

Defender



“I am set for the defense of the gospel”

Volume XXI

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BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST PRESENTS

DEFENDER

Volume XXI

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Number 1



WILLIAM S. CLINE

1940-1991

In Memory of William S. Cline

Brother William S. Cline left this life for eternity with the redeemed Tuesday night, December 10, 1991. After almost three years of valiantly battling cancer and bearing its attendant pain, his passing was an easy one.

Bill was born on November 9, 1940, in Columbus, Mississippi. He attended Auburn University and David Lipscomb College, and began to preach full-time in 1961 at Pleasantview, Tennessee. He worked later with congregations of Aberdeen, Mississippi; Leonard Street in Pensacola; and, Tabernacle, New Jersey; moving to Bellview in 1968. He graduated from Alabama Christian School of Religion where he was lauded by Rex A. Turner, Sr., as one of the top students to ever attend.

Brother Cline worked with Bellview for a total of fifteen years. During that time, the church saw great growth and expansion into many areas of work. He began and edited a monthly publication, *Defender*, which begins its twenty-first year with this issue. He was the founder and first director of the Bellview Preacher Training School and began the annual Bellview Lectures and publication of the lectureship book. He encouraged the church to take on the oversight of the work of brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr. His influence brought many of the greatest preachers of this century to the Bellview congregation. Courageously, he opposed false doctrine and false teachers. Fearlessly, he upheld the blood stained banner of Christ against all foes. No wonder the members of the church at Bellview love him so.

Brother Cline sought to master that to which he set his hand. He submitted himself to the Lord and, as one of his students said, he allowed himself to be mastered by the Master. An excellent Bible student, his knowledge was matched with his untiring zeal and deep desire to do all he could for the Lord's church. He heeded the charge to "preach the word" and also saw the need to train others to preach (2 Tim. 4; 2:2), pursuing that endeavor at great sacrifice to himself and his family.

From 1983, he served as editor of the *Firm Foundation* and as co-owner of the Firm Foundation Publishing House. He began and directed the Firm Foundation lectureships (now in three states). He, along with "Buster" Dobbs rescued the *Firm Foundation* from the hands of liberals and, at great expense to themselves, put the paper back on the right track. In addition to his heavy schedule of writing and speaking, Bill was also very active in mission efforts, especially in the Far East. He made several journeys there to preach and also served as board member and treasurer of the Four Seas College of Bible and Missions In Singapore.

William S. Cline was a great preacher of outstanding ability and unyielding devotion. With a pure and tender heart, genuine love, and unfailing desire to bring glory to God and not to himself, he was a great encourager of good men and a great opponent of evil. To faithful preachers, he was a true friend. Throughout the nation and world, brother Cline was known, admired and loved by those who love and stand for the truth.

From the standpoint of being the local preacher where Bill had labored for so many years, I have a great appreciation for his love for the truth, the church, his brethren and all faithful gospel preachers everywhere. Bill displayed his gracious concern and generous spirit and "ran interference" for me more than once. He was not jealous of the pulpit he filled for so many years nor did he try to tell me what to preach or how.

Even more than that, he was a dear friend and beloved brother. His life inspired and encouraged us. His death reminds us of the frailty of humanity. Like Paul, he could say, at the end of life's weary journey: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Tim. 4:7-8). We rejoice in his reunion with dear departed saints and long to be with him, them, God and the angels after while.

In a dedicatory preface to the 1989 Bellview Lectures book is the following. "This dedication is a testimony of the deep appreciation and abiding love which the Bellview Church of Christ has for brother Cline and for his selfless and untiring work for the cause of Christ here and throughout the world. Only eternity shall tell the far-reaching scope of his influence for good. Bellview has experienced great growth because of the preaching and work of brother Cline, and the example of his lovely and tireless wife, Jean, and loving and faithful children, Cathy, Mary, William, and Becky, all of whom have been a great blessing to the Bellview church."

Preach the word...do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry (2 Tim. 4:2-5)

Upcoming Debate

January 27, 28 and 30, 31, 1992 at 7:00 P.M. in the building of the Burbank Church of Christ; 9700 Fulton St.; Houston, Texas, brother David P. Brown will debate Bob L. Ross, Baptist. The propositions are:

Monday and Tuesday nights: “The scriptures teach that in conviction, conversion and sanctification the Holy Spirit operates only through the word of God.” Affirmative: David P. Brown. Negative: Bob L. Ross.

Thursday and Friday nights: “The scriptures teach that in bringing men to faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit uses means, and he also exerts his personal power in accompaniment, or additional to the means.” Affirmative: Bob L. Ross. Negative: David P. Brown.

Preaching the Gospel

William S. Cline

Men may speak of “the new day,” the “changing times,” and “the enlightened age”; but the world has not outgrown the need for simple gospel preaching! It is evident that Jesus and the apostles considered the gospel to be “the power of God unto salvation” to every generation (Rom. 1:16). It is still “God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21). It is not the mere act of preaching that saves. If this were true, it would not matter so much what one preached. But this is not true, it is the thing preached that saves. Unless the gospel is preached faithfully, the preaching will not save. It may entertain, it may tickle the ears, but it will not save!

There is no acceptable substitute for plain gospel preaching. It is still the solemn duty of all who stand in the pulpit as servants of the Lord to “preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2). Paul, the greatest preacher since Christ, said, “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). He preached, “Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness” (1 Cor. 1:23). Christ commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel to every creature in all the world (Mark 16:15-16). The command to “preach the gospel” is as plain as God’s command to Noah to build an ark out of gopher wood. When God said “gopher wood” (Gen. 6:14) He only authorized gopher wood, and any other wood would have been wrong because there was no divine authority to use such. When Nadab and Abihu substituted “strange fire” in their service to God they were destroyed (Lev. 10) because they went beyond that which God had authorized. David’s “new cart” of 2 Samuel 6:1-11 was wrong for the same reason. He used that which God had not authorized! Thus, when preachers substitute something in their preaching for the gospel of Christ their preaching is no more acceptable to God than Nadab’s and Abihu’s “strange fire” or David’s “new cart.” When mere propaganda is substituted for gospel preaching and excitement is made to take the place of genuine conviction, it is no wonder that the “oxen stumble” and the cause of Zion suffers.

New Testament evangelism and not modern denominationalism furnishes us the true pattern for modern preaching. Our preaching cannot pillow its head on the lap of sectarianism without being shorn of its power. It is high time that our preachers go to Jesus, Peter, Paul, James and Jude to learn how to preach. Far too many (as if **one** is not too many) have wandered in the camp of the sectarians and mounted our pulpits spouting the “language of Ashdod.”

We often hear preachers applaud large numbers, and we would be the first to rejoice over every conversion to the Lord. But we need to learn that there is a vast difference between impressive numbers and genuine conversions. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Psa. 19:7). If men are not converted by the Word of God, their so-called conversion is a farce. And it is a fact that there are many who are counted as members of the church who have never been converted to Christ. We have those, both in the pulpit and the pew, who will openly admit that they believe the church to be a denomination—one that just happens to be one of the best denominations around. God forbid! One faithful gospel preacher having completed a sermon on “Conversion” was told by an elder that he would catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. (He considered Scripture quoting, proof text, one must do this, one must be a member of the Lord’s church, etc., as “vinegar preaching”). Brethren, since when did the church get into the “fly catching” business?

We are persuaded that the Lord’s church is in the “Soul Saving” business; and if souls are going to be saved, the gospel is going to have to be preached in its simplicity, its power, and its completeness. Knowing the fear of the Lord, it is proper to persuade men. Knowing how to properly apply “honey” in order to “catch flies” doesn’t qualify anyone

to stand in the pulpit anywhere at anytime! Souls, not feelings and impressive numbers are at stake! We must always seek to move men by gospel preaching rather than by smooth words, fair speech and crass sensationalism. The tactics and the message of many of our preachers have no place in the pulpit. There is, there can be, no acceptable substitute for faithful gospel preaching. The whole gospel must be preached. Preachers, preach the Word!

Defender; May 1976

Guilt by Association

William S. Cline

Is there such a thing as guilt by association? When brethren, especially preachers, continually seek the services and fellowship of those who are known false teachers, is there any justification in questioning their doctrinal soundness? Brethren, if the New Testament is going to be our only rule of faith and practice, then lines are going to have to be drawn and their boundaries adhered to!

The New Testament teaches that the false teacher is to be marked (Rom. 16:17). If any man does not obey the teachings of the Christ, we are not to have any company with him (2 The. 3:14). We do not need to wait until judgment to find out who the false teacher is so that we can mark him. We have the responsibility to make that decision here and now!

In 2 John 10-11 John wrote, "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into *your* house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (ASV). May we all understand too that *to give countenance and sanction to a false teacher is to share his guilt*. How judicious and cautious the Christian must be! *In this passage God forbids us to do anything that would in any way encourage or support the false teacher and his doctrine!* There is such a thing as guilt by association and the doctrine of Christ plainly teaches it.

Someone may counter, "Jesus associated with sinners" (Luke 15) Yes, He did, but His association with them was *in no way an encouragement, an endorsement, or a support of them in their sin!*

By Silence

We may share the false teacher's guilt by **silence**. Not long ago I heard a preacher tell a story about *Jesus talking to a young man and telling him to shave off his beard!* Before the service was over the man was forced to make correction of the false doctrine. To have remained silent would have been wrong for every supporter of the truth in the audience.

By Contribution

We may share the false teacher's guilt by private or church **contribution**. How many brethren privately supported the false teachers in Campus Evangelism? Have they repented and asked for God's forgiveness? How many churches supported the false teachers in Campus Evangelism? Have they *publicly acknowledged their sin* in supporting that work? Have they repented and asked for God's forgiveness? To contribute to the false teacher is to share his guilt. The only salvation for any who have so sinned is repentance, confession and prayer.

By Defense

We may share the false teacher's guilt by **defense**. I have sat in meetings where men defended some of the known liberals in the brotherhood. Their very defense of them was to mark themselves. I have heard elders, deacons and preachers defend the TEV perversion of the Bible to the point that they simply became ridiculous. The false translation (a discussion of the TEV was carried in the April issue of *Defender*) were defended in writing as being nothing but shortcomings! When we defend the false doctrine and/or the false teacher we share the guilt.

By Approval

We may share the false teacher's guilt by **approval**. We have heard people praise false teachers. We have heard sermons which contained false doctrine referred to as great preaching. We need to learn that approval or endorsement aligns us with the error. (Just this past week—Nov. 9, 1974—we listened to a preacher praise lessons delivered at a campus seminar which contained error—he called them "great messages." Tho he taught no error in his sermon he gave his approval to false doctrine/and consequently became as wrong as those who preached the error....)

And More

There are other ways we may share the false teacher's guilt. We may share such guilt by **indolence, unconcern, public countenance, inward approbation, open apology and assistance**. We must be careful of our soul's welfare in its association with the false teacher

Perhaps one of the most common ways brethren align themselves with the false teacher is in their obvious disobedience to John's command to "receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed" (2 John 10b—KJV). As we have already noticed this forbids the Christian from doing anything that would encourage or support the false teacher. This was one thing that brought about the death of Campus Evangelism. Their insistence in placing men on their staff and using men in their seminars who were liberal in their teachings brought about an awakening throughout the brotherhood. The money was cut off and Campus Evangelism died.

Today we see the Campus Ministries following the same course of action. They are using *the same men that Campus Evangelism used* who are still teaching the *same doctrines*. When brethren point out their fault in doing this they cry the wail of persecution and say they are being accused of guilt by association. **May it be understood here and now that any campus ministry, any congregation of the lord's church, any retreat, any Bible camp, any college lectureship and any other group in the church who uses men who are false teachers are guilty by association and are partakers of their evil deeds** (2 John 9-11).

Churches need to examine the man they secure for gospel meetings. If they have already scheduled men who have now turned out to be liberals, they need to write them and tell them their services will no longer be needed and tell them why they aren't needed. And gospel preachers, check on the places you go. Some of the liberal churches are using sound gospel preachers in their meetings. The same can be said for many of the seminars. They sprinkle the staff of lecturers with a few sound speakers. Brethren, have you ever considered your association with such? Have you considered that your name and soundness are possibly being used? Have you considered the fact that your appearance on such seminars or in such meetings may be causing brethren to question your soundness?

We appeal for all who are concerned about the truth to carefully examine their association with others and be certain that they neither encourage nor support the false teacher. Some may say, "Wouldn't you go preach in a Methodist church?" Yes, I would, but *my sermon would demonstrate beyond question that I neither supported nor endorsed them in their denominational error*. And it is very doubtful that I would ever be asked to speak for them a second time.

In matters of opinion let us cultivate the widest liberality; in matters of doctrine let us cultivate uncompromising firmness.

Defender; June 1972

Attitude Toward False Teachers

William S. Cline

God has always had to deal with the false teacher. From the early morning of time there has been the false doctrine to counteract the true doctrine of God. God told Adam and Eve **not** to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but the devil said they should **eat** and become as gods. The next few thousands of years of man's history reads like a broken record. God has given truth by which man was to be governed but the devil and his angels have sought to allure man away from God with false doctrine.

When Peter wrote his second epistle he was concerned with false teachers in the church. In chapter two he gave a scathing rebuke of those false teachers and told what their end was to be—eternal destruction. We would wonder if we cannot learn from Peter or Paul or James or Jude or many in the Old Testament who set the trumpet to their mouth or the pen to their hand and denounced the sins of the false teachers.

A tendency of man is to be tolerant of those who advocate new ideas and doctrines until they have been tested by the masses. In the religious world, which is woefully divided, we see such tolerance in the existence of more than 300 separate religious organizations. Within the Lord's church we have not done much better! False teachers have reared their ugly heads and we have been slow in denouncing them. An advocate of "love and understanding" cries that we must give them time. But we would ask, "Time for What?" Time to subvert whole houses? Time to divide churches?

Time to lead multitudes away from the Lord?

While the Christian is to manifest love and understanding, he is also to manifest diligence, vigilance, and militance against the false teachers and their doctrines. Did not Paul tell Titus that the mouths of the false teachers **must** be stopped?

God hates the false teacher and every false way. "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity" (Psa. 5:5). If the child of God is to be like God in his attitude toward false doctrine then he must hate that doctrine. "Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way" (Psa. 119:128). The great apostle Paul, the one who manifested such love, concern and compassion toward all men, especially his own brethren, denounced the Judaizing teachers in Galatia with this arresting statement, "I wish those who unsettle you would mutilate themselves" (Gal. 5:12—R.S.V.). The translation "mutilate" which the R.S.V. uses is more descriptive of the original Greek word). Thus we can see why Paul said that anyone who taught false doctrine was to be accursed (Gal. 1:6-9). Men of God were never slow to denounce error and neither should we. It is a mark of ungodliness to allow error to have free course. J. Sidlow Baxter, a denominational Bible scholar, writes, "When easy going kindness lounges in the place of righteous indignation, and allows Christ dishonouring false doctrine to play havoc inside the church, kindness has ceased to be Christian, it has become disguised disloyalty, camouflaged cowardice, and a moral wasting disease."

We should always seek to convert the false teacher from the error of his way so that his soul can be saved in the day of the Lord, but at the same time, if conversion is not possible, we should manifest the attitude of the Lord and set our face against them that do evil, for the Lord hates every false way. It is time for the church to **love** the truth and **hate** the error.

Defender, September 1978

A Many Talented Man Departs from this Life

Fred Stancliff

On Wednesday night, December 11, 1991, those of us in Singapore had just returned from an evening of participation in a combined gospel meeting and lectureship at the Jurong Church of Christ. When the phone rang, we were advised that brother William S. Cline had passed from this life on December 10, 1991, from Pensacola, Florida. Although in previous phone calls, we had been advised that death was imminent, it still was hard to accept the fact that "Bill" Cline, a many talented man of the Bellview Church of Christ, was no longer with us in this life.

A Talented Member of the Flock

Having served the Bellview Church of Christ as an elder for over twelve years, I knew brother Cline well as a member of the flock. He and his family were already in Pensacola when my wife, Rheba, and I first came to Pensacola, Florida in 1977. When I was appointed to the eldership in 1979, Bill was serving in the dual capacity of Director of the Bellview Preacher Training School and as full-time minister of the congregation. As the years went by, he worked in various capacities, as will be noted later; however, his cooperation with the eldership will always be remembered. His insight into problems of the church, not only in the Bellview congregation but throughout the brotherhood, was a valuable asset to the Bellview congregation and its eldership. When asked, his counsel was willingly made available to us as elders. His abilities as a classroom teacher also were of great benefit to the congregation.

A Talented Minister of the Gospel

Brother Ray Hawk was serving as minister of the Bellview congregation when I and my family arrived in Pensacola. When brother Hawk resigned as minister of the congregation, brother Cline was appointed by the elders to fill that position in addition to his duties as Director of the Bellview Preacher Training School. His sermons were always hard to misunderstand. His conversational expository method of preaching was to the point, yet his lessons were delivered with love for the lost souls who heard him. My family and I benefitted much from his sermons. He did not hesitate to present a lesson on any subject that the elders requested.

A Talented Director of the Bellview Preacher Training School

Bill Cline served as Director of the Bellview Preacher Training School from its origin to the time he resigned to work with the *Firm Foundation*. His work to establish a sound doctrinal curriculum should never be forgotten. His

students knew him as a director who was firm, yet who was concerned about their welfare. His abilities as an instructor in the classroom were appreciated by those students who sought to know Bible truths. Under his direction, the Bellview Preacher Training School gained a reputation for its doctrinal soundness and the high quality of its graduates. I enjoyed serving as an instructor in the school from 1979 to 1984 under the leadership of brother Cline as Director.

A Talented Editor of Religious Publications

The Bellview Church of Christ's publication known as the *Defender* originated with Bill Cline as its editor. He continued to serve in that capacity until he resigned to work with the *Firm Foundation* in 1984. The quality of the articles published while brother Cline was Editor of the *Defender* is well known to faithful brethren throughout the world.

In 1984, Bill resigned from his positions of minister of the congregation, Director of the Bellview Preacher Training School, and Editor of the *Defender*. He then became Editor of the *Firm Foundation*, and continued to work in that capacity as long as his health permitted.

A Talented Member of the Board of Directors of Four Seas College

In addition to the many duties already enumerated above, brother Cline also served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Four Seas College of Bible and Missions located In the Republic of Singapore.

His love for the people in Southeast Asia has been evident as my wife and I have talked to various Christians of Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines. When we left the States to come to Singapore in May 1991, brother Cline stated to me that he wished that his health would permit him to come with us. When I talked by phone with him recently, he again expressed his interest in the work here.

A Talented Husband and Father

Brother Cline's love for his wife and members of his family was evident from the time I first met him. Although he led a busy life, he found time for his wife, Jean, and his four children, Cathy, Billy, Mary, and Becky. Especially, during the last months of his life, he cherished the times when the family could be together as a unit. For example, in his sermon to the Bellview congregation October 20, 1991, which I saw on video tape, he looked forward to the Thanksgiving holidays when his family could once again be together.

Truly, William S. Cline was a many talented man who used his talents for the cause of Christ. He will not be forgotten by the Bellview congregation, by his other Christian friends throughout the world, and especially by his mother and father, his wife, and by his children. Although he has now left this life, the effect of his work as a minister of the gospel, and the other capacities noted above as he led the Christian life, will continue to live on.

W. S. Cline: A Friend

Ray Peters

It was a hot summery day in August 1966, when I first met William Sherman (Bill) Cline. My wife and I had been doing personal work in New Egypt, New Jersey for the summer. A Gospel Meeting was being conducted and on Monday night as we entered the building I got my first glimpse of Bill Cline. I remember thinking, "What a mountain of a man!" I walked up to him, stuck out my hand and introduced myself. His hand engulfed mine. He squeezed it and my new college ring leaving the imprint of the ring on two of my fingers. I was writhing in pain! That "firm" hand shake was an "omen" of a "firm" friendship that lasted 25 years.

The term friend does not properly describe the relationship Bill and I had. Someone used the term, "second person" the other day, and I think that fits. He and his family moved back to Pensacola in the early 70s. My wife and I, when home visiting my family in Pensacola, would attend Bellview where Bill preached. In 1975, the Bellview Lectures began and he invited me to be on the program. I was on it 10 years in a row. During the lecture years I would stay in his home and when passing through I would stay with him. It was amazing to behold what a kinship we developed very quickly. The apostle stated about Timothy; "For I have no man **likeminded**" (Phi. 2:20). That is the way I felt toward W. S. Cline. We had so many common likes and dislikes about various subjects: food, clothes, politics. etc.

Many people are aware Bill was, a big sportsman. He loved sports of all kinds. His greatest love was fishing. He surprised me one day in asking about golf clubs, because he used to kid me about my playing golf. Well, he took up golf. As usual he went after golf as he did anything else he undertook—100 per cent! One learns a lot about a person

when they play golf. We spent a lot of joyous moments playing golf, working on golf clubs, collecting and selling golf clubs. It was a hobby that we could do together. It drew us even closer. Even though he was a man of enormous size, he worked until he became a pretty good golfer—a tribute to his determination and dedication. The thing that amazed me was how such a big man could be a good puffer. Oh, the time we spent watching sports on TV! He would call me, when I was home, and say, “Come over and let’s watch the games.” Bill especially loved to watch the Auburn Tigers play football, and was proud of the fact he attended Auburn.

We had special moments during the Bellview Lectures and back at his home. His custom was to have different ones to come back for “cake and coffee” after the evening services. Those times are indelibly engraved in my mind, as the great preachers would sit around and have fun, and Bill telling jokes—as only he could. It was always light hearted, but sometimes the discussion would turn to more serious matters. He and Jean were gracious hosts.

At the graveside, I made a short Eulogy of Bill. I pointed out many times, in giving his name he would say; W. S. Cline—that’s with a C!” Too often people would spell his name “Kilne” or “Klein.” In writing an article about George Darling, a mutual close Gospel friend of ours, who passed away some years ago, Bill referred to him as “Brother D”—as many did. Well, although I never heard many, if any refer, to Bill as “Brother C,” I believe that it would correctly describe him. In my talk I took the letter “C” and pointed out characteristics in Bill’s life that began with the letter “C.”

CELEBRATION. William S. Cline had a zest for life I have never seen in anyone else! From Saginaw to Seattle, to San Francisco to Singapore he was known for his wholesome love for life. The thought that helped me through my part in the services was of Bill smiling at me and saying, “Look at my passing as a celebration, I am better off and am not suffering anymore!” Even in his death he celebrated!

COURAGE. He was a brave man as he lived, but I have never seen anyone face death as courageously as he. Bill never once questioned God nor showed any bitterness nor any self-pity. He was resolute in his stand for the Truth, and did not stick his “finger in the wind” to see which way the “brotherhood winds blew.” He took a stand on a “thus saith the Lord” and valiantly “fought the good fight of Faith.” In the same way he dauntlessly fought the dreaded disease of cancer. As he labored for breath and cleaved to life he was told by his wife “It is okay to go Bill, I am here,” in a minute he took a short breath and eased from this life.

CONSIDERATE. Bill had a knack for making one feel special. He was circumspect when it came to others’ feelings. In all our years together, and the last 6 years we practically lived together since our homes are only about 300 yards away, we never had a cross word. He wanted what was best for me. He is the one who encouraged me to do the mission work in which I am presently engaged.

CALLING. If I was not at his house, he was calling. When I would get back from a trip, my instructions were, “Call me when you get home.” I am not much on talking on the phone, at least not for long periods, but with Bill we could talk for an hour! He would call and check on my family when I was away. He was always calling his friends.

CONFIDANT. A true friend is one you can talk to confidently. Bill and I were each other’s confidants. Preaching, traveling and doing mission work are stressful. It is good to have one that understands, as Bill did, and can discuss anything. I sure leaned on him and miss him dearly. We had a relationship many never have in this life, and I am thankful I was privileged to have Bill as my “second person.”

CHURCH. His life was the church. While we spent a lot of time doing many things together, our main thrust and interest was the furtherance of the cause of Christ. What a joy to have a friend closer than a brother, that loved the church as much as Bill. If you ever listened to him preach or read his writings you know he loved the Lord and his kingdom. We knew each other’s shortcomings and helped one another in them as we tried to serve the Lord. Words are inadequate to express what that meant.

The writer in Proverbs 18:24 stated, “A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” William S. Cline was a very friendly, warm and likeable person. To me he was truly, “a friend that stuck closer than a brother.”

DEFENDER

Volume XXI

February 1992

Number 2

A Wedding Ring

Allen Webster

The most treasured material possession of the youthful bride and the aging widow is her wedding band. More sentiment attaches to this small item than all the heirlooms of two families. It is to her much more than just costly gold and diamonds. It is a symbolic expression of love.

Exchanging rings is an ancient practice. Why has it continued? What is a wedding ring?

A wedding band secures a permanent commitment. A ring is made of materials which symbolize the permanence of the marriage relationship. In times when marriage has become a revolving door, rings dogmatically say, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mat. 19:6). A sad smile appears when considering what some have said: "I took a band of gold and made a twenty-four carat mistake"; "Too much matrimony ends in alimony"; "I found out we were not fit to be tied." The ring constantly repeats the vow "Till death do us part."

In early times, kings pressed state rings into wax seals to make documents official (cf., Gen. 42:42; Est. 8:8). Two scripturally eligible people exchange rings on entering into an official lifetime relationship recognized by the state, society and the Savior (Rom. 7:2).

A wedding ring symbolizes pure love. As the gold of which to: rings are made has been refined and purified, so the love of two people has been refined and strengthened during the courtship period. It will continue to grow purer through the years of matrimony as each learns better to: "love, cherish, and nourish." "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Eph. 5:28-29). The wedding band stands for self-sacrificing love, not self-gratifying lust (cf., Mat. 5:28). It stands for love which will remain: "in sickness and in health, in poverty and in wealth, for better or for worse." As the ring is an endless circle, so the love of two people will go on throughout life.

A wedding ring serves as a practical reminder. Each time husbands and wives look to the third finger on their left hand, they are reminded that they belong to one another. The ring says to others, "I am not free to flirt because I am lovingly committed to my mate."

May God help all to see the significance of wedding rings!

Route 1 Box 38; Tiplersville, MS 38674

Editorial by Bobby Liddell

Fellowship with Gateway?

Due to the continued false teaching and unscriptural practices of the Gateway Church of Christ of Pensacola, the church at Bellview has had no fellowship with them since July 10, 1977.

Sadly, many congregations, in an obvious effort to hold hands with the "largest congregation in town" and, thus, imbibe of some of its "glory," have turned a deaf ear and a blind eye to the problems at Gateway. Instead, they have accused Bellview of being the troubler in Israel (1 Kin. 18:17-18).

What shall those brethren, who boast of their “balance” and still fellowship Gateway say now?

The Gatepost, Gateway’s bulletin, February 1992, issue contained an **article by our infamous brother, Rubel Shelly**. While it is not always possible to know every problem of every brother who might write an article, surely the false teaching of brother Shelly has been circulated far and wide that all should know. Ignorance of his false teaching is not the problem here.

On another page, note: “Wilson attended Gateway in February of 1991 and his heart was convicted by Buddy Bell’s lesson. He returned home to Mission Viejo, California, where **God had placed Jeff Walling at the pulpit of the Mission Viejo Church of Christ.**”

How shameful to blame God with putting a false teacher in the pulpit! Is God responsible for the damnable error taught by brother Walling in that pulpit and around the world? It certainly is not surprising to hear such folly from denominationalists, but should we expect it from brethren? Yes, when Buddy Bell, Gateway pulpit minister, in an article in the *Pensacola News Journal*, August 7, 1991, was quoted concerning his “Career Choice” as saying: “It was just **something God had put on my heart at a young age....**” Does that, and the above about Walling, not sound like the old denominational claims, in an effort to justify the error taught from their pulpits, of God calling their false teachers to preach?

Again, the false teaching of our fallen brother, Jeff Walling, who upholds the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship and fellowships those who use it, has been documented and should be known by any informed brother. Brother V. P. Black said about Jeff Walling and his error: “Twenty years ago...he would have been disfellowshipped or either made a confession.” Gateway disagrees.

Before Buddy Bell and Matt Elliott came to Gateway, they worked together at the University Church of Christ in Tuscaloosa, AL, and co-directed “Youth In Action.” In 1988, they invited young people to hear, among others, **Jeff Walling and The Acapella Vocal Band.**

In *The Gatepost*, May 1990, “Spring Sing ’90 at Harding University was a blast!...We were able to check out the campus, be entertained, meet lots of new folks and hear some **powerful messages by Jeff Walling.**” In the March 1991 issue, Matt Elliott reports the Gateway young people went to Winterfest “to hear **Jeff Walling, Acappella....**”

Should we be surprised that Gateway would endorse Jeff Walling, Acappella and Rubel Shelly? No! Why expect anything else from brethren who proclaim: “We probably had our best Prime Time ever last Wednesday night.... It was an extra special time. I’m so glad our Elders and parents were present to share it with us. Many tears were shed as our kids **shared their testimonies and then washed the feet of their parents**” (*The Gatepost*, August 12, 1988).

We take no delight in exposing Gateway’s continuing departures from the faith, but sorrow at the harm caused to the Lord’s church by the chosen course of the Gateway elders. We appeal to our brethren to repent and again walk in the light. Until then, we shall have no fellowship with Gateway.

Following a Mirage

Shan Jackson

A company of soldiers was crossing the desert when their supply of water became exhausted. As they continued, growing more thirsty as they pressed, a welcome sight came suddenly to their eyes. In the distance they saw a small lake bordered by palms and hedges. However, it was not in the direction their captain’s map indicated they should go.

As their insistence grew more bold the captain assured them that it was only a mirage, a mirage with no water, and that they needed to press on. However, their thirst drove them insane and rather than follow the map and the urging of their leader they overthrew his authority and headed into the desert. The anticipation of the needed water caused their steps to be hurried and soon they were running as fast as they could deeper and deeper into the desert’s sands.

But as they went farther on the mirage receded and as the sun sank in the distant sky it disappeared altogether. Realizing their folly they sought to return but without the map and the captain they could not find their way. After days of wandering in the waterless desert few were found alive to recall their plight.

Sad, is it not, to think of intelligent soldiers trying to catch a mirage and dying in the process. But, even sadder to

think of the multitudes of people who are following religious mirages, refusing to be led by God and His Word. Refusing to submit to the will of a loving Father who knows the right way and longs to lead the lost to it.

My friend, the truthful fact is we do not know the way from this life to heaven without Him. We can not safely travel even the journey of a day much less the journey of eternity without his help and guidance. Our path is beset with too many dangers to make it on our own. Its intricacies are innumerable and the result of a misstep is eternal. No matter how strong and steady we feel, no matter how sure we think we know the way, we are lost unless we have God as our guide and strength and let Him lead the way. We must never allow ourselves to follow a mirage, but rather we must accept God's truth as our light and lamp. For our God is glad to guide all who trust their lives to His care.

Those who are determined to follow a mirage of selfishness, self-will or arrogance will find themselves destroyed, yet He will lead them in a safe way if they would but let Him. But as a mountain guide offers himself to the climber at a price, God offers and urges us to follow having paid the price on the cross. He desires to be our guide. Consider inspired words, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou *art* the guide of my youth?" (Jer. 3:4). "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (Jam. 1:5). "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Pro. 3:6).

Following a mirage is going in the way of the promptings of our own foolish, wayward, and rebellious heart. However, taking God as our guide is to go in the right and safe way as certainly as the needle always points to the pole and the sun keeps to its accustomed course.

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A Cause to Champion

William S. Cline

In commenting on the problem of human organizations which arose during the Restoration Movement, Earl West wrote, "The controversy over human organizations in the restoration movement shows the development of an attitude on the part of the advocates of these organizations that becomes a thorn in their side. Oddly enough those who favored human organizations generally managed to generate more enthusiasm and energy on behalf of these organizations than they ever had for the church" (*Search For The Ancient Order*, Vol. I, p. 209.)

We feel that brother West underscored one of the basic human weaknesses which impedes the progress of the church with regard to its divine mission. The marching orders of the apostles were to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel." The plan was to begin in Jerusalem and proceed to Judea, Samaria and the entire world (Acts 1:8). This they did, and evidently without one single human organization! One will search in vain through the pages of the New Testament to find any cause being championed other than the cause of Christ.

Not one time do we find some human innovation being enthusiastically pursued while sidestepping the simple, yet successful plan of God. There are no super programs, colossal campaigns, gigantic workshops, nor mountain top experiences!! They simply went from house to house, city to city and nation to nation with the pure, plain, powerful gospel of the Christ. Men believed and obeyed and the church grew. The mission Christ had given was carried out and by Colossians 1:23, within approximately 30 years after Pentecost, the world had heard the good news of the salvation which would be had in Christ.

Isn't it strange that today we can't get brethren to generate much enthusiasm over that mission? We see tremendous enthusiasm being voiced over various human ideas and organizations, and enormous amounts of energy are expended to plan, promote and prosecute them. Let us not be misunderstood. We are not speaking against various forms of organizations which expedite the preaching of the gospel. But, we are setting our pen against any attitude or action that generates more enthusiasm for human ideas and programs than for the simple preaching of the gospel.

It is a fact and a shame that multitudes in the church are "past feeling" when it comes to the plan of Jesus—go into all the world and preach the gospel. If we must champion a cause then let's champion that one! I know it's not our idea, but it is our responsibility!

Defender; June 1983

Persuasion

Jeni Manasco

Persuasion means to cause someone to do something by means of argument or entreaty. Preachers preach to persuade people to action in the Lord's vineyard. Bible teachers should so teach as to persuade their students to be motivated to greater service for God. It is right to persuade.

The rich man in Luke 16:19-31 had the wrong idea of what was required to persuade people to do right! Dying without hope, this man requested Abraham to send Lazarus back from the dead to appear to his (the rich man's) brothers. His logic was that if they saw the dead Lazarus once again, they would be moved to obey God and not come to that awful place where the rich man then had his habitation (vv. 27-28). The man persisted in asking for Lazarus' return to convince his brothers of their need to repent. Abraham pointed out to the poor rich man that if his brothers would not be convinced by the inspired Word, they would not be persuaded even if one rose from the dead!

Persuasion is essential to leading people to repent. People need to face their errors. Paul said, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we **persuade** men" (2 Cor. 5:11). The fact of impending judgment is indeed an effective tool of persuasion! Realizing that God is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29) and that it is fearful to fall into His hands (Heb. 10:31) can be a persuasive argument—but it works only if the one you are talking to opens his or her heart to the truth you are stating! Paul exerted himself in the lesson he presented to Felix. Paul made use of the reality of the judgment to bring Felix face to face with the need for repentance in his life. Insofar as we can determine, the persuasion worked, for Felix trembled (Acts 24:25). Sadly, however, he rejected the gospel.

As did Paul so must we persuade with the preaching of the truth. I simply cannot believe that Paul appealed to emotion alone in his preaching, whether it was to Felix or the man on the street. Paul persuaded with the reasonable arguments of the gospel of Christ. First century preachers preached the Word and depended on that to persuade people (Acts 18:4; 17:1-4; 19:8; 15:7-9; etc.). The message itself is sufficient to persuade the honest-hearted (1 Cor. 1:17; 2:1-5). Of course, we must also speak with personal conviction. Our own sincerity must be evident or we may fail to convince others.

Christians are a persuaded people. Like Abraham, the Christian must be persuaded that God can and will keep His Word (Rom. 4:18). We must be persuaded that God will not forsake His faithful ones (Rom. 8:38-39). Our persuasion is that of Paul, "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:25).

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Is Baptism Essential to Salvation?

Steve Miller

A sincere soul looking for the way to heaven will at some point probably ask this question in studying the Bible doctrine of baptism. Most denominations answer this question by saying no! In studying any religious subject, one should always ask, "What does the Bible say?" Jesus told His disciples to: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Mat. 28:19). From this passage we learn that baptism is an important part of the work of the disciples of Christ. Jesus spoke these words with all authority and therefore we see it is a command (Mat. 28:18).

Since baptism is commanded, where does it fit into God's plan of salvation? Is it essential to salvation? Mark records the words of Christ when he said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). From this passage we see that baptism is commanded and essential to salvation. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Many pervert this passage and try to add to it, which is sinful. It is true that many today add the word "not" to Jesus's statement. In the *Howard-Pope Debate*, pages 31, 57, Julian Pope, minister of the Missionary Baptist church, said he would agree to add the word "not" to Mark 16:16, as if to make Christ say, "He that believeth and is (not) baptized shall be saved." Many people will compromise truth that is

plain and simple and will be damned for doing so. God will punish those who add or take away from His Word (Deu. 4:2; Rev. 22:18-19).

The divine Scriptures reveal that baptism is a command and is essential to salvation. A person affirming that one could be saved without baptism ignores plain Bible passages and perverts the Word of God. Teaching that a person can be saved without being baptized is false because Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). This simply means that no one can be saved without being baptized into Christ.

A person has to be in Christ where the blood of Christ can wash away sin. How does one get into Christ? "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). In Christ, "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7).

The Bible declares that baptism is essential to salvation. One must remember that baptism alone cannot save. Neither can faith, repentance, confession, or grace alone save an individual. The Bible teaches that faith (Heb. 11:6), Repentance (Acts 17:30), Confession (Rom. 10:10), and Baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:4; 1 Pet. 3:21) puts one into Christ and makes him a Christian only.

Baptism is essential to salvation. Your eternal destiny depends upon who you will follow. Each one of us must make a decision to either follow the teachings of men and be lost, or follow Jesus Christ and have a home in heaven.

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"So Long Bill, See You Later"

Roy Deaver

On Saturday morning, December 14, at 10:00 AM, a large crowd gathered in the auditorium of the Bellview Church of Christ building, in Pensacola, Florida, for the funeral service of our beloved brother, William S. "Bill" Cline. Bill labored with the Bellview Church for many great and wonderful years. Especially because of the extreme suffering which Bill had experienced for the past (approximately) three years, there seemed to be a special feeling of peace and comfort characteristic of those assembled. It was good that the suffering was over!

Paul Brantley led the singing, using several songs which Bill had requested. Buster Dobbs, John Priola, Daniel Denham, and Roy Deaver spoke in the auditorium service; Bobby Liddell and Ray Peters conducted the service at the graveside. Following is a record of my part in the service of honor of Bill Cline, my beloved friend and faithful fellow-servant of the Lord.

God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Eze. 33:11); but "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psa. 116:15).

I knew extremely well a little girl who from infancy suffered "curvature of the spine." Especially in her earlier years it was a part of my job to help take care of her. This little girl had 21 surgeries in 11 years. She managed to have a good life, and died at the age 40. After her funeral service January 29, 1965, while we were standing at her opened coffin, my Dad said to me: "What do we want to put on her tombstone?" I said, "Daddy, Romans 12:12, 'Patient in tribulation.'" And so, these words are inscribed on her tombstone, in a cemetery in Breckenridge, Texas.

And, literally hundreds of times in the last two years especially, in connection with Bill Cline, this passage has come to my mind: "Patient in tribulation." The word "patient" here literally means "steadfastness, perseverance, endurance." What a lesson Bill Cline has taught us! What a demonstration of steadfastness he has been—in the midst of intense suffering, affliction, agony and distress.

The real character of a man is clearly seen in careful consideration of the things which he loved. In this connection I want to consider the objects of Bill's love.

1. Bill loved the Church of our Lord. In his life, the kingdom came first. He honored, and respected, the divine injunction, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." His love for God and His will was "the Big Circle." Everything else came within the confines of this circle. He was determined to serve God with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength.

2. He loved the Bible. He revered it as being the inspired, the infallible, the inerrant, the allsufficient Word of the Living God. It was the “lamp” unto his feet, and the “light” unto his path. He knew that this book would guide him in life, and would take him to eternal glory.

3. He loved his family. Jean, his beloved companion and co-worker in the Kingdom for so many wonderful years; Kathy, Billy, Mary, and Becky. He respected and honored his mother and father.

4. He loved Christian fellowship. Not only fellowship with brethren here in the church building, or out under these gorgeous trees; but also in their own home. It was a common thing for the Cline’s to have 10 to 20 people in their home for a meal and Christian association.

5. He loved the pure gospel of Jesus Christ. He hated anything and everything which was in opposition to this gospel. He would not tolerate those who would tamper with the text; those who would try to cancel out the authority and power of the gospel; those who would attempt to make laws which God did not make; those who would disregard laws which God did make.

6. He loved preaching the gospel. He was first, last, and always a “gospel preacher.” He loved to “tell the old, old story,” and he told it with tremendous power. During these past few years of his extreme illness, he desperately missed his not being able to preach; and a few times he preached when he was not able to preach (sitting here in a wheelchair).

7. He loved training men to preach the gospel. Many years of his life were devoted to this work, especially in the Bellview Preacher Training School. And Bill’s preaching work will continue to live (in a very special way) in the lives and labors of those whom he trained to preach.

8. He loved writing and publishing in connection with the gospel. His writing work will live on and on in the books and articles which he has written and published in *Firm Foundation* and in numerous other works scattered around the world.

9. He loved sports: hunting, fishing and golf. At least, in former days, he loved to go on hunting trips with Billy. He loved to go fishing with his Dad. And, before his extreme illness, he thoroughly enjoyed playing golf.

10. He loved good music. He loved to listen to the recordings of “The Statler Brothers,” “The Blackwood Brothers,” Jim Reeves, and Patsy Cline. He himself was a good singer. He loved to sing the old, great, country-western songs while playing the guitar. Above all, in this regard, he loved to sing the great gospel songs.

These are some of the things which come to my mind as I struggle through broken heart and falling tears to pay tribute to this great and wonderful man and faithful soldier and servant of Jesus Christ. I knew him well; I loved him much; I will miss him terribly.

“So long, Bill. I’ll see you later.”

(This note: Fourteen days after Bill’s funeral service his father died. Our sympathy is hereby extended to Bill’s mother, sister Louise Cline, also of Pensacola, and to the entire Cline family).

7401 Glenhaven Path; Austin, Texas 78737

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

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

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

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

You Are Invited To Attend The Sixth Annual Firm Foundation

West Coast Lectureship

March 11 - 15, 1992 (Wednesday-Sunday)

San Lorenzo Church of Christ

977 Grant Avenue, San Lorenzo, California 94580

(Sponsored by San Lorenzo Church of Christ, San Mateo Church of Christ
and other congregations and concerned individuals)

Schedule of Events:

WEDNESDAY, March 11

7:00 PM	How To Recognize The Value Of A Soul	Noah Hackworth
8:00 PM	A Generation Which Knew Not God	Allen Robertson

THURSDAY, March 12

10:00 AM	Keeping The Soul Healthy	Kenneth McClain
11:00 AM	How To Secure The Home Of The Soul	Johnie Scaggs
	Lunch Break	
1:00 PM	Meaningful Worship	Eldon Lewis
2:00 PM	Dangers Facing The Soul	LeRoy McGrupe
3:00 PM	The Nature Of Hell	Gus Eoff
	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	John 3:16	Robert Taylor
8:00 PM	The Lord's Supper	Dub McClish

FRIDAY, March 13

10:00 AM	The Sanctified Soul	Greg Weston
11:00 AM	The Gospel Is For All	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	A Charge To Preachers	M. L. Sexton
3:00 PM	The Holiness Of God	Don Ruhl
	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Evangelism	Buster Dobbs
8:00 PM	Love's Crowning Deed	David Brown

SATURDAY, March 14

10:00 AM	The Greatest Question To Challenge Eternity Bound Man	Joe Gilmore
11:00 AM	What Will A Man Give In Exchange For His Soul?	Eddie Whitten
	Lunch Break	
1:00 PM	The Power Of The Gospel To Change A Life	Mike Dill
2:00 PM	The Sentence Of Death	Weldon Langfield
3:00 PM	Be Ye Steadfast	Herschel Wilson
	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Isaiah Chapter 53	Jimmy Clark
8:00 PM	The Value Of The Soul	Ronnie Hayes

SUNDAY, March 15

10:00 AM	Heaven. Home Of The Soul	Bobby Liddell
11:00 AM	The Impact Of Jesus On The Soul Of Man	Carl Garner
	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	Authoritative Love	Winfred Clark
3:00 PM	The Trials Of Abraham's Faith	George DeHoff
	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Is There Life After Death?	Perry B. Cotham
8:00 PM	What Is Man?	Curtis Cates

DEFENDER

Volume XXI

March 1992

Number 3

Psalm 110:1

Harold Blevins

“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Psa. 110:1).

Each word of this Psalm of David is filled with weight, wisdom, and wonderment. One short sentence sounds the sum of its astounding accuracy. Peter preached it in the first Gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost after Christ’s ascension (Acts 2), and Paul penned it via inspiration (Heb. 1:2-3; et al). Let us notice the plea of this Psalm.

“The Lord said unto my Lord.” The sweet Psalmist of Israel (2 Sam. 23:1) sang so sadly yet so gladly of the Christ that he knew only via inspiration. “My Lord” depicts the high and holy honor of Him called the Christ. The Almighty (Rev. 1:8) argued this by asking, “What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?” (Mat. 22:42). The pertinent point is “Whose son is He?”

He is the Son of God, and He is the son of David. He is Lord by His lineage. Records of Matthew (Mat. 1:1-17); and Luke (Luke 3:23-38) reveal that the Righteous One was man in the flesh (John 1:14; Phi. 2:6-8). He was born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14); yet, the government rests on His shoulders (Isa. 9:6). How is this possible?

The answer lies in the fact that the only begotten of God is God incarnate. Christ is the Word of God and God in the flesh (manifested). “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:1-5).

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:11, 14).

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:1-3).

Paul, by inspiration, preached that Jesus was equal with God: “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. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name” (Phi. 2:6-9). Therefore, Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God and the anointed one called the Almighty (John 3:1-6; 1 Sam. 24:10; Rev. 1:8).

“Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Power is in the hand of the Prince of Peace; that is, Christ Jesus (Isa. 9:6; Mat. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:25). All the pictures, promises, and prophesies are plainly brought to pass into our presence. The Anointed One is both Lord and Christ—both regal and legal—both God and Christ; and both God and man!!! He is God Christ Jesus, the second person in the Godhead. The God/man: one hundred percent (100%) God, and one-hundred percent (100%) man. The Father’s own is far above all (Eph. 1:21-23); descended to be the Savior of the world (John 3:16); declared to be Deity (Psa. 110:1; Mat. 17:5; et al); ascended to be the Almighty (Acts 1:6-8; Rev. 1:8); authorized to be raised to sit at the right hand of God with power (Zec. 6:12-13; Mat. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:25).

“Until” determines the length of time before the Rugged Redeemer judges the world (2 The. 1:7-9; et al). All will see Him on the last day, even they who pierced Him, and they who do so even today (Rev. 1:7; Heb. 6:4-6). The last day will cause all enemies of the cross to begin their suffering for their sins (2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rom. 2:4-6; et al).

May God grant unto us His grace to grow in the knowledge of Him; thereby, to obey and to declare Christ Lord of lords and King of kings (2 Pet. 3:18; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:16).

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Editorial by Bobby Liddell

News and Updates

CONTRIBUTIONS SENT IN BY READERS OF DEFENDER. Peggy Smalley—\$10.00; Gene Hammock—\$20.00; Raymond Hart—\$10.00; Ronald Allen—\$50.00; George LeHew—\$5.00; Willie Kitchen—\$20.00; Charles Fletcher—\$3.00; Lucille Simpson—\$10.00; Ruby Yarbrough—\$20.00; Dan Morris—\$20.00; Cecil Chaffin—\$50.00; Terry Garner—\$6.00; Roger Jackson—\$10.00; and, George LeHew—\$5.00.

Thanks to all who have been so generous to help us in this work! While there is no subscription price, we do appreciate those brethren thoughtful enough to want to offset our costs for the printing and mailing of “Defender.”

IN APRIL, ELEVENTH ANNUAL SOUTHWEST LECTURES. The Southwest congregation in Austin, Texas announces its eleventh annual lectureship to be held April 12-15, 1992, at the building of the Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748. The theme is: **“A Study Of Leviticus And Numbers.”** A fine group of faithful brethren shall speak daily beginning at 9:00 AM Camper hook-ups are available. Audio and video cassettes will be available. This will be another great Southwest lecture program! For more information, write the above address or call (512) 282-2486.

CORRESPONDENCE. “It has come to our attention that your publication has been made available to our members at no cost to them. Such great works as yours so often go unnoticed in our brotherhood today, and we join in commending you for it...we respectfully request that you add the following names to your mailing list....We greatly appreciate your efforts and hope to strengthen ourselves as a result of them.” Jerry Gentry, Troup, TX

“I appreciate the publication that you put out and I hope and pray that many souls will be reached by it.” David Long, Memphis, TN

“We were made aware of your good publication during the Portland Gulf Coast Symposium on Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage. Several families of the congregation have requested that I contact you and see if you would put their names onto your mailing list....Obviously a publication such as yours would be a source of edification to them as they continue to strive to be faithful.” Nils Donnell, Falfurrias, TX

“Please add these names to your mailing list. Your paper is very good and is true to the word of God. In a time when many are departing from the truth, it is good to read sound words written by sound brethren. I will continue to pray for your success in teaching God’s Word.” David Dial, Milan, TN

GUIDELINES FOR WRITERS. We welcome well-written articles submitted by sound brethren which deal with Bible subjects. We request those who write to follow our “Guidelines For Writers.” You may obtain a copy by writing or calling the office of the Bellview Church of Christ.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP OF THE MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING. March 29-April 2, 1992, **“Jesus Christ, The Gift Of God’s Grace And The Object of Man’s Faith.”** Lectures and classes begin daily at 9:00 AM and continue all day. Some of the greatest preachers of our generation will present uplifting lessons on this great subject. See the schedule on Page 7. For more information, Call 1-901-362-5139.

THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL BELLVIEW LECTURES. May 9-13, 1992, **“Current Crises Challenging The Church.”** You won’t want to miss this year’s lectures, so make your plans now to be with us. In addition to the lectures, and audio and video cassettes, a lectureship book will be printed (and offered at a special pre-publication price). Look for more information and a schedule of topics and speakers in next month’s *Defender*.

NEW BOOK. Just recently, I learned of a new KJV-NKJV Parallel Reference Bible from Nelson. If you have been comparing the two, this book should simplify your task. It also has center column references.

The Disappointments of Heaven

Roger Jackson

When we preach about heaven we always emphasize its perfection. There is nothing wrong with that because heaven is a perfect place. Heaven is the residence of a perfect God (1 John 1:4; 1 Tim. 6:16). Heaven's environment is perfect (Rev. 21:27). There we will live throughout one never ending perfect day (Rev. 22:5). In heaven every creature renders perfect obedience (Mat. 6:10).

However, to be perfectly honest with you heaven may hold some disappointments for a few people. I would not want anyone to be angry with me because I did not tell them of these possible disappointments. Since there are some things on earth that these people do not like, and since these things are surely going to be present in heaven, the possibility exists that they will experience some disappointments there.

A Lot of Singing. When you read about heaven it will not be long until you read about some singing. God told Job that there was singing in the beginning when He made the world (Job 38:7). The singers must have been angels. In Luke 2:13-14 there was a great host present when the announcement of the birth of Jesus was made and they were praising God. Perhaps this was a kind of song, since many Jewish songs were actually chants and all of them were a kind of praise to God. In Revelation 5:9 and 14:3 John describes heaven as a place for some mighty choruses whose ranks number in the thousands. They sung the song of Moses and the Lamb and the new song.

I know all of this is likely to disappoint a number of people who "cannot carry a tune in a bucket" or have to "sing with the heart" and so they don't. Those who never pick up a songbook at worship or forsake the assembly on singing night are going to shudder at this news. Those who refuse to obey the Lord's commands in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 will surely be disappointed when they learn that they must now sing after so many years of silence. I am sorry, but you needed to know.

A Huge Worship Service That Never Dismisses. It seems that they have "no excuse Sunday" in heaven every day (Rev. 5:14; 7:11; 11:16). Brethren often complain about services that are too long. Some of them even say they thought "they" would never dismiss. Well, I am sorry to inform you that they never do in heaven. Of course, that is no problem to my brethren who love to worship God, like David (Psa. 122:1). However, this could be a big disappointment to the rest. They would be bored to tears and churched to death. There will be no sick wife to stay home with, no fish to catch, no needed rest, no football games, no rain, no peas to shell and no sick cats to pamper! It will be tough for Christianettes, who liked to hear sermonettes, by preacherettes, so they could get out early and smoke their cigarettes. I am sorry, but I just thought you ought to know.

A Constant Labor of Love and Service of Joy. I do not know what kind of activity or work God has for us in heaven. When I read about heaven I cannot read about transparent beings flying about with feathered wings or lying about on fluffy clouds all day. What I do read about is the will of God being done (Mat. 6:10). I read about His servants serving him night and day; i.e., all the time (Rev. 7:15). I do not know all in which that may consist. I do know that God does not need any housekeepers. Since that is all so many of my brethren have done for the Lord instead of laboring for Him (1 Cor. 15:58) I know they will be disappointed when they get to heaven and learn they must get up off the stool of do little and stop leaning on the handle of do less and get to work. Work can make you miserable if you are not used to it. It doesn't bother people who have always worked. Good elders will jump for joy when they get to heaven because God likes them for their work's sake. He even told us in His Word to give special honor if not pay to them (1 The. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17). The work will not be the kind they endured here (Rev. 14:13), such as running after every derelict brother or sister in the congregation or agonizing night after night over some problem some weak and worldly member has caused. No, they will not mind the work, but a lot of other people are going to be disappointed. I am sorry, but I thought you ought to know.

A Fellowship Around the Throne That Will Never End. In the first church at Jerusalem there was a marvelous togetherness we call fellowship (Acts 2:41-46). In heaven the same people will live together forever. Most of my brethren love to get together and just enjoy each other's company including the worship assembly. However, there are exceptions. Some brethren have conflicts over different matters and end up hating each other so much they cannot worship together or socialize with each other. They remain estranged all of their lives. Sometimes one will ask the other for forgiveness, but have his plea rejected (Luke 17:3-4). Still that brother who refuses to forgive expects to go to heaven anyway (Mat. 5:22-26; 6:14-15). If he is right, he will be greatly disappointed. There, in the

place where he expects to live forever, is the man he cannot stand! What a disappointment! I know you will appreciate my warning you.

A Concluding Perspective. I can almost hear someone say, “Preacher, people who would be disappointed over these things are not going to heaven.” If these are your sentiments, you got the message! Something is wrong with your heart and religion if you do not love to sing (Heb. 2:12), worship God (Heb. 10:25), work for the Master (Heb. 4:12) and enjoy the fellowship of the brethren (Heb. 13:1). They are so elementary that the commands to do them are all found in one book of the Bible. To those who are going to heaven, “There Is No Disappointment In Heaven.”

Route 3 Box 882; Somerville, AL 35670

Momentous Decision

William S. Cline

A few years ago I was rummaging through some old bulletins and I ran across an article that I had found and filed several years before. The article was short but most pointed. It told of a preacher who had been going through some old church records and came across the minutes of a meeting of the Official board of the church. He found this entry: “Race problems were discussed for almost an hour—It was moved, seconded and carried that an extension ladder be purchased.”

As one of our past Presidents would say, “This was the art of the possible.” Not believing it to be possible to do anything about important matters, they compromised on a non-controversial matter and bought a ladder. I have no idea what church this was, however, the minutes suggest a denominational group by the phrase “official board.” Had it not been for those words I would have been certain that it was a business meeting of my brethren. That meeting had all the earmarks of the business meetings I have attended during the past 23 years. Too many times the work of the church has been slowed or stopped because some brethren did not want to get others upset. Brethren, we have been guilty of stopping the wheels of progress to satisfy some cantankerous brother who was more concerned about his idiotic ideas, or personal preferences than he was the lost of the world.

Rivers are crooked because they have taken the course of least resistance. Perhaps the work of the church takes such a circuitous route for the same reason. Often a congregation loads its train, puts its eldership at the throttle and is prepared to move at top speed down the track; but just as the wheels start to roll someone waves a red flag. The train is stopped. The objector declares, “If you do not halt this train, throw overboard the cargo, and reverse course, I am going to be offended.” **It is at this point that the average congregation decides to buy an extension ladder!**

Sometimes it is necessary to adopt policies, enunciate principles, and execute plans which are not universally popular. It is, in fact, this sort of thing which tests the integrity of the church. When sound plans and programs which are in harmony with God’s Word are adopted, those responsible for carrying out such works must stay hitched “until the cows come home.” The only other alternative is to decide to purchase an extension ladder.

Problems in the Pulpit

B. C Carr

Introduction

When we talk about problems in the pulpit, let it be understood that we are not talking about the literal place where one stands to preach. This is but a figurative expression that represents the preaching or teaching itself. Those who know anything about the church today are aware that we have preaching being done that is causing serious problems for the Lord’s church. Most of the blame for the current crisis can be attributed to the pulpit. The expression often heard, “As goes the pulpit, so goes the church,” is true. If the preaching is wrong, the church will go astray. When an eldership tolerates false teaching it too becomes guilty of sin. Elders are to feed the flock (Acts 20:28). They are also to exercise oversight (1 Pet. 5:2). In the end they must give account of their stewardship (Heb. 13:17).

Members of the church have a responsibility to demand faithful preaching. There should be the constant searching of the Scriptures to see that the things taught are true. This did the Bereans when Paul and Silas preached

(Acts 17:11). We cannot blindly follow false teachers without becoming guilty ourselves. Second John 9-11 teaches we are not to bid them Godspeed. We must individually be judged for our own deeds (2 Cor. 5:10-11).

Some might think getting rid of the pulpit would solve our problems. (I would hate for this to be given a vote by some members of the church). This we cannot do. God has ordained preaching. Before ascending back to heaven our Lord commanded with all authority, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Mat. 28:19). "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Paul charged Timothy to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). Even our Lord was sent to preach. "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19). It is clear that God's plan to save fallen man is by preaching, but it must be the right kind of preaching. Faithful preaching can save people. This is its design. Listen as Paul instructs Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:16).

The opposite is also true. Unsound doctrine can cause the preacher and those that hear to be lost. To the Corinthians, Paul wrote, "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" (1 Cor. 1:21). Preaching for any purpose other than to save is the wrong kind of preaching. It will not please God.

Error taught can cause people to be lost. This is true because only truth can make us free (John 8:32). A lie taught and believed will result in damnation. Some who do not love truth will be allowed to believe a lie and be damned. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 The. 2:11-12).

As an example of what can happen when one believes a lie and acts accordingly, please recall the case of the young prophet of Judah who was sent to Bethel to cry against Jeroboam's altar. This man of God had been warned by the Word of the Lord not to eat bread nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that he came to Bethel. But, he listened to a lying prophet, who claimed to be instructed by an angel who spake the Word of the Lord. As a result of believing this lie the prophet was slain by a lion. He had disobeyed God. Read 1 Kings 13.

Jesus rebuked the false teachers of His day and told what would happen to those who followed them. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Mat. 23:15). It is very evident that the kind of pulpits we have in the church can determine the eternal destiny of those who hear from the pew. The kind of preaching done can either make the church stronger or it can make the church weaker.

We are living in a very crucial time for the survival of the Lord's church. This is no time for uncertain sounds from weak-kneed preachers. I believe the church is much weaker today than it was a generation ago. Many preachers have listened to the popular cry of those about us and have failed to stand on the cutting edge of truth. I believe this can be seen as we proceed to give evidence as to what is taking place in the church today. There are special times and circumstances that should determine the tone and severity of our preaching. Paul indicated he would use that which was required for the good of the Corinthians when he came to them. He would administer a rod or love, depending upon their need. "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?" (1 Cor. 4:21)? It is sad to note that today we have so many who occupy our pulpits, in the present crisis, who can only preach on love. They are afraid to be negative. Everything they preach must be positive. Instead of using the sword of the spirit they are waving a butter paddle. Can you imagine Jonah going to Ninevah to preach nothing but love, or commendation? Can you imagine Stephen preaching to the Jews on "How to feel good about yourselves" or giving some counseling lessons?

There are wolves among the flock. Preaching is being done in some of our pulpits that has caused problems for the Lord's people. More trouble is ahead unless someone sounds the alarm. If we are to be justified in our sayings and if we are to overcome when we are judged, we must let God be true, but every man a liar (Rom. 3:4). Let us now look at some examples of problem preaching.

Problems in the Pulpit

When there are problems in the pulpit, it is not long until the church is influenced to turn in the wrong direction. Many congregations once known for their soundness are not the same today. Those preachers who preached the

Word faithfully and built good-sized churches would not even be welcomed to preach in the same pulpits today. Why? There are many reasons. Because of time and space we can only deal with a few.

1. **Men Pleasers.** There are men who preach to please men. Paul warned about those who had itching ears, who would obtain teachers, who would scratch where they itched (2 Tim. 4:3). There is always the temptation to preach what men want to hear. A preacher once told me that he did not preach on giving, because the brethren did not like to hear it. Another preacher stated he could say nothing against a false teacher in the same city because his elders had forbidden him to say anything. When asked if they should object to his preaching against instrumental music, what he would do, he replied, "I would have to avoid teaching against such." This kind of preaching causes problems. Forget about the itching ears. Preach the truth! Those who preach to please men cannot please God. "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).

When a preacher starts listening for praise from his audience he is in danger. He wants his ego built up. I wonder about some preachers who want to be "cheerleaders" for the audience. They call for frequent "amens" and often wait for applause. We do not need to encourage this sort of thing in our pulpits. This seems to lower the dignity of the pulpit to some form of worldly entertainment. When John the Baptist did his best preaching he was not applauded, but beheaded. Why do you think Jesus and the apostles were killed? Not because they pleased their listeners.

We could learn a lesson from Herod about vainglory. When he failed to give God the glory he was eaten of worms (Acts 12: 21-23). Some preachers seem to be so filled with pride and vainglory they can almost strut while sitting.

2. **Worldly Wisdom.** Another cause of problem preaching is seen when men value the wisdom of men above the wisdom of God. From some pulpits today we hear what some present day scholar (?) has written. Denominational preachers are quoted as though they were an authority. Too many sermons are filled with current events or a discussion of some political issue. Several months ago I heard one of our brethren preach in a meeting. The lesson was almost ended before he used one passage of Scripture. Another preacher used his time, while preaching to a large audience on Sunday morning, telling his personal experiences and giving human testimony instead of preaching the Word of God. Paul said, "And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:4-5).

This great lesson, from the 1992 Bellview Lectures Book, will continue in April. Editor.

What Must I Do To Be SAVED?

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

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

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

TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

MARCH 29-APRIL 2, 1992

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

4400 Knight Arnold Road • Memphis, Tennessee 38118

THEME: *“Jesus Christ, The Gift of God’s Grace and The Object of Man’s Faith”*

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 1992

9:30-10:20 AM	“The Power of the Cross, Versus Gimmickery, Entertainment, Philosophy, et al.”	Rex A. Turner, Sr.
10:30-11:30 AM	“The Unchanging Christ in a Changing World”	E. L. Whitaker
6:00- 7:00 PM	“Preaching Christ Equals Balanced Preaching”	Thomas B. Warren

MONDAY, MARCH 30, 1992

9:00- 9:50 AM	“The Church, Christ’s Beautiful Bride”	Buster Dobbs
10:00-10:50 AM	“The Faithful Christian Does Not Back Down”	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	“Lord, Help Me as a Daughter” (Women’s Class)	Brenda Rutherford
11:00-11:50 AM	“I Am Not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ”	Ruy McConnell
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1 - “The Last Will and Testament of Christ”	Eddie Witten
	Class 2- “The Pre-Existence of Christ”	Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
	Class 3 - “Christ, The Man of Sorrows”	J. A. McNutt
	Class 4- “Preaching the Parables of Jesus”	Louis Rushmore
11:50- 1:10 PM.	LUNCH	
1:10-2:00 PM	“The Lord’s Amazing Grace”	Winfred Clark
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1 - “Christ in Prophecy”	Curtis A. Cates
	Class 2- “Lord, Teach Us to Pray”	Wayne Cox
	Class 3 - “Christ and the Elevating of Women” (Women’s Class)	Dorothy Mosher
2:10- 3:00 PM	“The Body of Christ: Conditions of Entrance”	Gary Colley
3:10- 4:00 PM	“Open Forum”	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30-8:30 PM	“Apostasy-Modern Piercing of the Body of Christ”	Garland Elkins

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 1992

9:00- 9:50 AM	“The Church, Christ’s Militant Army”	David Brown
10:00-10:50 AM	The Faithful Christian Does Not Back Down	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	Lord, Help Me as a Wife”(Women’s Class)	Corinne Elkins
11:00-11:50 AM	“Christ, the Controversialist”	Harrell Davidson
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1-“The Man or the Plan the Pattern or the Person?”	Paul Sain
	Class 2- “The Virgin Born /Only Begotten] Son of God”	Michael Hughes
	Class 3-“The Follower of Christian Fasting”	Richard McWilliams
	Class 4-“Preaching the Miracles of Jesus”	Ronald Gilbert
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	“The Lord’s Perfect Example”	Joe Gilmore
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1 - “The Vicarious Suffering and Death of Christ”	Charles Box
	Class 2- “Lord, Teach Us to Sacrifice”	Tim Ayers
	Class 3 - “Christ and the Beauty of Holiness” (Women’s Class)	Annette Cages
2:10- 3:00 PM	“The Body of Christ: False Views of Fellowship”	Noel Merideth
3:10- 4:00 PM	Open Forum	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30- 8:30 PM	“Christ for the World We Sing”	Andrew M. Connally

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 1992

9:00- 9:50 AM	“The Church, Christ’s Exalted Kingdom”	Bill Lockwood
10:00-10:50 AM	“The Faithful Christian Does Not Back Down”	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	“Lord, Help Me as a Friend” (Women’s Class)	Janis Dearman
11:00-11:50 AM	“Creative Worship” (Choirs, Instrumental Music, Clapping, et. al.) versus ‘In Spirit and In Truth’”	Kenneth Gossett
11:00-11:50 AM	Class 1- “The Gospel of Christ versus the ‘New Hermeneutic’”	Tony Lawrence

	Class 2- "Nothing But the Blood of Jesus"	Bert Watkins
	Class 3- "Christ, the Friend of Youth"	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
	Class 4- "Commemorating the Death of Jesus"	Wayne Smith
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	"The Lord's Prayer for Unity"	Terry Hightower
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1- "Up from the Grave He Arose"	B. J. Clarke
	Class 2- "Lord, Teach Us to Have Compassion"	Jim Dearman
	Class 3 - "Christ and the Woman's Dress and Demeanor" (Women's Class)	Irene Taylor
2:10- 3:00 PM	"The Body of Christ: Not a 'Pilgrim Church'"	Dub McClish
3:10- 4:00 PM	"Open Forum"	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30- 8:30 PM	"Do All in the Name of the Lord"	Goebel Music
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 1992		
9:00- 9:50 AM	"The Church, Christ's Undenominational Body"	Wayne Coats
10:00-10:50 AM	"The Faithful Christian Does Not Back Down"	Thomas B. Warren
10:00-10:50 AM	"Lord, Help Me When I Grieve" (Women's Class)	Corinne Elkins
11:00-11:50 AM	"If a Man Abide Not in Christ"	Anthony Hixon
11:01-11:50 AM	Class 1 - "All Are Amenable to Christ's Law"	Richard Melson
	Class 2- "Christ, Now on David's Throne"	Richard Curry
	Class 3- "Christ, the Great High Priest"	W. Terry Varner
	Class 4- "Persecuted for Jesus and Righteousness"	Fred Davis
11:50- 1:10 PM	LUNCH	
1:10- 2:00 PM	"The Lord's Example of Proof-Text Preaching"	Jerry Moffitt
1:10- 2:00 PM	Class 1 - "Christ By Whom God Will Judge the World"	Bill Willard
	Class 2- "Lord, Teach Us to Lead"	Rod Rutherford
	Class 3- "Christ and the Work of Women in the Church" (Women's Class)	Irene Taylor
2:10- 3:00 PM	"The Body of Christ: Not an 'Irrelevance'"	Roy J. Hearn
3:10- 4:00 PM	"Open Forum"	Garland Elkins
4:00- 7:00 PM	INTERMISSION	
7:00- 7:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30- 8:30 PM	"Christ in You, the Hope of Glory"	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

DEFENDER

Volume XXI

April 1992

Number 4

Problems in the Pulpit (II)

B. C. Carr

This excellent manuscript from B. C. Carr, Director of the Florida School of Preaching, is from the 1992 Bellview Lectures book, "Current Crises Challenging The Church." The "Defender," March, 1992 featured Part 1. Editor.

Problems in the Pulpit (continued).

3. Hireling Preachers. *When men occupy our pulpits because they are hirelings, the church is in trouble.* There must be such. Jesus warned about this. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep" (John 10:11-12). When I see a preacher who regards himself as a professional I wonder. When a preacher gets the "Big Buck" syndrome and would quit preaching unless he can find a big church I question his convictions. When preachers tuck their tails and run when the wolf in sheep's clothing makes an appearance it is no wonder we are having problems in the church.

4. Bashing The Church of Christ. *There are preachers known for bashing "The church of Christ."* They speak of the church in denominational terms. They would blame it for things caused by a few false disciples. One well-known preacher says, "The church of Christ has made the doctrine of marriage-divorce and remarriage the unpardonable sin—one can commit murder and be forgiven, but if he marries again this is unpardonable."

Another has said, "The church of Christ has been guilty of teaching salvation by works. There is not one thing man can do to save himself." Still another preacher says "The church of Christ is guilty of thinking they are the only ones to be saved. They need to repent and confess this sin." A group of men, our brethren, have decided the church has been wrong in its interpretation and teaching **regarding** the role of men and women. We are told this needs to be re-evaluated. By such statements people, especially the young, are being taught to despise the church of our Lord. They are encouraged to seek to change the church. If such men are ashamed of Christ and His church they need to go out from us and quit trying to deceive us pretending to be of us.

5. Commending Denominationalism. *Other problems are coming from pulpits where it is being taught that the church is just another denomination.* Lynn Anderson taught this years ago. So teaches Leroy Garrett. Rubel Shelley has taught that there are sincere, devout, knowledgeable Christians in all denominations. He would even pervert the teaching of Mark 9:35-40 in an effort to support this view. The Bible still teaches there is but one body (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:20). All the saved are in that one body (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23; 1 Cor. 12:13). Such false teachers need to have their mouths stopped, yet they continue to be used and encouraged. Men who recognize their false teaching have their lips sealed. May God have mercy on them!

6. Deficiency in Distinctive Preaching. *Problems are caused by pulpits where the preaching is always in broad generalities and never in specifics.* Many of the sermons heard could be preached in any denominational pulpit without raising a feather of opposition. Sin is rarely ever described by name—no one feels guilty. Brother Jim Woodruff says we need to preach more from the gospels than from the epistles. He thinks we go to the epistles to deal with problems. Why not? Do we not have similar problems today? It is useless to think that sin will go away if we just ignore it. Some think that the epistles should be viewed as just love letters. They fail to accept anything by way of rebuke.

7. Deficiency in Doctrinal Preaching. *Many pulpits have ceased to preach the very fundamentals of the faith.*

Men have assumed the listeners already know these and have grown weary of such preaching. Sermons on the plan of salvation; faith, repentance and baptism still need to be preached. Lessons on the church and how to identify it are still needed. We need preaching on acceptable worship. Why is it when some of us who still preach these sermons hear the listeners say, "We haven't heard lessons like that in years"? Every generation must be taught. Christians need to be often reminded of these matters.

8. Dramatic Performers. There is an increasing effort being made to substitute dramatization for preaching. To create interest we are told men need to put on a dress, grow a beard and pretend they are Paul. Others need to pretend they are Timothy or Luke or some other character. These Bible men are not always quoted accurately. Words are put in their mouths. Wrong expressions are made. Why are we so ashamed of preaching that we have substituted the words sharing and witnessing and now to get attention some feel compelled to put on a play instead of teaching God's Word. Could it be we are so set on being entertained we have lost faith in the power of the gospel? (Rom. 1:16).

9. Improper Preparation. *Lack of proper preparation of the preacher presents another problem that hurts the church.* We have always had some who thought very little knowledge was necessary for one to preach. Recently I heard a man preaching on the radio. He was reading Acts 18:24. Noting that the passage said Apollos was an *eloquent* man, he commented that he had never known what the word meant, but he thought it had to do with pulpit manners. He further stated he knew one preacher who pulled at his nose while preaching. His conclusion was that this man lacked eloquence.

Men must prepare if they are to be effective in the pulpit. There is a mistaken notion that the most important task of a minister is to be a public relations man for the church. One group of elders told their preacher to spend his time visiting with the people. If he did not have his lesson prepared on Sunday, one of them would get up and say something. Paul told Timothy to study (2 Tim. 2:15) to give attendance to reading (1 Tim. 4:13). In so doing Paul expected the audience to benefit therefrom (1 Tim. 4:15). In order to prepare himself one should carefully select a school where the Bible is respected. He should have teachers who love the truth and who are able to motivate their students toward diligent study. I heard of one Bible teacher, in one of our schools who told the class that some New Testament writers grossly misunderstood what some Old Testament writers said. A case in point was that Matthew misunderstood Isaiah 7:14. With such teaching as this, how can men be properly trained to preach? Small wonder we have so many problems in the pulpit.

10. Immoral Messengers. *Finally we must admit that another great problem found in the pulpit is that there are men preaching who are guilty of great moral sins.* There are preachers who have had problems with women. I could list at least a dozen men who have been found out and embarrassed by such sins. Such men as Swaggart and Baker have drawn attention to this, causing preachers in general to be despised. Distrust has resulted. Preachers must not give room for people to suspect them of being immoral. The Chinese proverb, "When going through a melon patch, do not stoop to tie your shoe," could well apply here. Paul said, "Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Cor. 8:21).

Other preachers have sinned by the use of strong drink. At least two former college presidents lost their good influence through this means.

Some preachers have been exposed for practicing homosexuality. I know of one who closed a gospel meeting, but before daylight the next morning he was arrested and put in jail for making nude pictures with another man. Such things ought not to be.

Preachers must practice what they preach or they will cause people to blaspheme the truth (Rom. 2:21-24). As preachers we must be examples. We must keep ourselves pure: "be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12).

These are but a few of the problems being seen from our pulpits today. They are more than enough to cause concern from all who believe in holding the form or pattern of sound words (Tit. 2:1).

Good Preaching the Kind That Pleases God

I believe the Bible gives insight into the kind of preaching that pleases God. After all, it was God who authorized preaching that man might be saved.

1. Biblical Preaching. *There is a great need for scriptural or biblical preaching today.* Enough of what men

have said. Like Zedekiah of old, I want to know if there is any word from the Lord (Jer. 37:17). Jesus read from the book of Isaiah and gave the meaning thereof (Luke 4:17-18). Apollos used Scripture, "For he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the **scriptures** that Jesus was Christ" (Acts 18:28). Paul used the Scriptures when he preached "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the **scriptures** daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). One could search the Scriptures in vain today trying to find what some preachers are saying. Peter commanded, "If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). We need to get back to giving book, chapter and verse preaching. Let those who never do this be ashamed. Perhaps one reason some do not give scripture citation is they use so little of it.

2. Confident Preaching. *We need preaching from those with conviction.* John the Baptist preached with conviction. Listen to Jesus as He evaluates John, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" (Mat. 11:7). John was no shaking reed. He preached the truth which led to being beheaded (Mat. 14:10). We need men who will not be tossed to and fro by every new doctrine that comes along (Eph. 4:14). Like Paul we must preach the truth, even though all men might forsake us (2 Tim. 4:16). We need the conviction of Stephen who died preaching the truth before those who resisted it (Acts 7:)

Preachers with conviction will not be told what to preach by their wives nor from elders who want the truth compromised. If this means moving, then so be it. Let the truth be heard.

3. Bold Preaching. *We need bold preaching today.* Bold preaching leaves no doubt about where we stand. One is impressed when he reads through the book of Acts underscoring the word bold or boldness. The apostles were bold preachers. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Later they prayed that they might with all boldness preach the word (Acts 4:29). Later when they were filled with the Holy Ghost they spoke the Word of God with boldness (Acts 4:31). The apostle Paul preached boldly at Damascus (Acts 9:27). At Jerusalem he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians (Acts 9:29). When writing to the Ephesians he requested that prayer be made for him that he might speak boldly as he ought to speak (Eph. 6:19-20). This is no time for cowards. Dare we pray for boldness today for ourselves and for our preacher?

4. Rudimentary Preaching. *We need simple preaching today.* Paul used simple preaching. He did not try to impress his listeners with his learning. He wanted their faith to stand in the power of God, not personal admiration (1 Cor. 2:1-5). He feared that the Corinthians might be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ (2 Cor. 11:3). Marshall Keeble used to say, "We need to put the hay in the calves trough, then all can benefit." N. B. Hardeman used to warn the preachers against trying to impress the audience with their scholarly ability. He urged them to use simple language that people could understand. A display of big words usually shows stupidity not wisdom.

5. Balanced Preaching. *We need balance in our preaching.* This means men ought to avoid hobbyism. Avoid extreme positions. There needs to be a balance between meat and milk (Heb. 5:12-14). There must be balance between rebuke and encouragement. Some think they are unsound if they are not skinning the "sects" or the brethren. There is a place for rebuke but the church also needs encouragement. We need balance as to using different parts of the Bible. Some use the New Testament almost exclusively. It would help to use every book of the Bible for our lessons. By keeping a list of sermons preached for each year we may be able to see wherein we are weak as to balance.

6. Preventable Preaching. *We need preaching today that will warn, vaccinate and indoctrinate.* Some do not like to hear warnings against the errors prevalent in the church today. They would wait until an epidemic of sin is raging and then try to cure the evil. Paul believed in warning the brethren. To the elders in Ephesus he said, "grievous wolves [shall] enter in among you, not sparing the flock...Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:29-31). Paul wrote Timothy to warn that some would depart from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1-6). He identified some of their false teaching, refuting their error. He concluded by saying, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 4:6). See also 2 Tim. 3:1-5. A church properly vaccinated is in less danger of departing from the faith.

7. Compassionate Preaching. *We need compassionate preaching.* Our Lord was a preacher filled with compassion. He looked upon a sick multitude and His heart was moved. “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd” (Mat. 9:36). This caused Him to request that His disciples pray for the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest.

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus asking what to do that he might have eternal life, our Lord knew he was lost. He lacked one thing. Before he was told what to do the Scripture says, “Then Jesus beholding him loved him” (Mark 10:21).

Paul had such concern for his kinsmen according to the flesh that he could wish himself accursed from Christ if they could be saved (Rom. 9:1-5). When Paul was about to send Timothy to the Philippians he said, “For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s” (Phi. 2:20-21).

Unless one really loves the souls of men, he does not deserve to preach. Perhaps Jonah’s greatest weakness was this. God taught him a lesson by giving him a gourd vine, then sending a worm to cut it down (Jon. 4: 6-11).

8. Ardent Preaching. *We need preaching with a sense of urgency.* Too much preaching today lacks a sense of urgency. We do not preach with fervency. We must realize that whether men respond to the gospel is a heaven or hell proposition. Those who do not obey the gospel will be lost (2 The. 1:7-9). Do we really believe this? Does the church believe this? If so, why do we manifest so little zeal in preaching?

People dislike extended invitations to obey the gospel. Persuasion is frowned upon. This prolongs the service. Paul said, “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Cor. 5:11). “*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*” (Heb. 10:31). In New Testament times they baptized people the same hour of the night (Acts 16:33). Today is the day of salvation. Let us restore a sense of urgency in our preaching if we expect to baptize more people.

9. God Extolling. *All the preaching we do should be to the glory of God, not to glorify self,* “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col. 3:17). Paul speaks of some who would make a shew in the flesh but he concludes, “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal. 6:14). When the Galatians heard that Paul preached the faith he once destroyed they glorified God in him (Gal. 1:23-24). May it be so of all of us.

The Importance of a Strong Pulpit

It would likely be impossible to know all the benefits that can come from having a strong pulpit where the Word is faithfully proclaimed on a regular basis. I will list only three.

1. Steadfast Congregations. *Preaching as we have just described will help keep the church from going astray.* The church at Pergamos was able to hold fast the Lord’s name even where Satan’s seat was. They had not denied the faith. Antipas a faithful martyr had been slain there (Rev. 2:12-13). Because of the faithful leadership of Joshua Israel served the Lord. “And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel” (Jos. 24:31). Thus we see the results of faithful service to God. Those churches that remain strong and faithful today are not that way by accident. Someone has stood firmly proclaiming the truth in days past.

2. Lighten Elder’s Burdens. *Faithful, strong preaching will make the work of Godly elders much easier.* They will only need to stand by that truth publicly proclaimed. Those who would digress will be warned. They will know what to expect from the church. Many will be taught so they will never need the strong hand of discipline. It will be a joy for elders to give account of their stewardship when the flock has followed their leadership which has been supported from the pulpit (Heb. 13:17).

3. Soul Saving. *Last, but not least the preacher will be able to deliver his own soul by his faithful service.* When Paul was about to say farewell to the Ephesian elders he could say, “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that *I am* pure from the blood of all *men*. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:26-27). May all of us so preach and live that many will be able to enter heaven because of us. Let us pray that not one soul will be lost because of the way we have preached.

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Current Crises Challenging the Church

The church of our Lord stands at a crossroads. Many who once walked among the faithful have turned aside to follow the doctrines of men and their own stubborn will. In the forefront of this new digression are some who are well known and who have acquired a devoted following. In time past, many of these false teachers were proclaimers of the faith. In contrast to the great apostle Paul, who preached the faith he once destroyed, they now seek to destroy the faith they once preached (Gal. 1:23). Boldly, they proclaim “new” truths and “new” hermeneutics to support them.

They sneeringly disdain God’s approved pattern as outdated “traditionalism” and mask their old thread-bare denominational doctrines as “progress” and needed “change” in a “church in transition” in a changing world.

Have we so soon forgotten men of faith and courage, only a generation ago, routed the same errors which false brethren now embrace and advanced the cause of Christ in public debate with denominational opponents who were at least honest enough to identify themselves as different from and opposed to the church of Christ? “Oh, for an honest false teacher.”

Others, working quietly in leadership roles in local congregations have orchestrated subtle changes designed to gradually lead men away from the pure gospel of Christ. To compound the problem, a generation of spiritual illiterates has provided ready adherents who love to have it so. Do they not know they, in departing from the gospel are running headlong into the clutches of Satan and the accompanying miseries and eternal damnation? It seems they do not or they do not care and will not be warned.

What shall those who seek to faithfully follow God’s will do? Ignoring the fact of the departure of formerly faithful brethren will not solve the problem. Surely, we owe our brethren more than that (Gal. 6:1)!

First, we must be aware there is a real and present danger which threatens the eternal salvation of brethren and those whom they influence and which significantly hinders the work of the Lord’s people. Sadly, many would rather hide their heads in the sand and pretend there is no problem! They do not discern false doctrine when they hear it and will heed no warnings against it. Brethren, Satan is wreaking havoc among the churches! How can we say there is no problem?

Second, we must fortify ourselves to fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12), putting on the Christian’s armor (Eph. 6:10-18) and preparing ourselves to capably and courageously wield the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). Sitting back hoping error and its proponents will somehow self-destruct; thus, freeing us from having to face the issues or fight the battles is the coward’s way out. Let us be set for the defense of the gospel (Phi. 1:17) and ready to oppose error wherever it may be and whoever may uphold it (Eph. 5:11). Then, when problems arise and men oppose the truth, we shall be ready to recognize the threat and to deal with it appropriately.

Finally, we must stop attacking faithful brethren who would, out of genuine love for Christ and His church, sound the warning against uncertain sounds and deceitful workers. Instead, let us focus our energies on the real problems and the real troublemakers of Israel (1 Kin. 18:17-18). It has always amazed me how some who claim to be “balanced” will either uphold error and false teachers or will refuse to stand in opposition to it and them. Are they not guilty (2 John 9-11)? Yet, that same “balanced” brother will viciously and maliciously attack and publicly vilify one who has the intestinal fortitude to stand up and say: “This is wrong and those who teach it or practice it are wrong.”

God help us to have courage to face in faith the current crises!

“Thumbless”

Harold Blevins

Is it possible that our thumbs can place us in poverty, or plight, or a predicament with the Prince of Peace? Seemingly so, especially in the Old Testament times.

“Thumbless” Adoni-bezek

“But Adonibezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes” (Jud. 1:6), A man without his thumbs and toes is rendered practically useless. It was an agonizing travesty, a sullen

and slow death.

“Thumbless” Gloves

Today those of pugilistic persuasions recommend that there be “thumbless” gloves for prize fighters; therefore, eradicating the “thumb in the eye” which occurred oftentimes with the use of the older models.

Christ requires that we contend earnestly with Satan everyday. Figuratively, Paul did so. “But I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage” (1 Cor. 9:27—ASV, 1901). Thayer speaks of buffet as “to strike with the fist,” (p. 353). It is as though sterling characters such as Moses, Abimelech, David, or Paul rose early in the morning, and began each day by shadow boxing with the Devil (Exo. 9:13; Jud. 9:33; Psalms 5:3; 1 Cor. 9:16-27).

“Thumbless” Saints

How many fingers does a concert pianist have? The answer is, of course, they have ten (counting the thumbs as fingers). Is it a coincidence God gave ten commandments in His New Testament to “sing?” This excludes the mechanical instruments of music (Mat. 26:30; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; 13:15; Jam. 5:13).

Are there those today who claim to be saints, yet do not “thumb” through their Bibles daily? How the Holy One of Israel desires and deserves that we daily “take out the book and read” (Isa. 34:16; 1 Tim. 4:13); “search the scriptures” (John 5:39; Acts 17:11); inquiring “what saith the scriptures” (Rom. 4:3). As Christ would ask, “Have ye not read?” (Mat. 12:3).

Conclusion

How much more then would God want us to be taught the lessons of the thumbs lest we be without them and miserable as was “thumbless” Adoni-bezek!!!

God teaches us to study now, before it is too late (2 Tim. 2:15; John 8:21; Rev. 6:17).

Dear reader, are your thumbprints and those of this writer on the pages of our Bibles?

Route 2 Box 10A; Tiptonville, TN 38079

Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, “Behold The Pattern,” brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord’s body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God’s word why their argued positions are fraught with deadly error.

The book has been received with such great enthusiasm it is now in its third printing. Every brother should have a copy. A hardbound book of 660 pages (worth \$21.95), it is being distributed in a nonprofit effort for only \$5.00 (plus \$2.50 shipping). Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

What Must I Do To Be SAVED?

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

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

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

***Memphis School Of Preaching Lectures
March 29 April 2, 1992
“Jesus Christ, The Gift Of Gods Grace
And The Object Of Man’s Faith”***

Current Crises Challenging The Church

Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

SATURDAY, MAY 9

7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Must Christians Keep Themselves Pure?	Willie Bradshaw
8:00 PM	Is It Time To Update Our Worship?	Ronnie Hayes

SUNDAY, MAY 10

9:00 AM	The Eldership: Critical Problem In The Church Today	Bobby Liddell
10:00 AM	Is Abortion Murder?	Terry Claunch
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Do We Need A New Hermeneutics?	Eddie Whitten
8:00 PM	Is There A Pattern?	Andrew Connally

MONDAY, MAY 11

9:00 AM	The Threat Of Influential False Teachers And Unfaithful Schools	Noah Hackworth
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both In And Out Of The Church?	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Is The Faithfulness Of Today The Anti-ism Of Tomorrow?	Daniel Denham
11:15 AM	What Is Included In The Command To Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Are We Still People Who Know The Bible?	Garry Barnes
2:15 PM	Is The Church Of Christ A Cult?	Steve Waller
7:00 P	Singing	
7:15 PM	How Does The Holy Spirit Guide Men?	Jerry Martin
8:00 PM	What Is The Role Of Women In The Church?	Bob Duncan

TUESDAY, MAY 12

9:00 AM	Is The Church Lacking In Spirituality?	Guss Eoff
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both In And Out Of The Church?	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Modern Versions—Translations Or Perversions?	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
11:15 AM	What Is Excluded By The Command To Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Is It Wrong To Judge?	Larry Middlebrooks
2:15 PM	Problems In The Pulpit	B. C. Carr
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Is The Church Of Christ The True Restored Church Or Just One Part Of The Restoration Fellowship?	Harrell Davidson
8:00 PM	Is Salvation By Grace Alone?	Garland Elkins

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

9:00 AM	Is The Bible The Inspired Word Of God?	Jerri Manasco
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both In And Out Of The Church?	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Have We Lost The Desire To Be Servants?	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
11:15 AM	Strange And Uncertain Sounds From Brethren	Allen Webster
1:30 PM	Creation Or Evolution?	Garry Brantley
2:15 PM	Do We Care That Millions Have Not Heard Of Christ?	Ronnie Hayes
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Have We Sold Our House To Satan?	Buster Dobbs
8:00 PM	Does God's Love Prohibit Punishment?	Joe Gilmore

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DEFENDER

Volume XXI

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Number 5

Troubling the Church

Jerri Manasco

Quite often many people entertain strange ideas of right and wrong. If we begin with the wrong set of assumptions, we shall assuredly follow the winding path to the wrong conclusions. This has been true from the very beginning. It has been true throughout Bible history. It is true today in the church of our Lord.

A confrontation between Ahab and Elijah is a prime example of the fallacies of men who simply refuse to see the real source of spiritual problems. Ahab was that wicked king of Israel, influenced by his wife Jezebel, to provoke God to anger. Elijah was that great prophet of God who sought to turn Israel back to the God who had long since been forsaken by them. Upon meeting Elijah one day Ahab said, “*Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*” (1 Kin. 18:17). In the next verse Elijah offers a true and biting reply: “I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.”

Israel had endured a drought for a three-year period. No doubt disturbed by the political and economic uneasiness in his kingdom as a result of this, Ahab had to find a target toward which to aim the anger of the nation. The best victim he could find was Elijah! The reader will notice, of course, that Elijah did not greet Ahab’s accusation with a “conciliatory” tone! Instead he placed the blame for the problem just where it lay, in Ahab’s lap!

Elijah’s answer to Ahab is most instructive. First of all, he acknowledged that there was trouble in Israel! Second, he acknowledged that the trouble would not vanish just because Ahab was bold enough to select a scapegoat. Elijah pointed out plainly where the trouble was. Ahab’s house had turned aside from God’s commandments and had turned to a false religion. This is similar to what Paul warned about in his writings. He warned that many would turn from the truth and turn to fables (2 Tim. 4:24). He warned that there would arise men who would turn away disciples from the truth (Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 4:1-6; etc.).

Oddly enough it was Paul and others like him who were accused of creating problems! Jesus also was accused of being something of a problem causer! Concerning Paul some men in Philippi said, “These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city” (Acts 16:20). He and his brethren were accused in Thessalonica of turning the world upside down (Acts 17:67). What sort of trouble was Paul causing? None whatsoever! He was simply preaching the gospel of Christ! He was not threatening the authorities. He was not threatening the peaceful order of society. He was simply teaching people the way to salvation.

Apparently some in the church had the notion that Paul was a trouble maker. In the Galatian churches were elements that were adamantly opposed to Paul and who were trying to overthrow his work and influence, as they were doing in Corinth. Hearing of this false working among the Galatians, Paul asked, “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (Gal. 4:16). Jesus was met with disapproval (!) by His disciples because they perceived that His message offended the Pharisees and scribes (Mat. 15:12)!

Was Paul a troubler of the church? Only if preaching the truth is what causes trouble! In fact, it is never the truth that creates problems. It is rejection of the truth and open antagonism to those who preach the truth that cause the problem. Paul was never one to compromise some truth because influential preachers opposed him. He was not a preacher’s pawn but a servant of the Lord. Paul did not hesitate to tell in plain words that it was those who brought contrary doctrines to what he was preaching that created the divisions (Rom. 16:17-18). It was men like Alexander, Hymaeneus, and Philetus who were disturbing the brotherhood (1 Tim. 1:19-20; 2 Tim. 2:17-18). When will this generation of the church realize that fact?

Now who is it that troubles the church? The Bible points the way to the answer:

1. The contentious trouble the church! A preacher or teacher who presses his error on others and who will refuse to be reprimanded in love is the trouble maker. There were such men rising in the early church (Tit. 1:10-13). One who is a heretic and who will simply not listen to reason is to be rejected (Tit. 3:10-11). Clearly, Paul means here that those who adhere to the truth will resist anything else.

2. Disturbance causers trouble the church! The Judaizing preachers in Antioch (and other places) are prime examples of this (Acts 15; Gal. 2:1ff.). These men created dissension. Apparently they even falsely claimed apostolic endorsement. The result of their incursion into the hearts of the brethren was almost devastation of the brotherhood! Paul could not and would not sit idly by. Incidentally Paul said that it was by “revelation” (Gal. 2:2) that he knew to put an end to this problem.

Hence, it was not merely some fascination with “church of Christ traditionalism” that truth-teachers are so often accused of today! Furthermore, it was not some unity meeting or conciliatory convention that Paul was part of on this occasion. TRUTH WAS AT STAKE. The Judaizers and not Paul were the trouble makers!

3. Gospel perverters trouble the church. This was the essence of Paul’s argument in the letter to the Galatians. Problems are caused by those who preach just enough of a love message to convince you of their soundness, but the remainder of their message is far removed from the truth as God has given it. Galatians 1:6-9 settles the question. Preach the gospel, for eternity hangs on it.

4. The immoral trouble the church. Many preachers would not dare preach on adultery, fornication, homosexuality, divorce and remarriage, or dozens of other topics for the simple reason that such preaching is not in tune with the times! The church where that preacher works is full of these sins or at least in sympathy with them. It matters not that God condemns immorality (1 Cor. 5; 1 The. 4:18; etc.). If a preacher preaches on these sins he will be promptly accused of causing a problem in the congregation! Tragic, isn’t it?

5. The busybody troubles the church. Thessalonian brethren had this problem among them. Someone in the church was out busyboding and creating whatever problems such behavior causes (2 The. 3:11). Gossip is the fuel for trouble!

6. The arrogant are trouble makers! I am always amazed at how the Bible touches upon every facet of life that we need to know something about! John speaks of a man named Diotrophes who had assumed the lead in the church. This man “loveth to have the preeminence” (3 John 9-10).

Instead of catering to this man’s folly and humoring him, John was ready to properly deal with his presumption! Today there are those in many congregations who have such influence that when they label a preacher or other member as unfit for the church, then the whole church will follow suit and not even speak the name of the rejected one! Sound preachers are far too often uninvited to preach because some man of influence in the congregation has issued a congregational order against him! Preachers are fired because of the Diotrophes folks! Spineless brethren must face a God who will remember such folly!

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Editorial by Bobby Liddell

Isaiah 53

Isaiah, by inspiration, wrote what we know as Isaiah 53, prophetically picturing the suffering servant who would come some seven hundred fifty years later. Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ the Son of God, came in fulfillment of that prophecy. In so doing, he gave proof of the inspiration of Isaiah 53; thus of the book of Isaiah; and, of the Bible.

WRONG CONCEPTIONS OF THE SAVIOR. The Jews, who should have known better, were wrong in their view of the coming Messiah (Christ). They expected Him to be of **proper parents**; born into wealth, splendor and nobility. When Christ asked: “What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?” They replied: “*The son of David*” (Mat. 22:42), indicating their looking for the son of an earthly king who would inherit the kingly trappings. In Nazareth, the Jews rejected Jesus as “the carpenter’s son” unable to imagine how such a simple man with nowhere to lay his head could be the Messiah (Mat. 13:55; 8:20)!

The Jews expected the Messiah to be **physically pleasing** in His appearance. They remembered Moses as “ex-

ceeding fair” and a “proper” child (Acts 7; 20; Heb. 11:23). They rejoiced that David was “ruddy” and of a “beautiful countenance” (1 Sam. 16:12). The Messiah was supposed to be even more beautiful, so they thought.

Notice what Isaiah says: “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him” (53:2).

According to the thinking of men such an one could not amount to much, nor would that one find favor. Jesus came not to appeal to men through physical beauty but through a beautiful message of salvation offered by a loving Father and made possible through an obedient and suffering servant, Christ. Modern preachers would do well to learn that lesson.

Power and pomp would accompany their Savior, according to their misconception, for they looked for an earthly king to rid them of their hated Roman rulers, restore the glory of the throne in Jerusalem, return the scattered Jews to the “Promised Land,” and rule, with them, over the world. (Sounds much like the false theory of premillennialism, doesn’t it?)

They would have taken Him by force and made Him a king (John 6:15), but Christ’s kingdom was “not of this world” (John 18:36). Jesus failed to meet their expectations, but they should have known. Isaiah had prophesied: “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not” (53:3).

Their misconception **wrought condemnation of the sinless one**. They **rejected His message** for it was not what they expected. Jesus came unto His own and they received Him not for He condemned their sin (Mat. 15). He told them their standard of judgment would be His words (John 12:48), and so it shall be. Whether men like it or not, the Word of Christ shall judge us all.

They **reviled His manhood**, sneering at His humble associates, thinking of Him as weak and associated with sinners. That Jesus was both man and God was inconceivable to them (Phi. 2:5-9; Mat. 22:24-26; Col. 2:9). Thus, His claim of equality with God was rejected as blasphemy (Mark 14:61-65).

They **refused His majesty**, denying His deity. Before Pilate they affirmed they had no king but Caesar (John 19:15). Really, they would have any as king but Jesus. When Pilate wrote over Christ’s head: “JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS,” they said, “Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews” (John 19:19-22).

The Wonderful Consequences of the Suffering of the Servant. Man did not plan it this way, but God did. Jesus was burdened with our sufferings, bore our sins and brought our salvation. He who knew no sin was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21).

Read Isaiah 53. You may weep and well we all should, but we may also rejoice in that with His stripes we are healed. As then, a wrong conception of Christ will work condemnation of ourselves and wrong consequences for our souls.

Worship and the Acappella Vocal Band

Lester Kamp

Are you familiar with the Acappella Vocal Band? The A.V.B. is an outgrowth of the group Acappella which began around 1979 and has been widely used in connection with youth rallies and other youth activities for the last several years. These groups have specialized in singing with the accompaniment of sounds of mechanical instruments of music vocally produced. One member of the “band” supplies the “rhythm and percussion” for the songs. Sometimes while listening, for example, you might think that they are using a guitar or drum, but all of the sounds are vocally produced. They advertise themselves as “full time ministers of music” and “Pure Voices, Pure Gospel” and as “a full time singing group committed to taking the message of Christ to the world.” The truth is that they are carrying a message, but it is not the message of Christ.

Their songs contain words about Christ and spiritual matters, but there is no authority for the nonverbal sounds mimicking the sounds of mechanical instruments. We are authorized in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 to teach and admonish one another by singing. These verses authorize singing, but they do not authorize making sounds of instruments with the voice no more so than they authorize the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship.

It seems that these are trying to side step the teaching of Scripture by introducing such vocal noises into the singing. They have reasoned that even though the instruments themselves are not allowed by God the sounds these instruments make if produced vocally should have God's approval. They looked until they found what they think is a loophole of God's law. Trying to "get around" what God has commanded reflects a sinful attitude on our part in the first place. Secondly, what makes some think that it is only the actual instruments which are condemned by God? Note the emphasis in the texts on "teaching and admonishing" and "speaking to yourselves." Can these be accomplished with the instruments? NO! Can these things be accomplished with the sounds of the instruments? NO! This cannot be done with the "barum, bar-um, boom, boom, bar-um, bar-um" sounds made during the singing of songs.

Justification on the one hand for this practice is made on the basis that their performances are "entertainment." Certainly if it were strictly entertainment using secular songs with these sounds there would be no objection to it. However, this is not the case. The songs have to do with Jesus and spiritual matters. Though justified on the basis of entertainment, I have wondered how long it would be before such "instrumental sounds produced by the voice" would be introduced into the worship of the church. After all many of their concerts are performed in our church buildings after our regular services.

Recently (October 27, 1991) the headlines inside the Broadway church of Christ bulletin (Lubbock, TX) read: "A SIGN OF THE FUTURE—ACAPPELLA VOCAL BAND PERFORMS AT BROADWAY." The caption under a picture of "the Band" was: "Members of the Acappella Vocal Band led the audience in a time of worship." "A TIME OF WORSHIP!" One of the paragraphs from the accompanying story read: "For the next two hours the Lord was lifted up, praised, and glorified in song and prayer. The audience sat, stood, clapped, cheered, smiled, and shed tears in a wonderful celebration of true worship. They worshipped in a way that made sense to children of the sixties and to their children." What took place that night may have made sense to some of the children of the sixties and their children but it was not acceptable to God. It was certainly not acceptable worship! It was without the authority of God. There is no authority for the instrumental sounds nor for the clapping and cheering that went on. It was a "sign of the future" all right but not a good sign.

The Broadway church was celebrating its centennial that night. The closing paragraph on the page contained: "If we are to reach this group of people who were raised in the time of walkmans, TV, and an ever-expanding world, we should desire to know how they think and how God pushes their buttons." Another attempt to make the church be a reflection of man's thoughts and desires! It cannot be. We must wake up! What these people need is the Truth!

Via "In Word And Doctrine"; Madisonville, KY 42431

Update: Breathitt County, Kentucky Mission

Paul Vaughn

In the August 1991, issue of the *Defender*, I announced that my wife, Ricki, and I were going to move to the Appalachian Mountains of Eastern Kentucky to help in establishing a new mission work. We are now working with the Jackson Church of Christ and have been since the last Sunday in 1991. There are seven members in the congregation.

In the short two and a half months we have been here we have setup five in-home Bible studies and have ten active Bible correspondence courses. We also have a weekly radio program and a weekly newspaper article. The community has accepted us and everything looks good for this new mission work. Plans have been made for a lectureship in 1993 to start the work on a firm foundation. The subject for the first lectureship will be "**There Is a Pattern.**"

Everyone is working hard but we look to God to give the increase.

At this time we still need \$700.00 a month personal support and \$300.00 a month work fund. The work is overseen by the Lothair Church of Christ, Hazard, Kentucky. The Lothair church has elders. If you are willing to support us in this work please contact HalliBurton Greer, an elder at Lothair, at 342 Lyttle Blvd., Hazard, Kentucky 41701, phone 606-439-1791; or I can be reached at 70 Turner Drive, Jackson, Kentucky 41339, phone 606-666-5628.

I Would Do it for My Kids

Bill Brandstatter

There are parents today that would do anything for their children. Thank God for these parents! They are willing to sacrifice, scrape, and stretch themselves to make sure their children have what is needed. These parents will be seen at any of their children's functions. If the son or daughter is in basketball, a play, or any number of activities, Mom and Dad are there. This gives the child the confidence and support of the parents. This is so desperately needed today! The question addressed in this article is, if you can do it for your kids, would you do it for the Lord?

If the decision to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Mat. 6:33) would involve doing something for your children, would you do it? It does involve the children. Throughout history, as the parents went, so went the children. If you are willing to do anything for the kids, what about putting God FIRST? The passage in Ephesians 6:4, "fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is not a suggestion, but a command. Paul knew of Uzziah, whose mother and father only served God halfheartedly. Paul knew of Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel who adversely influenced their son. What about Lot and the result in his children's lives of pitching his tent toward wicked Sodom?

Doing for our kids is fine. It is even a biblical principle. If however we love our kids to the extent God is forsaken, services missed and the kids, not God, take first place, then priorities are mixed up. Jesus stated "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Mat. 10:37-38). Jesus was not saying one should not love Mom and Dad, nor is He saying one shouldn't love son and daughter. It is just a matter of priorities.

To put the Lord first is what matters to Jesus. When services are forsaken for a son or daughter's sports event, Jesus is not being put first. When you put Jesus first, however, you are putting your kids first. By showing them Jesus, you are giving them guidance and an example that can be found nowhere else. So do it for your kids! Put Jesus first in everything you do.

206 N. Hancock; Ironton, MO

Favour

Harold Blevins

The record reads, "Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain" (Pro. 31:30).

"Favour" in this verse probably means "popularity" and that is the sense in which this scribe wishes to use the word. Are there those today who use beauty as a weapon to find favour in the sight of men? Are there those today that wish to gain prominence and acceptance by preaching only what people want to hear? Are there those today who wish to seek to please men rather than God (Acts 5:29; 6:2).

Notice that the wise sage King Solomon is teaching that such like are faithless. Fraudulent and dishonest Christians are to be judged by a "righteous judge" (2 Tim. 4:8). Such like have reason to repent. Isaiah agrees, "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:10).

Christians desire to imitate Daniel and find favour with God in times of adversity (Dan. 1:9); and find a good name which is above riches (Pro. 22:1). Let us be as Christ: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). Therefore we will be found: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people" (Acts 2:47).

Route 2 Box 10A; Tiptonville, TN 38079

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ARK-LA-MISS BIBLE LECTURESHIP

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“YE ARE JEHOVAH’S REMEMBRANCERS”

Thursday, July 23

- 1:00 P.M. WHAT IS THE ONE TRUE CHURCH?
Buster Dobbs
- 2:00 P.M. THE PROBLEM OF SIN, EVIL AND
SUFFERING Edward Lee Davis
- 3:00 P.M. WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH?
John Bowles
- 3:45 P.M. FORUM Dobbs, Cates, Swain
- 7:30 P.M. THE CREDIBILITY OF THE SCRIPTURES
Curtis Cates

Friday, July 24

- 9:30 A.M. HOW CALVINISM IS HURTING
THE CHURCH Tim Ayers
- 10:30 A.M. SOME PROBLEMS FACING THE CHURCH
Curtis Cates
- 1:00 P.M. THE SCRIPTURES--OUR PATTERN
Joe Nichols
- 2:00 P.M. CHRIST-CENTERED LIVING
Joe Sponagle
- 3:00 P.M. ARE CHRISTIANS IN DENOMINATIONS?
Tommy Doran
- 3:45 P.M. FORUM Dobbs, Nichols, Swain
- 7:30 P.M. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED
BY GRACE? Buster Dobbs

Saturday, July 25

- 9:30 A. M. LESSONS FROM THE PAST
Don Smith
- 10:30 A.M. IS THE CHURCH TO BE MILITANT?
Darwin Hunter

(318) 281-4959

Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, “Behold The Pattern,” brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord’s body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God’s word why their argued positions are fraught with deadly error.

The book has been received with such great enthusiasm it is now in its third printing. Every brother should have a copy. A hardbound book of 660 pages (worth \$21.95), it is being distributed in a nonprofit effort for only \$5.00 (plus \$2.50 shipping). Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

What Must I Do To Be SAVED?

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

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

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

Current Crises Challenging The Church

Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

SATURDAY, MAY 9

7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Must Christians Keep Themselves Pure?	Willie Bradshaw
8:00 PM	Is It Time To Update Our Worship?	Ronnie Hayes

SUNDAY, MAY 10

9:00 AM	The Eldership: Critical Problem In The Church Today	Bobby Liddell
10:00 AM	Is Abortion Murder?	Terry Claunch
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Do We Need A New Hermeneutics?	Eddie Whitten
8:00 PM	Is There A Pattern?	Andrew Connally

MONDAY, MAY 11

9:00 AM	The Threat Of Influential False Teachers And Unfaithful Schools	Noah Hackworth
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both And Out Of The Church?	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Is The Faithfulness Of Today The Anti-ism Of Tomorrow?	Daniel Denham
11:15 AM	What Is Included In The Command To Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Are. We Still People Who Know The Bible?	Garry Barnes
2:15 PM	Is The Church Of Christ A Cult?	Steve Waller
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	How Does The Holy Spirit Guide Men?	Jerry Martin
8:00 PM	What Is The Role Of Women In The Church?	Bob Duncan

TUESDAY, MAY 12

9:00 AM	Is The Church Lacking In Spirituality?	Guss Eoff
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both In And Out Of The Church?	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Modern Versions—Translations Or Perversions?	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
11:15 AM	What Is Excluded By The Command To Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Is It Wrong To Judge?	Larry Middlebrooks
2:15 PM	Problems In The Pulpit	B. C. Carr
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Is The Church Of Christ The True Restored Church Or Just One Part Of The Restoration Fellowship?	Harrell Davidson
8:00 PM	Is Salvation By Grace Alone?	Garland Elkins

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

9:00 AM	Is The Bible The Inspired Word Of God?	Jerri Manasco
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both In And Out Of The Church?	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Have We Lost The Desire To Be Servants?	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
11:15 AM	Strange And Uncertain Sounds From Brethren	Allen Webster
1:30 PM	Creation Or Evolution?	Garry Brantley
2:15 PM	Do We Care That Millions Have Not Heard Of Christ?	Ronnie Hayes
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Have We Sold Our House To Satan?	Buster Dobbs
8:00 PM	Does God's Love Prohibit Punishment?	Joe Gilmore

Bellview Church Of Christ
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Pensacola, FL 32526
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DEFENDER

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Training Men to Preach Is One of the Great Tasks of the Church

Joseph Meador

In view of eternity, and the power of the Gospel to save, it is not at all unreasonable to affirm that the doctrine of preaching is one of the great teachings of the New Testament (1 Cor. 1:18). Preaching in fact is a remarkable doctrine which is intimately allied with the Word, with spiritual courage, and with holy ethics. Its redemptive intent predates man's existence as it was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, and its power does not diminish with the passing of time though generations may themselves pass into eternity. Preaching lives! It exists today as a potent force of the ancient apostolic church to enlarge the Kingdom as well as to defend the faith. Training men to preach is one of the great tasks of the church!

Sadly, however, it is a task which seems unimportant to many. In fact in some churches, preaching, as God would have it, has become trivial or obsolete. Yet, in the mind of the apostle Paul such an attitude is at variance with God's intention (Rom. 1:15-16). As our generation becomes more and more self-centered, and therefore less spiritual, the words of one modern preacher become very prophetic regarding this situation:

Scrambling for acceptability in the world, the church is embellishing the gospel with anything and everything but the truth. Instead of preaching the Word, the church is foundering in a swamp of worldliness and self-indulgence. With its growing infatuation with psychology, show business techniques, and extreme mysticism, the church is giving in to the notion that Christ alone simply is not sufficient to meet people's real needs.

Preaching Jesus Christ. With the dawning of Christianity in the middle period of the Roman Empire, the world witnessed one of the greatest spiritual upheavals in the history of mankind. During this period, every aspect of life and thought would be forever altered by the life of one man: Jesus of Nazareth.

This era of religious and social change which He instituted was not brought about by the rhetoric of violent civil disobedience, nor was it induced by political rebellion. Rather, this godly reform was inspired by the act of preaching. The message of the Gospel was the animating force of the primitive Christian community and was characterized by its teaching on love, spiritual peace, and fidelity to God by repentance and obedience to the Gospel through the blood and grace of Christ Jesus.

The dominant themes of the Gospel message, such as the Messiahship of Jesus and His literal bodily resurrection from the dead, propelled the church into open and often hostile conflict with the traditional Jewish community and with the pagan world. Indeed, with the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, this most unique and controversial message, an epoch in history was begun which, in the mind of the Roman government, was everywhere "turning the world upside down."

Preaching the Gospel. The proclamation of the Gospel, as commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ, has played an integral part in the system of genuine Christianity since its beginning some two-thousand years ago (Mat. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). In fact, preaching, along with the edification of the members and practiced benevolence toward the deserving body, have been characteristics of faithful and working congregations since Pentecost (Acts 2). These three great tasks, by example, form the purpose and mission of the church in every age. Yet, it is the preaching of the Gospel that must be at the heart of the church's responsibility. Indeed, to evangelize the world and strengthen the saved is her purpose. This remains so despite the fact that in recent centuries such has not always been fully

appreciated. As the pioneer preacher and scholar Robert Milligan stated in his text entitled *The Great Commission*:
The last Commission of Jesus Christ to His twelve Apostles is the fundamental law of the kingdom of Heaven on Earth. In harmony with its principles and sublime enunciations, the Apostles went everywhere preaching the Word. It seems strange, therefore, that more has not been written on this organic law of the Kingdom; and that greater efforts have not been made to make the people understand its bearings, not only on the ministry of the Apostles, but also on that of the church through all coming time.

Certainly, we need to be aware of the great prominence which Jesus himself assigned to the work of preaching: “And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth” (Mark 1:38).

4000 West Oakey Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89102

Editorial by Bobby Liddell

“Tongues” Today?

Over the last several years, some in the religious world have claimed the miraculous ability to speak in a “tongue” different from their native tongue (language) and which they have never studied. Many define this as an “ecstatic utterance.” Some in the church claim to have and to have demonstrated that ability. Others are confused not knowing what to believe.

As in all other matters, we must go to the authoritative book, the Word of God, the truth (John 17:17) for the answer. If we will but open our Bibles and seek, we can find the truth about speaking in “tongues.” What does the Bible say?

On Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2, the apostles were, “all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (v. 4). What the apostles spoke, the inspired penman Luke records (as translated in the KJV) as “other tongues.” In verse 6, the same Luke, by inspiration, records the multitude of Jews from around the world, “were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.” What the multitude heard was speech in their; that is, every man’s, own language.

“And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man **in our own tongue, wherein we were born?**” (vv. 7-8). The apostles were from Galilee; thus, they spoke with the dialect peculiar to inhabitants of Galilee. That made the occasion more remarkable to the hearers because they heard in their “own tongue, wherein [they] were born.” After listing the many different places from whence the hearers came, verse 11 says: “we do hear them speak **in our tongues** the wonderful works of God.”

In another pertinent passage, Paul, by inspiration said regarding the miraculous gifts limited to the first century church: “If any man speak [make a public speech—BL] in an *unknown* [this word is not in the original—BL] tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; 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” (1 Cor. 14:27-28). It is interesting to note women were not to make a speech in the public assembly (vv. 34-35).

Again, Paul wrote, “Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* [this word is not in the original—BL] tongue” (1 Cor. 14:19). Finally, the Spirit, through whom miraculous gifts came (including the gift of “tongues”) gave these words through Paul: “Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away” (1 Cor. 13:8).

Note: 1. The apostles spake with “other tongues” as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance; thus, their ability to speak with other tongues was not learned but was a miraculous gift (v. 4).

2. The hearers heard in their “own language” (v. 6); thus, the tongues of verse 4 were the languages of verse 6. A tongue is a language known to man. In this case the languages were known by the hearers but were not known (in that they had not been learned) by the speakers.

3. This point is further advanced by the fact the speakers were known to be Galileans (v. 7) yet the hearers heard in their “own tongue”; that is, the language of their birth (native home) (v. 8).

4. Verse 11 shows the tongues were used to convey the “wonderful works of God”; thus, they were under-

standable by common men who heard with no special; i.e., miraculous ability.

5. All who heard were able to understand what was said. This proves the apostles did not speak in some garbled, broken, partial or “ecstatic” way. The hearers inquired as to why this miracle took place by asking, “What meaneth this?” (v. 12). Peter’s reply pointed them back to the prophecy given through Joel of the miraculous outpouring of the Spirit (Joel 2).

6. Miraculous “tongues” ceased (1 Cor. 13:8). No one today has a miraculous “tongue.”

F.A.M.I.L.Y.

Shan Jackson

One of the most obvious statements that a writer could make is the statement that I want to use to introduce this article. Jesus loved the church! In fact, Jesus loved the church so much that He willingly left His spiritual home in heaven to come and suffer as a man and die in our stead. That’s how much He loved the church. However, it almost seems that we have heard those words so often that they almost seem meaningless to us today. My brethren, Jesus loved the church with all His very being. (Wouldn’t it be something if we all loved the church as He did)? But not only did Jesus love the church enough to die for it He also showed His desire for the church to grow and prosper. Certainly He wants us to grow spiritually but He also wants us to grow numerically and both types of growth require a great deal of work on our part.

You see, it was never Christ’s desire to see 300 or more religious organizations claiming to be His church. He intended to build and He built one church. It was also not His desire to see different congregations within His body to constantly assume a fighting posture at the drop of every opinionated hat. (Some even go so far as to fight over who gets to drop the hat). His desire is for the church to be a family, a loving family, a family who seeks the good of all the members of that family and this will require a great deal of work on our part.

To assist in our understanding of the church Jesus used the illustration of a family to show the functioning of the body. Like a family we might disagree but we should never become disagreeable. This is not to say that we should not “earnestly contend for the faith”—Jude 3) but we should do it in a patient and longsuffering manner.

The first word I want to call your attention to in this discussion is the word **fellowship**. “And they [the church] continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). It appears most obvious that fellowship was an important factor in the functioning of the early church—just as important as the Apostles’ doctrine, just as important as breaking of bread and just as important as prayers. In all of these things they continued steadfastly. This fellowship meant that the members had a part in each other’s life. This is proven to be essential to a physical family as well as the spiritual family we call the church. The church is the body of Christ and as Christians we are a part of that body. Therefore, we want to hear words like “we” instead of “they” and “us” instead of “them.” We are the church. When the church has a victory “we” have a victory and when the church has a problem “we” have a problem. Why, because we are a family, we are the church.

The next word I want to use in this discussion is the word **attitude**. Attitude, we know, is essential to happiness and love. Any feelings we have for others completely depend on our attitude. From the depths of failure to the heights of success, attitude is more essential than altitude. We, as a family, cannot achieve more than we believe.

Our position tomorrow depends on our disposition today. It all depends on attitude. Just as some people brighten a room when they walk in, others brighten it when they walk out. Paul referred to attitude when he said, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phi. 2:5).

Our next word is **message**. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” (Rom. 1:16). This is our message, our only message. The gospel of Christ is the message we preach. There is no church without the correct message. That is why the gospel is referred to as the “good news” because it does convey the good news of salvation.

However, with the fellowship, attitude, and message must also come the inspiration we need to see things through. Hebrews 10:24 begins, “Let us consider one another.” Just as a family will inspire each other in their personal goals, our spiritual family should inspire and encourage each other in our spiritual goals. Paul says, “Wherefore comfort yourselves together” (1 The. 5:11). The more we inspire each other the more we will involve the membership in the functioning of the church.

The last two words I want to center our discussion around are **love** and **yearning**. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). He also said that this love will set us apart from the rest of the world. "By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). But the key to understanding the love Jesus is referring to is found in 1 John 3:18. "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." To love each other as Jesus would have us to we must yearn for the good of others. Just as we have a desire to be a part of His family we also should desire others to come in as well. As Paul said, "My heart's desire," this is also the desire we must show to the world.

And that is what makes a family a family, F.A.M.I.L.Y. Fellowship, attitude, message, inspiration, love, and yearning for the souls of the lost.

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Power in the Word

Steve Miller

Man has always been impressed with power. Power is "the ability to control others; to have authority; and to have influence" (*Webster's New World Dictionary*, p. 1145). Some men have spent a lifetime trying to obtain power only to abuse it. Others have been successful in using it. There is a power that can divide asunder the soul and spirit (Heb. 4:12). It is simply the Word of God.

The Psalmist said, "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). The word reveals the way to heaven. It is the guide for our lives. We can not go wrong in following God's inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

A study of the Word of God shows its effect upon the disciples in the early church. When Paul and Silas came to Berea on the second missionary journey, they found some studious Christians. "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). The Bereans did not go home and take the preacher's word for what they heard; they studied the word of God to see if the message was correct. How many people in the pews do this today? How many return home from worship to discuss, much less to study the passages they heard in the sermon or Bible class? Hopefully, more than we can tell. People who take the message as "gospel" without checking the Word of God are living dangerously in their attempt to be pleasing to God. An open mind and heart in our study of the Scriptures is essential in having the attitude of changing our lifestyle or religious beliefs to fit God's standard. There is power in the Word, if we will study it!

The powerful Word of God brings results. When Peter preached the first gospel sermon on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, the Word he preached brought results. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). The apostle Paul stated "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). The power is in the gospel, the Word, the message, the good news of Jesus Christ. God's Word convicted the people on Pentecost of the sin in their lives and it will do the same today when it is preached simply, forcefully, boldly, uncompromisingly and in love. The Word of God will bring results if we will just preach it, teach it and most of all, live it.

Not only is the Word powerful enough to bring results, but it can also be a comfort to those who are in Christ. Paul comforted the Thessalonian brethren by revealing truths concerning the dead in Christ. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him...For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 The. 4:14-18). There is comfort in the thought that we will someday abide in the home Jesus has prepared for the faithful. As Christians, we should look forward to the second coming of Christ in that we will be taken up with Him in the clouds to stay for ever and ever.

The Word of God is just as powerful as it was in the days of Abraham and Moses or Peter and Paul. Even man's wisdom in 1992 cannot surpass the all-inspired, authoritative, living, active, comforting, convicting, and powerful Word of God. Let us be prepared to "take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" (Eph. 6:17).

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I'm Warning You!

Burt Jones

When we were children and there was a disagreement, eventually we arrived at a point where one of us would caution the other with the intimidating statement, "I'm warning you!" Most of the time we never did figure out what the consequences would be if one or the other did not cave in with absolute terror at this statement, because, normally the warning was forgotten about in a minute or two and we went about doing the things that children do.

As we open the Bible we are almost immediately brought face to face with the first recorded warning in the book of Genesis, chapter two verse seventeen: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Just before the Bible is closed a last warning is issued: "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:19). Between these passages are a multitude of warnings, each designed for man's benefit.

A favorite pastime of full-blooded American boys growing up in Alabama was raiding old farmer so and so's watermelon patch. Posted on the fence at every border of the patch was a large sign with glaring red letters: "WARNING DO NOT GO BEYOND THIS POINT!" Now, guess what we did. Then one day, as we were exiting the field under the fence rolling two watermelons each, I looked up to notice two pair of boots—one pair carried my dad, while the other pair belonged to the owner of the watermelon patch. That hot August day long ago I was given the aching, all-inclusive definition of the word WARNING, and what happens when one disregards it!

God has given us ample warning and has given instruction that this warning be continually issued through preaching His Word. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). Notice the example of Paul. After warning of apostasy he said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31).

God is saying with an all-consuming love, "**I'm warning you.**" If we fail to take heed, we will experience first hand the result of disregarding the warning of hell.

926 E. Jackson St.; Millersburg, OH 44654

Dub McClish Begins New Work

After over eleven years of work with the Pearl Street Church of Christ in Denton, Texas, Dub McClish has resigned as local preacher. In an announcement made jointly by brother McClish and the Pearl Street elders on March 29, he will begin a new phase of work under their oversight as soon as practical matters for this transition can be accomplished. His new work will consist of conducting more Gospel meeting series, speaking on more lectureships, and going on more preaching trips abroad than local preaching work allowed him to do previously. He also plans to spend considerable time in writing. The Pearl Street elders have asked brother McClish to continue to direct the Annual Denton Lectures, which they began in 1982 and have continued with great interest and effect.

This is a work the McClishes have been planning and wanting to do for a long time and which they suggested to the Pearl Street elders. While regretting that brother McClish will be leaving the Pearl Street pulpit, the elders acceded to their request and suggestion. He will continue to serve as local evangelist while a new evangelist is being sought and until the transition can be completed. The McClishes will continue to live in their home in Denton and will move their offices to their home as soon as necessary building and renovation can be done to accommodate them. They will continue to be members of the Pearl Street congregation.

Pearl Street is able to supply only a part of the support brother McClish needs to enable him to enter this new phase of his work for the Lord. He will have to secure the major portion of his support from other congregations and/or individuals. Accordingly, there are two principal ways in which those who wish to encourage his good work may do so. He needs onetime contributions for “start-up” expenses in order to set up his study/office (most of the furniture and office equipment he has used through the years belongs to the church and must be left behind when he moves from the church offices). He needs continuous monthly support. This can either be handled by sending a check each month or by putting the amount contributed on an automatic bank draft. In either case, no amount is too small to be of help. All contributions should be sent to: Elders, Church of Christ, 312 Pearl Street, Denton, TX 76201 and marked for “McClish Support Account.” Also, if anyone has a question about this new work into which brother McClish is entering, he is invited to contact the Pearl Street elders.

Brother McClish will also be available for more Gospel meeting series and Bible lectureships than before. If you desire to contact him concerning such, you may write him at 908 Imperial, Denton, TX 76201 or call him at 817-387-1429.

First Annual Truth for The World Mission Forum

The first annual *Truth For The World Mission Forum* will be hosted by the Knight Arnold Church of Christ, Memphis, TN, August 28-30. Ten speakers will address the theme “The Dream of God.” A panel of missionaries from various parts of the world will discuss questions pertaining to missionary preparation, principles and practices. An appreciation dinner honoring Robert Mays, long time elder in charge of missions at Crieve Hall Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee, will be held Saturday night. Speakers for the forum are Andrew Connally (Africa), Bruce Daugherty (Italy), Jim Dearman (Malaysia and the Media), Demar Elam (Russia), Steve Ellis (U.S.A.), John Grubb (Taiwan), Tom Holland (U.S.A.), Robert Martin (Pacific islands), Rod Rutherford (Zambia and Australia) and Paul Tucker (U.S.A.). For further information, write Mission Forum, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 381 18 or call (601) 8959740.

Why I Am in Hell

“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame” (Luke 16:22-24).

Something to consider: HELL IS REAL!

We know why the rich man went to hell and why multitudes of others will be there. If you awake one day in Hell, will you know why you are there? Will I be in Hell because:

I followed my way instead of the Lord’s way?

I compared myself with the most unfaithful members of the church?

I did not read and study the Bible like I should have?

I let my anger for the preacher, elders and others keep me away from Christ and His church?

I was too stingy to give as I was prospered?

I spent too much time on the faults of others, and not enough on my own?

I was too proud to confess my sins and ask that God forgive me?

I always believed that I could be saved and never obeyed the Gospel?

I let my temper rule me instead of my heart?

I did not attend the worship services each week—Bible study and worship?

I could not allow myself to “stoop” to help the poor and unfortunate?

I would not try to strengthen the weak, nor encourage the fallen?

“But seek ye first the kingdom of god.”

Via Olathe, KS.

1992 Bellview Lectures

Bobby Liddell

Men of faith and recognized ability encouraged us all to stand fast in the faith, uphold the truth and oppose error in lectures on “Current Crises Challenging The Church.” Every lesson was well prepared, lovingly presented and gratefully received by an enthusiastic assembly. Those wishing to obtain books or tapes may order them from the Bellview Church of Christ. Audio tapes—\$30.00/ set; video tapes-\$44.00/ set; and books (see back page). We hope you shall plan now to attend the **Eighteenth Annual Bellview Lectures** scheduled for May 8-12, 1993.

Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, “Behold The Pattern,” brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord’s body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God’s word why their argued positions are fraught with deadly error.

The book has been received with such great enthusiasm it is now in its third printing. Every brother should have a copy. A hardbound book of 660 pages (worth \$21.95), it is being distributed in a nonprofit effort for only \$5.00 (plus \$2.50 shipping). Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

What Must I Do To Be SAVED?

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

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

SIXTH ANNUAL GREATER KANAWHA VALLEY LECTURESHIP

August 4-7, 1992

Washington Street Church of Christ 601 Washington Street; Saint Albans, West Virginia 25177

“GOD’S WAY—THE CHURCH”

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4

6:30 P.M. SINGING

7:00 P.M. God’s Way—The Church

8:00 P.M. God’s Way Vs. Man’s Way

8:50 P.M. How Do We Determine God’s Way? Panel:

Terry Varner
Goebel Music
Varner, Music, Higginbotham

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5

9:00 A.M. The Church The Prophets Saw

10:00 A.M. The Establishment Of The Church

11:00 A.M. The Organization Of The Church

1:15 P.M. The A.D. 70 Theory

2:00 P.M. God’s Way Vs. Man’s Way

3:00 P.M. The Message Of The Prophets For Modern Man

6:30 P.M. SINGING

7:00 P.M. God’s Way For Fathers And Mothers

8:00 P.M. God’s Way For Children

8:50 P.M. Challenges Facing The Church Panel:

Wayne Coats
Lowell Altizer
Don Wright
Terry Varner
Goebel Music
Thomas Eaves

John Harris
Roger Jackson
Coats, Eaves, Harris

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6

9:00 A.M. The Church--The Bride Of Christ

10:00 A.M. The Church--The Kingdom Of God

11:00 A.M. The Church--The Pillar And Ground Of The Truth

1:15 P.M. The A.D. 70 Theory

2:00 P.M. Prophecy And Premillennialism

3:00 P.M. Prophecy And The Inspiration Of The Bible

6:30 P.M. SINGING

7:00 P.M. God’s Way For Marriage And The Home

8:00 P.M. God’s Way For Unity And Fellowship

8:50 P.M. The Amazing Grace Of God Panel:

Roger Jackson
Wayne Coats
John Harris
Terry Varner
Paul Sain
Johnny Ramsey

Frank Higginbotham
Thomas Eaves
Jackson, Ramsey, Sain

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7

9:00 A.M. The Church--Her Mission

10:00 A.M. The Lifestyle Of Christians

11:00 A.M. The Church--Her Concern For The Alien, The Wayward And The Unfaithful

1:15 P.M. The A.D. 70 Theory

2:00 P.M. Prophecy And Providence

3:00 P.M. This Is That (Joel 2, Acts 2)

6:30 P.M. SINGING

7:00 P.M. The All-Sufficiency Of The Church

8:00 P.M. The Final Victory Of The Church

Lowell Altizer
Johnny Ramsey
Frank Higginbotham
Terry Varner
Roger Jackson
Wayne Coats

Paul Sain
Johnny Ramsey

DEFENDER

Volume XXI

July 1992

Number 7

Positively Negative

Darrell Broking

As soldiers of Christ we are to arm ourselves with the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:11, 13). This is the only way one is able to “vicar the good warfare” (1 Tim. 1:18), “fight the good fight of the faith” (1 Tim. 6:12), and suffer hardship “as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:3). Without the proper offensive and defensive gear we are open to the wiles of the Devil. After careful examination of the soldier’s protective equipment (Eph. 6:14-17), it is clear that God expects his people to: “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). As the “pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15), if we refuse to uphold doctrinal purity, who will?

We live in perilous times. There are perils from within and from without. The perils from within are posing the most threat to Christ’s church in as much as many would rather not be bothered with the details. Where, I ask, within the list of our protective gear (Eph. 6:14-17), do we read of blinders that might shield one from the negative forces within? No one denies the frustration and anxiety that go along with exposing error. Is this any reason to ignore error, or is it all the more reason to be prepared, “that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan” (2 Cor. 2:11). Paul continued in this context to say: “We are not ignorant of his devices.” Satan carries out his devices through men and women. Of this, many are ignorant or indifferent.

Balanced, loving, caring, so Satan’s workers present themselves. Demand the old path where the good way is and watch their loving fangs froth. Yes, many of these rebellious church changers can love anyone in the church—adulterers, fornicators, blasphemers of the truth, accepting them and their perversions of Scripture—accepting almost anything and everything in the name of change and progress except those of us seeking the narrow way, the only way.

Recently one so-called preacher of the Word made the statement that he would only do those things which promote unity. He would never involve himself in anything negative that would tear down his brand of unified diversity. Where does the Bible teach unified diversity? Can book, chapter, and verse be sighted for this smorgasbord of untruths? Who among the faithful claims to be a wall builder, lawgiver or judge? The wall of truth exists, bound in Heaven (Mat. 16:19). The Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35). As soldiers of Christ, we must accept nothing less than the truth even if it involves tearing down. Jeremiah was a good and faithful soldier, an excellent example for every soldier of the cross to follow. Before he could build and plant he had “to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant” (Jer. 1:10).

Many of our brethren who know problems exist would rather not be involved in such a negative mess. The best of both worlds is simply not possible, middle ground is a detour from the narrow way. “The highway of the upright is to depart from evil” (Pro. 16:17). Depart means one thing, co-exist another. Some might consider it negative to have the responsibility to point the way. As soldiers of the cross, we have such a responsibility. “Set thee up waymarks, make thee guide-posts; set thy heart toward the highway” (Jer. 31:21). Some might consider this so negative, yet the only way to find the positive results we desire is by following the highway of holiness. “And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for *the redeemed*: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err *therein*” (Isa. 35:8).

Around fifteen hundred years existed between Sinai and the cross. Fifteen hundred years never changed the standard. The old law was the same when Jesus walked on the earth as when Moses walked on the earth. The idea

of a continuing restoration of the New Testament church is a false one. The church was established in her full glory on the first day of Pentecost after Christ's resurrection. The beautiful bride has not changed in two thousand years nor can she. The church exists whether we are in it or not. Changing her is not the answer. We must move beyond the country club atmosphere and demand the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The truth separates the righteous from the unrighteous and that wall was built by God.

The truth, you see offers freedom (John 8:32), sanctification (John 17:17), and purification, when obeyed (1 Pet. 1:22). Truth is the standard (John 12:48; Rev. 20:12). So many want the benefits of the truth without having to stand as that pillar and ground of the truth, because that can be so negative and frustrating, "Why they will even call me legalistic and dogmatic, the troublemaker." Brethren the Lamb of God (John 1:29) is also the lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5). Therein is balance and it is "positively negative," as we must balance the positive and negative. The positive results come with a price. Jesus said, "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I heard from God: this did not Abraham" (John 8:40). In the watery grave we commit our entire being unto Him. We commit to walk in His steps (1 Pet. 2:21), the positive as well as the negative. So, I ask with Paul, "So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16).

608 Barrus Place; Casa Grande, AZ 85222

Editorial by Bobby Liddell

Respect for Others

What does it mean to have respect for others? First, let us note what it does not mean. There is no "respect of persons" with God; neither should there be with God's children. That is, there should be no: "respect to the position, rank, popularity or circumstances of men, instead of their intrinsic conditions, preferring the rich and powerful to those who are not so" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words*, p. 851). Note these passages: "For there is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. 2:11; cf., Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25). "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons...But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors" (Jam. 2:1, 9). "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ³⁵But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). Thus, we should not base our "respect" for others on such things as race, color, national origin, beauty, wealth, education, health, social standing, etc.

What does "respect" as used in this article mean? It means the proper esteem, regard or honor we are to have for others. We are to respect others for what they are—the pinnacle of God's creation possessing a soul which shall live on eternally. We should properly regard others because we appreciate when others properly regard us. A very simple rule to follow to ensure we do as we should is to put ourselves in the place of others. How would we want to be treated? With proper regard? Then, let us treat others the same. Lest we exalt man for his wisdom in devising such a plan, let us remember Jesus gave what we call "The Golden Rule" when He said: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31). That rule should guide us in the following observations.

Applying the Golden Rule, we should respect the property of others because we want others to respect our property. Would we want others to take our things without asking or misuse or damage something and not repair or replace it? Of course not. So, it is a very simple concept—do unto others as you would have them do unto you. If all had the proper respect, as the Bible teaches, think how much more pleasant the world would be. Read carefully Ephesians 4:28 and Leviticus 6:2-4.

God created us with emotions (feelings). What others do and say has an effect upon us. Those who follow God and appreciate the feelings of others will find true happiness and many friends (Pro. 18:24). They will be loved and appreciated and will find in return that which they have given to others—respect. Those who, because of their hateful gossip, arrogant attitude and calloused unconcern for others, find themselves unhappy and with few friends have none to blame but themselves.

Our government guarantees certain rights. We are happy to have those rights and are happy they extend to all citizens. Christians respect civil law (Rom. 13:1-7) and the rights afforded under it. Christians should be model citizens, paying taxes, obeying the speed limit, etc., and respecting the rights of others.

Caring Christians will respect the work of others. How may we show such respect? (1) By not hindering or undoing the good work of another, and, (2) by expressing our gratitude for their work. Are we not all supposed to work together—with God (2 Cor. 6:1)? Are we careful to thank parents, elders, deacons, preachers and teachers for their work? Do we respect it or are we always ready to hinder, find fault or speak against?

If we respect others, we will have proper regard for their souls. Every person has one given them by God (Ecc. 12:7). Every accountable person has a soul in need of salvation (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). Respect and love for the soul are keys to evangelism. Do you respect the value of the soul (Mat. 16:26)? If you do, act accordingly. Pray (Rom. 10:1), live (1 Tim. 4:16) and teach (Mark 16:15-16) so both you and others will be saved. Your “respect” will make an eternal difference.

“Where Did God Put Salvation?”

M. Floyd Bailey, Jr.

For many, the question of “Where did God put salvation?” is an unanswered one. Many denominations teach salvation upon belief alone, others teach the salvation of an elect group, without any effort on the part of the subject. Where did God put salvation? I believe that with a few passages, we can answer this question.

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:15-16). This clearly states belief plus baptism equals salvation, does it not? A third grade child can easily see it. If you will be honest with yourself, you also will see it. In this verse God put salvation after belief and baptism.

“Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you...for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:37-38). This passage clearly states that repentance plus baptism equals remission of sins, does it not? Remission of sin is the clearing away of sin. Therefore, remission of sins must be synonymous with salvation, for no man can be saved except his sins be remitted or washed away. So very clearly in Acts 2:38 salvation comes after repentance and baptism.

“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). In this passage, Ananias was speaking to Saul of Tarsus. Saul already believed on Jesus (v. 10), but his sins were not washed away. Is not washing away of sin the act which brings us back into a covenant relationship with God? The passage clearly states arise plus baptism equals the washing away of sin, does it not? Again, this passage puts salvation after the arising and the baptizing.

“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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection” (Rom. 6:3-5). Verse four clearly states we are buried in baptism and raised to walk in newness of life. Can we be a new creature without burying the old? Not according to God’s Word! Clearly in this verse God put salvation or newness of life after baptism.

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:26-27). When we are baptized, we put on Christ. How simple, how plain. Where did God put salvation? No doubt after we have Christ in our life. How do we put Christ into our lives? By being baptized. God put salvation after baptism.

“The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21). All the shuffling in the world cannot change what this verse says. Any man who will be honest with himself can plainly see that salvation is placed after baptism.

Let God’s Word answer your questions. Not the technical jargon of a so-called religious scholar. God’s Word can be understood by any common man. Just sit down and read it.

1968 Dean Road; Jacksonville, FL 32216

Christians Are Established by Gospel Preaching and Not the Signs of the Times

Joseph Meador

A PERSONAL INTRODUCTION. The following is written out of a heart of Christian love and deep affection for members of Christ's church as well as for my fellow preaching brethren. These reflections are the result of my own personal study of Scripture, my having been a Christian for some twenty years, my having preached the Gospel on a regular basis for over a decade, and my ongoing work in training men to preach. Also, I, like many others, have sadly witnessed the great doctrinal changes which have taken place within many congregations of the church during the last fifteen years. I believe that the allowance for this change, to a great degree, rests upon the fact that there has been a lack of authentic Bible preaching in too many pulpits.

Finally, let me add that the following lines have not been written with a harsh, arrogant, or uncaring heart. On the contrary, I have written with a compassionate love that I and others have for the church and for those men who really desire to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. May their number and strength increase in the days and years ahead!

Whatever Happened to the Gospel? It is an all too observable fact that there are a number of men who have given up trying to preach the Gospel and have instead taken up preaching "the signs of the times." The "signs of the times" refers to preaching from the latest magazine or newspaper on just about any human interest subject which strikes an emotional cord with the members. As a result, sermons have regularly been presented in many churches on such wonderfully diverse themes as: "the need for greater environmental consciousness," "the development of U.S. foreign policy," and "how to relax and loosen-up." Along with these topics it is certainly not uncommon nowadays to hear personal developmental theory taught out of popular self-help books in substitution for the Gospel of Christ in many pulpits on the Lord's Day. Rarely is any specific text of the Bible mentioned. Perhaps many factors are to blame.

Modern Preaching Styles Versus the Gospel. Modern preaching theory with its emphasis on the theatrical and dramatic elements of staging an "emotionally charged performance," complete with "mood lighting" and the use of heart moving solo's or select group singing, bears much of the burden. So does the type of preaching which seeks to transform the preacher into a country or folk story-teller. Indeed, the message may be one of common sense humor and dry wit, but it reveals precious little about the Gospel. Another style which is all too common among churches today involves preaching which not only lacks the Gospel but also moral courage. The preacher who gives in to such a system uses a non-offensive or passive message with the hopes of keeping the brethren satisfied so as not to "rock the boat" among the members or leadership. This condition, we must remember was even a problem in Paul's day; i.e., the "give them what they want, and keep them happy; not what they really need" philosophy (2 Tim. 4:1-8).

What Is the Real Problem? These preaching styles are not the real problem however. Rather, these trends in the modern pulpit, which would have been the cause of much bewilderment and chagrin in the church only fifty years ago, are the symptoms of a much worse condition. The real problem in the pulpit and especially in the pews, is a lack of genuine faith in the power of the Gospel message to save, as well as in the power of Christ to work in the hearts and minds of men and women today. That is the real problem: A lack of faith in the very Person of Jesus of Nazareth!

For many, the "Old Jerusalem Gospel" has become obsolete and irrelevant. It has simply gone the way of all historical messages. Its usefulness, at least to modern society with its own unique problems, has faded away as a reminiscent curiosity much like the tree-stump political speeches of the 1930s and 40s, the automobiles of the 50s or the fashions of the 60s. The result has been the creation of a new, more updated version of the Gospel. A synthesis has taken place between the Gospel and various psychological and social betterment theories along with a heady mixture of the "unity amidst doctrinal diversity" school of thought (agreeing to allow for doctrinal differences for the sake of keeping peace within the congregation). This formula has resulted in an anti-gospel message or a "new gospel for a new age."

Yet, the Gospel as preached by Jesus and His apostles is not a mere historical message. Its teaching is far from obsolete (John 20:30-31). Today, the Gospel continues to be a spiritually, ethically and morally powerful message which, when founded upon the Word of God, is centered in the very Person of Jesus Christ. It is the same message with the power to save the penitent soul or strengthen and establish the maturing Christian (Rom. 1:15-16).

Christians Are Established Only by Gospel Preaching (Rom. 16:25-26). If the modern church continues to feed on a diet of fluff, (which is the current spiritual junk food of many), then the church, styled by Paul as the beautiful “Bride of Christ” will become soiled and, such congregations will lack real Christian influence and evangelistic fervor in the community. These churches will also continue to give in to spiritual and moral weakness. Does this sound familiar?

The apostle Paul, in the closing portion of his letter to the church at Rome gives us great insight regarding how Christians are really to be established or strengthened. Three lessons need to be learned. **FIRST**, to be established, literally: “made strong,” in the faith requires hearing and applying the authentic Gospel as opposed to the many false gospels (Rom. 10:17; Gal. 1:6-12). In Romans 16:25 Paul wrote: “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ.” The power by which we are strengthened therefore is Christ (Phi. 4:13), and through His Word, the Gospel, we are established in the faith (John 14:15, 23; 15:14).

Second, to be established requires hearing the Word of Christ preached or taught from its primary source, the New Testament Scripture! Paul, in Romans 16:25, says the Gospel was preached: “according to the revelation.” In writing to the church at Ephesus he explains this revelation, which was formerly kept by God, is the Gospel. message of today: “Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery in Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit” (Eph. 3:4-5). Paul adds that this revelational Gospel message, meant to be personally understood and applied, was given by the inspiration of God and therefore is His only authoritative message for today (2 Tim. 3:16-17). So, don’t settle for non-biblical preaching!

Third, in Romans 16:26 Paul writes: “But now is...made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.” Here, Paul stresses that this Gospel is to be made known unto all men so that they might become obedient to the faith. It was certainly not his view that the Gospel message was some passing fad, or that it was only appropriate for his own generation. Indeed, to the minds of Christians in the first century, the Gospel message was God’s final Covenant with man, and therefore, applicable in every age to come for salvation and growth in Christ!

These verses, along with many other New Testament passages teach us that the saving message of the Gospel, with its power to literally transform the lives of men and women, must be preached today! And, it must be preached from the text of the Bible itself. Let us not be guilty of substituting other gospels for The Gospel (Gal. 1:6-12), or desiring to be established by “trendy” preaching. Rather, let us diligently seek to return to: (1) hearing the authentic Word, (2) from the New Testament text, so that we might (3) be strengthened ourselves, and then, (4) preach the Word to others. This is the mission of the church, **today**!

4000 W Oakley Boulevard; Las Vegas, NV 89102

Not Rich Toward God

Shan Jackson

Christ’s challenging parable (Luke 12:21) which closes with these words can never be forgotten. To read it once is to remember it always. The story needs no depth of explanation. His teaching is plain and concise. The parable of the rich fool is an insightful look at judgment.

The reoccurring theme of His message is how that “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.” It is a foolish life, indeed, when we allow it to become a life strictly of wealth. The life of the rich fool had judgment passed because his wealth was toward self and not toward God. Life’s essential qualities were lacking. But what are these qualities?

Lack of Thanksgiving. This man was rich as his ground brought forth plenty but his heart never felt the tug of gratitude. He never thought to thank God for the ground God made or the rain God sent. He never realized that God is the Great Giver of all useful increase. His thoughts were of “my fruits,” “my good,” “my barns.” He thinks and

speaks only of himself and his narrow conception of wealth. "I" is his only supplier. "I" is his only need. "I" is his only satisfaction. Most likely he attributed his success and prosperity to his personal skill, wise insight of planning, and anxious labor. Perhaps he boasted of the little he started with and the swelling increase of his pride-filled abundance. He did not see how God could have played any part in this personally satisfying scenario. That feeling, in and of itself, is the proof of foolishness. As has been aptly said, "A grateful mind is a greatfilled mind." Gratitude and a thankful spirit are true signs of followers of Christ. However, pride and presumption are the offspring of an unthankful heart and to refuse to see that God's goodness sustains our very existence is a great and eternal lacking. One lacking in thanksgiving shows his poverty in himself.

Lack of Service. Feigned embarrassment often comes with excessive riches. This "poor" man had no where to store his goods and take counsel with himself but his problem is soon solved. The solution is simple. Simply tear down his barns and replace them with bigger barns. His desire is to "stow" when it should have been to "bestow." His life will remain "business as usual" but now on a grander scale. No other thought comes to his mind which serves as further proof of his real poverty. No thoughts of giving to the poor or homeless but rather only of getting more. No ideas of using, only of storing. He considers no possibilities of helping, no higher conception of using this abundance for the good of mankind, only tearing down the adequate and replacing it with the excessive. He realized not that gifts given from God are gifts to be shared with others. He never dreamed of stewardship or service. His increase came not from stowing and storing but from sowing and growing. Had he used his abundance as he used his grain, putting them out to the service of helping man, true riches would have come to him. He would have been rich toward God and his fellow man.

Lack of Worthy Planning. What are the thoughts of the future for this ungrateful farmer? What hopes and plans does he dream and cherish? "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." In his satisfaction he considers retirement. He has enough and more than enough. No more reason to rise early and toil late or endure the heat of the day. He will take life easy and enjoy his wealth. He is his own "Alpha and Omega." His life is self-assuring, self-gratifying and self-controlled. He will become a glutton and a wine-bibber as his pleasures turn from honest labor to those of the flesh. No higher thoughts draw his spirit toward God. No interest in spiritual things are mentioned or considered. God and judgment are absent from his scheme of life. "Many days" are the limitations of his planning. Man's highest interests are of no interest to him. Thoughts of goodness, the love of truth, the joy of helping, and fellowship with the Father are of no attraction. His life is so poor and useless that he realizes not what it lacks.

Leaving and Taking. Then comes the voice of summons that no one can refuse. He had planned for many days and he lives not even one. "This night" is now his time frame. In the midst of all his plans and hopes this inevitable end surprises him. What does he leave behind? He leaves his fruits, his goods, his barns, as well as his plans, his dreams and his wealth. No one rises to bless his memory. His mourners are few, if any, for he had never cared for their needs. He leaves no lasting monuments of memory concerning his kindness, support and care for what he did was not kind, he did not support and he did not care for anything except himself. What does he take? Nothing of what he had because his treasures were of the earth and the earth keeps its own. All he takes is his character, such as it was, and with that he enters the eternal world as a beggar and a fool.

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Communication Is the Key

Bill Brandstatter

Communication is the bond that keeps everything moving. Imagine what the job, home, school or church would be without communication. Chaos would be the result. It is unfortunate that in many areas of a Christian's life there is a lack of communication. For a Christian's life to move along as God would want there must be communication.

Between God and man communication is a must. God's will has been made known to man in various ways. The apostle from Tarsus describes it by indicating, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:12). Man communicates with God **via the avenue** of prayer. The church at Philippi was encouraged to "be careful for nothing; but in

everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phi. 4:6). Jesus told his disciples "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mat. 21:22).

Between man and man there must be communication. Between brothers and sisters in Christ communication is a must. Sometimes a Christian will have a gripe with another Christian. This problem will fester until the two are not speaking. God does not want this to happen. Jesus comments on this by indicating: "That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment" (Mat. 5:22). Jesus told his disciples: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother" (Mat. 18:15). More communication of this kind between Christians will heal a lot of wounds in the Lord's church.

Between husband and wife communication must be practiced. There are many homes today that are sadly lacking in this area. Often the husband doesn't know what the wife will be doing. Parents may not know where the children are at a particular hour. This plight can be traced to a lack of communication. Does the Bible speak in this area? Yes, in a number of different ways. Consider the Biblical admonitions regarding the home. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). There are two types of communication mentioned in the preceding passage. The incorrect communication is to provoke a child to wrath. However the correct communication is also listed. Bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord requires a lot of care and time. Husbands are to be not bitter against their wives (Col. 3:19). Wives are to submit themselves to their own husbands (Col. 3:18). Without communication this is impossible. After showing the correct communication between wives, husbands, children, and servants Paul tells how important it all is. He indicates all this is to be done to please the Lord (Col. 3:23). He closes this chapter with a promise, "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons" (Col. 3:24-25). Yes, communication is important.

Between members of the church there must be communication. If everyone came into services with no regards to the order of worship imagine the confusion. Paul addresses this in 1 Corinthians. There the prize student of Gamaliel indicates all things are to be done unto edifying (1 Cor. 14:26). Everything in the services are to be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). Communication is important to keep the church and its services orderly. Christians should make it a point to be diligent in making sure: "Your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6). Communication must be prevalent in all areas of life or nothing will get done, and anarchy will occur.

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Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, "Behold The Pattern," brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord's body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God's word why their argued positions are fraught with deadly error.

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

Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

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

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

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

DEFENDER

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Amorality

Burt Jones

Although this may stir up controversy, I am firmly convinced that we are moving away from immorality. There is evidence everywhere! There is less **immoral** thinking today than there has been for decades.

The tragedy of this phenomenon is that although **Immorality** is today less of a factor in the lives of men, **amorality** is rearing its ugly head. It is growing by leaps and bounds! An amoral nature lies outside that sphere to which moral judgments apply. It is beyond moral order or outside any code of moral sensitivity.

A person with an amoral nature is ignorant of, or totally devoid of, the moral nature of other human beings. An immoral nature implies that the individual at least knows and understands the principles that establish those codes of moral conduct, but is in conflict with them through his or her behavior. The amoral individual **has no idea** that their behavior, or the behavior of others, lies outside that which is righteous and ethical and virtuous.

Anything Goes. There is a generation arising out of an already reeling and staggering season of crookedness and perversion, which has no remorse, no foundation of civility, and worse yet, no concept of moral behavior. The hundreds of thousands of latchkey children, at home, by themselves almost constantly; and, the tens of thousands in youth gangs in our larger cities with no family except their fellow gang members, will be the next generation of this once great country. They will not necessarily be seeking out evil, but they will be void of any spiritual or social foundation.

Our Society. The movies, books, advertising, and magazines attempt to appeal to our basest instincts. Thumbs rest on the television remote device, constantly moving from channel to channel, finally “escaping” to the educational channel, only to find that we have happened upon the breeding season of the duckbilled platypus in graphic detail. Abortion clinics continue to murder with no sense of wrong doing.

Our Government. This new amorality has rocked our nation with one scandal after another. Now, these are elected individuals who were placed in positions of trust, many times, sadly, because they, in contrast to their opponent, were the lesser of two evils. Criminals are coddled; judgment deferred; witnesses bribed; and, criminals released because there is no “room in the pen.” Our cities are sacked and burned; children kidnaped; rapists indicted and the **prosecutor** made to look foolish, etc., ad nauseam!

God is giving this nation “up to uncleanness through the lusts of their [our] own hearts” (Rom. 1:24). God is giving us over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient (Rom. 1:28). Amoral souls are “Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful” (Rom. 1:31). But, even these pitiable souls are somehow better than those professing to be wise, “Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them” (Rom. 1:32).

Is Amoral in the Bible? You will not find the word “amoral” in the Bible. For that matter, neither is the word “moral” or “immoral” to be located. But from the book of Genesis to Revelation we repeatedly read of the rotten fruit of base morals and rampant immorality. We read of man’s rebellious spirit, where “every man did *that which* was right in his own eyes” (Jud. 17:6; 21:25).

Parental discipline is virtually non-existent. Our young people survive in spite of us rather than because of us. The home is the breeding place for amoral behavior. It is one thing for good and godly parents to instill godly principles in the hearts of their precious children and then to have them consciously turn from these precepts as did

the prodigal. But it is quite another thing to see your child slip away into the vise-grip of the world with no idea of that which constitutes right and wrong. Homes have become filling stations and stop-over sleeping quarters.

Amorality is becoming the standard because our “god” is the pursuit of pleasure. Our jaded appetites must be constantly satisfied, as we search for higher “fixes.” We are suspended in a limbo of diversion between a gadget-filled paradise and a tawdry, tinsel-covered torment.

The Church’s Obligation. Our task as Christians is to exert a positive and wholesome influence wherever we are. We are to be shining lights “in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation” (Phi. 2:15).

Wherever we go, and whatever we do, we are members of the body of Christ. The amoral person cannot use his or her ignorance to justify following a course of selfishness, greed, deceit and the gratification of fleshly lusts and base desires.

The basic moral principle of God is constant, unalterable, and eternal. No lover of pleasure “hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph. 5:5).

Our society has reached this pitiable state because good men were silent and evil men prevailed. Many have fallen away, and they will “betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Mat. 24:10-13).

Unless WE very quickly restore the beauty of holiness to this land of our fathers, future generations will have no knowledge of those things Christian, and will ignorantly be bound ever further by the surly bonds of **amorality**.

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Editorial by Bobby Liddell

Fulfilled Prophecy Is Undeniable Proof of the Bible’s Divine Authorship

The Bible is a grand book, the “best seller” of all time and unlike any other book in all the world for many reasons, one of which is its fulfilled prophecy. The fulfillment of prophecy is positive and undeniable proof that this wonderful volume came from God and not from man. How else can one explain how the hundreds of prophecies, spoken over thousands of years by men who lived in different times, at different places, and most of whom never met one another, could demonstrate such perfect agreement?

Though men, by their own devices, may claim to be able to see and speak of future events, the passing of time shows their deceit. Conversely, time has shown the fulfillment of inspired prophecy; thus, the truthfulness of the sacred Scriptures. This proof joins many others in giving those who search the Bible’s pages cause to be fortified in faith and reason to rejoice in hope.

Almighty God gave this admonition: “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him” (Deu. 18:22). “If the thing” (that which was prophesied) “follow not, nor come to pass” (is not fulfilled), “that is the thing which the Lord **hath not spoken**.” “The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him” (Jer. 28:9). The sure and final test of prophecy is its fulfillment.

Were there prophecies in the Bible which should have been fulfilled, yet which have not been, no right-thinking individual could have faith either in it or in the One from whom it claims to be.

Man may, within limits, make calculated guesses based upon his observations of historical trends and future possibilities, but no man has the power to know with certainty what shall be on the morrow or even in the next minute, much less what shall take place years, even centuries, into the future. James, the inspired penman, wrote, “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain? Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow” (Jam. 4:13-14). At best, man’s predictions are general and dependent upon the continuation of historic trends. Any deviation from those trends destroys the prediction and proves the predictor to be but a mere man attempting to state knowledge which he can not have and,

by that, showing himself to be false.

At worst, man's predictions are blatantly in opposition to the truth. Consider the many "prophecies" about the "Rapture" (remember the dates which were set and have since passed) and other equally unscriptural, and anti-biblical "prophecies" concerning the supposed events surrounding and leading up to the second coming of Christ. Those who have made and do make such "prophecies" are lying "prophets" who have spoken "presumptuously" and whose sin shall not go unpunished by God.

Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Mat. 24:36). Only the omniscient God has the power to know what the future holds; thus, His book, the Bible, has no equal. **No other book** has such an undeniable proof of its divine authorship, and no greater testimony can be found to attest to the divine revelation of the inspired Scriptures than the fulfillment of that which was miraculously foretold in prophecy. How can any deny this magnificent and forceful attestation to the divine inspiration of God's Holy Word, the Bible?

Let us rejoice for we live in an age in which we may read and understand the hundreds of inspired prophecies in God's marvelous book and also see their fulfillment as recorded therein as well as in the volumes of secular historians.

Timely Reminder

Paul Vaughn

One of the first men to plead for a return to the New Testament Christianity in the past two hundred years was Barton W. Stone. Stone died in Hannibal, Missouri on November 9, 1844. Three months before his death, he wrote an open letter to the churches of Christ throughout the United States. This letter was published in the *Christian Messenger* of which Stone was the editor.

In this letter, Stone was concerned about the churches of Christ trying to be like the sects in the religious world around them. His warning to the church then stands as a warning to the church today. Stone said:

...My dear brethren, we have advanced, and become a great people. Now is the time of danger—now there is need of humility, watchfulness and prayer. We begin to be respected as a people, and begin already to vie with others in numbers...Israel often seduced from the true worship of God to the idolatry and communion of the nations among which they dwelt, and this always took place in the days of their prosperity. So we may be so captivated by the doctrines, forms, popularity, and respectability of the sects around us, that we may try to accommodate the truth of God to their prejudices in order to gain their favor, and eventually to enlist them on our side, and join in our mighty union. Such union is no better, if as good, as that of the Romanists, who are exceeding zealous for union. A union of ten pious uncompromising persons in truth, is better than 10,000 of the contrary character. Truth must never be sacrificed for the union of numbers. Truth preached and lived in the spirit will cut its way through all opposition. But what is truth? The Bible, and the Bible alone... (*Christian Messenger*, Vol. 14, p. 117).

This letter, written over one hundred and forty years ago, is just as pertinent today as it was when it was written. The pernicious ways of false teachers have not changed. There are many today in the brotherhood who seek union with the Christian Church instead of seeking unity with God and His people. The result of such union is not unity, but apostasy. It is the abandoning of biblical truth.

Churches of Christ and the Christian Church once were a united people. Division came when those in the Christian Church began to reject the authority of Christ for the Missionary Society—and mechanical instrumental music. This division started in 1849 when the Missionary Society was introduced and grew until 1906 when separation was realized.

The Christian Church has steadily evolved until today when they have numerous unscriptural practices. They invite denominational preachers to mount their pulpits and teach doctrines of men. They have governing boards made up with elders and deacons. They have women preachers and elders. They have special services at Christmas and Easter with any denominational group that will join them. They also practice open membership. Why would any truth-seeking Christian want to join such a menagerie of false teachings? To do so would mean a total abandonment of the Restoration Plea to speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.

Paul said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). When Christians preach the Word of God and follow the one doctrine of Christ there will be no desire to be united with those who compromise the truth.

Barton W. Stone tried to warn the churches of Christ in 1844 not to compromise truth for the sake of union. Sadly, most in Kentucky and Ohio refused to heed the warning. Today, there are mission works in counties that once had numerous churches of Christ. Let us be reminded of our history, lest we make the same mistakes and someone has to come and reestablish the church where there are churches of Christ today.

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Max R. King Is Wrong Again

Jesse Whitlock

Max R. King wrote an editorial in his instrument, *The Living Presence*, January 1992, Vol. 2, No. 6, pp. 10-12 called, "Slander and False Accusation." Once again, it is brother Wayne Jackson under attack for his expose' of this damnable doctrine of the devil, alias: Realized Eschatology. Max R. King is upset with an article written by brother Jackson in the November 1991 issue of the *Gospel Advocate*, pp. 4748. It is Max R. King's charge that brother Jackson's article is false and slanderous. I am reminded of the old saying that "Only the hit dog yelps!"

Max King (p. 10): "First, Jackson asserts that our teaching is unorthodox, and our making converts is such a 'formidable task.' We have developed some sort of a quiet, covert strategy that sneaks our view of eschatology into churches until they can be taken over. And in this connection he thinks this has much widespread practice that he suspects it must be orchestrated."

My reply: That's the way it happened in Ardmore, OK. It is a matter of record that Don Preston (formerly preaching for the Maxwell Ave. Church of Christ) brought this divisive doctrine in piecemeal. The elders at Maxwell Ave. did not know that Don Preston espoused this strange doctrine until it was too late. He had introduced it a little at a time, i.e., classes, bulletin, newspaper, only bits and pieces and finally into the pulpit.

Thankfully, the Maxwell Ave. Church of Christ was not taken over by the A.D. 70 doctrine. In 1991, Don Preston was fired for preaching this false doctrine. However, he took about 100 of his followers with him. There is now an A.D. 70 congregation in Ardmore, OK meeting at the corner of Grand and "G" streets. It was well orchestrated from beginning to end. I cannot speak for other places where this divisive doctrine has gone—but that's the way it is here!

Max King (p. 11): "Second, in connection with what Jackson perceives as a secretive congregational undermining operation, he blatantly charges that realized eschatologists 'circulate tapes and literature only among the most promising potential converts.' [Here he documents p. 48 of the November, 1991 issue of *Gospel Advocate*, JLW]...in his book on the A.D. 70 theory, on page 1 he wrote, 'while this heresy is unbelievably extreme, it appears to find a ready market among brethren who are unlearned and unstable.' "

My reply: In December of 1990, at the request of the elders at Maxwell Ave. congregation, brother H. A. "Buster" Dobbs came to Ardmore to lecture on the errors of the A.D. 70 teaching. Don Preston had affirmed that he would not make reply in any way. However, after brother Dobbs' powerful lesson it was obvious that Don Preston would have to reply and he did. I attended two nights of the "un-debate" and noticed that each evening Don Preston spent over half of his time trying to patch up his own mistakes from the previous night. Brother Dobbs handled a difficult situation in supreme fashion. The secretary in charge of making copies of the tapes was amazed that the A.D. 70 advocates made copies of only Don's presentation by the hundreds; but very few wanted the tapes with brother Dobbs' powerful rebuttals to the damnable doctrine.

As to Max King's concern that this doctrine is suited to the unlearned and unstable, i.e., in regard to the pages of Holy Writ, the examples I could cite would fill a book. One may suffice. I attended a meeting on July 15, 1990 to express concern over the false teaching of Don Preston. One of the A.D. 70 advocates was present (at that time an elder at Maxwell Ave.). During the course of that meeting one of the elders from the Central congregation quoted portions of 1 Corinthians 15 to reinforce an argument he made relating to this doctrine. He did not give book, chapter, and verse; just used KJV and quoted it. Whereupon, this elder (?) leaned back in his chair and made this statement: "Well, I never read anything like that anywhere in my Bible!" I had to bite my own tongue. I could not

believe it. Later this same man bragged that he had been a serious Bible student for about 70 years. Imagine! In 70 years of Bible study he had never read anything like unto 1 Corinthians 15. He followed the split that left Maxwell Ave. If that is not “unlearned and unstable” then I must suspect that there are no “unlearned and unstable” men upon this present earth!

Max King (p. 11): “Third, in this same connection, Jackson asserts that realized eschatology finds a ready market ‘among a certain class of preachers who seem to be unable to find the degree of fame they seek except by advocating the bizarre.’” (Here he documents p. 1 of Brother Jackson’s book, *The A.D. 70 Theory*, available from Courier Pub., JLW). “...who thinks he (Wayne Jackson) has the right to put this stuff in writing, circulate it in the brotherhood, and pass it off as the truth? Talk about ‘bizarre.’”

It is a certain class of preacher when you think about it. See Deuteronomy 18:22, “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid him.” Therefore, I have challenged Don Preston to mount the polemic platform in public discussion using the same position that Max R. King and the late brother Gus Nichols used in debate in 1973. I have nothing to fear.

Now, the hit one really begins to holler. He says brother Jackson ought not be allowed to put this stuff in writing and circulate it through the brotherhood. Yet, Max R. King has a “Research and Writing Ministry” under the guise of the Parkman Rd. Church of Christ in Warren, Ohio which lists 16 offers of books, tapes, VCR’s, tracts, etc. I never cease to be amazed at the false teacher who says he ought to be free to take his false doctrine to the public through every means available to him. But just let a faithful soldier of the cross write an article, tract or booklet exposing the anti-scriptural teaching and look out! It seems the false teacher demands his right to promote his pet project; but that freedom is not extended to any but the false brethren! Ah, consistency—thou art a jewel, indeed! Is this a case of the pot calling the kettle black, or what?

Max. King (p. 11): “Lastly, Jackson writes how this theory continues to exert its divisive influence both in this country and abroad, charging that it has disrupted and/or divided churches in Alabama, California, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas (that we know of).” (Here he again documents *Gospel Advocate*, November, 1991 , p. 47).

Once again, I cannot speak for other states, but in the state of Oklahoma, let it be written that the Maxwell Ave. congregation did indeed divide over this damnable doctrine of the devil. The elders finally had to fire the man who was driving the wedge. Now, we have a group meeting here in Ardmore, OK using the misnomer “Ardmore Church of Christ.”

On page 12 of the January issue of *The Living Presence*, Max R. King makes a feeble attempt to compare the “divisive influence” of “Realized Eschatology” to the Lord’s teaching on “divorce and remarriage.” The two are not synonymous! Realized Eschatology is heretical; while the Scripture’s teaching on divorce and remarriage is God’s inspired and authoritative Word in this matter. The two are not second cousins!

He continues that brother Jackson’s article is “reckless irresponsible journalism” I must suspect the editor of *The Living Presence* has never entertained the thought of applying the same rules to his own publication. Quite often, I read in that publication from one man of how he has made so many challenges to brethren who are “afraid” to meet him in debate. But as of the January issue he has never dared to mention that he was challenged to debate myself in June of 1990. I proposed that we use the same proposition Max affirmed in 1973: ‘The Holy Scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D.’ In a personal letter from him dated June 19, 1990 he replied in part: “The proposition which you cited is unacceptable and **does not deal with the key issues**” (Emphasis is mine—JLW).

I cannot help but wonder if Max R. King and Don Preston would be in agreement here? King signed a proposition to affirm that these things are true. Preston states clearly that these things are not the **key issues**! If they are not key issues then why did Max R. King discuss these in public debate with the late brother Nichols? If they are key issues then why is Don Preston not willing to defend them in view of what Max R. King writes further on page 12 of the January 1992 issue of *The Living Presence*? I quote him now: “Is it not time brethren, to desist from what is so obviously wrong and uncharacteristic of Christians and fight the good fight of faith by focusing exclusively on ‘what saith the scriptures?’ I think so, and to this end I make an earnest appeal to all warriors of the

faith.”

I think so, also. That is why I offered the challenge for a public discussion of these matters. When the gauntlet was not taken up, the elders requested brother W. Terry Varner to send us signed propositions if he would debate with Don Preston. W. Terry Varner graciously offered two signed propositions which we then sent to Don Preston. They read: (#1) “The Bible teaches that the law of Moses was abolished before the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) as God’s acceptable law for the Jews.” Brother Varner signed in the affirmative. (#2) “The Bible teaches that the second (final) coming of Christ took place in the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.” Brother Varner signed to deny. Don Preston did not respond at that time. It will not do for Don Preston to say he had no knowledge of such, for a Maxwell elder contacted Brother W. Terry Varner concerning the signed propositions.

Now, “what saith the scriptures?” (1 Pet. 3:15), “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” Since Preston refused to acknowledge the first challenge from myself and a second challenge to meet brother W. Terry Varner in public debate, the matter seemingly dropped. In the interim brother W. Terry Varner has since challenged Max R. King to a public discussion. It might be well for Max King to re-read his editorial. Brother W. Terry Varner stands willing and ready as a warrior of the faith! Will Max King now come forth into battle? We shall see what we shall see!

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Correspondence

“A friend passed her copy of the Defender on to me. I was impressed with your desire to keep the church pure and spotless. It is refreshing at this time with all the problems....” George Mastick, Shawnee, OK.

“I wish to thank you for sending the Defender to me over the years. Keep up the good work. Enclosed is ten dollars to help with postage.” Andrew Hill, Calvert City, KY.

“...I would like to receive 30 copies here, if you can afford to do it. I do appreciate you mailing the Defender available for free. It sure helps in the mission field. Thank you.” Harold King, Cairo, GA.

“I recently read a copy of your Sept. 1990 issue on Authority and was impressed by the articles it contained. I would like to receive this paper on a regular basis....” Dennis Needham, Athens, TN.

“...I would really appreciate to be put on your mailing for the Defender. I have had the chance to read a few of your past issues and have found them most interesting. If you are able please send me some of the back issues that are available.” Danny Aragon, Lakewood, CO.

“...I also would like to tell you how much I appreciate receiving the Defender each issue. I also would like to commend all who are responsible for making it possible. I also appreciate the stand for and may God help us all to do likewise, and support the truth at every opportunity we have. May God richly bless you all as you stand for the truth.” Robert Cannon, Huntsville, AL.

“We are writing to request our name be added to your mailing list for the Defender. In our quest for sound brotherhood publications your name was passed on to us. Thank you for defending the truth.” Rocky & Noni Artrip, Daggett, MI

“I have just recently learned about your gospel paper Defender. Please add me to your mailing list...” Douglas Palmer, St. Petersburg, FL.

“Our neighbor’s copy of Defender was delivered to our home by mistake. I didn’t notice the address to whom it was for, but started to read it. I enjoyed it so much, I would like to receive it regularly...delivered the Defender to its rightful owner after I finished reading it.” Nancy Michel, Lebanon, PA.

TWELFTH ANNUAL
ST. LOUIS AREA-WIDE LECTURESHIP
September 17-19, 1992
“READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER, PART II”

Thursday, September 17

6:30 P.M.	Congregational Singing	
7:00 P.M.	How Do We Interpret The Bible?	Mac Deaver
8:00 P.M.	The Identity Of The New Testament Church	James Boyd

Friday, September 18

6:30 P.M.	Congregational Singing	
7:00 P.M.	Why We Don't See The Bible Alike	James Boyd
8:00 P.M.	Women's Role In The Church	Alan Highers

Saturday, September 19

9:00 A.M.	Establishing Bible Authority	Mac Deaver
9:00 A.M.	Charlotte Fanning: Extraordinary Wife And Christian Educator (For Ladies Only)	Brenda Rutherford

9:50 A.M.	Are The Principles Of The Restoration Movement Still Valid Today?, Part I	William Woodson
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9:50 A.M.	Sarah Andrews: Extraordinary Pioneer Missionary (For Ladies Only)	Brenda Rutherford
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10:30 A.M. Break For Refreshments

11:00 A.M.	The Instrumental Music Controversy	Alan Highers
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11:45 A.M.	Are The Principles Of The Restoration Movement Still Valid Today?, Part II	William Woodson
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12:30 P.M. Final Comments And Dismissal

West End Church of Christ, 9350 Natural Bridge Road,
St. Louis, MO 63134
For more information call (618) 667-6708

Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, “Behold The Pattern,” brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord’s body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God’s word why their argued positions are fraught with’ deadly error.

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Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

Book Review

Bobby Liddell

“The Bible Only Makes Christians Only And The Only Christians” by Thomas B. Warren

Originally printed in a hard-back edition, this excellent book is now available in paperback for only \$2.95 (plus postage and handling) from National Christian Press, P.O. Box 6709, Moore, OK 731 53.

Brother Warren says: “This book makes clear: (1) that the Bible is the **one** and **only** source of **the truth** as to how to become a **Christian**, (2) that people who both learn and obey what the Bible teaches become nothing other than **Christians** by so doing, and (3) that the **only** Christians are people who have learned and obeyed the **Bible** plan of salvation. These are the three basic truths (in regard to the Bible) which the world needs to learn above all else.” Indeed it does! Let us all help to get that message out.

We encourage Christians to obtain this book and to help get it to others both lost and saved. Plans are to print it in several foreign languages for distribution around the world. Will you help? All book sale proceeds go to printing and distribution expenses.

DEFENDER

Volume XXI

September 1992

Number 9

Saints in Wrong Places

Bill Brandstatter

There are many Christians who work hard at avoiding many of the temptations of life. These Christians would not be found in bars or nightclubs. They would not be seen in skimpy clothes either. Paul said: "But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). Many battle temptations on a daily basis. If a Christian goes to a bar, he is in the wrong place. If however, he is not in services when the church assembles, wherever he is, he may be in the wrong place. James wrote Christians, saying: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin" (Jam. 4:17). There are many wrong places in which Christians place themselves when the church assembles.

A Christian is in the wrong place if he is at a ball game when the church assembles. As important as it is to encourage our children, we should not be at a ball game on Wednesday night. Paul wrote: "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). Christians must learn to; "stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13). Elijah stated in the long ago: "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD *be* God, follow him" (1 Kin. 18:21). How can a Christian be of the opinion that it is alright to be at a ball game when the church assembles?

A Christian is in the wrong place if he is at home taking it easy when the saints meet. He should want to be in services. Assembling with the saints is not an option. We need it for our spiritual existence. The Lord knows that. From the Patriarchal Age into the Mosaic Age and now, the Christian Age God has wanted His people to assemble. That assembly was held in the tabernacle, then in the temple and synagogues and today, in the church building. Christians should want to be where the saints meet, whenever they meet.

A Christian is in the wrong place if he is working on some "important" project when the saints assemble. What could be more important than our soul's salvation (Mat. 16:26)? Important projects will come and go, yet we only have one soul. We must work to live, but what if we live to work? Jesus said "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). If we are too busy to pay attention to our soul, something is definitely wrong.

A Christian is in the wrong place if he is entertaining company when the saints assemble. How disheartening it is to hear of Christians who will not attend services because of company. One of the best ways to show our concern for that company is not to stay at home, but invite them to go with us to services. Andrew found someone he was concerned about to bring to Jesus (John 1:41). Christians need to be like Andrew.

A Christian is in the wrong place if he is home doing chores when the saints assemble. Chores can until wait another time. Remember the ones who stated they had to first bury a dead relative. Jesus would not even take this as an excuse for not following Him (Mat. 8:22). Why do some think he would take any of the above? The words to that precious song ought to ring in our hearts: "Where he leads me I will follow." Will you follow the Lord when it comes to worship. God is seeking the true worshippers (John 4:23). When the saints meet if you are not there, are you in the wrong place?

206 N. Hancock; Ironton, MO

The Essence of Prophecy

Prophecy is, by definition: that which is spoken forth. That which is spoken forth, in true prophecy, is that which could not be known by man unless revealed by God; thus, whether predictive (foretelling) or declarative (forth-telling), and whether having to do with events past, present or future, prophecy signifies the speaking forth of the will of God to man. By prophecy, God gave instruction, information, prediction, warning, comfort and hope. By prophecy, and its fulfillment, God confirmed His Word to be His Word; that is, divine revelation; thus, true prophecy is found only in the Bible.

Bible prophecy has certain characteristics (all of which have been attacked by liberal critics), which, when understood, should heighten one's appreciation for God's inspired Word. Bible prophecy often involves that which is remote as to time and place, even that which is nonexistent at the time of the prophecy. To the dreamer, Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel said, "As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came *into thy mind* upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass" (Dan. 2:29). Daniel spoke of kingdoms and peoples then unknown and unable to be known to him or any other man by ordinary knowledge, but revealed in prophecy, and whose risings and fallings are now historically documented to have followed precisely the predicted pattern.

Bible prophecy is often very specific and detailed. With man, the more specific the prediction, the less likely is the possibility of its coming to pass. With God, accuracy is not accidental, nor is it incidental, but significant. Of Christ's birth, Isaiah prophesied: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). Isaiah did not prophesy just that the Christ would be born, nor that He would be born of just any woman (and man), nor that He would be born of just any "young" woman, but that He would be born of a virgin. Matthew declares the exact fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 (Mat. 1:22-23).

In an obvious Messianic prophecy, Zechariah noted the price of Christ's betrayal, thirty pieces of silver, which was later used to buy the potter's field (Zec. 11:12-13). Again, in his inspired writing, Matthew gives the fulfillment (Mat. 26:14-15; 27:3-7), and declares these actions to be the specific and accurate fulfillment of prophecy (Mat. 27:9-10).

Bible prophecy is often antithetical to human reasoning. What man could reasonably predict the downfall of: impenetrable Edom (Obadiah); of Jerusalem, home of God's temple (Mic. 3:12); or of Nineveh, conqueror of nations (Nah. 1:1; 2:6)? Who would dare to predict the Son of God being born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14)? What man, on his own, would have predicted the long awaited and cherished Messiah would be rejected (Isa. 53:3; John 1:11); forsaken (Zec. 13:7; Mat. 26:56); scourged (Isa. 53:5; Mat. 27:26); crucified (Psa. 22:16; Mark 15:24); and, mocked (Psa. 22:7-8; Mat. 27:39-44)? Such contradictions to that which would accord with the thinking of men show the prophecies to be miraculously given from God.

Liberal "higher critics" deny the element of prediction or foretelling in prophecy. Their assumption is that a prophet was a man of "his own time" who spoke only to men "of his own time." That tells only half the story. God's prophets spoke to men of their own time about those things which were of concern and significance, but they also spoke of those things which were future and which would be of concern and significance to all, from those then living to those who would see the fulfillment of the prophecy and to those who would live after that fulfillment and read the inspired record of the prophecy and its fulfillment. Contrary to the "critics," biblical prophecy was not written after the fact, ambiguous, artificially fulfilled, nor just a phenomenon common to all religions and peoples. No well-attested evidence of one miraculous "prophecy" has ever been found outside the Bible!

What Would it Take to Get You To Come Back Sunday Night?

Allen Webster

Statistics do not lie. More people love God on Sunday morning than on Sunday night. There will be, generally, one third fewer Christians lifting voices in praise at 6:00 P.M. than at 11:00 A.M. Shepherds pray about it, preachers preach about it, Christians are concerned about it, and children wonder about it, but it happens anyway.

The question is often posed in elders' meetings, "What would it take to get everybody back on Sunday nights?" Some churches try the "entertainment route." They "jazz up" services by appealing to fleshly lusts with give-aways, jokes, food, music and singing groups. This is the wrong approach. But what is the right approach? What would it take to get "Sunday morning Christians" to come back and worship in the evening?

More Love from God? If only God was more generous toward his children, they would feel more like expressing love for Him. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (Jam. 1:17). "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

We do not need more love FROM God, but more love **for** God (Mat. 22:37-38).

More Sacrifice from Christ? If Christ had given more, Christians would surely feel a debt to worship. "And when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified...And they stripped him...And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head...and mocked him...And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head...And they crucified him" (Mat. 27:26-35; cf., 20:28; Rom. 5:6; 2 Cor. 8:9).

We do not need more sacrifice FROM Christ but more sacrifice FOR Christ (Mat. 6:33; Rom. 1:14).

A Better God to Worship? If only Christians had an object worthy of their worship, they would, "get more out of Sunday nights." "Among the gods *there is* none like unto thee, O Lord; neither *are there any works* like unto thy works" (Psa. 86:8). "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One...Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? *there is* no searching of his understanding" (Isa. 40:25, 28). "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:9).

We do not need a **better God**, but **better Christians**.

A BETTER BOOK TO STUDY? Surely people would come back if they had a perfect book to study. "The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple...The law of thy mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver...O how love I thy law! *it is* my meditation all the day...How sweet are thy words unto my taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth!...Thy word *is*...a light unto my path...The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple...my heart standeth in awe of thy word" (Psa. 19:7; 119:72, 97, 103, 105, 130, 161).

A Better Group with Which to Fellowship? Since Christians are washed in the Lamb's blood (Rev. 7:14), called out of the world (2 Cor. 6:17), and forgiven of sins (Acts 2:38), they are the best people in the world! They are not perfect, but they are better as a group than whoever one would spend his time with during the period when worship takes place.

We do not need a **better group** but **more desire** to encourage the group (Heb. 10:24).

Have these words been erased from our Bibles: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). Do we no longer believe that deliberate transgression will cause one to be lost (Heb. 10:26; Rom. 6:23)?

We better take God seriously. Those who deliberately skip worship services will be lost.

Route 1 Box 38; Tiplersville, MS 38674

The Jordan River

Bobby Liddell

No great cities stand on the banks of the Jordan. No great vessels of commerce ply its swift and dangerous waters. The Jordan is not noted for its length nor for its picturesque beauty.¹ Still, the river Jordan is the most famous river in the world. Every Christian is well acquainted with its importance. Even those, who have had minimal contacts with Christianity, are aware of the river's prominent role in Bible history. Its fame comes from the fact it has been the site of numerous exhibitions of God's power and glory.² One could not even casually read the Bible without noticing the many times it mentions the Jordan. Great events in the lives of many Bible characters have taken place in and around this great river.

Uniqueness of physical characteristics also attracts attention to the Jordan. The Jordan river is the lowest river in the world. The valley through which it flows is the lowest land on earth, and the sea, into which it empties, is the lowest body of water.³ From Dan to the Gulf of Aqaba is a tremendous crack in the earth's surface, the opposing walls being from four to fourteen miles apart.⁴ Within this great division, streams the turbid waters of the Jordan, from its unpretentious origins in the foothills of Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea. The length of the Jordan valley is 104 miles with an average width of seven miles.⁵ Through it, the Jordan flows almost due south in a winding course which takes it through Lake Hula and the Sea of Galilee, to empty into the Dead Sea. Running below sea level most of the way of its short length, it drops an incredible three thousand feet, for an average drop of twenty-two feet per mile. It varies from eighty feet in width to one hundred and eight feet and from five to twelve feet in depth.⁶

All three sources of the Jordan are either in, or close to, Dan in the shadows of Mount Hermon. As the snows of Mount Hermon thaw, the icy water seeps between the rocks into the very foundations of the mountain. From thence, it arises to form the three sources of the Jordan and many smaller springs. Fed by these melting snows, all three maintain an abundant flow.⁷ From the western side of Dan, emerges one of the largest springs in the world. Flowing south along the middle of the plain, its icy waters are twenty to thirty inches deep and about twenty feet wide. In the distance, it is concealed by the luxurious growth of weeds, canes and poplars, along with other vegetation.⁸ This spring, known as the Leddan, is the principal source of the Jordan and is at an altitude of about five hundred feet.⁹

From a tremendous cavern below Banias, or Caesarea Philippi, at an altitude of twelve hundred feet, issues the second source of the river.¹⁰ From under the walls on the northern side of the ruins of Banias, flows this stream, only half as abundant as the Leddan. It flows rapidly toward the southwest meeting the Leddan about six miles from its source. This spring, two and one-half miles from Dan, is the eastern source of the Jordan.¹¹

The other principal source originates in a large fountain on the western slopes of Hermon, near the town of Hasbeiya, at an altitude of seventeen hundred feet.¹² This rapid mountain stream, known as the Hasbany, lies deep within its bed of black rock. Beginning one and one-half miles west of Dan, under the western side of Mount Hermon, it is about equal in size to the Banias stream and is the western and most distant source of the Jordan.

Five miles below their points of origin, the Leddan and the Banias merge, at an altitude of 148 feet. As their combined waters course on, they are joined, one-half mile downstream, by the Hasbany. After their junction, they flow across marshland, and seven miles onward empty into the lake known as Hula.¹³

Lake Hula, called the waters of Merom in the Bible, is three miles wide and four miles long. It is triangular in shape coming to a point at its southern end. The Leddan is eleven miles upstream of the northern end of the lake. The depth of the lake averages eleven feet.¹⁴ Hula is nowhere deeper than fifteen feet.¹⁵ The surface of Lake Hula is approximately the level of the Mediterranean Sea, which is thirty miles to the west. The marshy plain surrounding the lake is too wet to be used for agriculture. It is so wet the shore can only be reached from the east and the southwest. Farther out, the land is very rich and most can be cultivated.¹⁶ The region around Lake Hula is not a valley as that around the Sea of Galilee or the Dead Sea. A dam of natural rock, caused by an ancient lava flow from the east, blocked the waters of the Jordan creating the shallow lake and the marshy plains.¹⁷

From the southern end of the lake, the Jordan continues its course, easing tranquilly through its banks for a distance of two miles. It then careens down a rocky winding course.¹⁸ From gently sloping banks, the water, quickened by its rapid descent, knifes through the walls of black rock, cutting a narrow gorge in the surrounding

low hills. It crashes over rapids until it approaches the Sea of Galilee when it slowly levels off to gently enter the sea.¹⁹ When the Jordan enters the Sea of Galilee, it has dropped six hundred and eight feet in ten and one-half miles for an average drop of sixty-five feet per mile.²⁰

The distance from Lake Hula to the Sea of Galilee is fifteen miles. The Sea of Galilee is twelve and one-half miles long, and is seven and one-half miles wide at its widest point. Shaped much like a harp, it has been called by the name, Chinnereth, which means harp.²¹ It has also been called Genessaret and Tiberias. Noted for its beautiful blue water, it is an amazingly beautiful lake. The Jordan enters it as a small stream and leaves a much larger river. The lake is also fed by underground streams which contribute to the strength of the lower Jordan.²²

The Sea of Galilee is but an expansion of the Jordan. It is bounded on east and west by mountains. The water is clear and deepens gradually from the shore on every side. Its greatest depth is one hundred sixty-five feet. Fish abound in its clear blue waters. It is also a place of sudden violent storms. From the surrounding mountains, the storms come in quickly, making the otherwise calm waters dangerous in a few moments. From the point of the bay, in the southern end of the sea, the Jordan exits. It runs first to the northwest for about one mile, then after a short curve to the south, it starts its winding path to the Dead Sea.²³

The Jordan recorded in the Scriptures is that part of the river between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Mountains rise three thousand feet on the western shore and five thousand feet on the east.²⁴ It runs its whole course through a fissure which is four miles wide at its narrowest point and widens to fourteen miles at its widest point.²⁵ From the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea is a distance of sixty-five miles, but its course winds so that in going sixty-five miles, it runs two hundred miles. There are no long bends, only short sharp curves. Between the two seas, the river falls over six hundred feet, but its rate of descent is not constant. In a distance of forty-two miles, it falls four hundred and sixty feet, for an average of eleven feet per mile. In the next section, beginning at the Damieh ford, it falls an average of four and one-half feet per mile over a length of thirteen miles. From there to the Dead Sea, a distance of ten miles, it falls nine feet per mile. If it were not for the many short bends, rapids, alternating pools and level stretches where the current is slow, the river would be a raging torrent.²⁶

The most important streams flowing into the Jordan between the two seas are the Yarmuk and the Jabbok.²⁷ The Jordan has two other perennial tributaries, the Jalud to the north on the western side and the Farah on the south on the western side. The Jalud's source is in the Jezreel valley, while the source of the Farah is on Mount Ebal. The Yarmuk, to the north on the eastern side, is the largest of the four. Its mouth, about six miles below the Sea of Galilee, is nearly as wide as the Jordan where the two unite. To the south on the east is the Jabbok. There are also several winter streams on both sides which account for part of the swelling of the river during the winter and spring.²⁸

Shortly after leaving the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan enters a broad valley called El Ghor by the Arabs, and in the Bible, known as "the plain."²⁹ With the Chor is the Zor, or flood plain. This half-mile wide inner valley is flooded at the time of harvest.³⁰ The river has two sets of banks, and in some places three, but it is only the lower banks that are flooded. The low flats along the river are not very wide, but they are covered with vegetation. It is from this thick growth, that the "Swelling of the Jordan" in Bible days expelled the lion from its lair.³¹

Thus, the Jordan flows into the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is aptly named, because it has no outlet. It is forty-eight miles long and ten miles wide. Its surface is twelve hundred ninety-two feet below sea level and it reaches a depth of thirteen hundred feet. The Jordan pumps six and one-half million tons of water into the Dead Sea daily.³² The sea does not overflow, though fed by two rivers, the Arnon and the Zered, because of intense evaporation. Due to this, its waters are composed of about one-fourth solids.³³

1. J. W. McGarvey *Sermons*, p. 298.

2. C. R. Nichol, *Bible Notes On The Holy Land*, p. 82.

3. McGarvey, op. cit., p. 299.

4. J. W. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 35.

5. Ibid.

6. Charles F. Pfeiffer, *Baker's Bible Atlas*, p. 29.

7. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 31.

8. Ibid, pp. 30-31.

9. Nichol, op. cit., p. 80.

10. Ibid.

11. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 31.

12. Nichol, loc. cit.
13. Ibid.
14. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 31.
15. _____, "Jordan," *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia Of The Bible*, III: 686.
16. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 31.
17. Elmer B. Smick, *Archaeology Of The Jordan Valley*, p. 16.
18. Nichol, loc. cit.
19. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 32.
20. McGarvey, *Sermons*, p. 299.
21. Pfeiffer, loc. cit.
22. Zondervan, op. cit., p. 688.
23. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 32.
24. Nichol, loc. cit.
25. McGarvey, *Sermons*, p. 299.
26. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 33.
27. Charles T. Pfeiffer and Howard F. Vos, *The Wycliffe Historical Geography Of Bible Lands*, p. 168.
28. McGarvey, *Lands Of The Bible*, p. 34.
29. _____, "Jordan," *The Encyclopedia Americana*, XVI: 209.
30. Zondervan, loc. cit.
31. W. M. Thomson, *The Land And The Book*, I: 364.
32. Pfeiffer, loc. cit.
33. Ibid.

Stand Upon Thy Feet

Shan Jackson

Men sometimes speak, and more frequently act, as if the message of the Master has paralyzed in some way the sinews of our manhood to the very core of our lives. However, the purpose of following Jesus is not to impoverish our lives but rather to show us life's grandest blessings. Following Christ means, as God said to the prophet, "Son of man, stand upon thy feet" (Eze. 2:1). This is a statement of God's imperative but what will be our response? We, as God's children; we, as Christ's soldiers, must meet Christianity's demands as friend meets friend—face to face and eye to eye. Standing upon our feet is the only way we can make it through this world but praying upon our knees is the essential support for this stand. When our heart and life have been surrendered to the Master's cause it will naturally stand us upon our feet. It will assuredly lift our nature, enrich our existence and add reach to our goals and vision to our faith. Plus, it will buffer us from the fiery darts of the evil one.

God said, "Stand upon thy feet." Ezekiel was to be the bearer of God's message, but to be commissioned by and for God he first had to stand still and hear God. His attitude was to be one of attention and respect which remains fundamental today. With this needed attitude of reverence and humility, we stand. Never has God allowed His children to crouch at His feet, rather He has commanded them to fight at His side.

Standing upon one's feet also instills in us an inward attitude of self-respect. God calls us to dignity when He calls us to service. It is a very false view of truth that Christ-likeness tends to make His followers fearful and afraid. True self-respect, which springs from humility before the Father, is not grounded in man's fleeting pride, but rather from the depth of God's religion. Religion calls for dignity just as service calls for action. God said, "Stand upon thy feet" which calls for conviction and courage. Dedication demands righteousness just as righteousness demands truth.

Standing upon one's feet also demonstrates an attitude of expectancy. Expectancy which echoes "Speak Lord, thy servant heareth." To a disciple on his feet, with this needed attitude, God will have something to say through His Word. This standing also shows a sense of readiness for action characterized by God's greatest servants. As the prophet said, so say we, "Lord, here I am, send me." When our Lord calls upon us to stand, we realize action is part of the pact.

However, why do we not more often hear God's call for us to stand? Would God not sooner call through His Word if we were listening urgently for that call rather than sitting idly by in apathy and self-service? Would not His biblical call be heard louder and plainer if we were already armed for the fight rather than preaching peace where

there is no peace? Let us all stand upon our feet and offer ourselves to God as did Ezekiel so long ago. "Lord, we are truly here to be used, use us as you will." Let us offer ourselves to the Father's cause and mean it with all our hearts.

P. O. Box 904 Palacios, TX 77465

Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, "Behold The Pattern," brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord's body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God's word why their argued positions are fraught with' deadly error.

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Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

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

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

"And now why tattiest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 11:16).

Book Review

Bobby Liddell

"JESUS CHRIST, The Gift Of God's Grace And The Object Of Man's Faith," Curtis A. Cates, Editor.

This hardbound book of over six hundred pages contains fifty-five lectures from the Twenty-Sixth Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship conducted March 29-April 2, 1992 in the buildings of the Knight Arnold Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee. It is available for \$12.00 (plus postage) from Memphis School of Preaching, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 38118.

Written by men of outstanding ability and unquestioned dedication to the Cause of Christ, it provides "excellent Bible-based discussions on various subjects relating to our Lord." For one wishing to broaden his knowledge concerning pertinent subjects such as "The Power Of The Cross" (Rex A. Turner, Sr.), "The Body Of Christ: Not An Irrelevance" (Roy J. Hearn) or "The Lord's Amazing Grace" (Winfred Clark), this book is a must. Included also are eight lectures presented for ladies by faithful sisters in Christ.

“God’s Wonderful Grace”

THE FIRM FOUNDATION LECTURES

October 4-8, 1992

East Ridge Church of Christ
501 McBrien Road, Chattanooga, TN 3741 2

Sunday, October 4

8:30 AM	What Grace Is	Garry Brantley
9:30 AM	What Grace Is Not	Eddie Whitten
10:30 AM	The Grace Of God And Spiritual Things	Charles Cochran
6:00 PM	Grace In The Old Testament	Thomas Eaves
7:00 PM	The Grace Of God And Final judgment	William Woodson

Monday, October 5

9:00 AM	Grace Of God And The “New Hermeneutics”	David Hester
10:00 AM	Grace And Automatic Forgiveness	Ken Willis
11:00 AM	Grace And Direct Operation Of The Holy Spirit	Perry Cotham
1:30 PM	Grace Of God And Material Things	Guss Eoff
2:30 PM	Grace Of God And Prayer	Ed Jones
3:30 PM	Restoration History	Adron Doran
7:00 PM	The Grace Of God Is Harmonious With Physical Law	Paul Kidwell
8:00 PM	Grace And Romans 8	Buster Dobbs

Tuesday, October 6

9:00 AM	The Grace Of God And The Cross Of Christ	Waymon Summers
10:00 AM	Grace, Meriting As A Debt	Noah Hackworth
11:00 AM	The Grace Of God And The Fellowship Of Saints	Wayne Coats
1:30 PM	The Grace Of God And Service To Mankind	Richard Melson
2:30 PM	Grace And Romans 4	Lindell Mitchell
3:30 PM	Restoration History	Adron Doran
7:00 PM	Grace And Universalism	Joe Gilmore
8:00 PM	The Grace Of God Demands Discipline	Winfred Clark

Wednesday, October 7

9:00 AM	Grace, Dimensions Of: God To Man, Man To Man, Man To God	Al Simmons
10:00 AM	Grace And Inherited Total Depravity	Wayne Price
11:00 AM	Grace And Salvation	Daniel Denham
1:30 PM	Being Worthy Of Grace	Joe Cox
2:30 PM	Grace And Work	Rod Rutherford
3:30 PM	Restoration History	Adron Doran
7:00 PM	Grace And Galatians	Garland Elkins
8:00 PM	Grace In The New Testament	Roy Deaver

Thursday, October 8

9:00 AM	Grace Of God And Big And Little Sins	Johnie Scaggs
10:00 AM	Grace And Imputed Righteousness	Bobby Liddell
11:00 AM	The Limits Of God’s Grace	Ronnie Hayes
1:30 PM	The Immutability Of The Grace Of God	Gary Colley
2:30 PM	The Grace Of God And Respect Of Persons	Curtis Cates
3:30 PM	Restoration History	Adron Doran
5:00 PM	Honor To Whom Honor Is Due	George DeHoff
7:00 PM	Grace And Law	Bill Lockwood
8:00 PM	The Grace Noah Found	Paul Sain

Singing nightly Monday-Thursday at 6:30 PM

DEFENDER

Volume XXI

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Believes All Things

Shan Jackson

Possibly the greatest statements on love, save from the lips of Jesus, were penned through inspiration by the apostle Paul. The depth and scope of feeling in 1 Corinthians 13 is unparalleled. However, especially challenging is the portion of verse 7 where he states, concerning love, that it “believes all things.” This phrase though is not indicating that love is easily duped or deceived; rather, that love has one’s highest interest at heart. Love serves as the most God-like emotion in man’s emotional constitution. It is this degree of love that sets man apart from the animal world. This God-like love is best described in Christ’s words recorded in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.” Jesus realized the purity and intensity of *agape* love because its design and structure came from the very core of divine nature. God’s love comes from God’s heart and Jesus’ understanding never faltered for God or man though His “cup” lay ahead (Luke 22:42). In His life, His teaching and His prayers, we find the God-like, Christ-displayed love of the New Testament. As Paul wrote as recorded toward the end of this chapter, he listed three great Christian attributes, namely, faith, hope, and charity (love) and with great confidence comes the acknowledgment that the “greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13).

Such love stands at the apex of Christianity. In it, the Christian realizes what the nonbeliever can never recognize. It is this love, remember, that Jesus says sets His disciples apart from the world (John 13:35). This is also the love that prompted Jesus to Calvary and with this God-like love He allowed Himself to be taken by wicked hands and crucified on a rugged tree. However, His death stands today as more than just an incident in time’s past; rather, it serves as a perfect demonstration of total love. In that instant of time, God raised man from the depths of spiritual loss to the heights of spiritual salvation. His death, this demonstration of total love, **was the** required price for our souls. In this act, Christ identified Himself with our greatest need, and because of this ultimate demonstration, God can today bestow His blessings upon the precious bride of His devoted Son. Christ’s church is the spiritual home of God’s elect; however, such blessings do not come without responsibility.

Responsibilities to God begin with a person’s response to the Father’s urgent call. Christ said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mat. 11:28). But our coming has a decided process as instituted by the Lord. We first must hear his message through a study of his word, “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Having thus heard we react to His truth with either disregard or acceptance. Acceptance results in “faith” and “without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*” (Heb. 11:6). Jesus had previously stated that unless we believe that He was who He said He was we would “die in your sins” (John 8:24). Following this entrance of faith comes the need to change our heart and our actions and set our affection solely upon the Saviour. This change is referred to as repentance, “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). Peter added, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). However, this degree of change requires a life-changing stimulus. Jesus said, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 10:32). He also said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16).

This combination of study, faith, and change, coupled with his stimulus to action puts us into Christ and, thereby, into His love (Gal. 2:20). Our love “believes all things” as stated so wonderfully by Paul. Salvation is not a deception conceived in an angry heart; but, rather, a gift of God’s total and overflowing love. No wonder John could

Editorial by Bobby Liddell

Prophets, True and False

"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" (2 Pet. 1:21). The God of the universe gave *through men*, His prophecy to men. Thus, true prophets spoke forth only that which was given them of God. The Bible simply and plainly presents God's definition of a prophet in Deuteronomy 18:18, where God said, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." A prophet was: (1) chosen by God; (2) given words from God; (3) to speak those words to men; and, (4) to speak only that which God commanded him.

That there were false prophets in Old Testament and in New Testament times the Holy record plainly affirms. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pet. 2:1). "Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart" (Jer. 14:14). "Behold, I *am* against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD" (Jer. 23:32). "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Mat. 24:24).

Speaking through the prophet Isaiah, God challenged the followers of false gods and their prophets to prove their gods by the test of prophecy. "Let them bring *them* forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they *be*, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye *are* gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold *it* together" (Isa. 41:22-23).

Again, God said: "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did *them* suddenly, and they came to pass" (Isa. 48:3). "I have even from the beginning declared *it* to thee; before it came to pass I shewed *it* thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them" (Isa. 48:5).

Many today claim the power from God to prophesy. Each and every one is a false prophet (translated liar and deceiver). Others purport themselves miraculously able to discern present day fulfillment or the imminent fulfillment of biblical prophecies; that is, of those prophecies which God says have already been fulfilled, many of them being fulfilled centuries ago! The meaning of other biblical prophecies has been so perverted by them no true student of the Bible would begin to recognize them.

From the millionaire televangelist to the woman preaching to a handful in a storefront, the wildly speculative and ever changing "prophecies" peal forth. They, each time a nation rises or falls or a new dictator comes to power, change their "prophecies" and "inspired interpretations," being bounded only by their wicked imagination and the gullibility of their audience. These are the same folks who have "ciphered" the number 666 through curious manipulations of the names of practically every world and religious leader for the last one hundred years.

The sure and final test of a prophet is the fulfillment of his prophecy. "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deu. 18:22).

Man's Role in the Home

Bill Brandstatter

Through the years a number of articles have been written and sermons preached on "Woman's Role in the Church." Part of the reason is because of the abuse of such today. But there is another topic of importance that concerns Christians which also needs to be addressed. Have we forgotten that man has a role in the home?

A man's responsibility consists of, among other things, support for his children and wife. God said to Adam in the long ago, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). Paul later on alludes to this when he writes, "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8). Some of the Christians at Thessalonica had an incorrect attitude in regards to working. Paul wrote to them: "This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 The. 3:10). But a husband's role in the home does not end here. There is more a husband must do.

The husband must help in the rearing of children. Often a husband is so busy with work, he fails to help with the discipline in the home. Paul asks the question in regards to discipline, "for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Heb. 12:7b). He mentions two verses later, "we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9). A father who does not discipline his children may be teaching his child to be unfaithful to God. If a child will not obey an earthly father, how well will he obey and reverence the heavenly father? The woman's first and foremost responsibility should be to: "love their husbands, to love their children, *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home" (Tit. 2:4-5). Yet the man also has a responsibility in the home. Notice, Paul instructs fathers to bring up children, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). The spiritual "bringing up" is directed to the man. This involves more than just bringing a child to services. The example set at home as a father, husband, and Christian are equally important.

A husband must treat his wife correctly. A woman is different. God planned it that way. Peter advises: "husbands, in like manner, dwell with *your wives* according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7—ASV). By indicating woman is the weaker vessel, Peter is simply indicating the different make up of the woman and the reference here is not to the mental but the physical. If the husband and wife would both practice the golden rule (Mat. 7:12) many marriages would last longer. Paul's "golden rule of marriage" is found in Ephesians 5:28. There Paul, by inspiration, states: "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." This is not always easy for every man. But, if he desires a Christian mate for life he must so do.

The role of the man in the home can be summed up in one word, RESPONSIBILITY. A man who shirks his responsibility could indeed be the leading cause of his home being destroyed. Lot, in the long ago, because of irresponsibility led his family to sin. Eli's lack of discipline with Hophni and Phinehas caused problems. So will fathers today who are irresponsible or fail to discipline their children. Let us fervently pray Christian men will all realize the importance each plays in his home. May all the fathers and husbands reading this article pray to God for the strength and courage to be the kind of whom God will say, "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

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The Compromise of Cohabitation

Burt Jones

I have seen one article after another having to do with "Coping With Cohabitation," "Who Does The Dirty Work?" and "Being Able To Just Walk Away." These articles simply deal with living together—that currently fashionable, alternative life-style that releases the concerned parties from commitment, constraint and confinement.

There are approximately three million people cohabiting in the United States. We almost breathe a sigh of relief in the midst of the crooked and perverse nation (Phi. 2:15) realizing that this represents only about one percent of the population. But, then we are reminded that even the loss of one soul is precious in His sight.

One of the previously mentioned articles suggested that couples who cohabit are fifty percent more likely to break up than those who marry. If my third grade arithmetic serves me well, since the present day figures on divorce are reaching in excess of **fifty-one percent**, that **must** mean that **every single case** of cohabitation will ultimately end in failure!

I would like to offer a very old fashioned solution to an “arrangement” that has obviously failed miserably. The Record tells us God has provided a blueprint for those who have explored the far country and are ready to leave the “hog troughs” of heathenism and come back to their Father. God has arranged a way in which a man and a woman may correctly leave their mother and father and marry one another, after which “they twain shall be one flesh” (Mat. 19:5).

Marriage is a divine institution. It means more than sexual fulfillment. Man is different from the beast because he has both a physical and a spiritual nature (2 Cor. 4:16). The absence of commitment through a marriage relationship equals selfishness. Not only is this selfishness through an arrangement such as cohabitation damaging to the partners, but any children who happen to be involved in this sinful coupling are affected. Innocent young souls, during extremely impressionable years, can become the prey of their parents, live-in boyfriends, or girlfriends. The children lack a positive Christian role model. Many of these children will grow into adulthood seeing irresponsibility and lack of commitment as normal, **never knowing** the sweetness and eternal benefits of Christian parents committed to each other for life.

Marriage is a supreme relationship. It is the greatest human contract. It takes precedence over all other human relationships. The relationship between parent and child is exceedingly precious, but one day even that must take a secondary place (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 6:2).

The lack of commitment to a Christian marriage relationship offers exposure to sexually transmitted diseases. A monogamous relationship, in a Christian marriage, is the **only true safe union!** When a Christian man and wife commit themselves one to another in love, respect and honor, a unique and incredible relationship grows and flourishes.

Struggles will be a part of this growth, but as a Christian family, both those married and their children can mature from disappointment, knowing we learn obedience as did our Lord, by the things we suffer (Heb. 5:8).

The marriage relationship is for life. It is not some temporary, non-committal “walk away when you feel like it” pact (Rom. 7:1-3). Marriage is permanent except when fornication is committed (Mat. 19:9). God never intended that there be divorce; neither did He intend that there be fornication. Under the law of Moses, God made the provision that the fornicator be stoned (Lev. 20:10). This left the innocent party free to marry again. But, under the Christian dispensation we are not to stone to death the fornicator, and so, the one exception of fornication. But, even in the case of fornication when there is a remarriage not ALL parties are without sin (Mat. 19:9). Therefore, re-marriage is not pleasing in the sight of God for ALL involved (Mat. 19:9).

Just as in sporting events, there are also boundaries in life. What would a football game be without them? A running back may run for a score, but if he steps out of bounds, the touchdown is nullified. God requires we remain within his stated boundaries during the CHRISTIAN race. In the realm of Christian marriage it is no different. Cohabitation is slapping God in the face and saying that you will play your game without boundaries and make up the rules as you go. This pain of cohabitation goes far beyond the unmarried couple simply living together. It affects the very fabric of a righteous nation. “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Pro. 14:34). **Brethren, cohabitation is a sin!**

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Don't Fight the Law

Lynn Blair

There is a line in an old song that goes, “I fought the law and the law won!” The song is no doubt talking about some kind of outlaw disobeying the laws of the land. In such situations, most folks who continue to fight the law of the land lose.

Everybody that continues to fight the law of God loses! Notice my wording, “continues to fight.” That is not to say we can not be forgiven. Obviously we can (1 John 1:7; Acts 22:16; etc.). It is that person who conies to fight

or rebel against God and His law that loses, if not in this life, at least in the end.

Just go through the Old Testament and remind yourself of so many examples of those who fought against God and His law. Whether it be the two priests who were the nephews of Moses—Nadab and Abihu (who “offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not”—Lev. 10:1-2) or the great King David who was so good in many ways but fell to lust and adultery (2 Sam. 11:1-5). There are numerous others that come to mind.

These examples do not stop in the Old Testament. What of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) or Diotrephes (3 John 9-10) in the New Testament?

Of course, one really does not have to go back even as far as the New Testament to observe someone fighting against God and His law. You can see people doing the same thing today. Some will seek to “obey” God’s law as long as they can be married to whom they want, no matter how many times they have been married before (Mat. 19:9). Some will seek to “obey” God’s law as long as they can talk and curse like the world (Rom. 12:14). Others will “obey” God’s law as long as it allows them to skip, miss or forsake the assembly (at least the worship assembly of their choice—Heb. 10:25; Jam. 4:17). Oh, the list could go on.

Some will “obey” God’s law as long as they do not have to get involved. Some folks will NOT get involved in the work of the church at all! However, when they fail to be personally involved, they surely miss the point: “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2).

Oh yes, there is a law under which we live. James 1:25 calls it the law of liberty and, as stated above, Galatians 6:2 calls it the law of Christ. We must obey that law and not fight against it!

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“Ye Are Bought with a Price”

M. Floyd Bailey, Jr.

We have all made life changing purchases at one time or another. In our lives we have made purchases like a new car or maybe a house, but no purchase has been made like the one made almost 2,000 years ago. It was the purchase God made. God bought the souls of the world. Every person that has ever lived or ever will live was involved in this great purchase. Many, however, have never gone through the checkout. The price has been paid but they refuse to accept it. They refuse to obey. God loved the world so much that he sent His Son to die for the sins of the world. The world was in sin (John 3:16). Satan had God’s creation clutched in his tight grip, but God did not allow Satan to keep the upper hand. God sent his Son to buy us back with His precious blood. 1 Peter 1:18-19 says: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

In the final day it is going to be those who have been washed in the blood of the lamb that will be in heaven (Rev. 1:5; 7:14). But the question must enter our minds, “How do I become washed in the blood?” The answer can be found in God’s Word. Acts 22:16 says, “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and **wash** away thy sins.” First Corinthians 6:11 says that the brethren there had been washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. Hebrews 10:22 says that they had their “bodies washed with pure water.” Thus, I believe it is clear that we are washed by the blood of the lamb when we are buried with Him in baptism (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21). We all have been bought but not everyone has been washed and therefore not all are acceptable. Second Peter 2:1 says: “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord **that bought them**, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

Christ bought us, but if we deny Him and do not follow Him at His word, we will be none of His. If you have been following the teachings of man rather than the teachings of God, there needs to be a change in your life. First Cor. 7:23 says, “Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.” Do not be among those who deny the purchase price. Obey God today! He’s waiting for you!

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Garry Brantley to Apologetics Press

The Board of Directors of Apologetics Press, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt work dedicated to the defense of New Testament Christianity, is pleased to announce effective July 1, 1992, Garry K. Brantley has joined our staff as Associate Director of Biblical Research.

Garry is a graduate of the Bellview Preacher Training School in Pensacola, Florida. In addition, he holds the B.A., M.A., and M.Div. degrees from Southern Christian University (formerly Alabama Christian School of Religion). His emphasis has been upon Old Testament studies and languages. Garry will be writing a wide selection of publications for Apologetics Press, and will be available for speaking assignments in the areas of Christian Apologetics and Christian evidences. He joins Bert Thompson, Wayne Jackson, Jim Clark, Trevor J. Major and Brad T. Bromling in the work of Apologetics Press. Those congregations wishing to contact Garry for possible participation in lectureships, meetings, youth programs, etc., may reach him through Apologetics Press at 230 Landmark Drive, Montgomery, Alabama 361 17-2752.

Contributions Sent in by Readers of Defender

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We deeply appreciate the interest shown by your gifts to help in the work we seek to do by the publication and distribution of DEFENDER. Because of your help and the generous support of the brethren at Bellview, we are able to send DEFENDER without charge.

Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, "Behold The Pattern," brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord's body. He has painstakingly provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God's word why their argued positions are fraught with deadly error.

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

Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

What Must I Do To Be SAVED?

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

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

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 21:16).

BOOK REVIEW

Bobby Liddell

In The Shadow Of Darwin: A Review of the Teachings of John N. Clayton by Wayne Jackson and Bert Thompson.

The latest publication from Apologetics Press carefully and accurately documents the error and duplicity of John N. Clayton in hopes of warning those brethren who may be deceived by his polished presentations and evasive answers. It does so in a straightforward and impressive way.

While Clayton is busily engaged in speaking to brethren across the nation on the subject of God and Evolution, he disavows being a creationist and points out "...errors involved in the creationist positions." He also states: "...evolution and the Bible show amazing agreement on almost all issues and that one is not mutually exclusive of the other." Again: "...God came into being before time began...." Sadly, those are not the only points on which he errs. Available for \$4.00 (plus \$.50 postage) from Apologetics Press, 230 Landmark Drive, Montgomery, AL 361 17. Bulk discounts available. Credit card orders call 800-234-8558.

Eleventh Annual Denton Lectures *Studies in Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther* November 8-12, 1992

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

9:00 AM	Gary Summers	Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther—An Introduction
10:00 AM	Dub McClean	Ezra, a Model for Every Servant of God
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	David Brown	Haggai and Zechariah Inspire Resumption of the Temple Construction (Ezra 5:1-17)
3:00 PM	Jim Moore	Mordecai Promoted, the Jews Preserved, Purim Instituted (Est. 8:1-10:3)
4:00 PM	Robin Haley	The Division of the Labor of Rebuilding (Neh. 3:1-32)
5:00 PM	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Goebel Music	Nehemiah Journeys to Jerusalem, Surveys Its Ruins, and Encourages the People To Begin Rebuilding (Neh. 1:1-2:20)
8:00 PM	Bobby Liddell	The Levites Confess the Sins of Their Fathers and the Goodness of God (Neh. 9:1-38)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9

9:00 AM	Michael Hatcher	Ahasuerus Rejects Vashti and Selects Esther as Queen of Persia (Est. 1:1-2:23)
10:00 AM	Dave Rogers	Haman's Wicked Plot Against the Jews and Their Alarmed Reaction (Est 3:1-4 17)
11:00 AM	Al Brown	The Temple Construction Is Stopped by the Work of Enemies (Ezra 4.1-24)
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	
2:00 PM	Bob Berard	Difficult Passages In Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther: Why are the lists of names and numbers of travelers from Babylon to Jerusalem given both by Ezra and Nehemiah and why do they differ (Ezra 2:1-60; Neh. 7:6-62)? Why do the two versions of the decree of Cyrus vary in several details (Ezra 1:1-4: 6:35)? Does the condemnation of usury include any and all charges of interest on money loaned (Neh. 5:6-13)?
3:00 PM	Discussion Forum Curtis Cates	Are the "Second Incarnation" and "Pilgrim Church" Concepts Scriptural Models for the Church?
3:46 PM	Curtis Cates	Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
6:00 PM	Dinner Break	
7:00 PM	Roy C. Deaver	Nehemiah, a Study in Real Leadership
8:00 PM	Robert Taylor	God's Will concerning Forbidden Marriages as Revealed in Ezra and Nehemiah

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

9:00 AM Gary Colley
 10:00 AM Perry Hall
 11:00 AM Mac Deaver
 12:00 PM Lunch Break
 2:00 PM Tm Ayers
 3:00 PM Discussion Forum
 Wayne Coats
 3:45 PM Wayne Costs
 5:00 PM Dinner Break
 7:00 PM Marvin Weir
 8:00 PM Thomas B. Warren

The Decree of Darius and the Completion of the Temple (Ezra 6:1-22)
 The Outcry Against Usury (Neh. 5:1-19)
 The Law Is Faithfully Expounded and Eagerly Received (Neh. 8:1-18)

The Alter Set Up and the Temple Foundation Laid (Ezra 3:1-13)

Does the Church Need To Make a "Transition"?
 Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Ezra's Proclamation Concerning Putting Away the Forbidden Wives (Ezra 10:1-44)
 The Providence of God as Revealed in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

9:00 AM Eddie Beard

 10:00 AM Larry Fluitt
 11:00 AM Lester Kamp

 12:00 PM Lunch Break
 2:00 PM Tom Wacaster
 3:00 PM Discussion Forum
 Jerry Moffitt

 3:45 PM Jerry Moffitt
 5:00 PM Dinner Break
 7:00 PM Buster Dobbs
 8:00 PM Garland Elkins

Difficult Passages in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther: How could Esther (a Jew) be married to Ahasuerus (a Gentile) without violating God's law (Est. 2:17: Exo. 34:16; Deu. 7:3 Neh. 13:23-27)? How was it acceptable for Esther to apparently spend a night with Ahasuerus before she became his queen (and thus his wife) (Est. 2:13-17)? How can we explain the apparent blood-thirst of Esther (Est. 9:13-15)? Why are the names of God and the worship of God not explicitly mentioned in Esther?

Ezra's Grief and Prayer Due to Israel's Marriages to Gentiles (Ezra 9:1-15)
 Sanballat and His Cohorts Renew Their Opposition and the Repatriates Listed (Neh. 6:1-7:73)

The Commission of Cyrus Fulfilled by Zerubbabel (Ezra 1:1-2:70)

Should Denominational Baptism (e.g., That Practiced by the Baptist Church) Be Accepted by the Lord's Church?
 Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Nehemiah and the People Vow a "Covenant" to God (Neh. 10:1-39)
 Nehemiah Reforms Several Abuses (Neh. 13:1-31)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12

9:00 AM Robert Dodson
 10:00 AM Jesse Whitlock

 11:00 AM Darwin Hunter
 12:00 PM Lunch Break
 2:00 PM Kenneth Gossett
 3:00 PM Discussion Forum
 James Meadows
 3:45 PM James Meadows
 5:00 PM Dinner Break
 7:00 PM Noel Mandarin

 8:00 PM Darrell Conley

The Expedition of Ezra and His Companions (Ezra 8:1-36)
 Distribution of the People in the Land and Dedication of the Wells (Neh. 11:1-12:47)

The Commission of Artaxerxes to Ezra (Ezra 7:1-28)

The Work Continues in Spite of Fierce Opposition (Neh. 4:1-23)

Should Woman Be Allowed To Take Leading Roles In the Church?
 Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Esther Gains Ahasuerus's Favor. Mordecai Is Honored, Haman Is Hanged on His Own Gallows (Est. 5:1-7:10)
 Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther—A Summary

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DEFENDER

Volume XXI

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Number 11

Why Are There So Many Churches?

Roger Jackson

Lester had never been a member of any church, but I guess you could say he was “leaning” toward his wife’s religion. It was a small holiness group that believed in the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the accompanying sign of speaking in tongues, as they would put it. Although his wife had given him a hard time about his drinking, it had not slowed him down much. He just had to get out of the house now to get away with it. That is why he was visiting his wife’s grandmother. He had not expected the preacher of the local church of Christ to drop by while he was there, so he had to hide his beer when the preacher drove up.

The conversation was cordial. It was one of those pleasant exchanges about the weather and other things we talk about, but about which we can do nothing. Lester had not said much, but there was a question on his mind and so he found the right time and spoke up.

“Preacher, why are there so many churches?”

The preacher hedged a little because he knew by now that Lester had been drinking and he was not sure he was actually interested in an answer. He knew that books had been written in answer to that question, but his answer must be short.

“Because so many people are not going by the Bible, Lester. A lot of people are being deceived into believing they are right when they are not,” he answered.

“I don’t belong to any church, but those people where my wife goes, they got something. Do you believe in speaking in tongues?” Lester asked.

“I believe they did in the first century, Lester, but I have not seen anybody do that today, and quite frankly, neither have you.”

Lester spoke up quickly. “I have seen them get up and start talking real fast and their tongues will run so fast they just couldn’t be faking it. I have never seen anything like that. I don’t know what it is, but it’s really something.” His excitement was betrayed by the expression on his face and the gestures he made with his hands.

The preacher interrupted, “Lester, did you know that those people use that as proof that they are doctrinally right? And did you know that the denomination down the road does the same thing, and says it proves they are doctrinally right, but the people you visit say they are fakes. Yet they have the same ‘evidence’ and are just as sure that your wife’s group is a fake? Now which one is the fake? One’s ‘evidence’ is as good as another’s.”

Lester became visibly nervous and began to pace the floor.

The preacher continued. “Lester, did you know that the baptism of the Holy Ghost enabled men who had it to raise the dead and avoid harm when they drank poison, according to Mark 16:17-20? Did you ever hear of those people raising anyone from the dead?”

“I was there when they prayed for a man who was nearly dead and he got up and walked away.” Lester quickly rejoined. “But he was not dead, was he?” the preacher pressed. “Well, I know what I saw no matter what the Bible says,” Lester snapped.

“Lester, that is why there are so many churches.”

Route 3 Box 882; Somerville, AL 35670

Biblical Prophecy Fulfilled

Our Lord said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled"(Mat. 5:17-18). There are various means by which reference is made to the fulfillment of prophecy. One of those is a direct referral back to that which was written. Peter said, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16). By so saying, he attested to the truthfulness of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-32) of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (and its attendant blessings) and of its fulfillment beginning with the events of that Pentecost day.

Jesus, in a direct reference to the fulfillment of Psalm 35:19, said, "He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause" (John 1 5:23-25).

Reference may also be made indirectly to indicate the fulfillment of prophecy. Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah: "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death" (Isa. 53:9). Matthew reported that Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man and a disciple of Jesus, begged of Pilate the body of Jesus, and upon obtaining it, "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 sepulchre, and departed" (Mat. 27:57-60).

Micah predicted the birth of the ruler of Israel in Bethlehem Ephrath (Mic. 5:2). He, by saying Bethlehem Ephrath, signified the Bethlehem in Judaea which was earlier known by the name of Ephrath or Ephrath; thus, eliminating the other cities in the land known by the same name "Bethlehem."

Genesis 35:19 says, "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem." First Samuel 17:12 shows Bethlehem Ephrath to be the city of David, also known as Bethlehemjudah: "Now David *was* the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehemjudah, whose name *was* Jesse." Thus, when the inspired record documents the birth of Christ, an indirect reference is made to the prophecy of Micah: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem" (Mat. 2:1).

Reference may be made in a comprehensive way to the fulfillment of prophecy as the Savior's statement in Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me." Christ's sweeping statement included the numerous prophecies, from Genesis to Malachi, made by a variety of prophets, which were to be fulfilled in Him.

His next words include a general reference to several Old and New Testament prophecies: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47). No one prophecy and no single prophet spoke of all this verse comprehends. Collectively, they revealed the following. The preaching of repentance and remission of sins would begin in Jerusalem (Mic. 4:1-2; Isa. 2:2-4). From there, it would be taken to all nations (Isa. 11:10; 42:1, 6; Psalms 2:8). His suffering preceding that was prophesied by Isaiah (50:6; 53) and Micah (5:1). His resurrection, following His suffering, was prophesied by the Psalmist (1-6:10). That His resurrection would be on the third day was prophesied by Hosea (6:2) and by Jesus Himself (Mat. 12:40; 16:21; John 2:19).

Truly, there is no other book like the Bible, for no other book has the divinely given evidence of fulfilled prophecy that attests to its only possible source, God.

Please send us your change of address before you move that you might not miss a single issue and that we might not have to pay return postage. Sadly, we must take from our list those who fail to notify us of their change of address prior to moving. Don't be left out.

The Kingdom Has Been Established

Edward Lee Davis

Has the kingdom been established, or will it be at some future date?

Generally, when one asks this question, he is trying to ascertain if the teaching of a thousand year reign of Christ on earth on David's throne in Jerusalem is plausible. The teaching of premillennialism has at its heart the denial of the fact that the kingdom of Christ is now in existence. If one can determine from the Scripture that the kingdom has already been established and is now in existence, then one of the major supports of the premillennialist's doctrine has been removed.

When exposed to the Scripture, the "fortress" of premillennialism falls like a house of cards.

In Luke 24:49 Jesus' instruction to the apostles was to wait in Jerusalem until they were given power from on high. In Acts 1:8, Jesus points out to the apostles that at the time of the giving of the Holy Spirit the power would be given. Acts 2:1-4 records the giving of the Holy Spirit and the subsequent empowering of the apostles. But, the crucial text concerning the kingdom is Mark 9:1, where Jesus says that there were those standing there that would live to see the kingdom come with power. We have seen that the power was to accompany the coming of the Spirit. Thus, the kingdom came with power when the Spirit came upon the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2).

My friends, the kingdom was established almost two thousand years ago. It continues in existence today with Christ now reigning in Heaven as its King. Those who were obedient to the Gospel in the first century were made citizens of the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9). That kingdom is the church of our Lord, the church of Christ (Mat. 16:13-20; Rom. 16:16), the church of which you should be a member (Acts 2:37-47).

Keynote Is Christ

Harold Blevins

Some secular businesses have irreplaceable executives. Special insurance policies are written for them called keynote policies. Every musical composition has a certain note oftentimes repeated as its tonal center. For example, *The First Symphony of Beethoven in C Major* has C as the keynote of this great opus. Pennsylvania was the center of the thirteen colonies; six on either side, and was the midpoint which held all the others stationary; thus, it has been dubbed the Keystone state. Most buildings have a corner stone (or keystone) which marks their beginning with a date inscribed. The Christian has a Keynote named Christ who is our Chief Corner Stone (Eph. 2:20; et al.).

Just one of the many keynote passages in the Bible is Hebrews 1:1-3.

Prophet

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets" (Heb. 1:1). Even before God sent His only begotten Son, the prophets of old pictured, predicted and prophesied the incarnation of Christ. How fascinating is the fact that Isaiah called Christ and His church, "The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 60:14). There is no end to the names one may cite for Christ who is the Name above all names (Acts 4:12; Eph. 1:21-23).

Emmanuel enunciated: "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Moses called him Prophet (Deu. 18:15). Samuel foretold that all who ignore Him by their ignorance shall be destroyed (Acts 3:22-26). Precisely and accurately, the people proclaimed Him Prophet (Mat. 21:11; 1 3:57; Luke 13:33).

Prince

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2). The Anointed One is the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). "All things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:16). The Princely Priest is our High Priest forever (Heb. 3:1; 5:6). The Princely Savior is the superior priest in the similitude of Melchisedec—without father, mother or descent; without beginning or ending; continuing forever holy, harmless and higher than the heavens; a better than the best; with an unchangeable priesthood; and, the summation of all sacrifices, which is to name but a few of the many (Heb. 7:1-28).

Therefore, thanks be to God that if we be His children, "then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:17).

King

“Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3).

“Express image” is a: “...stamp, an imprinted mark...” (from *charagma*; Thayer, p. 665). He is the Bright and Morning Star (Rev. 22:16), the exact image of the glory of God as high as the heavens (John 1:14). Paul depicts, by inspiration, Emmanuel as the effulgence; that is, the splendid, shining, incandescent Son of God burnished more brightly than the sun of the sky (“shining forth [a more probable meaning than reflected brightness]”; Vine, p. 143). Transfigured white as light, three saw Him as the “bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (Mat. 17:25).

The Word was with God from everlasting to everlasting. Into our hands, God has placed the written Word for handling aright, authority and absolute allegiance (John 1:1-5; Mic. 5:2; 2 Tim. 2:15—ASV; Mat. 7:29). Deity will destroy all who will not conclude that He is holy and the Prince of all kings (2 The. 2:8; 1 Pet. 1:15; 2:5; Rev. 4:8; 22:11; 1:5).

He is our hope (1 Tim. 1:1); our peace (Eph. 2:14); our life (Col. 3:4); and, “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 22:16). “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Tim. 1:17). “Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift” (2 Cor. 9:15).

Conclusion

He is a better angel (Heb. 1:4); who provides a better salvation (Heb. 6:9); a better hope (Heb. 7:19); a better testament (Heb. 7:22); a better promise (Heb. 8:6); a better sacrifice (Heb. 9:23); a better substance (Heb. 10:34); a better country (Heb. 11:16); a better resurrection (Heb. 11:35); and, a better thing for us (Heb. 11:40). He is a better than that of Able (Heb. 12:24), and the better of all the best.

Dear reader, let us also be better keynotes for the Nobler One of Nazareth; that is, Christ our Savior.

Box 104; Tiptonville, TN 38079

The Incomparable Christ

The following is an adaptation of some notes given me by our late beloved brother, John H. Renshaw, a grand instructor (and one of my favorites) at the Memphis School of Preaching when I attended there some years ago. I do not know if this material was original with him (it sounds like his) but I do believe it will be helpful; thus, offer this adaptation—BL

He came from the bosom of the Heavenly Father to the bosom of an earthly mother.

He came from Heaven where peace reigns supreme, pain and heartaches never come and where death never separates the family of God.

No doctors practice there for none is ever sick.

No graveyards mar the beauty of that wonderful land for no one ever dies.

He put on humanity that we might become the sons of God.

He was born contrary to nature, lived in poverty and obscurity with neither wealth, influence or education.

His relatives were inconspicuous and insignificant in view of men.

In infancy, He startled a king; in boyhood, He puzzled the doctors of the law; and, in manhood, He ruled the course of nature.

He walked upon the billows and hushed the sea to sleep.

He healed the multitudes without medicine and never charged for His services.

More than that, He has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors have healed broken bodies.

He never wrote a book, yet not all the libraries of the world could hold all the books that have been and could be written about Him.

He never wrote a song, yet He has furnished the theme of more songs than all song-writers combined.

He never founded a college, yet all the schools together cannot boast of as many students as He has had.

He never marshalled an earthly army, drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun, yet no leader ever made more volunteers

who have, under His orders, made rebels stack arms or surrender without a shot being fired.

He is the Star of astronomy, the Rock of geology, the Lion and Lamb of zoology, the Harmonizer of all discords and the Healer of all diseases.

Great men have come and gone, yet He lives on.

Mighty Herod could not kill Him, the devilish Deceiver could not seduce Him, and Death could not destroy Him.

He was rich, yet for our sakes, He became poor.

How poor? Ask Mary! Ask the wise men!

He slept in another man's manger.

He crossed the Sea of Galilee in another man's boat.

He rode on another man's ass.

He was buried in another man's tomb.

All have failed, but He never.

All others have lived imperfectly, but He is the ever perfect One.

Alone He stands as the Chief among ten thousands, the most wonderful character of all time.

He is the God side of man and the man side of God, an earthly child with a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly child with an earthly mother.

His life has been tested in the crucible of time for two millennia and the verdict is that His life was wonderfully sublime and sublimely wonderful.

God gave Him honor and glory, proclaiming Him His Son.

This glorious person is the soul of the Bible, the center of the spiritual system, the attraction for all nations, the ruler, not only among the saints of the earth, but also the armies of Heaven.

He walks at the head of the army of God, the true Israel, and among the inhabitants of the earth, He proclaimed with all authority, both in Heaven and on earth, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me ...I am the resurrection and the life ... I am he who was dead and am alive, and behold I live forever and ever ... I have the keys of hell and death; I can open, and no man can shut; I can shut, and no man can open...) am the bright and morning star, the root and offspring of David ..., if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me ...If any man be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me."

Heaven and earth proclaim Him as the King of kings and Lord of Lords.

Coronated in Heaven, crowned Lord of all, the Almighty Father swore that He should reign till His enemies should be put under His feet, that to Him every knee should bow and every tongue confess.

Who was He? A good man or God-man?

This question plagued the minds of the Jews of whom Jesus asked the question, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?"

Christ is the only person known to history who has claimed divinity and yet who has been accounted sane by the human race.

Upon Him, in the person of its founder, the truth of Christianity stands or falls.

Christ's claims even survived the test of apparent failure.

On the cross, after being rejected by His own nation and religious leaders, He could still behave as King of eternity, promising Heaven to a penitent criminal and interceding as calmly for His enemies as though He were walking the quiet lanes of a country town on a summer's day.

No man ever acted as this man!

His deeds matched His words.

Could one flaw be found in the Gospel narrative, the whole picture would be blemished and Christ's claims dissipated.

No such flaw exists.

Had Christ never lived, it would have required his equal to invent the unique story of His life.

Heaven's darling Son, God's unspeakable gift, lived and walked the dusty streets among the sad inhabitants of a wicked lost world.

In righteousness, He called men to their only hope, offered them salvation and lived the perfect example before them.

In compassion beyond compare, He loved them, weeping and praying for their souls.

The Captain of our salvation, though innocent and sinless, suffered and: died on the most hateful invention of man's cruelty.

The world counted him defeated and destroyed and His disciples wandered away from Calvary in hollow despair.

In power, the Matchless One arose from the grave alive.

Triumphant over sin and Satan and victorious over death and the grave, He offers victory to all those who resolve to follow Him.

Without compare, without doubt, He brought within those without.

A.D. 70 Debate

Don Preston of the Ardmore Church of Christ in Ardmore, Oklahoma, will defend the proposition, "The Bible teaches that the second, or final coming of Jesus Christ occurred at A.D. 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem."

Bill Lockwood of the Marlow Church of Christ in Marlow, Oklahoma, will defend the proposition, "The Bible teaches that the second, or final coming of Jesus Christ is yet future and will occur at the end of the Christian dispensation."

Place: Civic Auditorium in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

Time: November 30 through December 4 (except Wednesday) at 7:00 each night.

A second debate will be held in Marlow on this topic in May, 1993.

Correspondence

"We would appreciate it very much if you would begin a subscription to the DEFENDER for.... You have an excellent paper and (we) look forward to each issue. Keep on being a defender of truth!" "...You are in our prayers that your good works such as: DEFENDER, your lectureships and now offering this good book (Behold The Pattern) by brother Music may continue. What a force for the cause of Christ is being exerted! It encourages us in areas where error, may be trying to slither in." Mr. and Mrs. O. C. Landrum, Americus, GA.

"...I would like to commend you for the fine job that you have been doing with the DEFENDER. Take care of yourself and keep up the good work." Russell M. Kline, Chandlersville, OH.

Behold The Pattern

In his latest book, *Behold The Pattern*, brother Goebel Music has rendered a tremendous service to the cause of Christ and has dealt a severe blow to the proponents of liberalism who are currently troubling the Lord's body. He has provided the proof of the false doctrine held to and taught by various influential brethren and has shown from God's word why their argued positions are fraught with deadly error.

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

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Florida School of Preaching

1807 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, Florida 33803

Eighteenth Annual Lectureship

January 18-21, 1993

Theme: "It Is Written In The Prophets They Shall Be All Taught of God"

Monday—January 18

- 9:00 "The Position of The Prophet"
Rex Turner, Sr., Montgomery, Alabama
- 9:45 "Practical Lessons From Job"
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, Alabama
- 10:45 "Prophets Could Believe A Lie"
Cliff Martin, Jamaica
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "Lessons From Elijah"
Winfred Clark, Athens, Alabama
- 2:30 "The Teachings of Balaam"
Bill Cantrell, Huntsville, Alabama
- 3:30 "The Prophetic Message Corrupted by Max King"
Dale Spung, Arcadia, Florida
- 4:30 Dinner
- 7:00 "Prophecies And The Inspiration of The Bible"
Joseph Sejour, Orlando, Florida
- 7:45 "The Courageous Prophets"
B.C. Carr, Lakeland, Florida

Tuesday—January 19

- 9:00 "The Position of The Prophet"
Rex Turner, Sr., Montgomery, Alabama
- 9:45 "Practical Lessons From Eli"
V.P. Black, Chickasaw, Alabama
- 10:45 "Jonah: A Prophet With A Problem"
Lester Kamp, Madisonville, Kentucky
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "Lessons From Elijah"
Winfred Clark, Athens, Alabama
- 2:30 "The God Who Inspired The Prophets"
Charles Wright, Kissimmee, Florida
- 3:30 "The Christ The Prophets Foresaw"
E. Robert McAnally, Lakeland, Florida
- 4:30 Dinner
- 7:00 "The Perseverance of The Prophets"
Robert Lupo, Live Oak, Florida
- 7:45 "Lord, Give Us Preachers Like The Prophets #1"
Wendell Winkler, Montgomery, Alabama

Wednesday—January 20

- 9:00 "The Position of The Prophet"
Rex Turner, Sr., Montgomery, Alabama
- 9:45 "Practical Lessons From Abraham"
V. P. Black, Chickasaw, Alabama
- 10:45 "Lord, Give Us Preachers Like the Prophets #2"
Wendell Winkler, Montgomery, Alabama
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "Lessons From Elijah"
Winfred Clark, Athens, Alabama
- 2:30 "Lessons From Jeremiah"
Roy Deaver, Austin, Texas
- 3:30 "The Importnace of Preaching"
Wallace Maxwell, Jacksonville, Florlda
- 4:30 Dinner
- 7:00 "False Prophets Then; False Teachers Now"
Charles Austin, Mulberry, Florida
- 7:45 "Lessons From Amos"
Roy Deaver, Austin, Texas

Thursday—January 21

- 9:00 "The Position of The Prophet"
Rex Turner, Sr., Montgomery, Alabama
- 9:45 "The Prophetic Message Corrupted by Premillennialism"
Buford Carroll, Pinellas Park, Florida
- 10:45 "There Are False Prophets Today"
Willie E. Bradshaw, Riverdale, Georgia
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "The Prophets Praise and Memorials"
Maurice Davis, Lakeland, Florida
- 2:30 "Lessons From Jeremiah"
Roy Deaver, Austin Texas
- 3:30 "Why Christ Was Likened to The Prophets"
J. H. Blackman, Jr., Lakeland, Florida
- 4:30 Dinner
- 7:00 "Prophetic Word Is Used To Expose False Prophets"
Ted Wheeler, Venice, Florida
- 7:45 "Encouragement From The Prophets"
Winfred Clark, Athens, Alabama

Lectureship Director—Jackie M. Stearsman (813) 683-4043

BOOK REVIEW

Bobby Liddell

The Books Of Leviticus And Numbers, David Brown, Editor.

This hardbound book of five hundred pages contains lectures and additional material from the Eleventh Annual Southwest Lectures, conducted by the Southwest Church of Christ, April 12-15, 1992. It is available for \$11.00 (plus \$1.50 postage and handling) from Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, TX 78748.

Over two dozen faithful men dedicated hundreds of hours of intense study to provide this excellent verse by verse commentary on Leviticus and Numbers, two books often neglected in the average member's study.

The fine layout makes the book very readable and enhances the valuable content. Most chapters in the book are arranged according to the chapters of Leviticus and Numbers. The logical presentation and true to the Book exposition make this a valuable volume useful in one's search for Bible knowledge.

What Must I Do To Be SAVED?

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

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

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