

# Defender

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

*Volume XVI*

*1987*



January

April

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February

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# DEFENDER

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

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## What About Our MUSIC OF TODAY ? ? ?

**Anti-Marriage  
Anti-Family  
Anti-Christian**

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*Should Christians Knock Rock?  
Must We Condemn Country Music?  
Is All Heavy Metal Ungodly?  
Do The Lives Of The Performers Matter?  
Is It Really As Bad As Some Say?  
Should We Just Sell Our Radios?*

*Questions -- Many Questions  
Are There Any Solutions?*

*Let's Study The Facts -- And  
Reach For Sensible Suggestions!*

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As the teenager listened to radio blasting out the final notes of the latest hit song, she said, "Did you ever hear anything so wonderful?" To that comment, her father replied, "Well, once, when a truck loaded with empty milk cans collided with another truck loaded with ducks!"

Obviously, the above crude illustration points to the various perspectives from which we could approach this study. Please be willing to read further, with an open mind, concerning this vital subject that touches the lives of **everyone!**

There are some great songs on the airwaves. Some love songs that speak of true, lasting love serve a great purpose to teach the way of righteousness. Whether "The Glory Of Love," or "Cherish," etc. we have reason to emphasize the greatness of some of the music today. But, how sad, that they are few and far between.

**Tina Turner** screams out in a recent song, "What's love got to do with it?" **Rod Stewart** asks in a song, "Do you think I'm sexy?" **Janis Joplin** advised "Get it while you can." **Donna Summer** sang about "bad girls" and cries out for "hot stuff." That possibly reflects accurately the attitude of many of the singers, performers especially in the rock music field. In the following material, we will suggest that much of the rock music of today is "**Anti-marriage, anti-family, and anti-Christian!**"

U. S. News and World Report, Oct. 31, 1977, reported, "Hot selling songs with sexually explicit lyrics are moving up on the charts -- causing widespread concern about effects on youth across the U.S.....critics are worried chiefly about the long-range effects of permissive lyrics on the impressionable young..." Then again in April of 1979, we read from this same publication, "some sociologists are convinced that recorded music is the strongest of all social influences on tens of thousands of American youngsters -- especially those without close ties to the traditional source of guidance such as family, religion and school."

Over 200 years ago, **Andrew Fletcher** said, "Give me the making of the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws." Whether we are fully aware of its massive influence in our lives or not, music of today (as in all generations past) has a tremendous impact upon everyone of us.

The same characteristics, the same lyrics, the same promotion of sex, violence and anti-holiness that in the past bound protesters together in opposition to such ungodliness is the same JUNK that now leads youth into drug and alcohol abuse, permissive and perverted sex and a total disrespect for authority. How fickle is this creature known as man. It has been suggested that:

**First We Abhor!**

**Then Tolerate!**

**Then We Embrace!**

I would challenge each of you with the following consideration: "Where are YOU in the above three categories?" Do you hate it; or are you merely tolerating it; or are you defending it?

Recently (1985), **Charlie Chase** of Channel 4 in Nashville, Tennessee reported that 81% of teens of today (according to a recent large survey) reflected that MUSIC was the most important thing to them in their life. Did they say, "The most important thing in their entire life?" And of that number 88% stated that ROCK music was their favorite, with 39% stating that the NEW WAVE was their preference.

**We cannot escape MUSIC!** It is every- where. It is found in the home, in the car, at work and school and even in our stores. Many folks today go to sleep with the radio playing and then wake up the next morning by the same manner. A recent study showed that the average young person listened to the radio *six hours per day!* And in that same study, it revealed that many adults listen to the radio over *three hours per day!* Could we ever successfully suggest that the music of today does not greatly influence and mold our lives?

**It is BIG BUSINESS!** U. S. News & World Report, April 30, 1979 (in other words, several years ago) declared the "*Recording Industry A 4 Billion Dollar Hit.*" Of that four billion, rock music is over 40%! Pop & Disco was another 22%, leaving only approximately 36% to the remaining categories: country, jazz, classical, children's, soul, middle of the road, and comedy.

The apostle Paul exhorts us to not be conformed to the world in Romans 12:1-2. In I John 2:15-17 we are admonished not to love the world, neither the things in the world. James states in 4:4 that an alliance with the world makes us enemies of our Lord. So we plead....

***Don't Let The World Mold You!***

For be assured friend, that the actors, songwriters, hollywood producers, record distributors, etc. are endeavoring to "*mold you!*" They want you to want what they sell. They want you to think that you just MUST have the latest album, watch the latest movie, buy the latest outfit -- regardless of how vulgar, filthy, or unChrist-like it may be. In fact, in order to OUTDO those who have gone before, to TOP the latest act, to be the greatest drawing card in the industry -- to just be IT, requires that there is more sex, vulgarity, filthy language and actions, abnormal behavior and such like. I do indeed understand what the apostle Paul was speaking about when he spoke about the ones who had left that which was natural, as well as that which is unnatural -- but does it not describe our world today quite well. For it is a fact that:

***Abnormality Has Become Normality!  
Normality Has Become Abnormality!***

We surely can find an application at this point to the forceful statement in Exodus 23:2, "*Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.*"

Let it be stated that these thoughts are not directly exclusively to ROCK music, though ROCK music is the most offensive and more frequently guilty of spewing out the vile references to free, pre-marital, extra-marital sexual involvements; the advocating of the use of drugs; drinking of alcohol; bestiality; the major emphasis of homosexuality as being just another lifestyle for one to chose from...perfectly acceptable; violence in almost every conceivable form; vulgarity; hypnotic control it appears to have over the young people of today; disrespect for authority (parents, laws of the land, etc); and the list continues to the point of nausea! In fact, we only wish that we had the time and space to adequately view not only the "*music of today*" but also the **video** industry as well. If we would merely take the time to view a thirty minute segment of the latest videos (country or rock) then we would see for ourself how distorted and twisted the minds of mankind have gone. (Parents, be aware and beware of much of what infiltrates your home via the radio and television! Love your children enough to take the time to know what they are regularly watching).

Oftentimes, COUNTRY music is even more offensive to the Christian because of the ability to hear and understand the words, the actual message of the song, more clearly. Songs that often speak of "*Oh, I like it when you're not a lady. You drive me crazy, when we're making love.*" It is obvious to assume that the two of whom the song is speaking are NOT husband and wife! Notice the anti-Biblical, anti-Christ attitude of, "*I don't care what's right or wrong...just help me make it through the night!*" Another song asks, "*How could it be wrong when it feels so right?*" Or, we might consider songs that speak of "*summer loving in the dandelions.*" **Gene Watson** states blatantly, "*I'd make love to you in a New York minute...lose no time doing it.*" **Ronnie McDowell** sings of "*Wandering Eyes*" and of spending his time, watching girls go by -- picking out the ones he'd like to make love to. He also sings of "*older women are beautiful lovers,*" for older women know how to please a man. Look at some of the titles of **country** songs and see the emphasis on the *worldly and ungodly*. "*The Girl Most Likely To,*" "*You Turn Me On,*" "*My Son Calls Another Man Daddy,*" "*Love To Love You Baby,*" "*Night Moves,*" "*Torn Between Two Loves,*" "*Lay Down Sally,*" "*You Never Done It Like That,*" "*Hot Child In The City,*" and on and on.

Surely, children of the heavenly Father must not condone ANY music that conveys the

sentiments referred to above! Yet, (an additional sad situation within itself), there are some today who defend the "music of today" as having great value, seemingly without effort to condemn the trash and filth contained in much of it. To speak specifically, recently in a "Christian college" publication, one of the writers, (who was reacting to a lecture delivered in a nearby town), spoke ever so slurringly about those who condemn Satan's music -- and through words (as well as the music played on that colleges' radio station) defend its existence in our lives. Sad! How sad! And the seriousness of the overall problem is seen in that this is only a **brief** sampling of "today's music and the general attitude concerning it."

In his book *The Battle for the Family*, Dr. Tim LaHaye lists rock music as one of the fifteen things threatening family life in our country. He declares that "Rock music is a vicious enemy of the family and should have no place in a Christian home."

## Rock Music Stars

Let us notice the attitudes, philosophies, and directions of many of their lives from their own words. The quotations are of public record, from newspapers, magazines, interviews, etc.

**David Bowie** was the first pop music star to openly proclaim his homosexuality. Bowie states, "Rock and roll has always been the devil's music. It could well bring about a very evil feeling in the West." (Rolling Stone, 2-12-76, p. 83).

**Jefferson Starship** utilized blasphemy as a part of their performance. For example, in their album, "Long John Silver," they describe Jesus as a bastard having an affair with Mary Magdalene. Their guitarist **Craig Chaquico** observed, "Rock concerts are the churches of today. Music puts them on a spiritual plane. All music is God." (Bay Area Music Magazine, 2-1-77).

**Elton John** openly projects his attitude of no restraints toward pre-marital sex, and even that of his practicing homosexuality, as he declared, "There's nothing wrong with going to bed with somebody of your own sex. I just think people should be very free with sex..." (Rolling Stone, 10-7-76, p. 17).

**KISS** is described by their producer Bob Ezrin as "symbols of unfettered evil and sensuality" (Rolling Stone, 3-25-76, p. 9). Numerous of their songs have Satanic overtones, and they believe they can use the devil to get things done. Gene Simmons said, "If God is hot stuff, why is he afraid to have other gods before him? I've always wanted to be God" (Circus, 9-13-76, p. 42). While in Amarillo, Gene was interviewed by Audrey Eckhardt (3-22-83). In the taped interview, when asked what he had done for the last three years

since the band was not on tour, said, "I increased the population of the U. S. noticeably; other than that...woke up in bed with a lot of girls whose names I cannot remember." To further reflect where he is coming from, and thus the perspective that is taught in example and songs, he also said, "My lifestyle is absolutely promiscuous. I don't want to get married, have kids, and I certainly don't hide that. I want to have as many girls as I can before the ground claims me, and that's what makes me happy." In Hard Rock Magazine (6-78, p. 62) he said, "The band is concerned with sex and little else."

**Queen** wants to "shock and be outrageous" (Circus, 4-74, p. 41). They openly flout their group's bisexuality. Freddie Mercury admits, "On stage, I am a devil" (Circus, 3-17-77, p. 42).

**Mike Jagger** of the **Rolling Stones** admits that his first sexual experience was homosexual and confesses a desire for his own daughter to have sex "at an early age" (People, 10-3-77, p. 108).

**Deborah Harry** (lead singer for **Blondie**) says, "Rock and roll is sex, 100%...I wear sexy clothes, I wear short skirts -- trying to look hot" (Circus Magazine, 7-7-77). Further she says, "Sometimes music can make you\_\_\_\_\_. I don't know if people\_\_\_\_\_to my music. I hope so."

**Bill Ward**, of the group **Black Sabbath**, said, "Satan could be God" (Circus Magazine, 12-71).

**Motley Crue** in their song, "Piece of Your Action" vocalize, "I want you, I need you, I want you to be mine tonight. You need me, you tease me, Use you up, throw you away. You're fire, taking me higher, Don't burn me, don't let me down. You need me now, I'll teach you how. Come on and go all the way."

**Prince**, who sang the song *Purple Rain*, said, "I'm not a woman; I'm not a man; I am something that you've never had...."

**Peter Dinklage** of the group **Who** said, "Pop music has become boring, what we need is more noise, more sex, more violence, more vulgarity."

**Ozzie Osburn** declared, "If I had a kid, I wouldn't let him come to my show."

**Jimi Hendrix** said, "Music is spiritual. You can hypnotize people with the music and then when you get them to the weakest point you can preach into their subconscious what you want to say."

**John Lennon**, of the **Beatles**, said, "We are more popular than Jesus Christ."

**Bob Segar**, in the song *Night Moves* (a song that has an appealing beat/rhythm) he strongly promotes sexual activity -- without being in love (and obviously NOT married). The words of the song: "We weren't in love, Oh, no far from it, We weren't searching for some pie sky summit, We were just young and restless and bored, living by the sword. And we'd steal away every chance we could to the back room, alley or trusty

*wood, I used her, she used me, but neither one cared, we were getting our share, working on those night moves."*

**Newsweek**, 4-2-79, p. 58, stated that *"Rock is the music of rebellion, against parents, against the establishment, against social restraints."*

The **Beatles** said, *"Our music is capable of causing emotional instability, disorganized behavior, rebellion and even revolution"* (Circus Magazine, 6-30-81, p. 21).

**Alice Cooper** points out that *"If I were a kid, Alice would be my hero. He's a rebellion symbol. He doesn't have to answer to anybody."*

The **Sex Pistols** declare *"I am the Anti-Christ.....I want to be anarchy"* in the song *Anarchy in U. K.*

**John Lennon** is quoted in the **Newsweek**, 3-21-66, as saying, *"Christianity will go. It will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn't argue about it. I'm right, right and will be proved right. We are more popular than Jesus now."*

The manager of the **Village People** states, *"I am sincerely trying to produce songs to make gay people more acceptable"* (Newsweek, 4-2-79, p. 64).

**Paul Stanley** of **KISS** says, *"You know what we're getting a lot of lately? Letters from 16 and 17 year old girls with little Polaroid pictures of them naked. That's amazing. That's great. There's nothing like knowing you're helping the youth of America -- UNDRRESS."* (Circus Magazine, 1-20-76, p. 36).

**David Roth** said, *"We are gathered here in celebration of Sex, Drugs and Rock and Roll"* (Shofor Magazine, Fall, 1983, p. 10).

**AC/DC** sings (?) in the song *Shoot To Thrill*, *"Put your head up to me, Pull the trigger, Really do it now. Shoot to thrill -- way to kill."*

**David Crosby** said, *"I figured the only thing to do was to steal their kids -- by saying that, I'm not talking about kidnapping. I'm just talking about changing young peoples value systems which remove them from their parents world very effectively"* (Rolling Stones Magazine, Vol. 1, p. 410).

**Prince** is notorious for his erotic lyrics and obscene behavior in his concerts. But in his song *"Erotic City"* there are clear, distinct and frequent slang references to the sex act -- that has brought many disc jockeys and/or stations to the point they refuse to play the song!

A few weeks ago, in a Sunday morning Bible class, some precious Christ-like teens were discussing the problems they face day-to-day: the filthy, vulgar messages of many of the songs of today. I asked them to bring to the next class the words either copied or written down. They did just that -- but it was NOT possible to read the words in our class. Yes, it is a mixed class (boys and girls together), but folks, I would NOT have read it even

if it had been just a class of boys! Godless damnable filth!

Is it not appropriate to refresh our memory about the declaration of the apostle Paul in Romans 12:9:

***"Abhor that which is evil;  
cleave to that which is good"***

## **The END Result Of Some Of Their Lives**

**Janis Joplin** once said *"I'm so scared of losing it all, so afraid it won't last....I'm going to live it up."* She did, and now she is dead! She died in 1970, at the age of 27 of heroin overdose.

**Brian Jones**, Rolling Stones guitarist, drowned in 1969 at age 26 while under the influence of liquor and drugs.

**Jim Morrison**, singer, leader of the Doors, died in 1971 at age 27 of an apparent heart attack, but was a heavy drinker.

**Jimi Hendrix**, guitarist/singer, died in 1970 at age 27 after an overdose of sleeping pills.

**Elvis Presley**, singer, died in 1977 at age 42, ostensibly of a heart attack, but was addicted to a wide variety of drugs.

**Keith Moon**, drummer for the Who, died in 1978 at age 32 from an overdose of drugs.

**Sid Vicious**, guitarist with The Ruts, died at age 24 in 1980 of a heroin overdose.

**John Bonham**, drummer for Led Zeppelin, died in 1980, choking to death in his own vomit after downing 40 shots of Vodka in twelve hours.

**John Belushi**, singer of The Blues Brothers, died at age 33 in 1982, speed-balling, mixing cocaine and heroin.

Surely the message is quite clear: Alcohol, free-sex, drugs, supposed attained success and stardom do NOT give lasting peace, satisfaction and tranquility! While we are NOT suggesting that all popular singers are engulfed in immorality -- many flaunt openly their devilish lifestyles, thus greatly influencing our youth.

## **What Does The Bible Say About This Subject?**

Obviously, the Inspired Word does not address every NEW innovation, evil, etc. that comes along. But, the timeless, ageless old Jerusalem gospel speaks to EVERY matter -- even those such as our subject under consideration. Let us read with open minds the relative passages and see what the Christian today should do with this matter.

**Exodus 23:2** -- *"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."* Regardless of how many

engage in an activity -- condone it with their actions and words -- declare it as the "in" thing to do or be -- wrong is still wrong. The majority has seemingly always followed evil!

**Romans 12:9** -- "*Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*" It is quickly established that many who represent rock music advocate, practice, exhort others to engage in evil practices. We must NOT sit idly by and close our eyes and hope that the problem will somehow go away. All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for the righteous to remain silent. We are obligated to ABHOR (hate, despise, loathe) EVIL!

**Revelation 21:8** -- We are told that the fearful (those afraid to take a stand); murderers; sexually immoral; idolaters (those who adore, defend and/or worship evil) and all liars will be tormented in eternal fire forever. If we are honest, we must conclude that those who engage in such a lifestyle and philosophy are described in this passage and thus are condemned (unless they are willing to change. Surely then, Christians (faithful followers of God) will not support, condone, sanction such evil by their purchasing of records, attending concerts, listening and regularly feeding upon such filth!

**Romans 12:1-2** -- Paul declares that we are not to be conformed to this world, but instead to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. We learn that our responsibility is to insure that the world does not mold us, but rather we strive to influence the world with godliness (Matt. 5:16; I Pet. 2:9). We are NOT accomplishing this if we engage in activities, listen to the same trashy music, go to the same filthy places, and speak the same worldly words as others in the world. After our obedience to the gospel we are a "good apple" in the midst of a bushel of apples that are questionable, at best. We must make certain that the world does not influence us to return to the worldly ways!

**I Thessalonians 5:22** -- Christians are taught to abstain from fleshly lusts, from all appearances of evil! How in the name of reason and common sense can any child of God claim to be abstaining (staying away) from all appearances of evil while buying records which have filth on the album covers, speak and teach filth in the songs contained on the record, and contribute to the one singing, thus encouraging more of similar nature to be produced? Instead of abstaining, we are totally condoning such activity by our actions!

**I John 2:15-17** -- Followers of Christ are not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world. Those things that are in the world, "*the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*" are not of the Father, but are of the world. We might suggest that the above phrase speaks a quite adequate description of the lewd, sensual,

suggestive music of today. Verse 17 of this same passage, states that only "*he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*" We see that one MUST put the matters of this world in proper perspective; realize that we are merely passing through this land (pilgrims, strangers, sojourners) for a brief time and must keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:2).

**Philippians 4:8** -- Suggests that the ones who desire to draw themselves close to God must *think* on those things that are *honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report*. The next logical question would have to be, "*Does the above description sound like it is speaking of the music of today?*" Surely, we agree that the vast majority is NOT pure, lovely, etc.

**II Corinthians 11:3** -- Paul states, "*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*" Those who will often accept believe and accept the truth on many subjects, will often reject that which touches their lives the most. Such is the case with the music subject. If they like, listen to, and have supported, in times past, the musicians included in this study -- then they often are unwilling to listen or study with an open mind -- for fear they will have to change. Is it possible that their minds have been corrupted?

**I Corinthians 6:19-20** -- To the Corinthian church, Paul said that they were to "*glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*"

In a companion passage, Colossians 3:17 suggests the similar idea of "*whatever we do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God.*" I ask, is it possible to sit at a concert, or listen to the questionable songs in the privacy of your home -- and do so to the glory of God? If Christ came back to the earth and visited your house, would you play that type of music for Him? I surely think not!

**I Peter 2:21** -- We are informed that Christ left us an example, and that we should follow in His steps. Paul admonished to follow him, as He followed Christ (I Cor. 11:1). May I ask, "*Do you really think that Christ (our righteous Redeemer) would listen to any of this type of music of today - very little -- or enjoy all of it?*" Surely the answer is quite obvious!

## Think About How "ROCK" Influences Your Life

It is a FACT that our lives are touched and influenced from many directions. Television, radio, records, those around us, etc.

The influence of ROCK upon our lives is from the *music, visuals in their shows, and the lives of*

**these performers idolized.** Satan is sneaky and deceitful and seeks to turn us away from serving God and to following his way. The influence of heavy rock, suggestive filthy country music in our lives instills, and teaches rebellion (against parents, authority, the way of righteousness!

Notice various ways SATAN'S INFLUENCE is evil:

### **1. Rock Influence Often Glamorizes Drugs!**

This is accomplished in the words of the songs as well as publicly known to be a part of the lives of many of the performers. Satan convinces the world that good is evil and evil is good. To the young people (even to those who are members of the Lord's church), such a lifestyle may be so appealing -- to be a *star* -- to have large amounts of money -- to be popular -- to be able to do what they want any time they want -- and then to couple that with *doing drugs!* Satan makes sin appeal so glamorous. Remember Moses chose to suffer with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season (Heb. 11:24-25).

**2. The Influence Of Rock Is Toward Immorality!** Think about it for a moment. How many rock performers do you know that are religious; serving Jesus Christ; attending church services? How many of them believe that one should not engage in sexual activity outside of the God approved marriage relationship? It needs to also be noticed that even the clothing, hair styles, Satanic outfits; etc. are not in tune with Christ's standards of morality, but quite accurately represent the immoral! Their message often is one of anger, rebellion and rejection of anything that *the establishment* has condoned!

## **Are There Any Suggestions And/Or Solutions?**

First, let us suggest that we **not issue a blanket decree against all music.** As mentioned earlier, not all music is ungodly and wicked. There are good songs. To issue a blanket condemnation would be comparable to advocating the necessity of our living in a cave to escape from the pollutions of the wicked world around us. Our greater concern should be "*keep the world out of our us -- not keeping us from the world.*"

Second, **be willing to take the time to become familiar with the songs/groups of today's youth.** Show that you truly have an interest. Be open-minded and objective -- instead of going into the venture with your mind already closed. Look for the good and positive. But, equally be willing and ready, to draw the line when the lyrics, suggestions, etc. are not in harmony with the life of a faithful follower of Christ....on his/her way to heaven.

Third, **let us teach and discernment.** We (as parents, teachers, etc.) should have as our goal to teach our youth *love for the right and hate for the evil!* Likewise, we should teach (as well as practice) our youth to have the courage to say **NO** when it is needed to remain pure and consistent with righteous living. Folks, we have drifted to our present state in attitude and practice! A few years ago, we would have **immediately** turned the radio and/or television OFF, if such filth that is today generally accepted had come across the air waves. We just would NOT have tolerated it! Yet, today, little by little, small change by change, we have **drifted** to the present state. On television, we allow man and woman to be in bed together (plainly and often explicitly involved). Filthy four letter words are supposedly "*expected.*" Then, on the radio, we no longer "*discern*" between good and evil -- but frequently just take whatever is presented to us.

Fourth, **let us encourage good alternatives from which to choose.** Let us change, mold, alter the world -- instead of allowing the world to change us (I John 2:15-17; Matt. 5:16; James 4:4). Christians have many great opportunities of recreational and pleasant involvements without having to tolerate sinful activities. We must let the world see that the followers of Christ are different, peculiar (I Pet. 2:9). Be creative.

Fifth, **recognize that Satan is alive and well - and will do everything possible to gain control of everyone!** Notice a few of the many references that suggest Satan's extraordinary desire to control our lives: Luke 22:31, "*...Satan hath desired to have you...*" In Matthew 7:15, Satan and his servants are referred to as "*ravening wolves.*" Acts 20:29, it is "*...grievous wolves.*" In Matthew 13:19, Satan is referred to as "*...the wicked one...*" The apostle Paul warned in Philippians 3:2 to "*beware of dogs...evil workers*" and then in I Timothy 6:5 he further stated that there were "*perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth...*" There were those who were "*beguiling unstable souls*" (II Timothy 2:14). In the first century, many were "*speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples*" (Acts 20:30), "*transforming themselves into servants of righteousness*" when in reality they were servants of Satan (II Cor. 11:13-15). Satan's characteristics include "*cunning craftiness...lie in wait to deceive*" (Eph. 4:14); "*enticing words*" (Col. 2:4, 8); "*pernicious ways*" (II Pet. 2:2); they creep in unaware (Jude 4); use feigned (hypocritical) words to make merchandise of you (II Pet. 2:3); etc. etc. etc.

Surely we can conclude that ***Satan is alive and actively involved in seducing many in the 20th century!***

Sixth, **learn to FLEE!** Paul



admonishes us to **"flee"** youthful lusts (II Tim. 2:22). We should **"flee"** ungodly sexual advances of others (cf. Joseph as the account is recorded in the book of Genesis). We must **"flee"** the very appearance of evil (I Thess. 5:22). We must **"flee"** the various works of the flesh, as itemized in Galatians 5:19-21 and Romans 1:29-32. Christians will desire to **"flee"** the garbage and filth that appears on television and/or movies (I Tim. 4:12) and instead shine as a bright light for Christ-likeness (Matt. 5:16).

Seventh, **face the fact** that while we cannot Satan-proof our youth of today, we can so forewarn them as to forearm them! We must instill in this young followers of Christ the solid foundation of a love for righteousness and a hate for evil! We must help them to know that they will be tempted; attacked by Satan and his servants -- but that we can be victorious.

## Christians Stand Up And Be Counted

In every realm of our lives, let us be willing to **"stand up and be counted"** -- opposing the unrighteous, worldly, wicked actions and ways of **"modern man."** Those ways come in the day to day lives of those around us; in the various types of shows on television; in the many songs (all types of music) that are played on the radio, etc.; in magazines, newspapers, etc.

If enough will voice their objection -- if enough will refuse to shop where filth is sold - then no doubt there will be more stores and managers of stores who will follow the example of Wal-Mart stores. Read with interest, the following news report:

Bentonville, Ark. -- Rock and roll materials are being pulled from shelves of 925 Wal-Mart stores because company leaders don't believe some music groups portray the family image.... we're family oriented....The lyrics of some rock groups have come under fire for promoting sex, drug abuse and violence.

All that is necessary for evil to be victorious (even if just temporary), is for the righteous to remain silent (attempting to be neutral, and not making waves or causing difficulties)! But dear ones, the evil will NOT go away if we ignore it! History has already demonstrated that, over and over. It is definitely already past time for those who love truth, desire to glorify God in their lives and make heaven their eternal abode, to **"awake to righteousness"** and **"sin not"** (I Cor. 15:34), and encourage others to do the same. We can and we must live **"soberly, righteously and godly in this present world"** (Tit. 2:11-12).

It has been our intention to reflect on some facts that hopefully will enlighten us to the attitudes and philosophies that are being advocated

by the various performers through their songs and lifestyles. It is *not* our intention to just throw out a blanket condemnation of all types of music; nor of just a single type. Though it has been our major thrust in this brief discourse to view **rock music** in particular, for the evidence clearly demonstrates that **rock music** is the most damaging (certain performers and especially certain songs) to our youth of today! But that is NOT to say that all music that falls in the category of **rock music** should be considered as the devil's music. Neither have we suggested that just because a group and/or singer may have some songs that are filthy -- that all others by that same group and/or singer will also be of the same nature. Some of the most lovely, good love songs that have been introduced recently have been by groups that have also sung songs that are nothing but trash!

Let us speak out against evil. Let us defend and stand for TRUTH! Let us march, step by step, toward our eternal goal, heaven eternal.

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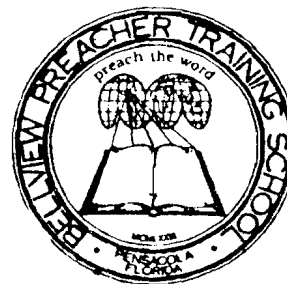
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WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND APPLICATION



# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVI, NUMBER 02

February 1987

## *International Soul Winning Workshop*

### **DOUBLE—BARRELED ERROR**

**Robert Curry**

So much has been written about two tragic issues that are affecting the Lord's church all across the nation, as well as the world. By name they are the Crossroad's Movement and an endeavor sometimes called the New Unity Movement. Both represent terrible diversions from truth and have caused many congregations to divide into splinter groups. Crossroadism aligns itself around what is called "total commitment," which, in and of itself, sounds Biblical, but in practice and work is far from Biblical truth. The New Unity Movement is the work of several erring brethren to form an alliance of the non-instrumental church of Christ with the Independent Christian Church (instrumental).

Coming March of 1987 is what is called the **International Soul-Winning Workshop**, held within the facilities of the Memorial Drive church of Christ in Tulsa, Oklahoma. This workshop has been called by one of its previous directors, Marvin Phillips (Garnett church of Christ, which hosted the workshop last year), "...the largest gathering of members of the churches of Christ in the world..." The sad part about this is that Marvin Phillips, the Garnett congregation and some on the Tulsa program this year are vocal advocates of both issues before mentioned, which have been unfortunate stains upon the Lord's church for too long. Listed under the heading of "Night Speakers" are such names as Dick Marcear, Richard Rodgers and Terry Rush. Each are noted advocates of one or both of these erroneous positions, offering to the observer a clear view of the potential thrust of this workshop for "soul-winning."

What is the conclusion to this? It is

painfully clear that considering the open fellowship of men such as these with false doctrine that the workshop in Tulsa is a grand soapbox from which to proclaim the sour sounds of such error. If these brethren are not using this event for such efforts, then one must wonder why they are not, for they stand before "...the largest gathering of members of the churches of Christ in the world..."

It is sad that this large gathering of souls is undertaken through the leadership and teaching of men who have openly defied Biblical truth. A great, evangelistic effort as this workshop is capable of producing is simply to be handed over to the teaching and glorification of error and misapplication of Scripture. Paul warned Timothy about false teachers: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (I Tim. 4:1). How much more seductive can a situation be than this workshop: Large crowds, proclaiming soul-winning, and shouting the praises of unity and total commitment?

As with Timothy, let us be warned of such events as this, marking those who advocate error and sow the seeds of division among the unwary. In response to the perverted form of gospel that Galatia had fallen into, Paul asked: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you" (Gal. 3:1)? Let us hope, dear brethren, that we do not become bewitched as well.

# IT'S MORE THAN THE ORGAN, BROTHER

Max R. Miller

The Restoration Movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth Century was the most exciting and fruitful stirring of Christianity since the days of the apostles. Salvation through the pure gospel was once again preached with humble multitudes submitting their will to the divine will. The kingdom of the Blessed Savior was known among men and spread to far corners of the world.

In time however, there arose in the last century a battle of strife and discord so great there was a cleavage of the body of Christ. One segment of believers made for themselves gods of the organ and Missionary Society. Their introduction, especially mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship, caused division and has been a continuing cause of separation between the two groups of believers. Many efforts of reconciliation have all failed. Unity is no more an expected reality today than it was at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Efforts to unify the Independent Christian Church and the church of Christ have been from a Scriptural basis. There has been an appeal to the Bible and its proper interpretation as the standard for unity. Many debates over the music question (the real cause of the division and today the chief obstacle to unity) ensued, many articles, lessons and sermons were the fruits of unity efforts. Often, it seemed, unity was in the offing, almost in the hand, almost a reality—but the instrument was ever the stumblingblock. We of the church of Christ would not, could not accept mechanical instrument in worship; the Christian Church people would not give it up. Therefore, if unity is attained it must be either on something other than Holy Scriptures, or a different interpretation of the Scriptures than we have always held.

David Erickson writing in **One Body**, a publication of those in the Christian Church, has named a rule of interpretation which, he thinks, is essential to Biblical

understanding and consequently a solution to the problem of our division. In his article, "Biblical Interpretation In Establishing Authority For Action, Fact or Interpretation (**One Body**, Winter-Spring 87, p. 8ff), he names five rules for correct Biblical interpretation. His fifth rule is:

The interpreter must acknowledge and depend upon the role of the Spirit in biblical hermeneutics. One's view of Scripture and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit converge when one faithfully attempts Christian decision making. We must remember that we can only properly interpret Scripture when the Holy Spirit is within us, making us alert to obey His direction. God is still the God who acts in history and will lead His Church through the prompting of the Spirit to new lands and cultures and areas of concern. I believe God's Spirit is doing that today.... I'm convinced that the Holy Spirit aids us in that struggle.

According to David Erickson's rule of hermeneutics it takes more to understand God's word than the word itself. It disallows Paul's statement, "whereby, when ye read, ye may understand..." Reading, thinking, study of the word is inadequate. One must have the Holy Spirit playing His role of interpretation of Scripture. It is only when one's view of Scripture (a result of his reading and study) "and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit converge" that the Christian can make the right decision, or the correct interpretation of Scripture. It is the word plus something else that enables the Christian to know truth. The word itself is inadequate. "...we can only properly interpret Scripture when the Holy Spirit is within us, **making us alert to obey His direction.**" When does the Holy Spirit do this, and how does He do it? Here, the Holy Spirit commands our reasoning powers, making us alert to obey His direction. Then one knowing the will of the Spirit, he must  
(Continued on page 11)

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Max R. Miller, Editor  
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# CAN'T START WRONG AND END RIGHT

Ivie Powell

A basic error of many is starting wrong, thinking they can end right. In order for one to end right one must start right, or stop going in the wrong direction and start anew or right. There is no exception to this rule?

For example, many suppose that one can accidentally be added to the Lord's church on the grounds that one is honest and sincere. Yet, what is often overlooked is the following: That one has (1) heard false doctrine, (2) believed false doctrine, (3) obeyed false doctrine and (4) practiced false

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**ORGAN** (Continued from page 10)

obey. It is the spirit's urging and directing rather than truth that allows for proper interpretation and obedience. "God...will lead His church through **the prompting of the Spirit** to new lands and cultures and areas of concern--I'm convinced that **the Holy Spirit aids us in that struggle**" (p. 8 emphasis supplied). This is teaching that one can properly interpret Scripture only when the Holy Spirit is within him, making him alert to obey His direction. The writer does not explain how the Holy Spirit is within us but apparently in some personal, literal, overpowering manner. Promptings, leadings, directings of the Holy Spirit to do or believe apart from one's own rational, reasonable, logical study of the Bible is going beyond the word of God and denying its all sufficiency in all matters of faith (II Tim. 3:16,17; II Pet. 1:3). Catholics have made the Pope the interpreter of Scripture and conveys the right interpretation to man through the Catholic Church; Erickson makes the Holy Spirit the interpreter of Scripture who then conveys it infallibly so to man.

David Erickson raises a question: "What is to be done when equally committed servants of the Lord find themselves at odds: disagreeing on Scripture interpretation?" He later gives the answer as quoted above, which essentially is: The one who has the strongest prompting, the strongest urges of the Holy Spirit must naturally have the right interpretation. This raises another question: what is to be done when the Spirit prompts one of the "committed servants" to obey one thing, and prompts the other "committed servant" to obey

doctrine. Therefore, how can such a one be doctrinally correct?

New Testament Christianity is **not** something someone stumbles into accidentally without prior knowledge! A basic ingredient in obeying the truth is wholesome or correct teaching (John 6:44-45). Correct teaching involves (1) hearing the doctrine (John 8:32; Rom. 10:17), (2) believing true doctrine (Heb. 11:6), (3) obeying true doctrine (I Pet. 1:22), and (4) practicing true doctrine (John 1:22; Rev. 22:14). Thus starting right and ending right.

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that which is the direct opposite of the first? How can it be proved which one is right, or would not both be right (both prompted by the Holy Ghost)? Would not these two "equally committed servants of the Lord find themselves at odds, disagreeing on Scriptural interpretation?" Erickson's solution is no solution. He speaks: "Our past have shown our struggle with our dilemma." His solution does not dissolve the dilemma; it is no more than Pentecostalism and Calvinism.

Erickson, in his fourth rule of interpretation, speaks of "Martin Luther who insisted that interpretation must be guided by that which "urges" or "promotes" Christ. This was Luther's great mistake and the ruin of the Protestant Reformation. Luther's rule allows anything and everything that one feels (that which is urged), and anything one **thinks** (human reason) would promote the cause of Christ. His rule sets aside the authority of Holy Scripture; Erickson's fifth rule sets aside the responsibility of human judgment in understanding and interpretation of the Scripture. They both, Luther's and Erickson's hermeneutics, are the same and equal.

The Holy Spirit is not going to urge us, or prompt us, or lead us, apart from the word of God; neither will the Spirit lead us in conjunction with the word, converging with the word, to give interpretation of the Scripture. It is in the truth and truth alone we learn God's will for us.

You see, brethren, it is more than ~~the~~ organ.

# THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND ITS FOLLY

Dennis Gulledge

The feminist movement has grown at a phenomenal rate in the last quarter century. The agitation for "liberation" of women has grown out of discrimination and abuse down through the years. We must admit, (1) Women have not generally been paid wages equal to men for the same work, (2) Women often are not able to obtain credit regardless of their income, and (3) women have not had the same opportunities for advancement in the work force as men have had.

Also, the human male and his view of women has led to the bitterness and inferiority that many women feel. In all fairness we must admit that some men reflect a blind and excessive superiority toward women. They think that their greater physical strength gives them the right to forcefully impose their will upon women. Thus, wife beating is one of the major domestic problems of our day. Some men believe that women should occupy a servant relationship to themselves. In those lands where the Bible has not gone such is still the situation that exists. In an article entitled, "What Christianity Has Done For Women," Andrew M. Connally, wrote, "In heathen lands she is bartered and sold like cattle on the auction block. Often she is bought by the husband of paying 'labola' --the bridge price of so many cows to the girl's father.... Whenever one travels where the Bible is not known woman's lot in life is one of great sorrow, suffering and endless work. She has no political or legal rights at all. Everything is slanted for the male. In all parts of the world she is a beast of burden. She exists solely for the use and pleasure of her husband. She is abused, beaten, cursed and degraded at man's whim" (*Spiritual Sword*, July 1975, p. 43).

The examples of chauvinism are evident. It flourishes in the wake of ignorance of God's will. Paganistic religions promote the chauvinistic view as does Hedonism (the Playboy philosophy). Sadly, our attitudes and behaviour toward the feminine gender has paved the way for the feminist movement. This does not excuse this movement in any way, but does help to explain why it exist. I will here try to show what the feminist movement is, and discuss its plans and purposes.

## What Is The Feminist Movement?

"Feminism" is a synonym for the "Women's Liberation Movement." It was born in the mid 1960's with the publication of Betty Friedan's book, *The Feminine Mystique*. From 1972-1982 feminism was the fashionable doctrine of the media, colleges and women's magazines. Feminism is accurately defined by these further characterizations given by Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly: (1) Feminism is an ideology which teaches that women have been mistreated since time began, and that even in America women are discriminated against by an oppressive male-dominated society (*The Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Dec. 1982). (2) Feminism is a political movement which teaches that a just society must mandate identical treatment for men and women in every phase of our lives, no matter how reasonable it is to treat them differently; and that gender must never be used as the criterion for any decision (*Ibid*). (3) Feminism is an economic movement which teaches that true fulfillment and 'liberation' for women are in a paying job rather than in the confining, repetitious drudgery of the home, and that child care must not be allowed to interfere with a woman's career (*Ibid*). (4) Feminism is a psychological outlook on life which is basically negative; it teaches women that the odds are stacked so severely against them that they probably cannot succeed in whatever they attempt (*Ibid*). (5) Feminism is really the other side of the coin of humanism; humanism is putting man at the center and God is out there in space somewhere. Feminism is putting women in the center, making everything revolve around her (*The Forerunner*, October 1983).

What is the current status of the feminist movement? It is not wielding the kind of influence that it once did. Phyllis Schlafly states: "Feminism has become passe". In mid-1982, 'feminism' went out of style..." (*Report, Op. cit.*) What are the evidences which warrant this conclusion? She gives three: (1) The rapid increase of women in the work force choosing to have children, (2) the admission in pro-feminist journals that we are now in the "post-feminist" generation, and, (3) the fact that in 1983 women's fashions began to reflect a more "lady-like" trend.

## **Socially Negative**

To discuss the follies of radical feminism you have to deal mainly in the negatives and in the perverse. In order to discuss feminism you have to talk about what it opposes, because it is basically negative in its outlook. The feminist movement is definitely known by its fruits, as is any other false way (Matt. 7:16,20). It is pro ERA, gay rights, abortion, drafting women into the military, more power of the Federal government to control our lives, etc. It is negative regarding the things I am about to mention, and more. However, let me say just here that, I gladly concede that not every professional woman is a feminist, nor is every feminist a humanist. Yet, these observations are fairly typical of the leadership of this movement.

### **Feminism Is Anti-Family**

Consider this statement from the mother of the modern day feminist movement, Betty Friedan: "The changes necessary to bring about equality were, and still are, **very revolutionary indeed**. They involve a sex-role revolution for men and women which will restructure all our institutions: child rearing, education, marriage, family, medicine, work, politics, the economy, religion, psychological theory, human sexuality, morality, and the very evolution of the race" (*The Restorer*, Feb. 1986, p. 9). Radical feminism is obviously set against what they dub "traditional family roles."

The Scriptures speak very highly of these "traditional roles" as being God's plan for the family (Prov. 32:27-31; Titus 2:1-8). Feminists view these passages as depicting the submergence of the woman's personality and life into that of her husband's and children's. However, Christians see the whole family framework being brought into harmony with God's will.

### **Feminism Is Anti-Marriage**

Another feminist source writes, "Marriage has existed for the benefit of men and has been a legally sanctioned method of control over women.... The end of the institution of marriage is a necessary condition for the liberation of women. Therefore, it is important for us to encourage women to leave their husbands and not to live individually with men.... Now we know it is the institution that has failed us, and we must work to destroy it" (*The Restorer*, p. 9). A few

observations are in order here. First, rather than existing for the benefit of men, "Marriage is an institution ordained of God for the honor and happiness of mankind" (H. Leo Boles, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*, p. 11). Second, rather than being an instrument of male dominance, "Marriage was ordained of God to promote the highest happiness and destiny of the human family" (*Ibid*, p. 10). Third, rather than ending marriage, "It is necessary to understand God's conception of it in order to understand clearly its full significance" (*Ibid*, p. 11). Fourth, rather than encouraging women to leave their husbands, we need to encourage women to find that necessary glue to keep husband and wife together (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). Fifth, rather than the institution of marriage failing us, it is more correct to say, as Thomas B. Warren has observed, "Basically marriages fail because the persons involved in them fail as persons" (*Marriage Is For Those Who Love God And One Another*, p. 35).

### **Feminism Is Anti-Christian Morality**

This explains the blurring of sexual roles, and open endorsement of such things as homosexuality, lesbianism, abortion, etc. Feminism insists that we must remain free to choose for ourselves, and it preaches "pro-choice" in everything with total disregard for God's way. That is humanism! In the Bible we find a pro-choice man in the person of Joshua, but he was pro God's choice with reference to the decisions which affected him (Joshua 24:14,15). The inspired Psalmist was pro-choice, but not in the way feminism speaks of it, when he said, "I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me" (Psa. 119:30). That is the kind of "pro-choice" we all ought to be.

### **Feminism Is Anti-New Testament Christianity**

Any ideology which forsakes God's way in marriage, family and morality indicts itself as the enemy of the religion of Christ. It cannot be said that feminism is anti-religion, because it preaches the religion of humanism. Remember Phyllis Schlafly's assessment that, "Feminism is really the other side of the coin of humanism." And nothing is more Godless than humanism! The *Humanist Manifesto II* says, in part, "We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural.... As Non-theists we begin with humans, not God, nature not deity.... We believe...that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that

(Continued on page 15)

# THE LORD'S SUPPER

Michael McDaniel

To partake of the Lord's supper is one of the great privileges of the Christian. Jesus chose this avenue of worship for us that we may commune with Him (I Cor. 10:16), to do it in memory of His death (Luke 22:19), to proclaim that death publicly till he comes again (I Cor. 11:26), and to have us all united as one body (I Cor. 10:17) and in one place (I Cor. 11:20). Brother B. C. Goodpasture had said that in the Lord's supper there was the backward look of remembering His death, the inward look of self examination, and the forward look to the future return of the Lord. We should also take particular notice of the facts that the Lord's supper is a spiritual participation of the death of the Lord, and that Jesus is with us when we partake of it (I Cor. 10:16). He told His disciples that He would "drink it new" with them in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25). Gary Workman has said, "As we drink literally, Jesus drinks spiritually, in a "new kind of way, and we commune together."

## Terms That Identify

Although most scholars agree, with the exception of the Quaker, that this memorial supper is to be observed today, there is a wide difference of opinion as to what it is to be called. It is called eucharist by some. This is the anglicized form of the Greek word eucharista which means thanksgiving. This term is unscriptural. It is no more correct to call the Lord's supper "the Eucharist" just because thanks is given than it would be to call any common meal the eucharist for the same reason (Acts 27:35; I Tim. 4:4). Others have called it the sacrament but this too is but an invented term and has no Biblical authority. Biblically, it is called: the Lord's table (I Cor. 10:21); the Lord's supper (I Cor. 11:20); communion (I Cor. 10:16); and the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42; 20:7). Some have said that the latter term is but as reference to a common meal but in reality it is a figure of speech known as synecdoche where "a part is put for the whole." The Holy Spirit answered this quibble when He directed Paul to write, "the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? (I Cor. 10:16).

Jesus said that His disciples would "eat and drink at my table in my kingdom" (Luke

22:28-29). Is it not interesting that some denominations observe the Lord's supper, yet say that His kingdom has not come. If their theory is true, by whose authority has the Lord's table (I Cor. 10:21) been moved from the kingdom and placed in the denominational church? With those who believe the Bible there is no question that the kingdom is now in existence (Col. 1:12-13; Rev. 1:9), and Christians are now citizens of that kingdom and eat and drink at "the table in the kingdom."

## Elements Involved

It is written that Jesus took bread (I Cor. 11:23). Jesus used unleavened bread because it was so specified in the law for the Passover and for the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread which followed (Exod. 13:3-7; Matt. 26:17). Because of this, it is proper to use unleavened bread in the Supper today. If fact, Paul's references to "unleavened bread" in I Corinthians 5:7-8 would have little meaning to the predominantly Gentile church in Corinth if they were not in the practice of using unleavened bread in the Lord's supper. We are to drink of the fruit of the vine (Matt. 26:29). According to Barclay M. Newman's **Greek English Dictionary**, "the fruit of the vine...means the grapevine." The juice of the grape was used in connection with Jewish feasts (Num. 15:1-7).

## Time To Partake

Several years ago in a Bible study, a preacher of the Church of God in Christ denomination told this writer that one could partake of the Lord's supper as often as one wanted to citing I Corinthians 11:25-26 as his proof. He needed to realize, however, that it is not "as often as" one likes but "as often as" the Lord wants!

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7). The matter-of-fact way in which Luke makes this statement shows they were in the habit of assembling on the first day of the week to break bread. Notice also that Paul tarried at Troas seven days

(Continued on page 15)



#### **LORD'S SUPPER** (Continued from page 14)

and waited there until Sunday so that he could "break bread" with the disciples and then on the next day he continued on his journey toward Jerusalem. "Perhaps", someone replies, "But Luke does not say that they met every first day of the week?" Let that one remember that a week has but one first day. The Jews were told, "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy" (Exod. 20:8). The Jews realized that "Remember the sabbath" meant every sabbath; we too should realize that "upon the first day of the week" means every first day.

Faithful Christians "continued stedfastly" in their observance of the Lord's supper (Acts 2:42) rather than having it just once every few months. If once a month, quarter, or year will do, why not just once in a lifetime? The church does not have the right to decide how often the supper should be observed. "The church is subject unto Christ" (Eph. 5:24).

Some argue against weekly observance by saying the solemnity of the feast is diminished by the frequency of such observance. In reply to this argument one may ask, "Do you pray every day!" And if

you do, do you not fear that if you pray so often it may become common-place and less meaningful. It is interesting that the same people who offer this argument on solemnity will turn to I Corinthians 16:2 and insist that there it does mean every first day of every week. And too, they are careful not to apply the same argument to the practice of giving.

The writings of the early churchmen such as Barnabas, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Cyprian all show us historically that the early church did partake of the supper every Sunday. Bible scholars such as Albert Barnes, Adam Clarke, Augustus Neander, Thomas Scott, P. Doddridge, and R. A. Torrey all agree that the early Christians partook of the supper on the first day of the week. This is the same conclusion reached by those of the Restoration Movement and practiced by the church of the New Testament.

If God's people want to obey God, they will follow the Biblical instructions concerning the supper. May we continue to focus our attention on the crucified Lord as we eat with Him in His kingdom, remembering that He died for us.

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#### **FEMINISM** (Continued from page 13)

place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species."

In this article I have dealt with radical feminism and its folly. I am glad to say that feminism bears no resemblance to being "feminine." Being feminine means accentuat-

ing those womanly attributes and characteristics which make women wonderfully different from men. The feminine woman enjoys being a woman. She has not signed an aggression pact against God and society. She has a positive outlook on life. She knows that she can seek a fulfilling career, including that of wife and mother. She endeavors, above all, to be God's woman!

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WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND APPLICATION



# DEFENDER

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

VOLUME XVI, NUMBER 03

MARCH 1987

## BEGINNING AGAIN

**Bill Dillon**

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote to his daughter, away at school, brooding over a mistake:

"Finish every day and be done with it. For manners and for wise living it is a vice to remember. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; you shall begin it well and serenely, and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old non-sense. This day is for all that is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the rotten yesterdays."

The words of a once misguided religious man easily come to mind:

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13,14).

Also, the words of a once misguided King seem especially meaningful:

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me... Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation" (Psalms 51:9,10,12).

The apostle of love reminds Christians how much they need to be like Paul and David:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

The beautiful blessing of beginning again is a precious gift extended to all stumbling men. Sinners are to turn away with abhorrence from evil ways, make public confession of their new loyalty to Jesus Christ as God's Son and submit the human body to be submerged in the watery grave in the likeness of Him, who was buried, yet also was raised again for our justification (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1-4). Straying ones are beckoned to return by confessing and forsaking sins, having realized the folly of disobedience to Deity. Thank God, blessings can come from blunders.

**Thirteenth Annual Lectureship**  
**BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL**

**May 10-14, 1987**

**The Preaching That Changed The World**

Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road

Pensacola, Florida 32506

# THE MOST IMPORTANT THING--ALL WEEK LONG

Max R. Miller

*For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (I Cor. 1:21).*

To the Corinthians Paul speaks of the high priority God had given to preaching; again he writes, "...and how shall they hear without a preacher" (Rom. 10:14). Faith comes by the word of God, it must be preached far and near, then, now and forever (Rom. 10:17; Matt. 28:19,20).

A modern and affluent generation has set aside the importance of preaching. Such is human judgment. This is the consequence of man not thinking as does God; even God said, "...my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Isa. 55:8). The "smart generation" in Corinth looked on preaching as unnecessary, even foolishness. Even though many then and now deem it to be foolishness, God has determined preaching to be essential to the salvation of the believer.

Preaching has been greatly depreciated in our times. Years ago our Christian colleges began to deny that they were preacher schools. Many of us attended because we thought they were and were soon disappointed to hear our teachers and college administrators disclaim the school's purpose of training and sending out faithful preachers of the gospel of Christ. The schools continued to deemphasise preaching until now, and, true to their claim, they train and send out but few gospel preachers. The colleges that at one time were administered by great gospel preachers, and whose faculties were filled with great men of the Book, are now directed by men whose chief concerns are to conform to

standards set by non-Christians. This is all as well with many nominal Christians who swell the ranks of the church. Apparently, the church itself has given a low priority to preaching. It has little interest in training preachers, or supporting the church schools that do train preachers. Preaching is greatly restricted. Threats and intimidations to the pulpit prevail in many "good" churches. Some preachers are adversely affected and no few consequently quit preaching and join the crowd.

But still with God and faithful saints, the most important thing all week long is the Lord's Day, worshipping God in spirit and in truth, with the precious word of comfort and promise expounded. Men who preach must feel that the most important thing in his life is to stand at the sacred desk and fill his hearers hearts, heads and souls with the gospel of salvation. To him and others of like mind, the most important thing all week long is the call to worship wherein the gospel is preached.

Preaching is an honorable calling, there is none more honorable. It was God's will that first century preachers carry His word to a lost and dying world. It is His will that preachers today do the same. The busy affairs of today's world fall into insignificance compared with the essential work of preaching the gospel. A preacher who does not sense this urgency and consequently give it top priority in his life should lay aside preaching to pursue matters of greater interest to him.

## DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor  
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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

# THE GATHERING STORM

Reid E. Bennett

After Israel had come into its rest, the prophet Samuel wrote of a period when the people became lax in their responsibilities toward God. He said, "There arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10). Something happened to God's people in the changing of the guard; the forefathers fought long and hard to gain the blessings they enjoyed, but their offspring received the promised land into their hands without expending the same effort. Thus began an era of retribution from God for Israel's apostasy to bring about needed repentance and restoration.

Like Israel, the church today has a whole new generation to teach, but many have forgotten the work God has wrought for us. The church is suffering from soft, accommodative preaching to soothe the itching ears of those who will not endure sound doctrine (I Tim. 4:2-3). We have been taught that popularity is the key to growth, and have become pleasers of men, not God (Gal. 1:10). Old timers condemned sin and false doctrine, but the new generation has lost respect for the Old Paths in order to seek numbers. While this complacency toward defending the faith has lulled us into stupor, men have arisen from among ourselves speaking perversity and drawing away disciples after them (Acts 20:30). Storm clouds are gathering for the worst division in the church since 1859. Already, multitudes have been swept away by worldliness and destructive heresies. Where will you stand? Will you follow a multitude to do evil, or stand with God and hold fast the pattern of sound words (I Tim. 1:13)?

At the root of widespread apostasy is the tendency to abandon divine authority. When men give up on the authority of God's word they open a Pandora's Box; there is no limit to the variety of heresies that will come forth. Virtually all the false teaching currently leading us into apostasy has this in common. When division comes, those fallen away will stand together because they all rely on one basic premise--disregard for divine authority.

## Departure One: Love Excludes Law

Years ago Carl Ketcherside advocated a law

of love and on this basis extended fellowship to all who fit his definition of love for Christ. He differentiated between doctrine (law) and gospel, saying that we are not under law, but must hold fast to those things which pertain to the gospel, that is, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Our Lord did not make this distinction when He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Rubel Shelly prescribed abandonment of divine authority when he said, "Only such items as pertain directly to the seven ones of Ephesians 4:4-6 are of such a nature as to qualify as issues of faith." Further, he stated, "The one faith has nothing to do with our methods and procedures of doing God's work; it has to do with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus." These are not isolated cases; the same ideology is being parroted in almost every locale. The Bible states that where there is no law, there is no sin (Rom. 5:13; 7:7). It further teaches that preaching the one faith (the gospel) includes doctrine: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God" (II John 9). Jude three says to "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." Elsewhere, the Book makes abundantly clear what "the faith" is: Paul exhorted the souls in Asia Minor to "continue in the faith" (Acts 14:22); later he "delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem" (Acts 16:4-5). There was love, but there was also law.

## Departure Two: Rank Subjectivism

God honors the law of rationality (i.e., make only those conclusions which are warranted by sufficient evidence; I Thess. 5:21; John 8:32; I Tim. 4:3). Some are telling us that knowledge is relative, that one cannot know anything for certain. Such agnosticism would eliminate church discipline because one could not know that God condemns those who practice sin. Issues such as divorce and remarriage would be surrounded by a cloud of doubt because we could be wrong. Doctrine becomes opinion. A prime example came from James Woodruff in the 1986 Restoration Lectures at Abilene when he suggested that we have depended too much on logic and reasoning and not on the law of the

(Continued on page 23)

Thirteenth Annual Lectureship  
BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

MAY 10 -14, 1987

**"The Preaching That Changed The World"**

Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road  
Pensacola, Florida

**SUNDAY**

9:00 A.M.	The Preacher's Message	Bill Cline
10:00 A.M.	The Preacher Of The World Changing Message	Bill Irby
6:00 P.M.	A Preacher Of Old Time	Winston Temple
7:00 P.M.	The Preaching Of The Cross	Mike Kiser

**MONDAY**

1:00 P.M.	"And Such Were Some Of You"	Ron Bryant
2:00 P.M.	Preaching That Turned The World Upside Down	Charles Blair
3:00 P.M.	Why God Chose Preaching	Brooks Boyd
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Womanhood	Steve Waller
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From The God Of This World	John Polk

**TUESDAY**

8:30 A.M.	The Christ That Was Preached	Gerald Reynolds
9:30 A.M.	The Kingdom That Overcomes The World	Sidney White
10:30 A.M.	Fearless Preaching From Amos	Garry Brantley
1:00 P.M.	Holy Scripture: The Sermon Source Book	Ken Burlison
2:00 P.M.	Preaching From The Overflow	Grady Miller
3:00 P.M.	In The Fullness Of Time	Alan Brown
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From The Fear Of Death	Robert Taylor
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From Sectarianism	Wayne Coats

**WEDNESDAY**

8:30 A.M.	Unity In One Body	David Bateman
9:30 A.M.	Mightily Grew The Word Of God And Prevailed	Ray Peters
10:30 A.M.	Make Full Proof Of Thy Ministry	Ben Vick
1:00 P.M.	The Changeless Message	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
2:00 P.M.	Eye Hath Not Seen, Nor Ear Heard	Garland Robinson
3:00 P.M.	The Heavenly Hope Of The New And Living Way	Dennis Gullledge
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From Anxiety	Jackson P. English
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From The Law But Under The Law Of Christ	Roy Hearn

**THURSDAY**

8:30 A.M.	The Gospel Of Rejoicings	Tom Franklin
9:30 A.M.	Paul On Mars Hill	Leon Stancliff
10:30 A.M.	If I Preach Not The Gospel	Bill Mead
1:00 P.M.	The Fullness Of The Blessings Of The Gospel	James Thompson
2:00 P.M.	The Preaching Of The Gospel Of Grace	Charles Tharp
3:00 P.M.	The Wisdom And Rewards Of Preaching	Fred Stancliff
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: But Servants Of God	Bill Dillon
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Freedom From Wrath Of God	William Wardlaw



Gullledge



Blair



Temple



Wardlaw



Kiser



F. Stancliff



Brown



Mead



Franklin



L. Stancliff



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Miller



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God And Grow In Faith And Knowledge Of Jesus  
Christ And His Will For You.*



# BIBLIOLATRY?

E. Dean Kelly

Last year, during a preaching trip to India, I was told that I and others like me are guilty of **bibliolatry**. I read the same term recently in a brotherhood publication. To be perfectly honest, I am not sure what that word is meant to imply. However, because of the circumstances surrounding the use of the term in both the cited sources, I think that I have a pretty good idea of what those who use it mean by it. I must admit I am guilty of bibliolatry, if bibliolatry means the belief that:

## God Reveals His Will Today Only Through The Bible

We can know that nature testifies to the existence of God (Psa. 19:1, Rom. 1:20). We cannot, however, know the true nature of God, or His will, except He reveals it to us (I Cor. 1:9-13). God has, through the pen of inspiration, clearly revealed Himself to us. His nature is revealed by those things written concerning His dealings with mankind throughout the centuries and recorded in Holy Writ (Rom. 15:4; Heb. 12:1; I Cor. 10:11). His will for us today is revealed by those things recorded for us, by His command, in the pages of the New Testament (John 14:26; 16:13; II Pet. 1:3). God does not in any other way, form, shape or fashion, reveal His true nature and will to us today, except through the word of God, the Bible. If that is bibliolatry, I stand guilty.

## We Can Know The Truth As Revealed In the Bible

The very statement that we can know anything with assurance in religion brings indignant charges of, at the very least, a glaring lack of humility on our part. The conclusion many draw is that since we can not know **everything** religiously, that we cannot really, with certainty, know anything. For some reason it is easy for these to ignore Jesus' simple and plain statements: "If ye continue in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32); again, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth" (John 17:17). We must **know** and **obey** God's will in order to take advantage of the grace of God. If we cannot know God's will by reading and studying the Bible then it is very much a wasted effort on the part of God. We can,

with a certainty found in God's ability to reveal His will in an effective written form, ascertain what God's will is for us. We can understand the Bible, and know God's will for us. If that is bibliolatry, so be it.

## The Holy Spirit Acts On The Hearts Of Men Only Through The Bible

In recent time two preachers have told me if a preacher is in the pulpit preaching and forgets a passage he wants to use and suddenly that passage pops into his mind, the Holy Spirit put it there, separate and apart from the studying that the preacher has done of the Scripture. I deny that! Such is simply a claim for Holy Spirit inspiration. In the case of inspired men of the first century God simply would "bring to their remembrance" certain things they knew. If there is latter day inspiration do we have need for the Bible? Holy Spirit inspiration ceased with the death of the apostles and those whom they imparted the gifts of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 10:13; Eph 4:8-15). The truth is: the Holy Spirit has guided men through the word since the end of the age of miracles.

As for the alien sinner, I challenge anyone to show one example of anyone since Pentecost, having knowledge how to become a Christian revealed to them miraculously, separate from the preaching of the word. Where the miraculous was involved the person was sent to where he could hear the word (Acts 9), or the preacher was sent to him (Acts 10). There is not one single example or inference that the alien sinner was told directly by God what he should do to be saved. Once again, is that bibliolatry? If so, I fully embrace it.

## Everything We Do Religiously Must Be Authorized By The Bible

Paul expected all to listen to God's revealed word and condemned all else (Gal. 1:6-10). Peter showed that if we speak, it should be as the "oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11).

What causes the majority of the problems that the church experiences (Crossroads, Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage; Unity-at-all-costs, etc.)? The lack of respect for the authority of the Scriptures, a failure to  
(Continued on page 23)

# Bellview Preacher Training School Alumni Association To Be Formed In May?

Plans have been laid to form an Alumni Association for graduates of the Bellview Preacher Training School. A meeting (and dinner) for the purpose of electing officers and ascertaining goals for this organization will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 1987 at 5:15 P.M. at the Quincy's restaurant on Mobile Highway in Pensacola. All former (and present) students (whether graduates or not) are invited to participate in this meeting. Also, anyone interested in the welfare of the School is invited to attend.

This meeting has been planned to coincide with the Annual Bellview Preacher Training School Lectureship Program, May 10-14. This should make it possible for the greatest

number of individuals interested in the formation of such an association to be present.

If you have any questions about this event, please contact me at the address listed below or contact brother Max Miller at the school. We will be looking forward to a good attendance of former students (and their families) and for many friends of the school to be there as well.

James Alan Brown, Evangelist  
College Street Church Of Christ  
P. O. Box 253  
Flomaton, Alabama 36441  
(205) 296-5261

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## GATHERING STORM (Continued from page 19)

heart. What happened to respect for a "thus saith the Lord" and the Berean attitude of searching the Scriptures daily? In our day anyone who takes a stand and defends God's word is called a radical, troubler, legalist, or negativist. All of these tactics are appeals to abandon divine authority.

### Departure Three: Refusal To Honor Silence Of Scriptures

To one extreme: folks contend that God permits only what is specifically authorized in the Scriptures--no expediency. Anti-cooperation brethren use this reasoning to substantiate their selective condemnation of those who disagree with some of their views. To the other extreme: some believe God allows anything not specifically condemned in the Scriptures. Items like instrumental music in worship, missionary societies, and family life centers use such an appeal. Both

extremes rely on silence of the Scriptures and only on that which is directly, specifically authorized or condemned. One says there are no implied liberties; the other maintains there are no implied commands. In Luke 22:17 Jesus took the cup and gave thanks. Only one cup is specified--shall we deduce that the number of cups is essential to fulfilling the command to take the Lord's Supper? God smote Uzzah for reaching out to stay the Ark (II Sam. 16:7). The Lord specified that the ark be carried on staves by Levites, not on David's new cart. He did not specifically say nothing else could be used, but was it not implied?

How will we react to these departures from divine authority? will we be silent? see where the wind blows? If so, we bid God's speed to error (II John 9-11). Jeremiah wrote, "Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death" (Jer. 21:8) Choose one. Which will it be?

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## BIBLIOLATRY (Continued from page 22)

demand book-chapter-and-verse, a lack to seek a "thus saith the Lord"--that is the cause. Paraphrasing an old adage: God said it, that settles it, whether one believes it or not. Bibliolatry? If so, I remain firmly entrenched!

### The Truth Of The Matter

Can we hold the very word of God in too

high an esteem? As we will be judged by it (John 12:48), I plan on paying it the respect that is due the law of God! I worship the God who gave us the Bible. I hold the Bible in the high respect that God's revelation demands. Such is not bibliolatry, it is simply what God expects. Our prayer to God is that men will come back to that word, the Holy Scripture, which is the only means of salvation!

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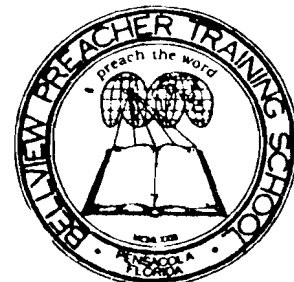
**BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL**

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WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND APPLICATION



# DEFENDER

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

VOLUME XVI, NUMBER 04

APRIL 1987

## HE DIDN'T DO NOTHING

Guy Hester

Every Sunday he preached two sermons. For this he spent many hours in preparation, making certain that each fact was well documented with numerous passages of Scripture, giving book, chapter and verse. He taught two Bible classes each week and always made sure that he had studied the lessons so that he could make them both interesting and beneficial to all that were in his classes. He usually had at least one home Bible study each week. When members of the church, or friends of the members, were in the hospital he visited them. He would always sit with the families of those who were having surgery or were critically ill. He made regular visits to the homes of shutins. He spent hours on the phone calling members who had been absent from the services of the church. Although he and his family had problems of their own, he would try to put these in the background as he would patiently listen to the problems of others and offer them the best counsel that he could give. He conducted funeral services and tried as best as he could to comfort the bereaved. He married the young. He rejoiced with those that rejoiced and wept with those that wept. He gave freely of his means on the Lord's day and then often took money from his pocket and gave to the needy even when it meant that his family would be deprived of things that they needed. He rarely took a vacation and when a family outing was planned it was often cancelled because he was

"needed" by someone in the church. His wife and children, though they often felt neglected, were willing to sacrifice because they understood that he was doing the greatest work that can be done on this earth: preaching the gospel of Christ.

Then it happened! The elders fired him! Then when the "chief elder" attempted to explain their action to the congregation, he said that he was fired because "he didn't do nothing!" And that is right! He didn't do nothing because he was always busy preaching the Word, he was "instant in season, out of season," reproving and rebuking people for their sins and exhorting them to live righteously. He made "full proof" of his ministry. He was fired because he **did something!** He pricked the consciences of those who were "at ease in Zion" and rather than change--they fired the preacher!

What will the preacher do? He will move on to another congregation and do the same work there that he has always done. What will his family do? They will continue to support him in his efforts as a gospel preacher. Every day they will pray for strength and courage to carry on their work and thank the God of heaven that there is laid up for them "a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give...at that day."

## LECTURESHIP CANCELLED! CANCELLED!

# "CHRISTIAN" HUMANISM

There is the evolution of words in living languages. There are changes in spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. Some words of today's language have an exact opposite meaning and usage of past times. An example of this is the word "prevent" as used in I Thessalonians 4:15. "...we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." The word "prevent" in the seventeenth century meant to proceed, or to go before. At the coming of Christ the living would see their dead loved ones raised from the grave and would go before the living as both rise to the clouds above to meet the Lord in the air.

Consider the words: humanities, humanitarianism, and humanism. **Humanitarianism** was a term originally applied to the followers of a group of eighteenth-century theologians who affirmed the humanity but denied the deity of Christ. It was later used when speaking of the Religion of Humanity, and it carried the subsidiary meaning of the worship of the human race. It's only recently that humanitarianism has come to imply almost exclusively the doing of good deeds that help people." The word **humanities**, today, generally "means a study of the works of the Renaissance humanists, their writings, arts, architecture, etc., whereas for the Renaissance humanists, the study of the humanities meant a study of ancient languages and literature, generally of Greco-Roman materials." **Humanism** relates to human nature; humanity; the study of the learning, or cultural impulse, imparted by those who brought the Greek and Roman classics into vogue during the Renaissance. In another sense, humanism is an attitude of thought as action centering upon distinctively human interest or ideals. The modern concept of humanism goes beyond mere service and good will to man--it is a religion in which the supreme purpose is to serve human needs and desires. "Humanism is the viewpoint that men have but one life to live and that human happiness is its own justifi-

cation and needs no sanctions or support from supernatural sources; that, in any case, the supernatural does not exist." Humanism is "man's attempt to solve his problems independently of God," for humanist say, there is no God, only man. "Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion."

There is among us so-called Christian Humanism. It is expressed and evidenced among those of the Lord's church. Today's emphasis in the church is on man, not on Christ. Evangelism, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations...", is a past issue. Emphasis now is on man, a social being rather than a spiritual being. Emphasis is on his carnal being, not on his spiritual being. Replacing gospel meetings, preaching to alien sinners, outreach of the gospel via radio and television to a lost world, is not the churches' interest. Concentration is on the happiness and well being of ourselves. Consequently, we have the Family Life Center, to furnish recreation and meals, the Minister of Congregational Affairs; the youth minister whose programs are mostly secular entertainment. Can there be a "devo" without a coke, or a hotdog, or a game? Bulletins announce the activities of the church: Mother's Night Out, a lecture on "Tips Hoq to Save On Your Income Tax," a seminar on how to deal with grief. The bulletins reveal little spirituality of the church; they speak hardly at all of the great spiritual work of the church--Only of "our ministries" which are designed to "take care of us." We are no longer a people whose ministry is to some others, especially the souls of the lost who dwell outside the walls of our splendid buildings, but a ministry to our selves.

Back to the Bible way! Preach the saving gospel to a lost world.

## DEFENDER

**Max R. Miller, Editor**

**Winston Temple, Assistant Editor**

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# ANATOMY OF A FALSE TEACHER

David L. Miller

When a person's heart, for whatever reason, becomes hardened and unreceptive to God's word (Luke 8:12-14; John 12:40; Rom. 1:21,24,28; I Tim. 4:2; Heb. 3:7-15), his or her behavior and teaching will reflect that condition of heart (Matt. 7:15-20). The individual will hold convictions and beliefs that are out of harmony with Scripture and will, consequently, seek to justify those ideas by promoting them and encouraging others to agree to the same conceptions. Consider some of the behaviors which often characterize one who promotes false teaching:

1) He is bold to advance his ideas in some settings, but is strangely silent or evasive in others. At a recent preachers' seminar, after hotly defending a current false doctrine, the advocate noted, "I do not preach this from the pulpit at my congregation." Such a statement raises serious doubt about that person's integrity.

2) He was once easily understood and known for the certainty and clarity with which he taught truth. But then he begins to speak vaguely and unclearly. Hearers raise their eyebrows and appear bewildered, wanting to think the best but unable to integrate these uncertain sounds into the Biblical framework. They are not sure he intended to say what they think they heard. They think, "surely he is not saying what he seems to be saying." As discussion is generated by the teacher's remarks, he is quick to claim that he has been misrepresented--that he has not changed in his thinking. In the meantime, he wants to be left alone, unimpeded in his efforts to spread his ideas and gain followers.

3) As it gradually becomes clear that the false teacher is really saying what faithful brethren feared he was saying from the beginning, he begins to be more overt in his efforts to gain agreement and support for his ideas. Suddenly, he is found to be identifying with those whom he previously perceived as enemies (Phil. 3:18) of the faith. Now these enemies do not seem so bad. They are not as "off base" as he once thought. Individuals widely recognized to be obvious apostates begin hailing him as an ally. They now promote his writings! "Politics makes strange bedfellows." One is reminded of the day when Herod and Pilate became friends (Luke 32:12).

4) With time, more and more faithful souls rise up in an effort to turn the false teacher from the error of his way, while seeking to minimize the chances of his "smooth and fair speech" deceiving "the hearts of the innocent" (Rom. 16:18; cf., Eph. 4:14; Col. 2:4; Titus 1:11; II Pet. 2:3). In response, he begins depicting them as unreliable barometers of the spiritual situation. He charges them with being too narrow, paranoid, tradition-bound, legalistic, unloving, witch-hunting, stagnant and static. He claims they have "circled the wagons" and are "stifling healthy investigation." They have "crystallized" into a "fortress mentality." The faithful have often been portrayed as wild-eyed, fanatical, troublemakers (e.g., I Kings 18:17; Acts 16:20; 17:6).

Brethren, dangerous trends are underway in our midst. Where once false teachers were quickly and firmly stopped and their influence and impact minimized, now broad segments of the brotherhood continue to offer themselves as prey to men who are given free course to spread their false ideas. They are no longer described as "false teachers" who promote "false doctrine." Now they simply "challenge our thinking" or "broaden our horizons." Rather than being duly noted and avoided (Rom. 16:17), they continue to operate freely and even function in influential capacities (e.g., staff writers for publishing companies and magazines). They are given latitude to voice their false ideas through major brotherhood publications. They continue to be used as guest speakers in pulpits and on lectureship platforms. We no longer call for repentance as John did (Matt. 3:7-8). Now we "negotiate merger" and "reconciliation" or "seek unity."

If we expect to please God; if we desire the church to survive these Satanic assaults from within, we simply must adhere to God's guidelines for dealing with false teachers (Rom. 16:17; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:14-15; 5:11; II Thess. 3:6; II Tim. 2:25-26; Titus 3:10-11; James 5:19-20; II Pet. 2:1-2; I John 4:1; II John 9-11)!

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not-- Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. (Titus 1:10,11,13).

Thirteenth Annual Lectureship  
**BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL**

May 10-14, 1987

**The Preaching That Changed The World**

Bellview Church of Christ, 1850 Saufley Road

Pensacola, Florida 32506

**SUNDAY**

9:00 A.M.	The Preacher's Message	Bill Cline
10:00 A.M.	The Preacher Of The World Changing Message	Bill Irby
6:00 P.M.	A Preacher Of Old Time	Winston Temple
7:00 P.M.	The Preaching Of The Cross	Mike Kiser

**MONDAY**

1:00 P.M.	"And Such Were Some Of You"	Ron [unclear]
2:00 P.M.	Preaching That Turned The World Upside Down	Charles Blair
3:00 P.M.	Why And How Preaching	Brooks Boyd
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Womanhood	Steve Waller
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From The God Of This World	John Polk

**TUESDAY**

8:30 A.M.	The Christ That Was Preached	Gerald Reynolds
9:30 A.M.	The Kingdom That Overcomes The World	Sidney White
10:30 A.M.	Fearless Preaching From Amos	Garry Brantley
1:00 P.M.	Holy Scriptures: The Sermon Source Book	Ken Burdison
2:00 P.M.	Preaching From The Overflow	Gray Miller
3:00 P.M.	In The Fullness Of Time	Alan Brown
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From The Fear Of Death	Robert Taylor
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From Sectarianism	Wayne Coats

**WEDNESDAY**

8:30 A.M.	Unity In One Body	David Bateman
9:30 A.M.	Mightily Grew The Word Of God And Prevailed	Ray Peters
10:30 A.M.	Make Full Proof Of Thy Ministry	Ben Vink
1:00 P.M.	The Changeless Message	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
2:00 P.M.	Eye Hath Not Seen, Nor Ear Heard	Garland Robinson
3:00 P.M.	The Heavenly Hope Of The New And Living Way	Dennis Gullledge
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From Anxiety	Jackson P. English
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Free From The Law But Under The Law Of Christ	Roy Hearn

**THURSDAY**

8:30 A.M.	The Gospel Of Rejoicings	Tom Franklin
9:30 A.M.	Paul On Mars Hill	Leon Stancliff
10:30 A.M.	If I Preach Not The Gospel	Bill Mead
1:00 P.M.	The Fullness Of The Blessings Of The Gospel	James Thompson
2:00 P.M.	The Preaching Of The Gospel Of Grace	Charles Tharp
3:00 P.M.	The Wisdom And Rewards Of Preaching	Fred Stancliff
7:00 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: But Servants Of God	Bill Dillon
7:45 P.M.	The Gospel Of Freedom: Freedom From Wrath Of God	William Wardlaw



# A MATTER OF IGNORANCE

Victor M. Eskew

The Bible is clear in its admonitions about withdrawing from the disorderly. The apostle Paul demanded that those who teach things contrary to sound doctrine be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17,18). This same apostle commanded us "not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (I Cor. 5:11). To the church in Ephesus the following injunction was given: "An have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). And to the church at Thessalonica these words were given: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (II Thess. 3:6).

Although the action of withdrawal is a clear command of Jehovah God, many local congregations of the Lord's people have not, are not, and probably will not practice it. One of the prominent excuses for not doing it is because members of the church are ignorant about the matter. When the subject is mentioned one of the first things said is: "We need to have a class on the subject because we do not know what is involved in the action." Thus, a preacher has to spend weeks and months teaching individuals what the Bible has to say about the subject of withdrawing.

This writer sincerely feels that the cry of ignorance with regard to withdrawal of fellowship is merely an excuse to get out of having to do that which the Bible very plainly tells us to do. Granted, there are some individuals, primarily new converts, who might be ignorant about the matter. But for the biggest portion of the church this statement is false.

The facts is that people know exactly what is involved in this action. The very words by which the action is described indicate what must take place. Also, most of those who use this excuse of ignorance have had a Bible on their shelves for years, and much is contained therein on the subject. Too, faithful gospel preachers have never neglected this area of church responsibility

in their preaching and teaching. In fact, if the truth were known, congregations which use this excuse do so with each preacher which comes along. And therefore, they have been taught several times about the matter. In addition, many fine tracts and books have been written on church discipline. These could have been purchased and studied by those who persist in ignorance about the action of church discipline.

No, ignorance is not the true reason churches have not practiced the withdrawal of fellowship. This excuse is merely used in order to bide for a little time. The real reason the action will not be taken is because many members know that they have mates, mothers and father, children, brothers and sisters, and close friends who would need to be withdrawn from if the action were implemented. They enjoy their weekends together, the daily association, and trips out of town too much to have to obey the command to withdraw from their disorderly kinsmen and friends.

Those who feel this way are not the disciples of Christ which they think they are. Their actions indicate that they love their relatives more than their Savior. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). They have deceived themselves in this matter. To them the apostle Paul's words can be addressed. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7,8).

Brethren, this is not a laughing matter. It is not a subject upon which we should think lightly. It is a command of God (II Thess. 3:6; Rev. 22:14). It involves the soul of the sinner (I Cor. 5:3-5). It involves the purity of the church of our Lord (I Cor. 5:6-8). Let us quit hiding behind our pretended ignorance and practice that which God demands on this vital subject. If we continue to refuse, many stripes will be the wage which we will have earned in the last day (Luke 12:47; Rom. 6:23).

# THE NINE SPIRITUAL GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Larry D. Mathis

Local churches of Christ in the first century were endowed with miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts were absolutely essential in the absence of written New Testament Scriptures. The church at Corinth did not take a back-seat to any other congregation in spiritual gifts (I Cor. 1:7). Paul, writing to the Corinthians, enumerates all of these gifts. The following is a brief review of the nine miraculous gifts of the Spirit that were possessed by the Corinthians, and recorded in First Corinthians 12:8-10.

## The Word Of Wisdom

Since this gift is called the **word** of wisdom it must have to do with the ability to communicate special, miraculous wisdom. Such supernatural wisdom was needed in the first century in the absence of the written New Testament. Paul referred to this wisdom in chapter two of First Corinthians, verses 4-13. Peter, no doubt, had the same in mind in Second Peter 2:15-16. No one possesses miraculous wisdom today! While we are to pray for wisdom (Jas. 1:5), it is not a miraculous reception that is received.

## The Word Of Knowledge

Since this gift is also called the **word** of, it must likewise have to do with the ability to communicate special, miraculous knowledge. The early church needed inspired guidance and these gifts supplied that need. It is difficult today to explain the difference between the "word of wisdom," and the "word of knowledge." No one possesses miraculous knowledge today! We today are commanded to read the New Testament in order to gain knowledge in spiritual matters (Eph. 3:1-7). However, such gaining of knowledge is not a miraculous reception of the Spirit.

## Faith

This was a miraculous gift of the Spirit. Paul refers to it in First Corinthians 13:2, as "all faith, so that I could remove mountains." Evidently, some first century elders possessed this gift (Jas. 5:15). No one possesses miraculous faith today! Our faith comes from hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17).

## Gifts Of Healing

This was miraculous, supernatural healing. People were healed completely and immediately. The "gifts of healing" probably refer to the same power that Jesus described in Mark 16:18, "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." A good example is found in Acts chapter three where Peter and John healed a man who had been lame from birth. Also, compare James 5:14-15. No one has such powers today!

## The Working Of Miracles

A great variety of miracles are mentioned in the New Testament that were spectacular displays of power. Jesus stilled a storm, fed the five thousand, raised the dead, etc. In Acts 13:11-12 we have the account of Paul striking Elymas blind because of his evil conduct. Needless to say, no one has these powers today!

## Prophecy

This miraculous gift enabled one to predict the future. (Cf. Acts 11:28; 21:10-11). However, the chief function of the New Testament prophet was to edify the church (I Cor. 14:3-4). The prophet was second, in rank, to the apostle (I Cor. 12:28). Paul regarded this gift as the most important to the local church. The prophet edified, exhorted, and comforted the congregation (I Cor. 14:3,5). There are no inspired prophets today in the New Testament sense!

## Discerning Of Spirits

This was the miraculous ability to read hearts (Acts 5:1-11); to detect false teachers (I John 4:1); and to judge what prophets were saying (I Cor. 14:29). The early church had to be especially careful of those who claimed to be speaking by the Holy Spirit. With no written standard, such as the New Testament, the church needed the help of those who had the ability to discern spirits (I John 4:1). No one has this gift today!

## Divers Kinds Of Tongues

This was a miraculous gift that enabled  
(Continued on page 7)

## NOTES FROM THE BRETHREN

**DIERKS, ARK:** The Second Annual Dierks Lectures will be conducted at Dierks, Arkansas April 30 through May 3. The theme will be, "The Church of Christ, a Divine Charge." The speakers will be: Ivey Powell, Nat Evans, Leon Jones, Fred House, James Boyd, Lynn Matheny, Robert Taylor, Noel Merideth, Mike Kiser, Tom West and Lowell Lites.

**BATESVILLE, ARK.:** The First Annual Lectureship of the Harrison St. Church of Christ will be June 4-7. Theme of the lectures will be, "Stand Up For Christ and His Church." Mike Vestal, Gobel Music, David Brown, Sunny Workman (ladies class), and Gary Workman.

**ANNISTON, ALA.:** Roger Jackson, evangelist of the Batta-View Hills Church of Christ, Oxford, Alabama, will debate Robert Williams of the Church of God in the Anniston Civic Auditorium June 1,2,4,5. 7 P.M.

The propositions to be debated are:

The Church of Christ which I (Roger

### SPIRITUAL GIFTS (Continued from page 6)

the recipient to speak in human language that was known by the people, but not previously known by the speaker. Tongue-speakers could speak in languages that they had never studied before. See Acts 2:1-4 for such an example. This gift was specifically a "sign to unbelievers" (I Cor. 14:22). When translated, the message of the tongue-speaker would edify the church (I Cor. 14:5). No one has this gift today!

### Interpretation Of Tongues

The miraculous gift of interpretation was the ability to translate what was spoken by the tongue-speaker into a language easily understood by the congregation. No one has this miraculous gift today!

The nine miraculous, supernatural gifts of First Corinthians cannot be demonstrated today! If the gift of tongues still exists, why not the others? The obvious answer is that there are none of these gifts exercised today. The counterfeits of the present are not at all the same as the gifts enjoyed by the early church.

Jackson) am a member, is the church Jesus built (Matt. 16:18), and is not a denomination (in any sense of the word) which has been formed, fashioned, or altered in any way by man.

Mr. Jawkson will affirm.

Mr. Willims will deny.

Anyone (whether religious or non religious) who denies the promise of the baptism of the Holy Ghost to believers (in this year of our Lord 1987, or until the end of time) has already, or is in danger of blaspheming the Holy Ghost.

Mr. Willaims will affirm.

Mr. Jackson will deny.

**ATLANTA, GA:** The Bellview Preacher Training School will conduct a series of evangelist services with the Moreland Avenue Church of Christ in Atlanta. Extensive area visitation and teaching will be done by the students. Mike Kiser and Max Miller will be preaching. John Gross is the evangelist of the Moreland Avenue church.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

Harold Heath	\$ 5.00
Mrs. Henry Yarbrough	20.00
Ava Burns	5.00
Brenda Manz	5.00
Maywood Love	10.00
Robin W. Haley	10.00
Herman Carter	25.00
Mrs. John Zeller	5.00
Earlean Thomas	8.00
Lenard Hogan	75.00
Jerry Lindesmith	60.00
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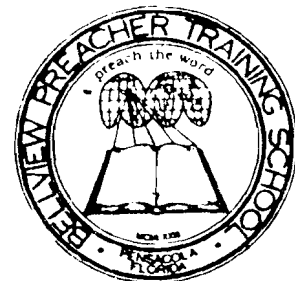
# **BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL**

4850 Saufley Road  
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*Max R. Miller, Director*

Bellview Preacher Training School provides a two-year curriculum of intense study and training. Every subject taught is one directly related to the needs of a gospel preacher. A capable faculty has been assembled who earnestly lead the student to a ready preparation in preaching the gospel.

## **WHY CONSIDER BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL?**

1. Its eldership are men of strong Christian character who are dedicated to the gospel of Christ.
2. A qualified and dedicated faculty, chosen upon five major qualifications:
  - Christian Character
  - Ability
  - Biblical Knowledge
  - Experience
  - Academic Training
3. College level instruction. Two-year program involving six quarters of intensified study.
4. The two-year curriculum is a complete exegetical study of the Bible, evidences, debate, languages and history; fully preparing the student to preach, teach and defend the truth.
5. Tuition free. The facilities and faculty are provided by the Bellview Preacher Training School.
6. Lectureship held annually with emphasis on vital themes pertinent to this age.
7. Approved by the Veterans Administration.
8. The Bellview Preacher Training School emphasizes that the Bible is verbally inspired, being God's final revelation to man.



**WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND APPLICATION**



# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XVI, NUMBER 05

May 1987

## GIVING? WHAT FOR?

Thomas W. Franklin

Money is highly valued by most of us; mainly, I suppose, because other people are willing to accept it in exchange for useful items, and also because of the time and effort we put forth to acquire it. Understandably then, separating a person from his money is no easy task--nor should it be. Each person wants to try to be sure that the money he has worked hard to acquire is surrendered only for something important and valuable. I think he is entitled to this assurance.

How critical it becomes then, for contributors to the church treasury to **know** that these funds will be carefully used for those things, and only those things, that the church is authorized and commanded to do. If church members can see their money actually supporting hardworking and successful missionaries or actively caring for the poor and the orphans both physically and spiritually: sermons on inadequate giving will rarely be needed. Christians will give generously when they see genuine needs being met in a prudent and expeditious manner. They are entitled, however, to the assurance that the money they place at the disposal of their elders will, unquestionably, be used only for what is unquestionably the duty and obligation of the whole church.

When members see their hard earned money being used in questionable ways they lose their interest in giving. Some congregations try to solve this problem by establishing several funds so that each member may give to

an endeavor that suits his particular interest. Brethren, this is wrong! Why? Simply because this system effectively transfers the oversight of the congregation from the elders to the wealthy members. It converts the local congregation from an aristocracy, as provided by the Scriptures, to a plutocracy--rule of the rich.

All work of the church, as such, is under the oversight of the elders of the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2, Titus 1:7). This oversight, by definition as well as by example, includes the oversight of church funds (Acts 11:29-30). While elders may delegate many tasks and functions to others in their congregation; they cannot delegate their oversight and stewardship responsibilities to other individuals or to other organizations. The Scriptures provide no basis for elders to turn over any portion of church funds to colleges, publishing houses, missionary societies or to individuals for private endeavors of any kind.

Needless to add, the use of funds of the church for the entertainment of its members whether young or old is, in corporate legal terms, an **ultra virus** act--one done outside the authority of the responsible parties. Jesus most certainly did not shed His blood to propagate and promote the establishment of country club assemblies throughout the world. This appears to be what a number of congregations have already become.

Current trends should make us reflect upon  
(Continued on page 39)

# KING JAMES VERSION: TRIED, TRUE AND MINE

Max R. Miller

The rash of modern versions, paraphrases, pseudo-Bibles, or whatever they may be called, has in no way displaced the King James Version of the Bible. The masses of English speaking people still place this old version atop of the heap. Whatever its faults, failings or deficiencies, real or supposed, it still is the best seller among books. The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible has been, still is, and shall continue to be--the people's Bible. Where and when new and modern works come forth to enjoy a thrilling splash of popularity, seemingly destined to surpass in glory and even outsell all the other translations of the Bible--the King James continues on in its time-tested--people-approved-fashion of still being number one.

one should be certain that his new Bible is true to the text and safe for the soul.

Until another and a better translation comes along I, and many others, will continue to read, study and preach from the King James Version of 1611, the so-called Authorized version of the Bible. One is justified in holding to the old and rejecting the newer works, especially those of 1946 and afterward. Following are reasons why I continue to read, study, and preach from the King James.

## An Honest Translation

The nearly one hundred and fifty men of the KJV translating committee were recognized

## MILLER CONCLUDES AT BELLVIEW

After more than three and one half years as Director of Bellview Preacher Training School, and the evangelist of Bellview Church of Christ, I will be leaving to take up work in another place. As editor of **Defender** it has been a pleasure to send out such a paper

to the thousands of its readers. Your response has been an encouragement to our editorial endeavors. I hope to continue a communication with you, and you with me, as the gracious providence of God permits.

We are not to stand in prejudiced opposition to a new translation of the Bible. A correct, true to the text, modern speech translation would be welcomed to Bible readers. However, of all the modern speech translations (and they are legion) none qualify as both a modern speech translation and a translation true to the ancient Hebrew and Greek languages in which the Bible was written. Most, if not all, qualify as "modern speech" translations, yet they fail in being accurate translations of the sacred languages. Failing in this it matters little as to the quality and expression of "modern speech." Our new "fad Bibles" are Bible failures and those who put their trust in them shall have no eternal reward. Before one turns down and turns loose of the old, the tried, and the true King James Version

as able scholars in the original languages. They brought forth a true and exact translation of the Scriptures. It was not only their purpose to give the sense of the passages but to do so by the exact rendering of the language into English words. Some passages of Scripture are not simple and easy to be understood (cf. 2 Pet. 3:15,16). There was no effort on the part of those translators to simplify the complex so that shallow minds of nominal interest could comprehend the great depths of spiritual truths. Much of the information in many fields of inquiry come with difficulty. Books of science, mathematics, law, history, and languages are to be poured over, searched, pondered, meditated upon. Simpletons then turn to the greatest knowledge of all, God and His will for man,

## DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, *Editor*

Winston Temple, *Assistant Editor*

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and attempt to make it "as fresh as your morning newspaper." Consequently, they provide "best sellers" for lazy, half interested simpletons who are looking for modern shortcuts to Bible mastery. The Lord God did not intend that His Book read with the cuteness of "Dear Abey" nor with the jousting and sarcasm of a Paul Harvey newscast.

The work of the translators of the King James Version can hardly be improved upon. It is true that some random passages have been given a clearer rendering in some other translations. On the whole, the KJV has held true for near unto four centuries. In that time it has met the chiefs of all agencies who would belittle its masterful and artful work. It stands. The critics, one by one, fade away.

#### **Tools Keyed To The King James Version**

One often turns to other books of various kinds to assist in the study of the Bible. Greek and Hebrew Lexicons deal with the English words and phrases according to the KJV. Standard works, Bible Encyclopedias, Commentaries, word studies, geographies, chronologies, etc. key on the text of the King James Version. The old and recognized standard works, as have been mentioned, invariably are based on this text. In this sense the scholarship of the past three hundred and seventy-five years concede to the KJV and its superior rendering of the ancient languages.

#### **Not Copyrighted**

Modern translations, and their translators and publishers, are concerned with copyright. The copyright has its place in the production of books and other written material. The copyright is to protect the content of the book from infringements and distortions. It is to protect the author and publisher as well. Copyright, generally, is to guarantee the author and publishers of the monetary gain produced by their publication. Some modern speech translations have brought fortunes to authors (translators) and publishers. Correctly, one should have permission from the copyrighters to quote from their works. Each time their works are used credit should be given them. If money is received for services rendered wherein the copyrighted translation was used--legally and ethically the ones holding the copyright

should share in the profit. This sounds absurd, and it is, when it relates to the "gospel of salvation."

The King James Version belongs to the people. This was God's intention for His word in all ages. One may quote from the KJV anytime, anywhere, and feel no obligation or debt to any except the Almighty God and the translators of the Bible.

#### **Contains All The Bible**

The world is still waiting for some of the new Bibles to give it the whole Bible. Some few have brought forth translations of both the Old and New Testament. Most of them have not! Some who have eagerly reached forth for a "fad Bible" lose all their eagerness and expectation to read the Old Testament in the same work. The newer translations omit numerous verses, phrases and words; it all is not there. The fad fades, interest dies, a "translation" is soon buried amidst the zeal and clamor of a newer fad Bible--incomplete!

The King James Version contains the Old and the New Testaments. It contains only the Old and New. The doubtful and false writings have no part or place in the KJV. Century after century this old and complete translation has been a part of man's heritage. We would expect it to continue so.

#### **Its Quality**

The King James Version of the Bible is conceded to be the most beautiful and expressive presentation of the English language known to man. Poets have imitated its style and beauty. Lawmakers have incorporated its lofty expression in their systems of jurisprudence. Language and style of other translations become cold, lacking, and common when read alongside the KJV. Beauty of expression, clarity of thought, graphic, lofty, describes this version. Truly, it is more than a translation. It is a lovely work of art of exceptional, yea, unsurpassed, quality. So long as the English language is spoken the King James Version of the Bible will be honored by those of that tongue.

#### **God's Plan Of Salvation**

There remains another prime reason for our personal preference of this grand version of the Bible. It is simply this: One can

(Continued on page 39)

# THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

Howell Bigham

The prophet of old said in Isaiah 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Because the ways and thoughts of God are much loftier than the ways and thoughts of man, we must respect the authority of Jehovah God.

## Rejecting God's Will

In studying the word of God we find that His message throughout all ages has been, "I have spoken." The God of heaven has given man instructions and commands in which he is to follow while upon this earth. Man, however, has chosen many times to reject the ways of God! In the very beginning of time, God gave Adam and ultimately Eve the command to not partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 1:15-17). Did they respect and hold up the divine authority of God? In chapter three of Genesis, the serpent enters the picture and begins his successful attempt in deceiving Eve. Eve did not only partake of the forbidden tree, but she also gave unto her husband and he did eat. In the very beginning of time man and woman despised, rejected and trampled under foot the authority of the God of heaven! We must be in subjection to God's rule of authority if we desire to enter heaven at the end of time. On the last day that God has appointed to judge this world, He will not judge it by the creeds and standards of man, but He will judge it by His word, the Book of books, the Bible!

## Abandon Doctrines Of Men

In studying the authority of God's divine word, there are three points that we need to consider. The first: we must understand that in cleaving to the authority of the Bible, we must leave all standards of man. Man has developed many standards in his quest for salvation. Paul wrote of Israel in Romans 10:3 and said "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." There are many today who are trotting in the pathways of Israel! They are going about establishing their own ways which are not authorized within the pages of God's eternal word. In preaching and teaching the

gospel of Christ, we must persuade man to turn from man's standards and turn to the Scriptures of God. In Jeremiah 10:23, the prophet Jeremiah said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Isaiah 55:7 teaches, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The only way that man can enter the narrow way leading to heaven is by obeying the truth of God.

Some prominent false doctrines introduced by man are: (1) the doctrine of feelings. Many contend that salvation is something that is merely better felt than told. In studying the Bible, however, we find man's doctrine to be false! In Proverbs 14:12 we read, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." The Bible teaches that one must first learn of salvation. Man must be taught the truth and then he must obey it in order to have everlasting life. Christ said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Therefore, we must not place our eternal destiny in the realm of feelings if heaven is what we desire. Man has also been a student of (2) the teaching of human reasoning. There are many who will suggest that their ways are much superior than the ways of God. Naaman was one who fell in this category. In II Kings 5:10-12 we read of this man being commanded to go wash in the river Jordan seven times to be cleansed of his leprosy. However, Naaman questioned the authority of God's word. He said, "Are not Abanah and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" Had Naaman not turned from his reasoning to obey God, he would have died a leper! Those today unwilling to obey God's plan of salvation revealed in the Bible, will die a sinner!

Another prominent doctrine source of man is (3) the creed of conscience. Saul of Tarsus was one who followed this teaching. He had persecuted the Lord's way, bound Christian men and women and condemned them to prison. He even held the cloak of Stephen as stones pelted his body. Yet this man said in Acts 23:1 "Men and brethren, I have lived in



all good conscience before God until this day." This would suggest that our conscience is not to be our guide! We must cast away this creed and let the Bible be our guide! It is the only thing that can lead us to heaven eternal.

In addition to these popular teachings of man, there is also (4) the following of traditions. Many will follow the traditions of man. Some will march in the footsteps of their parents without considering where they will lead. They contend, "If its good enough for mother and father, its good enough for me." They shout, "Mother and father have taught me this and they cannot be wrong." But what does the Bible have to say about it? Paul in Romans 3:23 said, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The apostle of love, John, wrote in I John 1:8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Mother and father may have taught us many good things, but when it comes to the matter of salvation we are not to take any man's word when it departs from God's. In Luke chapter 16, the example of the rich man is given. He was one who followed the tradition of "eat, drink, and be merry while you live." When this man died, he did not go to heaven! He went to eternal hell! While in torment he lifted up his eyes and asked Abraham to send Lazarus back to earth to warn his five brethren lest they also followed tradition to Hell! Man must throw down his standards and cleave to the glorious word of Jehovah if he is to enter heaven. The Bible teaches in Matthew 6:24 that "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." A choice must be made! If heaven is your desire, you must cleave to God's word and leave the worthless teachings of men.

### **The Divine Standard**

In the second place, we should realize that the Bible is the divine measuring line of authority. The Bible is the expression of God's supreme authority. The apostle Paul in II Timothy 3:16-17 said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." The Bible is the inspired word of God! It is God-breathed!

The apostle Peter said in II Peter 1:20-21, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Truly the Bible is the written expression of God's divine authority.

As we study the pages of God's eternal word, we notice a "chain of authority." At the very beginning of the chain is God Almighty. All authority resides in the Father in heaven. He revealed His authority in creating the world. In studying the creation we find that God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." He spoke the heavens and the earth into being (Heb. 11:3; Psalm 33:6,9). Not only did God demonstrate His supreme authority in creating the world, He also revealed it in creating man (Gen. 2:7). God created every human and gave each a soul (Eccl. 12:7). God is the creator of all and all are to be in subjection to Him. As the prophet Isaiah said in Isaiah 64:8, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are the work of thy hand." So we are.

As we continue in our study of this "chain of authority" revealed in the pages of God's eternal word, we find that God has given all authority to the Savior of man, Christ Jesus. Christ said that "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). Numerous other passages illustrate that Christ indeed has all authority in heaven and in earth (Heb. 1:2; Eph. 1:22). The God of heaven delivered all authority to His precious Son until that day in which Christ will deliver the kingdom back to His Father (I Cor. 15:24-28).

When one studies the Bible, one finds Christ taught as one having authority while upon the earth (Matt. 7:29). The Son of God commanded evil spirits to obey Him and they did (Mark 1:27). Therefore, as the Savior of the world was on this earth, He was one who had all authority! The apostle Paul writing to the Philippian brethren said that all men are subject to the authority of Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:9-11).

In addition to the God of heaven and Christ His Son, one finds the apostles and the Holy Spirit inspired writers were also links in the "chain of authority." Paul, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, said that

the apostles were "ambassadors for Christ" (II Cor. 5:18-20). The Holy Spirit inspired writers penned the glorious word of Jehovah (II Pet. 1:20-21), thus bringing the standard of authority which is able to lead one to heaven. The written word of God (Eph. 3:1-4), is man's light and lamp in this dark world of sin (Psalm 119:105). It is the only thing that is able to lead him in the narrow path leading to the eternal joys of heaven (II Tim. 3:15). As preachers and teachers of the Gospel, one is to hold up the Bible as the only authority in the matter of salvation. As Paul commanded Titus in Titus 2:15, "These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee," we must also hold up the word; Yes, the Bible is the **only** authority in the matter of salvation.

### Christians Only

In addition to the prior two points, in studying the authority of the Bible, we must also understand that the Bible only will reap Christians only! It is true that throughout the land many religious bodies have been established. However, the bodies that man has planted are without the authority of Christ. In Acts 17:22-31, Paul preached the sermon on Mars Hill. In verse 24 he preached that God "dwelleth not in temples made with hands." The apostle Paul taught that God does not exist in religious bodies that man has established! Therefore, God does not exist in the denominational bodies that are present today. The only church in which God does exist is that church which was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isa. 2:1-3; Zech. 1:16; Dan. 2:44); the church that came into being on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2; the church that the Lord adds the saved to (Acts 2:47); the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16).

When one studies the denominational bodies of men, one will find they study the doctrines of men (Matt. 15:8,9,13). If that person has an honest heart, he will soon realize that man has caused much confusion in the religious world today and that blame can only be placed on the shoulders of man (I Cor. 14:33). Man has walked down the paths of error, casting seeds of contradiction! He shall reap only sin and condemnation (Gal. 6:7,8).

If one would only compare the teachings of the Bible with the creeds and doctrines of

men, one will see a striking contrast. The Bible teaches truth while man's teachings promote error. The Bible can reap only righteousness and everlasting life while the creeds of men reap damnation and eternal punishment in hell! Why not study the Bible and see if these things are so (Acts 17:11)? A careful study will result in one realizing that only the truth of God can make one free from sin and darkness (John 8:32). When one studies and rightly divides the truth, denominationalism and confusion will not be reaped! The reaping of rightly dividing and obeying the Gospel is salvation. When one obeys from the heart that form of doctrine delivered unto him (Rom. 6:17), eternal life is the result. The form of doctrine that the Bible teaches is God's scheme of redemption. It is the only plan that can save any soul (Heb. 5:8-9; 12:1-2; Acts 4:12; Rom. 1:16). When one obeys the Bible commands, he is a Christian. The commands that are taught in the Bible are these: (1) hear the Gospel (Rom. 10:17; John 6:44-45); (2) believe that Christ is the Son of God (Mark 16:16; Heb. 11:6); (3) repent of sins (Luke 13:3,5); (4) confess Christ as the Son of God (Matt. 10:32; Acts 8:37); (5) be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:27; Mark 16:16); (6) be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10; Titus 2:12). When one obeys these commands, he is a Christian and a member of the body in which the only Christians are found--the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16; Eph. 4:4).

All should realize that the great teachings of God are found only within His word--the Bible. If one should desire to know how to become a member of the church which was purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), he should go to the only authority--the Bible. One may choose to go to the teachings of men, for they promise salvation: but, all the doctrines of men can deliver is damnation in hell. As the apostle Paul commended the Ephesian elders to the word of God which was able to build them up and to give them an inheritance in heaven, the writer of this article commends you also to the Bible. It is the only authority that is able to edify and to lead one through the narrow way which leads to heaven (Acts 20:32).

### GIVING (Continued from page 33)

our own carefulness in the past. Were we completely honest with ourselves as to whether so-called dual-use facilities were primarily for adult entertainment, i.e. fellowship halls? Was not this just the first step in the direction of family life centers and gymnasiums? The New Testament uses the Greek term translated "fellowship" at least twenty-six times but I have yet to discover a place where it is used to refer to a social gathering! Acts 2:42 in the original refers to the fellowship, i.e. the faith.

I know that Jude 12 speaks of feasts of charity with no indication of the site of such feasts. Acts 2:46 mentions both religious and other social activities of early Christians in the following words: "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Paul in dealing with the excesses and abuses at Corinth finally asks: "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?" (I Cor. 11:22). I wonder if current day abuses and excesses would not cause Paul to put the same questions to us? There certainly seems to be a difference in making a party house of the place of worship, to its shame, as in Corinth; and in making a place of worship in a home, to its glory, as in that of Priscilla and Aquila.

I read recently of the completion of a multi-million dollar church complex. It was verbally described to me as looking more like a shopping mall than a church building. Are we going to be greeted by "well done, thou good and faithful servant" when our claim to fame is that we have lavished upon ourselves an elaborate complex more suited to entertainment and show than to the preaching of the gospel? Think of it! Just the interest on a \$10,000,000.00 investment would support forty or fifty full time missionaries from now on--even to the day of judgment! Who will answer?

We can hardly deny that our membership will give heavily to the building of such complexes. Materialism, hedonism and pride no doubt provide motivation to some of the contributors. But I think that we can also say that seeing such a building go up provides something to which many people can relate. It is to them tangible evidence that something is being accomplished: they can see

where their money has gone!

The problem will not be solved merely by sitting back and criticizing the building of entertainment complexes, but rather by getting congregations deeply involved in personal work, in ministering to the needy and the orphans, and in direct support of mission efforts. Each member needs to be able to feel that he is personally involved in some way with soul-winning activities. As these activities begin to bear fruit we will see a corresponding increase in enthusiasm and liberality.

Contributions can easily be increased without engaging in the questionable practice of trying to lay guilt feelings upon our people about how the Jews gave a third. A recent news article showed that all of the average American's wages each year through April are consumed through taxes. Thus our situation monetarily is not comparable to the old Jewish theocracy. We should be able to see in this the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in disassociating our giving from specified requirements of the past.

In summary, it is the "what for?" aspect of giving that is being neglected. Elders can encourage proper giving by (1) using church funds only for what the church as a body is commanded to do, (2) letting members see their funds at work, (3) supporting fully at least one foreign missionary, and (4) engaging all members in some aspect of personal evangelism.

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### KJV (continued from page 35)

read it and learn of God's plan of salvation for man. In clear terms and easily defined words it instructs us to believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24; 20:30,31), to repent of sins (Luke 13:5), to confess Christ as the Son of God (Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 8:37), and to be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). At this point one becomes saved (1 Pet. 3:21). He then must walk faithfully and zealously in His service and then, after death and judgment, go home to heaven and meet its author face to face for all eternity.

Let us not be satisfied with those things that are doubtful. The King James Version of the Bible has stood every test. It is worthy.

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# LINGUISTIC LIBERALS

**Steve Gunter**

Jude 4 warned the early church of men who had "crept in unawares." The word crept means those who are skulking into a body of people in order to subvert and destroy their work. These men were creeping into the first century church. Now, today, they are striding in openly and standing tall for doctrines inimical to New Testament truth.

A legion of linguistic (i.e. language) liberals has fallen upon the church of our Lord teaching a form of doctrine foreign to the divine revelation of Jehovah God. The secular scholars have long sought to prove human speech evolved from animal grunts and noises. Since spoken sound preceded written word these God-hating individuals cannot document their outrageous speculations. Minus a core of empirical evidence these humanist scholars erect a facade of wisdom with heavy words which mean virtually nothing.

The centuries have come and gone since Adam and Eve spoke with God in the garden and still no animal has written a novel, a play, or even a poem. Rather the evidence indicates man has always had a complexity of speech and a rich vocabulary of words and concepts. There simply is no example of a speechless human society anywhere ever on this earth.

This insidious movement formally dates back to 1664, the year in which the Royal Society of Science published a "scientific standard" for acceptable language in oral and written productions. The Carl Sagans of the Scientific Revolution have from the very beginning of their monstrous movement sought to eliminate God and all supernatural

concepts from the language of mankind. Such a materialistic standard would go far to insure the triumph of humanism throughout the earth since this scientific criterion would prevent every attempt to return God to the realm of intellectual discourse and debate.

Actually the scientific universe itself is exploding today. The work of the new physics scholars has smashed the old steady state universe which the humanists depended upon for so long. As even the religious pagans knew, movement in the Universe demands a Prime Mover, motion demands Deity. The Bible reveals that Creator to man.

Despite these exciting developments it is my sad duty to report several instances of scientific thinking among our very own colleges and institutions of higher learning. Twice in the past month it has been my sad experience to encounter published material by one man who is a so called Bible scholar among us and another article by a man who actually teaches history in one of our colleges. In both cases these men condemn the "church conservatives" as being men of ignorance and praise a host of non-church liberal scholars as the great source of truth for our time.

Liberalism in our age is not a minor matter to brush aside and disregard in the vain hope it will go away. This is the path which will condemn millions to the very fires of hell. We face today a long term struggle to the death for the mind and soul of the church of our Lord. We must prepare to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (I Tim. 2:3).

# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

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## SECTS AND SECTARIANISM

Chester Estes

"I intreat you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions (*schismata*) among you...for it has been declared unto me, my brethren...that there are contentions (*erides*) among you...that each one of you is saying, I am indeed of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided (*memeristai*)? Was Paul crucified for you? Or, were you immersed into the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:10-13 TBV).

To follow men is sectarianism. A follower of men is a sectarian. The Jews had their parties or sects. For instance, there were the sects of the Pharisees, the Saducees, and the Herodians (Acts 5:17; 15:5). Paul was accused of being a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes (Acts 24:15). He said that before his conversion, he belonged to the "most straitest sect" of the Jews religion. He said that he was a follower of Christ "after the way which they call heresy (*hairesis*)," which they called a sect (Acts 24:24). "Heresies" or "sects" were condemned by the apostle Paul, along with other crimes of like nature (Gal. 5:20). Peter referred to such as "damnable heresies" (2 Peter 2:1).

Sects, as we know them are not representative of the religion of Christ, and when men talk about "Christian sects" or "sects of Christians" they are simply speaking the language of Ashdod, and not the language of the New Testament. When people obey God (obey the gospel) they become Christians, saints, or children of God, and, as such, when they group themselves together, they are, in the sight of God, a congregation (church) of Christ, and not a "sect." A so-called "Christian sect," or "sect of Christians" is an impossible something. When any body of believers claiming to be the church of Christ, becomes a "sect" that body then ceases to be a church (congregation)

of Christ. In a sense, "sects" originate in the church, but wind up outside the church. When you have tried to reform a "sect" you will awake to the fact that such is still a "sect," or end up with a multiplicity of "sects." Yes, sectarianism originates in the church, by the devil, and usually thrust out the righteousness, unless we are very careful to heed the apostle's instruction to, after the first and second admonition, reject the sectarians. A church (congregation) can exclude all her sects and in so doing will then remain a church (congregation) of Christ.

*Sectarians* and *heresy* are the same in meaning as the original Greek implies, and belongs in the same catalogue of sins attributed to the works of the flesh, and, the works of the flesh, cannot, therefore, in any manner, be classified as the "fruits of the Spirit." Sectarianism or denominationalism, which first begins in the church, is always introduced into the church by "false teachers" who bring in "damnable heresies." Members of the church with strong faith, supported by the word of God, furnish no fertile soil for sectarianism; but when members are uninstructed in the word of God, and have established their faith in men who peddle their philosophies among members, spend their time "counselling," socializing, and entertaining, instead of preaching the gospel, they become fertile soil conducive to the germination, growth, and spread of sectarianism.

The church of Christ exists in two senses, and in the broad comprehensive sense it contains all God's people everywhere, those who have been born again, and in a limited sense, it is applied to a congregation of Christians in a local sense. In the former sense we refer to it as "the church of Christ" (the same as the kingdom of Christ), and in the latter sense we refer

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# "NOT GIVEN TO MUCH WINE"

Tom Wascaster

One of the qualifications of the deacon is that he not be "given to much wine" (1 Tim. 3:8). Because of the wording of the text in the American Standard Version and the King James Version, it is often argued that elders are not to have ANY wine and that deacons are not to have MUCH wine. Is such a distinction the design of God? Is that what the Holy Spirit wished to convey? ABSOLUTELY NOT! Consider carefully the following.

*First*, to argue that the deacon can partake of strong drink (in moderation) is to argue that one can partake in that which the Bible condemns. Logically presented you would have: The scriptures do not sanction that which they teach is evil; but the scriptures teach that strong drink (used for the purpose of intoxication) is evil (Prov. 20:1, 21:17, 23:29); therefore, the scriptures do not sanction the use of strong drink (for the purpose of intoxication). I cannot imagine a strong, mature Christian denying the reasoning thus set forth. To try is to fail.

*Second*, the idea in the passage is one of "addiction" to strong drink. Roy Deaver has noted, "With regard to this particular qualification (as given in 1 Timothy 3:8) both the Weymouth translation and the Berkley Version have '...not addicted to much wine.' Thayer shows that addiction is the meaning here. May I suggest that the word 'much' is used because the idea of addiction is under consideration, and which idea demanded the word 'much'" (*Biblical Notes*, May, 1985, page 9). One simply cannot argue that because Paul was stressing a qualification of "non-addiction" that therefore the deacon can drink moderately.

*Third*, it is unreasonable to assume that a deacon can participate in something in which his wife or any other Christian cannot participate. The wife of a deacon must be "sober" (v. 11). The word used there is defined by W.E. Vine: "(*nepho*) signifies to be free from the influence of intoxicants; in the New Testament, metaphorically, it does not in itself imply watchfulness, but is used in association with it, 1 Thessalonians 5:6,8." My *Analytical Lexicon* gives

this definition: "Sober, temperate, abstinent in respect to wine, etc." The Christian (every Christian) is to "gird up the loins of your mind, be SOBER (emphasis mine, TW) and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:13). The word for "sober" in this passage is the same word used in 1 Timothy 3:11, meaning "abstinent in respect to wine." Again, "Be thou SOBER (emphasis mine, TW) in all things..." (2 Tim. 4:5). Again, the word is '*nepho*' meaning "abstinent in respect to wine." Do those who argue in favor of moderation really believe that a deacon can use a "little" wine, but his wife must abstain completely? Since a Christian is to be "sober" and a deacon can partake of a "little wine" (according to the reasoning of some), am I to assume that deacons are the ONLY ONES IN THE BODY OF CHRIST WHO CAN DRINK A LITTLE WINE? Again, I cannot imagine a strong, mature Christian who would reason along these lines.

*Fourth*, the Christian is to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11). Consider this: All things which war against the soul are things from which the Christian is commanded to abstain (1 Peter 2:11); the drinking of intoxicants is a thing which wars against the soul (would any dare deny that?); therefore, the drinking of intoxicants is a thing from which the Christian is commanded to abstain.

Brethren, it is time we quit arguing in favor of "moderate drinking." It is time we recognized what 1 Timothy 3:8 teaches in regard to the qualification of deacons—absolute abstinence! How can these things be successfully denied? It is time preachers got into the book and taught what God's word has to say regarding these things instead of cowering under the sophisticated arguments given by some who want to satisfy the lusts of the flesh and participate in social drinking. Elders, deacons, and every single member of the body of Christ must NOT BE GIVEN TO MUCH WINE!

## DEFENDER

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## SECTS AND SECTARIANISM

(Continued from front page)

to it as "a church (congregation) of Christ," but in no sense does sectarianism represent the true religion of Christ, or, as some say, "Christianity."

Sectarianism, or denominationalism, is self-evident of division, and division is of itself sinful. Regardless, then, of how we think about "churches"—"a Baptist church of Christ," or "a Methodist church of Christ," by way of illustration, is an unreal something. Or, to be "a Baptist Christian" is also an unreal and contradictory something. And if you ask a person if he is "a Baptist Christian," or "a Methodist Christian," and he replies: "No, I am a church of Christ Christian," he reveals that he is also a sectarian. Of course, we cannot read the thoughts and intents of the hearts of people, but we are sometimes made to wonder just how far some are removed from sectarianism when they begin to think and speak like the people of the denominations around them. Jesus taught that a tree is known by its fruits.

It is my belief that it is not only right but also enough to be simply a Christian, and too much to be something more than a Christian. Why should one not want to be a Christian? Why should he want to be more? Why should he want to be less? The name "Christian" is that "good name called upon you." No one can wear that name without wearing the name of Christ. Just as Christ is the anointed of God, those who are worthy to wear the name "Christian" are the anointed people of God. This name given to God's people is a sacred name, since all things anointed of God, in the sight of God, are sacred. The name Christian was not given to God's people accidentally, nor in derision, but was the "new name" of prophecy in the Old Testament, and God did not, therefore, bestow it lightly upon his people. It is not used in its adjective form any where in the New Testament, in the way in which people are using it today. Nothing was ever called "Christian" in the New Testament except persons, and such persons had been immersed for the remission of their sins, and were, therefore, members of the church of our Lord. Only that which you can, by the authority of Christ, immerse should ever be called "Christian."

We hear the expressions, "Christian life," "Christian home," "Christian schools," "Christian literature," and "Christian Church." Is it not strange that some people will call everything "Christian" except the church? Is such not sectarian? Can you not as easily say, "the life of a Christian," or the "home of a Christian," instead of "Christian life" or "Christian home," since we "speak where the Bible speaks" or "as the oracles of God?" Does our speech betray us? Does our speech not reveal that we, too, are, in a degree, sectarians? The only justification for the above mentioned expressions that I have ever heard was based on the assumption that all these things are

"Christ-like." Is it not then inconsistent to contend for the use of these expressions on that basis, and not say that the church is also "Christ-like," and should be called the "Christian church?" Since only human beings are called "Christians" in the New Testament, and the church is made up of human beings, people, why talk about "Christian schools" and "Christian this and that" and not speak of the churches as "Christian churches," or if speaking of the church in the broad sense, say "Christian church?" *You must understand that I am not claiming that it is scriptural to thus speak, but only pointing out how inconsistent some members are while claiming to "speak where the scriptures speak" and that they are "silent where the scriptures are silent."*

Sectarianism does not necessarily grow out of what we call "meanness," even though some of the leaders of the sects may seem to us at times to be mean. Sectarianism does not necessarily come from ignorance. However, you would not have sectarianism without a large degree of ignorance of the word of God. But when you have ignorance of the word of God coupled with zeal you can be assured that sectarianism will be the result. Paul testified to the Romans that some were ignorant of God's righteousness, and that because of their zeal they went on to establish their own righteousness.

Sectarianism is rampant today because preachers have abandoned the word of God, been "schooled" in certain types of "schools of preaching," where they have been taught the fancy up-to-date, and modern techniques of preaching, by those who think that the "techniques of evangelism" are changing. (These, of course, Paul and Peter never knew, and about which the preachers of the restoration were entirely ignorant). As a result, the church has been wrecked and taken over by preachers, and by "self-appointed" and "preacher-appointed" elders. And, further, "minus-gospel-centered preachers," with such mentioned elders, have so confused the churches until it seems that no one in them can tell where the Sunday School stops and where the church begins; or, we might also add, where the schools and colleges stop and where the church begins; even more, they seem not to know where "retreats," "workshops," "camps," "soft ball," "bowling," and, as Paul said, such like things, end and where the church begins. To every oncoming generation it is all the same—it is all "the church." It has been announced that one "Church of Christ" ball team would play the Baptist Church ball team at a certain date. One editor said that 50 per cent of the church members did not know why we do not use mechanical instruments of music in the worship, and that 40 per cent would not object to its use in the worship.

Suppose that some 62 years ago, about the time I began to preach, I had arrived in a town on Saturday afternoon, picked up the local paper, and some of the literature of the brethren placed in the lobby of the

hotel where I was spending the night, and then read about all the things the "Churches of Christ" had advertised concerning their schemes to attract and promote what they were doing—all about their "offices" and "officers," "counselors," and "Doctors;" all about their "practitioners of Psychiatry," their "work shops," "film showing," "cassette peddling," "camps," "retreats," their sundry equipment with which to "function"—you name the rest. Yes, if I had read all this about the "church of Christ" there, my conclusion would have been expressed, saying, "That is not what I am looking for; that must be a 'Christian Church' and not the church of Christ." Would I have been wrong then? If wrong now, where are the watchmen on the walls of Zion!

What is needed NOW is more gospel preaching. The sects and the Christian Church tried the gimmicks many years ago which some of the churches are trying

now. You cannot slip up on the blind side of people and convert them as you would lasso a calf. You cannot induct them into the kingdom of Christ by the devices of men and cunning craftiness. The gospel which was preached in New Testament times was the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, for the remission of sins. This gospel you rarely ever hear preached now. *The very method for binding people together as a unit has been abandoned.* You do not need to know much in order to be a modern preacher. You do not even need to know enough to hold a certificate to teach school. If you do not have a job, develop for yourself a little outline of some subjects you can handle by answering the questions, Who? What? When? Where? and How? and you will perhaps be a "big preacher," paid a big salary, furnished a home, utilities, a car, car expense, and maybe a boat.

Brethren, it may be later than we think!

# Rational Thinking And Inspiration

Roger Jackson

In 2 Timothy 2:15 Inspiration requires that every Christian, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." To "rightly divide" the word of truth doesn't mean to be able to make the proper divisions, although it includes that. Rather, it means to be able to handle the truth correctly without twisting or perverting it (2 Pet. 3:16). If a person is rational and uses the processes of correct reasoning he can know what the will of the Lord is as he commands (John 7:17; Eph. 5:17).

Logic is the science of rational thought. To be technical about it Mr. Irving Copi, in his book, *Introduction To Logic*, says, "Logic is the study of the methods and principles used to distinguish good (correct) from bad (incorrect) reasoning." While most people recoil in fear when the word is suggested in a sermon or class, we all use logic's rules every day, and have all of our lives, unless we are illogical (irrational), in which case we do not need to be concerned about it.

No inspired man ever made an unsound argument. The Bible is the word of God, who is omniscient (2 Tim. 3:16,17). While it contains the irrational arguments of its opponents, such is never characteristic of Deity. This could never be the case if it had been a mere product of the mind of man unaided by inspiration. Hebrews 11:1 tells us that faith is the "evidence" of things not seen. But "evidence" relates to the proof of a proposition. When a proposition is placed as a part of an argument it becomes a "premise." "Premises" (also spelled PREMISSES)

are the building blocks of arguments, which reach conclusions known as "inference." The twenty-one books known as "epistles" or letters, are filled with this kind of material.

False teachers decry the use of logic in debates and/or shorter forms of controversy. I have had men with whom I was in a discussion use the formal form of logic one minute and then make fun of it the next. Someone has well stated that no man ever turned on reason until reason turned on him. When a man says we do not need logic in order to understand the Bible, or that we must dispense with logic in order to understand it, he has said, in effect, that we must become irrational to understand it. The "fake healers" of modern times have always suggested such a thing if we are going to "see a miracle." Men can become irrational and believe anything regardless of the evidence if they wish hard enough. From this school of thought came the silly notion that the more evidence there is against a proposed premise the more faith it takes to believe it. There can be no faith without evidence and no reliable evidence apart from the Bible (Rom. 10:17). Logic is merely the knowledge of the processes by which we determine whether that evidence is valid. The Bible has always passed that test, but men have not done so consistently. Much false doctrine is not based on any supposed proof text at all, but upon some kind of "reasoning" on a text, or some kind of "reasoning" that is completely void of a Bible text, which we call a "quibble." In cases where these methods are employed we need to know as much about the science of correct reasoning as we can



learn, in order to avoid answering a fool according to his folly (i.e., don't be a fool yourself), and to answer a fool according to his folly (i.e., show him his foolishness). One preacher put it this way, "When you are talking to a fool, make sure he is not doing the same thing" (Prov. 26:4,5).

When, in support of a proposition, one makes a fallacious appeal, most rational people can catch it with no problem. They may not be able to give it the proper "official" and technical name, but they can spot it. Those errors in reasoning that are easily detected are termed "informal fallacies." I say they are easily detected, but perhaps I have overstated the case. What I should say is that we seem to be able to detect them in all areas except where the Bible is concerned, and then many people are like little birds with their mouths open—they will swallow anything dropped in. One such fallacy is the appeal to force (*Argumentum ad Baculum*). At the Yalta Conference after WW II Churchill and Stalin were arguing about some point of difference when Churchill suggested what the pope's position was on the matter. To this Stalin remarked, in substance, "And how many divisions did you say the pope had that are combat ready?" Clearly Mr. Stalin was arguing from the "might makes right" stance of his prominence. It is not unusual for Christians to meet such tactics as they stand for the truth. Many good men have argued for baptism's rightful place in God's plan of salvation while someone who opposed it stood by with a gun or a stick (big one). After Elijah had met the prophets of Baal and defeated them on the proposition, "God is God and not Baal," Jezebel's rejoinder was, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time" (1 Kings 19:2). When Amos preached against the idolatry of the northern kingdom of Israel and all its perverseness, he did so with evidence of their guilt. Finally, from the king's house came one, Amaziah, to oppose him. Amaziah argued, "O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court" (Amos 7:12,13). How many gospel preachers have packed their bags for the same reason? No one could prove that they either preached a falsehood or did so in the wrong attitude. "Just pack your bags preacher; we won't pay for that kind of preaching here." If it is the truth, and you are a gospel preacher, men cannot scare you off by, "You can't preach that here." All the can say is, "You can't preach that here but once."

Another informal fallacy used to support false doctrine is the *Argumentum ad Hominem* of the abusive type. It is called such because the respondent (false teacher) turns from the issue to abusing the opponent. This is how Christians became known as "Campbellites." That is the best the opposition could do. It is like the two lawyers who worked together on

a case. One prepared the brief while the other argued the case. The date came for the trial and no brief was ready. One hour before the case went to court the partner delivered the brief, which had one piece of paper in it with one suggestion. "No case! Abuse plaintiff's lawyer." That is what the Pharisees did in John 8:48 after they saw they could not answer what he had to say. "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" It was a lie, but if every word were true how would that have justified them? All of us ought to live in such a way that brings honor to the truth, but it is fallacious to the core for people to point to some old reprobate and say the church of Christ cannot be God's people because of him. For the same reason people who have quit the Lord's church because of hypocrites ought to be ashamed.

I must hasten to include one more before I run out of space. This one is called *Argumentum ad Ignoratum*, i.e., argument based on ignorance. It is the plea that one knows ghosts exist because no one has been able to prove they do not. Obviously the proof of such lies with the one affirming such. But what about the one who claims he can perform miracles today and rests it on the basis that we cannot prove he cannot? The proof lies within his realm of responsibility (1 Cor. 2:4). The basis of instrumental music in worship rests on no better basis. Advocates challenge those of us who use the kind of praise God commanded exclusively (Eph. 5:19) to prove it wrong. It is not our responsibility. It is theirs to prove it is authorized.

Perhaps by placing these arguments in favor of false doctrine beside parallel arguments for silly propositions which we all know are false, we can finally see how fallacious they really are. Why do people dispense with rational thinking when it comes to the Bible? Let's not be like the old boy who said the main use of the head is to keep our ears apart.



# DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE AND THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Frank Chesser

God is independently, infinitely and immutably holy. He sits upon the "throne of his holiness" (Psa. 47:8). He is of "purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. 1:12). He is "light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). In repetitious form, the Bible describes God as "the Holy one." God is absolute holiness, untouched by even the shadow of sin.

One of man's basic errors is the formation of God in human likeness. Man has attempted to pare God down to his own level. In essence, man has formed his own god, which feels and thinks just like he does. God's goodness and longsuffering are designed to provoke repentance (Rom. 2:4). However, while enjoying these traits of the divine nature during the practice of sin, some have confused them with the humanizing of deity. Having depicted his forbearance with man while on a course of sin, God exposed man's self-drawn conclusion saying, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself" (Psa. 50:21).

Certain physical substances appear fuzzy when viewed with the natural eye. But when seen through a microscope, their true nature becomes readily apparent. Even so, one of the most effective means of discerning error to be error is through the disclosing power of the nature of God. Every fundamental religious error can be verified as such when viewed through the microscope of God's nature. By contrasting humanly devised doctrines with the character of God, one can easily perceive the error in the creative works of the human mind. This is true even of the new convert who does not yet possess the ability to produce specific passages exposing a particular error, or of a mature Christian who is unable to answer all the arguments made on a difficult passage at a given time.

Consider the well-worn doctrine of salvation by faith alone. This doctrine, while emphasizing God's grace, nullifies the concept of God's holiness. Advocates thereof have a one-sided perception of God. They feel that God's grace will override almost anything. During a fleeting moment, John Doe utters a profession of faith in God's existence and the deity of Christ. He proceeds to live a life of debauchery and at death, leaves behind a body ravaged by long years of sin, only to have some preacher attempt to secure his soul in that heavenly abode. Such a doctrine is blatantly inconsistent with the holiness of God.

The impossibility of apostasy dogma is equally offensive to God's nature. Consistency demands the

position that one could die in the very bosom of the most vile sins known to man and immediately be bidden into that eternal realm of perfect righteousness by the outstretched arm of the holy One himself. One preacher stated on a local television program, "I could not be lost even if I were swinging over the fires of Hell on a rotten potato vine, spitting tobacco juice in the Devil's eye." This contemptible doctrine makes a mockery of the holiness of God.

The Calvinistic concept of predestination and election is easily perceived by the unprejudiced mind as being utterly incompatible with the very essence of deity. Biblical scholarship is not a prerequisite for discerning the obvious contradiction between this tenet and God's love, mercy and justice.

The premillennial theory has many defenders, but no defense. Though the novice might experience some difficulty contending for the faith relative to the specifics thereof, the basic incongruity between this doctrinal product of the finite mind and the nature of God is easily discernible. The mentality of the Judaizer has been resurrected in the premillennialist with his physical temple, kingdom, throne and reign. This materialistic thrust is patently inconsistent with the spiritual nature of God.

With immeasurable sadness, attention is now drawn to one of the most loathsome theories ever expounded within the confines of New Testament Christianity. This doctrine concerns the limitation of God's marriage law to Christians. Accordingly, such passages as Matthew 19:9 can be applied only to those marital relationships where "both" partners are Christians.

This theory encourages the very thing God hates. "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away" (Mal. 2:16). Thus, God hates divorce! Is it conceivable that our holy God who hates divorce would leave the teeming masses of humanity in pagan darkness without any law to restrain and govern their sexual relationships? Are we to conclude that by divine design, the non-covenant world is allowed to wallow in the pit of sexual indulgence with as many partners as they wish until they find themselves within the borders of the church? By his permissive will in the absence of law, is not God encouraging animalistic sexual behavior among his own offspring?

Consider the man whose daughter is married to a non-Christian. Certain problems arise that threaten to dissolve their conjugal union. The concerned father who holds to the above position, approaches them

with fervent hope of aiding them in saving their marriage. What is he going to say to them? On what basis will he plead for them to remain together, work through their problems and expend the effort necessary to save their marriage? He cannot refer to God's law for marriage, for he does not believe they are amenable to such law. Is it not obvious that his philosophy renders him impotent? His position on this vital matter will not allow him to make use of the most powerful means at his disposal to exhort his own daughter's faithfulness to her wedding vows.

We read much about grace, love, law and obedience as though the principles were at war. Wherein lies the problem? Webster defines law as a "rule of conduct." Divine law is an expression of divine grace and love. The presence of God's law constitutes the basis for man to manifest his love for God. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Man's loving compliance with God's will is God's way of enabling man to appropriate to his life the rich provisions of grace and love.

The existence of law is God's way of saying, "I love you." Parents understand this principle. Therefore, they lovingly encircle their children with laws (rules of conduct) in hopes of preventing their participation in activities that would destroy their happiness and general well-being and fill them with life-long sorrow and regret. God operates on this same basis. The stringent nature of Matthew 19:9 is God's way of preventing a mountain of woes from entering the marital state and thus aiding man in developing an intimate marital relationship, tightly bound by the cords of love, trust and mutual respect.

Consequently, the reality of divine law governing the marital state is a manifestation of God's grace, love and deep concern for those who become one flesh. Man's submission to God's law results in holiness, a separateness from the very sins that could destroy the one flesh relationship and man's enjoyment of the rich blessings of that most sacred state.

Are such expressions of divine grace, love and concern denied to the inconceivable masses of humanity outside the church? Is God indifferent to their fidelity in marriage? Have they been left without rules of conduct to govern their sexual behavior? Have they been encouraged in their wanton, lewd and self-indulgent conduct? Can a Christian marry and divorce as many non-Christian partners as he desires until he finally enters a marital union with another Christian? Who can believe such a thing? Yet such is the inevitable result of the doctrine which limits God's law to those marriages in which both partners are Christians.

This humanly devised doctrine is an odious affront to the holiness of God. It is as incompatible with the nature of God and as easily discernible as such as is the Calvinistic view of predestination and election, or the impossibility of apostasy. This matter could not be more serious. This is not an ivory tower theological debate on some abstract principle. It is an eternal destiny determining matter involving the souls of men and the unity of the church. The principle of God's holiness is overwhelming evidence for the fallacious nature of this doctrine and those in kinship therewith and for the universal application of Matthew 19:9 and kindred passages.

—Via Words of Truth

## SCANNING THE SKIES

Stanley E. Sayers

Speaking of his second coming, Jesus said, "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:24-31). Just prior to this he said, "For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be" (v. 27).

### No Pre-Warning

There will be no advance warning of Christ's

second coming. Luke's account says, "But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the earth" (Luke 21:34,35).

By inspiration, John wrote in the final chapter of the last book of the Bible, "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still" (Rev. 22:11).

Why do these words read thus? For the simple reason that when Jesus returns there will be no more time to repent! Those days shall forever be in the past. Three times in Revelation 22, Jesus says, "Lo, I come

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quickly!" (vv. 7,12,20). *Then comes the resurrection* (John 5:28,29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:1-58).

### The Nature of the Resurrection

Our Lord declared that the hour is coming when all that are in the tombs shall come forth, righteous and unrighteous, unto the resurrection of the dead (John 5:28,29). Paul says that those who are asleep in Jesus God will bring with him when he comes (1 Thess. 4:13,14). Those living at the Lord's return shall not precede those who sleep (v. 15), (1) the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, (2) with the voice of the archangel, (3) with the trump of God, (4) and the dead in Christ shall rise first (v. 15). Those who are alive at his coming shall (1) together with the resurrected righteous be caught up in the clouds (2) to meet the Lord in the air, (3) and thus ever be with the Lord (v. 16). They were to comfort one another with these words (v. 18).

In that great chapter on the resurrection both of Christ and the righteous, Paul deals with the logic of the resurrection. (1) If Christ be risen, he is the first fruits of those who sleep (1 Cor. 15:20). (2) Christ, the first fruits, and those who are his shall arise at his coming (v. 25). (3) When the end comes, he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and (4) abolish all rule, authority, and power (v. 24). His reign must continue until he has put all enemies under his feet, the last enemy being death itself (vv. 25,26). The Son shall be in subjection to him who put all things under his feet (v. 28).

Concerning the resurrection, questions arise. (1) "How are the dead raised?" (v. 35). (2) "With what manner of body do they come?" (*Idem.*). Paul contends: (1) That which is sown is not brought to life, or "quickened," unless it first dies (v. 36). (2) The body "sown" or buried is not the resurrection body (v. 37). (3) Just as a grain sown springs up wheat or some other grain, so is also the resurrection of the dead (*Idem.*). (4) God gives it a body as it pleases him and to each seed "a body of its own" (v. 38). (5) There are all manner of bodies: man and the animal kingdom (v. 39), bodies celestial and terrestrial (v. 40). (6) The glory of the planetary system and the galaxies, one

star differing from another (v. 41). (7) The natural body sown in corruption to be raised in incorruption (v. 42). Sown in dishonor to be raised in glory (v. 43). Sown in weakness to be raised in power (*Idem.*). Sown a natural body to be raised a spiritual body (v. 44). (8) The first Adam a living soul, the last a life-giving spirit (v. 46). The first man of the earth, the second the Lord from heaven (v. 47). The earthy are like the earthy, the heavenly like the heavenly (v. 48). "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (v. 49). (9) Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor corruption incorruption (v. 50). A mystery: we shall not sleep, but be changed (v. 51). In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the last trump—the trumpet shall sound, the dead shall be raised incorruptible; we shall be changed (v. 52). The corruptible shall put on incorruption and the mortal immortality (vv. 53,54). *Death shall be swallowed up in victory!* (v. 54).

### Judgment to Come

As Paul reasoned of righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come, "Felix was terrified" (Acts 24:25). He pled with the Athenians to accept it as fact (Acts 17:30,31). He warned the Corinthians regarding it (2 Cor. 5:10,11). He emboldened himself with the Romans concerning it (Rom. 14:10-12). He lived his own life keenly aware of it (1 Cor. 9:27). He proclaimed in the Hebrews letter that it followed death (9:27); that God is a consuming fire (12:29), and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (10:31).

John saw the judgment scene and relected upon it in startling reality (Rev. 20:11-15). Jesus said that the word which he spoke would judge (John 12:48). By men's works, they should enter life everlasting or eternal condemnation (Matt. 25:31-46). Peter vividly described the end of the world (2 Peter 3:10-12). As also did Malachi (4:1-3), and other of the prophets.

Seeing that all these things are to come to pass, what manner of persons ought we to be! (2 Peter 3:11). "Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not, the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).

Are we ready?

# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

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## A BORN-AGAIN LEGALIST

Phil Davis

I am a legalist—or at least such I have been told by those who enforce the rules of "anti-legalism." These are they who chastise others as unfaithful brethren for repeating what the Bible says constitutes faithfulness in a brother.

I am a legalist—or, as one "theological sociologist" put it, a Pharisee. Never mind that Jesus said of instances of obedience to the Law, "these ought ye to have done and not to have left the others undone," validating the Pharisee's precisionistic approach—which they originated as a reverential deference to Almighty Sovereign God who gave it (Matt. 23:23). The Christ's quarrel with them was for the twin hypocrisies of binding God's rules on all but self, and eviscerating the heart—the spirit—of the Law in order to circumvent God's intent in giving it (a sin which can be equally well accomplished by the liberal's approach). The Pharisees' corollary evil was in presuming to be God, by binding rank opinions (not the implications of scripture) as strongly as, or more strongly than, the Spirit's revelations. Their error was not in being doctrinal purists and literalists, but in evading the Law and so trying to "mock" God (cf., Gal. 6:7f).

I am a legalist—that is to say, narrow-minded. Why, one preacher brother pointedly told me the joke that, "those Church of Christ's are so narrow-minded that 1,000 of them could watch a ball game through the knot-hole in a fence at the same time." It seems to me that I recall Jesus' own use of the word narrow in Matthew 7:14, when he said, "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that enters into life, and few there be that find it."

I am a legalist—or as one gentle soul elucidated, an "anti," because I am against libertine Saduceeism and licentious liberalism: the taking of indecent liberties with the revealed will of the Almighty. And worse

than that, I'm militant about it. In Leviticus 10:1-3 God, in essence, said, "I will be honored as God." Could that be why I am ANTI anything or anyway or anyone that is anti-God and anti-Christ and anti-nomian?

I am a legalist—a knuckle-headed, radical, right-winger; a nasty legal-eagle sheriff-for-God for trying to keep "the law of faith," "the law of Christ," "the perfect law of liberty," "the royal law," and to obey the gospel and its giver as well as my feeble humanity can (Rom. 3:27; Gal. 6:2; Jas. 1:25; 2:8,12; Rom. 1:5; 16:26; Heb. 5:8f; et. al.) Further, I bristle when those Christian brothers and sisters who should be the greatest helpers in getting me to heaven let good sense and caution fly to the wind, and try to drag me into the grace-only gutter with them. Such a doctrine is nothing more than the traditional barnyard philosophies all dressed up in "Sunday-go-to-meetin' clothes."

I am a legalist—or so I stand accused. Besides that, I'm supposed to be a mereiless judgmental crank. I'm unforgiving, unloving, unaware of God's grace, and unfortunately, unforgivable by the largesse of my libelers. It is so curious to me that they can forgive the failings of all others *beside* me, and that their tender hearts judge none *but* me. I have told them over and over that all I try to do is to communicate *God's* judgment, not my own (2 Cor. 5:11). I'm more willing to extend what mercy and forgiveness is mine to extend, if only a man repent (Luke 5:21; Rev. 3:19). After all, it is upon the grace and mercy of Heaven that I rest my eternal hopes (Eph. 2:8f; 4:31f).

I am a legalist—according to the insidious ambiguity of perfidious prophets and treacherous twisters of words. Blurring the line between rule-making and rule-keeping, they prey upon an unsuspecting audience

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# "Technicalities"

Dave Miller

"Are you telling me that just because I don't belong to your church, or just because I haven't been baptized *into* the remission of sins, or just because I use the instrument when I worship God, or just because I don't attend *every* worship service, or just because I don't partake of the Lord's Supper *every* Sunday—that I can't make it to heaven? I can't believe that God would condemn me on a technicality! Besides, that's legalistic!"

Many, many religious people, in and out of the church, are characterized by this attitude. Their perceptions of God and his grace serve to minimize the necessity of being too concerned about strict obedience to every command of God. The latest manifestation of this attitude is seen in a statement made by one prominent brother: "The implicit understanding seems to have become that settling these doctrinal tenets correctly will produce a right relationship between the student theologian and Christ Jesus." Such a statement is simply untrue. The Lord's people have *not* assumed that doctrinal purity guarantees right relationship with God. Rather, we have assumed that right relationship with God is *impossible* without doctrinal purity. We have taught that *both* "spirit and truth" (i.e., proper attitude *and* proper adherence to truth—John 4:24) are essential for a right relationship with God. Even if some give the impression that they have gone "overboard" on truth without sufficient attention to proper attitude, no solution is achieved by abandoning or compromising truth in an effort to fellowship those who remain unconformed to truth.

Man's definition of what constitutes a "technicality" rarely matches God's definition. More often than not, the very items which men brush aside as unimportant and trivial, God lays great stress upon. Herein lies the crux of man's problem. *We* decide what *we* think is important and then proceed to structure our religion around those self-stylized premises, assuming divine sanction and "grace." Never mind the fact that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer.

10:23). Never mind the fact that "the wisdom of this world" is foolish to God (1 Cor. 1:20).

In everyday living, we understand very well the principle that those things which appear to be trivial or mere technicalities can be crucial to survival. The incorrect dosage of medicine in a medical emergency can mean the difference between life or death. One or two miles over the speed limit can secure the offender a ticket. Accidentally putting gasoline into a diesel engine can ruin an automobile. I suppose one could label each of these examples as "technicalities," but doing so does not alter the magnitude of their importance.

In biblical history, the same principle holds true. Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden for eating of the fruit from one tree (Gen. 3). Nadab and Abihu were destroyed for incorporating foreign fire in their incense offering (Lev. 10:1-2). Moses was excluded from entrance into the promised land because of his mistake at Kadesh (Num. 20:7-12). Saul was deposed as king for sparing the best sheep and cattle and the life of one individual out of an entire nation (1 Sam. 15). Uzzah was struck dead for merely reaching out and steadying the ark (2 Sam. 6:6-7). Uzziah was rejected by God because he entered the temple to burn incense (2 Chron. 26).

Many more examples could be considered. These are no more "technical" or "trivial" than New Testament regulations pertaining to vocal (not instrumental) music in worship (Eph. 5:19), unleavened bread and fruit of the vine at the Lord's table (Matt. 26:26-29), and the qualifications of elders and deacons (1 Tim. 3:1-13). We need to quit trying to second guess God or decide for ourselves what *we* think is important to him—"that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). We need to be attentive to "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). When people are clamoring, "Those matters are unimportant," we need to reaffirm the words of Jesus, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. 23:23).

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## A BORN-AGAIN LEGALIST

(Continued from front page)

with witty turns of phraseology, clever clichés, and piously martyred postures, all the while (at least some of them) knowing fully of their own duplicity. They poison wells; they damn people's destinies. They are despicable (2 Pet. 2:1-22)!

I am a legalist—a born-again legalist! Yes, I *am* born again! I am as much a child of God as my critics,

and at least I can rest my head at night, whether it be on pillow or on stone, knowing that I am, though imperfect, more nearly an obedient child of my heavenly Father than those who say, "I will" then won't (Matt. 2:28-31; 5:8-9: "Obey"). Rather they supplant God's ways with their 20th century existentialistic, relativistic, more-highly-enlightened (per Gnosticism), arrogant anarchy and loose interpretationism. If mere repetition of charges makes one a legalist, then I am a legalist—**OR AM I??**

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## The N.I.V. And Psalm 51:5

Melvin Elliott

To the textual critic, one mistake in the Bible is as serious as another because in his view a mistake is a mistake whether it has serious doctrinal implications or not. It is true that any mistake is a mistake; however, there is a vast difference in a mistake of no consequence and one that introduces false doctrine into the text.

The same principle is true in translation. For example, in Luke 2:42 the passage says, "...they went up to Jerusalem..." Suppose a translation said they went down to Jerusalem? Such would be a mistake but hardly of any consequence to one's salvation. The King James translation has the word "Easter" in Acts 12:4. This is a mistake—it should be "Passover." However, this is of no significance to one's salvation as we shall show.

Acts 12:4 is not a passage teaching us to believe or practice anything. It is not an example of anything the early church did under the direction of the apostles. It teaches neither the observance of Easter nor Passover. It simply marks the *time* these events took place and thus has nothing to do with one's belief or practice in following God's word. Mistranslate it July 4th, or for that matter, omit it, and what change will there be in your belief and practice in working out your salvation? This is simply a mistake of no consequence because, whether Easter or Passover, it correctly marks the time. This passage obviously does not teach the observance of Easter any more than it would teach the observance of Passover had that word been used. No truth is denied nor false doctrine introduced by this "mistake."

On the other hand, one mistake among many in the *New International Version (NIV)* that will bring disastrous consequences if believed and practiced can be found in Psalm 51:5. It states, "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." This is no less than placing in the text the doctrine known as Calvinism—specifically, that of original sin—inherited sin—the Adamic sin. Calvinism is also found in many places in the NIV

New Testament. For example, John 3:8 and Romans 8 are full of Calvinism as well as Romans 13:14, 1 Corinthians 2:14, Galatians 5:16-17, 19, 24, 6:7, Colossians 2:11, 13, and numerous other passages. The consequence of Calvinism, if believed and practiced, will be the loss of one's soul.

In the Bible, Psalm 51:5 simply refers to the conditions under which David was born. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." What were the conditions under which David was "shapen" and "conceived?" The real Bible, not Calvinism, gives the truth in this matter. First, we must understand that the Bible declares children innocent, "...and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil..." (Deut. 1:39).

Now to the conditions into which David was born: "A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord: even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord" (Deut. 23:2). If one will check out the ancestry of David, he will find him to be the tenth generation from the adulterous relationship of Judah and Tamar (Gen. 38:13-30; 1 Chron. 2:1-15). This is the condition into which David was born, but he was not a "sinner from birth"—*guilty* of sin—the Adamic sin. Thus, the NIV changes the *condition* into which David was born to the *characteristic* of one born—the guilt of inherited sin. This is *fatal* false doctrine!

Such translation is a perversion of the text and the corruption of the doctrine (teaching) of the scriptures! It is the actual placing of the damnable doctrine known as Calvinism into the text—a doctrine which, if one believes and follows, will cause him to lose his soul in eternity because such an individual has not followed the truth which will make him free.

Thus, the insignificant mistake of Acts 12:4 in the KJV is not comparable to the false doctrine placed in the NIV in Psalm 51:5 and many other places. To misunderstand the nature of man and hold the doctrine of original sin with that which springs from it

is to hold the doctrine which is the taproot of modern denominationalism. This false system may be the cause of more souls being lost than any other. What false system has come about because "Easter" is in Acts 12:4 in the KJV?

True, there are no perfect translations in that they are absolutely flawless, but we have shown a vast difference exists in flaws of no consequence and those upon which salvation is at stake. Although some may be shown worse than others, nearly all modern translations contain both serious error and diminish support for the truth of God.

Jesus said if a man's son ask him for a fish, "... will he give him a serpent" (Matt. 7:9-10)? Surely this principle is violated when one asks for spiritual food and another places in his hands these modern perversions containing the poison of asps! Those who love either man or God would not do so!

These are not trivial matters, but fundamentals of the faith—essentials to salvation. Think seriously about it and determine to stand with that which supports the truth of God and oppose all that sets itself against the inspired, perfect, complete and inerrant truth of God.

## ***Two Upcoming Debates***

1. Saratoga, Arkansas. July 20-24, Tom West and Keith Sharp: Support of Orphans, Orphan Homes, and Eating on Church Premises.
2. Stamps, Arkansas. Last week in September, Noel Merideth and Keith Sharp: Benevolence and Church Cooperation.

For information contact:

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Stamps, AR 71860  
Phone: 501/533-2491

# **Massive Effort Planned To Counteract *BOSTON/CROSSROADS* Movement**

In July 1985, brother Alvin Jennings mailed his book, *How Christianity Grows in the City*, to over 15,000 congregational addresses (unsolicited, enclosing a bill for the book!). The book is filled with speculations upon which a most dangerous system of church government, similar to that of Roman Catholicism, is advocated. Significantly, the book is dedicated to the "Boston Church of Christ," recent heir to the Gainesville, Florida Crossroads religious empire. Brother Jennings stated in his dedication that the Boston Church has most fully implemented his humanly-devised plan of church organization and evangelism, by which it is extending its dreadful tentacles into all parts of the world.

Brother Wayne Coats of Mount Juliet, TN has now written an expose' of the Jennings book, entitled, *A Critique of How Christianity Grows in the City*, which deserves as wide a circulation as the error-filled Jennings book. The 30-page tract by Bronwen McClish Gibson, *Crossroads from the Inside*, which lays bare the insidious nature of the mind/behavior-control tactics which are used by the Boston/Crossroads leaders, also deserves the widest possible circulation among the Lord's people. Accordingly, the Pearl St.

congregation in Denton, Texas has undertaken the project of mailing a *complimentary* copy of the Coats book and the Gibson tract to over 15,000 addresses, involving every congregation of the Lord's people in all of the earth! Brother Coats and sister Gibson have graciously made their publications available at their absolute cost for this worthy work. All of the materials (books, tracts, cover letters, envelopes, etc.) are on order. Without a penny of profit to anyone, with the lowest prices obtainable on all expenses involved and by using donated labor (Pearl St. man/woman power) we can accomplish this work for a mere \$25,000 (only about \$1.70 per package). The Pearl St. church is not large, but her elders, Harry Ledbetter and Millard Smith, have shouldered the leadership in this vital effort, believing that many individuals and congregations will want to join hands with them. If you are concerned about the trail of tragedies continuing to be produced by Crossroads/Boston advocates and want to help stop them, please send any help you can to Church of Christ, 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201, and mark your check for "book mailing." Your assistance is needed urgently and immediately!



# Children's Church

George Reed

Not too long ago my family and I were worshipping at a congregation down south. It was at the evening service. After the singing, the young people went somewhere else for worship. I was wondering, as I have wondered before, "Is this what New Testament worship is all about? Have we not started catering to the youth? Will not our youth start to see a distinction in the church? Is not this leading to our present trend of youth directors not being over 35 years old?" We need to admire our older brethren for the wisdom and learning they have achieved over the years (Prov. 20:29).

In Nehemiah's time the people were exultant over the word of God. Let's notice some important facts from Nehemiah chapter 8:

1. All the children of Israel were gathered together as one man (v. 1).
  2. Ezra read unto all that could hear and understand (v. 2).
  3. Ezra read from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and women, and those who could understand (v. 3).
  4. The people of God blessed Jehovah, and said, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands, and they worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground (v. 6).
  5. The Levites caused the people to understand the law (vv. 7-8).
  6. All the people wept when they heard the words of the law (v. 9).
  7. Everyday during the feast of booths Ezra read in the law (v. 18).
- My, oh my, how we need a double dose of that today. It's hard just to get brethren out today to hear

a half-hour lesson from the word of God, much less a Bible reading for half a day! That would be too boring. I'll tell you one thing the children learned, in the ancient assembly under Nehemiah and Ezra: respect for the word of God, which far too many of our children don't have.

Here are some points to ponder that our children, who are too little to read, can learn in the assembly:

1. The whole family worships together.
2. Worship is not play time.
3. Respect for God and his word.
4. How to pay attention. Worship is not a time for cereal, coloring, or playing with the car keys.
5. It is not a place for sleeping. Too many of our older children think church is a place to catch up on extra sleep. If they are old enough to watch their favorite TV show, they are old enough to stay awake in worship.

The church in the first century came together on the first day of every week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; 16:1,2). And brethren, that's just what it means: the **WHOLE** church came together. Paul in Ephesians 6 speaks to children, parents, servants and masters. I realize Paul was writing to the brethren at Ephesus, but when the letter was read did not the entire church hear it? The Hebrew writer points out that there is an assembly (Heb. 10:25), and we must not forsake that assembly. I ask you, reader, where is the authority for dividing that assembly? If the assembly can be divided, could not it be divided up into age groups? If so, how could the whole church come together?

May the whole church be able to come together as one man under one roof. Let's teach our children that worship is a family affair.

## The Saint And Suffering

Winfred Clark

The first epistle of Peter stands up and says to saints, "You may be called upon to sacrifice and suffer because of who and what you are." That shouldn't come as any surprise when one considers the collision course between evil and righteousness. Sixteen times within this epistle one confronts the term that is equal to suffering.

In the fourth chapter of this five-chapter book, one is handed a handbook of instructions on how to handle that which is bound to come. We would do well to listen to Peter as he addresses the situation.

HE SAYS IT CAN BE EXPECTED. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm

yourselves likewise" (1 Pet. 4:1). "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (1 Pet. 4:12). They could expect such to come (2 Tim. 3:12).

Didn't Jesus set such a possibility clearly before his disciples? He said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20). "They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think he doeth God service" (John 16:2). "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John

16:33). Surely, his disciples would know what to expect. Knowing what to expect, they must do at least three things:

*One*, they must arm themselves for the fight. This, among other things, would mean having the right mind, which would be the mind of Christ (1 Pet. 4:1). This is the thing that enabled the apostles to depart with bruised backs from the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name (Acts 5:40-41). These folks are strong in the Lord and the power of his might (Eph. 6:10).

*Second*, they must abstain from sins of the flesh. One armed with the right mind no longer lives life merely to satisfy the lusts of the flesh. He walks to the beat of a different drummer. This can cause him to face suffering.

*Third*, they await the end. This can help people who see the expected come upon them.

**HE SAYS IT CAN BE EASIER.** This is detailed in 1 Peter 4:8-11. Space doesn't allow a full discussion of this but you'll see how these folks could help one another through the suffering. They could bear one another's burdens. Let them keep cool heads, warm hearts, open houses, ready hands, and truthful tongues. Now, place this in the context of Acts 12:1-17. Here in the home of Mary, a faithful band of disciples met. In one another they found the help to bear more easily the onslaught of suffering raining down upon them.

**HE SAYS IT CAN BE ENDURED** (1 Pet. 4:12-19). Peter believed that not only could Christians endure suffering, but they could make it work to the glory of God (1 Pet. 4:13-16). There are several admonitions within these verses that would enable them to endure such. He says "keep your perspective, keep your peace, keep your purity, keep your pride, and keep your poise." In doing this, they could endure the suffering more easily even though such could be expected.

This places the saint in the arena of suffering with his armor on, ready to do battle for the glory of God.

## A Faithful Friend

G. K. Wallace

It is good to have a friend. We all need someone in whom we can utterly trust. We need someone who loves us in spite of all our weakness. We need someone who will comfort and encourage us in time of trouble and sorrow when the world leaves us alone to fight our battles. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Proverbs 17:17). "Ointment and perfume rejoiceth the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel" (Proverbs 27:9). R.L. Stevenson said, "So long as we love we serve, so long as we are loved by others I would almost say we are indispensable; and no man is useless when he has a friend." Jesus Christ said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Gossip can wreck friendship. "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very (chief) friends" (Proverbs 17:9). A true friend will help you up when you have fallen down. He will defend you when others speak evil of you. He will believe you are innocent until you are proven guilty. A good friend is a great blessing. To be a friend one must give of himself and appreciate all that is loving and noble in others. "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter" (Proverbs 11:13).

Do not turn against a true friend, and don't be a treacherous friend. "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me" (Psalms 41:9). "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Proverbs 27:6).

*What a friend we have in Jesus!*

# The Role of Women in Public Worship

## 1 Timothy 2

Larry D. Mathis

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years we have witnessed a growing interest relative to a woman's role in society and in religion. To be more specific, an interest in the role of women in public worship. While, no doubt,

some of this is the result of a healthy desire to know what the scriptures teach, we suspect that part of the interest has been generated by the Women's Liberation Movement.

Recently, we read that some eighty or more Protestant groups, around the world, are ordaining women. We are made to wonder what influence all of this will have on our people. Will the pressure be applied for us to conform? Will we, in the near future, hear demands to allow women to fill our pulpits; to be appointed to serve as elders and deacons?

It is disturbing, to say the least, to occasionally hear members of the church, in conversation or Bible class, express the view that they see nothing wrong with a woman leading singing, leading prayers, waiting on the Lord's Table, or teaching Bible classes where both men and women are present and so forth.

Historically, our people have honored the Bible relative to a woman's role in religion. Will it continue? We would certainly like to think so but we do not know. Here is an area that presently needs attention. Therefore, we must teach. Let us pray and hope that our brethren will continue to respect and obey God's word in this matter.

### **FEMALE TEACHERS NEEDED**

The first century church of Christ needed women teachers and so does the twentieth century church of Christ. The big difference is, back then women evidently possessed some of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (at least the gift of prophecy), and none of our women possess miraculous gifts today to assist them in teaching God's word.

Long before the New Testament church was established, the prophet said, "Your daughters shall prophesy...and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28-29). The apostle Peter quoted Joel's prophecy and applied its beginning to the great day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-21). This is significant because prophecy was one of the nine miraculous gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:8-10). The gift of prophecy was given for the purpose of edifying, exhorting, and consoling people (1 Cor. 14:3). To "edify" means to build one up in knowledge, to teach. So, God qualified certain Christian women in the first century A.D. to teach his word to others.

We must keep in mind that in the first century miraculous gifts were absolutely essential to the spread of the gospel of Christ. At first, there was no New Testament to guide teachers of the word (whether males or females). Since prophecy was primarily a teaching gift (it did not always have reference to predicting the future) men and women alike needed it in order to accurately teach the will of God to others.

Luke informs us that Philip, the evangelist, "had four daughters—virgins—which did prophesy" (Acts 21:8-9). And, we learn from Paul that certain females in the church at Corinth also possessed this gift (1 Cor. 11:5). Inasmuch as all spiritual gifts were bestowed through the "laying on of apostles' hands" (Acts 8:14-19; 2 Tim. 1:6), we conclude that the Lord approved of women teachers in the first century

church. The New Testament plainly teaches that God set teachers in the church (1 Cor. 12:28). And, since women are commanded to teach, it follows that women were set in the church, by God Almighty, as teachers of the gospel. And, they were fully equipped for their task by the Holy Spirit (even in the absence of the written New Testament).

There was (and is) definitely a place for women teachers in the Lord's church. We learn from the New Testament that women, in some capacity, labored in mission work with Paul "in the gospel" (Phil. 4:3). Evidently, this was a teaching role. We also learn that women are authorized to teach children (2 Tim. 1:5-6; 3:15); other women (Titus 2:3-4), and a woman could assist a man in expounding the Scriptures to a man, as in the case of Pricilla and Aquilla teaching Apollos (Acts 18:26). While women were fellow laborers in the gospel, and had teaching roles, we must not conclude that they could teach anywhere Paul was authorized to teach! Their work was limited to such places and situations as would not cause them to exercise dominion over men. One thing we are sure of—women were not authorized to take a leading role in worship in a mixed assembly where both males and females were present (1 Tim. 2:8-15).

### **I TIMOTHY CHAPTER TWO DEALS WITH PUBLIC WORSHIP**

That this chapter concerns the worship assembly and the conduct of both males and females in the assembly is beyond dispute. This is easily seen from the following:

(1) Paul's purpose for writing 1 Timothy concerning proper Christian conduct or behavior in the church (1 Tim 2:7; 1:2-3; 2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Tim. 2:1-3).

(3) Carefully observe that in 1 Timothy 2, prayer (vs. 1,2,9) and teaching (vs. 11-12) are the primary topics.

(4) This context plainly shows that a gathering where males and females were both present is under consideration (vs. 8,11-12). Please note the contrast between men and women in verses 8-15.

(5) In such a gathering, men (the males) are to pray (2:8), and teach (2:12).

(6) In such a gathering, women (the females) are to "listen quietly" and "learn" (2:11).

(7) In a mixed religious assembly women (females) are to learn from men, not teach them (2:11-12).

(8) In a mixed religious assembly women (females) are to be in a role of submission, not authority or dominion (2:11-12).

(9) "Subjection" (submission) is a key word (2:11). It means "to rank under." She is to "rank under" the man in a leadership role and not "teach over the man" having dominion over him.

(10) Women will be saved working in the domestic sphere, not as a public teacher of the word (1 Tim. 2:15).

## **THE ROLE OF MALES IN WORSHIP**

Here is a most significant point: Paul, through inspiration, used two different Greek words for "men" in 1 Timothy chapter two. This must not go unnoticed.

In 1 Timothy 2:1, Paul said to pray for all "men." The word "men" is translated from the Greek word "anthropos" and simply means mankind; it is used generally for a human being, male and female, without reference to sex or nationality. This word includes both sexes.

However, in 1 Timothy 2:8, there is a contrast. Paul uses another Greek word for "men" (andras), which specifically means the "male" of the species! This word is never used of the female sex, and it stands in distinction from a woman (cf., Acts 8:12).

The point is this, prayer is to be made for all "men" (mankind), but in an assembly where both men and women are present, the males (only) are to do the praying, that is, the males are the only ones authorized to take the lead.

The context shows that the right of offering up or leading public prayer and teaching in worship pertains to the male members of the church. According to Paul, all male members of the congregation have an equal right to officiate in this capacity (obviously if they are able and capable of doing so), and are expected to exercise this right.

"In every place," simply means that public worship is not limited to any one geographical location. Wherever the church assembles, men are to take the lead.

## **THE ROLE OF FEMALES IN WORSHIP**

We must presently press the point that Paul writes, in this epistle, with all of the authority of an apostle of Christ (1 Tim. 2:7). He wrote the commandments of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37; cf., 1 Tim. 3:14-15). Therefore, what Paul writes has absolutely nothing to do with personal preference, but is inspired truth from an apostle of Christ. Now, note the contrast between the roles of males and females in the church: (1) in 2:8 he commands, "I will therefore that men," and (2) in 2:12 he commands, "But I suffer not a woman to."

Specifically, when Paul says that he "suffers not a woman to teach" he has reference to the gospel and not to secular studies. He has reference to delivering didactic discourses. Paul absolutely forbids women from publicly preaching God's word. Preaching, by its very nature, is an authoritative function. Preachers are to preach, speaking as oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11), reproving, rebuking, and exhorting (2 Tim. 4:2), with "all authority" (Titus 2:15). But, this is the very thing a woman is forbidden to do! A woman is not to exercise authority over the man (1 Tim. 2:9-11). Therefore, a woman cannot publicly preach and at the same time be pleasing to God.

## **WHAT IF THE WOMAN IS GIVEN PERMISSION BY MALES?**

Someone is bound to ask, "But, what if the male gives the female permission to preach, to pray, to lead singing, or to officiate at the Lord's Table, and so forth? "Suppose an elder or a woman's husband asks her to take a leading role in worship when males are present?" First, we must realize that God does not give her permission, even if men do. Second, no male (not even her husband), has a right to ask any woman to do anything that is contrary to the law of God. Third, no male has the right to place any female in a situation in which she would even come close to exercising dominion over a man. Fourth, no woman can step into the place of a man without violating the very word of God she would try to teach!

## **CONCLUSION**

It is our deep conviction that females are extremely important in the work of the church. We have the highest regard for sisters in Christ. We need faithful, godly and true teachers of the gospel. Women may scripturally share in this great work. However, females must not take the leading role in any religious assembly where males are present. In other words, men, not women, are to take the lead in worship.

It is not a matter of what we "think" or what we "want" or "like" or "we can't see anything wrong with it." The issue is: What has God said about it? (See Isaiah 55:8-9).

# DEFENDER

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

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## Are There Christians In Denominations?

Keith Marshall

Recently I was in a Bible class made up of several preachers, a teacher of Bible in a University, and two instructors in preaching schools. The question was brought up by one of the men in the class: Are there Christians in denominations? He recounted an incident that happened where he had his membership. A Christian woman and her husband, who was a Baptist, had moved into this area. They came forward at one of the services and placed their membership. This man was accepted as a member of the body of Christ with no further action or acknowledgment of wrong on his part.

Now, grant it, we do not know everything about this particular situation. We know nothing about this man or what he knows about the scripture nor the respect he had for the authority of the scripture. We do not know which particular group of Baptists he came out of (some are closer to the truth than others). We do not know if this man had been studying with one of the evangelists or elders there before he came forward. It is possible they might have had lengthy studies with him and become satisfied that he had experienced the "one baptism." There are many factors we do not know about this particular situation.

Now, I grant the possibility of such a truth seeker arriving at the truth. I know of groups of people (Spain and Ethiopia) that separated themselves from particular denominations. I have, in over more than thirty years of preaching in the states, met a few such individuals. In every instance they had separated themselves from those denominations and remained independent until they found the body of believers. I believe any truth seeker can take the scriptures and study them separate and apart from any outside influence and arrive at the truth concerning the place

of baptism in the plan of salvation. Another thing I need to make clear in this matter is that I do not care who assists an individual in the act of baptism. Mrs. O'Hair can be the administrator as far as I am concerned. That act is done between the repentant believer and God (Col. 2:12). So, I am granting the possibility of such a situation.

I believe we ought to clarify some terms before we go any further. The word "Christian" is used three times in the NKJ (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). In two of these references, the word is used to describe the relationship these people had with God and fellow believers. In the other passage a non-believer was using the word to describe what his teacher was trying to convince him to become. So this word is used by the Holy Spirit to describe a relationship, a spiritual relationship to God and to fellow believers.

Christianity is a taught religion. Jesus called on a prophet to affirm this: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'and they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me" (John 6:44-45). Paul admonished Timothy "and the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

There was a brother in this class that had been reared in the Catholic Church and then in his middle twenties he was converted to the Baptist church. Some years passed and he was taught the full plan of salvation and confessed his faith in Christ as the Son of God and was buried with Christ into His death,

(Continued on Page 59)

# Bellview Church of Christ

The Bellview church in Pensacola, Florida is a vibrant body of believers. For many years this church has provided vigorous leadership in North-west Florida, and throughout the United States. Her influence has been felt not only at home but in many foreign lands.

This faithful group of God's people has conducted a preacher training school in order to help prepare courageous men to boldly speak out in the name of Christ, as they ought to speak. Many proficient gospel preachers have gone out from the Bellview Preacher Training School to "preach the word;" being urgent in season and out of season. They have taught and defended the gospel, both at home and abroad, to the glory of God and the good of all mankind. The school was founded and conducted for many years under the capable leadership of William S. Cline.

Brother Cline, who preached for the Bellview church of Christ for fifteen years, is everywhere recognized for his devotion to the Cause of Christ and his ability to proclaim the word of God.

The Bellview church has published gospel literature for the benefit and encouragement of all of God's people. The *Defender*, a monthly magazine, edited for nearly fifteen years by William S. Cline, has served a vital role in presenting old truths in refreshing style. *Biblical Notes*, edited by Roy Deaver (whose character and knowledge have earned for him well deserved respect), was published for several years by the Bellview church because of the support and encouragement from her members. *Biblical Notes* is highly regarded throughout the brotherhood as a source of advanced Bible Study. It is a "preacher's publication" just as Roy Deaver is a "preacher's preacher." *Contending for the Faith*, edited by the highly respected and courageous Ira Y. Rice, Jr., has fought the hard battles and, at the same time, presented powerful appeals for missionary work, especially in Southeast Asia.

The Bellview church has sponsored brother Rice and his vigorous missionary activities for a number

of years. Countless souls have heard the gospel because of the dedicated and unrelenting work of Ira Y. Rice, Jr. The people of the Bellview church have stood steadfastly by, faithfully holding the ropes, as brother Rice has bravely served in the army of the Lord, hazarding his life for the sake of the kingdom.

The Bellview church always has been deeply concerned with the preaching of the gospel, both locally and abroad. As elders of this congregation of God's people, we have always been eager to encourage every good work.

The Bellview church has recently passed through some troublesome times. Reports may have reached some of you that would cast Bellview, her elders, and her members in an unfavorable light.

A few have disseminated information that is untrue and used rumor, false suggestions, and half-truths in a way that makes the situation at Bellview to appear to be what it clearly is not. Because of the circumstances at Bellview, it has been necessary for us to release our pulpit preacher and our full-time teacher in the Bellview Preacher Training School.

This short article is to simply let you know that Bellview is alive and well. As a congregation of God's people, we look optimistically forward to the future in the absolute confidence that "the best is yet to be." The members have closed ranks behind the elders of the church and she is going forward in a very fine manner.

Isn't it ironic how things seem to work out for the good of the faithful and the dismay of the wicked? The book of Esther tells us of how Haman was hanged on the gallows he had built for Mordecai. Solomon wrote, "Whoso causeth the upright to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit; and the perfect shall inherit good" (Proverbs 28:10).

Anyhow, we just wanted brethren to know that the Bellview church, holding high the banner of truth, is marching on.

Elders,  
Bellview church of Christ

## DEFENDER

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## **Are There Christians In Denominations?** (Continued from front page)

and raised up to walk in newness of life. He now has been a member of the body of Christ for several years. I asked him how he became a Catholic. He said he was taught by his parents and reinforced by the teaching of a priest. Then, how did he become a Baptist? By the means of teaching. How did he find out that up until then no one had told him where salvation and reconciliation with God is found? (2 Tim. 2:10; Eph. 2:16). Some one took his Bible and taught him the truth. My point: How many denominational preachers and teachers teach this truth? How readily will one learn this truth sitting under false teachers year after year? Now, consider also that these teachers and preachers attack the truth. People are not likely to learn the truth in this kind of atmosphere.

Romans 14 was brought up to affirm that there are Christians in denominations. The weak and strong in this passage were both brethren in the Roman congregation. The "weak" were not in a denomination and the "strong" in the church of Christ there in Rome. They both were in the church. I am amazed that brethren who have studied the Bible for so long would condone such teaching as this. If the "weak" were in a denomination and was accepted into the fellowship of the brethren in Rome from such denomination, then answer me: What denomination were they members of?

Another passage used to promote this idea of Christians being in denominations is Mark 9:38-41

and Luke 9:49-50. The men referred to could have been disciples Jesus had made while the apostles and the seventy were sent out preaching to the Jews, and then the apostles did not know them when they got back. This is one explanation of this passage and there are others I would not have any problem with; but to say these people would represent Christians in denominations, I do not believe it. What denomination were they in? What are these people going to do with Matthew 7:21-23?

As I have said, there is a slim possibility that there may be Christians in isolated places somewhere on this earth. What is their duty when they learn the truth that their obedience brought them in contact with the blood of Christ? Separate themselves from that denomination and start a New Testament church.

Another man brought up that it does not take a Christian to assist one in the act of baptism to make it valid. I do not care if Mrs. O'Hari did the baptizing, if that individual was being buried into the death of Christ, by faith, he was raised to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4). So do not confuse the issue with something that has nothing to do with it.

Brethren, we better wake up or we will be led into a merger with some denomination or organization of several, as were the Disciples of Christ. Where do you think they came from? Can it happen again? Looks like it is, because it is happening many places. Wake up! If we are not different in doctrine and living from every denomination anywhere, then why do we exist? Brethren, let us declare ourselves and be honest with our brethren.

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## **"If Abraham Had Died..."**

Wayne Smethers

Those today who claim God as Father and Jesus as Saviour also claim Abraham as their spiritual father (Rom. 4:11-12,16; Gal. 3:7,9,24). Though faith is not expressed in the same way, both Abraham and his spiritual children are justified by faith. Among religious people, however, there is a vast difference of opinion as to how Abraham was justified; in turn, that affects the way by which they believe people to be justified today.

In Genesis 15:1ff we have the record of Abraham (Abram) pointing out to God that he was childless and his steward stood to become his heir. Jehovah denied that that would be the case, took Abraham outside and bade him look at the stars of the heavens, telling him, "So shall thy seed be." The sixth verse tells us that he believed Jehovah and that God counted that faith to him for righteousness. Since this passage is quoted in Romans 4:3, as a part of a

discussion of the necessity of faith to justification, and since the latter passage further states that David described the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works, many have concluded that Abraham was completely justified on the day that he believed the promise.

Since faith in a promise would obviously have to be shown after the promise is made, many have concluded that Abraham was justified by an unexpressed faith ("faith only"), and that his children can be justified by the same principles. This is the reason that denominationalists take the position that baptism, nor any other act, is essential to the justification of man—further, that man is incapable of doing anything to save himself. The supposed justification of Abraham at the point of faith is the basis of their theology.

Three times, however, James tells us that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:17,20,26). He further

goes on to point out that the faith of Genesis 15:6 "wrought with his works" (v. 22), and that the passage in Genesis 15:6 was "fulfilled" when Isaac was offered. Since faith without works is dead, Abraham necessarily waited until God gave the specific commands by which his faith could be expressed and thus come "alive." We recognize that Abraham, between the promise and the offering of Isaac, was obeying God in other ways, but they were not the ways by which his faith in the promise could be specifically shown, and thus his justification be achieved.

In like manner today, then, we are doing the right thing (rightness) when we believe in Jesus as God's Son, when we repent, and when we confess our faith in Jesus as the Son of God, but it is not until we are baptized for the remission of sins that our faith is so expressed as to result in our justification. Then, and then only, have we really believed "on him that raised

up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. 4:24), and then only are we justified from sin to become the children of Abraham.

The statement often is made today that, "If Abraham had died the day he believed the promise, he would have gone straight on to heaven." This is the speculation behind the "justification by faith only" doctrine. To make that supposition, however, is to suppose the impossible, for in Genesis 15:15, Jehovah told Abraham, "...Thou shalt be buried in a good old age." By the time Abraham died, he was more than twice as old as he was the day he believed the promise (See Gen. 25:7). Not only, then, is what is being supposed impossible, but it is dangerous because it paves the way for teaching that men become the children of Abraham (and of God) without any works of faith-obedience upon their part. This is clearly a contradiction of scripture.

## "I've Gone Back To The Catholic Church"

Howard R. Horton

To be quite honest, I couldn't believe what I was hearing! I was in Wal-Mart when I noticed a lady who looked vaguely familiar. We both knew we had met, but couldn't figure out each other's names. I walked over and introduced myself, begging her forgiveness for failing to recall her name. She said, "I was baptized in your church awhile back. I have gone back to the Catholic Church. I just love that little church (Catholic). They are so warm and friendly there."

I finally recalled the incident. A small congregation, out in the country that didn't have a baptistry, had used ours for her immersion. Before I could give a reply to her statement she had gone.

Since this little event, I have done some serious thinking. I have come up with some questions that need to be answered, or at least thought about. Could it be that we give the lost the truth in our preaching and teaching, but fail to give them ourselves? Could it be that we, in our effort not to be a social organization, avoid the social aspect altogether? (By social aspect I mean Christian entertainment).

These are questions that need to be answered and answered quickly. It is apparent that the Lord's church is an exclusive organization or an exclusive body of people. We are exclusive, not in and of ourselves, but because of the doctrine that we believe and follow. Consider what the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:4-6:

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of

all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

There is only one Chief Shepherd, thus only one way to go to heaven. Jesus made this very clear when he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (John 10:1).

However, our friends in the denominational world are tolerant of all religions (as some of our brethren, sad to say). They teach and believe that we are going to the same place (heaven), but we are all using different roads. This just will not wash. It is definitely unprovable by the Book of Books. One member of one denomination can attend and place membership at another denomination, and no one will think anything about it. However, you let a person be added to the body of Christ, and it is a whole new ball game! Friends are lost, and in some cases, position is lost.

We, as New Testament Christians, are going to have to be aware of what a person, or persons, give up when they become New Testament Christians. We are going to have to fill voids that are created in new converts' lives when they become a part of the Lord's people. The act of filling this void is called "fellowship"—not fellowship just for the sake of fellowship, but fellowship with definite goals and definite aims. One of those aims should be to fill the voids in new converts' lives when they are abandoned by their former religious friends, or voids that are made when they forsake their old friends who are involved in



riotous living. This is really brought out in 1 Peter 4:4: "Whereby they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." How many of your Christian acquaintances have had this problem? Probably several. Maybe even yourself.

Infants in Christ are going to need some encouragement and help in living the Christian life. Consider, if you will, the message that is written in 2 Timothy 3:10: "But thou has fully known my doctrine, *manner of life*, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions..."

Now, the only way that Timothy could have known all this about Paul is through association—daily association. Notice that Timothy knew Paul's "manner of life." The way that we know about one's "manner of life" is by association. Paul didn't just teach Timothy the truth and then throw him to the wolves to fend for himself. He taught him and showed him how to live. He not only gave Timothy teaching, he gave him some of his (Paul's) own time as well.

Question. How can we be the "salt of the earth" if

we isolate ourselves from new converts? And, how can we be "the salt of the earth" if only we are with infants in Christ once a week? Answer. We can't.

So, the next time we see or hear about someone becoming a member of the Lord's church, let's all think about the price that person may be paying to become a child of God. That person may not have had the good fortune to be reared in a Christian home. Also, that person may be giving up family and friends, as well as position, to be named among the saints. Did not Jesus make this clear when he said:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

Let's continue to preach and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let's also give those that we teach something else as well—ourselves.

## Is It A Sin To Debate?

George Reed

One of the misconceived ideas of the religious world, and is entering the church, is that the Bible teaches it is a sin to debate. The proof texts that are so widely used are Romans 1:29 and 2 Corinthians 12:12, which uses the word debate (KJV). This word (*debate*) is accurately translated strife in the American Standard Version. The word strife (*eris*) means "contention, is the expression of enmity" (Vine). Strife is wrong. Debating, as we know it, is not wrong, but scriptural. Debating is defined as to "dispute; to contend; to argue in detail" (Webster).

### Jesus Was A Debater

Jesus was a man of controversy; a man of hard words (John 8:39,44; 5:39-41; 6:60-68; Matt. 23:3-39). Jesus used logic to put down the Jews in Matthew 12:24-31. In logic this type of argument is called an *argumentum ad hominem*. This is the arguing from an opponent merely to defeat him. This is what Jesus did in Matthew 12. In verse 24 the Jews accuse Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub. Jesus replied, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation..." (v. 25). Jesus continued in verse 27: "And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges." The Jews at this point are pinned against the wall with no place to go. Lenski shows this point as made by Jesus: "Your sons drive out devils by means of devils; how, then, can you object to me for driving out devils by the help of the

chief devil? your sons will convict you of injustice."

Due to lack of space, we cannot give every example in detail of Jesus debating, but we will list some. Jesus showed his disciples were right in plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath day and eating them (Matt. 12:1-8). One should examine Matthew 9:14-14 to see how Jesus puts forth an argument on why his disciples do not fast. Also read Matthew 21:23-27 where Jesus gives the Jews an alternative on the baptism of John.

If debating is not scriptural, then our modern day prophets have Jesus in some mighty hot water. Alexander Campbell said of the Lord: "He unsheathed His sword at the Jordan River, and threw away the scabbard." Any student of the Bible should surely be able to see this.

### The Apostle Paul Was A Debater

Paul said, "Brethren and fathers, hear ye the *defence* which I now make unto you" (Acts 22:1). "Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been many years a judge unto this nation, I cheerfully make my *defence*" (Acts 24:10). Before Agrippa Paul stretched forth his hand "...and made his *defence*" (Acts 26:1). Paul was "set for the *defence* of the gospel" (Phil. 1:16, cf., v. 7). In all the above mentioned scriptures, Paul uses the word *apologia*. Vine says this word means, "a verbal defence, speech in defence." Paul illustrates the principles of debate in Acts 18:28: "For he powerfully *confuted* the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ."

The word "confuted" means to cast down intensively. Vine says, "Implying that he met the opposing arguments in turn and brought them down to the ground."

Notice the masterful way Paul deals with the false prophets of his day in Acts 13:6-12: "O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (v. 10). John the Baptist tells the religious hypocrites of his day just about the same: "...Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wraeth to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance" (Matt. 3:7,8). Don't forget, brethren, these were men that spoke the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

### **We Must Do The Same**

Peter tells us to "sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give *answer* (*apologia*) to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Paul says, "...that ye may know how ye ought to *answer* (*apokrinomai*) each one" (Col. 4:6).

Jude tells us we are "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). The word *epagonizestha* is translated "contend earnestly." The word means "to be a combatant in the public games, to contend, to fight, to strive earnestly" (Roy Deaver). Paul also used this very word in Colossians 1:29 and 2 Timothy 4:7.

Alexander Campbell rightly raises the question as to "how an activity could be 'unchristian' or 'ungodly' while the Bible clearly teaches that various men are pleasing to God while engaging in that activity." To say debating is not scriptural is to speak blasphemously against the Bible. The prophets of old engaged in debating. Moses took on Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. 3:8,9); Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:19-46), and Job silenced the princes of Edom.

Let us conclude with a statement from Lindsey Warren: "Each person must decide either (1) to be a religious person and, thus, be involved in controversy, or (2) to leave religion in general alone." To that statement I say, "amen."

## **SYNOPSIS OF SERVITUDE**

Victor M. Eskew

As one studies the Scriptures, he will see that there are nine words which can be used for "servant" in the Greek. These words translate to many different meanings in the English language such as "servant, minister, slave, deacon, hired servant, and bond-servant." The most common and general term for servant, however, is the term "doulos." This term has the definition of "slave, bondservant." It carries with it the devotion to another to the disregard of one's own interest. It views the slave in relation to his master.

The above definitions show the servant to be one who gives himself wholly to another's will. In 1 Peter, we read of Jesus as our example. In Philippians 2:5-8, we read of his being a servant:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Thus, Christ should be our supreme example, showing us how to give ourselves wholly to our master. This he adequately does. In John 4:34 we read: "Jesus saith

unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." In John 5:30 Jesus said: "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." Again in John 6:38 we are told: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Jesus manifested such an attitude seen in the Garden of Gethsemane, when death was lingering nigh: "And as he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39). Complete, whole service is required of the servant toward his master, even unto death.

But, who is your master? The New Testament refers to many things that could be a master to an individual. Things that could be served are sin (Rom. 6:6); the creature (Rom. 1:25); the law of Moses (Gal. 3:19); idols (1 Thess. 1:9); divers lusts and pleasures (Titus 3:3); and dead works (Heb. 9:14). These things, however, though they can be and are served by many, should not be our master. Service should only be rendered to the true God of heaven. This Jesus affirmed in his temptation in the wilderness: "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and

him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10). God in his infinite wisdom and kindness has given man the freedom to choose whom he will serve. It is certain that we must choose one, and that we cannot serve more than one: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). The one to whom we yield our obedience to is the one who has become our master: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16).

Thus far we have seen that we are, as servants, to give ourselves wholly to the will of the master and that there are only two alternatives as to whom we may serve, God or another. Those who are serving one other than the God of heaven are referred to as servants of sin (Rom. 6:17); servants to uncleanness (Rom. 6:19); and servants of corruption (2 Pet. 2:19). Those servants who serve the Almighty God are called faithful and wise servants (Matt. 24:45); good and faithful servants (Matt. 25:41); servants of the most high God (Acts 16:17); servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:18); servants of Christ (Gal. 1:10); servants of the Lord (2 Tim. 2:24); and servants of God (Titus 1:1). And servants who were at one time faithful, but who are no longer obedient are deemed wicked servants (Matt. 18:32); evil servants (Matt. 24:48); wicked and slothful servants (Matt. 25:26); and unprofitable servants (Matt. 25:30).

Some may realize that their service is being paid to one other than God. Realizing this, they question: "Is there a way for me to become a servant of righteousness rather than of sin?" The answer is a resounding yes! Paul made this plain in this Roman epistle:

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

Required of one to become a servant of righteousness is obedience to the "form of doctrine." The form of doctrine is that which encompasses the whole of the gospel: the death, the burial, and the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-4). This form is found in the act of baptism:

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3,4).

Upon obedience to the command of baptism we obey the "form of doctrine" Paul mentioned in Romans 6:17. It is then, and only then, that one is made free from sin and becomes a servant of righteousness. Upon this obedience we will be numbered with other

servants such as Paul (Rom. 1:1); James, the brother of Jesus (James 1:1); John, the apostle (Rev. 1:1); and the great law-giver of the Old Testament, Moses (Rev. 15:3).

After one becomes a servant, his job is one of service to the master. But, just how is one to serve his Lord? The first obligation is to follow the master: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (John 12:26). This verse shows that it is the Lord that is to be followed. Attempting to please someone else will cause one no longer to be the servant of Christ: "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" (Gal. 1:10). Another characteristic of service is that it should be with all humility. This Paul, the servant of Christ, said that he did: "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews" (Acts 20:19). A servant's rendering should also be instant: "Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come..." (Acts 26:7). Service also should be that which springs from within our very being. It should not be just an outward performance of duty: "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers" (Rom. 1:9). Finally, our service should be good and acceptable and with reverence and respect for our Master: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptable with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28).

This study has been designed to help us in our service to God. In connection with the above verses, the following Scriptures should be implanted deeply upon each and every faithful servant. "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matt. 20:27). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him" (John 13:16). And finally, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10).

## OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Andrew M. Connally

I have just talked at length to a brother who has been attending a congregation in Dallas that practices open membership. They are welcoming Baptists into their fellowship without "baptism for the remission of

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After one becomes a member of the church, he is expected to follow the teachings of the Bible. The first commandment is to love God with all our heart, mind, and strength. The second commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves. These two commandments are the foundation of the Christian life. If we love God and our neighbor, we will be able to keep all the other commandments. The third commandment is to keep the Sabbath day holy. The fourth commandment is to honor our father and mother. The fifth commandment is to do no murder. The sixth commandment is to do no adultery. The seventh commandment is to do no theft. The eighth commandment is to do no false witness. The ninth commandment is to do no covetousness. The tenth commandment is to do no envy. These ten commandments are the foundation of the Christian life. If we love God and our neighbor, we will be able to keep all the other commandments.

Many theories have been taught concerning the creation of the earth and the heavens. It has been taught that God formed a tiny cell and that the earth began to evolve from that and that the earth is continuing to grow. No one is able to tell us where the cell came from or when the earth will quit growing. A more popular theory is that a great explosion occurred, that the earth was heated and cooled for billions of years and that the earth and the heavens were finally completed. We do not want to base our faith upon conflicting theories but upon the word of God.

sins." Such is sin! It is a prostitution of the truth and they who do such shall be lost.

Brethren who are so enamored with size, numbers, money and fellowship the "sound doctrine" of the apostles (Acts 2:42) are nothing more than an apostate body lost to Christ. There may be lots of "good people there," but they are not standing up for the truth and by their presence, money, prayers, and fellowship they are partakers of their evil deeds.

Such "good people" need to heed Paul's admonition to "come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you..." (2 Cor. 6:17). It is evident as long as they remain there *God does not receive them*, otherwise there would be no reason to come out.

This same congregation's preacher has recently preached "that if a man has been married and divorced twenty times, unscripturally, send him to us and we will baptize him and take him, because we care." Such is another perversion of the truth by a false teacher.

It looks as if it is going to come down to a public marking and withdrawal of fellowship of a sister congregation. If they are determined to disregard the word of God, then they need to feel the wrath of righteous indignation from the saints of God. ...So be it.

## God's Wisdom In Creation

Quentin Dunn

Many theories have been taught concerning the creation of the earth and the heavens. It has been taught that God formed a tiny cell and that the earth began to evolve from that and that the earth is continuing to grow. No one is able to tell us where the cell came from or when the earth will quit growing. A more popular theory is that a great explosion occurred, that the earth was heated and cooled for billions of years and that the earth and the heavens were finally completed. We do not want to base our faith upon conflicting theories but upon the word of God.

"The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding he hath established the heavens" (Prov. 3:19). God used wisdom in creating the earth. Every mountain, every tree, every river, every ocean and every sea is in its proper place. Only a wise God could create an orderly earth. The heavens mean the regions where the birds fly, and the planets are fixed in their firm position. The sun is exactly the right distance from the earth. If it were too close the earth would burn up, if it were too far the earth would freeze. The sun being the right distance from the earth, shows that God used understanding in creating the heavens.

The moon and every star is in its proper place. Only a wise and understanding God could have all the heavenly bodies in their proper places. We should thank God for his wisdom and understanding in creating the earth and the heavens.

Bellview Church of Christ Announces

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# DEFENDER

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

**Phil. 1:17**

VOLUME XVI, NUMBER 09

SEPTEMBER, 1987

**Bellview Church of Christ**

## Let The Facts Speak

### INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

It is with careful and prayerful consideration that the following information is presented regarding problems which the Bellview church of Christ in Pensacola, Florida has recently experienced. The elders would like to consider the misinformation which has been disseminated among the brotherhood to be of such nature as to not deserve any comment; however, since so much which is not true about the Bellview church of Christ, its elders, and some of its members has been spread to so many, they are left with no alternative but to set the record straight and let the facts speak.

They have no ill will toward any man, including

those who have wronged them in this situation. In keeping with Matthew 5:44, and other principles of Christ, they wish no evil to come to anyone. Rather, they pray for those who speak evil of them, that their souls may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Earlier, in the *Far East/World Evangelism Newsletter*, and also in the July 1987 issue of *Contending for the Faith*, facts were presented in an effort to set the record straight re: 1) the "Special Issue" of the *Firm Foundation*; 2) the "Bibles-for-China" Fund; and 3) Ira Rice's disbursement account. It is not proposed that those facts be restated in this article.

### LAWSUIT THREATENED AGAINST BELLVIEW CHURCH & ITS ELDERS

At the close of the afore-mentioned article in the July 1987 issue of *Contending for the Faith*, it was mentioned that "one of the Bellview preachers that has been released from his employment has obtained legal counsel and has had a letter from the attorney

sent to the Bellview elders which threatened the Bellview church of Christ with a lawsuit." The following letter dated May 21, 1987 was written by Mr. Donald M. Sheehan, Attorney and Counselor At Law, of Pensacola, Florida:

DONALD M. SHEEHAN  
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW

103 NORTH DEVILLIERS STREET  
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32501

(904) 432-3492

May 21, 1987

Mr. Fred Stancliff  
Elder and Trustee of the Bellview church of Christ  
6235 Millview Road  
Pensacola, Florida 32506

In Re: Michael Kiser vs. Bellview church of Christ

Dear Mr. Gallagher:

I have been retained by Mr. Michael Kiser to pursue a libel and slander action against the Bellview church of Christ. Mr. Kiser states that numerous Elders, Mr. Cline, Ira Rice and others, have slandered and impuned Mr. Kiser's good name and reputation. Some of the allegations include accusations of dishonesty, criminal behavior and drug use. I can assure you that Mr. Kiser is ready to sue all parties involved in this sordid power play that the Bellview church of Christ has instigated.

Apparently a power struggle exists between the Elders of the Church and the ministers hired by the Elders. This power struggle culminated when a Mr. Cline was nominated to become an Elder. Mr. Kiser, an Elder named Mr. Don Orr and other members of the congregation vehemently objected to Mr. Cline's nomination. As it stands now, Mr. Orr resigned and the remaining three Elders, backed by Mr. Cline, fired Mr. Kiser and the preacher, Mr. Max Miller.

Mr. Kiser has been a preacher of the Gospel for twenty three years. As a minister of God, he has the moral authority and moral duty to call out to your attention facts which he believes will show financial improprieties, or wrongs concerning the Bellview church of Christ. Mr. Kiser did not shirk from that moral responsibility and did indeed inform interested parties of what he believed to be true. He did this in utter and complete faith so that you, as Elders, would decide what proper course of action to take.

Mr. Kiser, simultaneously, had the moral and civil duty to inform the members of his church. He did not do this. He gave you his thoughts - in complete confidentiality - concerning these matters. He trusted you to act. You failed to act on these matters but you did succeed in a character assassination plot on Mr. Kiser. You then fired him.

We have a Judeo-Christian legal system. Secular law dictates that a civil duty exists to inform people of that which they ought to know. Christian moral thought permeates our law. You should know what your legal duties are to the congregation.

A person who is a fiduciary holds the characteristics of a trustee. A bond of trust and confidence is involved and it required scrupulous good faith and candor. The status of being a fiduciary gives rise to certain legal incidents and obligations. This would include a broad prohibition against investing money or property imprudently or illegally. A duty of accounting exists to the people who invest the money. The investors (each member of the congregation) has an independent right to demand an accounting from the fiduciary on any financial matters. It is well established in civil law that a breach of the fiduciary duty can make a trustee liable for damages caused by the breach.

Collectively, Mr. Kiser, Mr. Miller, Mr. Rice, the Elders and other ministers of God are fiduciaries of the Bellview church of Christ. A fiduciary relationship exists between the congregation, on one hand, and the officers of the church on the other. The core of this relationship is founded on trust and confidence reposed by the congregation in the fidelity and integrity of the officers of the church. This relationship is strengthened when the congregation of the church give their absolute faith, confidence, trust and reliance upon the judgment and advice of the Elders and ministers of the church.

Mr. Kiser has been accused of "chewing poppy seeds and sniffing dust." He has been accused of "being a busybody." He was accused of a "dishonorable act." Brother Kiser was accused of "rifeling through the elders files" of which allegedly held "confidential matters."

It is ironic that these accusations were made to the congregation without Brother Kiser present. What concerns us, is that a video tape was made of this star chamber proceeding. I understand that you are distributing this video tape. What is really "hilarious" is that a speaker told the congregation all about the church's incorporation, the bylaws and of the board of directors. He then failed to tell them of the fiduciary duty owed by those officers to the congregation. The congregation was not told of many things.

We say let the truth be known. Mr. Kiser accepts the fact that you no longer want him at the Bellview church of Christ. He will soon be on his way. But, he will not and cannot leave Pensacola branded by you and threatened with disfellowshipment. His reputation and ministry are the only assets he has. He will do everything in his power to see that those are not destroyed.

Mr. Kiser has authorized me to file suit in the Circuit Court of Escambia County on June 3, 1987. I will file suit if we have not resolved this by June 3, 1987.

We wish to avoid litigation if at all possible. Mr. Kiser understands that you may give him no other alternative but to sue you. I have suggested that a lawsuit will be unnecessary if you agree to the following:

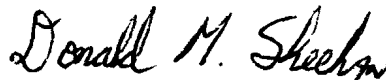
- (1) Withdraw the video taped meeting from circulation and stop making slanderous and libelous statements about Mr. Kiser.
- (2) Have the speakers who made those statements publically retract those statements and publically apologize to Mr. Kiser.
- (3) Allow Mr. Kiser and his attorney to present evidence and testimony to five honest men, outside of the Bellview church of Christ, with the five men being mutually agreed upon, and the Bellview church of Christ presenting whatever they wish to present; and the congregation shall be invited to attend with a court reporter present to record the proceedings.
- (4) Agree to allow Mr. Kiser to preach his ministry in peace somewhere else and agree not to hinder, in any way, his efforts to do so.

If you agree to do this, Mr. Kiser will not have to use the court to seek his remedy. Obviously, he is extremely concerned with the repetitious allegations concerning his reputation, good name and ministry. We want to stop the rumors, innuendos and slander concerning Mr. Kiser. We want the world to know the truth. Mr. Kiser would be satisfied if he can present his side to the congregation. You should not be afraid of that, or are you?

We want to create and preserve a proper record concerning all that has happened out at the Bellview church of Christ. This can be done by affording Mr. Kiser simple due process of law. This can be done in an orderly proceeding where everyone concerned has the opportunity to be heard and to enforce and protect his rights. If any questions of fact has been conclusively presumed against Mr. Kiser, then you have denied him due process of law. Mr. Kiser feels that he can then leave Pensacola with his ministry and reputation in good standing with all concerned. Please carefully consider all of the facts and I trust that you will do what is right and just.

Thanking you for your courtesies,

Sincerely,



Donald M. Sheehan

DMS/rh

# DEFENDER

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



In addition to the foregoing letter, Mr. Sheehan also sent a second letter, dated May 21, 1987 as follows:

**DONALD M. SHEEHAN**  
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW

103 NORTH DEVILLIERS STREET  
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32501

(904) 432-3492

May 21, 1987

Mr. Fred Stancliff  
Elder and Trustee of the Bellview church of Christ  
6235 Millview Road  
Pensacola, Florida 32506

In Re: Michael Kiser vs. Bellview church of Christ

Dear Mr. Stancliff:

I have been retained by Mr. Michael Kiser (Brother Kiser) to pursue a breach of his employment contract by your church. I understand that you are a church elder and a trustee. You have full power to bind the church on contract and did so in this case.

You and other church elders, on behalf of the church, formed a binding employment contract with Mr. Kiser. You and the elders arbitrarily and capriciously terminated Mr. Kiser. You made a promise to Mr. Kiser that upon termination of his employment with your church, that he would be paid his full salary for a period of twelve weeks. I also am informed that this is an absolute policy to do so and this is a custom of the church nationwide. As you know, Mr. Kiser has only been paid four weeks salary. The church owes him for eight weeks salary. His salary is \$500.00 per week. He is supporting a wife and minor child. He moved from Kentucky to Pensacola at great expense. He must now, obviously, find new employment and relocate his family.

Mr. Kiser is demanding that you fulfill your part of the contract and immediately pay him the sum of \$4,000.00. Mr. Kiser considers you in breach of the employment contract. If the \$4,000.00 is not in my office by June 3, 1987; Mr. Kiser will file a lawsuit against all the Elders and the Bellview church of Christ for breach of contract. I assure you that Mr. Kiser deals with you in good faith and expects you to do the same. Mr. Kiser only wants what the church promised him. We await your reply.

Sincerely,



Donald M. Sheehan

On June 1, 1987 the Bellview elders responded to both letters as follows:

June 1, 1987

Mr. Donald M. Sheehan  
103 North DeVilliers Street  
Pensacola, Florida 32501

Dear Mr. Sheehan,

Your two letters dated May 21, 1987, concerning Michael Kiser, have been received and carefully studied. The undersigned are the bishops (elders) of the Bellview church of Christ and make this joint statement to you in response to the separate letters you sent to the three of us.

In the first place, please be assured that we are men of good will who, in our dealings with Michael Kiser and with all men, act in good faith. We only want that the Bellview church of Christ be allowed to continue its important work in peace. We have no disposition to do or say anything that would in any way be damaging to, or disrespectful of, Michael W. Kiser. We wish the very best for him and pray that he will prosper as his soul prospers and that he will be successful in every righteous undertaking. We are willing to cooperate in every way possible in order to resolve our differences without litigation.

You mention an alleged employment contract between the bishops of this church and Mr. Kiser. Are you referring to the employment memo dated May 27, 1986, a photocopy of which is enclosed? Please be assured that we are indisposed to breach any agreement or contract we have made with Mr. Kiser. As men acting in all good faith, we intend to keep our word, as we always have. In this spirit, we are willing to work with you and Mr. Kiser in determining exactly what was and was not promised to him.

We have again gone over the contents of the memo of May 27, 1986 and can find nothing about any understanding or agreement concerning the termination of Mr. Kiser's work with the school and the church. If we have overlooked anything in the memo that deals with his dismissal and any possible severance pay, please point it out to us.

Mr. Sheehan, upon what basis do you say in your letter to us that we entered into an agreement with Mr. Kiser to give to him upon termination of his employment "full salary for twelve weeks"? We did not enter into such an agreement with Mr. Kiser.

Mr. Sheehan, we believe that you are a man of good will, like ourselves, and will be fair in telling us why you say in your letter that we acted "arbitrarily and capriciously" in dismissing Mr. Kiser. In what way were we sudden, unpredictable or inconsistent in our treatment of Mr. Kiser? When did we act randomly and without reason in our dealing with Mr. Kiser? Please be specific and give to us full details of any whimsical behavior on our part. We have searched our hearts and are honest in saying to you that we do not believe that such was the case. If we are mistaken, give us the information that will allow us to correct any outlandish behavior on our part.

Mr. Kiser refused to follow our instructions and was insubordinate. He furthermore made unfounded and unjust accusations against the bishops who employed him and who had every right to dismiss him. What, Mr. Sheehan, could any reasonable man expect under such

circumstances? If you were employed and began to rebel against your superiors, what would you expect them to do? If your rebellion was aggravated, would your boss be considered capricious or arbitrary in dismissing you?

We want very much to do the right thing and treat all men in the way we wish to be treated. We have absolutely no intention of ever doing or saying anything that would be out of order or unfair. We are reasonable men who can be approached and who will give an unprejudiced hearing to any person who is behaving in a rational manner.

Mr. Sheehan, who told you that it is an absolute policy of the church of Christ to pay a dismissed employee full salary for twelve weeks? Where did you get the information that such is the custom of the church of Christ nationwide? If this is either a policy or a custom of the church, we have never heard of it and we have served as bishops more total years than Mr. Kiser is old. If you can prove that the church of Christ has such a policy or custom, we will be indebted to you for the enlightenment and will reconsider our decision to give Mr. Kiser thirty days severance pay. We say to you, Mr. Sheehan, in all candor, that we believe we have treated Mr. Kiser fairly and justly and have given to him a more generous separation stipend than his behavior deserved.

Mr. Sheehan, the bishops of this church wish to assure you, in all good faith, that we have not at any time slandered or libeled Mr. Kiser. To the profound reverse we have made every effort to deal with him in the spirit of turning the other cheek and going the second mile. If any slanderous and libelous action has occurred, it has been on the part of Mr. Kiser in his unjust accusations against us.

Did Mr. Kiser tell you that a power struggle exists between the bishops of the Bellview church of Christ and the preachers? What exactly does he mean by this? What power does he claim or desire? If there is a power struggle, then both groups must be seeking power and undertaking to deny power to the other group. Did Mr. Kiser tell you that this is the case? Or do we misunderstand what you mean by a power struggle?

You, Sir, have been misinformed if you have been told that the bishops of this congregation have been approached by Mr. Kiser, or any other member of the church, with a request to be given financial information about the affairs of the church and have been denied. In the first place, such is not necessary seeing that it has been the habit of the bishops of this congregation for many years to make a monthly financial report available to the entire church. Every member of the church knows that if he desires additional information about the contributions and disbursements of the Bellview church of Christ a simple request is sufficient for the records to be immediately made available. We have double checked with the keeper of our financial records and have been assured that Mr. Kiser has never made a request to the treasurer of the church to examine the books. Furthermore we testify that he has never stated to any of the bishops, or to all of us, that he believes financial improprieties exist in any of our dealings.

Please tell us, in the same spirit of openness and fairness and willingness to do right that we maintain and have displayed in this letter, if Mr. Kiser has accused us of financial improprieties. If he is making such an accusation, we insist upon knowing the details of his charge. What,

exactly, is he talking about? Has Mr. Kiser represented to you that he pursued his moral responsibility to inform us of facts that he thought might show mishandling of funds entrusted to our care and keeping? If so, we emphatically state that we have no knowledge of such action on his part and insist that Mr. Kiser has a faulty memory and his statement is incorrect. Neither Mr. Kiser nor any other member of this church has ever been denied any requested information about the financial condition of the congregation.

We are greatly concerned about your assertion that we succeeded in a character assassination plot on Mr. Kiser. In all kindness, Mr. Sheehan, we believe that you have made an unsupported and unsupportable accusation against us in your letter when you charge us with assassinating Mr. Kiser's character. We demand to know why you made that statement. What information do you have that would suggest we murdered Mr. Kiser's character? Where did you get that information? What proof do you offer?

We are upright men who endeavor to treat all with courtesy and respect. We are men who do not jump to conclusions, nor do we rashly and recklessly make intemperate statements about others. We wish to get along peaceably, in so far as such is possible, with all people. We believe that Mr. Kiser knows this to be true. We also believe that as you get to know us better you will realize that this is true. We are not hardheaded nor arbitrary and wish to deal with you, Mr. Kiser, and all mankind with integrity.

Your comments about our legal system are very interesting. We think we do understand what our legal duties are to the congregation. If we need additional information and you can supply it, we will be much obliged to you.

Thanks, too, for your comments concerning fiduciary relationships. We confidently believe that all who know us will bear us witness that we behave as faithful stewards. If we are lacking in our trust obligations in any way, and you have knowledge of it that is not based on hearsay and rumor, we will count you as our friend if you will point out our failing and we will forthwith take steps to improve and make correction.

It is precisely because we are fiduciaries of the Bellview church of Christ that we found it necessary to take the painful and unwelcome course of dismissing Mr. Kiser from his position. We would have been faithless to our charge if we had not done so and if we had allowed Mr. Kiser to usurp our position and authority.

Please favor us with answers to the following questions:

Who accused Mr. Kiser of chewing poppy seeds and sniffing dust?

When was he so accused?

Who was present when he was accused?

What does "chewing poppy seeds and sniffing dust" mean?

What, if anything, provoked the charge?

What was the context of the charge?

When was Mr. Kiser accused of being a busybody?

Who accused him of being a busybody?

What does being a busybody mean?

What was the context of the accusation?

When and where was Mr. Kiser accused of "rifling

through the elder's files"?

Who made the statement?

How do you know what the congregation was and was not told?

Who told you that we are distributing a video tape that is in any way critical of Mr. Kiser?

To whom has the tape been distributed?

What, exactly, does the tape show and say?

With reference to the four demands that you make on page three of your second letter dated May 21, 1987, please be advised that we have not and will not circulate a video tape of any kind that we believe slanders or libels Mr. Kiser. We obviously cannot stop doing what we are not doing in the first place. When you have provided us with answers to the questions we have raised in this letter, we will give consideration to your second demand. Your third demand is impracticable, in our judgment. Please tell us what five men; what evidence and testimony; where the proposed meeting would take place; what good would be accomplished. We are perfectly willing to continue our correspondence with you and with Mr. Kiser until we arrive at a mutually satisfactory disposition of this unpleasant and distasteful matter. We are open to any suggestion that would have a healing and beneficial influence for all concerned. We agree with your fourth demand, but we have been trying to do that anyway. Our agreement to the demand must not be construed as agreeing with the implied charge in the demand.

We agree with you that the truth--the whole truth--should be known. Please be assured that the bishops of this congregation are more eager for the truth to be known than any other person could possibly be.

Like yourself, we wish to avoid litigation. We are interested in resolving this matter in an equitable way. We have no interest in doing any damage to Mr. Kiser and earnestly pray that he will not, by his actions, bring reproach upon himself. If he is truly interested in his reputation and ministry, he will withdraw his threat of a lawsuit, and go peaceably on his way.

If you desire any additional information we would be most pleased to hear from you. It is our united opinion that any discussion between us should be in writing so that a record of such discussion can be kept by both you and us.

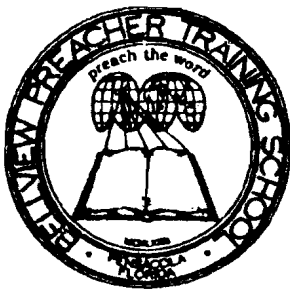
We not only wish to have any possible rumors, innuendos and slander (we know of none) against Mr. Kiser stopped, and will use all our influence and power to produce that result, but we also ask you and Mr. Kiser to use your influence and position to put an end to rumors, innuendos and slander against the Bellview church of Christ and her bishops.

Again, we invite you to submit for our study and consideration any facts that we do not currently have before us and we will give them due thought and investigation. We are eager for Mr. Kiser to have complete information and to be treated with courtesy and civility. We are reasonable men who will work with you in every way possible to bring this unfortunate circumstance to a speedy and pleasing conclusion. We look forward to hearing from you and receiving the information we have requested in this letter.

Sincerely,

(Signed)

H. Brantley, Bishop    B. Gallaher, Bishop    F. Stancliff, Bishop  
Copy sent to Michael Kiser.



# BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

*Bellview Church of Christ*

4850 Saufley Road

Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798

DIRECTOR  
Max R. Miller

TELEPHONE  
904/455-7595  
904/453-3426

Bellview Preacher Training School

Position of Administrator

May 27, 1986

1. Salary: \$26,000 annually paid at the rate of \$500.00 per week.
2. Duties: Primarily in
  - a. Classroom teaching
  - b. Administrator
    - 1) Communications
    - 2) Student recruitment
    - 3) Obtaining financial support for students and the operation of the school
3. Schedule speaking appointments on behalf of Bellview Preacher Training School; travel to points for the aforementioned purposes. Efforts are to be made to secure fifteen such appointments yearly. Monthly reports are to be made to the Director.
4. When appointments are secured for the purposes of making known the services of the school, or otherwise advantageous to the school, all expenses will be provided by Bellview Preacher Training School for miles traveled and all other necessary expenses.
5. Gratuities rendered for speaking appointments other than those on behalf of Bellview Preacher Training School will be retained by the speaker. They will not go to the school.
6. He will work directly under the supervision of the Director of the school. It is, of course, recognized the entire operation of the school, an educational department of the church, is under the oversight of the elders.
7. He is expected to be identified as a member of the Bellview church of Christ.
8. Vacation time: Three weeks excluding one Sunday
9. Gospel meetings: Six weeks
10. Summer Program:
  - a. The Administrator should, as best as he can, schedule his own evangelistic meetings for the summer recess, or at other times the school is not in session.
  - b. Summer duties at Bellview will continue on a regular basis except for classroom work.

*B. Gallacher*  
For the eldership

*M. W. Kiser*  
M. W. Kiser

*Max R. Miller*  
Director, Max R. Miller

## CONSIDERATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL ELDERS

In March 1987 the Bellview congregation was considering the names of four individuals for possible appointment to the existing eldership. The following statement, read publicly to the congregation on April 1, 1987, explains why the present elders discontinued the appointment process before any final selection of new elders was made:

Because of the degree of unrest within the Bellview congregation, and the extent of the murmuring which is taking place against the eldership in regard to the present consideration of qualified men for the eldership, we believe that for the preservation of the Bellview congregation, that it is best at this time that any further consideration of the names for new elders be discontinued.

### WHY WAS BROTHER KISER'S EMPLOYMENT TERMINATED?

On March 23, 1987 brother Kiser met with the elders to discuss his objections to one of the men whose name was being considered for appointment to the eldership. During that meeting and two more subsequent meetings, brother Kiser made statements which the elders could not accept. As a result, the elders met with brother Kiser on April 13, 1987 and the following statement was presented to him:

#### ELDERS' MEETING WITH MIKE

Mike, we have met three times with you, previously. The first two times we met you made charges (verbally the first time and written charges the second time).

- A. They have created a new work for the elder, that of a traveling, preaching pastor, to warn the church at large. (Shades of the first departure from the Faith).
- B. They have advocated a double standard of expectations regarding those who have the ability and opportunity to cooperate in the organized programs of activity for this church. You are to be excused from responsible active participation in the works of the Bellview congregation.
- C. They have involved themselves in a great contradiction. Miller should not be an elder because he is the local preacher; yet your work will be fulfilled in going out to warn the church universal.

As an eldership, we denied these charges in your presence, and we believe that to maintain our working relationship, that you must retract these charges.

In our first meeting on March 23, during our discussion, some of the statements that you made indicated that you did not trust this eldership. When we asked whether you believed that the elders were dishonest, you stated, "yes" We must insist that you retract this statement.

In the meetings previously noted, you have stated that you were working to discourage the fund raising efforts of brother Ray Peters as he proposes to work with brother Ira Rice in the Far East Evangelism. For our working relationship to continue, your efforts in opposition to the Far East work, which this congregation supports and oversees, must cease.

You have charged, during our discussions, that brother

Roy Deaver, brother Thomas Warren, brother Ira Rice, brother Bill Cline, and brother Ray Peters are all involved with money raising schemes or scams, and with the exception of brother Rice, they are too lazy to preach the gospel to provide their own support. As an eldership, we have respect for these preachers and cannot condone such statements.

If you are able, at this time, to retract your three statements as noted above, and your charges that the eldership is dishonest and will agree to cease working and making statements in opposition to the Far East Evangelism work, which we oversee, and will agree to cease charging brothers; Deaver, Warren, Cline, Peters, and Rice with money raising schemes or scams, then we are willing for our present working relationship to continue until the summer vacation begins for the Bellview Preacher Training School. If you are unable to do so, then we have no alternative than to discontinue our working relationship with you as of this date.

*The Elders*

Since it was brother Kiser's decision not to retract his statements against the Bellview elders and others, his work with the Bellview congregation was terminated effective April 13, 1987.

It should be noted that the elders explained first privately with brother Kiser, and later in public, their denial of brother Kiser's statements made against them. For example, on April 15, 1987, the elders met for a period of over three hours with a large portion of the congregation, and one of the items discussed was the following response which is referenced to brother Kiser's charges noted previously:

#### ELDERS' RESPONSE TO BROTHER KISER'S CHARGES

- A. We deny that we have created a new work for the elder. The work of an elder is set forth in the scriptures (1 Pet. 5:2-3; Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Rom. 16:17) and we have no authority beyond the scriptures. In the context of our discussion with Bro. Kiser, the above should have been understood by him. In our discussion, a statement was made that if Bro. Cline was travelling, he would be able to preach the gospel, as well as, let the Bellview congregation be made aware of false doctrine that was being taught elsewhere, so that we might be warned. There was no intent on the elders' part that, if he were appointed an elder, that his only responsibility would be that of a traveling preaching pastor. We have explained this to Bro. Kiser.
- B. We deny that we have advocated a double standard of expectations regarding those who have the ability and opportunity to cooperate in the organized programs of activity for this church. The elders recognize that not all members have the same abilities, physical health, and available time. Because of these factors, we cannot expect 100% of the membership to be present for every organized program. For example, if our members are not in Pensacola (out of town), we recognize their inability to meet with us at our worship service, or our organized visitation program. A similar situation arises if our members are sick, or of necessity must

work. They still have their responsibility, when able to do so, to worship God as the scriptures teach, to visit other members and nonmembers, and to study God's Word. If the members of this congregation must be absent from the morning services, they still have the responsibility to be at the evening services. If the members can't meet in an organized Bible study on Wednesday night, they still have the responsibility to make arrangements in their schedules to study at another time. If they are unable to meet and participate in an organized visitation program, they still have the responsibility to visit others when they are able to do so. The eldership has not advocated a double standard. All members are expected to serve God to the best of their ability and opportunity.

- C. We deny that we have involved ourselves in a great contradiction. We have not said, "Bro. Miller should not be an elder because he is the local preacher; yet, if another man were appointed to the eldership, his work would be fulfilled in going out to warn the church universal." As stated in paragraph A, the scriptures set forth an elder's work. What we have said is that we do not consider it to be expedient, if sufficient elders are already available, for the local preacher to serve as an elder, because, in effect, it places him in somewhat of a conflict of interest. He would be directing his own work, determining his own pay, etc. For example, who would suggest that the Superintendent of our public schools, who acts as an administrator of the Board's policy, should also be a member of the School Board who sets the policy. We are not saying that it is not scriptural for an elder to be the local preacher, but that it is not expedient. If only the preacher and one other male member were qualified to be elders, it would be better to have an eldership than not to have one, but there will be conflicts of interest that can create problems.

#### **Summary Statement:**

There was no intention on the part of this eldership to force any individual as an elder upon this congregation who, even if he were qualified, would not have had sufficient opportunity timewise to fulfill an elder's responsibility, as set forth by the scriptures. The eldership had not made a decision that any individual would be appointed as an elder, regardless of the congregation's statements. We gave the congregation several days time to let it be known if it did not believe that an individual was scripturally qualified, or would not be able to meet his responsibilities. We appreciate each member who took advantage of that opportunity and fulfilled his or her responsibility to the congregation by doing so.

#### **BROTHER KISER'S UNREPORTED ADDITIONAL INCOME**

At the time the Bellview elders hired brother Kiser, it was agreed by both brother Kiser and the elders that his salary would be \$500 per week for his work as an instructor in the Bellview Preacher Training School. Also, they mutually agreed that "gratuities rendered for speaking appointments other than those on behalf of Bellview Preacher Training School will

be retained by the speaker." Therefore, when he began preaching for one of the congregations at Laurel, Mississippi for the amount of \$200 per week, it was not questioned.

It was only after brother Kiser's termination as instructor in the school that the elders learned that brother Kiser had also been receiving \$400 per month from the Phillips Street church in Dyersburg, Tennessee. Brother Kiser had neglected to inform the Bellview elders that he had been receiving this additional supplement to his salary as an instructor. When brother Kiser found out that the Bellview elders knew of his supplement from the elders in Dyersburg, he then stated that it was for mission work in Africa and mission meetings in the United States; however, telephone calls with the Phillips Street elders reconfirmed that it was their understanding that brother Kiser had taken a cut of \$9,000 per year in salary to work with the Bellview Preacher Training School and that Phillips Street church had been sending him \$400 per month to help make it up.

When the \$400 per month from Dyersburg is added to the amounts of \$500 per week from Bellview in Pensacola and \$200 per week from Laurel, Mississippi, the total salary received by brother Kiser for that period of time was at the rate of \$41,200 per year.

#### **WHY WERE THE BELLVIEW LECTURES CANCELLED?**

It was while the previously noted events were taking place that the May 1987 Bellview lectures were only a few weeks away. Therefore, the elders met with brother Miller on April 17, 1987 to inform him that, because of the unrest that was evident in the congregation, they did not believe that it would be best for the congregation to have the lectures as planned. Brother Miller was then advised to cancel preparations for the 1987 lectureship.

#### **BROTHER MILLER'S TERMINATION TO BE EFFECTIVE JULY 31, 1987**

On April 26, 1987 the elders informed brother Miller that his working relationship with Bellview would be terminated effective July 31, 1987, provided that brother Miller would agree to make a peaceable transition. Brother Miller agreed to do so. The basic reason for his termination at this time was that he was continuing to support the actions taken by brother Kiser and was at the same time failing to support the elders. The announcement of brother Miller's termination was made known to the congregation on the night of April 29, 1987.

#### **UNAUTHORIZED MEETING**

On the night of April 29, 1987, as closing announcements were being made, some members of the congregation disrupted the service by calling a meeting which the elders did not authorize. The elders, as well as many of the members, did not attend this meeting.

It was later learned by the elders, from a tape which had been made of the meeting, that brother Kiser, brother Miller, and several others spoke to the group. It was also learned from the tape that efforts were being made to: 1) retain brother Kiser and brother Miller, 2) replace the elders and trustees, and 3) take over the Bellview property. Accusations were made by brother Kiser and others that the elders were involved in various "money schemes" or "scams". None of these accusations against the elders have been proven to be true. For example, in the July issue of *Contending for the Faith*, facts were set forth to explain some of the unfounded charges.

### **BELLVIEW'S ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

In an effort to avoid a takeover of the Bellview property, the elders, with the assistance of Ira Y. Rice, Jr. and others, met to discuss the alternative actions that might be taken. The elders hoped to avoid any legal confrontation in the courts. However, to know their legal rights, if they were taken to court, a legal opinion was sought from an attorney, who is a Christian, regarding their Articles of Incorporation which they had signed and notarized February 3, 1981. After reviewing the significant articles of the document, the attorney advised the elders that there was no way that the ones who were trying to take over the property could legally do so:

Article VI of the Articles of Incorporation states, "The affairs of the corporation are to be managed by three (3) of the 'Directors', 'Trustees', and the manner in which they shall be appointed or elected and the duration of their positions shall be as follows: The elders who have the spiritual oversight of the Bellview Church of Christ shall appoint trustees over the corporation. These trustees shall remain in office until such time the elders deem wise to either dismiss those presently serving and appoint new ones; or simply to add additional trustees to the trusteeship."

Article VIII of the Articles of Incorporation states, "The By-Laws of the corporation shall be adopted at its initial organizational meeting or at any special meeting duly called for such purpose and upon the affirmative vote of 51% of all existing members at the time and present at such meeting, such By-Laws shall be adopted. Likewise, a special meeting may be called by the Board of Directors for the purpose of alteration or rescission of such By-Laws wherein 51% of the members present would be required for their alteration or rescission accordingly."

It is obvious that if a special meeting may only be called by the Board of Directors, and the elders control the Board of Directors, then no special meeting can legally be called by those who would try to take over the congregation.

The attorney was most appreciative of the way the Articles of Incorporation were drawn. He further

said, that in his opinion, for the protection of the church, all such Articles of Incorporation should be drawn this way. He said that he always drew up such papers where the elders would be the ones in control of the corporation and that they only would have the authority to call any meeting for the purpose of making any changes affecting the makeup of the corporation. He further explained that since the scriptures give the authority to the elders, and that corporation papers drawn this way also gave the authority to the elders, then, as long as the elders remain faithful, the church, both scripturally and legally, is in good hands.

### **REFUTATION OF UNFOUNDED CHARGES**

On May 3, 1987 the elders asked brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr., their missionary to the Far East, to speak at the Bible study period and answer unfounded charges relating to the "Bibles-for-China" Fund, the Far East finances, and some other accusations. One of the elders read the pertinent articles from the Articles of Incorporation to advise the congregation of what actions legally could be taken against them.

### **BROTHER MILLER SIGNED AN UNAUTHORIZED CHECK**

On May 29, 1987 the elders discovered that check #398, dated May 5, 1987, had been written on a Bellview Preacher Training School account. It had been drawn to Max R. Miller in the amount of \$6,708.72 and upon the face of the check was a notation "12 weeks salary". It had been signed by Max R. Miller. The date of the check was only two days after the elders and others had refuted the unfounded charges referred to in the previous paragraphs. Although brother Miller was one of the authorized persons to sign checks from this account, his salary checks were to be drawn from the church's operating bank account from which he did not have check signing authority. The elders noted also that check #398 had been used out of order. The number sequence of the other checks drawn from this account was only to #150 by May 29, 1987, whereas this check, written 24 days earlier, had been taken from the last sheet of checks in the checkbook. Also, the check stub was identified as "Loan".

On May 6, 1987 check #398 cleared the bank. The paid check was endorsed by Max R. Miller. On May 19, 1987 the treasurer for the congregation had gone to the bank and completed the elders' arrangements to have check signing authority changed from brother Miller to other individuals. Brother Miller was notified of the elders' actions on May 20, 1987.

On May 22, 1987 a deposit in the amount of \$6,708.72 was made to the same bank account from which it had been drawn May 5, 1987. During the period May 5, 1987 to May 22, 1987, brother Miller continued to receive his regular weekly salary check from the church's operating account.

It should be noted that 12 weeks from the date of May 5, 1987 is approximately the date that brother Miller had been advised by the elders that his services

at Bellview would be terminated. No authority had been given by the elders for him to receive a salary advance.

BELLVIEW PREACHER 7/84  
TRAINING SCHOOL  
4850 SAUFLEY FIELD RD  
PENSACOLA, FL 32506-1798

398

PAY TO THE  
ORDER OF

*Max R. Miller*

*May 5* 19 *87*

63-36/632

\$ *6,708<sup>72</sup>*

*Six thousand seven hundred and eight and 72/100* DOLLARS



Florida National Bank  
21 E. Garden Street  
Pensacola, FL 32575

403

FLORIDA GOLD MMA

FOR *12 weeks salary*

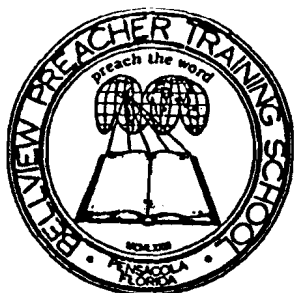
*Max R. Miller*

⑈000348⑈ ⑆063200368⑆ 0680100357⑈

⑈0000670872⑈

### BROTHER MILLER'S LETTER TO DRESDEN, TENNESSEE CONGREGATION

The following letter dated June 11, 1987 and signed by Max R. Miller appeared on a bulletin board of the church in Dresden, Tennessee:



## BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

*Bellview Church of Christ*

4850 Saufley Road

Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798

DIRECTOR  
Max R. Miller

TELEPHONE  
904/455-7585  
904/453-3426

Reason for dismissal of Max R. Miller from the position of evangelist of the Bellview church of Christ and Director of the Bellview Preacher Training School.

1. There was a move to appoint one W. S. Cline to the eldership. The eldership was determined to have Cline made an elder. A large number of the members objected on several different grounds to his appointment. Max Miller also made objections. (His and others objections can be furnished.) Two specific objections are here named:



- a. Elders wanted Cline to be an elder, thinking he would give brotherhood prestige to the eldership (his travels, speaking on lectureships, editor of Firm Foundation, etc.), that he in his travels, would gather information and relate it to elders at home that they might be better informed. At no time was it stated as to Cline's duties in the church at home. Miller and five others stated that such was not the work of the eldership, that it was not Scriptural.
- b. Recognition of a double standard: Cline was exempted from all teaching responsibilities, he would not participate in evangelistic and visitation programs of the church. All others are expected to do so, and certainly those who are elders, or who expect to be elders. They should be "ensamples to the flock" (I Pet. 5:3). A number of illustrations of the double standard could be provided.

The congregational rejection of brother Cline was so strong the elders saw they could not install him as an elder. This they strongly resented.

2. In addition to the above, it was found in an audit of the accounts of Bellview Preacher Training School that brother Cline had advanced himself salary payments of \$7,431.56. This sum was to be paid back, or was to be taken from his salary. The audit does not show any of the sum was ever recovered. Elders at first denied this, then they audited the books and have found this to be true. They have done nothing to reclaim the Lord's money, neither have they reported this to the church, neither have they disciplined brother Cline.
3. They permitted brother Cline, his wife and daughter to make a tourist excursion trip to China paid by with monies from the "Bible's For China" fund. The tourist trip cost \$2,270.00.

4. Five thousand dollars (approximately) annually was spent to publish Biblical Notes. This publication was to be paid for from contributions from the paper, or not be printed. This expenditure of some five thousand dollars a year was not shown in any way on the financial ledger. Our treasure and book-keeper is an auditor for the state of Florida! He also is one of the elders.
5. As a consequence of these matters (and others) the elders acted in a vengeful manner, first firing Mike Kiser for his objection, then Max Miller, then one of the secretaries, and finally the student janitor. Some seventy-five people have left the Bellview church due to the tyranny of the elders. Several of the members have personally withdrawn fellowship from the elders.

6. The only reason given by the elders for terminating the services of Max Miller was, "he is not supportative of the elders." They made no criticism of his preaching either in manner or in content, neither did they object to his functioning as Director of Bellview Preacher Training School, or his general Christian deportment--or any other thing.
7. All the above can be substantiated by the financial records of the Bellview church and by testimony of many of the faithful brothers and sisters who were at Bellview church of Christ during the months of April and May of 1987.
8. No shame or dishonor can be attached to the deeds done by Max Miller (or the others who were dismissed or to those who have chosen to leave Bellview) in his opposition to the fraud, the unscriptural work proposed by the eldership, or his reproving the tyranny of elders who have a perverted view of their work and authority as elders.
9. Before God, these words penned here are true.

*Max R. Miller*

Max R. Miller  
June 11, 1987

2

---

The elders at Bellview responded June 18, 1987 as follows:

Max R. Miller  
4850 Saufley Road  
Pensacola, Fla. 32506

Brother Miller:

We have been informed that this document (attached) was posted on the church of Christ bulletin board in Dresden, Tennessee.

We are appalled, dismayed, and surprised that such could possibly be connected with your name. Brother Miller, is this really your signature ???

*H. Brantley*    *B. Hallaker*    *F. Stancliff*

On July 3, 1987 the elders met with brother Miller and gave him a more detailed response, numbered in the same order as brother Miller's letter, as follows:

### **RESPONSE TO MILLER'S STATEMENT IN DRESDEN**

1. We have previously denied in writing what you are stating. We see no excuse for your continued use of these statements.
2. Your statement regarding brother Cline's salary advances is false. You have not yet shown us any audit that you may have made to prove your statement. Further, we did review brother Cline's salary, but we reached no final conclusions until June 16, 1987 (5 days after the dating of your statement). The salary advances of \$7,431.56 were repaid by salary deductions from subsequent checks.
3. The \$2,270 was paid to brother Cline to take Bibles into China (he and his wife and daughter). The monies were contributed for this purpose and paid to brother Cline the same as to any other person carrying Bibles into China.
4. Your statement regarding Biblical Notes is not true. If the expenditures did not appear in any way on the financial records, how did you determine that \$5,000 was spent for this purpose? Further, we have copies of financial reports and records with us today that show entries for "Biblical Notes" moneys coming in and going out.
5. Mike Kiser was not fired because of his objections to the selection of elders. He was fired because of his refusal to withdraw statements he had made regarding the elders and others.  
Max Miller was not fired. We merely determined to change preachers after a 3-month period. You continued to work as before your notification which a fired preacher does not do.  
Our secretary was not fired. She resigned as we have her notarized letter to prove it.  
The janitor, who was a former student, was given 10 days notice. You had failed over a period of months to take any action, as Director of the School, to move him out of the School's trailer.
6. Hebrews 13:17 states that you are to obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves for they watch for your souls... Failure to support the elders is an unscriptural act.
7. As shown previously, the financial records do not support your statements and the brethren who have left are relying upon unreliable statements which have been circulated by various individuals.
8. We believe it is shameful and dishonorable to make false charges, against an eldership.

—*The Elders*

Because of brother Miller's continuing failure to cooperate with the elders, and the false information that had been distributed over his signature about the Bellview church and its elders to the church at Dresden, Tennessee, the elders then relieved him of all further duties and responsibilities regarding the Bellview church. On that same day, they also paid brother Miller his salary for the period through July 31, 1987. Although he could have taken his 20 days accumulated vacation time during the period July 3, 1987 to July 31, 1987, he insisted that he be paid additionally for those days. Although the elders did not believe that they owed him a paid vacation at this time, they consented to give brother Miller the equivalent amount as separation pay.

### **BROTHER MILLER CANCELS "CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH'S" MAILING PERMIT**

On the week following the meeting discussed in the previous paragraph, brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr., editor for "Contending for the Faith", received a telephone call informing him that the second class mailing permit for "Contending for the Faith" had been cancelled. He was further advised that the request for the cancellation had come to the Pensacola Post Office on Bellview church of Christ's stationery. He immediately notified the Bellview elders and made preparations to come to Pensacola. He and two of the Bellview elders went to the Post Office in Pensacola to verify who had cancelled the second class mailing permit and to get it reinstated, if possible. They met with the one in charge of bulk mailing and were shown the letter on page 80.

Other than being shown the letter on page 80, the elders and brother Rice were provided no information at all as to who had cancelled the second class mailing permit. They were only advised that the cancellation-request letter had been sent to the Postal Service's regional office in Memphis, Tennessee, and that any permission to see it would have to be granted by the Memphis office.

At this time the June issue of "Contending for the Faith" was being held up by the Post Office at Birmingham, Alabama, so contact was made quickly with the Postal authorities and others in the Memphis area. As a result, on July 17, 1987, one of the Bellview elders received a telephone call from the Rates and Classification Center's General Manager at Memphis, Tennessee. In this call the elders were advised that in order for the second class mailing permit to be restored that the elders would have to sign a notarized affidavit stating that they are the governing authority of the Bellview church of Christ, that "Contending for the Faith" is Bellview's publication, and that any cancellation letter which the Post Office had received was without any authorization.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
Memphis, TN 38165-9599

07/08/87

Voluntary Abandonment of Second-Class Mailing Privileges  
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH  
USPS No. 053-530

Postmaster  
ATTN: Manager, Mailing Requirements  
PENSACOLA, FL 32501-9998

This is in response to your letter notifying this office that the publisher no longer desires second-class mailing privileges for the subject publication. Based on this information, second-class mailing privileges have been cancelled effective this date.

Postage at the applicable third- or fourth-class rates must be paid on any copies of this publication mailed after the effective date of this cancellation.

Please retain this letter of cancellation for your records and deliver the attached copy to the publisher.

The following offices have been notified of this cancellation:

AL BIRMINGHAM 10/01/81

Total Additional Entries: 1

*Gordon S. Proud*  
Gordon S. Proud  
General Manager  
Rates and Classification Center  
Office of Classification and Rates Administration

CLEARER COPY OF THE ABOVE LETTER:  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
Memphis, TN 38165-9599 07/08/87  
Voluntary abandonment of Second-Class Mailing Privileges  
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH  
USPS No. 053-530

Postmaster  
ATTN: Manager, Mailing Requirements  
PENSACOLA, FL 32501-9998

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The following offices have been notified of this cancellation:

AL BIRMINGHAM 10/01/81

Total Additional Entries: 1

Gordon S. Proud  
General Manager  
Rates and Classification Center  
Office of Classification and Rates Administration

The elder's response, dated July 17, 1987 was as follows:

Mr. Gordon Proud, General Manager  
Rates and Classification Center  
1 Front Street  
Memphis, Tennessee 38165-9599

Dear Mr. Proud:

The attached affidavit is in response to your telephone request July 17, 1987 to Mr. Fred Stancliff, one of the bishops of the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, Florida, for information to support our request for reinstatement of our second class mailing permit for the Contending for the Faith publication.

Also, we wish to confirm your phone conversation with Mr. Stancliff that upon receipt of the above affidavit by your office that all fees which have been paid in association with the filing of a new second class mailing permit will be refunded.

We further request that we be furnished a copy of the cancellation letter, which you said was signed by our former minister, Mr. Max Miller, and was instrumental in causing the cancellation action by your staff. Since Mr. Miller has not furnished us with a copy of this letter and we thus far have been unable to obtain a copy from Mr. Reed at the local post office in Pensacola, we are asking for your assistance in obtaining a copy. We believe that it is only right that we be furnished documentation of the actions which have been taken.

We also thank you for your immediate action in the release of our current mailing from the Birmingham post office, as well as, the future reinstatement of our second class mailing permit for Contending for the Faith.

Respectfully,

(Signed)

*Hairston Brantley, Bishop Bill Gallaher, Bishop Fred Stancliff, Bishop*

Attached to the foregoing covering letter was the following affidavit:

**BISHOPS**

Hairston Brantley  
Bill Gallaher  
Fred Stancliff

**BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST**

4850 Saufley Road  
Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798  
(904) 455-7595 (904) 453-3426

**DEACONS**

Henry Born  
Elward Brantley  
Paul Brantley  
Jerry Caine  
Charles Garrett  
James Loy  
Richard Parker

**MISSIONARY**

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

July 17, 1987

Mr. Gordon Proud, General Manager  
Rates and Classification Center  
1 Front Street  
Memphis, Tennessee 38165-9599

**A F F I D A V I T**

We affirm that we are the bishops of the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, Florida and that as bishops we are the governing authority of this congregation of the Church of Christ. We further affirm that the Contending for the Faith publication is our publication, and that the cancellation letter, which you have informed us was received by the post office in Pensacola, Florida and was signed by Mr. Max Miller on our stationery, was both inappropriate and that he was acting without any authority from us in doing so.

We further affirm that Mr. Ira Y. Rice, Jr. is our editor of the publication entitled Contending for the Faith and that he is a missionary and a preacher of the gospel working under our oversight and authority as bishops. Presently he also takes care of the mailing of the publication from the post office in Birmingham, Alabama.

Hairston Brantley  
Hairston Brantley, Bishop

Bill Gallaher  
Bill Gallaher, Bishop

Fred Stancliff  
Fred Stancliff, Bishop

Signed, Sealed and  
Delivered this 18th day  
of July, 1987.

Melissa Kaye Brantley  
Notary Public  
State of Florida

My commission expires:  
September 28, 1989

As the elders were awaiting the Post Office's reply to their letter and affidavit, they noted that mail delivery to their mailbox had ceased. When contact with the local Post Office was made, the elders were advised that Max Miller had placed a "hold" on the church's mailbox (#4850), as well as his own (#4852).

When the hold order was released, they received the awaited reply from the Memphis Post Office which reinstated the second class mailing permit. Also, included was a photocopy of the cancellation letter, signed by Max R. Miller and dated June 5, 1987, which was as follows:



## BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST

4850 Saufley Road  
Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798

### BISHOPS

Hairston Brantley  
Harold Cozad  
Bill Gallaher  
Don Orr  
Fred Stancliff

June 5, 1987

### DEACONS

Henry Born  
Elward Brantley  
Ervin Brantley  
Paul Brantley  
Jerry Caine  
Charles Garrett  
James Loy  
Richard Parker  
Charles Williams

Mr. Joe Reed  
U. S. Post Office  
Pensacola, Florida 32501

Dear Mr. Reed:

In compliance with your request that the Bellview church of Christ at Pensacola provide you, (the Post Office Department) with a statement of ownership of the monthly non-profit religious journal, **Contending For The Faith**, that is mailed under our second class permit. Let it be known that no records of ownership are to be found in the office of the Bellview church of Christ. Neither is this office able to furnish you with the mailing list of **Contending For The Faith**.

Please be advised that we are canceling the second class mailing privilege for publication number USPS 053-530, titled **Contending For The Faith**, published by the Bellview church of Christ. This is a voluntary abandonment. The primary reasons for this action is stated in the paragraph above, viz, we are not able to provide you with a statement of ownership, neither is this office able to give you the mailing list as we do not have one. Other violations of postal laws and regulations are as follow:

1. Subscription cost (\$5.00 annually) does not come to the Bellview church of Christ.
2. Proceeds from sales of merchandise advertised for sale in **Contending For The Faith**, and from its catalogue does not come to the church. The Bellview church of Christ does not seek support of its work by solicitation of funds, neither by the sale of books, records, etc. as advertised in the catalogue published by **Contending For The Faith** and its editor, Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Memphis, Tennessee.
3. The mailing list for **Contending For The Faith** is not available to the Bellview church. In April of 1987 the evangelist of the Bellview church of Christ asked the Birmingham office of **Contending For The Faith** for its mailing list. You (Mr. Joe Reed) had asked for this list and was told by the secretary at Bellview that such a list was not available at this office. The Birmingham office (place of publication and mailing of **Contending For The Faith**) was requested to give us the mailing list and refused to do so. Therefore we do not have access to the mailing list of **Contending For The Faith**.

### EVANGELIST

Max R. Miller

### MISSIONARY

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

### BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

### DIRECTOR

Max R. Miller

### INSTRUCTORS

T. W. Franklin  
M. W. Kiser  
Max R. Miller  
L. E. Wishum

### TELEPHONE

904-455-7595  
904-453-3426

4. The elders (or bishops, those men who supervise the work done by the Bellview church) do not oversee or superintend the editing, production, mailing, or any other aspects and functions of **Contending For The Faith**.
5. The monthly financial statement of the Bellview church of Christ, a statement showing all the works of the church, do not include income or expenses of **Contending For The Faith**.
6. Members of the Bellview church of Christ, if they receive **Contending For The Faith** on a regular basis do so because they pay the annual subscription price of \$5.00. No member receive it free as they do the legitimate papers published by the Bellview church of Christ, viz., **Defender, Beacon, and Good News**.
7. The monthly publication, **Contending For The Faith**, is solely the work and responsibility of one Ira Y. Rice, Jr. of 2756 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee. Its editorial policy, promotion, production and whatever else its functions, are the work of Ira Y. Rice, Jr. and is not the work or responsibility of the Bellview church of Christ.

Sincerely,



Max R. Miller

MRM/fl

In the first paragraph of the above letter, brother Miller referred to a request that the Post Office had made for it to be provided a statement of ownership and a mailing list for the "Contending for the Faith". At no time prior to the date of his letter had brother Miller advised either the elders or Ira Y. Rice, Jr. of the Post Office's request. If he had done so, such information could have been readily furnished.

In his second paragraph, brother Miller stated, "Please be advised that we are canceling the second class mailing privilege for the publication number USPS 053-530, titled Contending for the Faith, published by the Bellview church of Christ. This is a voluntary abandonment..." Since he was not the editor for the *Contending for the Faith*, and he had not advised the elders of any requests from the Post Office, such "voluntary abandonment" was an unauthorized act by brother Miller.

The following responses are numbered in reference to items #1-7 of brother Miller's second paragraph. Such information was obtained, either from brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr., or from the elders' records.

- 1) It is not true that the subscription cost (\$5 annually) does not come to the Bellview church of Christ. The subscriptions, as well as, renewals, payments for bundle orders, and any contributions to the Contending for the Faith Fund have been coming to the Bellview church of Christ since Bellview took over the responsibility for the publication of the paper from the end of 1978 onward, as shown by the financial records.
- 2) Brother Rice states, "Regarding proceeds from the sale of merchandise advertised in Contending for the Faith as well as from its catalog, as the publisher of any gospel paper will tell you, it requires far more than just the subscription price to meet the costs of publication. Although it is true that the church, as such, is not a business enterprise, yet, through our contributions, my wife and I purposely see to it that more is made available to the support of Contending for the Faith and Bellview's missionary work each year than comes to us through the sale of the things Contending for the Faith advertises."
- 3) Brother Rice states, "It simply is not true that 'the evangelist of the Bellview church of Christ asked the Birmingham office of Contending for the Faith for its mailing list.' According to my Birmingham secretary, it

was brother Miller's secretary...who asked for this list—and even then she gave no indication at all as to what it was for! When I learned of this, I reported it to the Bellview elders. They, in turn, confronted the secretary as to what authorization she had to be making such a request. Even then she did not say what it was for—only that brother Miller had told her to ask for it. All that would have been necessary was for him to ask either the elders or me to make such a list available to the Post Office and it would have been provided.”

- 4) Contrary to brother Miller's statement, the elders (or bishops, those men who supervise the work done by the Bellview church) do oversee and superintend brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s work, both as a missionary and as editor of Contending for the Faith.
- 5) It is not true that the monthly financial statements of the Bellview church of Christ do not include income or expenses of Contending for the Faith. Such monthly financial statements have been produced since the beginning of brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s work under the Bellview elders' oversight and are available upon request.
- 6) It never has been intended that the Bellview members would receive Contending for the Faith free of charge. However, it is a legitimate paper, as are all of the publications of the Bellview church.
- 7) Brother Miller's statement is not true. In fact, it is clearly refuted by the information included in the elders' notarized affidavit dated July 17, 1987 which was furnished to the Memphis Post Office.

#### **BROTHER MILLER REQUESTS MAIL FOR THE DEFENDER BE DIVERTED**

On September 8, 1987 the Bellview church's secretary received a telephone call from the local Post Office. She referred the call to one of the elders. The Post Office official said that the Post Office had just been requested by Max Miller to have the mail as editor for the "Defender", one of Bellview's publications, diverted to him. Before they did so, they wanted to confirm that this would be acceptable. Accordingly, the Post Office was advised by the elders as follows:

September 8, 1987

Postmaster, U. S. Post Office  
5200 Lillian Hwy.  
Pensacola, Florida 32506

Dear Sir:

This will confirm my telephone conversation with Mr. Stevenson this morning. Please do not hold for, or divert to — Max R. Miller, any mail for Editor, Defender. He is not the editor of our publication "Defender". The May, 1987 issue was the last one to go out with Max R. Miller as editor.

For your information, if further questions should arise, Max R. Miller has no authority to speak for, or represent in any way — the Bellview Church of Christ. Neither can he speak for, or represent in any way — our publications, "Defender", "Beacon", "Contending For The Faith", or "Good News".

Sincerely,

Bill Gallaher,  
for the Elders

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS**

Some might question why the Bellview elders waited so long to present the facts. The elders would have published the facts earlier; however, a few concerned individuals requested some additional time that they might be able to contact the ones involved, in an effort to encourage them to repent. The elders granted the extension as requested; however, no apparent progress has resulted.

As stated in the Introductory Comments, the elders have no ill will toward any man, including those who have wronged them in this situation. Rather, they desire that the responsible persons repent that their souls might be saved.

The previously stated facts should not be considered to be all inclusive of the actions of the various individuals. However, the facts cited are representative of actions with which the Bellview elders have dealt the past few months. It is the elders desire that the presentation of these facts will help to set the record straight for those who have been misinformed. Let the facts speak for themselves.



# DEFENDER

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

**Phil. 1:17**

VOLUME XVI, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER, 1987

[Editor's Note: Will there ever be a time when Christians can let up on their vigilance against error? From the Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas area, postmarked September 15, 1987, comes the following account of compromise.]

## That The Brethren Might Know

by Goebel Music

From almost the beginning of New Testament Christianity, haters of God, persecutors of Jesus, enemies of the cross, perverters of the Bible, betrayers, traitors and renegades of the church, advocates of the Devil and emissaries of hell have joined forces in an attempt to alter and adulterate, debase and degrade, corrupt and contaminate, prostitute, pollute, poison and putrefy the purity of the true New Testament church and the simplicity of undenominational Christianity!

Anyone who knows anything about the Bible, the New Testament as our standard, understands that soldiers of the Christ (Cf., 2 Tim. 2:3-41; 1:7-14) are to UPHOLD THE RIGHT AND OPPOSE THE WRONG! It is not enough to "love what God loves," but we must also "hate what God hates" (Cf., Amos 5:15; Psa. 97:10; Prov. 8:13; Psa. 119:104). It is not enough to preach and live the truth, but we must also defend the truth and refute the error (Cf., 2 Pet. 3:15; 2 Tim. 4:1-5; 1 Thess. 5:21; Jude 3; 1 John 4:1; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; Mark 6:18; Acts 9:20-22, etc.). The general has given the charge and the mandate is backed by all the authority of heaven itself!

How true is inspiration's statement, "And from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:30). Some evidently, like the Jews of old, have "set up their own system" (Cf., Rom. 10:1-3). Therefore, I write these words **THAT THE BRETHREN MIGHT KNOW!** (Please observe this sentence as it is the way this article will be outlined and presented). Some **PROMINENT PERSONALITIES** of a **POWERFUL PEOPLE** are in **PUBLIC**

**PARTICIPATION** which **PROVES PARTNERSHIP** in error, and that **PAY** the **PRICE** of such adulteration of the gospel of Christ.

### PROMINENT PERSONALITIES

Even though others, like Danny Mize of the Quail Springs Church of Christ in Oklahoma City and Jackie Pyeatt of the Central Church of Christ in Amarillo are also on the program, I list only those of our area, for herein we are mainly concerned. Note these:

1. JON JONES, preacher for the **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**.
2. RAY FULENWIDER, involvement minister for the **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**.
3. MIKE WASHBURN, singles minister for the **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**.
4. RON ROSE, family life minister for the **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**.
5. PAUL LEARNED, education minister for the **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**.
6. GAYLE NAPIER, counseling minister for the **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**.
7. GRACE NAPIER, wife of Gayle, marriage and family therapist, also of the **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**.

### POWERFUL PEOPLE

The **RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST** is a "powerful people," and boast of over 3,480 members. They now occupy about a 10 million dollar facility (which is sometimes referred to as their "mall") which was erected on their 5 million dollar piece of

land. Based upon the first five months of 1987, they had 2,098 family units, 3,485 members, 2,800 in attendance with weekly receipts totalling about \$43,990 (excluding pledges associated with the fund drive—they moved into their new facility on November 15, 1986). In addition to Jon Jones, Pulpit Minister, they have 9 other ministers and 17 full-time staff members. They now are issuing, through AMI Securities, a total of \$7,750,000 in bonds. This congregation now has 10 elders and 163 deacons.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

During the week of September 23-26, two separate and distinct organizations, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (from here on referred to as NADCE) and the TEXAS SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (referred to as TSSA), will convene in Dallas, Texas. The NADCE will meet at the Hyatt Regency on the 23-25, and the TSSA will have their 14th annual CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES CONVENTION on the 25-26 at the Dallas Convention Center (about the only thing these two have in common is the overlapping of the 25th date this year).

Brother Paul Learned, on Friday the 25th, from 9:00-10:00, has a seminar at the NADCE entitled "Growing Creative Teachers." However, also on the 25th and 26th, the following are speaking.

1. Grace Napier—"Preparing For Adolescent Choices."
2. Ray Fulenwider—"Age—Graded or Electives In The Adult Sunday School" and "Welcoming And Orienting New Members."
3. Mike Washburn—"Grief Adjustment: Finding The Peace That Comes From God" and "Divorce Recovery: Avoiding The Traps That Hinder Relationship With God."
4. Gayle Napier—"Dealing With Depression," and "Building Relationships."
5. Ron Rose—"Keys To Family Outreach," and "Equipping Families For The Unavoidable."
6. Jon Jones—"Inspiring And Motivating A Congregation."

All of these are participating in the TSSA'S 14th annual CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES CONVENTION.

### **PROVES PARTNERSHIP**

Along with our brethren who are participating in these two denominational activities, please note the following religious groups also participating.

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Gospel Lighthouse Church     | 18. Trinity Fellowship               |
| 2. First United Methodist       | 19. Reinhardt Bible                  |
| 3. Foursquare Church            | 20. Pantego Bible                    |
| 4. Northwest Bible              | 21. Bethel Temple                    |
| 5. First Baptist                | 22. Fellowship North Bible           |
| 6. First Presbyterian Church    | 23. Church On The Rock               |
| 7. The Village On The Rock      | 24. Assembly Of God                  |
| 8. Church Of God                | 25. Bent Tree Bible Study            |
| 9. Grace Bible                  | 26. New Wine Fellowship              |
| 10. Dennis Lee Ministries       | 27. Flame Fellowship                 |
| 11. Trinity Church              | 28. Evangel Temple Christian         |
| 12. Fellowship Bible            | 29. Christ For The Nations Institute |
| 13. Freedom Christian Academy   | 30. Word Of Faith                    |
| 14. S.I.M. International        | 31. Scofield Memorial Church         |
| 15. Child Evangelism Fellowship | 32. Evangelical Lines Missions       |
| 16. Kalaheo Missionary Church   | 33. Pine Cove Camp                   |
| 17. Christian Church            |                                      |

In addition to these various denominational groups, there are about seven publishing companies (such as Scripture Press, David C. Cook, Augsburg Publishings, Gospel Light Publications, Standard Publishing, etc.), people from Dallas Theological Seminary, Oral Roberts University, Women's Aglow and various other counselling, psychiatric, management and resource service people present.

If all of these are not meeting to combine their methods, by the sharing of their ideas, thoughts, research, resource materials, etc., for the purpose of church growth (increasing Sunday School attendance must be their goal) and if our brethren are not helping them to accomplish this goal, then I am at a loss as to what is going on.

This meeting is A THREE WAY STREET that we need to be totally aware of, and so I prove it by the following:

1. Our brethren are participating in two denominational organizations in the sharing of methods for church growth.
2. Our brethren are also listed as follows:
  - a. TSSA Officers—
    - (1) Workshop Coordinator—Paul Learned.
    - (2) Leadership-Administration—Ray Fulenwider.
  - b. NADCE Board Of Directors—
    - (\*) Director of Correspondence And Membership—Danny Mize.
3. On September 27th, Marlene Lefever, executive editor, ministry resources, David C. Cook Publishing of Elgin, Illinois will be speaking at RICHLAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST. (They have advertised it as a VERY SPECIAL DAY for members of Richland Hills...well-

## **DEFENDER**

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known as an editor of Sunday School curriculum ... Christian video series...). All this sounds like a "WE WITH THEM" and a "THEM WITH US" affair!

### PAY PRICE

I fully understand local autonomy, but I also am cognizant of, not only the right but responsibility, of exposing error and the withdrawing, as well as withholding, of fellowship. Brethren need to be conscious of the teaching of Romans 16:17-18, AS IT IS NOT LOCAL! No one has the right to BID GODSPEED TO ERROR, as this makes one a partaker (partner) of their teachings, so states, unequivocally and unambiguously, the beloved John in 2 John 9-11! We are to have NO FELLOWSHIP with the UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS, so states the beloved Paul in Ephesians 5:11! Indeed, some have GONE OUT FROM AMONG US, as inspiration declares in 1 John 2:19, and if they KEEP ON GOING IN THAT DIRECTION, WE MUST DECLARE "THEY ARE NOT OF US." Therefore, those who engage in such, as we have so documented from the brochures of the TSSA and the NADCE, must PAY THE PRICE of being "marked," "withdrawn from," and/or fellowship "withheld" *if they do not repent* of violating the gospel of Christ! It is high time that all the SOLDIERS OF CHRIST ARISE,

sound the alarm and let these, our erring brethren, find sharp conflict with those who truly wield the sword of the Spirit!

The time is past for us to offer some pious, polite and positive platitude to our brethren who so blatantly and baldfacedly join hands with religious error! And believe me, the only holy delight to be taken in any of this is the fact that we are upholding the truth of God, doing as charged by the very Spirit of God and with hopes of helping the children of God! Souls, PRECIOUS SOULS, are at stake—both ours and theirs. God help us this time to have the courage, the bravery, the gallantry, the fortitude and firmness, the staunchness and steadfastness to let our brethren know IT SHALL NOT PASS UNREBUKED. May we all, in the spirit of Martin Luther who got off his knees, climbed out of the monastery and said, "So help me God I can do no other" make the same spiritual cry. For the proud, the high and the mighty, we give the reminder of Obadiah 3-4 that GOD CAN BRING US DOWN! Indeed, there still are some of us who love truth more than life and are resolved never to sheath the sword of the Spirit, the sword of Truth! Brethren, our people err because they know not the scriptures (Cf., Matt. 22:29) nor the power of God; therefore, I write this article THAT THE BRETHREN MIGHT KNOW!

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[Editor's Note: From Indianapolis, Indiana, this article which appeared in the Shelbyville Road Church of Christ bulletin, "The Informer" reveals further error in the Crossroads philosophy/Boston church's discipling ministry.]

## The Anointed Evangelist?

Ben F. Dick, Jr.

As the Crossroads philosophy, via the Boston church's "discipling ministry," continues to develop, the advocacy of a clergy-laity system is seen. In the effort to make such a distinction, individuals who have been assigned certain responsibilities are said to be "anointed." J. P. Tynes wrote, "One of the clear teachings of the New Testament which most churches of Christ have not restored is an understanding that the Godhead has anointed men and women with different gifts in order to fill certain roles within the church (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; 1 Pet. 4:1-11; Eph. 4:11-12)." (*Boston Church of Christ*, "The Role of the Evangelist, Part I," Aug. 2, 1987).

It should be noted from the outset that the passages cited by Tynes are references to spiritual gifts imparted to some of the early saints by the laying on of the apostles' hands. (Acts 8:14-19; Rom. 1:11). No man today has these gifts, because the apostles all were dead by the end of the first century. The notion of the succession of apostles taught by some is false. These miraculous gifts were for the purpose of confirming

the word until the revelation was completed. Mark records, "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen" (Mark 16:20). Paul said when the perfect (i.e., the word of God in its complete, written form) was come, then that which is in part (i.e., the miraculous gifts) would cease (1 Cor. 13:10). God's word was completely delivered by the end of the first century (Jude 3). Therefore, the miraculous had ceased.

For one to argue that the miraculous continues today is tantamount to saying that God did not reveal all of his word in the first century. It is also a sneer and a slap at the all-sufficiency of the scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3).

In the same article Tynes states, "As surely as the Holy Spirit makes men overseers or elders in the church (Acts 20:28), the evangelist is also anointed of God for a particular function (Eph. 4:11-12)." How does the Holy Spirit make men overseers or elders? I am not sure what Tynes means, but the Bible teaches

that men are made overseers in local congregations by the Holy Spirit when they meet the qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, and are appointed by those whom they serve.

But how is one anointed to be an evangelist? There is no New Testament passage which can rightfully be applied to preachers today. To speak of an evangelist or anyone today as having been anointed of God is unscriptural and is an effort to elevate one above his peers, as the clergy-laity system of Catholicism.

People in Bible times were anointed or anointed themselves for different reasons. In the Old Testament, priests and holy things were anointed in order to set them apart from the common (Ex. 29:1,7; Num. 7:1). Kings were appointed with the anointing of oil upon their heads (1 Sam. 10:1; 15:1; 16:12; 2 Sam. 2:4,7). Some would anoint themselves or would be anointed as a means of freshening up after washing (Ruth 3:3; 2 Chron. 28:15; Luke 7:38,46). Anointing was also for medicinal purposes (Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34; John 5:14). And anointments were done at burials (Mark 16:1; Mark 14:8).

The name "Christ" means "The Anointed One." Jesus was the Christ, The Anointed One. He was anointed "to preach the gospel to the poor..." (Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38). Christ, as prophet, priest and king, was anointed with the oil of gladness above others (Heb. 1:8-9).

Some of the early Christians were said to have been anointed because they were endowed with miraculous gifts. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says that God anointed him along with Silvanus and Timothy: "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1:21-22). The apostle Paul had the same endowment that the other apostles had, i.e., the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 9:2; 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:12; Rom. 1:11). Evidently, Silvanus (or, Silas) and Timothy had received miraculous gifts by the apostles' having laid hands on them (2 Tim. 2:6). No one has this kind of anointing today.

John says, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.... But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 John 2:20,27). These verses have reference to miraculous gifts in the first century and, in particular, to the gift of "discerning of spirits" (1 Cor. 12:8-10).

In the first century some (not all) had the miraculous gift of discerning of spirits. When John wrote "ye know all" and "ye need not that any man teach you," he was not saying that his audience, as a whole, did not need instruction. Otherwise, there would have been no need for his writing of First John. But he specifically is exhorting those who had the gift of

discerning of spirits to use his gift to determine who the false teachers were (1 John 4:1). The only way we can test the teacher today as to whether or not he is loyal is by the word of God. No one today has "an unction from the Holy One" as some did in the first century.

Tynes and his Boston cohorts elevate the evangelist above his peers, and this can be seen in the following quotation: "Secondly, God's people must be aware that they have a responsibility before God to respect, obey, and submit to His anointed servants (Heb. 13:17; Titus 3:1; 1 Thess. 5:12-13)." Keep in mind that Tynes is discussing the role of the evangelist. But, then, he takes passages referring to our submission to the elders (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13) and misapplies them to our obeisance to the evangelists. What a perversion! The only authority the evangelist has is to preach the word (2 Tim. 4:2). Authority is inherent in the word of God. Judgment matters of the local congregation are the eldership's responsibility, not the preacher's.

So, no one is anointed today above his brethren, because every child of God is a priest (1 Pet. 2:5,9). We have no anointed ones except King Jesus. If those of the Boston church persuasion want to claim anointings today, then let them join the Pentecostals, for they are but a step away from them.

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**[Editor's Note: From Allons, Tennessee comes this admonition to the brotherhood to make sure our attitude toward error coincides with God's attitude.]**

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## Our Attitude Toward Error

Eddie Helms

It is certainly an understatement to say that many false prophets can be seen and heard in our day. The apostle John had the same problem (1 John 4:1). Some in the brotherhood today seem to be so concerned with offending men that they refuse to call sin by its name. They refuse to do so despite Biblical authority (Isa. 5:20; Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17; 3 John 9). Some will not point out false doctrine by name because they do not want to offend men, but in doing so they offend God (Eph. 5:10-11; 4:30)!

What should be our true attitude toward error? Brethren, I submit unto you that our attitude had better be the *same as God's attitude*! Notice an example from the Old Testament.

Behold, I am against the prophets, saith Jehovah, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy lying dreams, saith Jehovah, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their vain boasting: yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; neither do they profit this people at all, saith Jehovah (Jer. 23:31-32 ASV).

God is against those who speak opinions as if they

were “book, chapter and verse.” He is against those who dream schemes such as the “televangelists” often do, claiming “He saith.” He is against those, who through deceit and vanity, deceive the multitudes! You see, brethren, these false doctrines will not profit, for only the truth will save man (John 8:32). We should stand up for the truth (Jude 3) and stand against the deceivers (Titus 1:10-11). In doing so, our attitude toward error will be that of Jehovah God.

What about error in the brotherhood? What is God’s attitude? God says to beware of error, have no fellowship with error, rebuke false teachers, let others know of their ungodly ways and expose false doctrines

(Eph. 5:10-11; Rom. 16:17; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:13). Many are there who have an “open door” policy to false teaching in the brotherhood today because they fail to follow Divine orders. Let that not be said of us! Let us “prove all things: hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21-22). Let us love the truth (Psa. 119:97) and preach the word (2 Tim. 4:2). Let us hate every false way (Psa. 119:104). Then, our attitude toward error *will be the same as God’s attitude* toward error. Brethren, let us encourage one another as we contend for the faith, taking our responsibility as stewards of the truth seriously (Jude 3).

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**[Editor’s Note: From Scott City, Kansas comes this article concerning those who misapply and twist scriptures.]**

# Who Is This God Of Yours?

Robin W. Haley

One of the worst perversions of scripture takes place when one strings a ‘pearl’ of God’s word from here and another from there and comes up with some sort of teaching that is not taught in any fashion in the Bible! Such is true especially of prophetic scripture. We draw the reader’s attention to a passage from Jeremiah 31:31-34. These verses have been abused by many. A most recent abuse comes from a brother in St. Louis who tried to use this reference to ‘legalize’ adultery in his book that was advertised as a ‘fresh’ approach to the question of divorce and remarriage. But one of the strangest twistings of these verses comes with the recent ‘ecumenicism’ among us. Quite a number of so-called ‘preachers’ are prostituting these verses, forcing them to serve a doctrine that is not only wrong, but when analyzed is quite ridiculous!

It appears that some are contending that one can be, or is a child of God, because they feel like they are a child of God. Here is one of the reasonings that I have heard or read recently: “Well, God said that he would put his law into my heart and no one would have to teach it to me. So, I feel within my heart that God has saved me.” Now, many of us realize this “better felt than told” religion is not new, yet the newness is this: this is coming from members and even ‘preachers’ within the Lord’s church. We can readily recognize that there are certainly members of the body who are quite ignorant of Bible teaching regarding salvation, yet it shocks us to no end when alleged ‘gospel preachers’ are advocating not only fellowship with those who have had such ‘conversion experiences’, but are teaching their hearers to seek the same! The most obvious problem with this ‘wresting of scripture’ is one of assigning the New Covenant (of God with man) to the arena of mysticism and subjectivity. To come into covenant relationship with

God IS NOT something that just sort of happens! What did Jeremiah mean by what he said?

First, let us recognize that the prophet is contrasting two covenants. Most obviously the first is the law received at Sinai. The ONLY other covenant that he could be referring to is that New Covenant in Christ’s blood. Second, we must remember that the Law of Moses was to be taught to the house and to the stranger that was sojourning among God’s people, Israel. It was to be taught and read and re-taught and re-read to all Israel and all those living near Israel. This was for the benefit of those who “happened” to find themselves in the company of God’s people, Israel. Does this mean that there is no teaching to be done under the New Covenant? Why, that is ludicrous! Did Jeremiah mean that people under the New Covenant would just suddenly realize that they were children of God? More foolishness! That is precisely the point: the children of God in the New Covenant would not become his children by birth or accident. No one who is TRULY a child of God became one without knowing it! There are no TRUE children of God who have to be told that they ARE the children of God. If they are TRULY his children, they KNOW that they are, and they know how they got to be such!

Although mystical experiences and subjective feelings are gratifying to many, the Bible still says, “He that cometh to God must believe that he is” (Heb. 11:6). A child of God does not have to be taught to ‘know the Lord’, for he would not/could not be a child of God without *first* knowing the Lord! One who does not already ‘know the Lord’ is not his child and cannot become his child until he comes to know the Lord. Just here, the apostle John makes a most sobering and sometimes disappointing statement, “And hereby we know that we know him, *if* we keep

his commandments" (1 John 2:3). Sobering to all who want to please God and disappointing to those who believe and teach the man-made doctrine of 'faith only salvation.'

That Jeremiah says the TRUE children of God will not have to be told that they are the children of God, necessarily implies that many who 'feel' they are his children, will have to be told that they are not! Anyone who has ever taught the gospel to a non-Christian knows this. The entire religious world believes that they are the children of God. Ask them how they became his children and one will hear any number of doctrines and 'experiences.' (Some are not quite sure how they got to be Christians!) But, *why* will those under the New Covenant not have to teach his brother to 'know the Lord'? Read the rest of verse 34: "For I will forgive their iniquity." Knowing the Lord is the result of 1) obeying his commandments (1 John 2:3), and 2) having one's sins forgiven. Unless and until one has obeyed the gospel for the forgiveness of sins, he will not know the Lord, nor will the Lord know him (Matt. 7:23).

The concluding point is this: one cannot be accidentally added to the family of God. No one ever became a child of God without an informed, objective decision to become one. One cannot be taught wrong and obey the Lord correctly! This is a common error found in many congregations of the Lord's church. That is, one will come to identify with the church and when asked about their obedience to the gospel, a very uncertain sound is heard. The bad part is, it is accepted! When questioned about the gospel plan of salvation, they could not give a clear description of what they did to be saved. Yet, when the truth was described to them, they reply, "Oh yes, that's what I did!" Brethren, does that sound like they were taught the truth and then obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which they were committed?

Brethren, Jeremiah was not being "cute" nor was he confused. He was right when he said, "and they shall not teach his brother, 'know the Lord.'" ONLY those who know the Lord are his children; ONLY his children truly know him!

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# JESUS, The Suffering Servant

(Isaiah 52:13-53:12)

Larry D. Mathis

That Isaiah 52:13-53:12 applies to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, must be evident to every unprejudiced reader who has ever heard of his life and death. From this prophecy Philip preached unto the Ethiopian "Jesus" and then baptized him into Christ for the remission of his sins (Acts 8:26-40; Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:38).

Have you ever wondered what Philip preached? Though our list is not exhaustive, we would like to suggest at least thirteen points from this prophecy. Surely, Philip touched on some of these, maybe all of them, and probably more than what we shall list. In our estimation this is one of the greatest and most significant texts in all of the Bible. In great detail it describes "The Suffering Servant."

(1) JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD NOT BE ATTRACTIVE TO THE JEWISH NATION. Isaiah predicts, of Christ, an appearance that would be "marred" more than any man's; and that he (Jesus), would have no form or comeliness, and no beauty that we (Jews) should desire him. What does Isaiah mean?

Surely, Isaiah does not mean that the Savior's physical appearance was so "marred" (from birth) that he was ugly, repulsive, deformed, or grotesque. There is no indication that Jesus had severe, disfiguring birth defects or that he was deformed in any way!

Isaiah's language should be understood in light of Jesus' suffering and death during the crucifixion. He bore grief, sorrows, and indescribable pain. Our Lord was chastised, bruised and wounded for sinful man. This is the "disfigurement" Isaiah predicts. Jesus would be horribly "disfigured" by the cruel treatment received at his trials and the crucifixion, and would, therefore, be repulsive to the Jews.

Another point begs to be emphasized. Jesus also was unattractive to the Jewish nation in another way; simply because he did not meet their silly expectations of what the Messiah should be. Our Lord was very humble in background appearing as an unimposing peasant carpenter from a small obscure village in Galilee. By the world's standard, he was unimpressive in appearance.

(2) JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD BE DESPISED AND REJECTED OF MEN. By this Isaiah describes the reception Jesus would experience from the Jewish nation. To "despise" is to ascribe little worth to someone, or to

hold that person in contempt. The vast majority of the Jews did not appreciate Jesus' worth or have the proper esteem for him. John wrote, "He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not" (John 1:11). Jesus later said, concerning himself, "They hated me without a cause" (John 15:25).

(3) **JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD ENDURE SORROW AND GRIEF.** Not only was he to be a man of sorrows and one who was acquainted with grief; this servant would also bear our griefs, and carry our sorrows. Nowhere is this more vividly reflected in his life than in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-35; Luke 22:44). Jesus, knowing that the cross was near, took with him Peter, James and John. The record says that he was sore troubled, and said to them, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." Then, he fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him. Try to imagine his condition; Luke states that Jesus was in such an agony his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

(4) **JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD SUFFER FOR MAN'S TRANSGRESSIONS.** The vicarious death of Christ for humanity is the heart of the Bible and this grand truth is reflected in numerous passages. For instance: "For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly... while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6,8). He "died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3). There was absolutely "no fault in him" (Luke 23:4). He was "holy" (Luke 1:35). Jesus could not be "convicted of sin" (John 8:46). He "knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). He "did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22). He was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15). He alone was "without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19). No sacrifice was needed for him (Heb. 7:27). This "Suffering Servant" came to save others "from their sins" (Matt. 1:21); "to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17), and was "once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:28). This being the case, he is able to "cleanse us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

(5) **JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD BE SILENT WHEN ON TRIAL.** On trial, he made no attempt to retaliate or to escape, but was submissive. The "Lamb of God" offered no resistance toward his tormentors, but like a lamb that was about to be slaughtered or a sheep that is to be shorn, remained silent. Isaiah predicted that he would not open his mouth. Now, observe the fulfillment:

This prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus appeared before Pilate, the chief priests and elders. "Now Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, HE ANSWERED NOTHING. Then saith Pilate unto him, hearest thou

not how many things they witness against thee? And he gave him NO ANSWER, NOT EVEN TO ONE WORD: insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly" (Matt. 27:11-14).

And, as Jesus appeared before Herod: "Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard concerning him; and he hoped to see some miracle done by him. And he questioned him in many words; but HE ANSWERED HIM NOTHING" (Luke 23:8-9).

(6) **JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD DIE UNDER A JUDICIAL SENTENCE.** Our Lord was tried and convicted (illegally) under both Hebrew and Roman jurisprudence. He not only did not have a fair trial, he was killed in defiance of justice. His trial stands as the most violent miscarriage of justice in all of the annals of history. The proceedings of this "kangaroo" court were illegal from start to finish. Jesus was tried and condemned in one day; his trial began after midnight and was concluded by early morning.

Is it not truly significant that Isaiah predicted Jesus' judgment and that he would die under a judicial sentence? Christ was executed! He did not die of old age, disease, starvation, etc.! "By oppression and judgment he was taken away... he was cut off out of the land of the living" (Isa. 53:8).

(7) **JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD DIE BY VIOLENCE.** He would be "cut off out of the land of the living." "Cut off" denotes a violent death. Jesus, in the prime of life, was snatched away at the hands of his murderers.

(8) **JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD BE NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS AND THEY WOULD MAKE HIS GRAVE WITH THE WICKED IN HIS DEATH.** This prophecy aims straight at the crucifixion. It does not mean that Christ was a sinner, but only that he was regarded and treated as one. Jesus was numbered with the transgressors (the two thieves), being crucified in the midst of them, one on the right and one on the left (Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27; Luke 23:32; John 19:17). The thought seems to be that although it was intended for Jesus to be buried with the wicked, he instead was buried in the tomb of a rich man. Please see next point.

(9) **JESUS, THE SUFFERING SERVANT, WOULD BE WITH THE RICH IN HIS DEATH.** Joseph, of Arimathea, fulfilled this prophecy. The record says, "And when even was come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded it to be given up. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the

tomb, and departed" (Matt. 27:57-60).

(10) **THE DAYS OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT WOULD BE PROLONGED AFTER HAVING GIVEN HIS LIFE AN OFFERING FOR SIN.** Jesus' days would be prolonged after his death on the cross into the infinite future. He, according to Isaiah, would live beyond the grave. The Hebrews writer says, concerning Christ, "He ever liveth" (Heb. 7:25). Jesus said of himself, "I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1:17-18).

(11) **THE PLEASURE OF JEHOVAH SHALL PROSPER IN THE SUFFERING SERVANT'S HAND.** Jesus would not die in vain but would fully accomplish the purpose of his mission. He would completely and satisfactorily achieve God's purpose for the redemption of fallen man, and, in turn, Jehovah would be pleased to accept his innocent suffering as an offering for sin. The pleasure of Jehovah prospering in his hand means that Christ would accomplish God's plan and the gospel would prosper. Evidently, one of the most pleasing things in all the world is for the gospel to flourish, to leap and to spread over all boundaries and obstacles.

(12) **BY KNOWLEDGE THE SUFFERING SERVANT WOULD JUSTIFY MANY.** In the text Jehovah is the speaker, but to whose knowledge does he refer? Is it the Suffering Servant's knowledge of Jehovah, or is it the sinner's knowledge of the Servant? Either is possible. However, it seems to us that the meaning is that the sinner is justified by his knowledge of the sacrificial work of the Servant. Certainly, this is taught in the New Testament (John 6:44-45; Rom. 10:17).

(13) **THE SUFFERING SERVANT WOULD TRIUMPH AND DIVIDE THE SPOIL.** From a lowly, oppressed Sufferer, Jesus would emerge

exalted, great and strong as a victorious warrior receiving the spoil. Paul said that Christ "despoiled the principalities and the powers" and that "he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:15). This slain Lamb is worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory and blessing (Rev. 5:12).

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the scroll of Isaiah, Philip preached Jesus. In our Bibles the section is now identified as Isaiah chapter fifty-three. While we do not know exactly what Philip preached, we have suggested thirteen points he could have touched on e.g., (1) Christ would not be attractive to the Jewish nation; (2) he would be despised and rejected of men; (3) he would endure sorrow and grief; (4) he would suffer for man's transgressions; (5) he would be silent when on trial; (6) he would die under a judicial sentence; (7) he would die by violence; (8) he would be numbered with the transgressors; (9) he would be with the rich in his death; (10) his days would be prolonged after his death; (11) Jehovah's pleasure would prosper in his hand; (12) by knowledge many would be justified, and (13) the Suffering Servant would triumph and divide the spoil.

After Philip preached "Jesus" from Isaiah chapter fifty-three the Eunuch knew what he must do to be saved. Though Acts 8 does not say that Philip preached on baptism, evidently he did for the Ethiopian said, "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized" (Acts 8:36). The rest is now history. Philip baptized him into Christ (Acts 8:38-39).

Perhaps our preaching brethren would do well to imitate Philip by preaching Jesus from the Old Testament. Especially is this so since we live in a time when the Old Testament is castigated by so many.



# DEFENDER

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

Phil. 1:17

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## Debate On Instrumental Music

Stanley Keith

An event of historical significance is scheduled to occur in the Joplin, Missouri area, April 12 to 15, 1988. There will be a debate on the instrumental music issue between Alan E. Highers, representing the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Neosho, Missouri, and Given O. Blakely, representing the position of Independent Christian Churches. The following propositions will be discussed:

**(1) The use of mechanical instruments of music as an element of Christian worship is without scriptural authority and therefore sinful. *Alan E. Highers affirms; Given O. Blakely denies.***

**(2) The employment of instruments of music in the singing of praise does not transgress the law of God, is harmonious with the faith of Christ, and is unoffensive to God; hence, it is scriptural and in harmony with the word of God. *Given O. Blakely affirms; Alan E. Highers denies.***

This discussion will be an important occasion because of the geographical location, the strategic timing, the well-known disputants, and the vital subject.

1. *The Place.* Joplin was the site of the first "Restoration Summit" in August 1984 in which unity was discussed between those who use the instrument and those who do not. It is also the location of Ozark Christian College (formerly known as Ozark Bible College), an Independent Christian Church school. It is the home of College Press, a publishing business operated by Don DeWalt, a recognized leader among Independent Christian Churches; and consequently, Joplin has been a center of unity efforts relating to the instrumental music question.

2. *The Timing.* There have been five "unity forums" conducted between members of churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Churches, including Joplin, Tulsa, Pepperdine, Milligan College, and Cincinnati. The results of these meetings have been variously interpreted, but it is safe to say that many brethren who oppose the instrument have not been satisfied with this approach to the issues that divide us. Many have longed for a forthright discussion of the scripturalness of instrumental music. The purpose of this debate will be to provide such an opportunity.

3. *The Disputants.* The Hillcrest Church of Christ has selected Alan E. Highers of Henderson, Tennessee, to represent them in the discussion. Brother Highers is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman College, David Lipscomb College, and Memphis State University School of Law. He conducts the open forum at the annual FHC Bible Lectureship and is an experienced debater. Given O. Blakely, of Cedar Lake, Indiana, representing the position held by the Independent Christian Churches, is editor of *The Word of Truth*, a quarterly publication, and is also experienced as a debater. He has been personally endorsed in this endeavor by Don DeWalt, and DeWalt has agreed to publicize the debate through his publication known as *ONE BODY*. Ozark Christian College has also agreed to promote the debate among their faculty and students.

4. *The Subject.* It is generally recognized that the use of instrumental music constitutes an insurmountable barrier between the churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Churches. **There can be no**

(Continued on Page 3)

# What Is The "Instrumental Church Of Christ?"

Robin W. Haley

Having come out of the First Christian Church, I feel I am somewhat aware of the multitude of differences between that denomination and the Lord's church. My parents were a part of that organization and thus, my brothers and sisters and myself were raised in that denomination. Actually, my people were members in name only and it was not until I was 17 that I became more involved with that group.

I was "elected as a deacon" at the age of 18 (not married, no children), and was placed in charge of various fellowship gatherings between the First Christian Church and the other denominations in town for Easter and Christmas programs. I did my job well in that I and my good friend (another 18 year old deacon) were selected to go to the area Youth Conference held in Cincinnati, Ohio. So effective were we in our duly appointed roles that even the Methodist CYF invited me to go as observer to their annual Youth Conference in Columbus, Ohio.

Then one night while working in a gas station, a man from a local church of Christ gave me a tract to read. In the wee hours of the morning, I read the tract... took it home and re-read it with my Bible and realized much of my error! I began that week to ask many questions of the trustees and "elders" of the First Christian Church. So varied were the answers (not one from the Bible), that I decided to take it to "the top!" It was in "Reverend" Kelly's office, when in answer to one of my questions he closed my Bible and said in effect, "That does not matter," that I knew that I was not in the church of which I read in the New Testament. It took some searching, but I found the Lord's church and was added then to their number.

If you have stayed with me thus far, I would like to make an observation just here: those brethren who use such foolish language as the title indicates really ought to study again 1) what the Lord's church really is; 2) what the difference is between it and the Christian Church denomination! It is the essence of denominationalism to speak of the "instrumental church of Christ." It makes about as much sense, Biblically, to speak of the Islamic church of Christ, the Methodist church of Christ, the atheistic church of Christ, etc. Where in all of God's word do we find "brands,"

"strains" or "branches" of the church of Christ? There is no such thing! When a group of Christians (thus, a church), cease to walk within the borders of that "new and living way" (Heb. 10:20), how can they still be considered as the Lord's church? This is not to say they are not brethren, but they are without doubt brethren IN ERROR! Many of those within the ranks of the Christian Church are not even Christians. They have failed to be born again (John 3:5); to be washed with water by the word (Eph. 5:26), and to be obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7).

The Lord's church DOES NOT use instrumental music. The LORD'S church DOES NOT believe in Methodism. The LORD'S church IS NOT premillennial, anti-cooperative and on and on we could go, ad infinitum! Let us hear the end of such sectarian talk as is evident in the various "unity (union) meetings." Let us cease parroting the misguided and misleading terms as Restoration Heritage, Founding Fathers (meaning Campbell, Stone, O'Kelley and others). I am NO PART of a "branch" of some Restoration Movement. Rather, I have found the truth as revealed in God's Word and have obeyed THAT FORM OF DOCTRINE, not some doctrine of man. I do not belong to some church or branch of movement that is rooted in a movement of men. Rather, I belong to Christ and He has added me to His church.

Brethren, let us abandon this foolish talk that has helped to lead many into thinking of the Lord's church as merely a denomination. Let us "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). If a Christian ceases to walk by faith (2 Cor. 5:7), and leaves the teaching of the Lord (Acts 13:12), then he has fallen away (Heb. 6:4-6), and has no part nor portion in God, for his heart is not right (Acts 8:21). Would this not also be true of an entire congregation of Christians, a "church?" If they cease abiding in the doctrine of Christ, do they still have God? (2 John 9).

What is the "instrumental Church of Christ?" Who knows?!? It certainly IS NOT found in my Bible. Since this is the case, it certainly is NOT from God and is therefore sinful!

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## DEFENDER

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**DEBATE —** (Continued from front page).

**unity unless this issue is settled and settled on a scriptural basis.** [Editor's Emphasis]. This will be a debate dealing with "what the scriptures teach" on a subject that has been the source of division for over a hundred years.

Further details regarding the debate will be announced at a later date. For information, write the Hillcrest Church of Christ, 1037 West South Street, Neosho, Missouri 64850.

## The Whole Counsel of God

Weldon Langfield

Some congregations still demand strong, Biblical preaching. They sincerely desire straightforward teaching on the one true church, baptism, proper worship and the dangers of religious error. Courageous elderships remain who wouldn't settle for anything less from their ministers.

The teaching of Paul included all of the above topics. Yet it dealt with other matters as well. Paul told the Ephesian elders, "For I shrink not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). The apostle did not boldly teach only truths on which most everyone agreed; he boldly taught all the truth. It has been said that any preacher can labor twenty years in one place and, if he desires, never preach on certain topics. Yet the one who endeavors to preach "the whole counsel of God" must patiently, yet clearly, deal with delicate problems in the congregation.

Let's consider John the Baptist, for example. Had John preached a steady diet of "Judea is the one true nation of God," he would have had no problems. But he boldly dealt with the sin eating away at the Jewish leadership. He said to them, "Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt. 3:7). He warned them that being Abraham's children in no way compensated for their personal corruptness. John reminded them that at the great spiritual harvest of the last day, the chaff among God's people would be burned up "with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12).

The honest gospel preacher, then, will not simply deal with general truths about the church, baptism, love, Christ, hell and heaven, with which most members of sound congregations will agree. Rather, preaching in love, he will sometimes deal with passages of scripture that bring to light sensitive and even explosive shortcomings and sins. Someone might ask, "Can't a preacher avoid those sermons?" Yes, but he wouldn't be preaching the whole counsel of God and he wouldn't be honest.

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## There Are Some Things That We Can Know

Lynn Blair

One of my favorite verses comes from the pen of David when he writes, "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor my eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me" (Psa. 131:1).

Now, I don't know about you, but there are a few things that I still don't understand yet. For instance, my dad could tell you exactly how many feet of carpet was in a roll by some kind of measurement while still in the roll! A real computer whiz can lose me pretty quick. Most of us like a doctor that can talk to us in language that we can understand. But even in the Bible and religion, which should be my field of supposed expertise, there are still some things that I really don't understand. And some of the things that I do understand, I fear that my ability to explain is lacking!

Whenever my mind gets really fogged over (paralysis from analysis) and I think that I will never understand a certain thing, then I go to Psalm 131:1 and remember that I do understand some very important facts and concepts. I may not understand exactly every symbol in Old Testament prophecy or even in Revelation, but I can understand God's plan of salvation. And I can teach that to others! I have literally baptized dozens. I may have difficulty at times trying to keep up with which character is speaking in the Song of Solomon, but I can easily understand the five acts of worship as told in the New Testament. Why, I've understood that since I was a child! I may have a hard time trying to imagine exactly what the tabernacle or temple of the Old Testament looked like, but I have no trouble whatsoever understanding God's ordained structure for His church (that is—Christ is head (Col. 1:18), elders (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5-9, etc.), deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13), preachers (1 Tim. 4:2, etc.))

There are a lot of things that we can understand and teach! We won't get the job done by sitting back and not trying. It is interesting to notice that the blood of Christ is not said to cover us when we sit in the light, or stand around in the light, but we must do something—we must WALK in the light (1 John 1:7). There may indeed be some things that we don't understand, but we are duty-bound to teach a lost and dying world the pure, sweet, saving gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16)!

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***Remember, there will not be a  
December issue of the Defender.***

# Should We Use The Word Of God As A Hammer?

Quentin Dunn

I recently read this statement in a bulletin. "Don't use the word of God as a hammer, it wasn't given for that purpose." There is much objection to hard preaching today, therefore, I was not surprised at that statement. Should we use the word of God as a hammer? Let us consider what the Bible says.

"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23:29). The word of God is like a hammer because it crushes the hard hearts of wicked men.

There was all manner of wickedness during the days of Jeremiah. There was adultery, idolatry, lying and rebellion against God. There were profane prophets and priests. They caused Israel to sin (See. Jer. 23:11-14). The prophets lied and deceived the people. The imagination of the people's hearts were wicked.

Jeremiah warned the people about their wickedness. The purpose of his warning was to persuade them to return to God. God's word was like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. We use a sledge hammer, not a toy hammer to break a rock in pieces. In like manner we must use the word of God to break through to hardened hearts. Let us make some present applications.

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13). Sin promises liberty, joy and happiness. Therefore, it is easy for our hearts to be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Today there are preachers who preach the truth in a general way, but talk much about loving each other, disagreeing; yet still pleasing God. They go to workshops where unity in diversity is advocated. They also go to workshops where Crossroadism is advocated. Do these preachers openly advocate unity in diversity? Oh, no! Do they openly advocate Crossroadism? Oh, no!

Since these preachers do not openly advocate error, many brethren are deceived by them. They think that they are sound, dedicated preachers. Let us take the application farther.

Some preachers make many promises when they are being selected for work. They tell the brethren that they are going to turn the work around. They promise great numerical growth. They get a bus program started. Many children ride the bus for a while. They play games with the young people. They entertain the young people. They tell the young people that Christianity is a lot of fun! They baptize many young people. When winter comes and young people can't play outdoor games, many of them leave the church. Many times nearly all the children quit riding the bus. Yes, some preachers sure turn the work around! Just the wrong way!

Brethren should exhort each other lest any of our hearts be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Brethren should investigate a preacher before they select him. They should investigate his manner of life and doctrinal soundness. Brethren should beware of preachers that make unreasonable promises.

Exhortation is important but we must also rebuke (2 Tim. 4:2). We must rebuke those who persist in sin. This is harder than exhortation. We must use the word of God as a hammer to melt sinful hearts. This cannot be done by soft or general preaching.

Should we use the word of God as a hammer? Absolutely! The church is strengthened by hard preaching. The church is weakened by soft and general preaching. There is lukewarmness, immodesty, immorality and many "isms" in the church because of this. May God give us the courage to use the word of God as a hammer!

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## Sectarian Sentiment

Steve Gunter

A steady stream of sectarian sentiment has sunk deep into the heart of the contemporary church. A Detroit denomination recently increased its number by neatly avoiding the use of "Christianese language." Advertisements avoided mention of the Bible, Jesus Christ, and all other "Christian catch-words."

What was substituted for standard worship? "Friendliness, loving attitudes, (and above all) sensi-

tivity" are the foundation of its successful "low-key" approach. The idea is to "make the service more an event, unoffensive to the unbeliever." Isn't this the aim of many lukewarm and weak congregations within the body of Christ?

Had the apostle Paul applied this attitude toward his teaching and writing, much of the New Testament simply would not exist. Strike out 1 and 2 Corinthians—

too offensive. Remove 2 Timothy, chapter 4—same charge.

Pleasantness has its place but no one should dare surrender the truths of the gospel in order to suit and soothe modern taste. All men of faith must speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:5). Didn't Peter offend his Jewish brethren on the day of Pentecost with the *first* gospel sermon? Didn't Stephen's speech offend the

sensibility of the Sanhedrin (Acts 7)? Our Lord offended a host of humans in his mere three years of teaching the truth, didn't he? Salt has its savor and the church guards the truth of God's Word. Let us then with all our might go and preach the gospel of Christ and his church.

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# SPIRITUAL GIFTS

H. A. (Buster) Dobbs

The primary purpose of the Holy Spirit in talking directly to men in the first century was revelation. The Holy Spirit talks to the disciples of Christ today through that which was revealed in the beginning of the gospel—the Bible.

The apostles of Jesus received, in fulfillment of promises made by John the baptist and Jesus of Nazareth, a baptism with or in the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:4-5). They were filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:4). The Holy Spirit "gave them utterance" (Acts 2:5). The Holy Spirit literally told the apostles what to say and what to write. Jesus had promised, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (John 16:13). Paul says that he and his fellow apostles spoke the things they were taught by the Spirit in the Spirit's own words (1 Cor. 2:13). This is why it is correct to say that Holy Scriptures are inspired, that is, God-breathed. This is why the Bible is inerrant. The Bible is God's word.

While the New Testament was in preparation it was necessary for the first converts to have some means of knowing the mind of God in the absence of an inspired apostle. To fill this temporary need the apostles had the power to lay hands on certain, selected disciples and impart to them a "manifestation of the Spirit," sometimes called "spiritual gifts." Chapters twelve, thirteen, and fourteen of the first Corinthian letter deal with the matter of "spiritual gifts" in some detail.

Paul wrote, "for to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healing, in the one Spirit; and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discernings of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit,

dividing to each one severally even as he will" (1 Cor. 12:8-11).

These gifts were not imparted to all the disciples. Many of the saved received none of the "spiritual gifts" mentioned by Paul. The apostle questions, "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (1 Cor. 12:29-30). All were not apostles, prophets and teachers; and all did not have the power to speak with tongues, interpret and heal. Those in the first century, who did have a manifestation of the Spirit had no right to boast themselves or feel superior to their brethren who did not have a "spiritual gift." Paul points out that love is most excellent (1 Cor. 13:1-7); that these "spiritual gifts" were only temporary and would be "done away"—they would cease (1 Cor. 13:8); that "spiritual gifts" belonged to the infancy of the church and these "childish things" would be put away (1 Cor. 13:9-11). The apostle goes on to warn, however, that "spiritual gifts" must not be despised and that they did have a proper function in the beginning of the church (1 Cor. 14:1).

The "spiritual gifts" imparted to a few of the brethren in the first few years of the church's history were not the same as the baptism with the Spirit received by the apostles on the birthday of the church. The "gifts" received by the apostles were greater than those received by some of the saints and served, in part, to distinguish the apostles as a class of men set apart to a special work. Paul refers to the "signs" of an apostle which were wrought among the Corinthians and offers these signs as a part of his apostolic credentials (2 Cor. 12:12). Paul declares that he spoke with "tongues" more than all the brethren in Corinth (1 Cor. 14:18).

Furthermore, the baptism in the Holy Spirit was administered only by Jesus (cf., Matt. 3:11). It was a direct outpouring of the Spirit (cf., Acts 2:1-4). Whereas the "spiritual gifts" were administered and imparted by the laying on of the hands of an apostle. "Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of

the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given..." (Acts 8:18). When Paul wrote, "Wherefore let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret" (1 Cor. 14:13), he was not commenting upon how the "spiritual gifts" were imparted but simply stating that those who had this power, however received, might pray for a different gift than the one already possessed. He obviously is not telling people how to receive a "spiritual gift" but he is telling those who had already received such gifts that they were premitted to pray for a different manifestation than the one originally obtained. All of the information given in the New Testament concerning how this secondary measure of the Spirit was given points to the one overwhelming conclusion that such gifts could be received only through the laying on of the hands of an apostle.

The "spiritual gifts" imparted by the hands of an apostle to some of the saved in the first century were the means whereby the church might know the will of God. An apostle would visit a certain community, preach the gospel, and baptize the believers. The time would come when it was necessary for the apostle to go into other fields and leave the new converts. The New Testament was not yet completed. The disciples would need some means of knowing what was expected of them in their worship and service. The apostle would lay his hands on a selected few of the brethren and impart to them "spiritual gifts." The end product of these "spiritual gifts" was revelation and the miraculous confirmation of the revelation.

In connection with a discussion of "spiritual gifts" Paul wrote, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now they are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary: and those parts of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; whereas our comely parts have no need: but God tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to that part which lacked; that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same

care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:12-28).

The whole purpose of this paragraph is to demonstrate how the matter of spiritual gifts worked among the disciples for the building up of the whole body of the church. These gifts were not imparted for the private benefit of the person who received them but for the good of all. Notice, especially, that it was necessary for those few in the Corinthian church who had received "spiritual gifts" to work together for the advantage of all believers. Notice, too, that those who had not received a "spiritual gift" were nevertheless members of the body and important to the total structure. No one had the right, because of the function he was filling, to feel vainly superior to any other member of the body. All were necessary. All were important. The man who spoke with "divers kinds of tongues" was not better than the man who had "discernings of spirits" or the man who had "gifts of healings" or the man who had no supernatural "spiritual gift" whatever. They were all members of the one body and every member, functioning in his assigned place, was necessary. They worked together for the building up of the body just as the eyes, head, hands and feet all work together in the human body. Notice, too, the cooperation required. The eye, ear, hand and foot must be co-ordinated. In the same way the brother who spoke with tongues, the man who interpreted, and the one who performed miracles must co-ordinate their work for the intended good to result. "Spiritual gifts" were implemented in this fashion. On the Lord's Day the saints would gather for worship. The man or men who had the gift of prophecy would teach the congregation. The brother with the ability to discern spirits would declare what had been taught to be the truth. Those who could perform miracles and possessed gifts of healing would work wonders in the presence of all, and by the power of the Spirit, in order to confirm what had been taught and discerned as true. If additional revelation was required a brother or two, not more than three, would speak in a "tongue," but *only* if an interpreter were present. The man who could interpret tongues would tell the assembly in plain language that all could understand what had been said in the "tongue." The discernor of spirits would judge this to be the spirit of truth. A miracle would be performed to confirm the revelation. In this way those possessing "spiritual gifts" worked together for the good of the whole body of believers.

The apostle wrote, "What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath

a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. 14:26). In the light of what is said concerning the body with its various members in chapter twelve, this statement makes it abundantly clear as to how "spiritual gifts" were utilized in the first-century church.

Paul gives certain rules with reference to the application of "spiritual gifts." He says, first of all, that teaching is more important to edification than "speaking in tongues"—just as the eye is more important to seeing than is the ear. "For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and exhortation, and consolation. He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. Now I would have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy: and greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret that the church may receive edifying. But now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall it profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?" (1 Cor. 14:2-6). The rule here laid down is that in the assembly of the saints edification is the principle thing. If what is done does not edify, it should be stopped. Speaking in tongues, Paul says, does not edify, unless it results in revelation, or knowledge, or prophesying, or teaching.

Another rule is, "If any man speaketh in a tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, and that in turn; and let one interpret: but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. And let the prophets speak by two or three, and let the others discern" (1 Cor. 14:27-29). Those who spoke in "tongues" were to speak one at a time. Not more than three were to speak at any given assembly. If an interpreter was not present, they were not to speak in "tongues" at all, but to remain silent—or he was to go off somewhere by himself and talk to himself! The prophets, who were to edify and exhort and console, were to speak by two or three, and the others were to discern.

Paul also says, "and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophet; for God is not a God of confusion, but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:32,33). That is, the prophets could control their actions. The Holy Spirit spoke by their mouths but they had the power to give vent to the words of the Spirit or to not do so. Those who spoke in "tongues" also had the ability to control their speaking. Otherwise Paul could not have commanded them to speak by two, or at the most three; neither could he have required them to remain silent in the absence of an interpreter.

The end result of the whole arrangement was that the church might know the will of God. Paul makes it plain that if revelation did not result from the use of "spiritual gifts" in the assembly of the saints, there was a misuse and abuse of these gifts. "But if a revelation be made to another sitting by, let the first keep silence" (1 Cor. 14:30). An apostle had the power, because of his baptism in the Holy Spirit, to reveal and confirm truth unaided by any other human. But those who were not apostles, and who had received some measure of the Spirit, had to work in cooperation with others in order to produce revelation and confirm their message.

Today we have the full and final revelation from God in the form of the Bible. We have the "once for all delivered faith." There is to be no additional revelation. Therefore, there is no proper application of these "spiritual gifts" in the church of our time. We confirm what we preach by an appeal to what is written in God's Word. Back then they knew in part. A little was revealed here and a little there, line upon line and thought upon thought, until the revelation was completed. Today we have the full revelation. They knew in part, and they prophesied in part; "but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:9). In addition, there is no apostle today to impart by the laying on of his hands any of the "spiritual gifts" found in the first century church.

The Bible is the means by which we are guided and comforted. Nothing more is needed. Therefore, it is by the Bible that the Holy Spirit today leads the child of God, and furnishes the disciple all that is needful to make him complete or perfect in God's sight (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Any man who goes about speaking of himself as being led to do or say a given thing as the result of some kind of mysterious feeling that is better felt than told talks as no apostle ever talked. He speaks without the authority of the Bible.

If any today claim to be able to "speak in tongues" by the power of the Holy Spirit, we have the right to know what the Spirit says by their mouth. Surely such gifts are not the private property of men who might make the claim to have them. Just what is being revealed today that is not already revealed in the Bible? The Holy Spirit certainly does not use the mouths of men in our time to merely quote some passage from the Psalms. Where is the revelation? Where is the new teaching? Be sure that no one—no one—will claim to produce any revelation in this century. If any man today should be foolish enough to make the claim of being able to "speak in a tongue" and is consistent enough to produce the revelation, he is condemned. Paul wrote, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I

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now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8,9).

The "spiritual gifts" of the first century were given to fill a temporary need. They were not permanent. Just as the baptism with the Holy Spirit given to the

apostles was a special gift, bestowed upon a special class of men, for a special purpose, and was therefore limited to the first century, so also were "spiritual gifts" special and limited.

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## ***"Our Righteousness"***

by David L. Miller

The book of Deuteronomy constitutes a restatement or second declaration of the Law. Its original setting and time were the Plains of Moab, east of the Jordan River, near the end of the forty-year desert wandering. The new generation of Israelites are on the verge of experiencing what their parents were not permitted to experience—entrance into the Promised Land (Num. 14:29-31). In the first three chapters, Moses recounts the forty-year period that preceded their current situation. In chapter 4, he instructs, warns, and admonishes the people to be obedient to God when they enter the land and begin a new life. He articulates numerous stipulations to which they should submit themselves (chs. 5-6) and then summarizes: "it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us" (6:25).

By the time some religious orators get finished expounding *their* notions of God's grace and mercy, one is left with the distinct impression that the individual need not be overly concerned about strict adherence to the specifications of the New Testament. After all, "we're saved by grace and not by works." But too much of the Bible militates against this

conception of "cheap grace." Moses understood that while God's love and mercy were incredibly great (cf., Deut. 4:31; Num. 14:18), God demanded loving obedience from those who wished to be acceptable (Deut. 5:10). Only by behaving in harmony with revealed laws from God could a person please him.

Moses described such careful attention and respect for the details of God's will as "righteousness." The people could be righteous in God's sight, and therefore saved, if they would conform themselves to divine doctrine. Here is where "the rubber meets the road." Only obedient trust (i.e., faith) can enable one to be counted righteous by God (cf., Rom. 4:19-22; Gen. 26:5; James 2:21-24). As the apostle John wrote by inspiration for all people living today: "he that doeth righteousness is righteous...whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God" (1 John 3:7,10).

May we follow God's written instructions with meticulous care and concern, out of hearts full of love and faith. In so doing, it will be for "our righteousness."

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