

Defender



“I am set for the defense of the gospel”

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DEFENDER

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Number 1

The Church of Christ Is Not a Denomination

Jerry Martin

When we refer to the church of Christ we refer to the church that belongs to Christ; the one He promised to build (Mat. 16:18); the one He purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28); and, the one to which He adds the saved (Acts 2:47). When we use the word “church” we mean: “A group of baptized believers over which Christ is head and in which his Spirit dwells.” Those who make up the church are called out from the world and called into Christ by his Gospel (2 Cor. 6:17-7:1; Gal. 3:26-27).

When we say denomination we mean: “division, one of many.” When you understand the beauty of the church described in the previous paragraph you have no difficulty seeing the Lord’s church is not divided in any way and it could never just be one of many. The church of our Lord is eternally special and unique.

The church of Christ is unique and different from all other “churches” because it was designed by God and built by Christ (Eph. 3:10-11; Mat. 16:18). When men had “diverse” opinions of whom Christ was, Christ asked the apostles, “But whom say ye that I am” (Mat. 16:15). Peter answered and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (v. 16). Jesus informed Peter of the correctness of his confession and assured him such knowledge came from the heavenly Father.

Based on the truth of Peter’s statement, Christ made the following promise, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (vv. 18-19).

Not only did He promise to build His church (His kingdom) but He informed them that the building would soon take place. “Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom” (v. 28).

Peter, James and John were soon reminded that the church Christ had promised to build was not a denomination, not just “one of many” (Mat. 17:18). Jesus carried these three disciples into an high mountain and He was transfigured before them. There appeared Moses and Elias talking with Christ. Peter professed a view similar to that which has produced hundreds of denominations through the years. After seeing the two great men of Jewish history with His Lord: “Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias” (v. 4).

If Peter had had his way he would have “helped” the Lord “make” (build) three “churches.” Isn’t that attitude typical? How soon these disciples had forgotten what the Lord Himself had said concerning the building of His church (16:18-19). Yet God quickly removed the denominational opinion from Peter’s mind. “While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (17:5). They had not learned anything new on this occasion but had to be reminded how dangerous it is to insert one’s opinion into God’s will. “And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid” (17:6).

When men today learn that the Lord promised to build His church and they have had a part in building up “another” church they ought to fall on their face sore afraid.

You see, my friend, Christ promised to build only one church. He prayed that His followers would be one as He

and the Father are one. That is possible only in the one church He built (John 17). He purchased only one church with His blood (Acts 20:28). He is the head of only one church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18-19). He adds the saved to only one church (Acts 2:47). There is only one church that is the body of Christ (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23). There is only one church of which He is the Savior and for which He gave Himself (Eph. 5:23-25).

There cannot be many churches, different churches or choices of churches without dividing Christ (1 Cor. 1:10-13). In His church, we are united to Christ and to one another and are distinguished from the denominational world by being one in Him (Gal. 3:26-27).

The church of Christ is not a denomination, but the Kingdom of God. The seed of that Kingdom is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). The Kingdom produced by the Word of God is **non-denominational and Christ-centered** by its very nature. It is neither Catholic nor Protestant. It is free from the control of ecclesiastical hierarchy. All authority in this Kingdom has been given to Christ (Mat. 28:18).

Are you willing to give up the divisive spirit of denominationalism and become a Christian, a member of the church Christ built and which proudly wears His name?

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Denominationalism or Christianity?

Bobby Liddell, Editor

The Christian's allegiance is first to God (Mat. 6:33). Neither church of man nor creed of man shall prevail. Any who say otherwise lie and lead men to everlasting punishment. That they may be happy in their disobedience makes no difference in eternity. That they have found "a church" in which they feel comfortable has no bearing on its being right or wrong.

Having left the bonds of denominationalism many years ago, I have no desire to return, **nor do I have doubt**. Denominationalism is from Satan. Those who continue in the sin of denominationalism shall be lost. Of that, there is no question. That point may be debated, but not refuted. Only those who faithfully follow the Savior are, by God's grace and their obedient faith, saved; thus, added to His church (Acts 2:47). None else! Were I to waver on this point, I should neither be the servant of Christ (Gal. 1:6-10), nor a friend of man (Gal. 4:16).

Foolish brethren, false in their teaching and weak in their faith have begun to try to fashion the Lord's precious body into "just another denomination." They charge those who resist as being "hung up on tradition" and a "1940s theology." They speak of "transition" and "cultural changes" and echo the error of denominational theologians as though they were inspired and the Bible not! It matters not how "educated" a man may be if he is ignorant of God's Word or if he handles it dishonestly.

Why fear what men may say about us and concern ourselves with pleasing them? Christ shall be our Judge and His Word the standard (John 12:48). If those who discard the gold of truth for the tin foil of error oppose, castigate and bear false witness against us, then let us glorify God (1 Pet. 4:16). Let them say what they will, but let God be true.

Our appeal is for men to come to Christ and to become Christians and Christians only! If we are successful and they so do, the Lord adds them to the right church, His church, and there is no other approved of God (Eph. 4:4-6). We are not interested in making Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Jews, etc., encouraging them in their damnable error, nor in becoming such ourselves.

If, by accepting denominational members as saved by their following denominational teaching, we pretend there is no difference in salvation according to man and according to Christ, we sin and we and they shall be lost. Again, if, by accepting denominational practices into our worship, we pretend there is no God-given pattern, we sin and are lost.

Those of us who, with an open heart and an open Bible, cast off the shackles of man-made creeds, weep to see brethren going into the same error from which we escaped.

Woe be to them! Woe be to those who lead them there! Woe be to those who sit idly by and fear to lift their voice in protest. Woe be to those who do not care enough about the blood-bought body to fight the encroaching enemy of God and good who would defile, debase and destroy the hope of man.

Denominationalism has not one thing to offer of eternal worth. Denominational creeds: if they contain more than the Word, contain too much; if they contain less, do not contain enough; and, if they are the same are not needed. Where denominational practices differ from that authorized by God, they err. Why lose our souls to follow after such folly? Are we so blind and ignorant we can not see that which is so plain?

Friend, read the articles in this issue carefully. If you are not a member of the Lord's church, you should be. You must be if you would be saved.

Brethren, if as a member of the body of Christ, you detect departures into denominationalism, defeat them with a "thus saith the Lord." Fear not to oppose error regardless of who may champion it.

Christ built one church. Of it, He is the head. In it, are all the saved. By it, the world hears the Gospel. It is not a denomination!

The BIBLE ONLY Makes CHRISTIANS ONLY and the ONLY CHRISTIANS

Thomas B. Warren

That there is **one and only one God** can be proved. That **the Bible** is the Word of God can be proved. That **the Bible** teaches that there is one and only one **God, one Lord, one Spirit, one faith, one baptism, one body**, and one **hope** is made clear beyond doubt (Eph. 4:4-6).

In spite of the above noted facts, some people adamantly affirm that there are many churches and that any one of these churches is as good as any other church. In fact, many claim that one can be a Christian without being in any church at all. Sadly, even some in the Lord's church do this.

In contradiction to the immediately preceding, the Bible plainly teaches that there is **one—and only one—church** which is approved by God and that **salvation is in that one church**; that is, no can be saved by the blood of Christ without being in that one church!

No one has a God-given right to declare to others, "There are many churches and any one of them is as good as any other." Jesus died and bought the one **church** (His church) with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

I affirm, without equivocation, that the **Bible only** makes **Christians only** and the **only Christians!** I claim to **know** that this affirmation is **true** (cf., John 8:32).

Because I am so strongly convinced of the truth of the first three paragraphs of this article, I have written a book (217 pages) entitled, *The Bible Only Makes Christians Only and the Only Christians*. This is a book which explains this matter in much greater detail than can be done in this brief article.

Some people, including some who are members of the Lord's church, claim that while members of the church of Christ are Christians only, members of the church of Christ are **not the only** Christians. When people affirm such a doctrine, they are clearly implying that there are Christians living in the world today who are not members of the church which Jesus bought with His own blood (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:12-14; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:9). The Bible teaches otherwise. The Bible teaches that there is **not one person** who has been saved in any way other than by the **blood of Christ** (Heb. 9:22; cf., Lev. 17:11). And Jesus bought nothing with His blood other than **the church** (Acts 20:28).

The claim is made here that—by knowing what the Bible teaches about the matter—one can know that the **Bible Only** makes **Christians Only** and the **Only** Christians.

How can this be the case? Because people **can know**, not merely **guess**: (1) that God **does** exist, (2) that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, (3) that the Bible can be understood (it **can be correctly interpreted**, John 8:32), (4) that men **must obey** what the Bible teaches them to obey, (5) that the Bible only makes Christians only, and, (6) the **Bible only** makes **Christians only** and the **only Christians** (this means that no one is a Christian who has **not both learned and obeyed** what the Bible teaches people **must do** in order to be saved by the **blood of Christ**, Heb. 5:8-9; cf., Phi. 2:8). It must be repeated: there is not even one person who is a **Christian** who is not a member of **the church** which Jesus bought with His blood (Acts 20:28; cf., Gal. 1:4; 2:20).

Contrary to the views of many people, it is neither self-righteous nor arrogant to point out and defend the truth that members of the church for which Jesus died—and **only** those members—are **Christians**. I repeat: the Bible teaches that no one else is a Christian!

This is the case because the Bible plainly teaches such (involving both **explicit** teaching and **implicit** teaching).

May it be carefully noted that salvation is in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10). This passage makes absolutely clear that one **must be in Christ** to be saved; i.e., to be a **Christian**. To be in Christ is to be in the spiritual body of Christ which is the one and **only** body which He has purchased with His own blood (cf., Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:22; Rom. 5:8-9).

God gains no children (saved people, Christians) except by means of His seed (the same basic way any man gains children). His seed is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). No one becomes a child of God (one saved from his sins by the blood of Christ) by believing and obeying any other message (“seed”—1 Pet. 1:23).

When the seed which is the Word of God falls into the **heart of a dishonest** person (one who is not willing both to accept and to obey that Word), the result is rejection of God—the **dishonest** person rejects God’s Word, and God rejects the persons who reject His great message of salvation (the gospel—Rom. 1:15-16; John 8:32; Gal. 1:6-9).

However, when God’s seed falls into the heart of an honest person, that seed is both accepted and **nurtured**. It grows into a full-blown plant (a child of God, one saved by the blood of Christ—Luke 8:4-15; Acts 2:1-42; 8:26-40; et al.). When one obeys **the truth** (the gospel, the power of God unto salvation—Rom. 1:15-17), being baptized into the one body (1 Cor. 12:13), all of—his sins are washed away by the blood of Christ. Then, insofar as he walks in the light, the blood of Christ keeps on cleansing him from the “isolated sins” which he may commit (1 John 1:7-9). This will not be the case for children of God who **forsake the pathway** of faithfulness.

It bears repeating: there are no Christians who are not members of the **one-and-only church** which Jesus Christ purchased with His own blood (Eph. 2:13-18). Thus, it is clear that the Bible only makes Christians only and the only Christians.

How sad it is today to hear men who formerly were great proclaimers and defenders of the truth (the gospel of Christ) now cry out, “We are Christians only but not the only Christians!” If this assertion were true, then it would follow that there is at least one other way (i.e., in addition to obeying what the Bible teaches) by which the sinner (the non-Christian) can be saved without obeying what the Bible teaches about the matter! I deny that contention with all of my being, and I urge everyone (in order to see that it is false) to study carefully in the Bible the following passages: 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Romans 1:15-17; Matthew 7:13-27; Hebrews 5:8-9 and many others.

I lovingly urge, in the light of: (1) the eternity which faces each and every one of us (Mat. 25:46; 2 The. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:10-15; et al.), (2) the glory of heaven (eternal life), and, (3) the horror of hell (eternal punishment) that all of us learn and submit to the true teaching of the Bible.

I have written in genuine concern for the eternal destinies both of other people and of myself. May we all love and obey God. May we all be deeply and abidingly faithful to God because of His love in giving His Son for us and to Jesus Christ for giving His own life on the cross of calvary for us (by the grace of God, Jesus “tasted of death for every man”—Heb. 2:9).

The contemporary cry (even among some members of the Lord’s church) that we should accept the view that “unity-indiversity” is in harmony with what the Bible teaches even when such pertains to obligatory matters should be rejected by all.

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What Is a Denomination?

Jerri Manasco

There are few questions as sensitively loaded as is that which forms the topic of this article! No one likes to think of his religious affiliation as being less than adequate. Everyone who belongs to a church wants to feel that his faith and his concept of religion is as acceptable as the other fellow’s. It is easy to become most uncharitable and arrogantly hostile in a discussion such as this, but we must be willing to lovingly yet firmly face squarely the facts in the case. Just what is a denomination? As we study this important issue, I wish to make it plain at the outset that

I am not making personal attacks, nor am I seeking to frame as offensive an approach as I can. I am, however, striving to logically and scripturally consider this question.

By “denomination” I am referring to what is generally recognized as a completely organized religious body. In such an arrangement, there is a headquarters, a head (or body of men that comprise a “head”), a stated policy of operation and a defined policy of action. There are hundreds of such organized religious bodies, each maintaining separate identities from all others. I do not mean by “denomination” that church which we read about in the New Testament. There is a distinction to be clearly made between “denominationalism” and the called out body identified as the Lord’s church.

A denomination, though it is a completely functioning organism on its own, is admittedly a part of a whole! It is admitted even by those who would subscribe to the denominational concept of “Christendom,” that a denomination is not the only avenue of approach to God! In other words, one can be saved and not belong to their particular denomination—or to any denomination! A denomination, then, by definition and common recognition is a nonessential element in religious hope and life!

By contrast, the Lord’s church is presented in the New Testament as being the whole thing! The church is “the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23). The church in the New Testament is never spoken of as a “segment” or “part” of anything. This is not true of a denomination. The oft repeated concept of the “visible church” (i.e., denominational affiliations) and the “invisible church” (the sum of all Christians) is not a New Testament concept at all.

It is argued by some that the use of a name (i.e., “denominating”) over a church building makes you a member of a denomination. This is fallacious reasoning. A name on a church building may indeed designate who meets there and the purpose for the building’s existence, but it does not imply a denominational spirit. What denomination was Paul addressing when he wrote to “the church of God...at Corinth” (1 Cor. 1:2)? To what denomination was he writing when he greeted “the church of the Thessalonians” (1 The. 1:1), or the “churches of Galatia,” (Gal. 1:2)? Are “the churches of Christ” (Rom. 16:16) to be viewed as another separate religious organization from these? These are terms designating location or relationship, not denominational affiliation. Did they not all follow the “one faith” (Eph. 4:5), adhere to the same doctrine (2 Tim. 1:13), and contend for the faith (Jude 3)?

A denomination generally is built upon a particular doctrine or philosophy that is stressed above all others. To be a member of a denomination one would accept the peculiar teaching of that denomination! Other denominations do not teach that doctrine. If they taught the same thing, they would no longer be a separate denomination! To be a New Testament Christian, on the other hand, one accepts only that which is taught in the Bible without the addition of speculative or philosophically generated reasonings.

Something other than or in addition to the Word of God is essential to the foundation of a denomination. I have heard it said of certain itinerant preachers, “He doesn’t preach any denomination. He just preaches the Bible!” Why not turn that around and see the logical significance of that statement: IF A MAN PREACHES ONLY THE BIBLE, THERE WOULD BE NO DENOMINATIONS!!

Denominations exist because someone has disregarded the teaching of 1 Corinthians 1:10: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Paul could not beseech people in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to find a denomination offering the teaching they want to subscribe to!

A denomination is evidence that the unity for which, Jesus prayed is not respected. Jesus did not pray for a segmented body of believers, but “that they all may be one” (John 17:21). Denominationalism does not and cannot consistently endorse that prayer!

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The Name of the Church

George W. DeHoff

One reason for being a member of the Church of Christ is because of the name it wears. Names are important in the sight of men. We call our children, Peter, Paul and John but would not name one Nero or Judas Iscariot. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." Names are important in God's sight. God changed Sarai's name to Sarah (Gen. 17:15). He changed Jacob's name to Israel (Gen. 35:10).

God planned to give his people a new name. Isaiah said, "And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call His servants by another name" (Isa. 65:15). A similar prophecy is found in Isaiah 56:5 and Amos 9:11-12. All these prophecies were fulfilled in Acts 11:26 when "the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." In Acts 26:28, after Paul preached to King Agrippa, the King said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Peter said if any man suffer as a Christian, "let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (1 Pet. 4:16). Luke said there is salvation only in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12). Human names dishonor God. It is sinful and wrong to wear them.

The church is the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:23). A faithful wife wears the name of her husband. She would not think of stepping out with some other man and wearing His name. The church must wear the name of Christ and each member of it must wear His name. The church itself should be called the church of Christ. Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Mat. 16:18). If Christ said the church is His church, then it is Christ's church or the church of Christ and ought to be called such. In Romans 16:16 Paul said, "The churches of Christ salute you." Several congregations of the church are called churches of Christ. One congregation would be called a church of Christ.

Paul said it is sinful to wear anybody's name unless that person was crucified for us. He said it is sinful to wear any name unless we were baptized in that name (1 Cor. 1:13). Christ was crucified for us. We were baptized in His name. We ought to wear His name. It is sinful and wrong to wear any other name. We must be members of the "One body"—the Church—to be saved.

Christ is the Saviour of the Body: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body" (Eph. 5:23).

He gave Himself for the Church: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

He purchased the Church with His blood: "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

He reconciled in the one Body: "that he might reconcile both unto God in one body" (Eph. 2:16). Christ added the saved to the Church: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).

Since the "church" is the "body," how can men be saved and not be members of the church? Again, since He "purchased" the church with His own blood, how can people be members of the purchased institution?

The church is spoken of as God's family—God's household.

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph. 3:14-15). Again: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). From these scriptures we learn that the church is God's family—God's household. If people are saved before they are members of the church, then it runs thus: If you are saved, if you are a child of God, but not a member of the church; then you are a child but not in the family.

If you are a child, and not in the family (church), you accuse God of being the father of children that are not in His family! Again; you had to be "born again" to be saved: If you are saved before you become a member of the church, since the church is God's family; it follows that you were born again, and remained out of the family of God. Why? (1) You had to be born again to be saved. (2) When saved, you are God's child, or when born again, you are God's child. If saved before you became one of God's family, the church, then you claim to be a child and not in the family of God. I would hate to accuse God of having children that are not in His family, and I would certainly hate to acknowledge that I was a child of God and not in His family. God does not have children who are not in His family, and the family is the church. It follows that all of God's children are members of His family, the church.

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The Church of (Your) Christ's Choice

Stanley Ryan

The word choice means: "the act of choosing; selection to be preferred" (Webster). We are accustomed to making choices concerning things that we like. For example, we like one car and choose it over another car. However, in religion, we must choose what God likes. There is "one body [the church] and one Spirit [Holy]...one hope [eternal life]...one Lord [Jesus], one faith, one baptism, one God" (Eph. 4:4-6). God does not give us a multiple choice. The church that Christ built is God's proclaimed and revealed choice in the New Testament. God's blessings are upon the church. It was in the eternal purpose of God (Eph. 3:10-11). Jesus is the head of the church and the foundation on which the church is built (1 Cor. 3:11). If you submit to Christ you will choose His church (Acts 2:47). No other choice will bring you the blessings of God (John 3:16; Eph. 5:23-27). One can choose not to follow Christ and will be damned. One choice is not as good as the other. Your choice must harmonize with the Lord's will. One must realize it is not a choice of things we like, but what the Lord likes. You must make the Lord's choice your choice if you would be saved.

Christ has all authority (Mat. 28:18). He has the right to command and He has revealed his commands to us in the New Testament (Mat. 26:28; Heb. 1:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). If one chooses to obey the commands of Jesus that one will be saved (Heb. 5:9; Acts 2:38; Eph. 2:8-9) and added to the church (Acts 2:47). If one chooses not to obey they remain in sin, and thus are lost (1 John 3:4; Rom. 3:23-25; 2 The. 1:7-9). One choice is not as good as the other.

What commands did Christ choose to place before the sinner that would bring him to salvation and add him to the church? 1. Hear the Word of God (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6; John 8:24; 20:30-31). 2. Believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 3:16; Acts 8:37). 3. Repent of sin (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38). 4. Confess Christ (Mat. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10). 5. Be baptized (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). 6. Live and worship faithfully (Rev. 2:10; Acts 2:42). Is your choice in harmony with the commands of Jesus? Could any other choice please the Lord? NO! Why then do people try to pray through? Why do others just receive Jesus? Why are some teaching "faith only?" Why do some baptize babies? Why do some vote on whether to accept new members? Why do they reject Christ's choice?

What commands did Jesus give concerning church worship? 1. God is to be worshipped in spirit and truth (John 4:24). 2. Prayers are to be offered to the Father through Jesus (Mat. 6:9; 1 Tim. 2:5; John 14:13). 3. A freewill offering is to be collected on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:12). 4. The Lord's Supper is to be observed on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:24-28). 5. Preaching or teaching (Acts 20:7). 6. Worshippers are to sing and make melody in the heart (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). 7. Men are to lead the home (Eph. 6:1-4; 5:23) and have the authority to lead the church in doing God's will (1 Tim. 2:12; 3:1-14). Have your choices in worship been in harmony with Christ? Could any other choices please the Lord? Why do people leave off the Lord's Supper? Why do they add instrumental music? Why do they ordain women preachers? Why do they hire professional entertainers? Do their choices conflict with the commands of Jesus? Yes, they are in conflict with Jesus' choice.

Today people choose a church for different reasons: 1. Because it is close to their home. 2. Because it has a beautiful building. 3. Because of its programs. 4. Because of a friend that goes there. However, it seems that people ought to be more concerned with making choices based on what the Bible teaches. Is this the church Jesus built? Does this church teach what Jesus commanded concerning salvation and worship? Is man's choice more important than the commands of Jesus? Are we trying to please ourselves or please Jesus?

Today many say the church is not important. However, Jesus says it is important because: 1. He built it (Mat. 16:18). 2. He loves the church (Eph. 5:25). 3. He gave Himself for it (Eph. 5:25). 4. He is the head of the church (Col. 1:18). 5. He adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47). 6. The church is the temple of God (Zec. 6:13; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; Eph. 2:19-22). 7. The church is the priesthood of believers (1 Pet. 2:9). 8. Christ is the great high priest over the church (Heb. 4:14; 8:4). 9. The church is the kingdom entered by the new birth (John 3:3-5; Mat. 16:18-19; Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9). 10. Jesus is head of the church, king on the throne and high priest all at the same time (Zec. 6:13; Acts 2:30; Heb. 8:1). The church is important as the body of Christ, the chosen of God. What people need to realize is that denominationalism can not save, Therefore, choose Christ's church, stay in harmony with Christ choice.

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Book Review

Bobby Liddell

The Second Incarnation: A Pattern For Apostasy, Curtis A. Cates.

Curtis A. Cates, outstanding Director of the Memphis School of Preaching has written an excellent book exposing the Shelly-Harris false teaching on the "Pilgrim Church" and "Second Incarnation." Brethren have said: "(It)...is reminiscent of the 'Review of Jeter' by Moses E. Lard in its penetrating analyses and thoroughness of exposure of the absurd tenets of this deliberate attempt to lead the saints astray...I commend it unreservedly" (Guy N. Woods); "Their misinterpretations of Scripture, inconsistencies, and 'patchwork' theology borrowed from sectarians (some of whom are/were little more than infidels) are answered and answered soundly:...It deserves the widest possible circulation among the Lord's People" (Dub McClish).

We recommend this thoroughly documented and completely devastating answer to Shelly and Harris as "required reading." Already in its second printing after only two weeks off the press, it is available for \$3.50 (plus \$1.00 postage and handling) from Cates Publications, 5512 Cottonwood Road, Memphis, TN 38115. Get copies for yourself and for your friends influenced by Shelly's error.

Behold The Pattern

Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to liberalism currently troubling the Lord's body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine of various influential brethren and has shown from God's Word why their positions are fraught with deadly error.

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What Must I Do To Be SAVED?

The Bible answer to this most important question applies to all. To be saved from sin and be with God in Heaven eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17).
2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24).
3. Repent of all past sins (Acts 2:38).
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

February 1993

Number 2

The Origin and History of the Baptist Church

Daniel Denham

The doctrine of "Church Succession" has been a favorite dogma among certain Baptist groups, especially those who have held to Old Landmarkism. The Missionary Baptist churches, in recent years, have been the best known defenders of that doctrine, which maintains that there is a discernible line of churches holding to the basic tenets of the Baptist church going back to the days of the apostles. The first church in the New Testament, according to their teaching, was a Baptist church. Various opinions have been defended for "Church Succession" as to when precisely that first church began.

Some Baptist successionists have contended that it started with the ministry of, John the Baptist; i.e., that John built and founded the "Baptist" church. Others have held that it began sometime during the earthly ministry of Christ (e.g., at His baptism by John the Baptist, the Lord's call of the apostles, the sending out of the seventy, et. al.). Some have taught that it began in Acts 2 at Jerusalem (c. A.D. 30). However, the basic doctrine of "Church Succession" has no foundation in fact. Not only are there logical and biblical problems with the theory, the recorded histories of the Baptists themselves are against it. They point to a much later date for the **beginning of the Baptist church**, and show by implication the Baptist church cannot be the church of the New Testament, which Jesus promised to build (Mat. 16:18-19) and that during the life of some of the apostles (Mark 9:1; cf., Luke 24:44-50; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-47). To the historical evidence concerning the origin and development of the Baptist church, we now turn.

Henry C. Vedder, a noted Baptist historian and the author of a *Short History Of The Baptists*, has written of his own denomination: "The history of Baptist churches cannot be carried, by the scientific method, farther back than the year 1611, when the first Anabaptist church consisting wholly of Englishmen was founded in Amsterdam by John Smyth, the Se-Baptist" (p. 4).

David Benedict, another well known Baptist historian and the author of two major works on the history of the denomination, finds a Baptist church a few years earlier than Vedder. He says, "The first regularly organized Baptist church of which we possess any account, is dated from 1607, and was formed in London by a Mr. Smyth, who had been a clergyman in the church of England" (*Jubilee Report*, p. 304). It will be observed that, while there is a slight discrepancy as to the exact year and place of origin for the first Baptist church between these two highly trained and accomplished historians, they both reject the doctrine of "Church Succession" and place the establishment of the Baptist church centuries after the death of the last apostle!

The historical method of inquiry does not, as Vedder and Benedict demonstrate, validate the Baptist doctrine of "Church Succession." Vedder writes, "If every church of Christ [Note: he uses this of denominational churches in general, HDD] were today to become apostate, it would be possible and right for any true believers to organize tomorrow another church on the apostolic model of faith and practice, and that church would have the only apostolic succession of faith in the Lord Christ and obedience to him" (p. 7).

Thomas Armitage, the most revered of Baptist historians, also rejected the notion of a discernible line of Baptist churches going back to the Apostolic Age in his monumental work *History Of The Baptists* (pp. 2-3). He contended that the only basis for identifying a church as apostolic in belief and practice is loyalty to the "pure doctrine" of the New Testament.

The history of the Baptist church rightfully begins with the work of John Smyth, a member of the British

Separatists who had broken off from the Church of England and had fled their native land for sanctuary from persecution. They arrived in Amsterdam where they were influenced by an Anabaptist group called the Mennonites, named after their leader Menno Simon. The Anabaptists practiced sprinkling for baptism, but they did reject infant baptism. They “re-baptized” (sprinkled) those who had been sprinkled at birth (hence “ana” meaning “again”). Smyth “re-baptized” from the Church of England and had fled their native land for sanctuary from persecution. They arrived in Amsterdam where they were influenced by an Anabaptist group called the Mennonites, named after their leader Menno Simon. The Anabaptists practiced sprinkling for baptism, but they did reject infant baptism. They “re-baptized” (sprinkled) those who had been sprinkled at birth (hence “ana” meaning “again”). Smyth “re-baptized” himself and his followers by affusion (pouring). Anabaptists they became, but the followers of Smyth refused to fully adopt all the ways and doctrines of the Mennonites.

They excommunicated the founder of this first Baptist church. Smyth died in 1612. His people filtered back across the English Channel. The old Anabaptist doctrine of the inherent evil and sinfulness of civil government was rejected by them, and they returned to be “good” Englishmen on English soil. The first two churches established upon their return were called “General Baptists,” as they believed in a general atonement for all. Later there arose a Particular Baptist church, which held to a limited atonement as taught by John Calvin.

Throughout its history, the Baptist church would experience schisms over the doctrine of the atonement. Many Baptist groups today have their doctrinal roots in the brand of Calvinism taught by the Particular Baptists during the Reformation. Some have opted for the teachings of Jacob Arminius. They, like the Methodist churches, reject the idea of irresistible grace and consequently also that of a limited atonement. They hold to some concept of “free will,” though they do not utterly cast off the shackles of Calvin, for, like Arminius, they believe that a special “enlightenment” or “illumination” from the Holy Spirit is needed to permit men to then exercise their will to discern the truth and believe.

Calvin held that the action of the Holy Spirit did it all for man by infusing the grace of God directly into the heart of the sinner, thus regenerating him without the need for knowledge of God’s Word. Some Baptists flip-flop between the competing systems and are found on both sides of any controversy respecting the atonement, the operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion and sanctification, and the free will of man.

About 1644 (some place the date earlier, about 1638) another major division occurred among Baptists. Some began to insist on immersion as the only mode of scriptural baptism. They were called by their enemies “Immersion Baptists.” They published a confession of faith, which was the model for many confessions like that of Philadelphia (1724) and New Hampshire. The word “Baptist” came to be applied almost exclusively to the immersionists of the denomination as a distinctive name.

Roger Williams, a Separatist minister who came to America in 1631, organized the first Baptist church in the New World at Providence, Rhode Island in 1639. Two years later, another was organized by John Clarke at Newport. These were both Calvinistic, and; thus, of the Particular branch. However, during his travels and revivals in the colonies, George Whitefield championed the tenets of Arminianism. The effect on the emerging Baptist congregations, which had begun to spring up in every colony, was profound. A furor arose between the Calvinistic “Old Lights” or “Regulars,” who opposed the emotionalism stirred by the revivals of Whitefield, and the Arminian “New Lights” or “Separates,” who held to an aggressive missionary posture.

A constitution signed between the groups quelled the dispute, but Whitefield’s sermons spurred missionary fervor among the Baptists for generations. Zeal unbridled led to their participation in the formation of the first Protestant missionary society in America in cooperation with other denominations; and by 1814, the founding of the first distinctively Baptist missionary society, the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions. They did not bother to consult Holy Writ as to biblical authority for such practices.

Other institutions were established: a general convention, tract society, several smaller missionary societies, and the Baptist Young People’s Union. Two major manuals for church organization, et. al., were published (Hiscox’s and Pendleton’s). Doctrinal and geo-political rifts splintered the Baptist church into a number of small fellowships. A listing of the major groups comprising the Baptist church is found in Mead’s *Handbook Of Denominations In The United States*.

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In Search Of The Baptist Church

Bobby Liddell, Editor

From whence came the Baptist church? From God or from men? If from God, surely, adherents to Baptist doctrine could present absolute, undeniable, irrefutable evidence to show such a Divine origin. If no such proof may be produced, it must follow the Baptist church came from men.

If the Baptist church came from men, it offers no more hope for salvation than any other manmade organization; that is, **it offers none!** How so? Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God and promised Messiah, purchaser and builder of His church, proclaimed all who follow the commandments of men worship in vain (Mat. 15:9). God never has nor shall He ever accept such worship or worshippers.

Friends, we are careful to insure our purpose is just and our motives honorable. We seek to bring men to Christ through the Truth and in so doing, to glorify God. To do so, we must uphold the Truth of God and, by so doing, expose the false doctrines of men that would damn men's souls to eternal torment—not because we hate anyone, but because we love the soul of everyone.

Thus, we dare not present as the beliefs of our Baptist friends that which is not true. To show the Truth and expose error, we do not have to contrive imaginary false doctrines. There are far too many in the world as it is. To be sure we do not misrepresent the position of our Baptist friends; i.e., the modern-day Baptist church, we contacted the largest Baptist church in Pensacola (around 5,300 members) for some answers to some very basic questions. The questions and answers follow.

Question: Where in the New Testament does one find the Baptist church?

Baptist Answer: **You do not find “the Baptist church” in the New Testament.** You do not find any church like “the Baptist church” or “the Methodist church” or “the Catholic church” in the Bible.

Question: Is there any church mentioned in the New Testament?

Baptist Answer: No. You can find the word “church” but nothing like “the Baptist church” or “the Methodist church.”

Question: If one cannot find the Baptist church in the Bible, where is the authority for there being such a church?

Baptist Answer: **The authority came from man. Man created the Baptist church,** the Methodist church, the Catholic church and so on.

Question: If the authority came from man, and not from God, **how can one know which church is right?**

Baptist Answer: You can't. You have to determine that by the way you feel. **Everybody interprets the Bible differently and you have to determine which one is right by your interpretation.** The Baptists think they are right and the Methodists think they are right, and so on.

Question: Since the Baptist church is not in the Bible, when did it begin?

Baptist Answer: There are many different theories on that...**it began in the late 1500s.**

To any honest reader, concerned about his soul, the above answers should flash a warning.

Should anyone want to be a part of a church not found in the Bible? Not if they want salvation.

Should anyone want to be a part of a church whose authority for existence; that is, for beginning and continuing, came from man and not from God? No.

Should anyone want to be a part of a church which espouses one's choice be made on the basis of how he feels instead of on what God said? Again, No.

Should anyone want to be a part of a church which began in the late 1500s instead of on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2)? Surely not.

Friends, dare we stake our soul's salvation on membership in a church God never sanctioned and offer worship in vain with only a wish of a false hope on a perhaps maybe all will turn out for the good after all? Not me! Hopefully, not you either.

The Baptist Church Manual

Harrell Davidson

In this short article, it shall be my purpose to show some of the contrasts and contradictions between the *Hiscox Standard Baptist Manual* and the doctrine of Christ. We shall refer to it simply as the *Manual*. All quotations will be from the *Manual* wherein it is used.

Edward T. Hiscox was born in 1814 and died in 1901. The foreword in his book tells of it being a “favorite among countless thousands of Baptists in the United States.” The fact that a church would have to have a manual to go by instead of the Scriptures is appalling. God’s Word, the Bible, is complete and furnishes man completely unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17). If the Bible, and the Bible alone, cannot lead us, we might as well stop our religious activities. The *Manual* suggests one needs something in addition to the Word of God to go by in matters related to the church.

This is precisely the claim that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, better known as Mormons, makes for themselves. They come to your door and say, “We believe the Bible, but we have this book of Mormon.” We say to them, “Come in and let’s just study the Bible.” The reply is normally, “No, thanks.”

In the chapter, “The Nature Of The Church,” the *Manual* shows the process through which people are to go in starting a new church. It points out that careful thought and much mature deliberation should be made consulting “wise and experienced sources, including the association or convention with which the proposed church will likely affiliate....” We read nowhere in the Scriptures of the Lord’s church ever belonging to a convention or getting permission from a convention to function in any community in the world.

Next, the Baptist church is to “draft a proposed constituting act and church covenant...bylaws may also be drafted at this time, together with articles of faith, if desired.” The Bible is as silent as the tomb on such a constitution or articles of faith. Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and the hearing by the word of God.” God’s Word produces faith enough to save through obedience. This must not be enough for the Hiscox folks.

On page 27 of the same chapter in question: “Resolved, that guided as we believe by the Holy Spirit, and relying on the blessing of God, we do here and now by this act constitute ourselves a church of Jesus Christ to perform his service and to be governed by his will...”

It was the will of Jesus Christ to build His church. He said: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mat. 16:18). No church that Jesus built ever wore any other than his name. His church is not a denomination among many as the *Manual* suggests. The new Baptist church being formed should then “petition the local Baptist association for recognition....” Again, the Bible is silent. This is the problem with the *Manual* all the way through, it is not inspired.

In the chapter entitled “Church Membership,” the *Manual* says, “...the new birth begets Christian fellowship; but to secure church fellowship, that change must be confessed in baptism” (p. 35). On page 34, the *Manual* says: “baptism constitutes the ritual or ceremonial qualification.” According to the *Manual*, the new birth begets Christian fellowship and baptism is a ritual qualification. One can see the problem coming long before one gets there, for in the same chapter under the subheading “Modes of Admission” we quote Note 1: “By Baptism—A person may be admitted to the church on a profession of faith in Christ, by baptism. First he makes known his desire for baptism and union with the church, to the pastor or brethren. If they, after proper investigation, become satisfied of his readiness for that step, the church considers the question of his reception; and then, if satisfied, votes that he be received as a member, on being baptized.”

Mind you this person is already saved on his profession of faith, but is voted on before he can be baptized and be affiliated with that particular congregation. The Lord’s church never ever voted on anyone before or after baptism. The baptized believers are added to the church (Acts 2:47). The Lord does the adding, not the congregation.

In the chapter on “The Christian Ministry,” (p. 55), “The pastor has the oversight and supervision of all the interests of the church, and of all departments of its work, both spiritual and temporal.” The Baptists Pastor (minister) is over the church. He is in charge of both the spiritual and temporal. He runs the show, in other words. The New Testament shows that elders rule the church (Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:28).

In the chapter on “Christian Ordinances,” and in particular on the partaking of the Lord’s Supper, page 92, Note

7 says, "There is no scriptural rule as to the frequency with which, nor time or place at which it shall be observed." This is a plain contradiction of Acts 20:7 where the disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread. Again the *Manual* is not true to the scriptures. Page 93 says that "preaching is not worship." This plainly contradicts Acts 2:42. The same is true when the *Manual* deals with baptism. On page 83, the *Manual* says, "Baptism may not be essential to salvation, but it is essential to obedience."

All New Testament converts were told to be baptized before salvation could be obtained (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). The *Manual* then says: "Regeneration is by the Holy Spirit alone, and should precede baptism." Again, we have the cart pulling the horse. Regeneration is attained after baptism.

Again, the *Manual* says: "Baptism, therefore, is an act of obedience, and as such brings the candidate into a more intimate and exclusive fellowship with his Lord; but it possesses no power in itself to remit sin, to change the heart, or to sanctify the spirit." Acts 2:38 still says, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

Now, which will we accept? Will we accept the *Manual* or the New Testament? It cannot be the *Manual* **and** the New Testament for the *Manual* contradicts the New Testament on almost every page.

Christianity is not dependent on the whims or doctrines of men. Thank God that such is true.

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Is Baptism Essential to Salvation?

B. C. Carr

Our assignment is to show from the Bible that baptism is essential or necessary to salvation. By essential, we mean that it is so necessary that a responsible person cannot be saved without it. By salvation, we mean that one cannot be saved or pardoned from his past sins, hence, justified in the sight of God without baptism. This would also suggest that one would be eternally lost if he has not submitted to this commandment of the Lord.

We have been especially asked to contrast Baptist doctrine with Truth. In so doing, we shall try to be fair, yet unyielding so far as truth is concerned. We have many good friends in the Baptist church and do not wish to offend them, but God's Word must be true if it means every man is found to be a liar (Rom. 3:4).

Baptist Doctrine on Baptism

Baptist doctrine teaches that Baptism is not essential to salvation. They affirm that one is saved before he is baptized. This is not to say they do not believe in baptism, for they do. They practice baptism. One cannot get into the Baptist church without being baptized. Baptist doctrine refutes sprinkling as practiced by Methodists and others. You see, the point of contention is not whether they believe in baptism, but do they think it is something to be done as a condition of salvation. They do not believe it has anything to do with salvation, but something that those who are saved should do to get into the Baptist church. It is to be compared to the Lord's Supper, something one observes after being saved. From *McConnell's Manual for Baptist Churches*, I quote the following from the chapter on "Distinctive Baptist Beliefs."

"There were two ordinances in New Testament churches. They are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptists observe them in their churches. They, like all the ordinances of the Old Testament, are symbolical and teach by the manner of their administration. They are declarative and not procurative. All the baptisms of all ages of the world could not blot out the least sin."¹

Ben Bogard was the greatest Baptist debater of this century. In 1938, he debated N. B. Hardeman on the subject of "The Necessity of Baptism."² Over and over, Bogard denied that baptism was necessary for salvation. There is no doubt about what Baptist doctrine teaches. Baptists believe and teach that a man is saved at the point of faith (before he is baptized). Again, we quote from the Baptist manual on the subject of "Justification": "We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood."³ This is simply saying one is saved by faith only.

Baptist Doctrine Versus Truth

Baptist Doctrine

Truth

All the Baptisms of all ages could not blot out the least sin (Manual).

“arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:16).

Baptism does not save anybody.

“baptism doth also now save us” (1 Pet. 3:21).

He that believes is saved without baptism and then should be baptized.

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16).

Man is saved by faith only.

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (Jam. 2:24).

Man is saved at the point of faith.

“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble” (Jam. 2:19).

Again, Baptist debater Ben Bogard makes it clear as to what they believe as he debated Curtis Porter: “We teach that salvation is obtained at the point of faith, Acts 16:30-31,” and, “Salvation is at the point of faith.”⁴

The above stated positions concerning what Baptists believe on baptism are consistent with my experiences in discussions with them over the last fifty years. Several years ago, I conducted a radio debate with a Baptist preacher on this subject. It lasted for several weeks and attracted many listeners. This man insisted that baptism had nothing to do with salvation. In fact, he said, “There is not one thing a man can do to save himself.” One of our listeners, who was an invalid, listened every day. He was persuaded that he was lost since he had never been baptized. He asked his family to contact me to come to see him. He wanted to be baptized. Since members of his family belonged to the Baptist church, they called the Baptist preacher who was my opponent in the debate. When he arrived, he assured this man he was already saved since he was a believer, hence no need to be baptized. In a few days, this man died. It was then that I was told about this man’s desire to talk with me and that he wanted to be baptized. His funeral was conducted from the Baptist church. I went to hear what my opponent would say. He related the story just as I had heard it. He said in his oration that he had assured this man he was saved, without baptism, and had caused him to die satisfied. What a pity. It is sad to know that many yet living are being deceived in a similar way.

Surely, our readers can see that there is a contrast in each of the above statements. They cannot both be right. Please take your pen and mark through the one that is fake. You will be your own judge as to who is teaching the truth.

Consequences of Baptist Doctrine on Baptism

If one accepts the doctrine that baptism is not essential to salvation, he must be prepared to accept other things that are obviously false. Please note the following:

If baptism is not essential to salvation, neither is belief. In Mark 16:16, faith and baptism are joined together as conditions of salvation.

If baptism is not essential to forgiveness of sins, neither is repentance. They are joined by the conjunction “and” and are of equal force (Acts 2:38). They are both for the same purpose.

If one is saved by faith only, then devils will be saved (Jam. 2:19).

If people can be saved by faith only, some of the chief rulers were saved who refused to confess Jesus (John 12:42).

If one can be saved without being baptized, he can be saved without obeying the commandments of God. Baptism is commanded (Mat. 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:48).

If one does not keep the commandments, he does not know God (1 John 2:3).

If one does not keep the Lord’s commandments, he cannot be a friend of God (John 15:14).

Only those who do the commandments can enter heaven (Rev. 22:14).

If one can be saved without baptism, he can be saved without the benefit of the death of Christ. We are baptized into his death (Rom. 6:4).

If one can be saved without being baptized, he can be saved outside of Christ. Baptism is the final act that puts us into Christ.

But, please note the consequences of not being in Christ.

Only those in Christ are new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17).

All spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

Salvation is in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10). Since one must be baptized to get into Christ (Gal. 3:27) and there is no other way to enter Him, those who have never been baptized cannot be new creatures. They are without one single spiritual blessing.

They are without salvation. We must therefore conclude that they are lost

Endnotes

¹*McConnell's Manual for Baptist Churches*, F. M. McConnell, Judson Press, 1946, p. 48.

²*Hardeman-Bogard Debate*, Gospel Advocate Co., 1938 p. 1 57.

³*Manual*, p. 18.

⁴*Porter-Bogard Debate*, Roy Cogdill Pub. Co., Lufkin, TX., 1948, pp. 54, 73.

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News

Brother *George W. DeHoff*, whose article on *The Name Of The Church* appeared in our January issue, passed from this life January 1, 1993. An excellent preacher who began at an early age, he was also a debater, author, college president and successful businessman. Through his efforts to preach the pure Gospel, thousands came to Christ for salvation. He shall be missed.

Only a few copies left. Several have requested additional or multiple copies of the **January, 1993, Defender**. Due to a larger than average initial mailing, the number of our reserve copies was minimal. We shall try to honor requests for additional copies, but we ask for your understanding. We also appreciate the many kind encouraging comments regarding the January issue. Thanks!

Almost out of print. The demand for the 1990 Bellview Lectureship Book, *What Does God Authorize in Worship?*, has been so great we have only a few copies left (less than fifty). We have no plans to reprint the book, so if you want one, order soon.

Recommended reading. Subscribe to the matchless monthly edited by H.A. (Buster) Dobbs: **Firm Foundation**, P.O. Box 210876, Bedford, TX 760957876. Phone (817) 498-8512. \$15.00 per year, 2 years for \$28.00. Club, congregational and bundle rates available.

Tract record. Over 860,000 copies of *Come and See*, an effective and attractive tract written by Garland Elkins to introduce people to the church of Christ, are in print. Order from Garland Elkins, 1190 Estate Drive, Memphis, TN 38119. \$20/100 or \$150/1,000.

Book Review

Bobby Liddell

Triumph And Tragedy, Edited by Paul Vaughn.

Aptly titles, this book, tracing the development of churches of Christ in much of Central and Eastern Kentucky, shows the triumph of Truth and the tragedy of lost churches and lost souls to the forces of liberal digression over the years. A very telling statement from the Introduction follows: "Today, within a hundred mile radius from Lexington, Kentucky, where the College of the Bible was located, there are six counties without a church of Christ and five with only one church of Christ. We must learn from history or that which happened in Kentucky, not only may, but will occur in every place where the Lord's church now flourishes." Included in the book are histories of: several counties, restoration periodicals in the state, and Kentucky colleges and the restoration movement; biographies of eighteen prominent church leaders and related topics. *Triumph And Tragedy* deserves a place in the library of all who are concerned about the fruits of liberalism.

23 writers contributed 38 chapters that comprise the 290-page paperback book. It may be ordered from Paul Vaughn, P.O. Box 975; Jackson, KY 41339 for \$8.00 plus shipping.

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Volume XXII

March 1993

Number 3

Millennialism In Baptist Doctrine

Flavil H. Nichols

Charles Caldwell Ryrie, in his *The Basis of Premillennial Faith* (Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, New Jersey, 1953) defines Premillennialism:

In general the premillennial system characterized as follows. Premillennialists believe that theirs is the historic faith of the church....

It may (?) be the "historic faith" of the Baptist church, but those who wrote the New Testament were not members of that "church," nor did they believe or teach Premillennialism. Hence, this is not "the historic faith." But, read on:

Holding to a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, they believe that the promises made to Abraham and David are unconditional and have had or will have a literal fulfillment. In no sense have these promises made to Israel been abrogated or fulfilled by the church, which is a distinct body in this age having promises and a destiny different from Israel's....

The apostle Paul denies this, saying he was, "called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)" (Rom. 1:1-2). But, Paul preached much about "the church," averring that the **church** was in the "eternal purpose" of God (Eph. 3:11)! Hence, the church was not an "after-thought!" Rather, it was encompassed in the gospel which the prophets "promised!"

Regarding the land promises God made to Abraham, let the Bible speak: "the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein" (Jos. 21:43). "There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (v. 45). Joshua said to the Israelites who crossed over Jordan and conquered the land of Canaan: "ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof" (23:14).

Ryrie continues: "At the close of this age, premillennialists believe that Christ will return for His Church, meeting her in the air (this is not the second coming of Christ)."

There is only ONE future coming of Christ in the Scriptures. He promised: "I will come **again**" not, "again, and again, and again!" (John 14:1-3). "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time" (Heb. 9:28). Nowhere in the Bible do we read about a third, nor a fourth, etc., coming! Hear Ryrie further (p. 13):

Premillennialists elieve that Christ will return for His church, meeting her in the air (this is not the second coming of Christ), which event, called the rapture or translation, will usher in a seven-year period of tribulation on the earth. After this, the Lord will return to the earth (this is the second coming of Christ) to establish His kingdom on the earth for a thousand years, during which time the promises to Israel will be fulfilled.

The only time the Bible mentions "a thousand years" is in Revelation 20:1-7. However, the Holy Spirit directed John to write earlier in that same book: "I...am...in the kingdom" (1:9). So any "interpretation" of Revelation 20 which makes the kingdom yet future in relation to the apostle John, is a false interpretation! John affirmed that he was "in" the kingdom!

Ryrie imagines that Premillennialism has its "Basis" in: History, Hermeneutics, The Abrahamic Covenant, The Davidic Covenant, Ecclesiology and Eschatology. The truth is: Premillennialism is based only in the fanciful imaginations of false teachers who wrest or pervert the Scriptures!

John F. and, John E. Walvoord, in *Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1980) say:

The purpose of Christ's return to the Mount of Olives will be to establish Jerusalem as the capital of His new world kingdom. The law will once more go forth from Zion (Isa. 2:3). Christ's return will save, Jerusalem and the nation of Israel from complete annihilation (p. 176).

This ignores Christ's repeated declarations: "My kingdom is not of this world," and, "now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36-37). And it ignores the fact that "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2) fulfilled Isaiah's prediction when it was first preached, "beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-49) on Pentecost Day in Acts 2.

But read further from them: A utopian world will follow the colossal failure of man's attempt to control human history. Three judgments will have purged the world of all who have not believed in Jesus Christ. The armies of the world will have been destroyed on the battlefields of the Middle East. Unbelieving Jews will have been judged and killed. In the judgment of the sheep and goats, unbelieving non-Jews will also have been purged from the earth. The entire adult population of the earth which remains will have experienced regeneration through faith in Christ (p. 179).

The "resurrection" of the righteous will be "the last day" (John 6:39-54; 11:25), and the only "judgment" day will be "the last day" (John 12:48). There will not be another subsequent "day" for the other two (or more!) judgments which Premillennialists have imagined! Lindsay, in *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Zondervan, 1970) says, "We are 'premillennialists' in viewpoint" (pp. 176-177) and:

God's kingdom will be characterized by peace and equity, and by universal spirituality. and knowledge of the Lord. Even the animals and reptiles will lose their ferocity and no longer be carnivorous. All men will have plenty and be secure. There will be a chicken in every pot and no one will steal it! The Great Society which human rulers throughout the centuries have promised, but never produced, will at last be realized under Christ's rule. The meek and not the arrogant will inherit the earth (Isaiah 11).

Isaiah 11:1-5 is clearly a prophecy of, Jesus, the Messiah, who ordered the proclamation of the gospel to "every creature" in "all the world" (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16), thus smiting the earth with the rod of his mouth. Under the imagery of beasts, verses 6-9 describe the nature of changes in people, as a consequence of "the knowledge of the Lord." Verses 10-12 foresee the conversion of "Gentiles," which has been going on since Acts 10! The God of heaven and earth is now "no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34)! To construe this prophecy to mean a return to Judaism would be to exchange the "precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:19) for the "blood of bulls and goats" (Heb. 10:4) which could never take away sins!

Hear Lindsay on the imagined "Rapture": "There I was, driving down the freeway and all of a sudden the place went crazy...cars going in all directions...and not one of them had a driver. I mean it was wild! I think we've got an invasion from outer space!" (p. 136).

Jesus teaches that the separation of the righteous from the wicked takes place, not seven years nor a thousand years before the end of the world! But, according to no less authority than, Jesus Christ himself, the saints will be "severed" from the wicked "in the end of the world" (Mat. 13:36-50).

Lindsay says in *The 1980s: Countdown To Armageddon* (Bantam Books, New York, 1981):

First, there is a time coming, and I believe absolutely that time will be during this generation, when suddenly and without warning, every true believer in Jesus will disappear from the Earth. That event's speed and suddenness will leave the non-believing world mystified (p. 170).

Again the same writer says: At the end of the seven-year Tribulation, when man is on the brink of annihilation in an all-out war, Jesus the Messiah will personally return and stop it...Jesus will then judge the survivors of the Tribulation period. Those who have believed in God's Messiah-Savior during the Tribulation will go as mortals into a new Earth and will repopulate it. It is then that all man's dreams of utopia will finally be realized. This beginning period of the new world will last for 1,000 years. The Prince of Peace Himself will rule the world (pp. 171-173).

Please note carefully that Micah (4:1-8) foresaw "in the last days" what the Holy Spirit designated as "the first dominion" of the "kingdom"—which is the church of Christ (Mat. 16:18)—not the Baptist church nor any other denomination. But there would be no point in designating "the first dominion," unless there is to be a second dominion. It—that second "dominion"—will be at the resurrection of the righteous, "at his coming." "Then *cometh*

the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death” (1 Cor. 15:24-26).

This will be the second “dominion,” and some New Testament passages refer to this second (heavenly) dominion as “the everlasting kingdom” (2 Pet. 1:11; Acts 14:22; 1 Cor. 15:50).

However, it is clearly evident that in many other passages of God’s Word Christ’s “church” and “kingdom” are one and the same. (1) Our Lord Jesus Christ used the names “church” and “kingdom” to refer to the same institution (Mat. 16:18-19). (2) We are repeatedly told that “there is **one** body,” and “but **one** body” (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:20; Col. 3:15). However, if the church is one body, while the kingdom is another body, this would be untrue! (3) The inspired apostle Peter used the “keys of the kingdom” (Mat. 16:19) to open the doors of “the church” (Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47). If the “church” and the “kingdom” were not the same, Peter should have been arrested for “house-breaking”!!! (4) If the “church” and the “kingdom” are not the same, who stole the Lord’s “table” out of his “kingdom” where Christ put it (Luke 22:29-30), and slipped it into the “church” (1 Cor. 1:1-2; 10:21; 11:17-30)?

[Incidentally: It is inconsistent for any premillennialist to eat the Lord’s supper ever! (1) Premillennialists tell us the “kingdom” will not be established until, Jesus comes again. (2) But Christ said Christians may eat and drink “at my table in my kingdom” (Luke 22:29-30). (3) However, the Lord’s supper is to be eaten only “till he come” (1 Cor. 11:26). (4) The only logical conclusion is that his kingdom exists prior to his second coming!]

(5) All who are saved are “added to the church” (Acts 2:47—KJV). But all who are saved are “translated into the kingdom” (Col. 1:13-14). Since the same “process” puts one into both, the “church” and “kingdom” must be the same. (6) The church includes all who are “called to be saints” (1 Cor. 1:1-2); while at Colosse all “saints” were in the kingdom (Col. 1:2, 13). Hence, the “church” and the “kingdom” are one and the same institution.

(7) The kingdom was to be established “in the last days” (Dan. 2:44). Jesus announced: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). Not long thereafter Peter—guided by the Holy Spirit—identified the day the church was established as being “in the last days” (Acts 2:16-17). (8) Eighty-four Bible preachers—including John the Baptist and, Jesus Christ!—affirmed the “kingdom” was then “at hand,” and seventy of them were instructed by, Jesus to declare: “Be sure the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you” (Mat. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9, 11).

There is to be only one future coming of Christ. He shall “appear the second time” (Heb. 9:28)—not a third and a fourth time. He will bring the spirits of saints back from heaven with Him when He comes (Acts 7:55; 59; Rev. 6:9-11; 1 The. 3:13; 4:14; Jude 14-17). At that time, the “last” trumpet will sound, and will wake up the dead (1 The. 4:16-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-53). There has already been one resurrection (Mat. 27:51-53; 1 Cor. 15:20), of which Jesus Christ was “the firstfruits.” At Christ’s only future coming, the dead saints will be raised before the living saints are “changed” (1 The. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:52), and “together” they will meet the Lord in the air.

The wicked and the righteous—all—will be raised at his coming (John 5:28-29), and that will be at “the last day” (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24). There will not be another “day” on earth—much less a “thousand years”—after the saints are raised, but all—both the good and the bad—will be raised the same “hour” (John 5:28-29).

“When” Jesus comes, all will be judged, the good and the bad will be separated (Mat. 25:31-46). The Bible explicitly says “when” and comes, “THEN” the judgment will be held.

Christ will recompense “rest” to the troubled saints when he comes, but “tribulation” to the wicked—“to them that trouble you” (2 The. 1:6-10).

There is no Bible evidence that Jesus will ever set foot on this earth again. Rather, the saved will “meet the Lord in the air,” and the “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10).

“When he comes” (2 The. 1:6-10) the wicked shall be punished and the righteous rewarded. Wicked men (like Nero) who “troubled” saints in the first century (2 The. 1:6-10) will be raised and shall “see him” (Rev. 1:7; 2 Tim. 4:1).

The world will be burned up when Jesus comes (2 Pet. 3:1-15). He will come “taking vengeance” on the wicked “in that day” (2 The. 1:6-10). The saints will meet Jesus “in the air” that day (1 The. 4:13-18). There will not be another “trump” to sound later, after the saints are raised (1 Cor. 15:51-53), for that will be “the last trump.” That

Once Saved, Always Saved (?)

Garland Elkins

The title of this article quoted above, sets forth the denominational view (error) of “The impossibility of apostasy.” Sam Morris, a Baptist preacher, said,

The sin question is a Son question; salvation is a trust question; damnation is a disbelief question. All the prayers a man may pray, all the Bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform will not make his soul one whit safer; and all the sins he may commit from idolatry to murder will not make his soul in any more danger. The justification of the human soul is through the atonement of Christ and not through the efforts of man. The way a man lives has nothing whatever to do with his salvation.

Please note carefully the statement, “all the sins he may commit from idolatry to murder will not make his soul in any more danger.” This statement is especially significant and revealing for a number of reasons. (1) It is a clear statement of what the “once saved, always saved” doctrine entails. (2) Since the Bible teaches that, going to heaven is conditional upon obedience to the Father and Christ (Heb. 5:8-9; Mat. 7:21; Luke. 6:46), the statement makes clear that the doctrine of “once saved, always saved” is a false one. (3) It makes clear that all who have honestly believed and espoused the “once saved, always saved” doctrine have simply been misled. (4) All who truly love God, and learn the truth will not espouse such false doctrine as “once saved, always saved,” and those who have been misled into believing the false doctrine of “once saved, always saved” have been deceived.

Sam Morris has set forth the Baptist doctrine of “The impossibility of apostasy.” Many Baptist preachers do not like to answer the question as to whether they do, or do not, believe Sam Morris’ statement that a child of God cannot so sin as to be lost. They usually attempt to ignore the question when asked if the affirmation of Sam Morris is true. It certainly should be apparent to them that if they answer, “Yes, it is true,” then, even though that is in harmony with Baptist doctrine; i.e., “once saved, always saved,” to take such a position puts one in opposition to plain Bible teaching (2 Pet. 1:5-11; Gal. 5:19-21). If Sam Morris, and his Baptist doctrine, were true then, character, obedience, holiness and righteousness would have nothing to do with going to heaven. The Baptist view entails the position that an idolater or murderer can go to heaven without repenting! (Rev. 21:8; Luke. 13:3; Acts 17:30). On the other hand, if they say in reference to the statement of Sam Morris, “No, it is not true,” then they contradict their “once saved, always saved” doctrine.

The Bible definitely teaches that a child of God can so sin as to finally be lost in hell.

Some Passages That Teach That a Child of God Can So Sin as to Finally Be Lost in Hell

There are so many passages that teach that a child of God can so sin as to finally be lost in hell, the difficulty is just which one to cite. First, I point out that it is not a question of what a child of God **may** do; but rather, what **can he do**! The question is one of **possibility**, not of **probability**; and I should like for that clear difference to be emphasized. God has always recognized the sovereignty of the human will. Nothing is taught more clearly than the fact that God has provided for the freedom of man’s will. God leaves him free to act as he pleases. There is not an instance anywhere in the Bible where God forced a man, as relates to obedience and disobedience, without giving man an opportunity to exercise freedom of choice.

Those who have taken the time to investigate, have discovered that there is scarcely a page in either the Old or New Testaments that does not sound a warning, and raise the possibility of apostasy. A few of the many examples follow, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). Paul said of himself, “But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27). The Hebrews writer stated, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Heb. 3:12). I point out that to know God is eternal life:

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). It is possible to forget God, “Can a maid forget her ornaments, *or* a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number” (Jer. 2:32). What will happen to those who forget God? “The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God” (Psa. 9:17).

The Lord’s people have their names written in the book of life: “Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life” (Phi. 4:3). However, the Bible teaches in both the Old and New Testaments that some will have their names blotted out of the book of life: “And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book” (Exo. 32:33). Those who are not in the book will be cast “into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15). Please note: (1) God’s people are in the book; (2) sin will cause them to be blotted out; and, (3) if not found written in the book of life, they shall be cast into the fire.

Conclusion

The Bible plainly teaches the possibility of apostasy: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; **ye are fallen from grace!**” One cannot fall from a place he has never been. In Galatians 5:4, it is affirmed that it is possible to fall from grace; one must be in grace to fall from it. It is therefore possible for a child of God to fall from grace, **I rest my case!**

Is Salvation By Faith Only?

Terry Claunch

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). The seriousness of sin is seen in its consequences and ultimate end. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Eze. 18:20; cf., Jam. 1:14-15).

God does not want this to be the end of His creation. He is, “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). God sent His Son to take away the “sin of the world” (John 1:29). This would be done by making Him an offering for sin (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24). Paul sums up God’s ideal for the lost in 1 Timothy 2:4; that is, God would have all men saved. God has provided everything possible for the salvation of man.

No student of the Bible will doubt that faith is required for salvation. “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*” (Heb. 11:6). “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1-2; cf., Eph. 2:8; Heb. 10:39). Faith is an essential ingredient to salvation. The question needing an answer is, “is it the only ingredient to salvation?”

The New Testament makes two usages of faith. First, the gospel contains facts that are to be believed (John 20:30-31; 1 Cor. 15:1-3). There must be faith in these facts if one is going to be saved. Second, the gospel contains commands that are to be obeyed and this is also faith. “By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name” (Rom. 1:5; cf., 16:26). There must be obedience to faith if one would be saved.

Do we choose faith **only** in regard to the facts of the gospel to be saved? Should we choose faith **only** as expressed in obedience to be saved? Could there be harmony by having both?

Preparation for this article was made by contacting a dozen Baptist “churches” to obtain material they present on the subject of “Salvation by Faith Only.” Out of the dozen **ONLY** two responded.

Here are some excerpts from what was received. Herschel Hobbs wrote that salvation, “...is offered to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer” (*The Baptist Faith and Message*, Convention Press, Nashville, TN, p. 55).

Robbin Trent in his book *The Faith We Share* wrote, “A person enters the Christian life only by being converted, by believing-trusting, Jesus as His Lord and Saviour....Faith is the individual’s part to believe on, put confidence in, trust himself to, the Lord Jesus Christ, through that act he comes into vital contact with the Lord Jesus” (Convention Press, Nashville, TN, pp. 76-77).

Both these men are representative of the Baptist teaching that “salvation is by faith only.” They will tell prospective converts to “believe only” and be saved. Is this the truth on the matter? Let’s turn from the doctrines of men to the doctrine of Christ and see.

Jesus did not teach the Baptist doctrine of “salvation by faith only.” The faith that Christ taught demanded action. “Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, “This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent” (John 6:28-29). Here, the Lord states that even believing must be considered a work for it is something man does which God cannot do for him. “Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). Christ told Thomas to “reach...behold...reach... thrust.” This was done so that Thomas would, “be not faithless, but believing.”

Peter did not know anything of the doctrine of “salvation by faith only.” Peter went to the household of Cornelius to, “tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (Acts 11:14). Cornelius gathered his family, “to hear all things that are commanded” of God (Acts 10:33). He did not bring them together to have “faith only.” Peter says God, “commanded us to preach” (Acts 10:42). Therefore, Peter, “commanded them to be baptized” (Acts 10:48). Surely Peter knew what to teach about salvation.

Paul said about “faith only.” “Though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing” (1 Cor. 13:2). Paul says that faith only is nothing.

The Baptist doctrine finds itself in direct contradiction to inspiration in the book of James. “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and **not by faith only**” (Jam. 2:24). This is the only time that Scripture uses the phrase “faith only.” Here it is preceded by the three letter word **NOT**.

To whom are you willing to listen about salvation, the Baptist or the Bible? Yes, faith saves but not faith only. It must be followed by repentance (Acts 3:19), confession of Christ (Rom. 10:10), and baptism (Mark 16:16), if it is going to save.

Rt 1 Box 139; Stevenson, AL 35772

News

Memphis School of Preaching Lectures

March 28-April 1, 1993, Twenty-seventh Annual. Theme: **Living In Trust: A Study In The Bible Doctrine Of Prayer**, Memphis School of Preaching, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 38118. (901) 362-5139.

Southeastern Pennsylvania Firm Foundation Lectures

April 4-7, 1993, **The Challenges Of The Local Congregation**. Coventry Hills Church of Christ, 1339 S. Hanover St., Pottstown, PA 19464. (215) 326-4028.

A.D. 70 Debate

May 3-7 (except Wed. night) at 7:00 P.M., Marlow Church of Christ building, Marlow, OK.

Bill Lockwood will defend the proposition: “The Bible teaches that the second, or final coming of Jesus Christ is yet future and will occur at the end of the Christian dispensation. Don Preston will defend the proposition: “The Bible teaches that the second, or final coming of Jesus Christ occurred at A.D. 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem.”

Bellview Lectures

May 8-12, 1993, Eighteenth Annual. Theme: **“God’s Pattern For Christian Living.”** Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL 32526. (904) 455-7595.

God's Pattern For Christian Living

Eighteenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 8-12, 1993

Saturday, May 8

7:00 P.M. TO LIVE IS CHRIST

Shan Jackson

8:00 P.M. CHOOSING A MATE FOR LIFE

Ray Peters

Sunday, May 9

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-THE PATTERN

Bobby Liddell

10:00 A.M. A LIFE OF CHRIST-LIKE COMPASSION

Eddie Whitten

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. THE PEACE AND JOY OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

Jackie Stearsman

3:00 P.M. CHRISTIANS DO GOOD UNTO ALL MEN

Stanley Ryan

4:00 P.M. LIVING BY FAITH

Garry Barnes

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—HUSBANDS

Curtis A. Cates

8:00 P.M. WE COUNT THEM HAPPY WHICH ENDURE

Winfred Clark

Monday, May 10

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-SETTING THE HEART TO SEEK IT

Tony Tarole

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST-OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part I)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. CHRISTIANS OUTLIVE THE WORLD

Roger Jackson

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO THINGS

Harold Bigham

3:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE CHURCH

David Brown

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME-WIVES

Joe Gilmore

8:00 P.M. GOD'S FAITHFUL ARE FORGIVEN AND FORGIVING

Dub McClish

Tuesday, May 11

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD—SETTING THE HEART TO DO IT

Carl Garner

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST—OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part II)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO TIME

Tommy Alford

3:00 P.M. HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT INFLUENCE CHRISTIAN LIVING?

H.A. (Buster) Dobbs

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—CHILDREN

Glenn A. Posey

8:00 P.M. LIVING IN VIEW OF ETERNITY

Bobby Duncan

Wednesday, May 12

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-SETTING THE HEART TO TEACH IT

Paul Vaughn

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST—OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part III)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. GROWING STRONGER IN CHRIST EVERY DAY

Clifford Newell

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO TEMPTATION

Thomas Larkin

3:00 P.M. OPPOSING ERROR IN WORD AND IN DEED

Wayne Coats

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—PARENTS

Noah Hackworth

8:00 P.M. HAVE WE FORGOTTEN CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY?

Guss Eoff

Book Review

Bobby Liddell

Studies In Ezra, Nehemiah, And Esther, Edited by Dub McClish.

This book, of the Eleventh Annual Denton Lectures, November 8-12, 1992, is their latest in a long series of excellent studies of Bible books. Anyone familiar with the Annual Denton Lectures knows the quality of the lectures (and the lecture book) and that the Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, Texas, stands firmly for the truth. Brother Dub McClish's work in producing the ADL books is an outstanding contribution for which we should be truly thankful.

The hardbound book contains thirty-five chapters in just over five hundred pages and its subjects include an introduction and summary of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther, an exegesis and exposition of the text plus studies of topics, difficult passages and controversial issues. Thirty-five faithful brethren, whose respect for God's Word manifests itself in their work, contributed to this effort. It is a very fine study of these oft neglected Bible books and would enhance any library.

Studies In Ezra, Nehemiah, And Esther costs \$13.00 (plus shipping) and may be obtained from Valid Publications, Inc., 908 Imperial Drive, Denton, TX 76201.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

The Bible answer to this most important question applies to all. To be saved from sin and be with God in Heaven eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17).

2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24).

3. Repent of all past sins (Acts 2:38).

4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).

5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).

6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

April 1993

Number 4

The Methodist Plan For Church Organization Versus God's Plan

Stephen P. Waller

The Methodist Plan

The Methodist Church is organized under a conference system. In descending order, the system is as follows: General Conference, Jurisdictional Conference, Central Conference, Annual Conference, District Conference, Quarterly Conference, The Official Board and the Judicial Council (Nolan B. Harmon, *Understanding The Methodist Church*, pp. 9, 102ff; Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1955).

The General Conference is the "...supreme governing and lawmaking body of Methodism and one of the most influential church bodies in the world" (Ibid., p. 103). Its business is: "...to revise the book of *Discipline*, to make laws, and determine all sorts of important matters..." (Ibid.). It has full and sweeping powers. The Jurisdictional Conference elects bishops and the members of most of the boards and general agencies of the church. It also plans the future work of the church. Central Conferences are Jurisdictional Conferences outside the United States and its territories. The Annual Conference is the basic body of Methodism. It consists of all the traveling preachers who live within a certain territory and of lay members. This group has the power to "locate" a preacher and make him a local preacher. Lay members of the Annual Conference are elected by their local church with one delegate per church and serve a specified term.

The District Conference consists of all preachers in churches in a particular district, certain lay delegates and certain district offices. It is overseen by the district superintendent. This group takes final action on the licensing of properly qualified persons to preach.

The Quarterly Conference is the governing body of the local church of "charge." It consists of all officials of the local church—the pastor, assistant pastors (if any), stewards, trustees, local preachers, the president of the Women's Society of Christian Service and others. This Conference is overseen by the "district superintendent." The Conference has certain "executive" powers such as: the amount of a pastor's salary, how the business affairs of the local church are to be managed and what amount of money it shall accept as its share of general church work. It can buy, build, sell or mortgage a church building or parsonage and take care of all property matters. This Conference has "electoral" powers to elect who will attend the Annual and District Conferences and to elect church stewards and trustees who hold church property in trust. It recommends to the proper licensing committee those who wish to become preachers (without which one cannot become a preacher). This Conference sets up commissions and committees such as: The Commission on Membership and Evangelism, the Commission on Education, the Commission on Missions and the Commission of Finance.

The Official Board must be organized in every church in Methodism. It is composed of the pastor, the trustees, the stewards, and certain "ex-officio stewards" such as the church-school superintendent, the president of the Women's Society of Christian Service and others. "The Official Board is the real power in every Methodist church" (Ibid., p. 115). Its duty is to manage the finances of the local church. It creates special committees and makes plans for the future of the church.

There are General Boards and Agencies, each with a paid staff, executives, secretaries, headquarters, etc. These boards include the Board of Publication, Methodist Publishing House, Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief,

the Commission of Chaplains, the Commission on Public Relations and Methodist Information and the Women's Division of the Board of Missions.

The Judicial Council and the Methodist trial law provide for the proper trial of church members and of ministers when charges affecting their character or official action are brought against them in a formal way. The judicial Council is the supreme court of the Methodist Church to rule upon the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference. From the decisions of this Council there is no appeal. Its ruling at once establishes Methodist law. All of the above is clearly set forth in the *Discipline Of The Methodist Church*.

So far as local churches are organized, there is the Minister, the order of Elders, and the order of Deacons (which is the lowest of Methodism's two orders). Deacons are considered ministers who are empowered to perform all the ministerial practices of the church with the exception of administering "the sacrament of Holy Communion *outside the bounds of his own charge*" (Ibid., p. 121), though he can assist an ordained elder. To become a deacon, the Annual Conference must elect a man to "deacon's orders," then a bishop in a formal ceremony lays hands upon his head and pronounces him a deacon.

A minister who is a deacon may be elected to the order of elders by the Annual Conference and it must be by formal vote. Ordination of elders in Methodism involves a "bishop" praying and laying hands upon the one to be ordained. The "bishop" prays that the one becoming an elder, "be imbued with the Holy Spirit for the office and work of an elder in the Church of God" (Ibid., p. 122). A Methodist elder having all the rights and privileges of Christian ministry may administer "sacraments" anywhere.

A Pastor in the Methodist Church is known as a "preacher in charge" with at least twenty-seven specific duties. He is referred to as the "Key Man" upon whom the progress of each local church depends.

The District Superintendent is the most important administrative officer in the Methodist Church. He has the authority to supervise churches within a specific geographic area or district. He oversees all traveling and local preachers in his district and may appoint or change preachers. He is a "pastor of pastors" and member of the "bishop's cabinet."

Bishops are the highest officers of the church and the executive and general administrators of the church's work and program in the Annual Conferences. They are elected by the Jurisdictional Conference and are "consecrated" rather than ordained. They are regarded as belonging to the "third order." A bishop is simply an elder who is set apart for a particular administrative task—that of a superintendent in the church.

Stewards are "lay officers of the church" and may be men or women. They compose the "pastor's cabinet," and are responsible for the finances of the local church, salaries and fund-raising activities.

Trustees manage property.

As one can easily see, the organization of the Methodist Church is extremely complex and detailed. Though the claim is made that the Word of God sufficient for salvation and that "...the pure Word of God is preached..." in the Methodist Church (*Doctrines And Discipline Of The Methodist Church*, p. 7; Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1964), it should be clear to all that the organization and government of the Methodist Church is foreign to the New Testament pattern. More concern is given to following the directions of the *Discipline* than God's Word. The errors of Methodism's ecclesiastical organization are legion.

God's Plan

In contrast to the Methodist plan for church organization, the New Testament does not recognize official conferences, boards, councils, jurisdictions and other such groups which govern local churches. Furthermore, the New Testament does not recognize the grouping of churches into geographical regions or territories for the purpose of being overseen by a council, a conference or District Superintendent. New Testament churches were (and are) "autonomous" (self-ruled). Not once in the New Testament do we read of any congregation being under orders by any other church or organization higher than itself. Each New Testament church was independent, so long as it followed the teaching of Jesus Christ and the inspired apostles, to carry out its own work as it saw fit. Such an arrangement would help prevent the spread of error within the church.

Each New Testament church was to ordain men who would serve as elders (also called bishops, overseers, pastors or presbyters) (Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 4:11; Tit. 1:5; 1 Tim. 3:1-2). Rather than having one bishop or pastor over a church or over many churches, each congregation was to have a plurality (more than one) to oversee the Lord's work. These men would come from within the local congregation. There were duties clearly set forth, begin-

ning with the need to guard themselves and the church (Acts 20:38). Further duties involve feeding the flock, helping the weak, encouraging the fainthearted, caring for the needy, convicting the gainsayers, holding fast the faithful Word and being examples to the flock (Acts 20:35; 1 The. 5:14; Jam. 5:14; Tit. 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:2-3). The qualifications of such men are set forth by inspiration through Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Additional admonitions for elders are found in 1 Peter 5:1-5. The New Testament does not recognize an elder having greater authority in the eldership than the other elders. All elders have equal authority regardless of age or tenure as an elder. The authority of the eldership lies within the elders collectively, not individually.

Deacons are servants in the church specially selected to perform particular duties that need attention. In order to become a deacon, one must meet the qualifications as set forth by God through Paul in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Deacons serve under the oversight of the eldership. The only authority deacons possess in the local church is that which is delegated to them by the elders. Many men who have served faithfully as deacons, if they become qualified, may become elders. However, one does not have to be a deacon before he can become an elder.

Preachers or evangelists are charged with the responsibility of heralding or proclaiming the Word of God, the gospel of Christ (2 Tim. 4:1-4; 1 Cor. 2:12; 1:21-31; Rom. 10:14-18). Gospel preachers are not “pastors” or “preachers in charge” as found in Methodism. A preacher could only be a “pastor” (elder) if he were qualified according to the New Testament and selected to so serve. Even then, he could not be “in charge” of things for he would only be serving as one of those composing the eldership. In Methodism, the “pastors,” elders and deacons are responsible to see to it that the provisions of the Methodist *Discipline* are carried out so far as their duties are concerned. In contrast, the New Testament teaches gospel preachers must “preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2), elders must “hold fast the faithful word” (Tit. 1:9), and deacons must be faithful to God’s Word (Acts 6:1-8).

The New Testament plan for church organization is so simply stated and easy to follow that many simply overlook it in their search for cumbersome, unscriptural ecclesiastical methods of organization which are not authorized. In all matters, including church organization, we must speak and act with God-given authority—the authority of the New Testament (1 Pet. 4:11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

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Why I Left The Methodist Church

Bobby Liddell, Editor

Until age nineteen, I was associated with the Methodist Church. It was the church of my father’s family for generations. Having attended it all my life, I became a member by being sprinkled when a young teenager. I remember well those days and the pleasant associations with my Methodist friends.

Sometimes people leave a particular church or a religion because of some bad experience, personality conflict or strong resentment. None of these precipitated my leaving the Methodist Church. I still appreciate the kind friends I have there.

Nor did I leave because I grew tired of “organized religion” as some claim they do. I did not leave because of “hypocrites” or because the church did not call on me enough or called on me too much. No one made me leave the Methodist church; that is, I was not kicked out.

I did not leave because of lack of support from my family. I deeply appreciate their interest in my soul and their seeking, to the best of their knowledge and ability, to instill within me a knowledge of right and wrong and a determination to do right. Were it not for that, who knows where I would be today. Thus, I shall always be grateful.

Though some make it their practice, I did not leave because of some financial, political, social or other benefit to be obtained by my so doing. Nor did I leave a “small” church for a “big” one or a “big” one for a “small” one.

None of the above mentioned factors had any significance in my decision to leave the church of my fathers.

I left the Methodist Church because I had to.

I had to put aside the doctrines of men for the doctrine of Christ. Jesus said, “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Mat. 15:9; cf. Eph. 4:14; 2 John 9).

I had to quit obeying men and start obeying God. “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29; cf. 2 The. 1:8; Heb. 5:9; 1 Pet. 4:17).

I had to quit wearing a name given by men to wear the right name—the one given by God—the name, Christian. “And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26; cf. 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). Nowhere in the Bible does the name Methodist appear nor was anyone in the New Testament age ever instructed to be such.

I had to stop supporting denominationalism and use my time, ability and material resources to promote the church for which Christ died. “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Eph. 3:21; cf., Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:23-25; Mat. 16:18; Rom. 16:16). It was to His church the Lord added me when I was baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38, 41, 47).

I had to cease worshipping according to the will of men and worship in accordance with God’s will. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24; cf., John 17:17).

I had to quit encouraging people by my teaching and example to be Methodists and begin encouraging people to become and be just Christians. When Paul had preached to Agrippa, his response was: “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian” (Acts 26:28).

I had to quit thinking of convenience and start thinking of conviction. Felix’s sad response was: “When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee” (Acts 24:25).

I had to give up the pleasant ties of time for the promised fellowship for eternity. “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me” (Mat. 10:37).

I had to leave the doctrines and the church approved by my fathers for the doctrine and the church approved by my Father. What about you (Acts 10:34-35)?

Is The Methodist Discipline A Safe Guide?

Jamie Long

The apostle Paul condemned those teachers among the churches of Galatia who made a perversion of the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-9). Many today have perverted the gospel of Christ by adding their own ideas and creeds to it. The Methodist doctrine, one of the most popular in our area, like that of most denominations, has its own creed other than God’s Word. It was founded by, John Wesley who was an ordained priest in the Episcopal Church. John and his brother Charles with a few other students at Oxford formed themselves into a group for the purpose of overcoming the ways of the Episcopal Church to stimulate spirituality among its members. Other groups were organized and because of their methodical manner of life they were called by others, Methodist. For a time after Wesley’s death they considered themselves a part of the Episcopal Church.

On December 24, 1784, the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States originated at a “Christian Conference” in Baltimore. There, the *Book of Discipline* prepared by Wesley was adopted. This reduced the Episcopal Prayer Book from 39 articles to 24 articles and added one article covering the rulers of the United States.

The Methodist *Discipline* gives rules and regulations for its members to live by. The Bible, on the other hand, teaches God has, “given unto us **all things** that *pertain* unto life and godliness” (2 Pet. 1:3). Paul instructs Timothy that the Bible 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” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). No one has the right to add to or take from God’s Word (Rev. 22:18-19). It is easily seen from the Scriptures that man does not have the right nor the authority to add any ideas or creeds to God’s plan.

Methodism states the church is composed of many branches of which the Methodist Church is one. How many churches did Christ promise to build? Christ said, “I will build my church” (Mat. 16:18). That is in the singular, not plural. Paul, in his inspired instructions to the elders of the church of Ephesus, instructed them to, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). Christ is, “the head of the body, the church” (Col. 1:18). In John 15:1-6, Jesus clearly teaches *His disciples* the importance of abiding in Him. In like manner, today we must abide in Him or else we will be, “cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned” (v. 6).

The Methodist *Discipline* also teaches men are saved by faith only (Article 9, paragraph 69, page 27, *Discipline*, 1948). While it is true one is “justified by faith” (Rom. 5:1), this faith is an obedient faith. In Acts 2, on the day of

Pentecost when the people came to the belief of Christ through Peter's teaching (v. 36), they were "pricked in their heart" and asked, "What shall we do?" They realized their lost condition and wanted to know what they could do in order to be saved. "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" (v. 38). Peter did not say, "Since you believe in Christ you are now cleansed." He simply carried out the Lord's wishes as stated in Mark 16:15-16. Jesus Himself taught in Matthew 7:21, that only those who do the will of God can expect to enter into Heaven. Paul was thankful that the Roman brethren (Rom. 6:17-18) had obeyed "that from of doctrine" as described in verses three and four. He says they were, "then made free from sin" (v. 18).

This brings us to another fault of the Methodist belief concerning the action of baptism. The *Discipline* teaches sprinkling is acceptable and infant baptism is necessary. The Bible teaches there is but one baptism today (Eph. 4:5). The example of Philip and the eunuch in Acts 8:36-39 teaches clearly the way of baptism. When the eunuch saw the water, he asked what hindered him from being baptized. Philip replied, "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Upon his belief that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, they went down into the water and he was baptized (v. 38). Paul says we are, "**Buried** with him [Christ] in baptism," thus, stating clearly the act of immersion in baptism (Col. 2:12).

Converts of the Methodist Church are not accepted into full fellowship until the completion of a probation period of at least six months. There is no Scripture in God's Word that teaches this belief. The Bible teaches, as we have all ready established, what one must do in order to be saved (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 8:37; Heb. 5:9) and when one so does, the Lord adds him to the church (Acts 2:47).

The pattern for the church as revealed in Scripture is really quite simple when compared to the complicated and elaborate human systems of religion. Whenever men and women have been willing to lay aside human systems and return to the plan for the church revealed by the Holy Spirit, they have reproduced nondenominational New Testament Christianity.

Churches of Christ in America are a great example of this. God's Word is "the seed" of the Kingdom (Luke 8:11), and always reproduces after its kind when sown in its purity without a mixture of doctrines of men.

Sources: *Understanding The United Methodist Church*, 1977 Edition, by Nolan B. Harmon.

Churches of Today—In Light of the Scripture, 13th Edition, Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, TN, 1970, by L.G. Tomlinson.

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Methodist Departures From Truth Concerning The Lord's Supper

A. Dean Gittings, Jr.

One of the most profound acts authorized by God in mankind's worship of Him is that commemoration called communion. Each time a faithful disciple partakes of the Lord's Table that one is brought face to face with the Master's death, and is reminded of the wondrous sacrifice made upon the cross of Calvary.

In this study, let us focus our attention upon Methodist doctrine regarding the Lord's Supper as compared to that which is revealed in Divine Scripture. We will examine this act of worship from two aspects: (1) The nature of the observance; and, (2) the frequency of the practice.

The Nature of the Observance

G. S. Frazer, in his book *Methodism, Its History, Teaching, and Government*, tells us on page 45 that a platform tenet of Methodism is that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament. However, it should be noted that on the pages of the New Testament neither the word "sacrament" nor the idea behind the term can be found in connection with the breaking of bread. Sacrament comes to our language from "sacramentum" which is the oath of allegiance sworn by one enlisting in the Roman army.

Despite the fact *The Methodist Discipline* (Art. 16, 18) teaches that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament (oath), or as Frazer says (p. 47), "A badge of membership in the Church of Christ," the Bible does not so state. In God's Word,

we discover communion is a simple memorial to Jesus’ death by which Christians recall and show (announce) Jesus’ love and sacrifice (1 Cor. 11:24-26).

To say communion is a “sacrament” is to go beyond that which is written, which is in itself sinful (2 John 9; Rev. 22:18-19), and is nothing more than copying another bit of papal error. Rather than being called a “sacrament,” this item of worship is termed “the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42; 20:7), and, communion (1 Cor. 10:16) in God’s Holy Writ.

The Frequency of the Practice

Methodist doctrine affirms it is not necessary for one to partake of the Lord’s Table each week, but rather that monthly or quarterly observance will suffice. Notice, however, the understanding and practice of our first century brethren. Acts 20:7 reveals disciples gathered on the first day of the week to break bread. The same emphasis is found when brethren are instructed to lay by in store upon the first day (1 Cor. 16:2). As often as we are warranted to give (weekly), we are constrained to commune.

Some argue, “The Bible doesn’t say break bread every Lord’s Day but rather says as often as one eats and drinks, Christ’s death is remembered” (1 Cor. 11:26). I would suggest that just because the phrase “as often as” is used, it does not mean that God failed to inform us as to how often that observance should occur.

Under the Old Law, when the command “Remember the sabbath day” (Exo. 20:8), was established, God did not say “Every sabbath.” It was not necessary for God to use the Word “every” because, as Israel of old understood, each week had a sabbath and God’s admonition included every one of them. Likewise, today, each week has a first day. Upon each of these, Christians are expected to assemble for worship, which includes both the giving of our means as we have been prospered, as well as remembering and showing (announcing) our King’s death till he comes again.

Further, we understand that Christians are God’s priests today (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6). The Old Law, which served as “a shadow of good things to come” (Heb. 10:1) sets the stage for this weekly observance. Each week, the Levitical Priesthood ate shewbread (Lev. 24:5-9), a fit shadow of the priestly observance of the Lord’s Supper, on a weekly basis, by disciples, under Christ’s New Law.

God’s Word admonishes, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Col. 3:17). Methodist doctrine on the Lord’s Supper fails to comply with Christ’s commands in both word and deed. Thus, all who worship God after this false teaching sin in so doing and worship in vain (Mat. 15:8-9). Let us pray that repentance and a return to obedience to God’s will (not man’s will) be forth coming.

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**Which Church Is Scriptural
According to Christ’s New Testament?**

<i>Methodist Church</i>		<i>Church of Christ</i>	
Aspect	Scripture	Aspect	Scripture
Name: Methodist	?	Name: Christian	Acts 11:26
Salvation: Faith Only	?	Church of Christ	Rom. 16:16
Baptism: Sprinkling	?	Salvation: Obedient Faith	Jam. 2:24
Worship: Playing Instrument	?		Rom. 16:26
Overseen by Districts,	?	Baptism: Immersion	Rom. 6:4
Boards, Conferences		Worship: Singing	Eph. 5:19
		Overseen by Elders	Tit. 1:5

God's Pattern For Christian Living

Eighteenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 8-12, 1993

Saturday, May 8

7:00 P.M. TO LIVE IS CHRIST

Shan Jackson

8:00 P.M. CHOOSING A MATE FOR LIFE

Ray Peters

Sunday, May 9

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-THE PATTERN

Bobby Liddell

10:00 A.M. A LIFE OF CHRIST-LIKE COMPASSION

Eddie Whitten

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. THE PEACE AND JOY OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

Jackie Stearsman

3:00 P.M. CHRISTIANS DO GOOD UNTO ALL MEN

Stanley Ryan

4:00 P.M. LIVING BY FAITH

Garry Barnes

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—HUSBANDS

Curtis A. Cates

8:00 P.M. WE COUNT THEM HAPPY WHICH ENDURE

Winfred Clark

Monday, May 10

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-SETTING THE HEART TO SEEK IT

Tony Tarole

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST-OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part I)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. CHRISTIANS OUTLIVE THE WORLD

Roger Jackson

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO THINGS

Harold Bigham

3:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE CHURCH

David Brown

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME-WIVES

Joe Gilmore

8:00 P.M. GOD'S FAITHFUL ARE FORGIVEN AND FORGIVING

Dub McClish

Tuesday, May 11

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD—SETTING THE HEART TO DO IT

Carl Garner

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST—OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part II)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO TIME

Tommy Alford

3:00 P.M. HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT INFLUENCE CHRISTIAN LIVING?

H.A. (Buster) Dobbs

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—CHILDREN

Glenn A. Posey

8:00 P.M. LIVING IN VIEW OF ETERNITY

Bobby Duncan

Wednesday, May 12

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-SETTING THE HEART TO TEACH IT

Paul Vaughn

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST—OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part III)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. GROWING STRONGER IN CHRIST EVERY DAY

Clifford Newell

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO TEMPTATION

Thomas Larkin

3:00 P.M. OPPOSING ERROR IN WORD AND IN DEED

Wayne Coats

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—PARENTS

Noah Hackworth

8:00 P.M. HAVE WE FORGOTTEN CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY?

Guss Eoff

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

May 1993

Number 5

God Said, “Sing.” What Do Methodists Say?

Eugene Jenkins

It is interesting to realize that almost all religious groups claim to recognize the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and the faithful proclaiming of it. It is sad, however, to recognize that these, to many, are only claims. The evidence clearly shows that most religious people do not believe the Scriptures to be sufficient. This is seen in the fact that so few actually stay within the boundaries of authority given within the inspired book.

The Methodist denomination and her adherents are among this number who claim to believe the Scriptures are sufficient. They say, “The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man...” (*The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, 1968, Article V, p. 38). They go on to say, “The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached...” (Ibid, Article XII1, p. 40). These statements are good, and true, but does this group really believe in the sufficiency of the scriptures? Are they the “church of Christ,” as they imply? Are they faithful in proclaiming the “pure word of God”?

As with any biblical subject, for one to be correct, he must *follow* the proper standard. Christ pointed to Himself as the authority (Mat. 28:18), and instructed the apostles in what to teach. Just before He ascended to His Father, He promised the Holy Spirit would be sent to guide them into all truth (John 16:13). This was done, and we now have the complete, perfect (1 Cor. 13:10) will of God that *does* give us all we need to be pleasing to God (Eph. 1:3) and thus go to heaven. With this knowledge, we surely want to “make sure” that we follow the proper standard, that we will go to heaven. To fail to follow Christ is to reject any (all) hope of heaven, for Christ Himself said, “Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up” (Mat. 15:13).

Concerning our subject, it is very simple to see what Jesus Christ has authorized. Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 are clear in their teaching concerning “singing;” the instrument from which the melody is to come being the heart. Also in Colossians 3:16 it is clearly seen that we are to be “teaching and admonishing one another” through our singing; which places the responsibility on everyone to sing.

Do the Methodists respect Christ’s authority, and thus follow these teachings? No! Instead, they use mechanical instruments of music in their worship. They also use a special arrangement called a chorus, instead of each person fulfilling his responsibility in teaching and admonishing one another. Where do they get their authority for such aberrations? As I researched to determine their source of authority, I found *none*! Their “Book of Discipline” says nothing concerning any authority to do different from the divine dictates of the New Testament, just statements showing that they do differently, while calling on the Godhead for their blessings! For example, they speak of: (1) A division of the local church which “...shall develop standards governing the work of the...associates of music and music assistants...It shall cooperate with the **National Fellowship of Methodist Musicians of the United Methodist Church**” (Ibid, p. 298). (2) A complex “...Order For The Dedication of An Organ” which includes an “ACT OF DEDICATION to be said responsively by the minister and the people. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we dedicate this organ to the praise of Almighty God” (*Discipline of the Methodist Church*, 1948, pp. 550-552). (3) Recognition of Choristers. “At an appointed time the choir director, with his choristers properly robed, shall stand before the minister...” Among the things said, “...the choir director shall say: I present these persons to be recognized as choristers in the church...I have inquired of them and have also examined

them and commend them for this service in the Church” (Ibid, p. 534).

These things cannot be properly done in the name of (by the authority of) the Father, Son and Holy Spirit because They have never authorized such activities! To call on Their blessings does not mean They have given them (Mat. 7:21-27).

We are instructed to: “make all things according to the pattern” (Heb. 8:5), as Moses had done. To use instrumental music or chorus groups, or any other such innovation, in worship to God is definitely not according to the inspired pattern!

The only attempt of authority for their practice in the use of the instrument is the mentioning of various verses in their dedication of the organ. They quote Psalm 1 50:1, 3, 4b and 6, as well as Psalm 96:1 and part of Ephesians 5:19 “together” (Ibid, p. 551). This shows a lack of understanding (or concern) about Christ’s “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Col. 2:14). He having the authority to do so, dismantled that law, having fulfilled it (Mat. 5:17-18; Gal. 3:19-29), and has given us a new and better law. Any honest, informed person recognizes therefore that one cannot return to that which is no longer binding for authority today.

It is the desire of each of us who truly believe in the all sufficiency of the Bible, that all will join us in this belief, that there will be unity, instead of the division that now exists!

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Understanding: Division Or Unity?

Bobby Liddell, Editor

The excuse for religious division has often been given as: “One person understands the Bible one way and one another way, but both can still go to Heaven.” One who thus believes sees division as a blessing saying, “It is good that there are various denominations so one can find the one that fits his understanding best.” They might add: “I don’t see it the way they do, but who am I to judge? We can still get along together.”

Such an attitude may seem tolerant, kind, loving and magnanimous. Indeed, its proponents relish being thought of as possessing those characteristics. However, they are quick to condemn, in strong words and most hostile tone, those who dare to disagree with the pseudo-philosophy of, “It’s okay as long as we agree to disagree.”

Does the supposed inability of men to understand the Bible with uniformity excuse religious division? Certainly not.

First, the idea that men cannot understand the Bible is false. Note these passages. “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but **understanding** what the will of the Lord *is*” (Eph. 5:17).

“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, **when ye read, ye may understand** my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)” (Eph. 3:3-4).

“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an **understanding, that we may know** him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (1 John 5:20).

“Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in **understanding be men**” (1 Cor. 14:20).

Second, the problem of a lack of understanding lies not in the insufficiency of God to give man a knowable book, but in the problem of sinful man’s rejecting the Truth, substituting their will for God’s will.

“And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and **shall not understand**; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: **For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and *their* eyes they have closed**; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Mat. 13:14-15).

“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning,

and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:42-44).

"Having the **understanding darkened**, being alienated from the life of God **through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart**" (Eph. 4:18).

"Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and **shall not understand**; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: **For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed**; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it" (Acts 28:26-28).

We can understand God's Will for us. If we understand His Word, we will understand it alike. Let us open our eyes, hear with our ears and understand with our hearts God's Word that we might be saved in obedience to Him and be **united in Christ**.

Baptism: Sprinkling, Pouring Or Immersion?

Derrick Temple

Speaking to the scribes and Pharisees concerning the law Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men" (Mat. 15:9). These men were seemingly concerned about Jesus' disciples keeping law that God had not given, yet these men refused to acknowledge the testimonies of God (Mat. 15:3-8).

Many today have given themselves over to the doctrines of men esteeming them greater than the commandments of God (John 14:15). One such group who fits this description is the Methodist Church. It has been said that all religious groups teach some truth, but is some truth sufficient to please God? Did God give man His Word and expect man to use only portions of it mingled with the teachings of men? From the first reference given above, this idea is refuted, but let us continue to examine this by looking at baptism.

Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Peter wrote, "The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:21). From both of these passages, one can know that baptism is essential to salvation. Without baptism, one can only look forward to the vengeance of God (2 The. 1:8).

How is baptism to be administered, or how is one to be baptized? Methodists teach that baptism can be performed by sprinkling, by pouring, or by immersion (*Handbook of Denominations*, p 163). If it is the case that one can use all of these methods for baptism, surely the Bible would give the command or example (2 Pet. 1:3). However, one who has been "baptized" by sprinkling or pouring may be shocked to find the Bible gives no example or command for such as a form of baptism.

All references given in the New Testament concerning baptism teach that baptism is an immersion and not sprinkling or pouring. When a eunuch of Ethiopia heard Jesus preach, he asked Philip, "See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" After the eunuch made the grand confession that "Jesus is the Son of God," the account continues, "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8:35-39).

All would agree that it would have been just as easy for Philip to dip his hand or some object into the water and pour or sprinkle water on the eunuch's head. However, the eunuch must have understood from what Philip preached that baptism is not sprinkling or pouring but an immersion in water, a burial. Realizing that much water is required to be baptized the eunuch commanded the chariot to stop when he saw a place with enough water. Paul also understood baptism to be a burial in water, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3-4).

Looking at the word from which baptism and other forms of this word are translated clarifies this subject even more. Baptism comes from the Greek word *baptizo*, which if literally translated would say "to dip" or "to immerse" (*Vine's*, p. 99). Neither sprinkling nor pouring could fit this definition.

The introduction of sprinkling and pouring as *forms* of baptism did not occur until many years after the

completion of the New Testament. In fact, men did not adopt either as valid forms of baptism until the fourteenth century. God never authorized sprinkling or pouring as forms of baptism.

Both sprinkling and pouring are departures from God's way. God commands that all be baptized, immersed, for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Therefore, immersion is the only form of baptism authorized by God and taught by the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

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Abilene Christian University Has Employed A Methodist Preacher To Edit The Optimist (School's Student Newspaper)

Cliff Lyons

Sadly, apostasy grows deeper at Abilene Christian University. It is also very sad that some brethren continue to endorse and defend the school under such circumstances. A few years ago we learned that *organic evolution* had been taught there (See *Is Genesis Myth?*, by Bert Thompson).

In the June 4, 1992 issue of the OPTIMIST Keith Alewine wrote an article regarding Michael O'Connor, the new Methodist editor. Among other matters, we learn from the article that **Dr. Royce Money, president of ACU**, helped choose the new editor. Alewine wrote: "Michael was asked some tough questions by the committee that chose the editors of the Optimist and Prickly Pear. The committee included Dr. Royce Money, president of the university. Michael said, 'I got asked by Dr. Money, 'Pretend you're me and justify my picking you to be editor of the Optimist.'" Michael answered that he hoped he would be picked because he was the best person for the job, "not because of his religious preferences."

Brethren how important is our religious preference today? Have we lost sight of being the church we read about in the New Testament? Is it wise and right or foolish and wrong to have a Methodist preacher edit the OPTIMIST, and thus influence precious young souls in Methodist doctrine? Or, will Mr. O'Connor compromise Methodism and teach the truth? How could he be a sincere editor and not teach what he believes as a Methodist? Parents and young people need to take a very serious look at ACU and realize what has and is happening to it. First century Christians were warned, "to give the more earnest heed" to the gospel they heard, lest they drift away from it (Heb. 2:1-4). This warning fits the Lord's church today (including our schools and especially, ACU). Incidentally, there must have been "a pattern" from which brethren could drift away from according to Hebrews 2:1-4.

Brethren, when there are, "no problems for a Methodist at ACU," and when O'Connor is convinced that, "John Wesley, Methodism's founder," would get along just fine on campus, it is time to restudy such passages as 2 John 9-11; Jude 3; Romans 16:17-18; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Ephesians 5:11; et. al. Please note the following contrast between New Testament Christianity and Methodism.

Brethren, there is a striking contrast between New Testament Christianity and Methodism and other matters could be added to the above list. Yet, it seems that ACU looks upon Mr. O'Connor as already converted. The OPTIMIST article said that his, "conversion to Christianity started during the summer before his senior year of high school in Midland." Indeed, at ACU, "religious preference" may not mean much to the president, the board, et. al., but to those of us who still believe you can know the truth and be simply Christians, members of the church set forth in the New Testament, it makes a difference. If I have anything to say about it, my children and grandchildren will not attend ACU, if she continues on her apostasy course.

Question: Are we (elders, deacons, preachers, and all Christians) contending earnestly for the truth, the precious gospel of Christ, if we encourage young people to attend ACU? Also, how about making proper application of Ephesians 5:11; 2 John 9-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; and other Bible passages. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

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New Testament Christianity	Methodism
Christ founder of church (Mat. 16:18)	John Wesley the founder
Christ has all authority (Mat. 28:18-20)	Methodist Discipline is authority
Wear name Christian (Acts 26:28; Rom. 16:16)	Wear name Methodist
Preach the one gospel (Gal. 1:8-9)	Preach Methodist Doctrine
God no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34)	“The Reverend...”
Plurality of elders (pastors) over each church (Acts 20:17)	“Pastor” over one church
Faith + Baptism = Saved (Mark 16:1 5-16)	“Faith only” saves
Baptism by immersion only (Rom. 6:3-4)	Sprinkling, pouring
Baptism for penitent believers (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38))	“Baptism” for infants
Baptism a condition of salvation (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21)	“Faith only” saves, or baptism not essential
Singing in worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)	Use piano, organ, etc. in worship
Lord’s Supper each Lord’s Day; thus, weekly (Acts 2:42; 20:7)	Not necessary to observe Lord’s Supper weekly

7 Things Wrong With Methodist Doctrine

James Pilgrim

Our discussion in this article centers around seven errors in Methodist doctrine, a doctrine my father espoused until he was a grown man. He left the Methodist Church due to the following and other reasons.

Conference

No local Methodist Church is autonomous (self-governing). A conference has control over every one of their churches. They have no choice in the preacher they will have other than to ask. If a Methodist Church were to teach a doctrine different to those in the “Discipline,” it would lose its building. So it goes in other matters. Beloved, each New Testament body of Christ was self-governing. There were elders in every church (Acts 14:23; Phi. 1:1; Tit. 1:5). No elder or group of elders were over any church other than the local church of which they were members, and that was limited to watching for the souls of the saints there, but certainly not in making laws (Heb. 13:7, 17).

Baptism

Methodists do not believe one has to be baptized to go to heaven. However, read an inspired man’s statement on the matter (John 3:5; cf., Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). If baptism saves, removes sin, etc., how could one be saved without it?? Methodists practice sprinkling, pouring and immersion. However, the Bible says we are baptized (buried, immersed) but one way (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12; Acts 8:38-39). Methodists also baptize babies, but the Bible says believers (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:37) who repent (Acts 2:38) and confess Jesus Christ (Acts 8:37-39; Rom. 10:9-10) were baptized by the Lord’s authority. Can babies do either?

Name

The Methodist Episcopal Church is the name by which many people go. The name was given by men hundreds of years after Jesus built His church. We are to speak as the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11). We are to do all in the name of Jesus (Col. 3:17); that is, by His authority, because He said do it. Question: Where in the King James Version of the New Testament do we read of the Methodist Church? A \$1,000 check awaits anyone who will furnish us with book, chapter and verse. If it cannot be found, it must be dropped if we would obey God. We do read of other names by which the New Testament church was called (Rom. 16:16; Acts 2:47; 1 Tim. 3:15).

Church Music

As is true of almost every religious body, except churches of Christ, Methodists use mechanical instruments of music in worship to God. Too, as is true of most, they go to the Old Testament and the Revelation to prove such acceptable. But, my friend, the Old Testament (as a law or pattern for us—BL) has been abolished (2 Cor. 3), and the voice of

Revelation 14:2 was not many waters, thunder and harps, but like them; that is, powerful and beautiful. If we neither add to nor subtract from God's Word (Deu. 4:2; Rev. 22:18-19), what will we do when we follow the instruction in the following verses: Matthew 26:30; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13? Will we sing, play, or sing and play?

Licensing Preachers

Before one can preach in the Methodist Church, he must first be licensed by the District Conference, which also has the authority to renew or reject the person later, depending on their feelings of his usefulness. He must also be recommended by the Quarterly Conference of the charge to which he belongs, and must first pass before a committee of three, to be appointed by a Presiding Elder, etc. We shall limit our comments here to one question: Where is just one Scripture even hinting at such a plan?????

Lord's Supper

Methodists observe the Lord's Supper monthly. The Bible tells us to observe it weekly (Acts 20:7). How often does the first day of the week come? Though God did not say every sabbath day, He meant every one of them when he said, "Remember the sabbath day." The statement in Acts 20:7 is the same as that in 1 Corinthians 16:2, and they are both to be done weekly. If we are to be God's people, we must do what He says, when He says do it, and for the reason He says do it. Methodists are not doing so in this area.

Calvinistic

Methodists have been swayed by John Calvin. They follow his doctrines about total depravity, unconditional and unchangeable predestination, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints. However, notice how the Bible teaches otherwise. We are not born depraved (Eze. 18:4, 20). All can be saved (Rev. 3:20; 22:17). Jesus died for all (2 Cor. 5:14). The gospel saves man (Rom. 1:16; 1 Pet. 1:23). Men can fall from God's grace (Heb. 12:15; Acts 5:1-11).

Conclusion

Let us speak as God's Word reads.

(Reprinted by permission.)

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

To be saved from sin and be with God in Heaven eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17).
2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24).
3. Repent of all past sins (Acts 2:38).
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

Book Review

Bobby Liddell

LIVING IN TRUST: A Study In The Bible Doctrine Of Prayer, Edited by Curtis A. Cates. The 1993 Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship book is another in the outstanding series of such lectureship books. It addresses the topic of prayer in forty-six chapters by faithful brothers and has five chapters (ladies' classes) by faithful sisters. The book is well made, attractively hardbound and has 580 pages. In this day when similar books cost \$20-25 or more, it is a bargain also at only \$12.00 (plus shipping).

The various authors present a well-balanced and Scriptural approach to: the purpose, process and power of prayer, Christ's prayers, hindered prayers, misconceptions about prayer, public and private prayers, and specific subjects and conditions of prayer. Their lessons are true to the Bible and presented plainly and lovingly. God's people certainly need to know more about prayer and be encouraged to pray more and to pray more effectively. This book will be a great help in that pursuit.

LIVING IN TRUST is available from Memphis School of Preaching, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 38118.

God's Pattern For Christian Living

Eighteenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 8-12, 1993

Saturday, May 8

7:00 P.M. TO LIVE IS CHRIST

Shan Jackson

8:00 P.M. CHOOSING A MATE FOR LIFE

Ray Peters

Sunday, May 9

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-THE PATTERN

Bobby Liddell

10:00 A.M. A LIFE OF CHRIST-LIKE COMPASSION

Eddie Whitten

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. THE PEACE AND JOY OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

Jackie Stearsman

3:00 P.M. CHRISTIANS DO GOOD UNTO ALL MEN

Stanley Ryan

4:00 P.M. LIVING BY FAITH

Garry Barnes

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—HUSBANDS

Curtis A. Cates

8:00 P.M. WE COUNT THEM HAPPY WHICH ENDURE

Winfred Clark

Monday, May 10

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-SETTING THE HEART TO SEEK IT

Tony Tarole

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST-OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part I)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. CHRISTIANS OUTLIVE THE WORLD

Roger Jackson

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO THINGS

Harold Bigham

3:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE CHURCH

David Brown

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME-WIVES

Joe Gilmore

8:00 P.M. GOD'S FAITHFUL ARE FORGIVEN AND FORGIVING

Dub McClish

Tuesday, May 11

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD—SETTING THE HEART TO DO IT

Carl Garner

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST—OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part II)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO TIME

Tommy Alford

3:00 P.M. HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT INFLUENCE CHRISTIAN LIVING?

H.A. (Buster) Dobbs

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—CHILDREN

Glenn A. Posey

8:00 P.M. LIVING IN VIEW OF ETERNITY

Bobby Duncan

Wednesday, May 12

9:00 A.M. GOD'S WORD-SETTING THE HEART TO TEACH IT

Paul Vaughn

10:00 A.M. JESUS CHRIST—OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE (Part III)

Roy Deaver

11:00 A.M. GROWING STRONGER IN CHRIST EVERY DAY

Clifford Newell

Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. LIVING WITH RESPECT TO TEMPTATION

Thomas Larkin

3:00 P.M. OPPOSING ERROR IN WORD AND IN DEED

Wayne Coats

3:45 P.M.—Open Forum Discussion

Dinner Break

7:00 P.M. GOD'S PATTERN FOR THE HOME—PARENTS

Noah Hackworth

8:00 P.M. HAVE WE FORGOTTEN CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY?

Guss Eoff

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

June 1993

Number 6

The Origin And History Of The Catholic Church (Part 1)

Elliott C. Glasgow

The question of the rise and development of Catholicism has been dealt with by many in our great brotherhood. Of special merit is the taped and transcribed Freed-Hardeman College Lectures by G. K. Wallace who asked, "How does one account for the origin of the Roman Catholic Church? Christ built the church and the Bible says in Acts, chapter two, that the people were added to the church. Paul said the people of Colossae had been 'translated out of the power of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son' (Col. 1:13). So the Kingdom existed, the church existed, the New Testament has a record of it. The Roman Catholic Church is an apostate body from this New Testament church. Here in the New Testament is the original church. You cannot find the Roman Catholic Church in the New Testament" (Wallace, p. 32).

Departure in Organization

The early church had some difficulties, and a great breaking away (apostasy) occurred. The first departure or breaking away was in organization. The organization of the church consisted originally of elders and deacons in each of the local congregations. Christ is the head of the church with elders in the **local congregation** to rule and deacons to serve. Every congregation was independent and had its own elders.

When Paul came to Miletus, he met with the elders of the church of Christ at Ephesus. As he warned them, he said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30). And then to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 The. 2:3-4). In the church of the Bible, there were men who arose speaking perverse things. Their efforts culminated in the man of sin. Who is the man today that sets himself forth as God? He is none other than the Pope of Rome.

According to Phillips: "Concerning the Man of Sin such as Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Melancthon, Beza, and Bucer declared him to be the Antichrist, and an individual, and that the restraining influence was the Roman Emperor. According to English Reformers such as Crammer, Ridly, Latimer, Hooper, and Jewell the apostasy is the failing away from evangelical doctrine to the traditions of men and the corruption of popery; to them the man of sin is the Roman Empire out of whose ruins the papacy arose" (Phillips, p. 286).

Look again at what Paul said about the great apostasy. He said, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith." They are going to turn from the simplicity of the gospel; they are going to turn away from the faith: "giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (now watch this), "Forbidding to marry" (1 Tim. 4:1-3). Is not this the mark of an apostate church? This shows us how Catholicism arose. Here are certain men speaking perverse things and forbidding to marry.

Yes, the first departure came in organization. The early church (local congregation) was ruled by elders. During the first half of the second century, the old order began to disappear. The two officers (Elders and Deacons) became

three (one bishop, a college of presbyters, and a board of deacons). By A.D. 250, five new officers developed in larger churches: Subdeacons (assistants of deacons), Acolytes (assistants of bishops), Exorcists, Readers, and janitors.

The function of the new officers were as follows:

Bishop: (1) Act as head and presiding officer in the government of the church; (2) administer finances; and, (3) administer confirmation, ordination, consecrate holy oil, churches, etc. Presbyters: (1) The conduct of worship on ordinary occasions and in subordinate churches; (2) administration of ordinances; (3) instruction of people; and, (4) advising bishops in dioceses and provincial synods.

Deacons: they belonged to clergy, but not to priesthood. They assisted in finances, in administration of the Lord's Supper, etc.

Before the end of the third century, the office of Metropolitan or Archbishop had been developed in certain quarters.

Departure in Doctrine

"The corruption of the government of the church naturally led to the corruption of everything connected with Christianity. A departure from the divine government in one thing opens the way for other departures. Such a course will soon cause men to lose sight of the Lord's directions and cause them to follow the doctrines and commandments of men. Prominent among the early departures from the divine order was the substitution of infant baptism for that of believers.

"This practice originated in the third century, and grew out of the doctrine of original sin. It was contended that baptism was regeneration in the sense of washing away original sin; that infants were depraved by original sin, and could not be saved without this washing away of that sin, and therefore they baptized infants that they might be saved." On this point Shepherd quotes Neander saying: "But when now, on the one hand, the doctrine of corruption and guilt, cleaving to human nature in consequence of the first transgression, was reduced to a more precise and systematic form, and, on the other from duly distinguishing between what is outward and what is inward in baptism, the error became more firmly established that without external baptism none could be delivered from the inherent guilt, or could be saved from the everlasting punishment that threatened him, or raised to eternal life; and when the notion of a magical influence, a charm connected with the sacraments, continually gained ground, the theory was finally evolved of the unconditional necessity of infant baptism. About the middle of the third century this theory was already generally admitted in the North African Church" (*Church History*, Vol. 1., pp. 426-427—Quoted by Shepherd, pp. 5960).

Philip Schaff in his *History of the Christian Church* had this to say: "The practice of infant baptism in the church, with the customary formula, 'for the remission of sins,' and such accompanying ceremonies as exorcism, presupposes the dominion of sin and of demoniacal powers even in infancy. Since the child, before the awakening of self-consciousness, has committed no actual sin, the effect of baptism must relate to the forgiveness of original sin and guilt. This was a very important point from the beginning of the controversy, and one to which Augustine frequently reverted.... Constrained by the idea of original sin, and by the supposed necessity of baptism to salvation, he does not shrink from consigning unbaptized children to damnation itself... The Catholic doctrine of the necessity of outward baptism to regeneration and entrance into the Kingdom of God, forbade him a more liberal view respecting the endless destiny of that half of the human race which die in childhood" (Vol. III, pp. 835, 836).

The departure from the practice of immersion, the original act performed in baptism, to affusion, was largely due to the idea of the magical effect of water to cleanse the polluted souls of men. It was believed to contain the whole forgiving power of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. On this account, many put off baptism till death threatened them that their iniquities might be removed as the King of terrors carried them into the land of spirits. "The first case of this kind on record is that of Novation (A.D. 251), who was 'baptized by affusion in the bed as he lay.' At first this practice caused a schism in the church, but in the course of time that which was the exception became the rule. On this radical change from apostolic practice the learned Roman Catholic bishop, Karl Joseph Hefele, says: 'The Church has always been tender toward the sick; she has hastened to confer baptism upon them, because it is necessary to salvation; and for that reason she introduced clinical baptism'" (Shepherd, p. 60).

The Bible unequivocally teaches individual responsibility of actions. Every person is responsible for his own conduct. Ezekiel 18:20 shows, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father."

The apostle Paul clearly states, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). A child; therefore, cannot sin because he is not yet a person with choice. Baptism is for the penitent believer (Acts 2:38), and it involves a burial and a resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5).

(Continued in the July issue, Editor).

The Bellview Lectures: 1993 And 1994

Bobby Liddell, Editor

Before the report on the 1993 Bellview Lectures, please be advised next year's lectures, the **Nineteenth Annual Bellview Lectures, will be June 11-15, 1994**. Please note the change from our regular lecture time for the last several years (from May to June). We sincerely hope you will mark your calendars and plan now to be with us then.

The 1993 Bellview lectures were the best with which this writer has been associated. There are many reasons why.

First, the Bellview brethren outdid themselves in preparation and cooperation in the many areas of work involved in a lectureship. Many letters have been received already from those who visited with us commending the good works of the Bellview members.

We are glad our visitors noticed and, likewise, commend all who labored so diligently in preparing and serving food (all agreed the food was delicious and the best ever), providing transportation, manning (or womanning) the nursery, registering all who attended, working in the sound room, setting up the furniture, taking care of the books and tapes, picking up speakers and seeing to their needs, caring for the building and grounds, etc., and giving so liberally to provide for the many expenses involved.

Second, every speaker was prepared and presented his lecture in a very fine way. Each preached the truth and covered the topic assigned them without going "everywhere preaching the word." Some of the finest preachers in the brotherhood were present and their lessons showed why they are considered to be such fine preachers.

Third, the attendance was good with visitors from the Pensacola area, around Florida, several other states and as far away as Washington state coming. Many of our speakers also were able to be with us for the entire lectureship. We know what that involves and appreciate their support. That is always a plus.

Fourth, we made some changes to the lectureship schedule which were beneficial. We added an Open Forum this year (Mon.-Wed.). The Forums proved to be a very valuable addition. They were lively and informative with many good questions asked and appropriate responses given from the Bible. The Sunday afternoon sessions were also new this year. We hope they shall afford opportunities to those who work during the week and cannot attend the day services Monday through Wednesday, to come and hear the Gospel preached all day Sunday. Likewise, the members of area congregations should be able to come be with us then. We plan to keep these additions next year and to include an Open Forum in the Sunday afternoon schedule; thus, we will have Forums each afternoon, Sunday through Wednesday.

Fifth, we all rejoiced in the heart cheering fellowship with those of like precious faith. What a blessing it was to be with our visitors, many of whom attended every session. Being with brethren who love the truth and are willing to stand for it is a great encouragement. We all benefitted from the outstanding preaching of God's Word. The singing was great with Paul Brantley directing and calling upon several visitors to help.

Sixth, the lectures presented in our nightly series on God's Pattern For The Home were especially good with lessons on Husbands, Wives, Children and Parents, on Sunday through Wednesday nights respectively.

Seventh, we trust that for many years to come, through the availability of the lectures in books and audio and video tapes, men and women shall be blessed. To God we give our thanks for such an opportunity as the Bellview Lectures and to Him we give all the glory, honor and praise.

We hope you will make your plans to be with us next year, **June 11-15, 1994**. Mark your calendars now for the **Nineteenth Annual Bellview Lectures**. See you then!

A History Of The Popes

Glen Alexander

As we look at the History of the Popes, we must first note that in the Scriptures, the word Pope is not found anywhere. We do find the early church was commanded to “ordain elders in every city” (Tit. 1:5). The elders were also called bishops, overseers and shepherds. One quickly learns that these men had to meet certain spiritual qualifications as found in Titus 1:5-9 and also in 1 Timothy 3:17. They always served with equal authority in plural numbers, having the rule over the local congregation only. Elders were stewards, being accountable unto the only Head of the church, Jesus Christ. This relationship is clearly seen in Hebrews 13:17-20.

Let us note something the Catholics themselves say about the history of their Popes: “Christ founded the Church in the form of a visible, hierarchical society, being made up of subjects and superiors who rightfully rule the subjects. Christ made Peter the first head of the Church, the first Roman Pontiff” (*Primer on Roman Catholicism*, p. 4).

We see a great departure here from God’s design given in the Scriptures we have noted. Each congregation of the New Testament church was subject unto Christ, its only Head. Elders were, under this same subjection, to lead and feed the flock (Acts 20:28). The Catholic Church from its earliest days, set up two classes, clergy and laity. The Pope was given reign over the priests, with all ruling over the lower class subjects. In the Bible, Christ only has all authority (Mat. 28:18).

The doctrine that Peter was the first Pope is also in complete error. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The word for **Peter** in the Greek is *petros*, meaning a small piece of rock. The Greek word for **rock** is the word *petra*, a feminine word, referring to a massive rock. It is upon this rock (*petra*), and not Peter, that the church is built. Jesus, Himself, is the only foundation and chief cornerstone (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20).

Therefore, Peter had no special power or headship over the other apostles or the church. He was simply one of many spiritual stones, not unlike Peter’s own description of every Christian in 1 Peter 2:5: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood.” It is plain that all Christians are priests under Jesus our High Priest. Peter was a married man, as both Matthew 8:14 and 1 Corinthians 9:5 strongly confirm. This, as well, made it impossible for him to be a Pope. To teach that Peter was the first Pope is to both wrest the Truth and fabricate a lie.

Please follow their reasoning in the doctrine of Apostolic Succession beginning with Peter: “...this power was to be passed on from one Bishop of Rome to another pope, who serves on earth as Vicar of Christ” (*Primer on Roman Catholicism*, p. 5; see also *A Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 112-113). Jesus entrusted the apostles with His Word, which was safely and surely delivered through the Holy Spirit (John 16:13). Being completed and finished, the Bible remains our sole guide long after the apostles have departed this life (Jude 3).

The doctrine of the Popes sprang up in the midst of a falling Roman Empire and from men departing from God’s way. That the early church was, by and large, going to depart from the Truth was no surprise to believers. Paul warned of this coming departure: “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:30). The Holy Spirit knew what would happen when men coveted the power and glory reserved for the Lord only. Paul recorded again in 1 Timothy 4:1-3, in remarkable detail the coming fall. This fall, being spiritual in nature, has had an even greater impact on the world than the fall of the Roman Empire.

Blind ambition raised up the Popes. Note these words: “If Rome is Queen of cities, why should not her pastor be the king of bishops? Why should not all nations be her children, and her authority their sovereign law? It was easy for the ambitious heart of man to reason thus. Ambitious Rome did so” (*History of the Reformation*, p. 8).

The History of the Popes really began in A.D. 606 when Boniface III was first installed Pope (by man and not by God). Remember Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”

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*Nineteenth
Annual Bellview
Lectures
June 11-15, 1994*

Jeff Clark

As one studies the doctrines advanced by the Roman Catholic Church, few are less understood or more confusing than that which is advanced concerning priesthood. While on the one hand, it is claimed that the priests, “are not necessarily holier, nor are they of a higher class in the church’s structure,” than anyone else (*Christ Among Us*, p. 373), they also assert that, “When we meet a priest we should salute him: women and girls should bow, and men and boys should raise their hats” (*My Catholic Faith*, p. 352). Yet such disparity is common and characteristic of all who do not adhere to Bible authority. It is a subtle hint as to the underlying problems of the whole Roman doctrine of priesthood.

There is no doubt that priests and priesthood are prominent Bible themes. The word “priest” in one form or another appears over nine-hundred forty times in the King James Version of the Bible, thus establishing forever the validity of the Old Testament priesthood and its mediatory role and functions under the Old Testament law. Yet, with all of those references it cannot be shown that God ever explicitly authorized or even tended toward a human priesthood as a separate class of people, distinct from others in the New Testament church. This the Catholics readily admit as is seen in the following quotation, “The divine institution of the threefold hierarchy cannot, of course, be derived from our text; in fact it cannot in any way be proved directly from the New Testament; it is a Catholic dogma by virtue of the dogmatic tradition...” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VII, p. 334). Elsewhere it is also admitted that, “the priesthood evolved” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, XII, p. 406).

Therefore, it is clearly seen that the Roman doctrine of a special human priesthood is a purely human tradition such as is condemned by our Lord in Matthew 15:8-9 when He said, “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

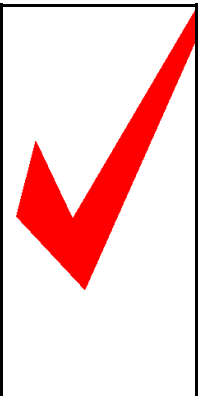
So, what is one to believe concerning priesthood and the church? Hebrews 7:12 reveals to us that there has been a change made concerning priesthood in connection with the New Law. Whereas Aaron and his descendants served an essential purpose at one time, now it is different. Today, under the law of Christ, there is no need for a human mediator because Jesus is our only mediator (1 Tim. 2:5), High Priest (Heb. 7:28), sacrificer and sacrifice combined (Heb. 7:27).

In addition, whereas the Hebrew nation was a sinful nation dependant upon the priests of the Levitical priesthood for their approach to God, all of those who compose the church are themselves a “royal priesthood, an holy nation” (1 Pet. 2:9), giving all Christians individual access to God.

All of the above being true, what function would a priesthood of the Roman nature serve except to give recognition, authority and honor to men that God does not give?

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***CHECK FOR THESE IDENTIFYING MARKS
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	CHURCH OF CHRIST	CATHOLIC CHURCH
Scriptural Builder - Christ	✓	
Scriptural Beginning Place - Jerusalem	✓	
Scriptural Purchase Price - Christ's Blood	✓	
Scriptural Beginning Time - 33 A.D.	✓	
Scriptural Name (Members) - Christian	✓	
Scriptural Name (Church) - Church of Christ	✓	
Scriptural In Doctrine - New Testament	✓	
Scriptural Organization - Elders, Deacons, Saints	✓	
Scriptural In Worship	✓	

Lord's Supper Or "Holy Eucharist"?

Ron Gilbert

The term "Eucharist" means thanksgiving or giving thanks. Webster defines the word as: "the Christian sacrament commemorating Christ's last supper. Also called Communion; Holy Communion."

An important element of the Catholic mass is what is called the miracle of transubstantiation. This term was first used by Hildebert of Tours in 1133. This belief says that at the moment of consecration (prayer) the bread and wine become the actual and literal body and blood of Christ. In order to set forth the Catholic position, we will list several quotes from their works.

(Note: Catholic writings refer to the fruit of the vine almost always as wine. We will use their terminology; however, the word wine is never used in the New Testament in connection with the Lord's Supper.)

"The real presence: By this expression is meant that the true body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ, is really and substantially present under the eucharistic species."¹

Their position is that when the priest utters the words of consecration ("This is my body") then, the bread and wine are changed into the actual body and blood of Christ.

The council of Trent defined that after the consecration Christ is present not only when the sacrament is being received, but both before and after reception, and in the Hosts that are left over.² (Host is defined by Webster, 'The consecrated bread or wafer of the Eucharist.')

This; however, according to their doctrine, is only true if consecration is by an ordained priest.

It is certain that only the ordained priest can validly consecrate; others do not have the power, contrary to the idea of Luther, who stressed equal priesthood of all the faithful.³

The Catholics believe that the Eucharist or Holy Communion has sanctifying power and the ability to restore one to grace.

Every sacrament worthily received confers an increase of sanctifying grace, the life of God within us. This is eminently so of the Eucharist.⁴

The church teaches that since the Eucharist is a sacred meal, "all the effects which material food and drink have on the life of our body, maintaining and increasing life, restoring health and bringing pleasure, all these effects this sacrament has on our spiritual life." ...Second it restores health. Reception does not directly remit mortal sin, for the Eucharist is a sacrament of the living and should be received in the state of grace; however, it is probable that if a person approached in good faith, forgetting that he was in mortal sin, and had attrition, the sacrament would restore him to grace.⁵

There are many false ideas set forth in the religious world in regard to the Lord's Supper. One key problem with the Roman Catholic approach to the Lord's Supper is a problem in hermeneutics. Catholics contend the words of Jesus, "This is my body," are to be taken literally.

We believe the body and blood of Jesus Christ are truly and really present in the adorable Eucharist... He who is omnipotent, said "This is my body, this is my blood." Here is our argument; and what can we advance to prove a strict accordance between our doctrine and that of our Savior, stronger and clearer than the bare enunciation of our dogma beside the words which he used in delivering it? "This is my body," says our Lord.

"I believe it to be thy body," replies the Catholic.⁶

Catholics argue that a literal interpretation is required by the fact that no explanatory words are given that might suggest a figurative view. In other words, since Jesus did not say this bread represents my body, then it must be his literal body.

The figure of speech used by Jesus was a metaphor. Unlike the simile which says a thing is like another, the metaphor says one thing is another thing. Isaiah 53:6 is a simile: "All we like sheep." Consider some other metaphors: John 8:12, "I am the light"; John 15:5, "I am the vine"; John 10:9, "I am the door"; and, Matthew 5:13, "Ye are the salt of the earth."

According to the Catholic's approach, since there are not explanatory words saying that Christ represents these things, then they must be taken as literal. At the time Jesus uttered these words, then, he, was not a man but a vine and a door, literally.

The purpose of the Lord's Supper can be seen in the scriptures. 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 says it is a memorial,

“This do in remembrance of me.” In 1 Corinthians 11:26 it is a proclamation. Every time we partake of these elements we, “do shew the Lord’s death till he comes.” 11:28-32 says it is an examination, “But let a man examine himself.” In 10:16-17, it is a communion.

The Catholic position, in regard to the Lord’s Supper, teaches miracles are still being performed today. “It defies both faith and reason to suggest that he was in his body, yet held his body in his hands and that both he and the disciples ate of his body and drank of his blood while they sat at the table together.”⁷ Notice that even after the prayer, or consecration, which Catholics refer to, Jesus still called the elements the “bread” and the “cup” (1 Cor. 11:26).

The Catholic position on the Lord’s Supper is a false position. Many false positions arise as a result of faulty hermeneutics. The words of Paul should be taken to heart by all Bible students. “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

Endnotes

1. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, V, Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., 1967, p. 602.
2. *Ibid*, p. 606
3. *Ibid*, p. 607
4. *Ibid*, p. 606
5. *Ibid*, p. 607
6. *What the Bible Says About the Lord’s Supper*, Andrew Paris, College Press, Joplin, Missouri, 1986, p. 77.
7. *The Spiritual Sword*, “The Doctrine of Transubstantiation,” Alan Highers, July 1992, p. 40.

Greater Houston Firm Foundation Lectures

The First Annual Greater Houston Firm Foundation Lectures will be June 20-23, 1993 at Spring Texas. Contact Al Brown or David Brown for more information.

Change of Address Notice

To all readers: If you have a change of address, please let us know at least two weeks in advance (earlier if possible). Failure to do so means we have to pay for returns and, assuming you no longer wish to receive *Defender*, we delete your name from the mailing list.

Book Review

Bobby Liddell

Romans: God’s Plan For Man’s Righteousness by Roy C. Deaver.

Roy Deaver has given tremendous aid to the serious student of the Bible through his writing over the years. His new book on Romans represents thirty-five years of work! All who seek to have a better knowledge of the great inspired epistle to the Romans (and of the Bible) would greatly benefit themselves by obtaining and carefully studying this new volume.

The title page aptly describes this book as, “An analytical, exegetical, expositional, homiletical, paragraphical, devotional commentary on Paul’s letter to the Saints in Rome (and by principle and application to all people everywhere).” The comments are, in his characteristic style, to the point, yet thoroughly supported. In addition to the comments on the text of Romans, there are almost ninety pages of appendices (A-K) of particular interest. We highly recommend this work as an excellent addition to your library:

Romans: God’s Plan For Man’s Righteousness is a large book (over seven hundred pages), hardbound, well made and sells for \$25.00 (plus postage). You may order it from Biblical Notes, 7401 Glenhaven Path, Austin, TX 78737.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

The Bible answer to this most important question applies to all. To be saved from sin and be with God in Heaven eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17).
 2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24).
 3. Repent of all past sins (Acts 2:38).
 4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
 5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
 6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).
- “And now why tarries(thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

July 1993

Number 7

The Origin And History Of The Catholic Church (Part 2)

Elliott C. Glasgow

Departure in Worship

McGlothlin stated:

Between 323-600 there is the worship of saints, images, relics and angels. The invocation of Mary, who was thought to have remained a virgin, free from actual (and by some authors, original) sin, to have risen from the dead and to have been taken up to heaven (assumption), begins in the second half of the 4th or early 5th century. She came to be called "Mother of God," "Queen of Heaven," the compassionate, who moves her Son to mercy; a sort of restoration of the female divinities of the heathen. Other saints (biblical characters and Christian Martyrs) were venerated and invoked from the beginning of the 5th century (also angels). Guardian angels led to belief in saints as patrons of countries, trades, etc. James of Spain, Andrew of Greece, Luke of Painters, etc. Churches and chapels were built over graves of martyrs to whom they were dedicated. This descended from the heathen hero worship, and is a sort of refined polytheism. In order to avoid heathen abuses that poured into the church the fathers invented a distinction between *douleia* (service given to saints, images, relics) and *latria* (worship of God).

This new idolatry produced a new mythology, *Acta Sanctorum*, lives or stories of saints: very extensive. Invocation of saints was followed by veneration of relics "...parts of their bodies, objects connected with the lives or bodies of saints and of Christ" (pp. 76-77).

The cross and the crucifix were brought into the worship about this time. Worship developed very rapidly, becoming more elaborate and complex in every respect during this period (A.D. 323-600).

Closely associated with worship was the system of confession, penance and indulgences, which was fully developed before the end of the fourteenth century. The church always required public confession of gross public sins, and had long insisted on the private confession of hidden (mortal) sins to a priest in order that he might fix the penalty. Gradually, the view developed that all sins must be confessed to a priest, and the fourth Lateran Council (1215) declared that every Christian must confess all his sins at least once a year to his own priest who should impose penalties and absolve the penitent. Up to the beginning of the thirteenth century absolution was in the form of a prayer by the priest; then it became declarative, "I absolve the...." This was remove the guilt of from eternal punishment but not from temporal penalties in this life and purgatory. These could, however, be greatly minimized by indulgences; granted at first by all bishops but later claimed as the exclusive prerogative of popes. By payment of money or performance of designed tasks, one could procure removal of past or even (rarely) all temporal penalties of sin for oneself or another. In case of punishment in purgatory, this remission was accomplished by the transfer by the church of some of the superabundant good works of Christ and the saints to the needy souls in purgatory for whom payment had been made. This view was completed by the scholastics of the thirteenth century.

Conclusion

During the thirty years' history of the apostles as given in the book of Acts, we read of men and women "hearing, believing, and being baptized." In no case, anywhere, do we read of the baptism of any but believers.

The church of Christ, as divinely established, was congregational. There was no higher organization, no synod, assembly or ecclesiastical body placed over it or given legislative authority for it, for Christ is the "head of the church." Individual Christians are made "kings and priest unto God." They are called "a holy priesthood," "royal

priesthood.” Being sovereign, they have an absolute right under Christ to select their own servants or officers.

The church of Christ was so ordained and established and its simple form of government was such that it could be planted in every nation and grow under any form of government.

The church of Christ being a historical institution, all things pertaining to it must be determined in the light of history. Its author, its foundation, its terms of membership, its organization, its officers, its ordinances, the duty of its members, its discipline and its rewards can only be determined by history. This history is given in the Scriptures.

The church of Christ was completed and recorded into history with the close of the New Testament. So far as revealed to us there has been no change since made by any authority in heaven or upon the earth. Why can not the church of Christ be reestablished everywhere now as it was then in all its divine beauty and simplicity? Can not Christians build now on the same foundation, having the same Lord, the same name, the same officers, chosen in the same way, observing the same ordinances in the same way, telling the penitent believers to do the same things in order to become members, requiring the church members to live now as they lived then?

The Roman Catholic Church exists today as the result of the great falling away (predicted by the apostle Paul). This system continues to change because it was built on the doctrines of men.

It is hoped that the above mentioned information will whet the appetite for further, fuller and detailed study on the subject.

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Exposing Error

Bobby Liddell Editor

I recently received a question asking whether it was right to condemn error and to expose it. I appreciate the sincerity of the querist and sympathize with his dilemma. No faithful follower of Christ delights in condemnation, nor does he search for fault to expose. Yet, soul damning error exists and even some of our own brethren are propagating it. What shall we do concerning error that we might be right and please God?

We Can Know Truth and the Error That Opposes it

One of the silliest doctrines ever espoused is that we cannot know truth from error or right from wrong; that we may be wrong in thinking we are right but cannot be right in thinking there is wrong. We can know truth and; thus, we can recognize error (John 8:32; 2 John 9-11). God, through His Word, exposed error (Eze. 18:20-32; Pro. 12:2; Mat. 23:13; Gal. 2:11; 1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 4:10, 14). He expects us to do the same (Eph. 5:11).

What Should Be Our Desire?

If in error, certainly our desire should be for one to warn us of that error. Who, with a right heart, would want to continue in error rather than have it exposed that he might turn from it? Yet, some condemn those who would warn of religious error in the beliefs of their neighbors or their brethren.

Must We Be Sinlessly Perfect to Expose Error in Others?

Some would have us believe we must be sinlessly perfect before we can even hint that a doctrine, position or practice of another is wrong. We must live in harmony with God's will, but, even then, we are not sinlessly perfect. Only Christ was sinlessly perfect, yet faithful men of the First Century exposed error. True, we are not to judge unrighteous judgment (Mat. 7), but we are to judge righteously (John 7:24).

How Plain Should We Be in Exposing Error?

While error may be exposed in a generic way, there are situations which call for a more specific exposure. Some brethren, whom I love dearly, are very careful never to call names, thinking that would be wrong. Over the years, my observation has been that it would have been far better for the Lord's church had the proponents of error been publicly identified by name and marked as the false teachers they are.

In the first seven issues of 1993, we have exposed the errors of denominationalism and of the Baptist, Methodist

and Catholic churches. Were we wrong in naming the particular groups and individuals in error? Certainly, not. Have we been unloving in so doing? Indeed, no.

What If We Expose Error?

Some will hate us for they would rather continue in their error unopposed. Some, without an understanding of true love, will condemn us as unloving. Some, without a knowledge of the Scriptures, will not know what to think. While we would like to be able to please all men, we desire to please God more and if in so doing men are pleased, fine. If, however, pleasing God means men are displeased, that is the way it shall have to be. If we stand for truth, we must stand against error and if we so do, God shall be pleased (Gal. 1:10).

What If We Fail to Expose Error?

If so, we fail to love our fellow man, error wins the day, souls are lost and we are responsible.

Note what God said to Ezekiel: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous *man* cloth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous *man*, that the righteous sin not, and he cloth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul" (3:17-21).

Catholic Errors Concerning Mary

Keith Dixon

The Bible speaks of Mary in an honorable way. When we think of Mary, we also have a high regard for her, not because we worship her or think that she was a perpetual virgin or that her body was taken by the Lord himself to heaven after her death. We regard her highly because she was a righteous woman, a godly woman. When the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto Nazareth, he said to Mary, "Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women" (Luke 1:28). Again, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, she was filled with the Holy Ghost and said, "Blessed *art* thou among women" (Luke 1:41-42).

According to *Smith's Bible Dictionary* (III, pp. 1825-1826), we find three erroneous doctrines taught by those of the Catholic faith: (1) The worship of Mary, (2) The Assumption of Mary, and (3) The Immaculate Conception of Mary. A fourth error is found in *Basic Errors of Catholicism*, and that is that Mary remained a perpetual virgin.

The Bible tells us to worship God. When Moses was on Mt. Sinai he received of the Lord "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth" (Exo. 20:4). When Jesus was tempted of Satan, Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Mat. 4:10). When Paul wrote to the Romans, he said, "And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things" (Rom. 1:23). God wants us to worship Him only. There were times in the Bible when man tried to worship his fellow man and it was forbidden. In Acts 10:25-26, Cornelius called for Peter to come to him, "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped *him*. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." Again in Acts, when Paul was preaching at Lystra and had healed a man: "And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. *Which* when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things

that are therein” (Acts 14:11-15). When John tried to worship an angel he was told, “See *thou do it* not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God” (Rev. 22:9). Therefore, if we are not to worship anyone but God, why should we worship Mary?

The second doctrine of the Catholic church concerning Mary that we want to discuss is the Assumption of Mary. This doctrine states that Mary’s body did not see corruption; that Jesus came down from His lofty place next to God and, after her death, took her body to heaven with Him. The Bible indicates that only three people did not see corruption: Enoch, in the book of Genesis, Elijah in 2 Kings 2, and Christ in Acts 2:27; 13:35. The Bible does not tell us what happened to the body of Mary, and what difference does it make anyway?

The third point of Mariolatry is that she was conceived, born, and lived without sin. Since one of the basic points of Catholicism is that ALL are born sinners, and since Jesus did not sin (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22), they must therefore claim that Mary was sinless. The Bible clearly teaches that, “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23), and that Jesus was the ONLY one who lived a sinless life (see references above).

The fourth point of error is that Mary remained a virgin forever. In Matthew 13:55-56, we find: “Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?” In Matthew 12:46-50 the Bible says, “While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” Then again in Luke 11:27-28, we find: “And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” Jesus was emphasizing the spiritual family relationship over the material relationship. Obedience to God’s Word is the most important thing. Dear Reader, we would emphasize for you to read God’s Word and keep it.

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Emerson J. Estes

A Legend In His Own Time

Garland Elkins

From a background including his being a manager of an insurance company, and working in the funeral business, emerges a “giant” among the preachers and leaders of this generation. Emerson J. Estes was born June 17, 1903, in Tippah County, Mississippi. He attended the schools of his day, and later he studied at the Montgomery Bible College (which is now Faulkner University), in Montgomery, Alabama. However, his formal training was only a part of his education. He is exceedingly well educated in “life’s experiences.”

Brother Estes became a Christian in 1923. He has now preached for sixty-four years. From the time of his first sermon until the present, he has preached “The Old Jerusalem Gospel” in a most effective manner.

He has preached the gospel to thousands and he has converted hundreds of people to Christ. He has preached in twenty-five states, Canada, and the Bahamas. The phenomenal success of his preaching can be explained only on the ground that his sermons are sound, fearless and scriptural. Through the years, he has been in great demand and seldom has one man preached to so many over such a long period of time. Brother Estes preaches “Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). He knows that the gospel of Christ “is the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16). Therefore, he follows the instructions of the inspired apostle Paul to “Preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2).

His command of the English language is marvelous indeed. His preaching is simple, yet profound. He opposes with all of his being those who would seek to corrupt minds, “from the simplicity and the purity that is toward

Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3). He always preaches the truth. He both knows and believes the following Scripture: “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (1 Cor. 9:16). He does not pervert the gospel of Christ, for he is well aware that those who do so, will bring a curse upon themselves (1 Cor. 9:16; Gal. 1:89).

Brother Estes has served as one of the Board of Directors for Montgomery Bible College, Childhaven Orphanage, and MidSouth Christian Nursing Home. In 1983, he was made an honorary Lt. Colonel on the staff of George Wallace, then the governor of Alabama. For years, he wrote articles for newspapers, and he also published a gospel paper entitled *Way of Life* for a period of four years.

He did his first full time preaching in Birmingham and followed that with preaching in Montgomery, Alabama. He subsequently became the first full time evangelist of the Getwell Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee, in which capacity he served for eight years. While working with Getwell, he began the *Truth In Love* radio program on WHBQ. This program is likely the oldest continuous radio program in the area. During his years as speaker, he received and answered hundreds, perhaps even thousands of questions about the Bible and what it teaches. On more than one occasion, he invited preachers who opposed what the Bible teaches to appear on his program. He allowed them to state their views, and then kindly, gently, but firmly, refuted their error. He conducted one of the most unique, interesting, and informative radio programs to which I ever listened and perhaps, one of the most unusual, and distinctive ever aired. Tremendous good resulted from brother Estes’ radio work.

Emerson J. Estes is of the “Old School” of evangelists. He believes the Bible and preaches it. Like William Jennings Bryan, he is “a silver tongued orator,” though he moves his audience to obedience, and action, through a sincere, fervent, earnest appeal to the Scriptures. He speaks “as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11). Sometimes reference is made to “a southern gentleman.” Brother Estes symbolizes that description, but more importantly he epitomizes a truly great “Christian gentleman.” His physical appearance is striking and commanding. He stands as erect as an arrow. His beautiful grey hair immediately attracts one’s attention. He has a wonderful sense of humor, and though he was ninety years old on June 17, 1993, his mind is alert, quick and active. This remarkable man still serves as the full time evangelist for the Merton Street Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee, and this he has done for many years. He also serves as one of the elders of the congregation.

Emerson J. Estes has been married for sixty-five years to Mildred Sams Estes. Through the years she has stood by his side, and has truly been a great “help meet.” Their two lovely daughters are: Mrs. Sylvia Estes Harville of Memphis, Tennessee, and Mrs. Wanda Estes Kindred of Burlington, Kentucky. Brother and sister Estes have three grandchildren.

When David was giving his final charge to Solomon he said, “Be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man” (1 Kin. 2:2). The Poet wrote: Lives of great men remind us we can make our lives sublime, And departing leave behind us footprints on the sands of time.

The life of brother Emerson J. Estes is a most excellent example of the foregoing beautiful sentiments. Men of his type and character are far too few. We are made to wonder whether those of fewer years will measure up to the high standard set by his kind. To fail to appreciate such men while they live, and to perpetuate their memory after they are gone, would be an injustice, not only to such men, but to many yet unborn who may be encouraged and motivated by reading the stories of their lives. Emerson J. Estes is one of those great men, and it is our great, and exalted privilege to give, “honor to whom honor” is due (Rom. 13:7)!

Many of brother and sister Estes’ brethren and friends who read this may wish to write to them, or else call them. Their address is:

Mr. and Mrs. Emerson J. Estes
1846 Downing
Memphis, Tennessee 381 17
Their phone number is (901) 685-0178.

A Scientific Question

Jerry Moffitt

According to skeptics, there are evidences of scientific inaccuracies found in the Bible. In Leviticus 11:6, the Bible records the hare chews the cud, though science tells us that it actually does not ruminate. It has the appearance, but it is wrong to say it chews the cud. In Leviticus 11:13-19, unclean birds are discussed. Listed among them is the bat (11:19), which science classifies as a mammal. In Leviticus 13, all kinds of skin diseases are discussed and called "leprosy." Medical doctors look at the symptoms described and some say not a one of them is actually leprosy. Then, throughout the Bible, we have the phrase, "the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:12; Rev. 7:1), or the "sun rising" or "sun going down" (Ecc. 1:5; Jud. 5:31; Jon. 4:8). By the Copernican theory we know the earth moves, not the sun.

First, we believe the Bible is not only inspired (2 Tim. 3:16-17), but that it is inerrant (John 10:35). Scripture cannot be broken because it was accomplished under the direct supervision of God through the Holy Spirit (John 10:35; 14:26; 16:13; 2 Pet. 1:19-21). We believe that there are no errors in the Bible regarding numbers, names, mathematics, science, or quotations, and believing that, we are ready to defend it at any time. Yet, how do we fairly explain the above problems? Let us see.

We have a branch of science whereby individual species are classed "according to their detailed structures, growth, and reproduction" (*World Book Encyclopedia*, 1958, Vol. 16, s.v. "Taxonomy"). The Hebrew system of classification was based on appearances of things, visual similarity. They did not get into detailed structure, the way an organism grew or reproduced. They would loosely group things together if they saw a proper degree of similarity. If a hare looked like the ox when it chewed the cud, that met their requirements for chewing the cud. If a whale swam in waters like a fish they called it a fish. If the bat had wings and flew like a bird, that was enough similarity to group them with the birds. They had no desire to get into detailed anatomy. If they saw enough similarity, they would group psoriasis and mildew together under one word.

Too, as us, they used figures of speech and talked of the four corners of the earth. They even talked of the stars fighting (Jud. 5:20). But in the main, they spoke in accordance with the appearance of things, as we do when we too speak of sunrise and the sun going down, though we know it is the earth that moves. We have differences of opinion with **our** classification system. Is it fair to impose our modern system on the Hebrews and by it say they are wrong? No, they are right according to the scheme and system they used. To be fair, we are wrong according to their system!

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What Must I Do To Be Saved?

The Bible answer to this most important question applies to all. To be saved from sin and be with God in Heaven eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17).
 2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24).
 3. Repent of all past sins (Acts 2:38).
 4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
 5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
 6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).
- "And now why tarries(thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

Behold The Pattern

Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to liberalism currently troubling the Lord's body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine of various influential brethren and has shown from God's Word why their positions are fraught with deadly error.

The book has been received with such great enthusiasm it is now in its **NINTH** printing. Every brother should have a copy. A hardbound book of 660 pages (worth \$21.95), it is being distributed in a non-profit effort for only \$5.00 (plus \$2.50 shipping).

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Third Annual North Texas Lectureship *"The Christian Home"*

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1993

- 7:00 P.M. What Is A Christian Home?
Gary Colley
- 8:00 P.M. The Church's Role In The Home
David Brown

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1993

- 9:00 A.M. The Christian Husband
Dave Rogers
- 10:00 A.M. Christian Grandparents
Gary Colley
- 11:00 A.M. The Christian Mother
Mac Deaver
- Lunch Break
- 2:00 P.M. The Need For Proper Communication In The Home
Bubba Phillips
- 3:00 P.M. The Christian Wife
Ken Hope
- 4:00 P.M. The Husband-Wife Relationship
David Brown
- Supper Break
- 7:00 P.M. Will Our Children Go To Heaven?
Mac Deaver
- 8:00 P.M. What Is A Christian Marriage?
Bill Lockwood

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1993

- 9:30 A.M. Questions That Have To Be Answered Before Marriage
Bubba Phillips
- 10:25 A.M. Making God A Part Of Your Home
David Brown
- Lunch Break
- 2:00 P.M. The Christian Father
Bill Lockwood
- 3:00 P.M. Children Are To Obey Their Parents
Dave Rogers
- Supper Break
- 6:00 P.M. Solving Differences In The Home
Ken Hope

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Book Review *Bobby Liddell*

How To Study The New Testament Effectively by Guy N. Woods.

Our beloved brother has drawn from his many years of Bible study to produce a much needed book on effective study of the New Testament. The chapter on "Rules For Effective Bible Study," if followed closely, would change the lives of most church members and would be well worth many times the price of the book.

This book will help one to study special themes and to study the Bible in its context. Two noteworthy chapters provide valuable information on "The Analogy Of Faith" and "Beyond Death."

Especially valuable is the chapter entitled "An Annotated List Of Useful Books." I received a list, prepared by brother Woods, of books useful and needed in a preacher's library, many years ago. Through the years ensuing, I have tried to obtain all the books on that list and in the order recommended. The acquisition of them has made possible very rewarding study and I have always appreciated their recommendation by brother Woods.

How To Study The New Testament Effectively is a paperback book of 136 pages and is available through the Gospel Advocate Co., P.O. Box 150, Nashville, TN 37202 for \$6.95 plus shipping.

Thirteenth Annual St. Louis Area-Wide Lectureship September 16-18, 1993 *"Help For The Family"*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

- 6:30 P.M. Congregational Singing
- 7:00 P.M. Your Marriage Can Be Great James Watkins
- 8:00 P.M. False Ideas For Marriage Terry Hightower

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

- 6:30 P.M. Congregational Singing
- 7:00 P.M. Destruction Of Divorce And How To Prevent It David Sain
- 8:00 P.M. The Ideal Home Winford Claiborne

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

- 9:00 A.M. Beauty Of The Home Winford Claiborne
- 9:00 A.M. The Christian Wife (For Ladies Only) Foye Watkins
- 9:50 A.M. Moral Issues Facing The Home Terry Hightower
- 9:50 A.M. The Christian Mother (Ladies Only) Foye Watkins
- 10:30 A.M. Break For Refreshments
- 11:00 A.M. Marriage—Love God And One Another James Watkins
- 11:45 A.M. What Is The World Doing To Our Families? David Sain
- 12:30 P.M. Final Comments and Dismissal

Lectures will be at the West End Church of Christ building, 9350 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, MO 63134. The lectureship has been planned in cooperation by various churches of Christ in the St. Louis area. For more information, contact David McElwain, Godfrey Church of Christ, 6412 Humbert Road, Godfrey, IL 62035; (618) 466-4081

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

August 1993

Number 8

Recommended Reading *Denominationalism Versus The Bible*

Gary W. Summers

The Seventh Annual Shenandoah Lectures analyzed denominationalism. The purpose was not to make ourselves look good, nor for some self-righteous motive but to take an honest biblical look at the way things stand currently in the “religious” community as compared to what we find in the Bible.

When Moses set forth the Law of God, not only could the Israelites understand it, they obeyed it. But over a millennium-and-a-half later, traditions had arisen begun by rabbis, sometimes with the express purpose of circumventing the Law (Mat. 15, 23). Jesus not only pointed out the corruption; He also set forth the truth.

Nearly two thousand years have passed since the new covenant was given by our Lord, and traditions of men have abounded once again, choking the Word. This lectureship book calls us back to the Word of God comparing what is going on in the religious world with Christianity as God designed it.

The first fifty pages deal with fundamentals such as: “The Sin of Unauthorized Religions,” “The Roots of Sec-tarianism,” “The Definition and Origin of Denominationalism,” and “Is the Lord’s Church a Denomination?” Included is a listing of when several denominations had their beginning (pp. 45-47).

The next three hundred pages offer analysis of specific denominations and religious groups. These include: Roman Catholicism, Methodism, the Evangelical Free Church of America (represented by Chuck Swindoll), the Baptist Church, Presbyterianism, Lutheranism, Pentecostalism, the Independent Christian Church, Christian Science, Seventh Day Adventism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormonism and Masonry.

Each one of these chapters merits our attention. Several of them were written by men who had left that particular organization. None of these analyses is a “hatchet” job in any sense of the word. No group is misrepresented. The treatment of each is fair, accurate, and thorough. Additional, but briefer, descriptions are given of Armstrong’s Worldwide Church of God, Anglican and Episcopalian doctrine, the Salvation Army, “Holiness” groups and Jewish doctrine (pp. 74-111).

Sprinkled into this section are a few noteworthy chapters, such as Thomas Warren’s well-received “Open Letter to Billy Graham,” “Words Too Hard for Billy Graham to Preach,” “The Electronic Church” (which deals with televangelists), “What Is A Cult?” and “Is Infant Baptism Authorized in the New Testament?”

One chapter is devoted to the subject of “Instrumental Music In The Worship.” Three are devoted to the tenets of Calvinism: “Total Depravity,” “Calvinism Versus the Biblical View of the Holy Spirit,” and “Some Implications of Calvinistic Predestination ism.”

In the last two hundred pages are several articles on the nature of the New Testament church contrasted with denominationalism. One of the outstanding chapters (all are good) is Roy Deaver’s, “What Is the Relationship of Christ’s Church to the Churches of Men?” This information easily adapts to an entire series of sermons dealing with the nature and definition of the New Testament Church and how denominationalism does not fit into the biblical mold. The chapter also emphasizes restoration including a previously published article: “If You Have the Rogers’ Diary....”

More confrontational material may be found in “We Must Not Fellowship the Denominations,” “The Church—The Army of Christ” and “Why We Should Be Debating Denominationalists.” One article that should be required

reading for all is “How Denominationalism Hinders World Evangelism.” We ought to be aware of what others are doing. We all must take heed to the elegant plea for the essentiality of unity. Too many (brethren?) assert, “We can not expect uniformity.” We need to abandon the compromising cries of blind visionaries and listen to Jesus (John 17:20-21) and Paul (1 Cor. 1:10). Unity can be achieved when we refuse to settle for anything less! Part and parcel of determining what is the New Testament church is the vital aspect of the message of salvation. One may either preach a true or false gospel (Gal. 1:8). When “baptism for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38) is omitted, we have only a portion of the gospel presented. Two chapters deal with the importance of knowing the correct reason for being baptized. One answers specific points given by Jimmy Allen in his recent book *Re-Baptism?* (508-36; cf., 163-66).

Another vital chapter is, “Are You Saying They’re All Lost?” It is not unusual when studying the nature of the church versus denominationalism for someone to ask such a question as an objection. The reasons behind why people say it and how to respond are dealt with.

Many of the articles in this book make excellent source material for further study and information. Several contain extensive endnotes and/or bibliographies. Cartoons interspersed throughout add a touch of humor while making sharp points.

This book would make an excellent faith-building addition to anyone’s personal library and it would be of service for years to come in all church libraries. For individual copies, send \$18.50 to the Shenandoah Church of Christ, 11026 Wurzbach Road, San Antonio, Texas, 78230. To order a case of twelve, call (210) 696-5532.

“My Sheep”

Bobby Liddell Editor

As recorded in John 10, Jesus speaks of Himself as the Good Shepherd and those who follow Him as His sheep. In John 10:27-28, Jesus concludes with seven points which He had discussed in verses 1-ff. He said, “(1) My sheep (2) hear my voice, (3) and I know them, (4) and they follow me: (5) And I give unto them eternal life; (6) and they shall never perish, (7) neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand” (John 10:27-28).

1. My Sheep (vv. 1-3). The sheep belong to Him and He is their shepherd. In times of danger, the shepherd would place the sheep in a sheepfold having only one door. In that door, he would stand guard, protecting the sheep from any attacker; thus, he became the door. In the fold, the sheep stayed in peace and safety protected by their shepherd. God proclaims Jesus as the Shepherd (Isa. 40:9-11) and shows Him to be such by three great events: His death (John 10:15), resurrection (Heb. 13:20) and second coming (1 Pet. 5:4).

Here Jesus contrasts Himself with false teachers, especially the Pharisees. The shepherd would enter through the door but the false teachers, termed thieves and robbers, would seek to climb over the wall to steal the sheep (the souls of men) by their false teaching.

2. Hear My Voice (vv. 3-ff). Who are the sheep? They are those who hear the shepherd’s voice. Sheep are near-sighted, unable to follow the shepherd by sight. It has been shown that a shepherd can exchange clothes with another man and try to disguise himself, but he cannot trick the sheep. They follow by hearing his voice.

We, as Christians, are the sheep of Jesus. We also are nearsighted. We cannot, with our physical eyes, look back through the shadowed pages of history to see the miracles performed by our shepherd, nor can we see forward to heaven and the eternal bliss of life with God and Christ. Only by faith can we see those things (2 Cor. 4:18; 5:7; Heb. 11:1), and that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:13-17). Thus, we follow by hearing His voice.

Hearing may come in three forms: (1) hearing a sound without understanding; (2) hearing and understanding; and, (3) hearing, understanding and obeying. We must hear, understand and obey His words to be His sheep (Luke 6:46).

3. I Know Them (vv. 3, 14). The second distinguishing aspect of his sheep is they are known by him. In the East, a shepherd has a very close relationship with his sheep. He knows and names each one in his flock. Christ knows the hearts of all men; thus, He knows those who are His and those who are not (2 Tim. 2:19). He also has given a name to His sheep, Christian, denoting one that follows Him (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16; cf. Isa. 62:2). He

knows us as His sheep and we know Him if we hear and obey His voice (1 John 2:3-4; 5:3; Jam. 1:22; Mat. 7:21; John 12:48).

4. They Follow Me (vv. 4-6). The third distinguishing aspect of his sheep is they follow him. In the East, the shepherd goes before his sheep to lead them. He determines the safe path for his sheep to follow and if they follow him, they will not be lost. Jesus is the one we should follow. We should follow in His footsteps (1 Pet. 2:21). After hearing His voice, we should not follow strangers, for we know their voice differs from our shepherd's (Mat. 17:5; Gal. 1:9; Mat. 15:9).

5. I Give unto Them Eternal Life (vv. 7-10). Only Christ can so do (John 6:68; 14:6). The life He offers is abundant now and everlastingly (1 Pet. 1:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:1-ff). Only His sheep shall have eternal life (Mat. 25:31-46).

6. They Shall Never Perish (vv. 7-10). His sheep are subject to physical death as are all men (Heb. 9:27), but as long as they remain in the fold of the Good Shepherd, they shall neither perish spiritually nor eternally. To stray from that fold means forfeiture of protection.

7. Neither Shall Any Man Pluck Them out of My Hand (vv. 11-18). The Good Shepherd so loves His sheep He will not allow any force to have power over His sheep against their will (Rom. 8:35-39; Jam. 1:13-15). Not even the Devil himself shall snatch a sheep from the Savior if that sheep hears the Shepherd's voice and follows Him. What a wonderful picture of our relationship with Jesus Christ!

Some Afterthoughts From "AFTERGLOW"

Jackie Stearsman

"AFTERGLOW" is a column written by Phillip Morrison in each issue of the *Wineskins*. Consideration must be given to some of his assertions from the January-February, 1993 issue. One of the primary objectives of the publication and its writers is to convince members of the churches of Christ that they are one denomination among many. According to them, we should agree to disagree religiously. They would mesmerize us into thinking that if we would simply agree to disagree in religious matters that the world would believe our message in larger numbers. If we would but compromise, then all could sing our praise.

What these folk are teaching is the same message denominationalism has always taught. Anyone with eyes to see can see that agreeing to disagree will not convince a skeptical world of anything. Agreeing to disagree will not solve the divided state of the religious world. Where are there mass unity movements resulting from agreeing to disagree?

These men are wrong biblically and they do not have a message or system that will work pragmatically either. Reasonable people may know this if they choose. If we do not choose to be reasonable, nothing will assist us, and an awesome fate awaits (2 The. 2:9-12).

Drawing Circles

Brother Morrison writes: "Some Christians would draw the circle of fellowship tighter and tighter until it becomes a noose choking the life out of Christ's body on earth." First, let it be understood that it is not we who draw the line but the Lord. It is not the business of the clay to dictate to the Potter where the limits and dimensions of the vessel will be. We have no desire to be in the line drawing business. We do, however, have the God given obligation to know where He has drawn the line. If we want His approval we dare not go beyond it. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 9-11). "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:6-12). "Now I

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

“Unity in Diversity”

Brother Morrison continues, “For some strange reason, the simple expression ‘unity in diversity’ is rejected as unbiblical and heretical. In fact, it is completely biblical.

“Jesus and his apostles were united, but they did not always agree. He taught servanthood, but they desired position and power (Luke 9:46-48). He understood the necessity of making the supreme sacrifice, but they didn’t want him to die (Matthew 16:21-23). He taught compassion, but the Sons of Thunder wanted to destroy unreceptive people (Luke 9:51-56).” [sic]

It is difficult to see how anyone could deny the teaching of the Bible more than what is affirmed in the above two paragraphs. **Question:** Did Jesus correct the mistaken ideas advocated by the above illustrations? Indeed He did! Where then is the unity in diversity? **Question:** When Peter withstood Jesus on the way to the cross (Mat. 16:21-23), Jesus said that Peter had taken his stand with the Devil and was not minding the things of God but of man (Mat. 16:23). To affirm “unity in diversity” in the above illustrations is to affirm that men may seek power and position, and may oppose the will of God in any way they choose. Is this the unity these brethren desire for us? I will not be a part of it. Is this the diversity they wish? If this philosophy is employed where is the justification for upholding or opposing anyone or anything? Brethren, such assertions are alarming—we must not remain silent. We must keep the faith. We must fight for the right (2 Tim. 4:7).

Our misdirected brother continues with this observation: “The apostles and early missionaries didn’t always agree among themselves. Paul and Barnabas had different ideas about where to go and who to take (Acts 15:36-41). Peter and James differed with certain Judean brothers about the residual requirements of Judaism in Christian age (Acts 15:7-21).

“It is our human nature that makes us want people to be like us. We expect our friends to understand God and the Bible as we do.”

I strongly object to the last statement by brother Morrison. I do not want anyone to “understand” the Bible as he does. He misses the teaching again and again.

Seriously, do any of our readers think that Peter and James proposed “unity in diversity” with the false teachers? Read for yourself. “Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment: It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things” (Acts 15:24-28).

They resolved their differences and were of “one accord.” Only those with the authority of the Lord behind their attitudes and actions are a part of the faithful. The Lord has drawn a line around those who comprise His people—the line of truth (John 17:17). Those making laws (commandments) for the Lord are not recognized by Him or the faithful. That was true then, and it is true today.

I believe brother Morrison and his group know no informed and faithful child of God has ever advocated there must be agreement in areas of expediency (Rom. 14). Permitting expediency to operate is as much the truth of the Gospel as is the command to be baptized. When men forbid what God allows, it is sin (1 Tim. 4:1-9). The differences between Paul and Barnabas were over a matter of judgment—whether to take John Mark with them on the second preaching journey (Acts 15:36-41). To cite this difference of judgment as justification for accepting differences in doctrinal matters is a gross misrepresentation of the truth of the gospel. Such will not go unchallenged!

The Brotherhood

The last of brother Morrison’s assertions that I wish to consider in this critique is his last sentence in the column. “If he has made a people his children, they have become my brothers and sisters.”

Because I have a brother, must I sanction everything he may do? Must I be silent when I know he is going in the wrong direction? If I met Judas on the way to deny the Lord must I, since he is a brother, agree it is proper for him

to betray his Master? If I saw him later on the way to hang himself should I not oppose it? Is taking the physical life a greater tragedy than taking spiritual life?

Peter had a brother we know as Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24). Was Peter wrong in correcting his brother Simon? Should Peter have preached “unity in diversity” to him and let him go to hell? Does your Bible say that the spiritual should restore brethren overtaken in a fault (Gal. 6:1)? James makes clear our obligation to brethren in sin. We are not to proclaim brotherhood to them and then let them die in sin. “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (Jam. 5:19-20).

We must not agree with anyone in error, be they brother or not. “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*” (Eph. 5:11).

In conclusion, let us never forget the message of John. “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth” (1 John 1:5-6). “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:3-6).

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Baptism For The Dead

Jerry Moffitt

Baptism in water for the remission of sins is required of all for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). Without it one cannot be born again (John 3:3-5). But there is an unusual verse in 1 Corinthians 15:29. Paul says, “Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?”

Some have supposed that Christians should be baptized in behalf of the departed dead who never were baptized. For example, they use 1 Peter 3:18-20. In part it says, “Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous...being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.” Then 1 Peter 4:6 says, “For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh.”

From the above, it is argued that during the three days and three nights Jesus’ body was in the tomb, that in the spirit he went to the world of the dead and preached to them. Many, it is supposed, believed on Him but they cannot be saved because they cannot be baptized in that world. So, it is argued, we must do it for them. They are baptized by proxy. We are baptized on their behalf. This writer does not believe the above doctrine. 1 Peter 1:11 says Christ, in the spirit, in the prophets, did His preaching in the ancient world. Noah was a prophet, and the spirit which articulated his prophecy was the spirit of Christ.

Christ, in Noah, preached to them while the ark was preparing. At the time Peter wrote, these spirits were locked up in prison in the world of the dead. But the preaching took place while they were alive.

But what of 1 Peter 4:6 which says the gospel was preached to the dead? It was preached to them, while they were spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).

That leaves us with baptism for the dead in 1 Corinthians 15:29. What does it mean? This is a difficult passage and I encourage you to consider every sober view you can find. I believe there were some off-brand Christians in Paul’s day ignorantly baptizing for the dead. Paul calls them “they” (v. 29) and contrasts them with “we” (Paul and the Christians at Corinth). No, friends, there is no gospel of the “second chance”; We must prepare for heaven in this life. On this important point we all agree.

The Fruits Of Atheistic Evolution

Jerry Moffitt

When one accepts evolution, moral and intellectual adjustments must be made, and the fact is, evolution has been accepted in the public school system and a large majority of the scientific community. They have combined it with a humanistic philosophy and have a "Non-theistic Religion."

Professor Sedgwick (one of Darwin's teachers) said, "if Darwinism did what he thought it could do, humanity, in my mind, would suffer a damage that might brutalize it, and sink the human race into a lower grade of degradation than any into which it has fallen." Following are four fruits of evolution.

1. It has the philosophy that the strong are to subjugate the weak. Dr. Henry Morris points out "Evolution is at the foundation of Communism, Fascism, Freudianism, and Atheism." A doctrine is known for its fruits.

2. Evolution is built on the assumption that man is not more than a fighting animal. Morals and values are not included in evolution's scheme of things. If evolution is true, there is no valid reason to not do whatever you want to do. Being a Godless system, it is a system without morality. Evolution will not oppose the weak being sterilized, mercy killing, millions of abortions a year, or the failure of one out of every two marriages ending in divorce. There is nothing in the system to protest, and if a person or a race is physically bettered by some act, then do it!

3. Evolution leads to racism. Advocates like Haeckel and Thomas Huxley have been led by evolution to their superior-race theories. Some claim the black race is inferior, and others have claimed it is a link between apes and the Teuton race. We feel the notion of atheistic evolution leads to such nonsense.

4. Evolution teaches that nothing is supernatural, much less the supernatural being involved in things. One evolutionist, Dr. George Gaylord Simpson, said, "Man stands alone in the universe, a unique product of a long, unconscious, impersonal, material process with unique understanding. These he owes to no one but himself, and it is to himself alone that he is responsible." So, under evolution the earth evolved; it was not created. Moral irresponsibility follows. One must do away with parts or all of God's Word. There is a dehumanization of the human family, and atheism follows.

I reject evolution on scientific as well as on biblical grounds. When one considers all the above, it makes him glad he is on the other side. The more supernaturalism and judgment-day accounting is removed from society the more sensuous, anti-family, and violent society becomes.

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Baptized Unbelievers

J. Cleo Scott

We read in the Scriptures about two kinds of unbelievers: (1) some who are not baptized, but believe, not having acted on their belief, and (2) some who have been baptized, but do not believe the things God has said. Both are in danger because the Bible teaches, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Israel believed in God but became unbelievers through disobedience: "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19). Can we as children of God become unbelievers today and not enter into His rest?

Worldly influence Is Detrimental To Belief

Has the church allowed the world to so influence us into unbelief? In *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Gibbon described five reasons for her fall: (1) an alarming increase of divorce and the breakdown of the home; (2) higher and higher taxes until the load was unbearable; (3) the mad desire for excitement and immoral extravagances; (4) increased political pressures for armaments; and, (5) the decline in religion. Does our present situation fit these descriptions? Are we seeing all of them in our present world? I say we are, resulting in many falling into unbelief.

Baptized Unbelievers Disregard God's Word

Some baptized people do not believe the Scriptures are God's Word, although we read in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." Some want to interpret it away until it means nothing. Some want a new way to interpret Scripture, called "the New Hermeneutic." Even some baptized people are now saying that the Bible is not all true, that some of it is "fable," and that God must speak to us orally for us to know all truth.

These are false concepts, and those so advocating in the Lord's body are "baptized unbelievers."

Baptized Unbelievers Fail To Study God's Word

Some baptized people do not believe it is necessary to study the Scriptures, and by this show their unbelief. We read in 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study [give diligence] to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Yet some refuse to study for themselves or attend Bible classes. Instead they choose to blindly believe various speakers and writers who want to interpret the Scriptures for us, often misinterpreting and teaching false doctrines. Too many want to have their own way, and to do their own thing regardless of what the Scriptures teach about it. Many choose to please themselves above pleasing Jesus Christ and God. These are "baptized unbelievers."

Baptized Unbelievers Neglect Attendance

Some baptized people neglect attendance, deliberately ignoring Hebrews 10:25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." All manner of excuses are given for failure to meet with the church at the designated time and place specified by the elders of the local congregation. Others, though present, have their attention turned elsewhere. This is sometimes evident during the Lord's Supper where people are seen to be reading, studying their lesson, or grooming their nails rather than meditating, remembering the Lord's death. These are "baptized unbelievers."

Baptized Unbelievers Fail In Their Giving

Concerning giving, the apostle Paul taught: "Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him" (2 Cor. 16:2). There are baptized people who do not believe giving is necessary. Others do not give as they are prospered, or they give grudgingly only out of necessity. These types of giving are condemned (2 Cor. 7). There are many who do not purpose in their heart what they will give to the Lord. Instead, they give of what is left over after the week's activities. One cannot believe what God has said and act in such a manner while attempting to worship in spirit and in truth.

Baptized Unbelievers Ignore James 1:27

James designates some requirements for those who are striving to live the Christian life and manifest Christianity. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Many baptized people do not follow this admonition. Not only do they ignore the orphans and widows, but they fail to keep themselves "unspotted" by the world. Some church members live so much like worldly people one cannot tell the difference. This is sad. Many will be lost because of their unbelief.

Conclusion

Like Rome, we today face the decline of religion, even in the church. There are those who have been baptized into Christ, yet break up homes, fail to train their children, and desire excitement and entertainment more than they desire to serve God. Such behavior undeniably shows unbelief, for Jesus said, "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Mat. 6:33). May we live in such a way as Christians that we manifest active belief in God and His Word. Never become a "baptized unbeliever"!

2605 W Ave. P; Temple, TX 76504; From "The Restorer"

Book Review

Bobby Liddell

Behold The Pattern by Goebel Music.

One of the most needed books of our generation has gone into its ninth printing—almost fifty thousand copies. It is known to have gone into all fifty states and forty-seven foreign countries.

Truly, we wish it had never had to have been written, but the threat of false brethren who have embraced error and would make the church into a denomination of men must be exposed and refuted. By careful documentation and verbatim quotations, brother Music has shown the false teachers among us for what they are and has awakened many to the real and present danger they pose.

For all his work in research and preparation of the text (hundreds of hours) and in arranging the printing and distribution of the book (receiving and shipping from his home—a monumental undertaking), brother Music has not received any monetary gain. The book is sold on a non-profit basis. It is hardbound, 660 pages and could rightfully retail for \$21.95, but it is being made available for only \$5.00 (plus \$2.50 shipping). Order one for yourself and several for your friends who need them. Order from Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526.

What must I Do to Be Saved?

The Bible answer to this most important question applies to all men. To be saved from sin and be with God in Heaven eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17).
2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24).
3. Repent of all sins (Acts 2:38).
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).

“And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).

Second Annual Truth For The World Mission Forum August 27-29, 1993 *“Bringing In The Sheaves”*

Friday, August 27

7:00 P.M. Congregational Singing
Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

7:30 P.M. Bringing In The Sheaves
B. J. Barr

Saturday, August 28

9:00 A.M. Bringing In The Sheaves In Ghana
Ted Wheeler

10:00 A.M. Bringing In The Sheaves In Russia
Billy Bland and David Jones

11:00 A.M. Bringing In The Sheaves In Thailand
Dorsey Traw

12:00 P.M. Lunch Served By The Knight Arnold
Ladies

1:00 P.M. Panel Discussion With Billy Bland,
Dorsey Traw, B. J. Barr, Ted Wheeler

5:00 P.M. Mission Appreciation Dinner
Ed and Lina Crookshank, For 30 Years
Of Service In Zambia And The South
Pacific
Speakers: John Hall, Keith Besson

7:00 P.M. Congregational Singing Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

7:30 P.M. Bringing In The Sheaves In
The South Pacific
Ed Crookshank

Sunday, August 29

9:30 A.M. Harvesters Of The Past Rod Rutherford

10:30 A.M. Bringing In The Sheaves In China
John Grubb

6:00 P.M. Bringing In The Sheaves Using The
Media Jim Dearman

All who are interested in preaching the whole truth to the whole world are encouraged to attend. For further information, please write to the address below or call (601) 895-9740.

**Knight Arnold Church of Christ
4400 Knight Arnold Road
Memphis, TN 38118**

DEFENDER

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Did We Understand Mr. Money?

Dub McClish

Dr. Royce Money, President of Abilene Christian University, delivered a speech at the annual ACU Lectureship, February 21, 1993. Numerous reviews of and responses to it have since appeared. Reportedly, all of the ACU alumni were mailed a transcript of the speech, although I never received one (BA, 1959). However, I did receive a copy from another source a few days after the speech was delivered. It struck dismay, disappointment, and disgust to my heart to see the head of the largest school among Christians openly, yea, proudly confessing his agenda of error for the school. (We began writing letters of concern about the direction of the school to administrators at least fifteen years ago, at which time at least some of those on “the hill” still expressed concern for keeping the school sound. Perhaps my letters explain why I did not receive a copy of the speech under consideration.)

Several reviews and responses relating to the speech expressed grave concern about several points made by brother Money. These articles were well-documented, well-worded, and stated numerous concerns about the explicit as well as the implicit content of the discourse. When such a statement is forthcoming from one in a position of great influence and when several brethren take issue with said material, often the author or his defenders will cry, “You misunderstood me!” Have we who have unapologetically reacted negatively to this speech misunderstood brother Money?

The reaction of brother Leroy Garrett will help answer this question. Although brother Garrett no longer publishes *The Restoration Review*, he still publishes “an occasional newsletter” entitled *Last Time Around*. The front page of the June issue was taken up with his article entitled, “Good News (Mostly) From Abilene.” (See p. 4, ed.) For those who are either too young to know or who have been living under a rock for the past forty years, I give a bit of background on brother Garrett. In his younger years he was a champion of various “anti” positions, including Bible/Christian colleges and located preachers. He published a paper (*Bible Talk*) to advance his hobbies and publicly debated these issues.

(In my freshman year at Freed-Hardeman College he made himself so obnoxious on the campus during the annual lectureship [1955] in opposition to the college that he spent a night in the local jail.)

During these years he was a “soul mate” to W. Carl Ketcherside and his *Mission Messenger*. However, sometime during the 1960s, both of these men swung to the opposite extreme and began to champion “unity in diversity,” or, as they sometimes styled it, “fellowship without endorsement.” Brother Garrett began *The Restoration Review* to advance his new “fellowship everybody” convictions. Among other things, he believes that “...the Bible does not teach that baptism is essential to salvation...” (RR, May 1982). Even a casual perusal of his now defunct journal (any issue) will find him championing the most liberal positions, frequently depicting the church as a denomination, referring to various denominationalists as “Christians” and/or “brethren,” and commending and/or publishing fellow-heretics. He has been on the “cutting edge” of the malignant liberalism among God’s people since his doctrinal swing of thirty years ago.

Now, to brother Garrett’s review. It is apparent from the title of the article that he received the speech as good news. It is also apparent that if we who reacted negatively misunderstood the speech, brother Garrett’s positive reaction to it signals that he also misunderstood it! The speech in question has been rather widely circulated and reviewed, so I need not quote from it. However, I will refer to the things in the speech which caused brother Garrett to jump for joy.

Garrett saw the speech as a signal that “meaningful change...might be in the offing.” By this I suppose he means a change from faithfully indoctrinating students in the pure Gospel of Christ, rather than opposing it, which was the aim of its founders. Brother Garrett praised brother Money for realizing that “...unity does not mean uniformity of belief...” He also liked Money’s statement that “...our enemy is Satan, not each other.” He quoted with approval the Money dictum, “We must realize the powerful dynamics of change.”

As brother Garrett’s title indicates, he did not agree with all of the Money speech. He disagreed with Money’s characterization of acappella singing and male-led worship as “essential beliefs.” These were a “fly in the ointment!” To brother Garrett, these are “two areas where change is most crucial.” Garrett’s full statement on these two points reveals his thinking clearly: “For us to go on implying that acappella singing is essential, as if mandated by Scripture, rather than our tradition or opinion, is counterproductive to meaningful change. And to continue our male-dominated worship services is to bury us in the past. To do either is to perpetuate our failure to come to terms with the relevance of Holy Scripture for the 21st century church.”

Brother Garrett then opined that if brother Money would only listen to some of his own professors he would learn better! As a case in point, Garrett quoted from a recent address to the faculty by an unnamed professor who insisted that in these “times of change” instrumental music cannot be an issue, then with emphasis said, “it never should have been an issue.” Brother Money might also learn somewhat from Carroll Osborn on the ACU Bible faculty (if he were not the anonymous professor quoted above). He advocated the leadership role of women in worship (along with Pentecostal “tongues speaking”) in the 1992 ACU Lectures. Further, brother Jack Boyd, a member of the ACU music faculty, has been advocating (and introducing) the use of women in leadership roles in worship along with choirs and special Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter services in the Minter Lane Church of Christ, in which he is an elder, for some seven years!

Brother Garrett tells us that the Money speech was brought to his attention in the following way: “At our church several [ACU alumni] brought me their copy in case I had not seen it.” “Our church” (note the sectarian terminology, DM) refers to the Singing Oaks Church of Christ in Denton, Texas, long in the forefront of liberalism in Denton. (I have been a resident of Denton almost thirteen years and brother Garrett’s house is only a few blocks from mine). A large portion of the membership and almost all of the elders and deacons consist of former members of the Pearl Street congregation, with which I have worked since late 1980. In 1979, when they failed in their bid to oust the elders and brother Goebel Music at Pearl Street and take it over, the liberal element left and took over the then small Singing Oaks congregation. In 1987, the “Fellowship Church of Christ,” begun in 1974 by a group of apostate brethren in our city, closed its doors. Brother Garrett had been a leader in it for several years. At least some of its members, including brother and sister Garrett and Wayne Dockery, its preacher, were accepted wholeheartedly by Singing Oaks. Brother Garrett has been used as a regular teacher in their education program. This is the background of his reference to “our church.”

After stating his slight objections to the Money speech, brother Garrett concluded: “But still I join my friends at church in giving the ACU president high marks for most of what he did say, **things his predecessors could not and would not have said** [emp. DM].” Please consider the following observations:

1. Brother Garrett understood the Money speech just as I and several other concerned brethren did. The only difference is, we are greatly concerned at the implications of additional and accelerated harmful changes at ACU it portends; brother Garrett is greatly concerned that these changes are not coming fast enough!

2. Brother Garrett correctly perceived that the Money speech was a marked departure from the direction of those who preceded him. (I would draw the line on the Money predecessors about whom this would be true at the administration of the venerable Don H. Morris. The perceptible drift began with his respective successors, John Stevens and Bill Teague, Money’s immediate predecessors. The former allowed the perilous doctrinal drift to begin and the latter defended a professor who taught evolution as a fact and the Creation account in Genesis as a myth in his biology course. This, of course, created a climate which encouraged the teaching of any and every sort of unorthodox position.)

3. Brother Garrett is not blind to the fact that there are professors in the ACU Bible department who have announced that they hold convictions that contradict two of the “essential beliefs” brother Money enunciated in his speech: acappella singing and “worship led by Christian men.” I would like to hear brother Money explain just how essential these “essential beliefs” really are! Brother Ian Fair, head of the ACU Bible faculty, made a lame response

to the Osborn speech (which advocated pentecostalism and the leadership role of women in worship), mildly expressing disagreement, but also indicating that he was not going to do anything about it. What about the unnamed professor quoted by brother Garrett who believes instrumental music in worship should never have been an issue? Are these essential enough for brother Money to release them from their duties and let them find employment in sectarian schools, or will he allow them to remain at ACU and hasten its plunge into full-blown sectarianism? (I fear I know the answer!) Brother Money tried to reassure us in his speech that everyone on his faculty believes in the virgin birth of Christ (an obvious response to the deserved outcry against brother Andre Resner's blasphemous "Christmas at Matthew's House" article in *Wineskins*). If his reassurance is to be believed, he or someone did a spectacular job in converting brother Resner from infidelity on this point in a short time, for it is clear from his article that he did not believe in it at the time he wrote it only a few weeks before the Money speech!

4. If I were brother Money, I would be greatly concerned and embarrassed over a commendation from brother Leroy Garrett. I would feel neither flattered nor encouraged. Without intending any disrespect, but attempting to merely state the fact of the matter, I would count a commendation from brother Garrett on any doctrinal stance a sure indication that I had gone astray. I have stirred brother Garrett's dander a few times in the years I have lived in Denton (not intentionally, but merely in the course of teaching the truth) and I have counted each of these occasions an indicator that I was doing or saying what should be done or said. Now, it will be interesting to see if it matters at all to brother Money that brother Garrett has largely commended his speech and encouraged him to go even further!

5. Brother Garrett has observed that brother Money has "stolen some of his thunder" in announcing his "unity in diversity" and "dynamics of change" agenda for the ACU and the church. However, this is what has been the practice at ACU now for the last three administrations of the school. All sorts of the strangest doctrinal sounds have come from various faculty members over the past several years. Furthermore, a platform has repeatedly been provided, sometimes with great praise and honor attached, to some of the most blatant false teachers among us. Thus, the enunciation of the "unity in diversity" program is just a vocalization of what has been going on at ACU for a long time. However, now it is to the point where brother Money's dictum may be in danger of self-destruction: there is not really much attention given to diversity by those who plan the ACU lectureships and workshops! They are loaded—literally stacked—with liberals, many of them of the rankest stripe. Oh, they will stoop to invite a token "conservative" or two now and then, but it is just that—a token. (Please understand that I am not seeking an invitation—unless things changed drastically in favor of the Gospel Truth, I would not go if invited.) I contend that this is not practicing what he preaches! Where is the diversity when hardly any but liberals are invited? I charge brother Money and his liberal cohorts with actually practicing unity based on conformity (with liberalism)—the very thing he once declared he had tried and that would not work!

6. I understand why brother Money surrounds himself with brethren of a liberal mindset on his faculty and in the school's special programs. He himself is doctrinally liberal and liberalism is his agenda. He thinks the left-hand bar ditch is the middle of the road and that is where he is proceeding as rapidly as he dares! This is not said to be disrespectful or slanderous; it is simply a demonstrable verity. This would be bad enough if he had little or no influence, but his decisions powerfully affect the thinking of many hundreds of trusting young people every day of the school year. We do what we do at the Pearl Street congregation concerning the Annual Denton Lectures for the same reason he does **what** he does at ACU. We surround ourselves with men on our Annual Denton Lectures each year who believe in the first century Christ, the first century Gospel, and the first century church for this and every other century. We would not knowingly invite a liberal to speak on our lectureship without the express intent of answering his error with the Truth of our Lord. I therefore understand why brother Money does what he does. I just wish he would quit pretending to be conservative. It is sheer hypocrisy to feign a conservative stance while defending and coddling liberals on his faculty and constantly giving other liberals a platform and ready endorsement.

One thing is sure in all of this: The Garrett article proves that we old moss-backed negative soreheads (doubtless, liberals would employ these terms to describe the men who founded and served as administrators of ACU through most of its history, were they living today) who took umbrage at the Money speech understood exactly what he was saying!

908 Imperial Drive; Denton, TX 76201

The Organ Question, 1993

Bobby Liddell Editor

Before you read this Editorial, please read “The Organ Question,” on the facing page. The introduction of mechanical instruments of music to the formerly pure practice of Christian worship divided the church and spawned the formation of the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ denomination. There are frightening similarities in the digression of that day and the efforts of those among us who would promote the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship. Please consider:

1. The question of right and wrong. Some opposed the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship, as being unscriptural, but others as only inexpedient denying the Scriptures condemn it. It was a short step from there to full support of its use. Today, many brethren know churches of Christ do not use it, but do not know why and see no reason, other than “tradition” not to. Some are openly advocating fellowship with those who use it and are making statements such as, “I see nothing wrong with instrumental music in worship.” Perhaps if they read their Bibles more and heard the Gospel preached more, instead of being entertained by an actor, they could see what is wrong with it.

2. The influence of denominational practices. It only took one generation for the problem to spill over from the denominations into the Lord’s church. Apostasy is always only one generation away. Today, some are trying to bring unscriptural denominational practices into the Lord’s church. Honestly, if the denominations did not use the instrument, what brother would be twisting the Scriptures to bring it in? Sadly, many will sell their souls to be “like their religious neighbors” (Exo. 32:2; Eph. 5:11).

3. The influence of larger city congregations which have more money, more members, and more influence. Through their example, they lead others astray and through subtle pressures, they intimidate smaller congregations to go along with them.

4. The rejection of primitive practice. The first century church did not use the instrument in worship. Did the apostles not know it was, as some say: (1) “just an aid”; (2) “inherent in the word, psallo”; (3) “all music anyhow”; (4) “authorized in the Old Testament, thus, okay today”; and/or, (5) “an improvement to worship”? No (for none of the above is true), but they did know the Word and they followed it faithfully (Mat. 15:9; Rev. 22:18-19; 2 John 9-11; Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16).

5. The gradualness of change. A small dose gradually increased makes error more palatable to some. An instrument in a classroom or basement often found its way into the worship before long. Gradually, opposition to its introduction would wane with some leaving and others compromising for the comfort of staying.

6. The question of who caused division. History plainly shows the introduction of mechanical instrumental music in worship brought division. Now, who caused the division? Those who brought in the instrument. The same is true today. Who can resolve the problem and restore unity? The same folks who caused the problem and the resulting division. Dear faithful brethren, never let sinners charge the guilt or the consequences of their sins to you. Sin brought division!

7. The circumvention of faithful leadership. When majority vote of the members determines a church’s actions, we must ask where are godly elders and their oversight? In view of the unchallenged error set forth in many of our pulpits today, we ask again, “Where are the elders?” Right is not determined by majority vote (Mat. 7:13-14), nor by the persuasive presentation of some glory-seeking, book-selling Ph.d. parading as a minister of Christ (2 Cor. 11:12-15), but by God’s Word (Acts 17:11).

8. The popularity of innovation. The introduction of the instrument pleased the people, the preachers, the pastors, the denominational world and, especially, Satan, but it did not please God (Gal. 1:10).

9. The plea for future prosperity of the church. “Growth” by sin profits no one. A million won to error are still lost to Christ. Never let numbers determine our course as long as we are the church of Christ. To do so is to cease to be His church.

10. The desire for acquiescence of the faithful. The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing. Now, what shall we do? Stand idly by or fight for Truth and souls of men?

The Organ Question

J. W. McGarvey

Up to the year 1869 the churches of disciples, with possibly a few obscure exceptions had abstained from the use of instrumental music in their public worship, and the preachers with no publicly known exceptions were opposed to it. It was opposed by some as being inexpedient, and by others as being unscriptural. In the year 1864 I published an article in the *Millennial Harbinger* for November advocating the latter position. Early in the next year, A. S. Hayden, a distinguished brother in Ohio, replied, and the subject was pretty fully discussed in the *Harbinger* by several writers during the year 1865. All these writers held the practice to be inexpedient, but some denied that the Scriptures condemn it. This was the beginning of the discussion of the question among us. It had been a subject of protracted dissension among Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists for a generation previous, the practice gradually gaining ground, first in the cities, then in the villages, and finally in country congregations. As the disciples were set for the restoration of Primitive Christianity which was universally known to be free from the practice, they were the last religious body in this country to think of resorting to it. But the influence of surrounding examples gradually wrought a change in the feeling of the rank and file of the membership, and this leavened the sentiments of the preachers until there grew up in city congregations a decided inclination to be like their religious neighbors. This inclination developed into action in the city of St. Louis in the year 1869, when the congregation meeting on Olive Street, in a building purchased from the Episcopalians with a pipe organ in it, resolved to use the organ in its worship, whereupon a considerable number of prominent and influential members withdrew and held meetings elsewhere. The affair awakened intense interest throughout the brotherhood, and was regarded as seriously imperiling the unity that had hitherto prevailed in the body at large. Prudent counsels however were brought to bear, and the parties to the division in St. Louis were induced to call in a Committee of eminent brethren to adjudge the case, and decide what should be done. The Committee consisted of Robert Graham, Isaac Errett, Alexander Procter and J. K. Rogers. They decided that the use of the organ should be discontinued, and that the members who had withdrawn should thereupon resume their places in the church. Peace for awhile prevailed and it was generally hoped the controversy would spread no farther. But after a few months the members of the St. Louis church who favored the organ obtained letters of withdrawal, organized another congregation, and resumed the use of the instrument. In the meantime various brethren in other States, who were enamored of the instrument commenced its public advocacy, and it was rapidly introduced into the churches though in hundreds of instances its introduction was the occasion of strife and bitterness.

McG. having antagonized the first writer among us who defended the practice, continued the controversy as others took the field on that side, and published many articles through a period of about 20 years, chiefly in the *American Christian Review*, whose editor, Benjamin Franklin, continued to do the same to the day of his death. But the party for the innovation proved to be the popular party, and they finally succeeded in winning to their cause so nearly all of the preachers and congregations, that it appeared to McG. useless to continue repeating arguments and evidences which were unheeded, so he turned his pen to other subjects and contented himself with the hope that the congregation with which he was identified, and which had grown principally through his ministrations, to be one of the largest and most influential in the brotherhood, would abstain from the innovation during the remnant of his life. In this, however, he was painfully disappointed. After he resigned his place in the pulpit it was occupied by brethren who had no scruples on the subject, and the private members were left to drift on the current of surrounding influences until, in the spring of 1903, the officers of the church informed McG. that it was the fixed purpose of an overwhelming majority to introduce an organ, and plead with him to waive his well known objections or content himself with a mere public protest, and acquiesce in the change. This he could not do so long as there was another congregation within his reach with which he could worship in the apostolic method. He told the elders that he would make no public opposition to the movement, seeing that it would be in vain, but would ask for a letter of commendation and unite with the congregation meeting on Chestnut Street, in the founding of which he had taken the leading part, and which was in a flourishing condition. This he did, and a few other most excellent members, including the venerable Prof. H. H. White, did the same. When the question of using the organ came to a vote in Broadway church, a large minority of the members voted against it, chiefly on the ground that they held it to be

unchristian to drive me and a few others away from them for the sake of the instrument. Those of the majority who spoke publicly on the subject claimed equal respect for me but claimed that the future prosperity of the church was at stake and this should not be sacrificed through respect for a single brother. This dereliction on the part of the church to which he had given the best work of his life as a preacher and an elder, and which still contained a large number of his most devoted friends, was a severe blow to his feelings but he swallowed his disappointment, and went quietly on in the Chestnut Street church, which received him with open arms. (*Autobiography of J. W. McGarvey*, pp. 43-45).

Good News (Mostly) From Abilene

Leroy and Ouida Garrett

(From *Last Time Around*, June 1993. See “Did We Understand Mr. Money?” by Dub McClish, p. 1, ed.)

Royce Money, president of Abilene Christian U., gave old-timers in the Church of Christ, who have been looking for meaningful change, hope that such might be in the offing. In an address at the recent ACU Bible Lectureship he said that Church of Christ folk must realize that unity does not mean uniformity of belief, and that we can accept those with whom we differ and enjoy fellowship with them without endorsing all that they believe and practice. He also advised that we recognize that our enemy is Satan, not each other. He also said, “We must realize the powerful dynamics of change.” The address was mailed to all ACU alumni, to the delight of many. At our church several brought me their copy in case I had not seen it. But they noticed that there was a fly in the ointment in that the president demurred in two areas where change is most crucial. In referring to “essential beliefs” he included acappella singing and male-led worship, and he allowed for a continuation of female subjection—“female subjection but not repression,” as he put it, as if some of our people believe in the repression of women. Our most confirmed male chauvinists will settle for the subjection of women!

For us to go on implying that acappella singing is essential, as if mandated by Scripture, rather than our tradition or opinion, is counterproductive to meaningful change. And to continue our male-dominated worship services is to bury us in the past. To do either is to perpetuate our failure to come to terms with the relevance of Holy Scripture for the 21st century church.

The ACU president might have said what some of his own professors have recently said. I listened (by tape) with appreciation as one professor in an address to the faculty insisted that in these times of change instrumental music cannot be an issue, and he added with fervent emphasis, “and it never should have been an issue.” Another professor in a recent publication has reminded us of “Distant Voices” in our own heritage that tell us of the time when we had women preachers, and that some of our leaders, including Alexander Campbell and Tolbert Fanning, the founding editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, believed in women deacons!

But still I join my friends at church in giving the ACU president high marks for most of what he did say, things his predecessors could not and would not have said.

It may not matter all that much what professors or presidents—or editors—say anyway. Our colleges will not take the lead in effecting change, just as they did not in ending segregation. Change will come the way it always does, out in the trenches with the rank and file in the churches. Already we have numerous *avant garde* congregations that are leading the way in ending male-dominated services. One church is on record as making no “sex test” in any area of ministry—and there is a *bonafide* Church of Christ within driving distance of my home that uses instruments in its special praise services! A “praise service” at a Church of Christ? There’s change for you!

As Iacocca says on TV, *Either lead, follow, or get out of the way!*

Christian Influence

Terry Warner

Many would like to believe that they are free from any influences upon others. This is so far from the truth. We all influence others, knowingly or unknowingly and either for good or for bad. The apostle Paul said: “For ye...*are* ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and

truth;)” (Eph. 5:8-9).

In December 1990, brother Thomas B. Warren was a patient in Baylor Hospital where he was undergoing his third by-pass heart surgery. The nurse who cared for him, and a non-Christian, wrote him the following in July 1992. I am moved with joy and tears as I read it. I believe you will be, too.

Dr. Warren:

This letter is long overdue. I feel guilty as I sit down to compose it, because you played an important role in my becoming a Christian, and it has taken me too long to write and thank you. First of all, let me reintroduce myself to you. My name is _____. In December of 1990 you were in Baylor Hospital undergoing your third by-pass; I was the student nurse that took care of you. I felt very close to you and Mrs. Warren, and when I met your children, they were extremely pleasant.

At that time I was in the Baptist church, and still searching for something, later I began going to a Methodist church. I read The Bible Only Makes Christians Only, And The Only Christians which you gave me. This started a motion that was to change my life and open my eyes. After many prayers and a great deal of faith, God sent to me a young man named _____ in March 1991 who is a member of the church. _____ and I fell in love and it was just too good to be true, everything was perfect. We continued to fall in love and evade the subject of Christianity. Then one day God got the two of us talking and it ended in a break up. You see _____ loved me a great deal, but not enough to raise children with me in a divisive environment, not enough to overlook the fact that I wasn't a Christian (of which no one could convince me that I wasn't). Being the stubborn person that I was I let him go. Out of the blue, the least and unexpected person (my aunt) gave me a call and told me to at least listen. You see, even after reading your book, I was still under the fallacy that the "Church of Christ" was a denomination itself because it is listed as so in many books. Thank God I know differently now!

Anyway, I couldn't get you off my mind and I just began to review events in my life and I know in my heart that God sent you my way and blessed me with _____. I became a Christian in October 1991. And that Christian young man—will, if God says the same, will become my husband December 19, 1992. _____ is a 23 year old electrical engineer for _____ in _____. As for me, I will be a Registered Nurse come December 5, 1992 if God spares. We are most deeply blessed and I just could not let another day go by without "THANK YOU, Thomas B. Warren."

I pray this letter finds you and Mrs. Warren in good health. May God bless you and your family always and forever.

Love, _____

P.S. Have you gotten a chance to finish your other books?

Submitted by Terry Varner, Editor; THEREFORE STAND

The Firm Foundation Lectureship

GOD'S WONDERFUL WORD

East Ridge Church of Christ
501 McBrien Road, Chattanooga, TN 37412

September 26-30, 1993

Sunday, September 26

8:30 A.M. God's Word, Man's
Greatest Blessing
Guss Eoff

9:30 A.M. God's Word, The
Fountain Of Faith
Eddie Whitten

10:30 A.M. God's Wonderful Word
Tom Holland

7:00 P.M. The Power Of God's
Word
William Woodson

10:00 A.M. God's Word In
Conversion
Ronnie Hayes

11:00 A.M. How The Holy Spirit
Works Through God's
Word
Bobby Liddell

12:00 P.M. Lunch Break

1:30 P.M. Can All Men
Understand God's
Word Alike?
Ed Jones

2:30 P.M. The Epitome Of God's
Word
Terry Broome

3:30 P.M. A Study Of The Minor
Prophets
Winford Claiborne

4:30 P.M. Evening Break

6:30 P.M. Singing

7:00 P.M. God's Word In The
Judgment
Wayne Coats

8:00 P.M. God's Word, The
Pattern Of Purity
Curtis Cates

Monday, September 27

9:00 A.M. God's Word In Modern
Versions
Michael Hughes

10:00 A.M. God's Word, The
Source Of Hope
Noah Hackworth

11:00 A.M. How Can A Young Man
Cleanse His Way?
Waymon Summers

12:00 P.M. Lunch Break

1:30 P.M. God's Word, A
Safeguard Against Sin
Paul Kidwell

2:30 P.M. The Inerrancy Of God's
Word
Charles Cochran

3:30 P.M. A Study Of The Minor
Prophets
Winford Claiborne

4:30 P.M. Evening Break

6:30 P.M. Singing

7:00 P.M. The Moral, Ethical And
Spiritual Effects Of
God's Word
David Pharr

8:00 P.M. God's Word, The
Standard of
Righteousness
Gary Colley

Thursday, September 30

9:00 A.M. Denominationalism,
The Unfruitful Works
Of Darkness
Thomas Eaves

10:00 A.M. The Use (And Abuse)
Of The Sword Of The
Spirit
Richard Melson

11:00 A.M. God's Word Supplies
All That Pertains To
Life And Godliness
Ken Willis

12:00 P.M. Lunch Break

1:30 P.M. Worship, Not In
Harmony With God's
Word, Is Vain
Houston Bynum

Wednesday, September 29

3:30 P.M. A Study Of The Minor
Prophets
Winford Claiborne

4:30 P.M. Evening Break

6:30 P.M. Singing

7:00 P.M. God's Word, The
Pattern For Life And
Eternity
Buster Dobbs

8:00 P.M. The Inspiration Of
God's Word
Lindell Mitchell

9:00 A.M. The Relationship Of
Law And Grace
John Scaggs

10:00 A.M. The Forces Of Evil
Against God's Word
Tom Silva

11:00 A.M. Does God's Word
Apply To All Men?
Joe Cox

12:00 P.M. Lunch Break

1:30 P.M. Calvinistic Influences
In The Church Oppose
God's Word
Daniel Denham

2:30 P.M. The Harmony Of God's
Word
Bob Eddy

3:30 P.M. A Study Of The Minor
Prophets
Winford Claiborne

4:30 P.M. Evening Break

5:00 P.M. Honor To Whom Honor
Is Due
E. Claude Garner

6:30 P.M. Singing

7:00 P.M. The Theme Of God's
Word
Perry Cotham

8:00 P.M. The Psalmist's Love For
God's Word
Garland Elkins

Tuesday, September 28

9:00 A.M. God's Word As The
Light Of The World
Lynn Blair

2:30 P.M. The All-Sufficiency Of
God's Word
David Hester

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

October 1993

Number 10

“Faith Healing”

Tim Smith

As we look briefly at this subject around which so great a controversy exists, let us first notice some important points by way of introduction. This writer does not believe that any man now living has the power to heal the sick by the laying on of his or her hands, or by any miraculous formula spoken over the body of a sick person. This writer does accept every case of miraculous healing as given in the Scriptures. This writer does not suggest in any way that miraculous healing never took place, but that it no longer takes place. This writer believes that all healing is divine, inasmuch as the divine gift of life must be present before the body has the ability to heal itself, but there is a big difference between divine healing and miraculous healing. It must also be noted that this writer is a strong believer in the power of prayer. There can be no question but that God hears and answers prayer, but answered prayer and faith healing are different matters.

In the New Testament, men who were baptized in the Holy Spirit were given the ability to perform many miracles by virtue of that Spirit. Peter was enabled to raise Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-42), all of the apostles were able to heal the sick (Acts 5:16), and were able to do “many wonders and signs” (Acts 2:43). In order for another, not an apostle, to perform such things, however, it was necessary for that person to have the apostles to lay their hands on them. “Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money” (Acts 8:17-18). Simon knew that before he could heal any sick or raise any dead people he must first have the apostles’ hands laid on him. We would suggest that before any man today would be capable of healing the sick he too would have to have had the apostles’ hands laid on him, and such would be impossible, for the apostles have all been dead for nearly two thousand years.

In the first century, along with the ability to heal the sick and raise the dead, Holy Spirit filled persons could be the instrument whereby death was effected (Acts 5:1-6), men were blinded (Acts 13:9-12), and these men could take up poisonous snakes, be bitten by them, and have no harm come to them (Acts 28:5). These miracles were not performed for fame, they were not performed for money, and they did not even benefit the ones receiving them. Have we seen any man blinded for his wickedness by the “faith healers” of our day? When was the last time you heard of a “dead-raising” service being conducted? The point to be made by these facts is that the “faith healers” of our day are not doing all that the true faith healers of the first century did. We would kindly suggest that the reason for this is that they have no power to perform any miracles that demand physical proof.

When a miracle was performed in the first century, it was complete and instant. There was no waiting period, and the healing was complete in every way. “Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: And they knew that it was he” (Acts 3:6-11). Despite the fact that Peter had no silver and gold, no collection was required before this healing was performed. There was no recovery time to be waited before the healing was complete. The Bible said that “immediately” he was healed, and the lame man even was able to “leap” and enter the temple as the apostles did. There was no possibility that a case of mistaken identity had made them heal the wrong man, for the people “knew” that this was truly the man who formerly had been lame. Were one to examine

the “faith healings” of our day, no such case could be found. Many times this writer has offered an excellent opportunity for all would be healers to prove themselves before all the world. If one were to restore my right index finger, taken off in an accident, there would be indisputable proof that a miracle had taken place. There are doctor’s records and x-rays to establish a legitimate deficiency, and a restored finger would be hard to argue. Lest one should raise the argument that no miracle could be performed on a person who did not have faith enough to receive it, what about the man who was blinded by the apostles? Did he have faith? And what about Annanias and Sapphira? Did they die because of their great faith? Heal it, and there will be indisputable proof of your gift.

We in no wise dispute the sincerity of those who have been faithfully seeking out faith healers to help them in their illnesses, nor do we suggest that all faith healers are necessarily dishonest con artists. We do ask that everyone examine the evidence that proves: (1) there are no men now living who qualify as “faith healers”; (2) there are no documented cases of real, medically indisputable “faith healing” on record; and, (3) there are no examples of miracles which are being performed by those who would be considered workers of miracles now as there was in the first century.

Having examined this evidence, surely you will reject the notion that one can still perform miracles and heal the sick today.

Route 1 Box 199; Webb, AL 36376

Baptists Say 46% Of Alabamians Are Lost!

Bobby Liddell Editor

A recent issue of the *Birmingham (AL) News* stated the Southern Baptists in Alabama have calculated that 46% of all Alabamians are lost! Only the Southern Baptists know how they came up with that percentage (and they are not telling, brother).

Needless to say, quite a few folks have responded with concern and anger to what they call the “arrogance and narrow-mindedness” of the Southern Baptist Board of Missions. Others have condemned the Baptists as guilty of “judging” and of playing God instead of preaching about God. Some have wondered out loud if the Baptists had somehow obtained a copy of the Lamb’s Book of Life.

Considering the Baptist doctrine of “Once saved, always saved,” it certainly is surprising to hear them say there was, “...some percentage of us Southern Baptists we would crank into, the formula as being lost.”

What is more surprising to me is the fact they have calculated 54% of all Alabamians are saved! While a lot of Alabamians were outraged that the Baptists think 46% are lost, they should be flattered the Baptists think 54% are saved.

I was born in Birmingham (in the old Hillman Hospital which is now University Hospital) and I lived, went to school and worked in and nearby Birmingham the first twenty-five years of my life. I spent another nine years preaching in Alabama, in Winfield and Parrish. Thus, I know something about the folks in Alabama. There are a lot of fine people in Alabama and I love everyone of them, especially my kinfolks who dot the countryside. More than that, I know and love a lot of Alabamians who are members of the Baptist church.

My great-grandfather was a well-known Baptist preacher and I have twelve relatives who are or have been Baptist preachers. When I preached in Parrish, Alabama, our house was on the top of one hill and across the valley, I could see my great-grandfather Will Thompson’s old home place still standing. Some of his descendants, my relatives, were members of the Baptist church in Parrish, whose building was just a block from our home.

As God knows my heart, I love everyone of them and only wish for them the very best in this life and in the life to come. Because of my love for them, I have spent many sad hours contemplating the reasons why we are not united in the one family of God.

Like it or not, the Bible teaches not everyone shall be saved (Mat. 25:46; John 5:28-29). Not even most will be saved (Mat. 7:13-14). Not even all of those who claim to be religious shall be saved (Mat. 7:21-23).

You see, God computed his figures differently from our Southern Baptist friends. He said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few** there be that find it” (Mat. 7:13-14).

We dare not begin to equate the word “few” with a certain percentage (it would make no difference in anyone’s salvation if we did, except, perhaps, our own). One fellow once told me he had figured the total number of souls saved in the present age to be in the single digits! I got the distinct impression he did not number me among them. When I asked from whence he had obtained that incredible idea, he said, “Jesus said few would be saved and the Bible says few equals eight in 1 Peter 3:20.” The Jehovah’s Witnesses (though they are not Jehovah’s, neither are they His witnesses) erred long ago when they determined the number of the saved in Heaven at 144,000. Now, they are consigning the excess to a future refurbished earth Utopia.

Salvation is not dependent upon a calculation or pronouncement from the Southern Baptists or any other man or group of men. Salvation is dependent upon hearing, believing and obeying what God said. When anyone hears and heeds what God has said about salvation, he can rest in the precious promise given by our Savior Himself, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...” (Mark 16:16). After all, Jesus should know since He is the “author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:9).

Let us keep in mind two things. (1) Let us make sure we are among the saved, not the lost. (2) Let us do all we can to help all we can to likewise be saved, not lost. Let us give 100% to both efforts.

“Speaking In Tongues”

Waymon Swain

One of the most prominent doctrines taught in the religious world is the false teaching on the subject of “speaking in tongues.” Many contend one of the signs of being a Christian is to be able to speak in unknown tongues. Does the Bible teach that this miraculous gift is still being practiced today as a sign that one is saved or has received the Holy Spirit? What does the Bible teach on this matter?

We all know and believe one of the spiritual gifts was speaking in tongues. That is, one had this spiritual gift that would enable him to have the ability to speak miraculously in a foreign language, previously unknown to that person doing the speaking. The Greek word from which we get the word tongues is “glossa” and is used in two different ways in the Bible. (1) It is used to mean the physical organ in our mouth, the tongue as used in Luke 1:64. (2) At other times it is used and refers to the language spoken by people as used in Revelation 5:9, and Acts 2:4. In Acts 2:4 we read, “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” These apostles were not speaking with other men’s tongues, but were speaking other languages.

Jesus, just before He went back to heaven, promised the “gift” of tongues: “they shall speak with new tongues” (Mark 16:17). Wayne Jackson says there is special interest in the Greek word *kainos*, that is translated “new.” He says, “it suggests a newness of quality, not chronological newness. Thus, the Lord indicates this gift would involve a fresh or new way of speaking, not a new kind of utterance previously unknown to the human family” (*Christian Courier*, Jan., 1992). So, the miraculous gift of tongues was the ability to speak in another language previously unknown to the person doing the speaking. This was to aid in preaching the gospel to “all the world” as Christ had commanded. They did not have copies of the New Testament; whereas, today, we have the complete Word of God. Today, inspiration dwells in the Bible, but then it dwelt in inspired men. Today, we have the Bible in the major languages. In the time of spiritual gifts (tongues as used in the Bible was a spiritual gift), men were guided by the Holy Spirit and were able to speak in different languages without ever having studied them so all people could hear the gospel.

The gift of speaking in tongues also served as “signs” to cause people to believe. The purpose of speaking in tongues was two-fold: (1) to enable the apostles and other inspired men to preach to all the world; and, (2) to confirm the Word of God (Mark 16:20) Speaking in tongues was designed to convince people to become Christians, and that the men who were speaking were of God.

Was this a gift that would be age-lasting? Were these miraculous gifts to continue until the end of the Christian

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age, that is until Christ returns? What does the Bible say? “but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease” (1 Cor. 13:8). This verse has reference to the miraculous gift of speaking in other languages. When would these gifts cease? Let the Bible answer. “When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away” (1 Cor. 13:10). That which is perfect is the Word of God, the complete revelation to man (Jam. 1:2 5). So, when the complete revelation was given, men no longer needed the miraculous gifts to confirm the Word to make believers. Today, faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). “There is no evidence of the continuance of this gift after Apostolic times nor indeed in the later times of the Apostles themselves. This provides confirmation of the fulfillment in this way of 1 Corinthians 13:8, that this gift would cease in the churches, just as would ‘prophecies’ and ‘knowledge’ in the sense of knowledge received by immediate supernatural power. The completion of the Holy Scriptures has provided the churches with all that is necessary for individual and collective guidance, instruction, and edification” (Vine, IV, p. 143). The “unknown tongues” that men claim to speak today are not languages known to anyone today, but a group of sounds that serves no purpose. No one can speak a language today that he or she has not studied. If they could, that would be a “spiritual gift.” The Bible teaches such has ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Eph. 4:11-13).

Why I Left The Pentecostal Religion

Robert E. Sumpter

At the age of sixteen, I became what I thought was a Christian by “praying through” and a few weeks later, they baptized me, “For an outward sign of an inward work.” About six months later, after much praying, begging and pleading, I got what I supposed to be the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I joined the Pentecostal Church of God of America and a few years later, I began to preach for them.

At the age of twenty-two, I was given a preacher’s license from the Dayton Revival Center and Leland Gaver, a divine healer (so he said) was going to teach me how to become a divine healer. In doing so, he was teaching me how to use psychology. I was made one of his many assistant preachers. Leland and his wife divorced a few years later and the Revival Center made his wife the minister and I, at the age of twenty-five, became her assistant. Truly, my wife and I were so sincere in the Pentecostal religion. I was just as sincere as Paul in the Jewish religion (Acts 22:3) and Cornelius (Acts 10:2). I fasted and prayed much, for I thought that was the way to get power to heal the sick. What really happened to me was I got tired of sin, and I wanted to be saved and have a home in heaven.

My parents were not religious people and did not attend any religion. They were good people and good parents and taught me good morals and corrected me when I was wrong, but the Bible was never important to them. Somehow I knew that God was real and I wanted to be His child, so the Devil had a place for me, to deceive me into thinking I was a Christian. It was a place that made me feel good, but I knew nothing about the Word of God. I barely knew John 3:16. The Devil has a place for all who want to change their ungodly life to a “good moral” life. He will deceive them into believing they are saved in a false religion. It is easily done when one does not study God’s plan of salvation from the Holy Word. God knew my sincerity as He knew Paul’s and Cornelius’ and in His providence allowed a man of God to cross my path with the truth of His Word.

At first, I did not accept what Eugene Carter, the gospel preacher, had to say. It took six months of his insisting that I accept only the written Word of God, rightly divided, if I truly wanted to be saved (2 Tim. 3:16-17). I fought him at first with all my so-called miracles I claimed to be doing, but could not prove any of them. All the ones I prayed for who said they were healed had an illness no one could see. When it came to blinded eyes or deaf ears. I was like most other divine healers and told them they lacked faith and to come back when they had more faith. It was later when I found out they were fake healers not faith healers. I had such a struggle praying to God, “Why can’t I go to the hospitals and insane asylums and jail houses and heal and set free the people?”

I was so sincere, I believed if God gave me the power to do miracles I should go to people instead of asking them to come to me. The Pentecostal preachers soon began to frown on me, making fun of me and I was blackballed from preaching.

Thank God, He knew my heart and knew I wanted to be saved more than anything. I did it all as a Pentecostal preacher, “healing” all kinds of aches you could not see and they would say God healed them. I spoke and

interpreted “tongues,” danced in the spirit and really thought God told me things, but I was deceived by Satan. When men like Oral Roberts, A. Allen James Dunn, David Walker and other “divine healers” would come to Dayton, Columbus, or Springfield, I was there to help in the prayer tents.

Oh, the stories I could tell you about the Pentecostal Religion that are true but Biblically wrong and so against God. Like Paul in Acts 22:3, I thought I was doing God’s will.

I left the Pentecostal Religion by obeying the Gospel of Christ, the one true gospel (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 The. 1:7-10) and became a member of the Lord’s church (Acts 2:47) in 1963. Eugene Carter spoke the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11). He showed me from the Word of God that I must hear the Word of God concerning Christ (Rom. 10:13-14), and that I must believe in Christ Jesus our Savior (Mat. 1:21) by what the Word of God said about it (Rom. 10:9-10). That I must obey from the heart the form of gospel (Rom. 6:17) that is taught in Romans 6:3-5 and repent of all my past sins (Acts 17:30-31, Luke 13:3-5). He showed me that I must confess with my mouth Christ, as the Ethiopian Eunuch did in Acts 8:22-39, and as Jesus said in Matthew 10:32-33. He showed me that I must be baptized as the Eunuch in water for my sins to be forgiven (Acts 2:38), for me to truly be saved as Jesus said (Mark 16:1 5-16). Paul called on the name of the Lord by being baptized (Acts 22:16).

I had to hear and believe the gospel, repent of my past sins, confess Christ and be baptized, Eugene Carter said, but it was not because he said it—it was because he showed it to me in the Holy Bible and he said “Read it for yourself.” I realized I was still lost in my sins even though I was very sincere in the Pentecostal religion. I needed to do what the Lord said to do if I wanted Him to be my Lord (Luke 6:46; Mat. 7:21). My wife and I left the Pentecostal religion. We had to if we wanted to be saved.

The Bible was right and we were wrong in our Pentecostal religion. Oh how I thank God for His Church that He built (Mat. 16:18), that He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). He is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23) and the Savior of it (Eph. 5:23).

Until you turn from your sins and your religious denomination, you do not know what “joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Pet. 1:8) is. You cannot be saved in your sins and your religious denomination.

“Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up” (Mat. 15:13). Christ is the author of eternal salvation, the only source of salvation (Heb. 5:89). Are you hungry enough for God’s righteousness (Mat. 5:6)? Hungry enough to allow all men to be a liar and God’s Word to be truth in your life (Rom. 3:4)? If so, please contact the Lord’s church, the New Testament church, the church of the Bible; that is, the church of Christ in your area. Or contact me and I will help you find a teacher of God that will speak only where the Bible speaks and will be silent where the Bible is silent. I will be glad to talk to you by phone or letter.

1515 Knight Road; Urbana, Ohio 43078 (513) 484-3020

Baptized In The Holy Spirit!

Jerri Manasco

Many emotionally-charged issues are discussed in religious circles. One of the most hotly debated over the years has been Holy Spirit baptism, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Those who contend that such marvelous heavenly manifestation is still in force today turn to Hebrews 1 3:8 to “prove” that since Jesus is, “the same yesterday, and today, and for ever,” then Holy Ghost baptism is still the norm. Of course, what Jesus can do and what he *does* do are not necessarily the same! The Lord no longer creates men from dust or manufactures women from ribs (Gen. 2:7, 18-24), though he **could** do so if there were reason to do so. The fact is there would be no purpose in doing so since God has already accomplished what he intended to do by the first such act. The same holds true in the matter of Holy Spirit baptism.

It is generally accepted that there are two indisputable cases of Holy Spirit baptism in the New Testament. One is that which we read about in Acts 2; the other is found in Acts 10 at the household of Cornelius. We know Jesus promised this great thing. John spoke of it as well (Mat. 3:11; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). The question, then, is not, “DID God baptize people in the Holy Spirit?” It is not, “CAN God baptize people in the Holy Spirit?” The question is, “DOES God baptize people in the Holy Spirit today as he did in the New Testament record?”

Space prevents quoting the passages in detail, but I will make sufficient reference to the texts to provide adequate

ground for study.

Acts 2 and Acts 10 provide us with the information we need to form our conclusions on this great topic. In each chapter, there are similarities which we can compare with great benefit. First, it is clear that in each case we are seeing a divine act, an act of God and not of men. Second, in each case there is the famed “speaking in tongues.” Third, the speaking in tongues was the avenue through which the mighty works of God were declared and God was magnified (Acts 2:11; 10:46).

A fourth fact we see is that the “tongues” were intelligible languages and not ecstatic angelic expressions, and certainly not meaningless syllables (Acts 2:6, 8, 11). Since that which fell on the Gentiles in Acts 10 was “the like gift” the apostles received (Acts 11:17), it follows that the tongues at the house of Cornelius were languages!

Fifth, there was a definite purpose or design in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which purpose has been served and no longer needs demonstration. In the case of the apostles in Acts 2, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was designed to provide them with the equipment needed to do the work Jesus sent them to do. Jesus promised them the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 14:26). It was through the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost that these men were endowed with the power to carry on with their unique mission (Acts 2:1-4).

In the case of Cornelius the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was clearly designed as indisputable proof to the Jewish brethren (i.e., Peter, the six who accompanied him, and the brethren back in Judea) of the divine acceptance of the Gentiles. This is made plain to us in Acts 10:44-47 and Acts 11:15-18. The fact that the Gentiles in Cornelius’ house received “the like gift” as did the apostles (Acts 11:17) signifies that Gentiles were not to be viewed as secondary members of the church! Today, if we would know the apostles’ doctrine, we gain that knowledge not through Holy Spirit baptism, but through the reading of what the apostles (who were guided by the Spirit) have written (Eph. 3:1-6; etc.). Today we are aware of heaven’s acceptance of Gentiles not because we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, but because we have the sufficient record of that truth in the New Testament.

In the New Testament cases of legitimate Holy Spirit baptism, there is none of this being knocked to the ground or being so overwhelmed that people lost control of their will.

Those baptized in the Holy Spirit had no doctrinal differences among themselves. Some contend that even in the presence of Holy Spirit baptism people still can differ in doctrine. This cannot be! If it is so, then the Holy Spirit has bred confusion, and such a thing is impossible (1 Cor. 14:33; 1:10-13; Eph. 4:1-6; etc.). The case of Paul’s reprimanding Peter is called forth by the advocates of the notion that doctrinal differences can exist among people who are Spirit-led and Spirit baptized! One need not read Galatians 2:11ff very closely to realize that Paul reprimanded Peter for a failure in CONDUCT, not a difference in doctrine! Actually, this case of Paul’s reprimanding Peter is an argument that proves that Holy Spirit baptism was not designed to “sanctify” or “purify” or “burn out all the sin” in one’s life! Peter was infallible as a preacher (John 16:13), but not as a person! The design of Holy Spirit baptism was to equip the apostles and to confirm the divine approval of Gentiles in the kingdom of God. These purposes have been served. Now, if we would know the will of God, we must study the Bible!

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Twelfth Annual Denton Lectures

Studies in 1, 2 Kings & 1, 2 Chronicles

November 14-18, 1993

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14

9:00 AM Steven Lloyd
10:00 AM Dub Mcclish
11:00 AM Gary Summers

12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Tim Nichols

3:00 PM Lester Kamp

4:00 PM Jim Moore

5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Goebel Music

8:00 PM James Meadows

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15

9:00 AM Jesse Whitlock

10:00 AM Marvin Weir
11:00 AM Ken Gossett

12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Bob Berard

3:00 PM Discussion Forum
Jerry Moffitt

3:45 PM Jerry Moffitt
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Gary Colley

8:00 PM Terry Hightower

1, 2 Kings and 1, 2 Chronicles—An Introduction
Great Lessons from the Unheralded prophet, Micahiah
Early Kings of Israel and Judah; Elijah Challenges
Ahab (1 Kings 14:1-18:46)

Answering False Doctrines Relating to 1, 2 Kings and
1, 2 Chronicles: Are the Promises to David regarding
the throne and kingdom to be given to his son a
reference to the reign of Christ from David's actual
throne over an earthly political kingdom, per
premillennialism (1 Chr. 17:11-14)? Does God's
sanction of instrumental music in worship in the Old
Testament authorize its use in the New Testament
church (1 Chr. 16 4-6, 42; 2 Chr. 7:6, 25-29)?
Difficult Passages in 1, 2 Kings and 1, 2 Chronicles:
Why is the account of David's sin concerning
Bathsheba and Uriah (2 Sam. 11:1-12:23) omitted in
1 Chronicles 20:2ff? Who provoked David to number
Israel—God or Satan (1 Chr. 21:1; 2 Sam. 24:1)?
Why was all of Israel punished for David's sin (1 Chr.
21:7-14)? How could Asa be described as "perfect all
his days" (2 Chr. 15:17). yet be condemned for his
Syrian alliance and for throwing Hanani into prison
and oppressing others (16:1-10)? How can we harmo-
nize the statement that Jehoshaphat "took away the
high places and groves" (2 Chr. 17:6) and 'the high
places were not taken away' (20:3)?
David's Death and Solomons Enthronement (1 Kin.
4:34)

Times of Glory and Shame for David (1 Chr. 17:1-20
8)
Judah Under Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat (2 Chr.
13:1-20:37)

Difficult Passages in 1, 2 Kings and 1, 2 Chronicles:
How can the episode with David and Abishag be
explained and/or justified (1 Kin. 1:1-4)? Did Jero-
boam of Rehoboam have a choice in what they did
(1 Kin. 11:30-34; 12:12-15)? Why did God kill the
Judean prophet for believing a lie, but not the old
prophet for lying (1 Kin. 13:1-32)? Who was the
"lying spirit" who was volunteered to deceive Ahab?
How is God's use of lies and liars to deceive Ahab
reconciled with His perfect moral nature (1 Kin.
22:19-23)?

The Final Years of Judah (2 Chr. 33:1-36:23)
The Reigns of Sundry Kings, Evil and Good, in Judah
(2 Chr. 21:1-27:9)

Solomon Builds and Dedicates the Temple (1 Kin. 5:1-
9-28)

Must We Respect the Silence of Scripture as Well as
Its Statement?
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Elisha's Mighty Works Continue, Jehu's just Slayings
(2 Kin. 6:1-10:36)

The Grandeur of Solomon's Reign, the Kingdom
Divided (2 Chr. 7:1-12:16)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

9:00 AM Robert Dodson

10:00 AM Al Brown

11:00 AM Tom Wacaster

12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Tom Ayers

3:00 PM Discussion Forum
Robert Taylor
3:45 PM Robert Taylor
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Bobby Liddell

8:00 PM Roy Deaver

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

9:00 AM Bubba Phillips

10:00 AM Eddie Whitten

11:00 AM Robin Haley

12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM James Boyd

3:00 PM Discussion Forum
Curtis Cates
3:45 PM Curtis Cates
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Garland Elkins

8:00 PM David P Brown

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

9:00 AM Gary Summers

10:00 AM Howard Morton
11:00 AM Toney Smith
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Joe Gilmore

3:00 PM Discussion Forum
Mac Deaver
3:45 PM Mac Deaver
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Thomas Warren
8:00 PM Darrell Conley

Time of Tumult in Israel and Judah (2 Kin. 16:1-
20:21)

Difficult Passages in 1, 2 Kings and 1, 2 Chronicles:
How can God's destruction of children for an appar-
ently childish prank be explained (2 Kin. 2:23-24)?
How can we explain or justify the deceptions of Flisha
and Jehu (2 Kin. 6:19; 8:10; 10:19)? How did David
get by with being displeased with God (1 Chr. 13:11)?
Why was the ark taken to Jerusalem instead of to the
tabernacle in Gibeon (1 Chr. 16:39)?
Solomon's Fame, Apostasy, Death, the Kingdom
Divided (1 Kin. 10:1-13:34)

Elijah's Ascension and Elisha's Early Works (2 Kin.
1:1-5:27)

Is the Restoration Plea Valid?
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Solomon's Early Acts—the Temple Finished arid
Dedicated (2 Chr. 1:1-6:42)
The Kingdom God Promised to David

Genealogies from Creation to Captivity and Saul's
Death (1 Chr 1 :1-10:14)

Answering False Doctrines Relating to 1, 2 Kings and
1, 2 Chronicles: Is it wrong to seek the help of medical
doctors or should we merely pray. per the "Christian
Science" cult (2 Chr. 16:12)? Does God have an
"umbrella of grace" that covers our sins whether or
not we repent of them and faithfully obey Him (2 Chr.
30:18)?

Josiah, the Last Light Before Darkness for Judah
(2 Kin. 21:1-25:30)

Elijah Discouraged, Elisha Anointed, Ahab's Final
Exploits (1 Kin. 19:1-22:53)

The Worship of God—Our Way or God's Way?
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

David Numbers Israel, Charges and Crowns Solomon,
Dies (1 Chr. 21:1-29:30)
Reigns of Various Kings of Judah and Israel, Elisha
Dies (2 Kin. 11:1-15:38)

Men Who Understand the Times and Know What
God's People Ought To Do

Great Lessons from Josiah, the Restorer King
The Early Days of David's Reign (1 Chr. 11:1-16:43)

The Reigns of Wicked Ahaz and Righteous Hezekiah
(2 Chr. 28:1-32:33)

Should We Seek Unity in Diversity or Conformity?
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Great Lessons from Hezekiah
1, 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles—Summary

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WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

The Bible answer to this most important question applies to all men. To be saved from sin and have the abundant life now and eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17).
2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ (John 8:24).
3. Repent of all sins (Acts 2:38).
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).

“And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).

DEFENDER

Volume XXII

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Isaiah 7:14

Franklin Camp

(1915-1991)

Isaiah 7:14 has been the source of a great amount of controversy. The R.S.V. translation of the passage has added to the confusion. The King James and the American Standard use the word “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14, while the R.S.V. uses the phrase “a young woman.” A vital and important question is, Should the passage read “virgin” or “young woman”? There are some simple considerations that I believe will contribute to one’s understanding of this passage and how it should be translated. I do not believe that it is necessary for one to have a knowledge of the original language to be able to arrive at a scriptural conclusion as to whether the passage should read “virgin” or “young woman.”

The fact that Matthew states that the virgin birth of Christ fulfills the passage should settle the question. Was Christ born of a virgin? If the answer is yes, then the King James and the American Standard Versions are correct in using the word “virgin.” The R.S.V. is wrong in using the phrase “young woman.” Thus, the critical problem in Isaiah 7:14 is one’s attitude toward inspiration. Whatever other problems there may be in Isaiah 7:14, these problems take a secondary place when the inspiration of both Matthew and Isaiah are accepted. When one accepts the verbal inspiration of the Scripture, then all problem passages will be studied in this light and the only solution to the problem will be such as will harmonize with inspiration. Any explanation of Isaiah 7:14 that conflicts with inspiration and is not in harmony with Matthew’s use of the word “virgin” must be rejected by all who accept the integrity and the reliability of the Scriptures.

The inspiration of the Bible and the virgin birth of Christ are two fundamental truths that we dare not tamper with. These truths must be upheld or the entire Bible crumbles. If the Bible is not an inspired revelation from God, it is not worth the paper that it is written on. If Christ was not born of a virgin, there is no gospel of redemption; thus, Isaiah 7:14 becomes a fundamental passage. Any exegesis of the passage that affects inspiration or the virgin birth of Christ must be opposed by those who love and respect the Bible. The controversy over this passage is not “a tempest in a teapot;” it is vital and affects the very foundation of our faith.

I do not mean to say by the things previously mentioned that those who have defended the translation of the R.S.V. reject either inspiration or the virgin birth of Christ. I am saying that they are not conscious of the problems that they are confronted with. I think I know at least a part of the reason that has led some to claim that the translation of the R.S.V. is acceptable, but I believe before our study is finished, I can establish by the Scriptures that this position is untenable and without any justification.

Some Rules of Bible Study

Isaiah 7:14 needs to be studied in the context of the book of Isaiah. Whatever there is in the passage is related to the overall teaching of the entire book. It is my conviction that some who are having problems with Isaiah 7:14 are doing so because they are looking at the verse isolated from the rest of the book. One rule of Bible study is that verses must be considered in the light of the general teaching and theme of the book. Will this rule of Bible study offer any help in the analysis of Isaiah 7:14? I believe that it will and I shall seek to show how the verse is related to the general teaching of the book. I will come back to this particular point later as we look at the book of Isaiah in a general way.

A second rule of Bible study is to ask the question, Who is doing the speaking? In connection with Isaiah 7:14,

let us ask this simple question. Who is doing the speaking? The answer is Isaiah. But who is Isaiah? Isaiah is a prophet, but, Who is a prophet? A prophet is one that speaks for God. He is a “forthteller;” and included in his “forthtelling” is foretelling. Since Isaiah was a prophet and a prophet spoke for God—“forthtelling” and foretelling—why should one have any difficulty with Isaiah 7:14?

The nature of a work of a prophet was such that one should have no difficulty with Isaiah prophesying the virgin birth of Christ. David prophesied the resurrection of Christ (Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:29-31). Daniel prophesied of the ascension of Christ (Dan. 7:14; Acts 1:9). Why should there be any problem with Isaiah prophesying the virgin birth?

Furthermore, one should remember that what a prophet said was not his word, but the Word of God. Read Isaiah 1:1, Isaiah 2:1, and especially Isaiah 8:3. Did God know that the mother of Jesus would be a virgin? Matthew says that it “was spoken of the Lord by the prophet” (Mat. 1:22). Was Matthew correct when he said that it was spoken by the Lord? If he was correct, then where is the difficulty in Isaiah 7:14?

Is the word “virgin” correct in Matthew 1:23? Even the R.S.V. translates Matthew 1:23 “virgin.” If the “virgin” of Matthew 1:23 is a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, then does it not follow that it is “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14? In view of the unique nature of the virgin birth, there is no way that one can have “virgin” in Matthew 1:23 and “young woman” in Isaiah 7:14. The acceptance of the inspiration of prophecy settles the translation of Isaiah 7:14. The problem of Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23 is not with the passages, but with men’s attitude toward prophecy and inspiration.

As proof that the problem with Matthew 1:23 and Isaiah 7:14 has to do with one’s attitude toward prophecy and inspiration, read the following comments by Barclay on Matthew 1:23:

This passage tells us how Jesus was born by the action of the Holy Spirit. It tells us of what we call the virgin birth. The virgin birth is a doctrine which presents us with many difficulties, and it is a doctrine which our church does not compel us to accept in the literal and physical sense. This is one of the doctrines on which the church says that we have full liberty to come to our own belief and our own conclusion. At the moment we are concerned only to find out what this means for us. If we come to this passage with fresh eyes and if we read it as if we’re reading it for the first time, we will find the fact which it stresses is not so much that Jesus was born of a woman who was a virgin as that the birth of Jesus is the work of the Holy Spirit....It is as if these sentences were underlined and printed large. That is what Matthew wishes to say to us in this passage. What then does it mean to say that in the birth of Jesus the Holy Spirit of God was especially operative? Let us leave aside all the doubtful and debatable things and let us here concentrate on that great truth as Matthew would wish us to do. In Jewish thought the Holy Spirit had certain very definite functions. We cannot bring to this passage the Christian idea of the Holy Spirit and all of its fulness because Joseph would know nothing about that. We must interpret in light of the Jewish idea of the Holy Spirit, for it is that idea that Joseph would inevitably bring to this message, for that was all he knew.

It is quite easy to see from Barclay’s comments on Matthew 1:23 that his real problem is the rejection of prophecy and inspiration; thus, in order to avoid the difficulty, he seeks to break the force of the statement made by Matthew that the birth of Christ was a virgin birth and that it was in fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. He does not relieve himself of the difficulty in the saying that what Matthew stresses is not so much that Jesus was born of a virgin, as that the birth of Jesus is the work of the Holy Spirit. In what way would the birth of Jesus be the work of the Holy Spirit and be different from other men if it did not involve the virgin birth? Of course, this is not what he believes, but his very attempt to avoid the truth of Matthew 1:23 shows the foolishness of the Modernist’s attempt to reject what the Bible teaches in relation to the virgin birth of Christ.

Another question that one needs to ask is, To whom is it spoken? The prophecy was made to the house of David and Ahaz. Syria and Israel were threatening Judah. The kings of Syria and Israel had already selected their own man who would be king of Judah (Isa. 7:6). God, through Isaiah, told Ahaz that their plan would not succeed (Isa. 7:7). Then Isaiah said to Ahaz, “If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established” (Isa. 7:9). The prophet was trying to get Ahaz to place his faith in God rather than making alliance with other nations. In order to encourage faith, the prophet told Ahaz to ask for a sign, but Ahaz, in pretending piety, refused to ask for the sign. Then Isaiah gives the prophecy of the virgin birth in 7:14.

Some Further Preliminary Considerations

Question: Is the word “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14 a mistranslation? If the word “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14 is a mis-

translation, then both the King James Translation and the American Standard Version have mistranslated the word. Second, may the Hebrew word be translated “virgin? Is it possible and is it correct to translate the Hebrew word “virgin? The R.S.V. translators would not deny that the word “almah” may be translated “virgin.” The R.S.V. has the word “virgin” in the margin, thus admitting that the Hebrew word could be translated “virgin.” The R.S.V. has “virgin” in Matthew 1:23, which is the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14.

Why the problem with Isaiah 7:14? It is not because the Hebrew word cannot be translated “virgin;” because R.S.V. puts “virgin” in the margin of 7:14 and in the text of Matthew 1:23. The King James and the American Standard Versions are not mistranslations. Even the R.S.V. translators would admit that the King James and the American Standard Versions are not mistranslations. It is not because “virgin” does not harmonize with the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 (See Mat. 1:23).

Third, is “virgin” the correct translation of Matthew 1:23? Could Matthew 1:23 be translated by any other word and be correct? “Young woman” certainly will not do in Matthew 1:23. The birth of Christ was unique. It is the only one like it that there has ever been. Since this is the case, the word “virgin” is the only word that can be correctly used in Matthew 1:23. The birth being unique, a word denoting the uniqueness of the birth was needed. The word “virgin” was the only word that could denote the uniqueness of the birth of Christ. The translators of the R.S.V. felt the force of the unique situation in Matthew 1:23 and used the word “virgin.”

Now some questions are in order. If the birth of Christ in 1:23 required the R.S.V. translators to use the word “virgin;” why did it require the word? Was it because the birth of Christ was unique and the only one of its kind? If so, then some other questions are in order. Is Matthew 1:23 a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14? Matthew says that it is and evidently the translators of the R.S.V. agree because here is the way the R.S.V. translates Matthew 1:22: “All this took place to **fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet.**” In answer to the question as to whether or not Matthew 1:23 is a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, the R.S.V. translators recognize that it is. If Matthew 1:23 is unique and the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, then it follows that Isaiah 7:14 must be as unique and unusual as Matthew 1:23. Even if some prophecies had a dual fulfillment, Isaiah 7:14 cannot be one of them. A one-time event cannot have a dual fulfillment. The birth of Christ was a one-time event. This being true, it was not possible for there to have been such a birth in the days of Isaiah or Ahaz. If there was a virgin birth in Isaiah’s or Ahaz’s time, then one would have two virgin births. If there have been two virgin births, then the birth of Christ was not unique and if His birth was not unique, He is not the Son of God.

There is no way that one can defend the Deity and Sonship of Christ except by defending His virgin birth. But no one can defend His virgin birth and Deity while contending that a virgin birth occurred in the days of Isaiah and Ahaz and the one born at that time was not Deity.

If one was born of a virgin in the days of Isaiah and Ahaz, was he also Deity? If yes, then God had two sons and Christ was not the only begotten son of God. On the other hand, if the virgin of Isaiah 7:14 was a virgin who had a child by an earthly father in Isaiah’s day, then Christ’s father would also have to be an earthly father. This means that those who deny the Deity of Christ are right after all and Joseph was the real father of Jesus.

Was the birth of Christ the only one of its kind? If yes, then there could, under no circumstances, have been a dual fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. The argument of a dual fulfillment is not the answer to any problem that may be in Isaiah 7. Whether brethren want to admit it or not, the dual fulfillment ends up in denying the Deity of Christ. It seems to me that if brethren would just one time stop and recognize the unique nature of the birth of Christ, that it was a one-time event, they would realize that one cannot have a twofold fulfillment of a one-time event. I think most would readily admit that the birth of Christ differs from every other birth that has ever been. If this is true, and it is, it must necessarily follow that the prophecy that foretold it cannot, in the nature of the case, have a dual fulfillment. One might as well claim that one is two as to claim that a one-time event occurred twice.

Let me ask again, Was the birth of Christ a one-time unique event? Is Isaiah 7:14 a prophecy of this onetime event? If so, that should settle forever how Isaiah 7:14 should be translated. The birth of Christ was a one-time event (Mat. 1:23). The birth of Christ was a virgin birth. Since the birth of Christ was a virgin birth, His birth was a one-time event as there has been only one virgin birth. Isaiah 7:14 prophesies of the virgin birth of Christ. The birth of Christ is the only one of its kind; therefore, Isaiah prophesied only of the birth of Christ. One cannot have a prophecy of a one-time event and have more in the prophecy than the event which fulfills it.

The Context

The first six chapters of Isaiah form the background of Isaiah 7. Any attempt to analyze Chapter 7 without considering the background in the previous chapters will only lead to misunderstanding. Four kings, Judah and Jerusalem are mentioned in the first verse. While it is true the verse mentions the kings under which Isaiah prophesied, it also has a broader significance. The background of Isaiah 1:1 is the Divided Kingdom. The background of the Divided Kingdom is the demand for a king in order to be like the nations round about them. The demand for a king was the rejection of God as King. (Read 1 Sam. 8-11.) The background of 1 Samuel, Chapters 8 through 11, is Genesis 49:10 and the background of Genesis 49:10 is Genesis 12. In Genesis 12, God promised Abraham that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). In Genesis 49:10 this promise is channeled through Judah and in 2 Samuel 7 through David. This promise was to be realized in Christ. Anything that would have interfered with the promise ending in Christ would have denied both the sovereignty and the integrity of God.

Verse 1 has this background and introduces the key thought in the book of Isaiah. The verses following in Chapter 1 present the sad consequence that had developed from their desire for a king. The nation became more and more interested in politics and less and less interested in religion. The neglect of religion had produced the conditions described in Isaiah 1:2-15. Because of the sinfulness of the nation, God had allowed their enemies to attack and devour them (Isa. 1:7). God used their enemies to chasten them, but this did not produce repentance. This shows the condition of things in Chapter 7 and is important in an analysis of the chapter.

In Chapter 2 Isaiah prophesied of the kingdom that started in Acts 2. The background of the prophecy of Isaiah 2 is the condition portrayed in Chapter 1. Their desire for an earthly king was not in keeping with the promise that God made to Abraham, plus the fact that the earthly kings had become the cause of their present situation. An earthly king had not been the solution to the deeper problem of sin. It had only increased the problem. The kingdom of Isaiah 2 was designed to do what an earthly kingdom and its kings could not. The kingdom of Isaiah 2 was what God had in mind when He made the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12. The kingdom of Isaiah 2 was to be spiritual in nature rather than temporal and physical. This was the kind of kingdom that God had in mind from the beginning. Their asking for and receiving an earthly king neither stopped nor changed God's plans. The promise to Abraham would be fulfilled in the establishment of the kingdom; thus, Isaiah 2 is an announcement to the nation that their earthly king had failed, that the earthly king was not in God's mind to start with; the failure of the earthly king would not keep God from fulfilling His promise to Abraham. Note the first part of Isaiah 2:2: "And it shall come to pass." This was said to give assurance to the nation that God's plan had not failed. This statement also is similar to the one in Isaiah 7:9 that is made to Ahaz by Isaiah.

Isaiah 6 must also be studied as background material for Chapter 7. Isaiah seems to have been disturbed over the death of Uzziah. The vision that he has in Chapter 6 is designed to set forth God's Sovereignty and Holiness. **This is a key thought, not only in relation to Chapter 7, but all the book.** Isaiah 6 is basic to the understanding of the entire book of Isaiah. Isaiah's prophecy concerning other nations has as its background the Sovereignty and Holiness of God as set forth in this vision in Chapter 6. God rules, not only Israel, but all other nations are under His control. What Isaiah saw in the vision in Chapter 6 was the very thing that Ahaz refused to believe in Chapter 7. In pretended piety, Ahaz refused to ask for a sign, as though such would be tempting God. This would not have been the case because God, through Isaiah, had ordered Ahaz to ask for the sign. The problem of Ahaz was unbelief. The unbelief of Ahaz resulted in his refusing to trust and rely upon God and turning instead to alliances with other nations. He refused to believe that he might be established (Isa 7:9). Thus, the Sovereignty of God shown in Isaiah's vision becomes a key principle in the exegesis of Chapter 7. God, through the prophet, tried to get Ahaz to see the problem. His unbelief, and that of the nation, which led them into sin was the taproot of the problem. When Ahaz refused the offer of Isaiah, then Isaiah gave the prophecy of the virgin birth. This verse must be studied in the light of the previous thoughts. Isaiah 7:14 has as its background the Sovereignty and Holiness of God as contrasted with the unbelief of Ahaz. If one sees the Sovereignty and Holiness of God in Chapter 6, then there should be no problem in seeing the significance of the prophecy of the virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14. The two principles of God's Sovereignty and Holiness underscore two things: the faithfulness of God and the need of man because of his sinfulness. The prophecy of the kingdom in Chapter 2 is related to these problems and, now the virgin birth of Chapter 7. If one looks at the context of Isaiah 7:14, the so-called problem vanishes.

The Dual Prophecy

The reason that some contend for dual prophecy is because of the statement in verse 16: “For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.” That this verse refers to something in the days of Ahaz is evident, but a dual prophecy cannot be the answer to this problem. I have already shown the impossibility of there being a dual prophecy of the virgin birth. Is there a solution to the problem? A study of the context of Isaiah 7:14 will clear up the difficulties.

First, instead of there being a dual fulfillment of the prophecy, there are two prophecies given by Isaiah. Isaiah 7:14-15 is a prophecy of the virgin birth. Isaiah 7:16 is another prophecy relating solely to the overthrow of Israel and Syria. A study of the context, beginning in verse 1, will enable one to see that there are two prophecies and two fulfillments, not one prophecy with a dual fulfillment.

Prophecy was given by prophetic act, as well as by word. “And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years *for* a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia” (Isa. 20:3). Here is an action by Isaiah that is prophetic and called a sign, thus we have in this very book a prophecy by action. The action is called a sign.

“Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller’s field” (Isa. 7:3). Note this is a command by the Lord to Isaiah to meet Ahaz. Isaiah is commanded also to take “thy son.” The son’s name was Shearjashub—a remnant shall return—the very thing that happened.

Why did God command Isaiah to take this child? It is not reasonable to think that God commanded Isaiah to take the child and this action has no relationship to the events of the chapter. This is not just an example of a father taking a child with him, but of a father doing it by divine command. According to most exegeses of this chapter, this action by Isaiah is entirely overlooked. Since Isaiah was commanded to take his child with him to meet Ahaz, what was the significance of it? “Behold, I and the **children** whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion” (Isa. 8:18). Notice the word “children” in this verse. “Moreover the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man’s pen concerning Mahershalal-hashbaz” (Isa. 8:1). Thus, both of Isaiah’s children were “signs.” Since the child that Isaiah carried with him to meet Ahaz was a sign, is it a proper exegesis of Isaiah 7 to completely ignore this child? If the child is to be considered in the exegesis of the chapter, where will he fit? There is only one place and that is verse 16. The child of verse 16 is Isaiah’s child that was a sign, not the son that was born of the virgin of verse 14.

A careful reading of verses 13 through 16 will establish this fact. Notice carefully verse 10: “Moreover the LORD spake again unto **Ahaz**, saying.” Now consider verse 13: “Hear ye now, O house of David.” Isaiah’s message is to Ahaz and also to the house of David. The sign of verse 14 is to the house of David, that is, the lineage of David, through whom the promise to Abraham was channeled. (See Luke, Chapters 1 and 2.) The change from Ahaz in verse 10 to the house of David in verse 13 is significant. In spite of the unbelief of Ahaz, God’s promise to Abraham through David would be fulfilled. Verse 14 is God’s assurance that the promised seed of Abraham would be born of a virgin. The word “Immanuel” in verse 14 shows His Deity. There was no way a son could be born and be Deity except by a virgin. Verse 15 sets forth His humanity. “That he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good” is a prophecy of His sinless life. “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Heb. 1:9). Verse 14 is a prophecy of His virgin birth and Deity. Verse 15 is a prophecy of His humanity and sinless life.

Now what about verse 16? Who is the child of verse 16? Is the child of verse 16 the same as the son of verses 14 and 15? The answer is no. As already pointed out, verse 14 is a prophecy of the virgin birth. This was a one-time event. Verse 16 was a prophecy that would be fulfilled in Ahaz’s life. Is there any explanation that harmonizes with these two facts and yet does no violence to the passage? There certainly must be because truth never dashes. A dual fulfillment of one prophecy dashes with the virgin birth of Christ. But let me ask again, Who is the “child” of verse 16? If the “child” of verse 16 is not the “child” that God commanded Isaiah to take with him to confront Ahaz, Isaiah’s child is never mentioned again. It makes no sense for God to command Isaiah to take the “child” and it never be mentioned again. Chapter 8:18 states specifically that Isaiah’s children were for signs and this would include the child that Isaiah was to take to confront Ahaz. Since Isaiah’s child was for a sign, and the name means “a remnant will return,” what would be more reasonable than for Isaiah to point to this child as a sign to Ahaz? That

is what I would expect after reading verse 3, then verse 13.

Furthermore, a careful reading of verses 14 through 16 makes this clear. Notice carefully the following: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a **son**, and shall call his name **Immanuel**. Butter and honey shall **he** eat, that **he** may know to refuse the evil.” Notice the word “son” and the pronoun “he.” If the “child” of verse 16 is the same as “the son” of verses 14 and 15, why not continue the pronouns, reading thus: “For before **he**,” not “child.” If “the child” of verse 16 is the same as “the son” of verses 14 and 15, there would have been no point in using the word “child.” Pronouns were used in verse 15, so why were they not sufficient if “the child” of verse 16 is “the son” of verse 14? The truth is that “the child” of verse 16 is Isaiah’s child and not “the son” of verse 14. The change from “son” in verse 14 to “child” in verse 16 was by deliberate design and purpose to separate the virgin birth and “son” of verse 14 from “the child” of Isaiah in verse 16. Isaiah’s action in carrying his son with him to confront Ahaz and then saying, “This child,” (his child) was a prophetic action. The prophetic action of verse 16 was directed to Ahaz. Before Isaiah’s child was old enough to know the good and to choose the evil, Israel and Syria were forsaken of their kings. As proof that this is correct, compare the language of verse 16 with Chapter 8:4. Note the parallel: “For before the child shall know” (7:16). “For before the child shall have knowledge to cry” (8:4). Is it difficult to see the similarity of language and the principles in these verses?

Now let me ask, Who is the child in 8:4? Surely, no one would deny that the child of 8:4 is Isaiah’s. Then it should be plain that the child of 7:16 is also Isaiah’s and it was no virgin birth. How could God have done more to avoid the confusion? God told Isaiah to take his child with him and even named the child. Surely, no one would insist that the child that Isaiah carried with him was born of a virgin, but it was this child of Isaiah’s that he had with him, perhaps even in his arms, when he made the prophecy of verse 16. It was this child that was already born that was the sign of verse 16. It seems to me that God naming the child that Isaiah carried with him should take care of keeping “the child” and “the son” separated. “The son” of verses 14 and 15 is Christ, born of a virgin. “The child” of verse 16 was Isaiah’s child, already born and born in the ordinary way. Here we have two prophecies and two fulfillments, not one prophecy and a dual fulfillment. Isaiah 7:14 should read “virgin,” not “young woman.” All attempts to justify the R.S.V. translation of Isaiah 7:14 are misdirected efforts. The King James and the American Standard Version are correct. They set forth the truth in Isaiah 7, as well as in Matthew 1.

It has long been my conviction that the Bible is its best interpreter. Letting Isaiah, along with Matthew, interpret 7:14-16 solves all the difficulties without compromising the fundamental truth of the virgin birth of Christ. This analysis of Chapter 7 fits the text, the context, and the key thought of the entire book. It holds forth the truth of Isaiah 7 and defends inspiration, prophecy, and the virgin birth. This is not a strained interpretation. It is just a simple, plain explanation of a passage that has been made difficult by ignoring what the passage says.

This is just one example of where either the King James or the American Standard Versions should be used instead of the R.S.V.

From *The Word Of Life*, Vol. V, No. 7, July, 1976

I have long appreciated the work of our late brother, Franklin Camp. He worked for years with the fine congregation at Adamsville, AL, where I first heard the truth and where I profited so much from his preaching and teaching. His encouragement to me to preach meant more than that of any other. When I preached in Alabama, I was able to attend his weekly classes and / greatly prize those notes.

The Franklin Camp Preacher Scholarship Fund, to help deserving men train to preach, has been set up and is overseen by the Adamsville Church of Christ, 4207 Adamsville Pkwy., Adamsville, AL 35005. To contribute to this good work, in his memory, make funds payable to Adamsville Church of Christ and mark them Camp Scholarship Fund.

Was Christ Born Of A Virgin Or Of A “Sexually Questionable Woman”?

Bobby Liddell Editor

One year ago, *Wineskins* (Vol. I, No. 7, Nov., 1992) carried the article: “Christmas At Matthew’s House” by Andre Resner, professor at Abilene Christian University. In it, he insults the integrity of Matthew, calling him “sneaky,” and says of Matthew’s account, “How do you begin a gospel of Jesus Christ? Each evangelist was faced with the dilemma. How would they frame the beginning?” If that is not an obvious attempt to cast doubt on verbal plenary inspiration, we can hardly imagine its purpose. Sadly, it gets worse.

Resner says the gospel of Matthew, “...begins in sexual scandal...Before he can tell the scandal of Mary’s immaculate conception, he has to subtly remind us of other scandalous women...Why does Matthew remind us of these people and their embarrassingly scandalous stories?...It could be because the most embarrassing scandal was about to be told and Matthew wanted to show that such an outlandishly embarrassing story was not out of line with the way God had always seen things done in this world.”

Resner then refers to Mary as “Another sexually questionable woman,” whom Joseph received because of a dream which, “...was real, yes, but still a dream. Could it have been a message from God? Or, could it have been his own imagination, his wanting to believe her so much that his subconscious produced a nocturnal justification for marrying her, even in the face of such an outlandish excuse?” He says it was upon this dream Joseph had to rely, “...believing in her word, that she really hadn’t slept with another man and used him to cover her shame.”

In a follow-up, “A Quick Note From Andre Resner,” (*Wineskins*, Vol. I, No. 11, April, 1993), Resner attempts to deflect the deserved blows of those who opposed his irreverent and shocking assertions by saying it was just a matter of writing style to which his detractors objected—a style, he claims, which was directed to young adults. He says, “...some are even of the opinion that it is an inappropriate medium for the subject matter of the Bible.” Surely anyone who holds the Bible above the works of men would find it so. A vulgar mockery of the Biblical record finds no appreciation from those who rightfully esteem the divinely inspired Word. Mr. Resner should be ashamed instead of offering such a pitiable defense.

He then affirms his deep belief in the divinity and virgin birth of Jesus. We would hope Mr. Resner truly believes so, but somehow, that just does not fit, friends. Suppose one were to assert, “Jesus was another morally questionable man,” based on the false charges some made (cf., Luke 7:34), and then affirm his deep belief in Jesus’ moral purity. Would one who truly believes in the divinity and moral purity of Jesus so recklessly speak as if he did not? Should he be surprised to find objection to his impudent message? Hardly.

God, elsewhere in His inspired record, accurately depicts both the good and the bad in the characters found in the lineage of Christ. We make no quarrel with the truth. We do, however, deny the baseless assertions made in “Christmas At Matthew’s House.” We also take strong issue with one who would, under the guise of “writing style,” flippantly defame Mary and; thus, as a logical consequence, cast doubt upon the virgin birth of our Lord. The article is in line with the mindset of the *Wineskins* staff. “Christmas At Matthew’s House” is just another evidence of the *Wineskins* mentality whose adherents, in their pseudo-scholarship, embrace warmed over denominational dogma proudly parading it as if it were some great new-found truth discernible only to the spiritually elite. Sadly, many brethren love to have it so.

Good brethren, I left the errors of denominationalism years ago because of the very disrespect for God and His Word which the *Wineskins* group would now foist upon a trusting, though woefully ill-prepared, brotherhood.

Their pretentious claims of piety and enlightenment fail to mask their devilish doctrines. Only those who have swallowed the poison of modernistic liberalism could print and defend such a vulgar approach to the beautiful inspired account of Jesus’ virgin birth as revealed through Matthew.

What must I Do to Be Saved?

The Bible answer to this most important question applies to all men. To be saved from sin and have the abundant life now and eternally, one must:

1. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:1 7).
2. Believe in Jesus as the Christ John 8:24).
3. Repent of all sins (Acts 2:38).
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
5. Be baptized to have sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
6. Remain faithful in service to God (Rev. 2:10).

“And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).

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