

The Apostolic Way

"Things learned, received, heard and seen in me do"
Paul to
CHURCH OF CHRIST

"Speaking the truth in love." . . . "Let all things be done unto edifying."

Monthly—\$1.00 the Year

Dallas, Texas, January, 1933

Vol. XIX—No. 6

Our Position—Number 2

In my last article, I said: "Our first position is that men may be just such Christians as there were in the time of the Apostles in all essential respects." All such people either then or now are children of God, brethren in Christ. They may differ in their interpretation of some of the Lord's sayings, whether these apply to the past, present, or future. No two brothers in the flesh, unless very weak mentally, can be found to understand or believe everything alike after they pass early childhood. This is too self-evident to need comment, yet we meet men who say that Christians must agree on every detail of church work and see everything the Lord said in exactly the same light. Such conclusions come from strained interpretations of passages that emphasize unity. Of course, perfect unity on every question would be an ideal state if that unity were based upon the Lord's truth. But this condition among the believers presupposes perfection in knowledge—a state we shall never reach in this life, probably not even in the life to come.

From these observations, we conclude that differences of opinions are surer to obtain among the Lord's people. I am inclined to believe, however, that patient, prayerful, and persistent study of all the Lord said on a subject, in the light of other subjects and the laws of reason, will tend to bring contending parties closer together. I am sure that a disposition to cling to one's own view while refusing to hear the other side of a question in dispute tends to drive men further apart. But that intelligent men can ever agree perfectly on every question that may be raised over religion is a presumption that is not supported by either human nature, human experience, or the limitations of divine revelation. Not a single case is found in Holy Writ where even inspired men were brought together long that they did not differ over something. Note for example the case of Peter and Paul or of Paul and Barnabas.

From what I have said, it is clear that fellowship, brotherhood, in the Lord's work must be based upon a few fundamental things. These things make us babes in Christ and leave us to grow to manhood by feeding upon the Lord's provisions to that end. In this period of growth, the Lord does not feed all by exactly the same menu every day. He leaves to each the selection and use of that portion of the Lord's bounty that suits his circumstances and desires. The result will inevitably be to produce of human beings who differ naturally a group of Christians

who also differ in their attitude toward many questions.

"But," says one, "men must agree if they work together. If they differ, they will be divided in sentiment if not openly." This is exactly where faith, love, and knowledge are involved. Faith unites where all believe the same. Love compromises where doubt beclouds the way. Knowledge acquired by patient and prayerful study dispels the darkness and makes its possessors stronger in the Lord.

Since it is evident that Christians may differ and yet be brethren, may we expect to find congregations of Christians all exactly alike? I answer, No. The pictures drawn in New Testament writings of the churches therein mentioned indicate that each had its peculiarities. These were due to various things, such as location, character of membership, social customs, etc. Each had its problems and, no doubt, each had some peculiarities in its work that are not mentioned. Those things peculiar to the church in Corinth or in other places that Paul discusses were the things he considered important.

The idea that brethren should separate because they disagree has been the prolific source of all the divisions that have cursed the church. Heresy, as men have defined it, has driven many thousands away from the fellowship of their brethren, to be followed in many instances by persecution in its most cruel forms. Such a course causes hatred and division where love and union once prevailed. It is easy to see that brethren who do not agree often treat each other worse than they would members of the denominations. This shows a lack of that kind of brotherly love that belongs to all true Christians.

New Testament Christians were disciples, that is pupils, or learners of Christ. They were not supposed, even under inspiration, to know all things. Paul spoke of some who knew things freely given to them of God (1 Cor. 2:12). Again, he mentions knowledge as one of the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:8). Nevertheless, he admonishes Timothy to study, and Peter exhorts brethren to desire the sincere milk of the word that they might grow thereby (1 Peter 2:2). With such instruction before us, it seems strange that so many men would insist upon making their ideas of doubtful questions tests of fellowship with others. This, however, is but a manifestation of human weakness. The child thinks it knows better than its parents what it should do. The Freshman in college is often more conceited than his aged or learned preceptor. And an ignorant beginner in the Lord's work often imagines he knows all about a subject he has never

really studied. This is where humility as a virtue shines. It is one of the most beautiful and valuable of the Christian graces, but it can never dwell in the same house with conceit.

The point I am trying to make is that Christians are all characters who have been molded after the same fashion into a likeness of subsequent growth, they may differ on many religious questions while yet brethren in the Lord. We do not believe that such differences justify open division and the foundation of sects. Every line of reason in the premises opposes sectarianism, while both Scripture and human experience teach that prayerful study and self-denial tend to remove differences. Had childlike faith and true brotherly love tempered with reason and moderation, guided professed followers of Christ in past centuries, we should never have had either our denominational bodies or the existing divisions among those who call themselves simply disciples of Christ.

The extent to which human opinion drives zealous religionists is exemplified by a doctrine I have recently heard good men advocate. It is that no man is Scripturally baptized unless he believes certain special things about the Sunday school, the cup question, etc. In other words a man's views on all manner of questions that pertain to the Lord's work must be thoroughly settled and correct before he can obey the Lord in baptism. If this is true, we should lengthen the Confession into something like the Methodist catechism and ask the candidate to confess his acceptance of a creed absolutely unknown to the New Testament.

In some parts of the country, able men among us are making one's views on the Second Coming of Christ a test of fellowship. A good old brother once warned a church against calling me for a meeting on the ground that I was not sound on the Millennium. I have read several works on these and allied subjects. I have found that there is room for doubt on any position one may take on such subjects. I have my view of the whole matter. Of course, I believe that I am right; but I trust that I shall never become so dogmatic as to declare disfellowship with a brother over such questions.

I meet brethren who preach against what they call "Sectarianism" with all their power yet they set up certain things as tests of fellowship with others that are in principle identical with those that led others to found the denominational bodies. Such men have made the Church of Christ of today, in the estimation of many, simply another, or rarer three or four other sects. Men permit their opinions to

ship in an old stone building that belonged to one of the brethren, and have been continuing steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. They will not have anything they cannot read out of the law the Holy Spirit brought us through the apostles. They are building them a house to worship in, have enough lumber cut to finish the building but need a little money for windows, doors, etc. I don't think they will have any trouble on that line as some are able to raise the money. Brother L. D. Campbell held them a meeting last spring with one added. The name of their place is Gambetta church of Christ. I moved to this part January 1, 1932, and have been preaching for the church at Pisgah and Gambetta. They have been supporting me in my preaching in destitute places. I preached at Fries Junction one week in the spring; from there helped Brother Campbell in a meeting at Shacktown. I came back to Fries Junction, preached one more week and six obeyed the gospel. I preach there once each month. I preached at Elk Creek in a Quaker house; they only allowed me to preach a week; baptized one. Began last of August at Steward, Virginia, and preached 19 days; good attendance and attention; hope to go there again next year. These are all destitute places and opposition strong, but I am ready for the fight, wherever it comes. I have not made definite arrangements for another year yet."

J. F. Lilly, Weatherford, Texas: "This writing finds me back at home, having closed a meeting at Shreveport, La., Lord's day night, November 27. This meeting resulted in two being baptized and three restored. Brother Nona Bonneau of Mill-sap, Texas, and I did the preaching. Brother Bonneau is a fine young man. This summer was his first experience in a series of meetings. I can truthfully say that he is the best I have ever heard according to his experience. Brother Nona Bonneau does not have himself over estimated but is fully capable of holding meeting anywhere normal conditions are. Those who desire a clean, godly, upright young man; one who believes the Bible, one who is satisfied with it as it is, will not make a mistake in getting him to conduct meetings. He and I were together the entire summer and preached some together. This has indeed been a big summer with us. My first meeting was at Consolation which resulted in three baptisms. My next meeting was at Beaxite, Arkansas, which resulted in 53 additions. Next was at Sturdovant, Texas. Sixteen additions. Next at Reform, Arkansas and 53 additions. Next at Sardis, Arkansas, with three additions. I help Brother Nona Bonneau at Haskell. He baptized eight before I came, one restored after. We then went to El Dorado, Arkansas. He preached at Urfona. I preached at El Dorado the first week. He baptized four at Urfona. Twelve restored at El Dorado. Then he came to El Dorado, I went to Urfona. Two were baptized at each place the last week. I preached the last Sunday and night at El Dorado, eight others restored. Brother Nona at Urfona and one restored, which is a total of 29. We then went to Shreveport and had five additions. Brother Nona will remain over there and evangelize this coming year. The brethren there are planning on a month's meeting in May which I will conduct, then go to Bauxite, Arkansas, for the first two weeks in July, and after that Brother

Nona and I will go to Urfona for two weeks. I am enjoying the Apostolic Way. Some fine articles in it. Many have promised me they would subscribe for it. May God bless the brotherhood who are trying to keep the true cause going. Let us be up and doing while it is day; there are many who are hungry for the Word of God."

L. Fish, Ringling, Okla.: "Brother Duckworth—Enclosed find \$3; one for the A. W. and two dollars for you. I would send you more money, but am a little short. I like the paper fine, is a dandy now. Brother C. R. Worsham preached for us last Lord's day (November 20) and evening. Best wishes for the paper."

Grove White, Long Bottom, Ohio: "We held a meeting at Fairmont, West Virginia, at the first church of Christ, Columbia Street, beginning November 1 and ending November 6. While there were no additions yet, we hope good will result from our efforts. We shall long remember the hospitality and respect shown us and the liberality of the contribution they gave us. We surely enjoyed ourselves with Brother Frank Goskins. We began a meeting at Huntington, November 20, closing December 4, at 1335 Adams Avenue. No visible results here, but believe good seed was sown and hope and pray that good will result. We found some hospitable folks at Huntington. The brothers and sisters are very zealous in the cause in every way, especially Brother B. F. Leonard. He is the most zealous young man we ever met in the Lord's work. He is loyal and should be recognized by loyal congregations and given a chance to develop himself as a preacher. The brethren were very liberal in their contribution, for which we thank them. I am enclosing \$1.00 to extend my subscription. Was glad to receive the last copies of the Way and to know you were continuing its publication."

M. F. Pruett, Weatfield, Ind.: "Enclosed find \$1.00 for my renewal for the A. W. It is the only true paper I know of. A few of us have been meeting in a school house. This fall we had one addition, a fine young man, age 17; in a couple of weeks we had another young man age 15 and his sister, 14. At the water at their baptizing a man came to be baptized; that day we had five welcomed into the church, two by fellowship and three by baptism. It was an all-day meeting and what a happy day! January 1 we are to have another all-day meeting. We all live so far apart that this way we get together and have a real spiritua lget-together. We do not have a Sunday School nor any such abomination. The world needs the true gospel as it was taught by Christ; we nede nothing more than He used. We set the Lord's table EVERY Lord's day."

If all would renew their subscriptions promptly it would relieve this office of embarrassing explanations to printers and others.

Sidney W. Smith, Abilene, Texas: "I am sending you \$4.00 for four subscriptions. I do so much appreciate the paper now, it is better than ever. I am glad to do all I can for it and hope all the readers will assist in the good work and extned the circulation of the paper; in so doing we might help save some soul in eternity."

H. E. Holst, West Virginia: "The last two papers you put out surely are fine, especially Douglas Dunn's article in October issue and many good articles written by others."

Alva Johnson, Shmarock, Texas, November 23: "Baptized 17 at Springfield, Colo. One baptized here to date."

Turkey, Texas, December 5: "Came home this morning to begin debate with L. S. Ballard (Baptist) tomorrow at 10 A. M., for three sessions a day for six days. Am to begin at or near Bryan with Brother Arceneaux December 13. I am sending date to Brother Ward of Luther, Texas, for discussion at Big Spring December 19. Good meeting at Mobeeta, Texas, closed last night."

Turkey, Texas, December 23: "Sure some weather up here. Wife and one of the boys (Clark) in bed with colds. I let Brother Belemy keep questions with Arceneaux answers, so can't send them. You write what you want to about debate."

Prompt renewals help get the paper out on time. Some neglected to renew their subscriptions and this, added to other hindrances, prevented our publishing December issue.

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT

(Continued from Page 3)

uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."

By reading verse 52 of this chapter it will be seen the father resisted the Holy Ghost by resisting God's prophets or messengers. So we see one may quench the Spirit by refusing to follow His teaching, doing what we know to be contrary to His will, or neglecting to perform the duty He demands of us.

The Holy Spirit says to the unsaved, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). When a sinner refuses to do this he is quenching the Spirit of God. Christians are also admonished by the Spirit to give to God's cause cheerfully and according to their ability. They are also advised to meet on the first day of the week to study His Word and commemorate the death of their Savior.

Felix of old quenched the Spirit of God when he asked for a more convenient time to serve the Lord, probably not realizing that today is the day of salvation. Agrippi, too, probably quenched the Spirit by being almost persuaded.

James says that to know to do good and do it not is sin. So, brother, when you fail to live for God according to the light and opportunity you have you quench the Spirit of God. We should remember that to fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man. Anything less than this certainty grieves God and hinders the advancement of His Kingdom on this earth. If all members of the church would do their duty as they should their influence on the world and society would be marvelous.

J. C. HAMILTON

Send us one or more new or renewal subscriptions at once.

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Dallas, Texas, March, 1933

Vol. XIX—No. 8

Our Position—No. 3

In this series of articles I am stating our views and responsibility as a religious people. I have advanced the doctrine that a man may no wbe in every essential respect just such a Christian as was Paul or any other New Testament saint. By the term "essential" I refer to those things in faith or action that make one in God's sight a Christian. Men have added many things to these simple requirements. In some instances, they have changed or taken away the divine requirement. As a result, we find several popular notions among religious people concerning the way of salvation. The Calvinist teaches that man can do nothing. All the process of salvation to him is by direct divine agency. The Armenian holds that God's Spirit co-operates in some way with man's spirit and that salvation is reached when the sinner believes on Christ. Other notions more or less akin to these are found among the sects of Christendom. When we raise the question, "How do men get into the church?" we get a still greater variety of answers.

Now it is self-evident that the Lord's plan for saving men and adding them to the church is a very simple one on the human side, for the Lord knew human weakness. Again, the Lord's plan, whatever it is, conforms to man's nature and environment else God must be unjust. Furthermore, if the Bible is God's revelation it surely contains God's plan of salvation, for this is the most important thing that God could reveal to our fallen race. These propositions are so self-evident that I have not thought it necessary to quote Scriptures to prove them. The result of all man's efforts for 19 centuries to patch up God's plan by injecting his philosophy, adding his improvements or otherwise changing God's arrangement has been to produce in our time a veritable Babel of religious ideas, practices, and organizations. To come out of this Babylon into the clear light of New Testament teaching and be the kind of Christians that lived in the days of the apostles is our mission and aim as a people. Alexander Campbell and others saw this over a century ago and started a movement that spread with unparalleled rapidity throughout the country. But the spirit that appeared in Apostloic days and worked amon gthe churches till it produced the Babel of denominationalism in our times also seized some of the leaders in this more recent effort to purify the church. This spirit among us has brought one division after another. Some of the

leaders have erred on one extreme others on the opposite; for some have sought to remove from religious practice all Scriptural restrictions while others have zealously sought to fasten upon us as laws of God their own extreme interpretations of uncertain passages.

Out of all this confusion, we can see clearly certain fundamental ideas. The first is that Jesus Christ was the Founder of Christianity. Therefore, we must look to Him and those who taught under His immediate direction for the fundamentals of the Faith.

Whatever Jesus or the Apostles clearly taught forms the creed of Christianity. We may have our opinions concerning matters other than this, but such opinions cannot properly be made matters of rule or authority in the work or worship of Christians. Yet by far the greater part of the doctrines and practices of the churches of Christendom are derived only remotely, if at all, from the teachings of Christ.

One of the first questions that an intelligent man would ask about Christianity is "What is a Christian?" This question properly answered reveals all that is essential to the salvation Christ offers. To understand easily the principles involved, let us go to Nature for an illustration. God made the earth, air, water, food, etc., and adjusted man to their environment. He made man to eat and drink and created the food and water for him, but He requires man to seek, find, and partake of these things. That is all. Man can do no more, but he must do this. He can not even control the food after he has swallowed it. Digestion and assimilation are beyond man's control. The major portion, then, of man's living is the work of God; but the small portion appointed for him to do, he must do or perish. The application is easy. God, by His love, grace and power has provided for man's spiritual well-being. His work is by far the major portion of the process of salvation; but what He appointed for man to do, man must do or perish.

In Nature, man everywhere tries to follow one rule: Observe what the laws of Nature require, then obey these laws. In the spirtual kingdom, this means: Hear what God has said, then trustingly and lovingly obey Him.

N. L. Clark.

(To be continued)

Sister Trott Writes

"Munday, Texas, January 30, 1933.

"Dear Brother and Sister Duckworth:

"I was just so delighted to get the new Apostolic Way, I could not read it of course, but was so glad to know it had come again, I was a little bit disappointed at not being able to see the little piece I had sent you some weeks before and asked you to put it in the paper, but then I knew that you had good reason why you could not put it in the paper, and I hope you can have the space to put it in the next issue.

"At last, after trying so long, I really have got three subs for the paper, and really got a few more that have promised to give me the dollar, of course I am glad to get even one single one, but of course I do want more numbers so badly.

"Dear brethren and sisters, I want to thank each and every one of you, for your kindness to me, in sending me donations to help on the treatment of my eyes, I do thank you more than words can express or than you can have any idea of I am sure, I can't write much, can't see to do so, and as taking this method of thanking you I do appreciate your kind words and your good thoughts of me. I certainly need and appreciate everything from any of you. I don't feel like I have made any mistakes in a financial way since my poor dear Doctor left me, and really, if each of you could know the condition that I was left in I don't believe any one could think so. However, by the help of our Lord and managing the very best that I could know now I have got along so far, and I feel like if it had not been for this trouble with my eyes I could have done better than I have, but this came on me and I could not help it. I want every one of my brethren and sisters to pray for me, that I may be able to go through with this operation and that it may be a success and that I can be able to then read. It is so hard on me not to be able to read my Bible and the papers so please remember me in your prayers, and I do thank you so much, one and all, and I pray the good Lord that no one will ever feel they have lost anything by what they have done for me. It will be remembered by me. I would love to see and talk with each one of my dear loved ones, but as I can't, must now say goodbye. Thanking you again ever and ever for your kindness in anyway, your sad, lonely sister in hope of eternal life."

Responsibility of Teachers

"My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (James 3:1). Since teachers should teach according to ability, the purpose of this passage is not to dissuade anyone from using his talent, but the purpose is to show the responsibility resting upon teachers and to show the danger in a teacher's carelessly using his tongue to present ill-prepared and misleading lessons, as though it makes little difference. It is a dangerous sin to use one's tongue and say, "He saith" when He has not said it (Jeremiah 23:31). A teacher can easily misrepresent the Lord and thereby mislead the people. One should not put himself up as a teacher without realizing that he is presenting himself as a guide and that he is accepting a responsibility for souls. It is too bad for any capable person to destroy his own soul by neglecting to study and to show himself approved, but it is much worse for such a negligent student of the Bible to assume the responsibility of a teacher, and by his unjustifiable yet sometimes bold contentions for personal opinions and non-essential traditions to destroy not merely himself but whole congregations. Let us have a sufficiency of capable teachers, but let each teacher realize that he is responsible to the Lord and that if he speaks carelessly and stupidly, he will "receive the greater damnation."

Another responsibility upon teachers is that they agree among themselves. "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind" (Phil. 4:2). Euodias and Syntyche must have been two teachers in the Philippian church who were inclined to disagree, and maybe to contend sharply right in the assembly. Paul evidently knew they could be of the same mind, else he would not have so recommended. Paul says, "I beseech." "Beseech" is a strong word, for it takes strong persuasion to get teachers who are a little selfish, egotistic, and ambitious for the higher seats, to be of the same mind. But they can agree. The conscientious teacher who lacks information regarding any important matter appreciates instruction, and he will not urge a divisive doctrine or policy without previous thorough study. Get the spirit of Christ into teachers, and they will agree before they destroy a congregation. Anyone, of course, who becomes a heretic and would break up a congregation by urging error, should be dealt with as Paul directs (Titus 3:10).

"We are laborers together with God" (1 Cor. 3:9). Clearly, then, teachers should not only labor but should labor together. But since teachers cannot co-operate or "walk together, except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3), the Lord's spokesmen should surely agree. It is commonplace to say that if some build while an equal number tears down, nothing will be accomplished. But why will two leading teachers of the same congregation dangerously disagree? Since the Bible is sufficient teachers should, by their persistent and successful study, soon end any dangerous disagreement. If one has developed an ambition to rule and also the bad habit of opposing any policy or idea suggested by others, especially by certain others, then the devil is in the church, and nothing but exclusion or conversion and re-dedication can stop disagreement and chronic contention. In speaking of the American

colonies Benjamin Franklin said, "We must all hang together, or we shall all be hanged separately." It seems that the little churches of Christ scattered in a world of fierce enemies should be impressed with this vital principle. Surely he is a wolf in sheep's clothing who would rather see a congregation break up, scattered, and die while recognizing him as the principal teacher, than to see it co-operate and prosper with others as chief instructors and leaders. Teachers are responsible to God for any dangerous disagreement among themselves either in doctrine or in policy.

Teachers, by virtue of their position, are responsible not only for themselves but largely also for the flock. If the teachers disagree and devour one another, can we expect the members to co-operate in peace? The leaders are usually responsible for church troubles, for they either instigate the troubles or criminally neglect or refuse to settle them. "For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed" (Isaiah 9:16). The tragedy of Isaiah's doctrine is that the misled people as well as the leaders are all destroyed. Few nations have struggled in war except when their leaders caused them to err. Not the sacrificed young men of America, Germany, and France were to blame for the late war; the leaders of one or more nations led the people into error. The more numerous and ambitious the leaders, the more danger there is of disagreement and conflict. Since teachers are the leaders of the people, James wisely urges them to be very careful in the use of their tongues.

All realize that unfaithful teachers are responsible for much trouble, but some may fail to realize that a good teacher who is trying to be a peacemaker may at the very time unwittingly be an agitator. If a teacher or preacher believes that meeting in an upper room is non-essential, he should uniformly tell the people that it is non-essential, and should not say, "I personally do not really think it essential, but I believe we should all practice it for the sake of peace and the consciences of weak brethren." Surely such teachers are among the chief manufacturers of these weak consciences which so endanger the peace of the church. The consciences of the church, in fact, are just about what their teachers have made them. If all our best teachers, who are practically agreed, would regularly and plainly say that questions, such as those regarding wine and grape juice, upper and lower floors, one or two cups, and benedictions are inconsequential and inclined merely to gender strifes, there would soon be no weak consciences, and therefore no trouble, regarding such things. This list, of course, does not include questions upon which the Lord has clearly legislated. Special cases of conscience may be handled by local overseers, but any teacher who undertakes to pass rules for the whole church where the Lord has not legislated, or to speak where the Lord has not spoken are sure to be responsible for much trouble and possibly for damnation of many people.

Since teachers are held responsible for their own safe and adequate preparation, for agreement and co-operation among themselves, for guiding the people aright, and for developing healthy consciences, one should be very serious when undertaking the good though responsible work of a teacher and should conscientiously strive to be worth of his vocation.

Dull Teaching Services

In too many congregations the period used for teaching is a dull hour. There is not that life and enthusiasm in the teachers and in the audience during this service which ought to be manifest, but a sort of deadness and indifference too often prevails. Why is this? The failure of teachers to prepare edifying lessons has been discussed in this and former articles, a brief resume of which may first be given here. The failure to prepare may be caused by too much interest in worldly business, and therefore a lack of genuine interest in Christianity. A teacher may have a low ideal of what a teacher should be. He may be intellectually lazy, and therefore unwilling to study as a teacher should. The teacher may not realize that the membership is really starving for what the poor teachers are not giving them. It may be that by overestimating his own ability or by underestimating the intelligence of his audience, the teacher decides that he is sufficiently and quite permanently prepared for every occasion and that further preparation is superfluous. Lack of preparation is probably the most common as well as the most inexcusable cause of dullness in the teaching service.

Let us consider another cause of dullness, for since the life is in the seed, or word, dull teaching services produce lifeless congregations. Amateur teachers must be trained and encouraged, but perhaps there is some misunderstanding among the young and the old regarding these amateur teachers. When a beginner, or any other inefficient teacher, has made a few efforts to teach in a certain church, it seems that he and some others often get the idea that he thereafter has the same right to get up and talk for thirty minutes, regardless of how dull and deadening his speech may be, that the most capable teacher has. Surely this is a hurtful mistake, for the time used is not in proportion to the teacher's ability. When amateurs or unprepared teachers, regardless of how long they have been trying to teach, choose to occupy practically all the time, can we wonder that the audience draws a sigh of relief when the teaching service is over, and goes away unedified and rather discouraged? Can they feel like giving an enthusiastic invitation to their unbelieving neighbors to go with them to church next Lord's Day? Train the immature, but in each teaching service there should be some good teaching. Good teachers, moreover, should use a reasonable portion of the time, else the quality of teaching is out of proportion to the time used. This is not to discourage the immature, but it is to encourage both mature and immature teachers to teach according to a ability, for this is the best and only scriptural way. We need more good elders whose good judgment in directing and overseeing the teaching will make the service more effective.

As just shown, beginners are not the only inefficient teachers. Some never get above the beginner's level. Others become good teachers and later become inefficient by reason of age or some other disability. No member of the church should fail to give due honor to old and formerly good teachers, for if rightly used, they will greatly aid the church. We know, however, that older yet inefficient teachers may consume so much time that the teaching service is thereby made dull,

tiresome, and unedifying, especially to the immature listeners. Patience and good judgment are necessary in order that all teachers may so serve as to upbuild the congregation, but scriptural elders have this patience and good judgment.

If a teacher appears too often, his teaching becomes rather ineffective and his method monotonous. The average teacher runs largely in one rut, and too often repeats himself in slightly varied forms. How often should a teacher appear before a given audience? Of course there is no definite answer, for the teacher's ability, the number of teachers in the congregation, and other circumstances must be considered. Most preachers, as illustrated by located ministers, find their lessons becoming dull and ineffective after they have preached every Sunday in a given place for a year or two. A teacher with less ability, then should hardly think it best for him to teach every Lord's Day year after year. In a congregation with only two or three teachers where each one must appear quite frequently, unusually thorough preparation is necessary in order to prevent monotony and consequent dullness. It seems that such a congregation should determine to add or develop more teachers so that the teaching service may be given more variety and made more edifying. If any member feels sure that the teachers of his home congregation are too few and that they appear monotonously often, he or she should feel personally responsible for helping to get more and better teachers; and if such person temporarily fails, he should not give up and forsake the assembly, but should be temporarily content to abide the consequences of his failure. The doctrine "teach according to ability" cannot be improved; and if this doctrine is accepted in practice, it will determine how often and how long each teacher should teach whether the teachers in a given place are few or many.

How long may a teaching service continue without becoming dull? This again depends upon the quality of both the teachers and the audience. If the teachers are poor, the period should be rather short, for they cannot teach long and yet obey the doctrine "according to ability." If the teachers are able, then the audience and the circumstances become the determining factors. Perhaps the psychological time limit can be observed to some extent in our schools. Fifty to fifty-five minutes is the average period for college students. The average audience will likely be found a little below college students in preparation and interest. It seems safe to conclude that a teaching service which continues more than an hour is almost certain to become dull. A service of that length is altogether certain to become dull if the teaching is poor.

The chief causes of dullness in the teaching service, then, are the failure to prepare edifying lessons, the over-use of amateurs or other inefficient teachers, the appearance of a teacher more frequently and longer than his ability justifies, and services too long for the amount of edifying material contained. It has not been forgotten that in the edification of the church much depends also upon the character and development of the audience. But the audience is such an important factor that it deserves at least one or two articles, to which we expect to give attention. We should remember, however, that pious, well-prepared teachers who know

how often to talk and when to quit will make the teaching service both interesting and profitable, and will do much toward developing a live congregation of real Christians who will take pleasure in inviting the world to their assemblies.

P. C. KEY.

Dear Brother Duckworth: We were very sorry to hear of the sickness and death that have come to some of your relatives. I read your card at services here Sunday night, and requested a special prayer in your behalf. Brother Sam Lemley led the prayer. Surely hope your family will be restored to health ere long.

VAN BONNEAU.

Dodsonville, Texas.

The spiritual discouragements we are all having to face in these times of depression cause us to appreciate the more the splendid articles that are now being published through the Apostolic Way and the unrelenting efforts of Brother and Sister Duckworth to keep it going during these almost impossible times and in spite of unusual difficulties. The bad weather prevented Brother Duckworth receiving the usual assistance from congregations visited and now his father seriously ill for weeks, two operations at Baylor Hospital and not out of danger at this writing. For more than sixty years a member of the church and his faith in the all-sufficiency of the Word of God has never wavered. Brother Duckworth has remained with him constantly and then to add to his heavy heart, the night before the second operation on his father, his oldest sister "passed on."

We knowing of the difficulties sent a few cards to delinquent subscribers and we appreciate their response and thank those who added donations to their subscriptions; above all appreciate the prayers for the family. Surely under such burdens, the strongest of men need the prayers of the brotherhood. We trust that others seeing this may find some way to assist in this time of need.

C. A. STARK.
R. O. CONNER.

My Creed—Jesus Christ

(John 14:6)

My creed is what I believe. Therefore, when I tell you that I believe in Jesus what, in just a few words, does this include? This can be answered in three simple words, contained in a saying of Christ Himself, He who spake as never man spake.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Let us study these three words for a little while to learn more about that of which my creed consists.

1. The way. God's inspired prophet spoke and foretold hundreds of years before the time of Christ that "an highway be there, and a way" (Isaiah 35:8). He said also in the same connection that the eyes of the blind should be opened, the lame should walk, the dumb should speak, etc. Then right in the midst of performing all such wonders as these Christ announced, "I am the way!" Could there be any doubting that Isaiah spoke of the Christ?

Now comes the question; from whence came the multiplicity of ways that men now advocate? The answer: "There is a way that seemeth right unto men, but the

end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). The prophet foretold only one way. The Lord said that He was the way, not the ways. Therefore, since all of the hundreds of ways in the world could not be the one way, man has instituted his own ways. All of these are included in the broad way of Matthew 7:13. Only the narrow way leads unto life.

From the standpoint of the laws of language we find our lesson well borne out. We understand that both the prophet and Christ spoke figuratively. When Christ said, "I am the way." He used metaphor, an implied likeness. In what way is the way here spoken of like Christ? There is just one way; there is just one Christ.

2. The truth. Christ prayed to the Father, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). So if Jesus Christ is my creed, I believe the Bible, the Word of God. Christ was the embodiment of truth, for we read that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among men (John 1:14). But the Word is the truth. From this we learn a most important lesson, that we cannot believe in Christ without believing the Word of God, as is noted above.

What foolishness for men to say they believe in Christ, but that they do not believe that He says "word for word!" Belief in Christ is faith in the Bible, including even the simplest commands. For instance, the gospel most surely includes baptism (Mark 16:15-16). But the gospel is the "Word of truth" (Ephesians 1:13). From what we have already learned, we can easily see that one must be baptized to accept the gospel, or to accept Christ.

3. The life. Lastly, I wish to point out Jesus Christ as our only pattern for godly living here, and our only hope of a life everlasting. Christ lived the only perfect life. Even from the beginning life was in Him, and the life was the light of men (John 1:4). John 8:12 bears this out, and tells us that "he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Indeed, God so loved the world that He gave Christ, to the end that men might have everlasting life by believing in Him (John 3:16). We have already learned the futility of the claim that we can believe in Him without believing His words. Hence, His words become our source of life (John 6:63).

If you have been following our study with your Bible open at John 1:4, you likely have noticed the context of Jesus' remarkable statement that He is the way, the truth, and the life. He is approaching the time of His going away, and comforts His sorrowing disciples, beginning with the words, "Let not your heart be troubled." He assures that there are many mansions in His Father's house, and that He will come again to receive them unto Himself.

Doubtless the disciples wanted to go to the Father's house, or to heaven; hence Thomas' question, "How can we know the way?" Certainly all of us would like to go to heaven. Hear Jesus' answer telling us how we might do so: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

G. B. Shelburne, Jr.

Abilene, Texas.

Every new and renewal subscription helps.

Passed On

Sister Adaline Rhoades, wife of Brother J. L. Rhoades, was born in Coffee County, Tennessee, October 31, 1863. Moved to Bell County, Texas, in 1869, at the age of six years. She married J. L. Rhoades on September 25, 1884, and was his constant companion for forty-sxi years. They moved from Lampasas County to Coryell County where they lived from 1905 to 1914. From there they moved to Young County, where they have resided since.

Sister Rhoades departed this life February 1, 1933, at 2:45 P. M. She obeyed the gospel about the age of 17 and was a loyal and faithful member of the Church of Christ for fifty-two years, or more than a half century.

She was an untiring worker for the Lord and many souls have been led to Christ through her teaching and influence. Her life was a beautiful demonstration of woman's work in the church. Being the mother of four children, all of whom are living and members of the One Body, she demonstrated how to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord in the God-given way, without any human organization with which to do it. She was a lover of the Old Book and read it in her sphere.

Brother Rhoades has been a subscriber to the Firm Foundation ever since it began to be published, which was, I think, about 1884. He has also been a subscriber to the Apostolic Way from its beginning. There were a host of relatives and friends to mourn the departure of this good mother in Israel.

The great confidence Brother Rhoades and the children had in the promises of God's Word was a great source of relief during the dark hours, and they have an abiding hope of meeting her in the eternal home of the soul. She has passed on, but her works are following, and they will be a great factor in the lives of all who knew her.

The writer has been intimately acquainted with the family since long before I obeyed the Gospel. My first efforts to preach were under the care of Brother Rhoades and others who were pillars in the church at Kempner, Texas. I owe much to the encouraging words and deeds of these good people which helped me to make what little success I have attained.

For lack of room in our own church building at Graham, we secured the First Christian Church building in which to conduct the funeral service, and it was filled to its utmost capacity. Brother Moline of the Christian Church and Brother John M. Rice and Brother Oliff Ribble of the Church of Christ assisted in the services, all of whom were appreciated.

I here say to all the loved ones, Sister Rhoades has gone on to rest in the Savior's love and presence, and ere long we can cross over the same dark river and rest under the shade of the trees. May God's richest blessings be poured out on you, and keep you safely until we all meet in the sweet home where death and sorrow never come.

Your brother in Christ.

J. N. COWAN.

Hilda Laverne McFadden, 4-year-old daughter of Brother and Sister Alner McFadden of Winters, Texas, was buried in Fair View Cemetery at Winters, November 15, 1932, after a short but severe at-

tack of diphtheria which physicians and friends were unable to overcome. Quite a number of friends and acquaintances were present at the funeral. She leaves behind father, "Brother Alner," our beloved young preacher, mother, three brothers and two sisters, to mourn her going.

The writer undertook to speak the words of comfort and encouragement to the bereaved at the grave-side. May we strive to live so that our eternal happiness will be as sure as that of our little ones who depart this life in their younger days.

OSCAR BRANNON.

Winters, Texas.

Brother George N. Lipe was born April 23, 1853, and passed on to await the resurrection morning, at his home in Concord, North Carolina, December 3, 1932. He was baptized into the body of Christ, of which he remained a member till death. Brother G. W. McDaniel of near Woodleaf, N. C., and Brother L. D. Campbell of near Clemmons, N. C., spoke at the funeral at his home, in the midst of sorrowing relatives and friends. Brother Lipe is survived by his second wife and the following children: Joe Lipe and Mrs. Jim Tarlton of this city; Mrs. Pearl Baker of Pennsylvania; G. R. Lipe of Detroit, Mich.; J. P. Lipe of Washington, D. C.; F. M. Lipe of New York City, and Mrs. Ida Rile of Rock Hill, South Carolina.

WILLIS PARISH.

Brother G. W. Wolf was born July 9, 1866, and died at Houston December 23, 1932, after an illness which confined him to his bed for a period of about two years. He was preceded by his loving companion, Sister Wolf, who passed this life on April 18, 1932, leaving him confined to his bed. Brother Wolf is survived by eleven children who are left to fight the battles of life. He obeyed the gospel when a young man and devoted the major portion of his life since that time in defending the truth against all innovations, which truth all who know him can testify. He has done much good by his loyal efforts in upholding the truth and eternity will only reveal the much and lasting good that came from his work, in the Master's Vineyard.

H. L. REED.

What We Have—What We Need

"We," I am using to refer to Christian people of the present time. There was a time when the Gentile people were without God, Christ or hope (Eph. 2:12), but by the grace of God they were made right by the blood of the cross. So, at this time, we can say that we have God, Christ and hope.

Using need in the sense of lack, we can say we do not need God, Christ, etc., for we have them. If one says he needs \$100, we imply he hasn't such a sum. Thus, we enumerate some of the blessings that are ours. As Creator all have God—one God. Through God's grace in that He loved us so, we have Christ, a Savior. We may or may not need that salvation, depending on whether we have it or not. If we have it, we need to work it out. If we do not have it we surely need it. If we want salvation, here or hereafter, we need to meet conditions required of us by the God who loved

us to the extent He gave his Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." If we do not believe, we need to believe. Belief is based on testimony; the testimony is not lacking for God has given us ample testimony. Through His wonderful scheme of redemption, He provided means to establish and preserve the proofs for us and to us. God gave the testimony to us. It was that concerning Christ in which we have a Savior. It was through God sending Christ into the world to die on the cross, thus making atonement for sins, that salvation was offered to a dying world.

Now, the sinner needs Christ, needs the gospel, needs faith and salvation. He can never be saved unless he believes; he can never believe unless he hears. He must "call on the name of the Lord."

"How can they call on him in whom they have not believed? How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard? How can they preach except they be sent?" (For?) No; the "for" is not there (Romans 13:15). Dear reader, let me pause here to sound a solemn warning. Do you count yourself a Christian? Do you have the privilege of a good congregation, where you may sit together with them in heavenly things? If so, you are blessed indeed, and it may be said "you have no need," but that church needs to send (not send for) the preacher that they who have not heard may hear; may believe; may call on the name of the Lord; may be saved. On the doing or not doing this much is at stake: You may save yourself and others. I know it needs to be done now.

Aside from the Divine personages: God, Christ and the Holy Spirit that animated the apostles, belief is the foundation of salvation and is a condition. It can be increased; can be added to. Then, if we believe, we need to add to it; add to your faith, virtue; to virtue, knowledge; to knowledge, temperance; to temperance, patience; to patience, Godliness; to Godliness, brotherly kindness; to brotherly kindness, charity.

Now, he that has not added these Christian graces, needs to do so. They who have added them, have indeed been wise and are near the mark of perfection. God will give them abundant entrance into His everlasting Kingdom.

W. L. SHELNUTT.

Second Coming of Christ

All who believe the New Testament may know Matthew 24:37, "And as were the days of Noah so shall the coming of the Son of man be." This was Christ's own version. Then how were the days of Noah? See Genesis 6:5-7.

We learn from this reading that God destroyed man when he no longer would tolerate his wickedness; and Christ says His second coming will be as this was (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

As it appears our present system of government has broken down; something else must take its place.

Would it not be grand should this be the second coming of Christ? And the end of this wicked, and corrupt false rule.

Oh, how loyal we ought to be to Him who spoke as never man spoke. Let us watch. Matthew 24:42.

J. S. JOHNSON.

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