrines) in dangerous versions such as the New International.

From the New International Version one can teach and defend, premillennialism, Calvinism and a host of other isms. Aside from all this the translators have a general disregard for the inspired Word of God, changing words, sentences, and paragraphs.

I find it very difficult to believe that a man who had a Masters Degree found the Bible (even with its archaic language) so difficult to understand--unless, he did not want to understand it. Now on the other hand if one wants to believe that he has a **sinful nature** (as the NIV and Calvinism teaches), and that he really can not help it when he sins, and

that God's grace will cover it all any way, then I can understand why someone finds it so easily understood.

Brethren, I pray that I may never speak against that which is good nor defend that which is evil. But I am beside myself as to why elders, preachers, teachers, deacons, and Christians want to defend and promote the New International Version and in turn . . . cast accusations toward those who still use the KJV and ASV. It seems, according to some, if anyone dare to say anything derogatory about the NIV he is a worker of Satan. The King James Version led the people of the restoration movement out of the shackles of denominationalism. The NIV will undoubtedly lead some from the restoration back into denominationalism and is already doing that very thing.

# IDENTIFYING THE TRUE CHURCH

IVIE POWELL

Of the 1,200 plus religious bodies in existence--which one is the true church? That there is a true church is without doubt for Jesus said He would build it (Matt. 16:18). We read of its establishment on the first Pentecost following His resurrection in Acts two. Also, Peter, Paul, James, John and all of Christ's followers were members of the same church. To state that all of the existing religious institutions make up the one church is not only false but also ridiculous. For Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23), not churches, and He is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23), not bodies. As there is only one Christ so there is only one body, the church of which He is the head (Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 4:4-6). Furthermore, such an argument makes Christ a freak with one head and over 1,200 differing bodies which conflict in name, origin and doctrine!

By turning to the Bible one can learn the following facts:

1. The church was promised by Christ (Matt. 16:18).
  2. The church was built on Christ, and on Him only as its foundation (I Cor. 3:11).
  3. The church is divine and not a man-made organization (denomination) (Eph. 3:9-11).
  4. Christ is the only head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23). No man is the head of the church on earth.
  5. The church is to wear a divine name, "the church" (Acts 12:1), "church of God" (I Cor. 1:2), "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). Names such as Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Christian Church, Seventh Day Adventist, Pentecostal, etc. are not Scriptural.
  6. The church is to be organized according to the New Testament pattern (Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23). Elders, (I Tim. 3) deacons (I Tim. 3) and evangelist (II Tim. 4).
  7. The only rule of faith and practice
- for the church is the Bible (II Tim. 3:16-17; Rev. 22:18-19). No human creeds, manuals, disciplines, catechisms, etc.
8. The true church is to be supported by the freewill contributions of its members (I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 9:7). No begging, rummage sales, pie suppers, etc.
  9. The true church worships "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). That is, sincerely from the heart and according to God's word. The true church observes the Lord's Supper on the first day of each week (Acts 20:7), engages in singing from the heart, no mechanical instrumental music (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), the preaching of God's word (Acts 2), praying (Rom. 12:12) and gives as one has been prospered (I Cor. 16:1-2).
  10. Those in the true church enter by hearing the gospel (Rom. 10:17), believing Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24), repenting of their sins (Luke 13:3), confessing Christ (Matt. 10:32) and by being immersed for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). God then adds them to His church (Acts 2:47). Note: the Bible does **not** teach "joining the church of your choice," or that one should be voted into the church, or received into the church as an infant. All who enter the church must be old enough to believe, repent, confess faith in Christ, and to know why they are being immersed (John 6:44-45).
  11. It is essential to be a member of the true church! For Christ gave Himself for it (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25). All of the saved are in the church (Acts 2:47) which is the body of Christ (Col. 1:18). Hence, if one is out of Christ's church he is out of the body of Christ and out of that which constitutes the saved.

Beloved, are you a member of the true church of God's choice--the church of Christ? May you so be.

# CHRIST'S SECOND COMING AN AID TO CHRISTIAN LIVING

GRADY SCOTT

Many sermons have been preached and articles written concerning the second coming of our Lord. These have largely dealt with the who, when, why, and such of the second coming. There are many ways that the second coming of Christ can aid and enrich our everyday Christian lives and help us prepare for that great meeting.

An anticipation of the second coming should instill **righteousness** in each of us. Peter referred to the second coming when he told Christians of his day, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (II Pet. 3:11). Peter tells us that our way of life must be holy. Why? Because the second coming could come at any time and catch us unprepared to face the judgement. When that time comes the only thing that will matter is our holy living as children of God. Each New Testament Christian should live righteously in such a way that at any and all times they are prepared for the second coming.

Christ's second coming should cause us to have a sense of **urgency**. Every day and all around us souls are going into eternity unprepared; countless millions will be caught unprepared at the second coming and therefore be lost eternally. Jesus told us that the laborer doesn't have an unlimited time to work (John 9:4). Paul expressed this urgency when he penned the sacred lines of II Corinthians 5:11, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men . . ." The "terror of the Lord" spoken of was the judgement (V. 10), the event that immediately follows the Lord's coming. The uncertainty (as to the time) and the certainty (as to the surety of the event taking place) of the second coming should cause us to desire to teach lost souls now. That very person you were planning to teach someday might spend an eternity in a devil's hell because of your procrastination.

The second coming should also encourage Christian **endurance**. The Hebrew writer tells us that we must run the Christian race with patience, or endurance. He urges us, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1b). One of the great messages of the Revelation is: endure temptation and

persecution, God's cause will triumph in the end. If God had left us alone without assurance that His truth would be victorious it would be difficult, yea impossible, to remain faithful. But thanks be to God that He did not do that! Total victory is sure. Christ will return to judge the living and dead (II Tim. 4:1). This promise should encourage us to persevere in the face of great trials and afflictions.

The second coming should give us **comfort** as well. How can we derive comfort from the knowledge of Christ's coming? Paul was sure this very thought would give comfort to the Thessalonian brethren. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels" (II Thess. 1:7). We should be comforted because we know that all our labor is not in vain. If we remain faithful, if we use our talents in the Master's service, we will receive a bountiful blessing (Matt. 25:14-30). The Lord will not forget us when He returns. We can rest on the promise, "The Lord knoweth them that are His" (II Tim. 2:19).

The second coming is a most beautiful doctrine. It encourages righteousness, instills urgency, strengthens our endurance, and grants us comfort. No wonder the New Testament writer could exclaim, "Even so come Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

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# THEY WOULD IF THEY COULD

JIM FAUGHN

"... but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:7).

The placement of the word "would" in the above verse is most interesting. In the passage from which this verse is taken, Paul is affirming strongly that there is but one gospel and that it is all that must be preached.

He mentions the fact that some have been led astray by "... another gospel: which is not another ..." (vs. 6-7). Those who are teaching this error "... would pervert the gospel of Christ" (v. 7). There is the implication that these teachers would like to pervert the gospel, but that it is impossible to do so. Peter, using the picture of a seed, said that the word of God is "incorruptible" in nature (cf. I Pet. 1:23).

There was error being taught in the first century and it was being passed off as the gospel, but it was not the gospel. It had an effect on those who listened to it and obeyed it. They were troubled (cf. Gal. 1:7). That is, they were "... removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ ..." (Gal. 1:6).

However, this had no effect on the gospel. The pure and simple "incorruptible" word of God was not damaged. It remained pure and has retained that purity throughout the centuries.

It is possible today to listen to and to obey perverted teaching, but, strictly speaking, a perverted gospel does not exist. There is only one gospel and it alone is "... the power of God unto salvation ..." (Rom. 1:16).

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# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER, 1984

## THE JOPLIN MEETING

GRADY MILLER

There can be no greater desire on the part of God's people than for peace and unity among brethren. Our Lord fervently prayed for unity and concord among His disciples (John 17). Like David, every Christian should view unity among brethren as sweeter than the ointment that ran down Aaron's beard: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1). To keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace should be the ambition of every Christian and the plea of the church Jesus built.

Every effort to achieve, maintain and defend unity in Christ should be applauded. Every forum and means at our disposal should be utilized in the pursuit of unity. Every child of God ought to be ready and willing to go anywhere at anytime to promote and forge unity. Every Christian should stand ready to yield personal opinion and perspective and accept his brother in full fellowship and friendship. There can be neither shame nor disgrace in working toward unity among brethren in Christ. How could there be, seeing as how this was the attitude of Jesus Himself, and God abhors all who would destroy such precious unity? (Proverbs 6:19; Romans 6:17,18). A failing of desire for unity among all believers violates the historic principles of the Restoration Movement; it contradicts the spirit of our sweet Saviour.

It is in this context that recent events warrant our attention. The past few years have witnessed a renewed emphasis on unity

between the churches of Christ and the Conservative or Independent Christian Church. Rubel Shelly has spoken and written a great deal concerning the direction the Lord's church is taking. According to brother Shelly, the church has lost sight of and has abandoned the unity theme of the Restoration Movement; all those who share a common historic heritage [churches of Christ, the Christian Church, and the Disciples of Christ] need to do some serious rethinking and examining of certain fundamental issues; gospel preachers blunder and manifest a sectarian spirit if they insist that a Christian Church preacher must renounce the use of the instrument in Christian worship; the time is right for the church to once again stress the theme of unity and restore a spirit and attitude we have lost.

A new tabloid published by Don DeWalt of Joplin, Missouri and called *One Body* began in February, 1984. Featuring writers from both the churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Churches, *One Body* proposes to be a national paper addressing unity between all believers in Jesus, but especially those who are "heirs of the Restoration Movement." Don DeWalt hopes to publish *One Body* on a quarterly basis and mail it to 22,000 preachers among the churches of Christ, Independent Christian Churches, and Disciples of Christ; if enough money can be raised, *One Body* will be sent to an additional 350,000 Protestant preachers.

And then, on August 7-9, 1984 a

"Restoration Summit" was conducted on the grounds of Ozark Bible College, a small school operated by members of the Independent or Conservative Christian Church. More than one hundred men (preachers, teachers, professors, editors, school administrators, etc.), half from the Christian Church and half from the churches of Christ, met together for a period of discussion and study. According to Alan Cloyd, who was instrumental in planning the Summit and apparently spearheaded the effort, these meetings were an attempt to "open a dialogue" between two groups that share a "common heritage." Similarities and differences between the two were dealt with "in an extremely friendly and cordial way" (The Christian Chronicle, September 1984). Scriptural reasons were set forth as to why "the two groups should exist as one body in Christ" (The Christian Journal, October 1984). The Summit is to be the first of several unity meetings which will take place in the next few years.

Certainly it is right and proper for brethren to address these issues, and quite a number have! The speeches and writings of Rubel Shelly have been reviewed in many papers, including this one [March, 1984]. It remains to be seen whether One Body will survive and how much influence it will have. The recent Summit in Joplin, however, needs to be publicized, analyzed, and scrutinized. It cannot be ignored. In the months that have passed since the Summit a number of reviews and responses have found their way into church bulletins, papers and magazines. Those who heartily approve what was said and done in Joplin have exercised their liberty to say so. It seems only fair that we be granted the same license to review and examine these recent events, make a few inquiries, and offer a few observations.

#### What Was Said And What Was Done In Joplin?

The Summit was attended by one hundred and six men from twenty-three states and Canada. About fifty-two of this number were members of the church of Christ. [Incidentally, a few of our brethren who were invited and whose names appear on the list of participants did not attend the Summit; some were sick, and some have not said why they did not go.] The sessions began Tuesday evening, August 7th, continued all day Wednesday, and

concluded about noon on Thursday, August 9th. Several lectures were given before the whole assembly: Monroe Hawley spoke on the "History and Current Profile Of Churches of Christ," Boyce Moulton on "History and Current Profile Of Independent Christian Churches," Furman Kearley and Fred Thompson on "Exegesis and Hermeneutics as they Relate to the Unity Question," Hardeman Nichols on "Authority...Where Does It End?", W. F. Lown on "Liberty...Where Does It Start?", and Reuel Lemmons on "Where Can/Where Do We Go From Here."

The participants also broke up into smaller groups of eight to ten men for a period of study and discussion. Meeting four times over a two day period, these study sessions were led or chaired by Marvin Phillips, James C. Smith, Rubel Shelly, David Corts, Phillip Slate, Richard Crabtree, Bob Hendren, Dick Jorgenson, John Fisk, and Max Ward Randall. Not only were the major speeches critiqued and discussed in these smaller group settings, but time was also spent in formulating proposals and putting forth suggestions on how unity might be pursued. After each session the participants would reconvene and the recording secretaries of each group would report to the general assembly.

What was accomplished in Joplin? What impression does one have after reviewing the video and audio tapes and working through the material presented? How much, if any, progress was made toward Scriptural and Biblically-based unity between the church of Christ and the Independent Christian Church?

One cannot help comment on the irenic and gentlemanly spirit that characterized the Restoration Summit. Each participant conducted himself in a most cordial way. Indeed, it appears that this harmonious and loving spirit is being hailed as the single greatest accomplishment of the unity meeting; one brother has written that the Summit was "not a brawl. A beautiful spirit of love for God and one another as estranged brethren pervaded the discussions" (Rubel Shelly, church bulletin of August 19, 1984).

Several reasons might be given to explain why the Joplin unity meeting enjoyed such a serene and pleasant atmosphere. Certainly, anytime brethren come together to discuss

## DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor

Winston Temple, Asst. Editor

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Biblical themes we expect them to be Christ-like in behavior. Men ought to not only speak the truth, but do so in love (Ephesians 4:15). A forum on sensitive and controversial issues does not justify a hateful and ugly spirit. The opening comments of Alan Cloyd set the tone for the Summit:

"Keep it cordial. Above all things, brethren, love one another in this meeting. Now, if you're not equipped to do that please politely excuse yourself tonight and just go on home."

Then, too, the men invited to attend the Summit were carefully chosen. Only those who were viewed as able to get along gracefully with others who might differ with them were invited to Joplin. Alan Cloyd told them:

"You were chosen--in every case--because of the fact that you are sound in the faith, because of your knowledge of the Restoration Movement, and the two groups meeting here...And you have been chosen also because of certain personality characteristics and traits. You are the kind of fellows that can discuss matters of mutual interest and concern without coming to blows. And we want to really stress that."

There is, however, another possible reason that may help to explain the "beautiful spirit" that existed in Joplin. The Summit had no teeth. It was purposely dehorned and neutered before it even started. The caffeine was taken out.

It was decided months ago by the organizers and planners of the Restoration Summit that the unity meeting would not be: [1] An open forum of study or (heaven forbid!) a debate on the key issue of instrumental music in Christian worship. It was felt that previous unity meetings of the past had not achieved the greatest benefit because they had centered around the question of instrumental music (Alan Cloyd, "Conclusion and Review Of Wednesday Activities"). In his introduction of Furman Kearley, Cloyd asserted that "we have all understood, in preparing for this series of meetings, that we would err if we tried to deal with the specific points of difference that separate

us. We need to paddle back upstream and get to the causes of those differences." [2] An open forum wherein a faithful and influential brother could have opportunity to declare--with all candor and no restrictions--the unyielding refusal of the church of Christ to compromise truth and downplay the issue of the instrument. The "ground rules" simply would not permit it; there was no rebuttal of a major address and no questions received from the floor in Joplin. Every brother who attended and participated in the discussions, and especially those who spoke at the major sessions, did so with full understanding and consent that plain talk about the instrument was out of bounds at the Summit. One wonders why and whether a faithful gospel preacher should agree to have his hands tied and wear a muzzle.

Much of what was said in Joplin was true and timely, Biblical and basic to the issues involved; some can only be viewed as unfortunate and regrettable lapses from good common sense and the authority of Scripture. Furman Kearley spoke at length about the principles of Biblical hermeneutics and exegesis; the thoughts he outlined were related to the question of unity (which was his topic), but did not teach top, bottom or side of the issues that divide the Christian Church and the church of Christ. And, with an audience of some fifty Christian Church preachers, here was a golden opportunity to say something--anything--other than broad and sparkling generalities. Monroe Hawley took pains to emphasize that a small, vocal minority in the church of Christ do not speak for the masses--they only talk louder. Fred Thompson, former president of Emmanuel School of Religion, read a paper in which he spoke of "illumination" and challenged the notion that the Bible is a "divine blueprint" for the structure of the church; happily, he was a target for both groups to take aim at and hit. Hardeman Nichols dealt with the authority of Scripture as plainly and powerfully as possible--at Joplin. One regrets that circumstances did not allow him to hammer home the point that the Christian Church has abandoned the authority of God's Word and that unity cannot be restored until it returns to the New Testament pattern for worship. Reuel Lemmons was...well, Reuel was Reuel.

The smaller study groups are of more concern and import. Here, away from the main

assembly, assigned topics and designated speakers, every "delegate" could get into the act. Questions could be asked, statements made and challenged, proposals outlined, criticism offered, and the Bible opened in a less formal and more open setting. Hopefully, in these smaller sessions truth and conviction were held aloft. We wonder, however, if this was indeed the case. It was in this study group environment that the following exchange took place.

Furman Kearley: "This is an aspect of the isolation, is, a lack of knowledge of our histories. If we could start in our congregations doing some more study of the Restoration history outside of our own branch and looking at the distinctions between the conservative, instrumental and the Christian Church."

Wayne Kilpatrick: "I wonder too, if bringing Christian Church preachers into our class like this might not be a good thing. Let them come in and tell their history in a class situation."

Furman Kearley: "Yes, that's right."

Wayne Kilpatrick: "I think you can ease from the class to the pulpit."

Furman Kearley: "Right, and you can get by with..."

Wayne Kilpatrick: "...the class..."

Furman Kearley: "...telling history..."

Wayne Kilpatrick: "Yeah."

Furman Kearley: "...whereas if they're telling doctrine...[chuckle]"

Wayne Kilpatrick: "And while they're telling history let them tell about doctrine..."

Furman Kearley: "Yeah."

Wayne Kilpatrick: "...to make us know that, 'Hey, we believe alike on so much of this.' So that may be a beginning point--through the classroom."

There can be no doubt that brethren Kearley and Kilpatrick would be better off if Rose Mary Woods had taped the Summit and not brother Joe McDonald!

During these sessions each group was asked to develop, refine and commit to writing a plan that could be followed to knit together and unite the independent Christian Church and the churches of Christ. These were to be solid, practical steps that could be put into practice immediately. On Thursday morning each study group, one by one, revealed the fruit of their labors. This was to be "the most important 3 hours of Restoration history in the 20th century" (Alan Cloyd, Restoration Leadership Quarterly, Winter, 1984). The first few proposals were voiced by Alan Cloyd and Don DeWalt on Thursday morning. The study groups were asked to develop and enhance them in whatever way they saw fit.

First, should the Restoration Summit be an annual, continuing event? On this there was unanimous assent. The details are yet to be hammered out but we can expect other unity meetings to be held soon, perhaps in loose conjunction with the Abilene Christian University lectureship, the North American Christian Convention, or the Tulsa workshop on soul-winning.

Second, should there be unity meetings held on a smaller scale? Although this proposal met with considerably less enthusiasm, most of the Joplin delegates urged that these could and should take place if proper caution and careful steps were followed. It was quickly pointed out that a local Summit would probably not enjoy the tight rein that characterized the Joplin unity meeting. Alan Cloyd warned that just any "knucklehead" could attend and no doubt disrupt these smaller Summits.

Third, should 1985 be hailed as a "banner year" for joint worship services--under one roof--for churches of Christ and the Christian Church? This suggestion met with fear and trembling, and was viewed as premature. Several alternate avenues were held out: a joint "forum" instead of a worship service, a joint "retreat" focusing on some historical topic instead of a doctrinal issue, or perhaps a Wednesday evening session since this would be viewed as "less threatening" than a Sunday service.

Other specific suggestions included: the sharing of articles for church bulletins and religious papers so that people would become aware of "the other guy" and realize he is saying much the same thing in the same way; pulpit exchange in those congregations ready to take such a dramatic step; joint efforts against common enemies, such as legalized liquor, humanism, atheism, and other issues on which churches of Christ and the Christian Church share common cause; and exchanging "specialty" teachers (loneliness, alcohol abuse, divorce, etc.) so that both groups can benefit.

#### Some Matters Of Inquiry

It was feared that the mere proposal of a Restoration Summit would prompt some to rush into print a condemnation of the unity meeting before it even began. Alan Cloyd pleaded, "I ask you as a brother and a gentleman to hold your articles. Give this a chance to work" (Restoration Leadership Quarterly), Winter, 1984). This request has been honored. Now that the Joplin unity meeting is over and before the next Summit will convene it is time to examine and weigh what took place in Joplin. After reviewing the record, therefore, these questions and concerns come to mind.

[1] Where will these unity talks lead us? Exactly how will unity be restored and fellowship extended between the Independent Christian Church and the church of Christ? What will be the specific steps along the way to unity?

In 1939, at another unity meeting in Indianapolis, H. Leo Boles began his hour and a half address by quoting Edwin R. Errett, a grandson of Isaac Errett's brother and late editor of the Christian Standard.

"No man in Christendom generally is such a bore today as the man who merely pleads for unity and offers no plan, and no man in the brotherhood beats the air so uselessly with platitudes as he who bores the brethren with mere pleas for peace. Such pleas have become something of an insult to the brotherhood. What we all want now is some thorough-going study of the way of peace, the basis for true unity." (The Christian Standard, March 25, 1939)

Are we wrong in inquiring with Errett and Boles, "Where is the plan for unity?" Don DeWalt assures us in a letter mailed out with the first issue of his paper, One Body, that "we already have a strategy for unity by 1999 on the drawing board." Very well; what is it? Yes, we have noticed the specific suggestions and immediate actions urged by the Summit delegates. We are not so naive as to think these few proposals constitute the whole of Don DeWalt's strategy for unity.

Does this strategy lead to the renouncing of the instrument in Christian worship by the Independent Christian Church? We think not. If anyone knows Don DeWalt's strategy surely Alan Cloyd does. At Joplin he declared that each man present was "sound in the faith"--including fifty Christian Church preachers who defend instrumental music! Why should they renounce or even forego the use of the instrument if they are indeed sound brethren? Does the Joplin plan lead to the acceptance of the instrument among churches of Christ? No. Might it possibly include, then, the treatment and handling of instrumental music as a non-issue, a matter purely of conscience and personal opinion, and not fundamental to the division that began some one hundred years ago? Does it call for a resolution that the Christian Church silence the instrument when members of the church of Christ visit but continue to play the piano at other times?

[2] What caused the division and the shattering of unity between churches of Christ and the Christian Church? Is this not a matter to be explored and defined? Some might object and denounce an attitude that assigns "blame" to someone or some church. True, this is an old issue and a point of much contention. But, how can the walls of fellowship be repaired unless it is determined why they were breached to begin with?

An incredibly simplistic view of Restoration history and a totally unrealistic solution to the problem of division has been voiced by one Summit delegate.

"It was amazing to me that we have remained at a distance from our brethren for so many years, largely because of isolation, lack of communication, misunderstandings, misconceptions. Simple association and friendship can serve to topple

those barriers in the future" (Victor Knowles, editor of One Body, November, 1984).

Is this a fair representation of the attitudes present and conclusions reached in Joplin? Is there no doctrinal difference between churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Church?

[3] When will instrumental music be discussed and what will be said about it? Even though an attempt was made to rule this issue "off limits" in Joplin it came up again and again and again. Try as hard as he might to "ride real close herd on this whole event" Alan Cloyd could not wish the piano and the division it brought about away. In one study session after another instrumental music popped up. Dick Wamsley and Alvin Jennings reported on the first meeting of their group Wednesday morning:

"However, we began then to deal with an issue that seemed to be one that more of the group wanted resolved, and that is, what is the real essence of our divisions? What is the basic issue there? And we seemed to resolve that, when it gets right down to it, its the instrument."

"...and yet, at least among the non-instrument brothers in our discussion, it was expressed that the gut problem is instrumental music and its use."

Surely it is clear to all by now that, while instrumental music may be symptomatic of a deeper malady, the instrument itself is fatal to unity between Independent Christian Churches and churches of Christ.

Is the instrument no longer to be viewed as making a "heaven and hell difference"? Is it fatal error? Does its use cause God to look upon worship as unacceptable? One Summit delegate has declared:

"If I believed that I'd have gone hammer and tongs to say, 'Now, people, you gotta give it up; we can't talk about sharing this, that--you just gotta give it up. Its going to condemn you'...I'm not ready to pass a judgment one way or

the other on somebody over that issue" (Rubel Shelly, Sunday evening sermon in Nashville, August 12, 1984).

Those who are formulating the strategy and laying the plans for unity would do well to remember that faithful members of the church of Christ are not willing nor able to compromise the issue of the instrument; instrumental music in Christian worship is objectionable and sinful whenever and wherever it occurs--even in those settings where no member of the church of Christ is present. If the instrument is right in the sight of God let us not object to its use in Christian worship. Let those who are weak in conscience and deficient in knowledge be taught and trained to "handle aright the word of truth." Let those who would shatter unity in Christ over a matter of opinion be censured and opposed. If, on the other hand, the use of the instrument violates the authority of the New Testament pattern for worship it is never right--even though no one may be present who objects to its use!

[4] Can such meetings as the Restoration Summit result in permanent and lasting unity when men of tremendous influence and widespread recognition are ignored and discounted? We are told that fifty of our "finest men" were invited to Joplin and that they represent the "main-line thinking" of the church of Christ (Alan Cloyd, Restoration Leadership Quarterly, Winter 1984; Rubel Shelly, church bulletin of August 19, 1984). And yet, why were not such men as Guy N. Woods, Thomas B. Warren, Alan Highers, Noel Merideth, Robert Taylor, Bill Jackson, Garland Elkins, and others invited? Are these men on that "far right" and "radical" fringe? Are these the "knuckleheads" Alan Cloyd fears will upset the applecart? Who can believe it! Those who are masterminding the current unity drive must sooner or later--and the sooner the better--reconsider their "main-line", "sideline" and "out-of-line" definitions. Who determines "main-line" standing? Alan Cloyd? Don DeWelt?

We do not subscribe to the view that disagreeing brethren are, by the nature of the case, unChristlike or unkind in spirit and demeanor. A brother who begs to differ with us--and says so--is not necessarily a "belligerent partisan." Even in Joplin there was some [not enough!] disagreement on cer-

tain fundamental issues, and yet that "beautiful spirit" still prevailed. By what right can one say that an even stronger discussion of more pointed and immediate matters will result in an ugly spirit and a disappointing end?

[5] What of those who voice honest and sincere objections to the "strategy for unity by 1999" revealed so far? What of those who might express reservations and concerns? Sam Long of Milton, Florida suggested that the opening up of the Summit to "anyone and everyone" would be a "dangerous" thing. One reporting secretary predicted that some would criticize and label the Summit participants; critical brethren who would resort to such calumny were labeled "extremists, particularly right wing." Rubel Shelly has dismissed objectors and dissidents as misguided brethren bending under the pressure of "church politics" (Sunday evening sermon in Nashville, August 12, 1984). The bold and uncompromising--and we think "mainline"--words of H. Leo Boles have been dismissed as "abusive and crude" (Alan Cloyd, The Gospel Advocate, October 4, 1984). Yes, much has been said of late about "harsh, steely voiced arrogance." Some of it slipped out in Joplin.

#### Conclusion

We have been neither reckless nor rabid in our review of the Restoration Summit. The questions we have raised and the misgivings we have voiced are offered in the best of spirit and the kindest of manner. Our disappointment--and to some degree, alarm--does not result because we do not understand what took place in Joplin; it is because we understand too well!

Here, then, is the focal point of our concern. Not one single voice pleaded for repentance in Joplin. Not one single voice was heard to lament the introduction of mechanical instruments of music into Christian worship and acknowledge the bitter division that accompanied that innovation. Not one single voice stressed that instrumental music in Christian worship must be forsaken if unity is to prevail. The point is not that matters of great importance were discussed at the Summit in a kind and cordial way; the tragedy is that no clarion call pealed forth from Joplin directing men back to the fount and foundation of unity--the God given pattern revealed in the New Testament scriptures!

## PHIL DONAHUE MEETS THE TRUTH

James Alan Brown

Recently brother Garland Elkins of the Getwell church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee appeared on the nationally televised Donahue show. Brother Elkins was there to explain the actions of the elders of the Collinsville church of Christ in withdrawing fellowship from an admitted adulteress.

During the course of the show many individuals expressed their personal convictions and gave testimonial-type statements. However, brother Elkins refused to do such but rather spoke "as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). Realizing that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (11 Tim. 3:16,17). Brother Elkins did quite capably "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3), and did wield "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17).

Despite a moderator (Phil Donahue) and a prejudiced audience hostile to the truth, brother Elkins was "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). Those who opposed the truth "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 6:10). The only apologies offered against the gospel were "personal beliefs," emotional appeals, wisecracks, and to ignore the proclaimer of the truth as much as possible. The latter method being the one Mr. Donahue employed the most. Unable to offer any real condemnation for Biblical discipline Mr. Donahue, in response to a statement from the audience, said to brother Elkins: "I suppose you have a section [in the Bible] to cover that too!" Realizing that whatever he said, brother Elkins had the Biblical answer, he in effect, gave up!

Brother Elkins is to be commended for his stand for the truth. However, all Christians should realize that the word of God is unassailable and, when we will study it, apply it and live it, there is not anyone who can touch it! Let each reader "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (11 Tim. 2:15), "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Christ . . . that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (11 Tim. 2:3,4).

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## BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL CURRICULUM

First Year - Second Trimester Beginning  
January 7, 1985  
Now enrolling for the winter Trimester

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Course</u>
	8:00 - 8:25	Chapel
L-2202	8:30 - 9:20	English
B-2250	9:30 - 11:20	Hebrews and James
B-2482	1:00 - 2:50	Hebrew History
B-2270	7:15 - 9:30	The Gospels
<u>Tuesday</u>		
	8:00 - 8:25	Chapel
L-2202	8:30 - 9:20	English
B-2562	9:30 - 11:20	Apologetics
B-2441	1:00 - 2:50	Church History
<u>Wednesday</u>		
	8:00 - 8:25	Chapel
B-2562	8:30 - 10:20	Apologetics
B-2241	10:30 - 12:20	Church History
S-2222	1:10 - 3:00	Homiletics
<u>Thursday</u>		
	8:00 - 8:25	Chapel
L-2202	8:25 - 9:20	English
B-2482	9:30 - 11:20	Hebrew History
B-2271	1:00 - 2:50	Bible Geography and Archeology