

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

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NO. 1

PREACHING MORE THAN YOU KNOW

By JERRY DICKINSON

"I have heard what the prophets have said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies even the prophets of the deceit of their own heart? That think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor as their fathers forgot my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the straw to the wheat? saith Jehovah."

Those strikingly memorable words were spoken by the prophet Jeremiah in chapter 23, verses 25-28 (ASV). The false prophets of Jeremiah's day were equating what they had dreamed with the revealed Word of God. They were exclaiming, "I have dreamed! I have dreamed!", and were preaching their dreams as if they had been inspired by God. But their dreams, as Jeremiah so pointedly and poetically puts it, were like the chaff to the wheat when placed along side the revealed Word of God. "If a man has a dream," concludes the Lord through Jeremiah, "Let him tell it as a dream. "Tell your dream if you must, but if you preach it as something inspired from God you are going beyond what you know.

It is true, of course, in Biblical times that God did inspire the dreams of some, however in every case they knew the Lord had inspired their dreams because God gave them the interpretation and meaning of the dreams Himself. This is clear in the cases of Joseph and Daniel. The same is not true today. I have had folks tell me that they have dreamed about people dying and then shortly thereafter the person did die. Is that an inspired dream? It could just be coincidence or it could be the dreamer had his chronology confused - I mean he could have dreamed the dream shortly after the death and then, in the passing of time, think the dream preceded the death. The point is, nonetheless, if you have a dream tell it as a dream and do not venture beyond what is written and beyond what you know of a certainty.

But there is a much more important point to be made. It is one thing to have a dream or an unusual experience and tell about it as just that. It is quite another thing to get into the pulpit and preach more than you know. This is true whether we are talking about dreams or any thing else. I certainly believe, for instance, the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian (I Cor. 6:19) but when a preacher declares that he feels led of the Spirit to preach a certain thing or to make a certain point he is preaching more than he knows.

The problem is with that word feels. If you have a warm feeling of some sort come over you before you are preaching (or while you are preaching) keep it to yourself. Don't preach it in the pulpit! You have stepped beyond the Word of God - and beyond what you know for certain.

Do not give us your feelings - give us the scripture! If you have had some unusually unique experience which you feel was due to God's providence keep that between you and the Lord; I mean, do not include such experiences in your preaching. When you do you are preaching more than what you know and you detract from, not add to, your sermon. I certainly do believe, for instance, in angels and I do believe they minister for us according to God's providence (Hebrews 1:14). If you feel, however, that an angel has attended and aided you in some difficult situation keep it to yourself. When you include such incidents in your sermon you are preaching more than you know. Rather than making your point, your illustration is a detrimental distraction.

There has recently been a groundswell of interest and curiosity about the unseen spirit world. There is an explosion of books written about angels, spirits, demons, etc. I have had several people recommend some of these books to me as good reading. However, after reading some of them the thing that stands out is that these authors are going beyond what is written, and beyond what they know. In one of these books, written by a church of Christ preacher, the author states his belief that angels still bring messages from God today as they did in Biblical times. He goes to great lengths to affirm that they will not bring a message that goes beyond the written Word, but he claims they do bring messages (he never really states precisely how) to Christians today.

Not only that, but he states further in the book that he believes that the spirits of our dead loved ones are watching us here on earth, and even pray for us over yonder in the glory world. How does he know all of this is the question. The answer is, of course, he does not know all of this at all. He even says, now and again, in his book that he cannot be certain of all he says about angels and departed spirits, however he believes what he is saying is true and ought to bring comfort and strength to Christians.

The problem is that not only is he going beyond what is written in the scriptures he is going beyond what he or any human knows. While travelling to a meeting recently I

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 1



A D V O C A T E

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-10

Preaching More Than You Know 1

The Old Paths 2

The Querist Column 3

This And That 3

The Good Confession - Part 2 4

The Nature Of Angels 6

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

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Editorial

THE OLD PATHS

By DON L. KING

With this issue we begin our 67th year of publication. Our plea has always been to seek the old paths. That was the reason the name Old Paths Advocate was chosen in the first place.

In Jeremiah 6:16, the prophet is trying to warn Israel of impending doom from the north. The people had rejected all of the Lord's warnings and now, great harm was on the way. The passage reads: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein." Notice he said first of all "stand." Then, "see." Finally, they are advised to "ask for the old paths." Israel needed to stand in one place long enough to see where they were. They were away from God! Once they ascertained that they were away from the Lord they must then inquire as to where the old paths might be.

What a lesson for us today! Someone says, "you mean this passage applies to us?" Yes, we can (and must) learn from this. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

We are living in a time when the very basis of the Christian religion is being challenged and undermined. It is not surprising that denominational preachers speak things untrue. We expect those whom we recognize as false teachers to teach false doctrine. When false doctrine comes from some in the church it comes as a complete surprise to most of us because we just don't expect it. We are hearing strange sounds today from a few of our own. The ideas of a "new confession," or of "praying to Jesus" rather than praying through Him as we are plainly taught to do in Colossians 3:17, are being embraced by some who worship right. Look at Colossians 3:17 with me: "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." What did Paul say? He said do "ALL" in the name of the Lord Jesus. (or by His authority). Would prayer fall under that term, "all?" If it does, then ALL our prayers are to be prayed in His name (or by His authority) to God and the Father BY HIM, not TO HIM but "BY HIM." Small wonder Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (emphasis mine DLK) What do we do when we pray? We approach the Father in prayer do we not? Yes, and we can not go there unless we do so by, or through, the worthy name of Jesus. So saith inspiration! No matter what other obscure passage one may consider it must be seen in the light from these clearly stated ones. If not, why not? The apostle Paul said: "...Let God be true, but every man a liar..." (Romans 3:4)

What a great time for us to "stand in the ways, and see and ask for the old paths." Where can we possibly go but

continued on page eight

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: If a brother or sister stops coming to the services of the church or if they attend a digressive congregation and the brethren never contact or discuss this matter with them, on returning does that person need to make a public confession to be back in fellowship with the church? What constitutes a public sin? Whose forgiveness do you seek, man or God? (L.A.)

Answer: First of all it should be noted that when one stops coming to the services of the church that individual has violated the teaching of the bible. We are commanded to "seek first the kingdom..." (Mt.6:33). When one, through neglect or rebellion, ceases to assemble with the church, choosing to be somewhere else, they have failed to put the church first. Such actions are also a violation of Heb. 10:25. It is a sin to forsake i.e. (abandon, leave in straits, or helpless,) the assembling of ourselves together. It doesn't matter whether we have gone deer hunting, fishing, on vacation, or we are working, the result is the same. We have chosen to be someplace other than where we are commanded to be. Paul and others chose to be together on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) to break bread. We should make the same choice. Secondly, when one attends a digressive church, they participate in practices that violate plain Bible teaching. Such practices may involve singing with a mechanical instrument of music, drinking out of individual cups, or a system of teaching unauthorized by the Bible, as well as other things. The fact that no one contacted or discussed with the individual what had happened in no way diminishes the wrong done by this person. It should be noted, however, that the leadership of the congregation where this happened had an obligation to not only contact and discuss this matter with the person, but also should have tried to get them to repent and return to the Lord before it was too late. If this person on his or her own decide to return to the church, they need to seek the forgiveness of God, and inform the church of their repentance and desire to once again be a part of the congregation. How may this be done? In any number of ways. The individual might come forward at a church service and let it be known that they are sorry for failing to assemble and request prayer on their behalf. Or they might call up some of the brethren, during the week, requesting prayer on their behalf for their sins. Since all Christians are priests and have access to God in prayer, when we come in repentance, this person might realize they have done

wrong and pray to God to forgive them. It is only proper, if such be the case, that the person then let the church know of their repentance and prayer as well as their desire to once again be back with the church.

What constitutes a public sin? A public sin is one about which people generally have knowledge. A private sin in my life is one about which only I have knowledge. A sin between me and another person is between the two of us and should be taken care of by the parties involved (Mt.5 :23-24). The sin of choosing to stay away from the services of the church or of worshiping with digressive congregations is one generally known by all. When someone fails to come to church, everybody knows it. When someone starts worshiping elsewhere, everybody knows it. Hence, the necessity of letting people know that we have repented and desire their prayers. In Mt. 18, a private matter escalated to the point that the church had to be made aware of the situation. Since the church was now aware of the problem, any resolution to the situation must be shared with the church.

While the querist made no reference to this, I am wondering why anyone who has left the church feels they should have a right to come back without some kind of explanation as to where they have been, why they left, as well as a confession for any wrong doing? It always puzzles me when someone leaves the church and then approaches the brethren asking "what do I need to do to come back?" It seems to me that most any one should know the answer to that question. What does an adulterer need to do to come back? Quite obviously, they need to repent and confess to God their sin. What does a thief need to do to come back? The same thing. What does one need to do who has been in digression or just not attending services at all? The same thing. What God requires of one, he requires of all.

Whose forgiveness do we seek man or God's? Anytime we sin, we must seek God's forgiveness. Seeking God's forgiveness might also mean that we seek forgiveness of a brother if we have sinned against him. But basically when one comes before the church and confesses sin they are confessing to God and seeking forgiveness from Him. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

(Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, Mo. 65808)

THIS AND THAT

By DON McCORD

The Jewel of Consistency — One of the characteristics of truth - truth for all men, for all time, in all places - is consistency. Bible truth is never inconsistent because His word is never inconsistent (John 17:17). He is never inconsistent either. The practice of truth is therefore always consistent; when it is inconsistent, error enters, and I must look at my practice; consistency will never force us into a corner, take us down a blind alley. I have said that to kindly say this. Preaching brother, I do not understand your prac-

tice when you, for instance, because of a divorce-remarriage problem in a congregation near you, boycott a meeting on that basis, and then attend a meeting elsewhere with that same preacher, backing his meeting, and the congregation where he is preaching. Where is consistency in your practice? Again, preaching brother, I cannot understand your practice when because of a re-marriage question at one congregation, you refuse to preach there, but at another congregation with the same exact problem, you will

preach, hold meetings. I just do not understand your practice! Surely a sin, alleged, imagined or real, would not condemn the entire congregation. Even in Sardis, the many had not defiled the garments of the few (Rev. 3:4); sin does not "rub off" unless we let it; the sins of the many do not condemn the few unless they allow it. The sins of one or a few defiling the entire congregation? Unthinkable!! - that is the way we act sometime in some places though. Anybody who ever bathed a baby knows you don't throw out the baby with the bath water. If we can listen to a faithful preacher anywhere, attend his meeting anywhere, we can listen to him everywhere, attend his meeting everywhere. If not, why not? Brother Homer Gay used to say, and lived by this practice, if a congregation of brethren worship right, scripturally, he could and would preach for them, meet with them, worship with them, so long as they allowed him to preach the gospel. This is a great philosophy, consistently right, too. Preaching brother, if we wait to preach for a congregation where there is no sin, we will wait from now on, and never preach again.

Brethren, I cannot understand you either, or your practice, when by carloads, you attend a meeting by a preacher in digression, and not far from you, virtually to a man, boycott a meeting where the congregation worships just as you do, and the preacher is in full fellowship with preachers you use and adore. Consistent? Right? Hardly! Amen!! The reason for your boycotting is the sins, supposed or real, of one man. To be consistent you can never attend another meeting anywhere, anytime as long as you live. Let's strive for consistency in all we do in the Cause of the Lord. Oh, the games we play! Our Leader, Master, Savior, High Priest does not game-play!

The King James Version — How distressing it is when we hold in disdain, disrespect, disregard the translation of the Scriptures that has been tried and true, stood the test, for nearly 400 years! The translation, the King James here, with the backing of the valid original text, held up for question, while more modern, more recent translations, with the backing of an altered source are preferred. Follow me, please; I am not saying all other translations are bad, and should not be used, consulted, quoted, studied; we are not that naive. If the King James is so objectionable, why is that in God's providence, it has been around so long to guide the English-speaking world in its quest for truth? Its sustained tenure says something of its value. Please listen

to this excerpt from "**The Vindicator**" by Bro. Brett Hickey: "This text (Westcott-Hort) has been championed as the cure for the 'ills' of the KJB. It is alarming to find the Westcott-Hort text alters nearly 10,000 of the 140,520 Greek words found in the Majority Text (which is behind the King James). A number of scholars cry 'foul' on this point....". I applaud Bro. Brett Hickey for this, a young man, for young men and older men, in defense of the King James Version. Let us listen. An alarming statistic we have just read, indeed!!

Washing the apostles' feet — Why do we try to put Christ's washing the apostles' feet on the same evening as the Lord's Supper? In reality, and truth, those two events did not happen at the same time, on the same evening. Look at John 13, any translation. The supper where Christ washed the apostles' feet was "before" the passover (v. 1); the Lord's Supper was after the Passover; cannot be the same occasion, the same time. Passover was still ahead (v. 29). Even the two "sop" incidents are different. The one when He washed the apostles' feet, Christ dipped and gave to Judas; at the other, they both dipped in the dish.

"Groanings that can not be uttered" — Whose groanings, Rom. 8:26? Answer, not the Holy Spirit's! — but groanings within us, look at verses 22, 23 — "whole creation groaneth," "even we ourselves groan within ourselves." I have lived long enough to know what that means. I have had and still have enough infirmities, weaknesses, to know firsthand what verse 26 means. I have had enough times I did not know what to pray for as I ought, to know what Paul means when he speaks of the Holy Spirit making intercessions. Along with those groanings within me, the Holy Spirit intercedes. This no more makes him any intercessor than it does the dear brother, my intercessor who makes intercession when he prays for me (I Tim. 2:1). Yes, Christ is my Intercessor, your Intercessor (Heb. 7:25). Amen and amen!! Listen to Bro. Robertson Whiteside's comment in **A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints at Rome**, probably the best commentary on Romans written to date: "It is what Paul calls 'unutterable groanings'. It is the groaning within ourselves mentioned in verse 23. The groanings are silent groanings — unutterable feelings of need. The Spirit helps us in our groanings, for he understands our needs and longings and can make them known to God." — Box 1773, Covina, CA.

THE GOOD CONFESSION - PART 2

By GREG GAY

Hopefully, thus far in our study we have sufficiently proven that confession when we obey the gospel is necessary, and that the confession we make should include reference to Jesus being the Christ, the Son of God in keeping with the example of Timothy whose confession follows the example of Christ.

Some controversial passages.

You may have noticed the absence of the account of Philip and the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch in what has been written thus far. There we find a clear example of confessing Christ.

Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same

scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. (Acts 8:35-38 KJV)

When we look to other translations and read commentaries about this account we find a supposed problem with verse 37, the verse that includes the eunuch's

confession. Many translations omit it completely, while others include it as a footnote. One translation, the **New American Standard**, includes the verse but says in a footnote: "Many manuscripts do not contain this verse."

What are we to understand? Must all church leaders become Greek scholars in order to consider this question? I trust not. Based on this do, we discard the confession altogether? Not at all.

Even though what the Ethiopian eunuch said may not be in some manuscripts we can trust what he did say was right, or else he would not have been baptized. Notice at the end of Acts 8:36 the eunuch asks Philip the question: "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Are we to understand there was complete silence as the chariot was stopped and the baptism completed? Obviously there was an answer to the eunuch's question, and subsequent conversation. Surely no one would dare say the Ethiopian eunuch did not make a declaration of his faith in Christ.

In fact, please allow me this conjecture: If indeed Acts 8:37 is an addition, I don't believe an addition would have been made that was not the practice of the church. It in no way does harm to or disagrees with any passage regarding conversion. It in every way agrees with all that is said about The Good Confession. Brents reports "Dr. Hackett tells us this interpolation was known to Irenaeus as early as the year 170. Then it was bound to have been in copies taken at or before that period." (p 199)

My own opinion is to accept the Acts 8:37 confession and I use it frequently in sermons and conversions. When Jesus is preached to a total stranger, as was the relationship between Philip and the eunuch, and baptism is requested there must be some examination of what is understood. Just because someone requests baptism does not mean they understand the gospel. We need to know they are requesting baptism for scriptural reasons with the proper discernment of Christ. I know of no better examination than Acts 8:37 "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

Brents quotes several historians regarding the confession and then says:

These quotations might be extended almost indefinitely, but the foregoing are deemed sufficient to show that in primitive times the only confession demanded was a belief in the fact that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. As this was the confession authorized of the Lord, and required by the apostles and primitive Christians, who is authorized to demand anything else now? Can we improve upon the work of the Lord? Surely, it is more safe to keep within the boundary prescribed in the New Testament. (page 207)

Another controversial passage:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Rom 10:9-13 KJV)

This passage is often quoted and correctly applied to the necessity of faith and confession when we obey the gospel.

Please notice some other translations of Rom 10:9:

That if you will openly confess with your mouth, that Jesus is Lord, and believe with your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (**The Living Oracles**)

That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; (**New American Standard**)

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (**New International Version**)

Some brethren have wondered after reading Romans 10:9 from "new" translations if we need to change the confession we commonly use. Readers may not be familiar with one of the translations I quoted, **The Living Oracles**. This translation is from the early 1800's by Doctors George Campbell, James MacKnight, and Philip Doddridge, with "prefaces, various emendations, and an appendix" by Alexander Campbell. The "Jesus is Lord" translation of Romans 10:9 is certainly not new.

Is Romans 10:9 a valid confession as translated in translations other than the King James Version? Based on what many translations have done with this verse I believe we can trust the words "Jesus is Lord" to be a possible translation of Rom. 10:9. The Nestle Greek Text's literal English translation of that verse is: "Because if thou confessest with the mouth of thee Lord Jesus..." (p 634) This, by the way, is very close to the King James Version rendering of the passage in question. Regardless, the phrase "Jesus is Lord" reminds us of the wonderful truth of the Lordship of Christ. It is absolutely true that Jesus is Lord. He is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).

But what do we do with this newly discovered confession? Do we need to change the confession we have made thru the years? I don't believe so.

At this point in our study, you may think I've lost my mind, but bear with me for just a moment as I make a point that applies to this important issue.

Consider the name of the church

There are many ways the church is identified in the New Testament. Consider the following references:

"This way"

And desired of him letters to Dmascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. (Acts 9:2 KJV)

"The Church"

Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. (Acts 12:1 KJV)

"The Church of Christ"

Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you. Rom 16:16 KJV)

"The Church of God"

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20:28 KJV)

"The Church of the living God"

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim 3:15 KJV)

Now, are all of these scriptural designations for the church? Yes they are. So, out of all these, and more, why do we choose to use the name Church of Christ? For the following reasons: 1. It is scriptural (this, by the way, is most important) 2. It has universal agreement within our fellowship 3. We have peace with this name 4. It identifies us to the religious community around the world.

Now, what should happen if someone comes along and says we should change the name by which we are known to another Bible name. Or, we should attempt to combine every possible name for the church on our signs. Would we have scriptural grounds to say no? Yes, I believe we would, for the reasons listed above. Even though there are names for the church that appear to have different meanings—they are all synonymous and interchangeable and choosing one does not deny the others.

Is there a compelling reason for anyone to change the name by which we identify ourselves to the world? Not at all. Does calling the church, "The Church of Christ" violate any of the other names God's children are called in the scripture? Not at all. Therefore this generation can pass on to the next generation the use of the name: "Church of Christ" with confidence we are obeying God's word.

Back to the confession

Why do we use a confession that includes that Jesus is Christ and that he is the Son of God?

For the following reasons:

1. It is scriptural (this, by the way, is most important)
2. It has universal agreement within our fellowship
3. We have peace with this confession

Now, what should happen if someone says, there are other confessions, let's change the confession we use. Would we have scriptural grounds to say no? Yes, I believe we would.

Is there a compelling reason for anyone to change the confession? Not at all. Because confessing Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God is synonymous with every other confession regarding Jesus and choosing one does not deny any other.

Confessing we believe that "Jesus Christ is the son of God" does not violate any of the other confessions God's children are called upon to make in the scripture just as saying we are the "Church of Christ" does not violate any of the other several names that are used in the scriptures.

Our obedience to the gospel is performed for the church as a whole. We do not need to walk down the aisle, confess and be baptized again and again as we attend different congregations. In this regard baptism is similar to church discipline. Once disciplined, a Christian is disciplined for all. Once baptized, the baptism is to be accepted by all. Because we trust everyone do to this properly, we must be very careful to be worthy of our brethren's trust in this area. We need only to study the route of teaching about

circumcision in the early church to know how fragile this trust is. And we are right to know where brethren stand on such issues, because we want to trust them.

The fellowship enjoyed between Christians and the cooperation enjoyed between congregations is precious. We are to go out of our way to give our brethren reasons to trust our judgment.

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Eph 4:3 KJV)

Every generation has the responsibility to know the truth of God's word, and to share those truths with those who are younger, that the church might be preserved blameless until the end of time.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. (2 Tim 2:2 KJV)

This generation can pass on to the next generation the use of a confession that refers to Jesus as being the Christ, the Son Of God, with confidence we are obeying God's word just as that same "Good Confession" was passed on to us by the previous generation.

What if some want to add other things to the confession? I don't believe it is at all necessary, but as long as the confession includes the fact that Jesus is Christ and Son of God, and if what is added is scriptural, I believe it is acceptable. I could not recommend ever omitting the fact that Jesus is Christ and Son of God from the confession. To do otherwise takes us away from what Jesus confessed before Pilate.

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Cor 1:9-10 KJV)—7821 Saybrook Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621 papagreg@aol.com.

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THE NATURE OF ANGELS

By ALAN BONIFAY

Three previous articles in this study of angels have brought us now to the particular topic before us, the nature of angels. As we begin to consider what God's word teaches about this subject, perhaps the best place to start

is with the classification of angels. Much can be discovered about the nature of angels from the designations given to them in scripture. And so we consider nine terms given in the Bible that designate angels (or an angel) and serve

to classify them for us.

"Angel" - This word comes, as you may remember, from the Greek word "angelo" and the Hebrew word "malak." The term simply means messenger. In God's word angels were chiefly employed by God to deliver His oracles to men. This was the case in the Patriarchal (Genesis 18), Mosaic (Acts 7:53, Galatians 3:19), and Christian Age (Acts 10:3; 27:23). You will remember that angels were primarily messengers who brought to men God's word.

"Host" - The words "God of hosts" are found in Psalm 89:8 and Amos 4:13. "Host" is a military term, and the teaching of the Bible is that God has a great army of angels. These angels execute His judgments.

"The sons of God" - From the Hebrew term "Benai Eloheim," found in Job 38:7, comes our English translation "the sons of God." One of the names of God given in Hebrew scripture is Eloheim, and this term is also applied to angels in Psalm 8:5, a passage quoted by the New Testament writer of Hebrews (2:7). From this designation, we can clearly see that angels are not only in the family of God, but they also are supernatural beings.

"Sons of the Mighty" - This term is found in Psalm 89:6. It is a term used to describe the power that angels possess. Jesus used much the same type of description when He called James and John the "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). In that case, we readily understand Jesus was calling attention to the fact that James and John each had a thunderous nature. And when "sons of the mighty" is used in reference to angels, it is to be understood that angels, by their very nature, possess immense power and might. The Bible supports this conclusion eminently. The words of David are, "Bless the Lord ye angels that excel in strength" (Psalm 103:20). 2 Kings 19:35 notes the remarkable fact the one angel killed 185,000 Assyrians in a single night, ample evidence indeed that angels are certainly very powerful beings.

"Stars" - Job 38:7 reads, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" This wording is an example of Hebrew parallelism, for the stars who sang are the sons who shouted as well. A passage such this seems to place a close connection between the angels and the stars. The connection is mysterious at best, and to go further than this is to enter into speculation.

"Cherubims" - These are the first angels we meet in the Bible, for the Divine Record tells us that God placed Cherubims at the east of the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve were driven out (Genesis 3:24). Cherubims occupy a prominent place in the Old Testament, which teaches us they are usually located in God's presence. God dwells between the cherubim in the Most Holy Place according to Psalm 80:1 and 99:1 (compare also 2 Kings 19:15 and I Samuel 4:4). This truth is clearly seen also in God's instructions to Moses concerning the ark of the testimony (which was placed in the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle) and the mercy seat with its cherubims that was placed upon that ark. Concluding His instructions concerning the ark, God tells Moses in Exodus 25:22, "And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony..."

"Seraphims" - Here is a word which means "the burning ones." It seems likely that the seraphims are those angels who perform priestly functions in Heaven. This idea has been garnered from Isaiah 6:1-8. In that passage, particularly verses six and seven, it is one of the seraphims which takes a live coal from off the altar and brings it to touch the lips of Isaiah, thus taking away his iniquity and purging his sin. These are clearly priest-like duties.

"Michael" and "Gabriel" - These two angels are the only ones in the Bible for whom a name is revealed. They are the archangels. "Michael" means "one who is like God," while "Gabriel" means simply "man of God." Michael seems to be the angel who is the military leader of the angels of God. It was Michael who fought with Satan in Revelation 12. And again, it was Michael who disputed with Satan over the body of Moses according to Jude verse 9, daring not to bring a railing accusation against Satan, but rather saying, "the Lord rebuke thee."

"Angel of the Lord" - This is an angel mentioned very often in the Old Testament, and a very special angel indeed is this last one we consider. Often, the angel of the Lord is identified with Jehovah refers to Christ in His pre-existent state, and there is a significant argumentation to support this view. However, it is hard to be dogmatic because there are some passages differentiating between the angel of the Lord. Some believe him to be simply an angel with a special commission, while others say he could be a momentary descent of God into visibility. Whatever the case may be, he is no ordinary angel and at a minimum is very closely associated with God Himself - closely enough to receive worship.

These are the terms given in the Bible which designate the various angels and serve to classify them for us. This consideration of these terms and our study of them also leads us to conclude that angels have various ranks. Such is born out in the scriptures. The Greeks delineated angels by rank in ascending order as principalities, powers, mights, and dominions, ranks that the New Testament refers to in Colossians 1:16 and Ephesians 6:12. The Jews recognized the same ranks as cherubims, seraphims, angels, and archangels. Having noted the classifications and ranks of angels, let us consider now their attributes as we further attempt to understand their nature.

ATTRIBUTES OF ANGELS

Angels are wise but not omniscient. In Exodus twelve, the Destroying Angel had to have (or at least he did have) a sign by which to know Hebrew houses from Egyptian houses. Further evidence of angels' lack of omniscience is the statement made by Jesus in Matthew 24:36 that the angels of heaven know not the day nor the hour of our Lord's return. And Peter, speaking by inspiration in I Peter 1:11, 12, says that the angels, though they desired to, were unable to look into the Gospel plan of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Angels are capable of great speed, but they are not omnipresent. Angels had to travel places, such as the time they went to visit Abraham in Genesis chapter 18. Angels went to Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19. Exodus 12:29,30 tell us of the angel that passed through the land of Egypt. Daniel relates an encounter he had with Gabriel in Daniel 9:20-23. In this passage, the Bible says Gabriel

had to fly swiftly. And this angel himself says he came in obedience to a command. Again, we find Gabriel speaking to Zechariah in Luke 1:19, and there he says clearly that he had been "sent." These passages well teach that angels are capable of very great speed, but are by no means omnipresent.

Angels "excel" (Psalm 103:20) in strength and power, but they are by no means omnipotent. 2 Thessalonians 1:7 speaks of Jesus and his "mighty angels." But angels only have the power that God gives to them. The angel of 2 Samuel 24:15, 16 slew 70,000, a mighty act indeed. However, he was simply acting as the agent of God. The Bible gives us other examples of angelic power. We see it at the tomb of Jesus (Matthew 28:2-4), at the release of Peter from prison (Acts 12:10), at the wicked city of Sodom (Genesis 19), and at the death of Herod (Acts 12:23). Let us no doubt that angels have immense power, but neither let us believe they are almighty. They are not, at the defeat of Satan, who defiled God, clearly shows (Isaiah 14:12-15).

Angels have a will - they are not robots. Hebrews 1:6 says, "And let the angels of God worship him." Psalm 103:20 speaks of angels "that do his commandments hearkening unto the voice of his word." Satan was not one of these angels that hearkened. Rather, he exercised his own will. Notice the "I wills" in Satan's fall: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13,14). The angels of God, and the demons as well, each exercise their own wills.

Angels are invisible to unaided human vision. Colossians 1:16 speaks of the invisible, and then lists the

ranks of angels. Numbers 22:22-35 gives us remarkable account of Balaam and his encounter with the angel of the Lord. Three times the beast upon which Balaam rode saw the angel, but Balaam was completely unaware of his presence until God opened his eyes (verse 31). Equally remarkable is the account of Elisha in the city of Dothan. Elisha knew the hosts of Jehovah were there to deliver him from the army of the king of Syria, but Elisha's servant was unable to see the deliverance that was imminent until the Lord opened his eyes (2 Kings 6:17). David says, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psalm 34:9). And yet the angel of the Lord is unseen, for truly, without Divine assistance, angels are invisible to mankind.

THE NUMBER OF ANGELS

Though we cannot see them, angels are incredibly numerous. There is no way to know exactly how many angels there are, but the scriptures do give us some hints. In Luke 2:13, upon the announcement of the birth of Jesus, a "multitude" of the heavenly host appearing praised God. In Matthew 26:53, Jesus speaks of "more than twelve legions of angels." Twelve legions would be 72,000 in literal terms. Angels are called "stars" in Job 38:7. Of the literal stars in the universe, we know they number in the billions. Hebrews 12:22 speaks of "an innumerable company of angels" - a number that is virtually infinite. Thus we see that the angels of God, in all their classifications, in their various ranks, and with all the attributes God has created them which constitute a virtual numberless host.

In our next article, Lord willing, we will conclude our study of angels with considerations of their mission and activities as well as their destiny.—523 Jessie, Manteca, CA 95337.

PREACHING MORE THAN YOU KNOW

continued from page 1

heard a preacher on the radio declare his conviction that demons still possess people today. He even played a portion of a tape where he has a conversation with a woman who he claims was possessed. The demon (he asserts) spoke to him and he proceeded to exorcise the evil spirit. The exorcism took seven days, but he claims he finally cast the demon out in the name of the Lord Jesus. I thought what you are thinking I'm sure - why did it take seven days? Jesus and the apostles were able to cast them out instantaneously. At any rate, there seems to be a mania afoot with regards to the spirit world - angelmania, spiritmania, demonmania, etc. It is commendable that folks

are interested in the eternal unseen world, but let us not get so carried away that we start believing and preaching - may I say it again - more than we know.

Let us just preach the word and hold to sound doctrine (II Tim. 4:2,3). If you have had a dream, or some unusual experience that you feel the Lord had a hand in, or some moment of enlightenment when something that had been darkly vague became suddenly and brilliantly clear and lucid to your mind, keep it between you and the Lord. Make of it what you will - it may be perfectly explainable, or perhaps beyond explanation. In your teaching and preaching, however, stick to the scriptures. Stay on solid ground. To preach and teach anything else is to teach and preach more than you know.

THE OLD PATHS

continued from page 2

down unless we do so. Brethren, it is time for all of us to take a look around us. Where are we? We are being deluged with new translations of the Bible. Have you noticed that? Many are obviously trying to take the "teeth" out of the word of the Lord. We hear terrible railings against the old King James Version. There are those whowould really like to get it completely out of the way. Some would have us believe it is a very poor translation

indeed. If it is so bad, I am absolutely amazed that the Campbell's, Rice's, Smith's, et. al, were able to find enough truth in it to restore the Lord's Church! How did they ever get the work started if it was so bad? Again, we need to "stand" "see" "and ask for the old paths."

No, it is not the purpose of this writing to ban all translations except the KJV. Like most of you, we refer to various translations from time to time. Yes, we agree that there are some terms used in the old version which must be explained as we teach the people. However, at least we have learned them! Every novice teacher has learned to

explain that the word "conversation" in the KJV often means "manner of life." He will point out that the context, or setting of the text, will show the proper meaning, etc., etc.

Frankly, we deem it a huge blunder to allow a version

which has been accepted as a standard work for hundreds of years to simply be set aside as worthless, if only in our minds. We need to see where we are and then ask for the old paths. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTICE

Please send all material for publication to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 until February 15. Afterward resume sending to Don King as usual.

A NEW TRACT ON THE BREAD IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

Did you know that our "cups" brethren usually have a more difficult time dealing with the simple subject of the number of loaves in the Lord's supper than they do with the number of cups? They have very seldom ever dealt with this subject, and they need to be approached with it by our brethren. If you would like to have some material on this subject (much of it taken from a debate) to either pass out to these brethren or to have for yourself, you now have the chance to purchase a 4,000 word tract called **The Bread in the Lord's Supper**. This tract not only deals with the mandatory use of only one loaf in the Lord's Supper, but also with many objections to this truth. These tracts are only \$.60 each plus shipping. If you purchase 50 or more, I'll pay the shipping myself. Order from Tony Denton at P.O. Box 327, Eudora, KS 66025, or e-mail me at tedenton@juno.com, or call me at (785) 542-1849 or (785) 542-1813.

BROTHER BILLY ORTEN'S MEETING — COVINA, CA

As many brothers and sisters know, November, 1996 was a month in time never to be forgotten by one of our beloved preachers of the gospel, Billy Orten. He took as it were a walk through "the shadows" that many never have to take — in order to live, a heart transplant. What a trying time for him, his wife, children, dear parents in their 90's, sisters and brother!! It is nearly 50 years ago now that Billy Orten held his first meeting, at Sweetwater school house, still standing, in the Missouri Ozarks, not far from where the Cable Ridge meeting house now stands as a monument to what the Scriptures teach on worship, organization, and righteous living by those who worship there. Before Billy or we who worship at Covina, CA knew of what might lie ahead for him, we scheduled a meeting for the fall of 1997, which turned out to be scarcely a year after the transplant. As meeting time approached, we, and he, with the Lord's help and guidance, had every intention of having the meeting. Well, we awaited, as did Billy, his lead cardiologist's decision for him to come for the meeting or not. As November 23-30, 1997 approached, all was well, as we had really planned; a wonderful meeting is now history. Billy and Peggy are safe home, none the worse

for this sojourn, and we here at Covina will never be the same spiritually. Billy's experience is no miracle, those days are past; it is due to the answer of prayers prayed by a multitude all over this country, coupled with the know-how of Billy's medical team. Billy's preaching was at its best; you never heard better singing; prayers were fervent, effectual; the spirit prevailing, sweet throughout, as the Lord would have it. Brothers and sisters came from far and near—Bakersfield, El Cajon, Fremont, Montebello, Norco, Orange, Porterville, Sanger, Ventura, Yuba City, Los Angeles. To Him be all the glory!! — "—his compassions fail not, they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness." (Lam. 3:22-23)—Don McCord.

MY POSITION ON CARNAL WARFARE

I cannot take part in military service in any form, directly or indirectly, combatant or noncombatant service. Below are listed some of the reasons:

1. My duty and obligations to God are superior to all other obligations (Acts 5:29; Matt. 22:37).
2. God in the Bible forbids that we engage in carnal warfare in the following references: "Put up thy sword, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52). "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Cor. 10:3-4). "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44). "Turn the other cheek" (Matt. 5:39). "Recompense to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17).
3. To enter any military service, we would be combatant or noncombatant we would be compelled to "swear" (take an oath), but the Bible forbids that we do so. "Swear not at all" (Matt 5:34).
4. To enter any military service, we would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden. "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:16).
5. To be in any branch of military service we would be compelled to be part of an organization and would therefore have fellowship in the service, but such is prohibited. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).
6. To serve in the military service in any way we would be deprived of obeying the command to assemble on the Lord's day to worship God in the Bible way, at least part of the time, hence would disobey God. (Heb. 10:25; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1,2).

Therefore, I cannot conscientiously engage in carnal war in any form or branch and for the above reasons, authorize my name to be listed in support of the above principles.

Gerald Ray Barrett, 22150 Old Well Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561.

Matthew Ray Barrett, 22150 Old Well Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561.

Thomas Dale Fitzpatrick, 6601 Eucalyptus Drive Sp. #164, Bakersfield, CA 93306.

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Jarrold Hoyt Catlett, 1253 N. Reeder Ave., Covina, CA 91724

Aaron Parker, Aug. 2, 1997.

Robert Moore, 6702 Barney, Houston, TX 77092.



Johnny Elmore, 419 K SW, Ardmore, OK 73401, Dec. 8 - I considered it a real privilege to speak at El Cajon, CA Nov. 5-9. We were blessed in the meeting by having good, enthusiastic crowds with a number of visitors. We had two baptisms and one confession of faults. I appreciated the support of Elias Rodriguez and the congregation in San Diego during the meeting. It was a pleasure to stay with Fred and Bea Lay and to visit with Larry Lay, who is a preacher and a friend of long standing. I expect to be home now until next spring. I am looking forward to the study in Arlington and the New Year's meeting in Oklahoma City and another great year of work in 1998.

Brett Hickey, P.O. Box 6506, Ventura, CA 93003 (805) 658-78660, December 8 - Our weekend meeting with Richard DeGough was a great success. The congregation worked as a team to make it an opportunity for the lost to hear the gospel. We were greatly encouraged that seventeen visitors (14 adults) came from the community. We could not recall being part of a more fruitful weekend meeting. On top of that, we had the support of Montebello, Covina and both Bakersfield congregations. They went out of their way to show their love for the Christ and the brotherhood. Brother DeGough's excellent sermons fulfilled our needs perfectly. Everyone could feel that they were being "preached at" in love - both saint and sinner alike. The Ventura congregation has recently been blessed with the addition of David and Teresa Mackey and their three children. Teresa's friend Cheryl obeyed the gospel last Sunday. She was baptized as a baby and realized that it wasn't good enough. How encouraging to hear someone confidently assert in answer to the question, "Why be baptized?" ... "It washes away my sins." Our meetings at Mountain Home and Broken Arrow were like homecomings. The attendance at Mountain Home was excellent throughout. Their unsurpassed hospitality made us wish we could live at two places at one time. It was encouraging to see the stability and growth of so many. It was great to be with Bruce Roebuck and Jimmie Smith and to see the lost that Bruce had helped bring to the Lord. Sandy Foster was restored on Sunday morning. I was at the Broken Arrow (not Broken Bow) congregation's first service so it was good to be back with the brethren there. Our friendship with Jack Cutter was renewed, and I think, strengthened. At least five congregations in the area attended over the weekend. We had a wonderful visit with my folks. Be strong in the faith, brethren!

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069 - Since last reporting we have engaged in our annual

fall meeting here at Sharonville. At our request Brother William St. John came and preached the gospel to those gathering each evening. His preaching was commendable, being plain and straight forward. One confessed faults during the meeting. In the time between then and now one has been restored to the fold who has been away from faithful worship for a number of years. It has been my privilege to hear Merle Helwig several times while in this area. The first part of November I was with the brethren in Springfield, MO (Mission Hills) for a series of meetings. It was indeed a pleasure to be with them and assist in this way in the work of spreading the truth there. Several preachers and teachers were in attendance to support the meeting. Brother Ronny Wade was present most of the time as this is his home congregation. It was good to be with him as always. I am to be with the congregation at North Canton, OH February 13-15. We would more than welcome any within driving distance to assist in this short meeting. Pray for us.

Wyn R. Baker, P.O. Box 745, Lavalette, WV 25535 - (304) 697-2362 - On the date of Oct. 1, 1997, our work of 2 1/2 years with the congregation at Harrisonville, MO concluded and we have now moved to a new area to work, in the state of West Virginia. Before talking about the new work, I want to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to the congregation at Harrisonville, MO for providing us the opportunity to come work with them. We are so thankful that we were able to work with these good brethren of faith and we will always treasure the close ties that were developed while working with them these past few years. We believe our time was well spent in this work, and our prayer for them is, that they continue to be successful as a growing congregation, and that they steadfastly remain in boldly proclaiming and holding forth the gospel banner of Jesus Christ to their community! Now in regard to our new work! We are now located in the Huntington, WV area, and have made our home in Lavalette, WV. PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER! Our work is largely going to be based or channeled through the Garrett's Creek, and Radnor congregations, and will be centered upon helping these long established congregations, to become stronger in their present number of members and to organize some evangelistic efforts in stirring interest in the community and even beyond! Our present plans for progress are to strengthen the memberships, with strong doctrinal teaching on the first principles of the gospel, and then set out to help those who will be helped in training for responsibilities in the leadership roles of the church. Presently, these congregations are small in number, yet they seem at this point to be willing to cooperate in this endeavor. It is my estimation that this process may be long-term in the making, but with the Lord's help, who really knows but He, as to what can be accomplished! This work presents a new challenge, yet it is a thrill to me to be in an area of the country which seems to hold so many potentials for growth in the cause of Jesus Christ! Brethren, we solicit your prayers in this work, and if we can be of assistance to any, please let us know! May the Lord bless all the faithful!

Bennie T. Cryer, 1439 San Rocco Circle, Stockton, CA 95207, Dec. 6 - The new year of 1998 is almost here and we have many things to be thankful for as 1997 comes to an end. Personally, I want to thank the churches that supported me financially and otherwise, especially the Stockton congregation with her elders and deacons. The church here in Stockton lost some ground through the death of some of its members, even the death of one of our elders, Granville Mahurin, and some members who chose to leave us. We have gained some also. We have another elder, additional members, more studies, and a greater involvement in the work abroad and in Hawaii. We had the pleasure of visiting the congregation in Waipahu, HI and were much encouraged by the number of people present at the assembly and the great efforts Bro. Virgilio Danao and Bro. Filipe Bayani are engaged in. They believe in working, preaching publicly, from house to house, and by the written word. They have started a monthly paper and currently publish it in two languages, and, I believe, will expand it to a third language next month. They also are working hard to start an active work on the big island of Hawaii. The readers of the OPA will be kept up to date on this. I really appreciate all the work that the Atwater congregation, Stockton, and several others are putting in to this work. The church in Hawaii has enemies that try on every hand to discourage them by spreading things in vicious ways personally and by letters. The brethren and sisters there are standing valiantly for the truth and practice it in honesty and sincerity. Pray for them and, if you are interested in helping support an active and successful work, help them out. Please make a note of our new address here in Stockton and our new telephone number will be 209-473-2111. May God's richest blessings rest on all of you in this new year.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, December 13 - We have been home for much of the last month and enjoyed it. The home church is at peace and the young men are growing in stature. As always, when a work is started, some are enthusiastic in the beginning, but their interest soon dies. It would truly be wonderful if all could be kept "on fire" but that is not possible, it seems. However, there are still several who are doing very well and their efforts are appreciated by all. It thrills me to see them maturing spiritually. Lord willing, we are to leave for the Philippines on January 5, 1998. We make this trip each year to encourage the congregations and preaching brethren. It is a difficult trip in many ways, but so rewarding also. We ask that until February 10 you send all your materials for publication to Ronny F. Wade who will likely publish the February and March issues. Continue to send your subscriptions to our address as always. We have appreciated your taking the paper this past year. Our prayer is that it has been of lasting value to you as a Christian. If so, think about sending the paper to others as a gift, please. Your prayers are needed!

Miles King, Rt. #1, Box 115, Scotland, AR 72141, Dec. 5th - Greetings brethren, at the beginning of this year—1998 we wish you the best! It seems we have a lot of good memories of 1997— with gospel meetings at Powe, Missouri, Paducah, KY and Bowling Green, KY. The meetings in Louisiana were also good at Baton Rouge and Hammond. This past fall I also held meetings at Duncanville, Texas and Tucson, Arizona. I just wish I could write an article about each one of them as they were very enjoyable and it seems people

were eager to hear the preaching of the gospel. I sure enjoyed the hospitality and appreciate the encouragement of the brethren. I also had a weekend meeting in Pochontas, Arkansas. In November I held a 5 day meeting at Napolean, Alabama. This was going back home where I started preaching nearly 50 years ago. I had Morgan Stripling with me who is a young man studying to be a gospel preacher. Morgan was also with me in Louisiana and Mississippi. We went through southern Alabama visiting with brethren at Lowery and Slocumb. I preached one night at Lowery congregation. Johnette and I have enjoyed wonderful Thanksgiving holidays with our children in Texas. While in this vicinity I went to see Ralieg and Inez Perkins at Santa Fe, TX. Ralieg has been seriously sick since the first of September, but now seems to be some better. During this month (December) I'm looking forward to working with Bro. Ralph Noack in a short meeting in South Texas at the Fairview congregation. Johnette and I look forward to the New Year's meeting in Oklahoma City. The work in our area goes well. We are so happy to have Bro. Morgan Stripling assisting us in the work here at Scotland and also at Little Rock.

Buddy Brumley, 623 N. Quince Dr., Exeter, CA 93221 - We have baptized four in Woodlake since April. The Church is slowly growing. It requires dedication and hard work. While we have gained four, we have also lost one fine saint. Sister Louina Ellington passed away. In May we were privileged to travel with Brother Wayne McKamie to Mexico. The Rodriguez Brothers of Mexico have done a wonderful work there. Brother Bill Verner from McAlester, OK was very helpful with a big van and assistance. The teaching was great. It was my pleasure to go to Russia for the fourth time in July with Bro. Jerry Cutter. Words fail me, to express the deep feeling I have for the work Brother Jerry Cutter has done in Penza, Russia and Tula. The Church is strong in both places. I had the privilege of staying with Brother George Battey and family in Tula this past summer. Bro. George is doing a fine work. Pray for all those who go and stay on the field! Lonesome, oh how lonesome are the days spent away from loved ones. While in Penza, it was my privilege to baptize a young woman (a dentist). Twenty-five years ago when I was teaching Russian history, I never would have thought the Lord would bless me with preaching the gospel in Russia. Why not consider assisting the work in Russia? Brethren, the work in Russia is wide open. Brother Cutter just left again Dec. 4. Visas are still being passed out. God bless you.

Duane Cutter, 8301 SW 84th, Oklahoma City, OK 73169 - African Report - In October 1997, as a representative of the Twenty-First Street Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, OK, my wife and I made a trip to Africa. It is the most rewarding trip we have ever taken. It was rewarding because we could see first hand how the commitment over the years by the U.S. churches and the various evangelists that were sent there had reaped benefits for the Lord. We met Jim and Marlene Franklin in Harare, Zimbabwe on October 3, 1997. In Zimbabwe I taught at two churches, one in Harare on Sunday (where there were eight baptisms), the other was Kadoma where we were on Monday. Later in the week we traveled to Blantyre, Malawi where the Franklins live. In Malawi I taught at ten congregations throughout the country including Blantyre and Lilongwe. The attendance was close to 500 at some locations. There

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Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Cal. 94539.

were about 3,500 in total attendance at the twelve congregations that we visited (2 in Zimbabwe and 10 in Malawi). At each of the locations there were many preachers, leaders and members from other congregations in attendance. Everywhere we went we were greeted with singing and extreme enthusiasm. Just a word about the size of the work in Africa: When Twenty-first Street took the oversight of the Malawi work in 1964 there were about 75 congregations. Today in Malawi there are in excess of 600 congregations. When Jerry Cutter and his family went to Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) there were no churches at all in that country. Today there are 115 congregations. Also from the outgrowth of work in Malawi there are now 84 known congregations in Mozambique. It is my understanding that the work in Zambia was started by Bro. Dickson Dzilekwa from Zimbabwe. Today there are probably more Christians in Africa than there are in the U.S. As you can see the commitment by the U.S. churches and preachers through the years has paid great dividends in numbers of souls saved for the Lord. Some of the things that led us to that conclusion, besides the size of the work, was their excitement in their singing to the Lord, their greetings of the U.S. visitors, preachers committed to preaching without any financial support from the African brotherhood or the U.S. brotherhood, church buildings being built with no assistance from anyone or with help only in securing roofing materials, Christians who would walk many miles to be at the meetings and other signs of a willingness to spend and be spent for the Lord. Jim and Marler are doing a great work in Africa along with many African preachers such as Bro. Wickson Dzilekwa and Bro. Nicholas Mlambo in Zimbabwe and Bro. Davidson Kasambwe, Bro. Steven Kasenda, Bro. Lazlo, Bro. Yesaya, Bro. Chiwaya, Bro. Katona, and Bro. Chitsulo and many, many others in Malawi. The Little Rock congregation is doing a wonderful job of overseeing the work in Malawi and they also are to be commended. They need your prayers along with the entire brotherhood in Africa. The African brethren are working sometimes in poverty conditions we can only imagine.

The high priority needs for Zimbabwe would be for a congregation to agree to support and oversee the sending of a preacher from the USA to that country. It is my understanding that this work has not grown nearly as rapidly since the last U.S. preacher returned home some years ago. Jim Franklin has given some of his time to this work, but this is not fair to him since he is overloaded with the Malawi work already. The high priority needs for the Malawi work would be for Bibles, tracts, and study aids to be made available to them, famine relief in some areas and security for the

Blantyre property where the Franklins live. (There was a recent attempt to break into their house in which their lives were in danger.) There also needs to be an increase in the work fund due to the rapid growth and many needs of the work. Individuals as well as churches that are not involved and are interested CAN be involved in this. It is one of the greatest works for the Lord on the face of the earth today! We in America cannot know how difficult it is to try to grow as a Christian or teach others about Christ, when you have no Bible or when your family is hungry to the point of starvation. Most of us are blessed with several Bibles each and more food than we need. Let us be willing to share. We took some six hours of videos of our African trip and have condensed it into just under two hours for the highlights of the trip. The video includes the congregations we visited showing their singing and enthusiastic greeting; their culture and the countryside. If anyone desires to view the video please contact me at (405) 745-2581 or write: Duane Cutter, 8301 SW 84th, Oklahoma City, OK 73169.

Don Pruitt, 617 Phelps, Houston, MO 65483, Dec. 8 - We just closed our annual meeting at Seminole, OK last Sunday. Each year Carl Johnson, Joe Hisle and I meet there on the first weekend of December to conduct an Anniversary meeting. It is always a treat to be with these men and their families, as well as the Church there. Crowds were the best ever. The congregation in Seminole is growing. Our other meetings this year were at Oakdale, CA; Burkhart, MO; Lowery, AL; Napoleon, AL, and Wichita Falls, TX. (Gardens Edge). We certainly enjoyed and appreciated working with these congregations. These efforts resulted in several baptisms, restorations, and confessions. The work in south central Missouri continues to progress well. We are working with two congregations, Fieldstone and Houston. It is a real joy to be a part of these two congregations and this work. Each congregation has some very good leadership and a wonderful spirit. We have recently finished our third year in this area and the Lord has blessed the effort with seventeen baptisms. Three have turned from divisive worship, and one lady has been restored who left the church years ago. We are also encouraged by the fact that we have prospects that attend each week at both churches, some of whom we study with regularly. I have never been in a place like this, where we are able to get outsiders out to services. For instance, in the last four gospel meetings we have had in Houston, there have been 132 outsiders in attendance. I get excited every Sunday, anxious to get to services and see who is there. If you have any friends or relatives in this area, please let me know.

Happy Holidays!

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, FEBRUARY 1998

NO. 2

CRITICISM -- GIVING AND RECEIVING

By *BILLY D. DICKINSON*

I would like to begin this article by asking a couple of questions which are rhetorical in nature: Are you better at receiving criticism or giving it? Would you rather be on the receiving end or the giving end of criticism? If we will admit it, most of us are a lot better at giving criticism than we are at receiving it! Yet, there are times when we find ourselves either as the critic or as the one who is being criticized. Since this is something that can have a profound effect upon ourselves and others, we need to learn how to both give and receive criticism in a way that is beneficial and productive. Let us consider some principles from God's word which will help us toward that end.

What is criticism? Why is it that when we hear the word it seems to always produce negative feelings? That shows that our view of criticism is a rather limited one and perhaps too negative. The truth is that all criticism is not necessarily bad. While dictionaries point out that it involves the act of criticizing, especially disapprovingly, they also define it as "a review, article, or commentary expressing a critical judgment." However, that "critical judgment" could be a favorable one! We must realize that all of us are playing the role of a critic one way or another as we pass judgment on different things. In fact, as you read this article, you are forming an opinion as to whether or not I've done a good job in putting this material together.

There are two kinds of criticism: Constructive criticism and destructive criticism. As Christians who are interested in building up the cause of Christ, we should want to engage in the former and not the latter! There are people who are sometimes overly critical of others and who seem to delight in finding fault. Yes, they are zealous to pass harsh judgments even if they have to engage in nit-picking or hairsplitting to do it. It was that very kind of spirit and behavior that Christ condemned in Matt. 7:1-5. Please read those verses at this time. What was Christ condemning here? No, it was not all judging of any kind (1 Cor. 5:12). It was not a prohibition against discriminating between right and wrong or truth and error (Matt. 7:15-16). Instead, Jesus was teaching against unrighteous judgments. Our Lord is condemning rash and uncharitable judgments and the disposition to condemn without proper examination. That's what Christ is dealing with here—judging that comes from surmise, insufficient premises, or from ill will. The Master is telling us not to cultivate a harsh, faultfinding spirit that looks on the bad side of persons and actions and that seeks to see evil in

order to find fault and complain. Then Christ illustrates what we all know to be true; the faultfinding spirit usually runs to the harsh extreme of finding "motes" in the lives of others, while overlooking the "beam" in one's own is a good question for all of us: Are we as hard on ourselves as we are on others? Do we direct criticism toward ourselves as eagerly as we direct it toward others?

A faultfinding spirit can be a destructive thing and it is classified as a sin in God's word! In Rom. 1:29, along with fornication and murder, Paul mentions "malignity." This word literally means "bad manner," and it refers to "an evil disposition that tends to put the worst construction on everything." Have you ever "maligned" someone? We usually do it to those we feel malice toward; no matter what they do, we delight in questioning their motives and character. We need to be careful lest we cultivate a faultfinding attitude which causes us to lose all objectivity in dealing with others. If people perceive us as a "faultfinder," obviously our criticism of others will not be received as helpful or constructive!

How can we engage in constructive criticism? Let me give you two things to think about. We are basically dealing with two things: Manner and motive. First, when we approach people, what is the manner in which we direct our criticism? Are we as eager to compliment as we are to give a negative comment? If the only time I ever approach someone to talk to them about their behavior, it is to criticize and find fault, they are not going to be very open to my words and suggestions. However, if they see within me some objectivity, as they perceive that I am dealing with them from a standpoint of love and respect, they will probably be willing to consider my criticism and act accordingly. If we want to engage in constructive criticism, we must maintain a good balance between the positive and the negative. Let me offer this advice to parents: Be careful not to constantly criticize everything about the church in front of your children. If all children ever hear is how bad and hypocritical the preachers, teachers, leaders, etc. are, that's bound to have a destructive influence upon them. A balance needs to be maintained. While you don't want to produce a negative attitude in your children by being overly critical of the church, on the other hand we shouldn't raise our children to believe there are never any church problems. However, remember this: When you are in a critical mood, the easiest thing to do is criticize. It

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 1



A D V O C A T E

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-10

Criticism--Giving And Receiving 1

Items Of Interest 2

The Mission And Activities, And The Destiny
Of Angels 3

Baptism: Is It Necessary For Salvation 4

Cancer And Christ 7

The Serenity Prayer (1937) 8

FROM THE FIELDS 11-12

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Editorial

ITEMS OF INTEREST

By RONNY F. WADE

An apology and explanation is in order regarding the last issue of Old Paths Advocate. The January issue was assembled incorrectly, making reading very difficult. One four page sheet was inserted backwards, causing the problem. We are sorry for the inconvenience it caused. Also at the end of the paper on page twelve someone inserted the words in large bold letters "Happy Holidays". This was done without the knowledge or consent of anyone on the editorial staff, an inexcusable error. It will not happen again.

Sickness and accidents. We are very sorry to report the illness of Pat Cutter, wife of Jerry Cutter well-known Evangelist for many years. Jerry has preached extensively in foreign countries around the world, Pat has accompanied him faithfully through the years. She is currently suffering from cancer and is in need of our prayers. Please remember Jerry, Pat, and their children when you talk to our heavenly Father. Should you like to communicate with them, following is their address: Jerry and Pat Cutter Route 1 Box 139 Crescent, Ok. 73028.

At this writing Ron and Carolyn Alexander continue to recover from their recent automobile accident. They are at home. Ron suffered numerous internal injuries, several broken ribs and some deep cuts. Carolyn suffered facial injuries. Both seem to be doing well at present. I'm sure they would appreciate your prayers. You may write them at 117 East Hillsboro Dr. Marshfield, Mo. 65706.

I'm sure there are many others throughout the brotherhood who are in need of prayer and would appreciate your remembrance. It seems that I cannot remember, in the recent past at least, a time when so many seem to be afflicted with serious, life-threatening illness. May our Father bless them all.

Material for the March OPA. Please send all material for the next issue of the OPA to me at P.O. Box 494 Opp, Al. 36467. You may also address me personally at the same address. Mail sent to my home in Missouri will be forwarded to me here in Al. My phone number until March 1 is (334) 493-1226. After March 1 I plan to be back home where I can be reached at my regular number.

A CHRISTIAN

A Christian is a friend...Indeed:
Who is always there, In time of need,
To lift you up when you feel low,
Helping you to see the way to go,
To escape troubles, of this earthly life,
So abundantly filled with trouble and strife,
I am only mortal, and sometimes need help:
To find a way, I can't quite see by myself:
I am so thankful in my times of need:
For Christians who are, a friend...Indeed.

Ethel E. Young, 1601 West Henderson, Paris, Texas

THE MISSION AND ACTIVITIES, AND THE DESTINY OF ANGELS

By ALAN BONIFAY

This will be our final article in this series on the subject of angels. It is our fervent desire that we have presented the truth as it is found in the Scriptures and that all who have read these things have benefited. We again use the Bible as our standard of truth as we delve into this subject once more.

In studying the mission and activities of angels we must keep in mind the dispensation or age in which a particular work was or is performed. Some activities that angels performed they no longer perform because the circumstances have changed, or the law for God's people has changed, or God's agents are no longer performing miraculous works. However, in a general study of their work it appears evident from God's word that they worked or do work in about five areas:

1. Miraculous protection of Israel and/or specific individuals in Israel.
2. Spiritual protection of God's people now performed in the spirit world.
3. Praise and worship of God.
4. The miraculous revelation of God's will.
5. The execution of God's judgments.

We presume the angels continue in their praise and worship of God. But no longer do angels miraculously protect Israel or the church. And no longer are angels revealing God's word because the revelation of God is complete. In the future, angels will have a great mission in executing the final judgment of God. Regarding the activities of angels, we can say the foregoing things with certainty. We are less certain about present day activities the angels may be performing. They may function now in the spirit world protecting God's people from the demons, keeping the demons from gaining an unfair advantage over God's children. They may also function in providential answer to prayer though this cannot be ascertained with certainty from the word of God. Having summarized these things, let us now look to them more in depth, noting specific works angels performed that are recorded in the word of God.

Protecting God's People

Angels drove spirit horses in 2 Kings 2:9-12 while taking Elijah home to heaven. Angels are connected also to spirit horses and chariots in 2 Kings 6: 11-18 where they protected Elisha from the Syrian army at Dothan, and we find the horses and chariots in the visions of Zechariah as well (1:7-11; 6: 1-6). According to Genesis 3:24, cherubim were set to guard the gates of Eden when Adam and Eve were banished. But these are not the only gates guarded by angels, for the word tells us that angels guard the gates of the Holy City in Revelation 21: 12. At one time, angels served as princes over the nations (Daniel 10: 13-21; 12: 1). Just what these angels did in this capacity is not made clear, but it was an activity they were involved in. The New Testament teaches that angels came and strengthened Jesus when He was tried (Matthew 4: 11) and that Paul also received encouragement from an angel while at sea in a storm (Acts 27:23-25). In Revelation 9: 1 and 20: 1-3, the scriptures teach us that angels bind and

guard Satan, and the book of Psalms depicts angels as the protectors of the saints (34:4-7; 91:11,12).

Revealing God's Will

The scriptures teach that angels gave the law of Moses, as Stephen speaks of the Jews having "received the law by the disposition of angels" in Acts 7:53. Hebrews 2:2 also points to "the word spoken by angels" in reference to the Old Law. During Old Testament days, other revelations were given by angels as well as is evidenced by a reading of Daniel 8: 19. In this verse, Gabriel tells Daniel, "Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the appointed time the end *shall be*." Revelations from God were also given by an angel to Daniel in chapters nine and ten. But such revelations of God's will are not found only in the Old Testament. It happened in New Testament times too. The angel of the Lord told the apostles to "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." (Acts 5: 19,20). "An angel of God" brought instructions to Cornelius in Acts 10: 1-6. This incident is also an example of an angel bringing an answer to prayer, something that also is recorded in Daniel 9:20-23. Angels have also appeared to men in dreams to reveal the will of God to them as was the case with Joseph after Mary "was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Joseph learned what he was to do in this situation when "the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream." (Matthew 1: 18-21). Joseph was instructed two more times in this same fashion, as is documented in Matthew 2: 13-19. Sometimes angels led gospel preachers to sinners. This was the case with the evangelist Philip who thus received the opportunity to preach to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-38). Clearly angels have been instrumental in the revelation of God's will.

Executing Judgment

Often in the Scriptures, angels are described as the executors of God's judgments. In the spiritual realm, angels fought with Satan and his demons and cast them out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-9). On Earth also have angels been employed in the execution of God's judgments. God's destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, recorded in Genesis 19, was carried out by the hand of angels. God used an angel to punish Israel with pestilence in 2 Samuel 24: 15-17. The work of angels in this area is not yet done, for the scriptures teach that the angels will accompany Jesus when He returns (Matthew 16:27; 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7). This will be a time of judgment, and it will be the angels who have the responsibility of gathering together God's elect at that judgment (Matthew 24: 31; Revelation 7: 1-3). In explaining the parable of the tares of the field, Jesus said the harvest was the end of the world and that the angels would gather out all the wicked "and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." (Matthew 13:36-43). Obviously, the angels have not yet concluded all the work they will do in the execution of God's judgments.

Praise and Worship of God and other Present Time Activities

While the angels await the time for their last actions of

judgment, they carry on in their praise and worship of God as described in Revelation 5: 11-14. They also minister before Him, as Revelation 8:2 speaks of "the seven angels which stood before God." Also being done by the angels while they await the final earth day is the receiving of "the spirits of just men made perfect" into paradise (Luke 16:22; Hebrews 12:23). Our views on "Guardian Angels" have been made quite clear (see the first article in this series), but it may be that angels are assisting God's people today in some fashion. Ephesians 6: 12; Psalm 34:4-7; and Matthew 18: 10 are all passages which may well indicate such activity. But as all must admit that the veil of Divine Providence is in fact impenetrable, and we cannot define His workings there, so we must admit that clearly defining the role that angels play in that Providence is impossible. While this is not an exhaustive list of the work of angels, it is at least a representative one.

The Destiny of Angels

What is in store for angels in the future? The scriptures tell us. We have already noted that angels will be employed in the Judgment (1 Thessalonians 4: 16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Matthew 25:31). But what of the destiny the angels themselves face? Just as is the case with mankind, the destiny of angels is determined by their obedience to God. Psalm 103:20 shows that angels obeyed God's commandments and hearkened unto the voice of His word. From Revelation 22:8,9, where the angel refuses to allow John to worship him, we learn that this angel is a fellow servant of God with John. As was John, this angel was clearly under law and was obedient to it. Hebrews 12:22 says the saints had "come...to" or joined company with "an innumerable company of angels." Finally, in Matthew 25:31, when Jesus comes to judge the world He brings

with Him all the "holy angels. " All of these passages clearly indicate that the obedient angels will be the eternal companions of the redeemed in the "new heavens and the new earth. " Such then is the destiny of good angels. The destiny of evil angels is far different. Jude 6 says, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. " Peter speaks of the same thing in 2 Peter 2:4. And finally, note Matthew 25:41, 46: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels...And these shall go away into everlasting punishment..."

And so we see the destiny of wicked angels. They will suffer together with wicked men for eternity, the punishment for each being of the same kind. Whether the intensity of the punishment will be the same, we cannot say. Perhaps it will not be. But no matter, the everlasting fire, the eternal destiny of evil men and evil angels, is much to be feared and abhorred.

Conclusion

The pure and holy, whether angels or men, will be eternally happy while the rebellious and disobedient will be eternally miserable. Let us remember that the fate of wicked men and wicked angels is most certainly to be avoided. And let us remember what wonderful incentives we are given to prompt us to live lives of purity and holiness: that we may have eternal association with angels and purified spirits forever in the presence of Almighty God. It is a great joy to anticipate being forever associated with the angels in giving glory to God and to the Lamb that was slain to redeem us. May our Father help us to be worthy of such honor.

BAPTISM: IS IT NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

By RANDALL M. TIDMORE

Many scholars have debated this subject for ages. The debate continues today, at least among some. Others refuse to argue the point any longer, either because they consider the subject settled or, perhaps, they believe that their opponents have closed their minds. I do not expect to write an essay so convincing as to end all controversy over this subject. However, I shall attempt to clarify some of the objections to baptism for salvation.

Must one be a Greek scholar to understand what the Bible says about baptism? No. Although a working knowledge of the Greek could enhance one's Bible study, surely all must agree that understanding the Bible does not require it. By reading what reputable Greek scholars have said, and comparing a variety of translations of the Bible, one gains confidence in his ability to ascertain the meaning and intent of God's will for man. Jesus proclaimed man's ability to know the truth (John 8:31,32). By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul emphatically declared that God wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:3,4). The same Holy Spirit guided Peter to record that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Does this mean that one can answer any Bible question if he studies long enough?

No, not unless one accepts the answer, "I do not know. " Although God has revealed (given) to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, He has not revealed all things. (Deuteronomy 29:29).

Does baptism pertain to life and godliness? If it does, then God has given us the truth about baptism, and we can know it. In this article, I do not attempt to answer every argument made in opposition to baptism. I set forth scriptures that relate to it and mention briefly the arguments made against them. In the latter part of this article, I shall attempt to address the underlying motivation for this opposition.

I. Mark 16:16

Mark 16:16: He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

The oppositions to this passage are: Verses 9-20 are not in some manuscripts, and therefore, should be rejected; and that the Lord said that failing to believe would condemn one, not failing to be baptized.

The validity of the passage I cannot address, however, the truth about baptism does not depend on this one passage. The other objection is invalid for the following reasons:

1. Although unmentioned by Jesus in this verse, He definitely taught that eternal condemnation would come upon all who fail to obey other commands. For example: Failing to repent will condemn one (Luke 13 :3); failing to confess the Lord before men will condemn one (Matthew 10:33); failing to forgive others will condemn one (Matthew 18:21-35), etc.

2. The conjunction "and" unites "believes" and "is baptized," making them of equal value. Whatever "believes" is for, "is baptized" is also for. If belief is necessary to salvation, so is baptism. If baptism is not necessary for salvation, then neither is belief. Jesus placed both before salvation. Man has sought to change the order of the Lord's statement in every conceivable way. The Catholics say that one (an infant) is saved at the point of baptism, and later should believe. Most Protestants say that one is saved at the point of belief, and later should be baptized. Both of these doctrines negate what the Lord said: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved."

3. The Scriptures teach that one cannot be baptized unless he first believes. In the case of the Ethiopian's conversion in Acts 8:35-38, Philip preached Jesus to him. Along the way, they came to some water, and the Ethiopian asked what could hinder him from being baptized. Philip gave only one prerequisite, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."

If one must believe with all his heart, to qualify for baptism, then the Lord said all He needed to say: "He who does not believe will be condemned. " He did not need to say, "And He who is not baptized will be condemned, too. " If one does not believe, he *cannot* be baptized!

II. Acts 2:38

Acts 2:38: Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Those who oppose baptism for salvation must challenge this verse of Scripture as well. The following quotation states the most prevalent argument against the verse.

"For" (as used in Acts 2:38 "for the forgiveness. . .") could have two meanings. If you saw a poster saying "Jesse James wanted for robbery," "for" could mean Jesse is wanted so he can commit a robbery, or is wanted because he has committed a robbery. The later sense is the correct one. So too in this passage, the word "for" signifies an action in the past. Otherwise, it would violate the entire tenor of the NT teaching on salvation by grace and not by works. *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.

A. T. Robertson, in his exalted work, "Word Pictures in the New Testament," reinforced the confidence of those who oppose baptism for salvation. Concerning the same preposition "for" (*eis*), in the phrase "for the remission of sins." of Acts 2:38, He states:

"In themselves the words can express aim or purpose for that use of *eis* does exist as in 1 Corinthians 2:7. ..But then another usage exists which is just as good Greek as the use of *eis* for aim or purpose." "...It is seen again in Matt. 12:41 about the preaching of Jonah...They repented because of (or at) the preaching of Jonah...One will decide the use here according as he believes that baptism is

essential to the remission of sins or not. My view is decidedly against the idea that Peter, Paul, or any one in the New Testament taught baptism as essential to the remission of sins or the means of securing such remission." (*Word Pictures In The New Testament*, A. T. Robertson, Vol. 3, p. 35,36).

The purpose for presenting these two quotations is twofold: I want to make evident the arguments made against baptism for salvation; and to show the motivation for those arguments.

The obvious question is does "for the remission of sins" mean "because of," or "in order to"? Reading the passage in context, giving a natural flow to the text, and without preconceived ideas, I cannot imagine anyone concluding that Peter meant "because of." " However, since my imagination is not an acceptable authority in settling biblical issues, please consider the following reasons to accept Peter's statement in the natural sense, "for the purpose of the remission of sins. "

1. The Bible does not say, "because of the remission of sins." Where is the reputable translation of the Bible that does? (Please do not refer me to some dreamer's paraphrase!) The scholars who have translated the Bible have not translated this phrase in Acts 2:38 as "because of the remission of sins." I have several translations, in English and in Spanish, and have read several others, but I have never found one that said, "because of the remission of sins." Why not? If, as some "scholars" would like for us to believe, it is "just as good Greek," then why have Bible translators not translated it that way?

2. The passage that A. T. Robertson gave as an example of *eis* meaning "because of," does not contain a phrase parallel to "for the remission of sins." This invalidates his premise and thwarts his conclusion. No one can successfully deny that *eis* can, and does have different meanings, depending on the context and the grammatical construction of the prepositional phrase in which it is used. Could he not find a phrase, parallel in construction, for his comparison?

There is an exact parallel phrase in Matthew 26:28. This example is the same both in English and Greek.

Matthew 26:28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

If one insists that "for" (*eis*), in the phrase "for the remission of sins" in Acts 2:38 means "because of," then reason and consistency demand him to do so in Matthew 26:28, too. If one interprets "for" (*eis*) in Matthew 26:28 as "aim, or purpose," then reason and consistency demand him to interpret it the same way in Acts 2:38.

III. 1 Peter 3:21

1 Peter 3:21: There is also an antitype which now saves us — baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

This passage clearly states that baptism (not water) saves us. To maintain one's objection to baptism for salvation, one must deal with this passage, too.

The only argument that I have heard, concerning this passage, is: "Peter states that baptism is not for 'the removal of the filth of the flesh,' which refers to the 'works of the flesh,' (Galatians 5 :19-21) or sins. Therefore,

baptism is not for the removal (remission) of sins.”

The verse states that baptism now saves us. The “removal of the filth of the flesh” refers to the “removal of dirt from the body,” as the *New International Version* translates it.

1 Peter 3:21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also — not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Peter explains that baptism cleanses us spiritually (our soul — 1 Peter 1:22), not physically (our body — 1 Peter 3:21). Having one’s sins forgiven gives one a “good conscience toward God.”

IV. What is the motive behind the denial of baptism for salvation?

As one examines the simple statements found in these verses of scripture and the arguments made against them, one cannot but wonder why. What does anyone have to gain by denying what the Scriptures so clearly teach? By studying with several of those who oppose baptism for salvation, I believe I have found the main roots to their opposition.

1. They are motivated by the supposition that the biblical doctrine of *salvation by faith* means *salvation by faith ONLY*.

At first glance, these two doctrines may appear to be the same. However, the Scriptures teach the first one, but they do not the other one. Those who believe in salvation by faith only cannot accept anything else as necessary for salvation, because that would constitute a contradiction. The conflict, however, is really not between baptism and faith, but rather, between faith and *faith only*. Please consider the following:

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

If **GRACE** is necessary for salvation, then how can one say it is by **FAITH ONLY**?

Luke 13:3 “I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

If **REPENTANCE** is necessary for salvation, then how can one say it is by **FAITH ONLY**?

Romans 10:9-10 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

If **CONFESSION** of the Lord (our faith in Him as the Son of God) is necessary for salvation, how can one say it is by **FAITH ONLY**?

Mark 16:16 “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

If **BAPTISM** is for salvation, then how can it be by **FAITH ONLY**?

I think this helps get to the real issue. If one accepts that grace, repentance, and confession are necessary for salvation by faith, then why not baptism? Does *faith only* mean, salvation by faith and everything else the Bible says, **except baptism**?

2. They are motivated by their failure to understand and appreciate the different types of works taught in the

Bible, (works of the law, works of righteousness, meritorious works, works of obedience, and passive obedience).

Failing to distinguish among these types of works mentioned in the Bible pits Paul against James and creates a contradiction (James 2:24; Ephesians 2 :8,9). The quotation from the *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* illustrates this problem. “Otherwise, it would violate the entire tenor of the NT teaching on salvation by grace and not by works. “Once one distinguishes among these types of works, the *contradiction* disappears. Consider the different ways the Holy Spirit used the word “works”:

Paul wrote of the “works of the law,” (Romans 3:27,28; Galatians 2:15,16), which can not save (justify) today.

Paul also wrote of “works of righteousness” which God, not man does (Titus 3:5).

Paul also wrote of “meritorious works,” (Ephesians 2:8,9) of which one might boast. Such works do not save anyone, either.

However, Paul and James (and others, as well) also wrote of “obedient works,” (James 2:14-26; Galatians 5:6).

Paul and James were not teaching opposing doctrines. By the **GRACE** of God, Jesus died for us, (Romans 5:6-8). However, Jesus became “the author of eternal salvation to all who **OBEY** Him” (Hebrews 5:9).

That God requires obedience does not tarnish nor diminish the importance of faith. An *obedient* faith is necessary.

3. Considering **baptism a work** motivates them to attack the verses that teach baptism for salvation.

Those who oppose baptism for salvation clearly indicate that they believe baptism is a work. The quotation from the *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon* proves this point. It said, “Otherwise, it would violate the entire tenor of the NT teaching on salvation by grace and not by works.”

Is baptism a work? If it is, which type of work is it?

It is not one of the “works of the law,” for baptism in the name of Jesus Christ was unknown to the law.

Paul plainly states that it is a “work of righteousness,” but that is not a work that man does (Titus 3 :5). God works righteousness. He imputes it to us when our sins are forgiven (Romans 4:5-8). He “operates/works” in baptism, when He takes away our sins and raises us to “walk in newness of life” (Colossians 2:12, Romans 6:4). “Operation” (KJV) or “working” (NKJV) comes from the Greek word “energeia” (*Strong’s* number 1753), and is defined as: “1) working, efficiency la) in the NT used only of superhuman power, whether of God or of the Devil.”

It is not a meritorious work, of which one could boast in his salvation. The verb “be baptized” is passive voice. “indicating that the sentence’s subject is passive and receives the action of the verb” (*Britannica Book Of English Usage*, p. 170). One does not baptize himself. Of what could he boast? He has not done anything. He *received* baptism.

Considering this, **baptism is not even a work of obedience**, unless referring to the one doing the baptizing (Matthew 28:19).

Being baptized is “passive obedience” to a command of God. Is it possible to “obey” a command, without *doing* anything? Certainly it is. If a parent tells his child to “be quiet, don’t move, don’t do anything,” if that child obeys, what does he do?

One can obey without "working." "When God told Israel to "Be still and know that I am God" could they obey? When they obeyed, what type of work were they doing? Obedience does not necessarily involve *working* or *doing* something. Sometimes it means to "submit" to something, or to "receive" something. In the case of the command to "be baptized," it means to submit to "being baptized," or to "receiving baptism." "In Acts 8, when the eunuch was baptized, who was "doing" something? The Bible says that Philip baptized him. The eunuch received baptism, or submitted to being baptized. He was passive, (receiving the action) not active (doing the action). That is "passive obedience."

The fear that baptism for salvation contradicts salvation by grace and faith, apart from works is baseless, illogical and unscriptural.

4. They are motivated by a heartfelt need to defend the doctrine, apparently at any cost.

What compels someone to twist and distort the Scriptures as the opponents of baptism for salvation do? They interpret all scripture according to the erroneous, preconceived ideas about faith and works. As A.T. Robertson admitted, in the quotation, "**ONE WILL DECIDE** the use **HERE ACCORDING AS HE BELIEVES** that baptism is essential to the remission of sins or not. **MY VIEW IS DECIDEDLY AGAINST** the idea that Peter, Paul, or any one in the New Testament taught baptism as essential to the remission of sins or the means of securing such remission."

They feel justified, even compelled, to interpret all scripture, twisting when necessary, to avoid the obvious contradictions and problems their position causes. This converts simple verses into *controversial* and difficult ones. The Scriptures warn us of this dangerous practice.

2 Peter 3:16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable [people] twist to their own destruction, as [they do] also the rest of the scriptures.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

CONCLUSION:

I realize that this study could offend and inflame some of its readers. However, I hope you will not allow that to happen. I send it forth with love: love for God, love for the Truth, and love for those who hold to the positions described herein. My plea is that you will receive this with the same noble and fair-minded attitude that characterized the Bereans in Paul's day.

Acts 17:11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily [to find out] whether these things were so.

CANCER AND CHRIST

Scripture Reading: Philippians 4:13

Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Paul's strength to do and bear all things come from Christ. There was nothing for which Paul did not feel himself adequate, in the strength that Christ imparts.

Cancer is a terrible disease. It is almost a sure killer, but has been put to rest by some.

In the United States, cause of death by disease is as follows and in this order:

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Stroke
4. Alzheimer's Disease

This disease, cancer, has always been a mystery to me. Even the young are not exempt. They must die too.

The Medical Society has statistics showing lung cancer as number one killer by cancer.

If all of those who have died of cancer could offer advice to those that are on this side of the grave; I believe they would say: "Young people"

1. Do not use tobacco
2. Alcohol
3. Drugs

Set your goals on bigger and better things.

1. You can be a Christian.
2. You can make the Church better.
3. You can make the world a better place to live.

As I grow older, getting closer to the "threescore years

and ten," spoken of by David in Psalms 90:10. It seems that more of my friends and loved ones are dying of cancer. I know a lot of people, young and old with cancer, that are fighting for their lives as I write this paper. This dreaded disease has taken its toll.

Cancer is a six-letter word that begins with "C". It is one of the most terrifying words in the English language. Many lives have been shattered by this word. It has caused untold suffering, agony and pain.

It is cancer. Who among us has not known of someone close to us who has sat in a doctor's office anxiously awaiting test results only to hear the doctor say, "I'm sorry, but you have cancer"? Then the fight begins. There is much waiting, anxious moments, and sleepless nights. Prayers and rivers of tears. There are often radiation and chemotherapy treatments with all the miserable side effects. The full head of hair is soon gone. Facial hair begins to vanish. Sores appear. Rashes and itching come on and the patient is aggravated until screaming is heard. Nausea sets in. Morphine shots are given. The morphine pump is connected so that you may adjust how much you get and when you get it. The morphine shots eventually cause hallucination and disorientation. There is often the emotional roller coaster of thinking that the treatments are doing their intended work only to be crushed by the reappearance of the tumor. This type of back and forth scenario takes its mental toll on the patient and loved ones. The most devastating type of this wild ride is for a patient to be given a clean bill of health and to feel good for awhile only to be

overtaken again by the six-letter word that begins with the letter "C"—Cancer. The treatments start again and life is turned upside down for both patient and family. Sometimes the patient will get better after much suffering or the patient will lose to cancer after much suffering. The necessity of suffering is a constant in the malignant cancer equation. The patient suffers and the loved ones do too!

There is a six letter word that begins with "C." It is one of the most comforting words in the English language. Many shattered lives have been mended back together by this word. Suffering, agony and pain are not great enough to overcome the one these six letters point to—Christ. Cancer is no match for Christ. Even if cancer physically destroys the body of a follower of Jesus, it cannot do anything to destroy the soul of that follower. Jesus said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul..." (Matt. 10:28). Though cancer was not under consideration in the context of the aforementioned passage, the principle certainly applies. Cancer cannot conquer our souls! Cancer can take our physical lives away, but it cannot rob us of the eternal life which has been promised unto us (I John 2:25). It is true that Cancer can stop

us from realizing earthly dreams, but it cannot stop us from realizing the dream of going to heaven to be with God. Cancer can put our bodies of clay into the tomb, but it cannot keep them there.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26). Because Christ conquered the tomb and rose from the dead to die no more, so shall we who are in him (I Cor. 15; I Cor. 6:14; Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:18; I Thess. 4:13-18).

The moment cancer wins the physical battle the Christian win the spiritual battle. Simply put, CANCER DOESN'T WIN. THE CHRISTIAN DOES! Those who have died of cancer who are in Christ shall never suffer again. No more chemo. No more morphine or shots for pain. No more awful side effects. No more long nights. No more tears. Just the beauty and bliss of being with Christ forevermore. The battle is done and the victory is won. (Rev. 14:13).—Harvey Hammonds, 98 Isaacks Road #701, Humble, Texas 77338.

THE SERENITY PRAYER (1937)

By HOWARD HAMMONDS

The New Year is here and I am just like the majority of people that never get-done all the things that they want to before the New Year gets here. Someone has said, "*Failure isn't fatal and success isn't final.*" Scriptures that come to mind this time of the year are found in Philippians 3:13-14 as spoken by Paul.

"Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before,

I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

As we all look to the New Year, think on the things that these two passages suggest.

1. Forget the past; it is done and gone. Dwelling on yesterday will only rob you of the strength and fortitude it takes to face life's challenges.

2. Stretch yourself as you enter into the New Year: do not be satisfied with mediocrity. As a runner exerting that little extra bit of energy, put forth your very best.

3. Make the "*High calling of God in Christ Jesus*" your top priority. Develop the spiritual man and everything will take care of itself. After all, what have you (I) profited if you gain the whole world and loose your soul?

Here's hoping that all will have a happy, healthy, peaceful, prosperous New Year; also a very prayerful year while we "*Let brotherly love continue.*" (Hebrews 13:1) Do not be ashamed to tell someone that you love and appreciate them. We are all important to God.

The beginning of a New Year is sort of philologically exciting. Really, it is just another day, but still, it has a certain freshness about it that suggests a clean slate, another chance, a new start.

We have 365 days in the New Year ahead of us. After each night's rest, there is the dawning of a new day. What the new day brings is mostly up to the individual.

As the New Year progresses, try not to rely just on yourself to get the job done. Don't be ashamed to ask for help. Everyone needs it every now and then. My lot in this life was to learn this lesson well and how to do it gracefully. This is *still* a beautiful world with a lot of wonderful people. Just remember that it is better to share the glory than to face defeat alone.

The older we get, the more we resent change. When we realize that we need change, *we should do it.*

Always finish what you start. Never leave anything half-done. Also, under this topic comes "*Sins of Omission.*" Complete the task, come out on top in whatever you do. "*Anything worth doing is worth doing well.*"

This year, I want to make myself available to those who need me. We all know that, "*In this life, some rain must fall.*" We should all do a little preventative maintenance and seize the opportunity to do good while we can. It can get too late. Remember well, "*You don't miss the water 'til the well runs dry.*" There is time, "*When you can't come back.*"

I heard an elderly man once begin a prayer with these words, "Dear God, I just don't know what we would do without you."

Let us hold our heads high and with dignity live our lives closer to God this year.

May God bless you and may His word be a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path. (Psalm 119:105)

CRITICISM -- GIVING AND RECEIVING

continued from page 1

doesn't take a lot of effort or ability to express an opinion. It's one thing to tell others how it ought to be done, and it's another thing to roll up your sleeves and show people how to get it done.

Second, what is our motive for criticizing? This is most important! Are we doing it to be helpful or to tear down? The truth is that sometimes it is done out of impure motives, just as when Judas criticized Mary for pouring the costly perfume on Christ (John 12:5-6). If we will offer criticism in the right way and for the right reason, we'll be able to bless others by our actions.

Let's deal with the other side of the issue now. Let me point out when we are on the receiving end: (1) Remember that everyone has room for improvement. I'm not too good or so perfect that I couldn't benefit from some criticism or advice that someone might offer me. Neither are you! Sometimes we need help to see our mistakes and where our weaknesses lie, (2) Remember that the truth is the truth no matter the source. Even if it comes from an enemy, if there is some truth to it, we need to profit by it. Yes, we can actually gain from the criticisms that were intended to hurt us! Also, realize that our enemies will often do us a favor in that they will tell us the truth when our friends won't, (3) Consider this: Why do we allow negative comments to discourage us by concentrating on

the negative more than the positive? If someone, for example, were to give me five compliments on this article, but then they offered one negative criticism, why am I prone to concentrate on that one negative comment, perhaps even to the point of discouragement? Again, maintain a balance, and (4) Finally, remember that if you are never criticized by anyone for anything, it must be because you're not doing anything! If you are doing something and trying to put forth an effort, get ready for it, because someone will find reason to criticize sooner or later. Don't be discouraged by unjust criticism. Even our Lord was criticized—for eating with sinners (Matt. 9:11), because of his family and poverty (Matt. 13:55), because of the community where He lived (John 1:46), and for allowing a sinful woman to touch Him (Luke 7:36-39).

In conclusion, the next time you are criticized, do the following: Take it into consideration; think and pray about it. If the criticism is fair and just, learn from it and thank the person for their comments. If after prayerful study, you decide that you are in the right, then ignore the advice and keep on doing what you know is right!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

RISENER - HARRIS -- On Friday evening, September 26, Aaron Neal Risener and Brooke Kendra Harris exchanged vows of love and devotion and were joined as husband and wife in a beautiful ceremony at the church house in Norman, Oklahoma. The building was filled to capacity with family members, dear friends, and brethren from many places. The bride is the daughter of Jerry and Beverly Harris of Norman, and the groom is the son of David and Linda Risener of Allen, Texas. Aaron and Brooke were both raised in fine Christian homes and have a long and precious heritage in the church that will serve them well as they build their own home. The bride's grandmother, sister Elois Agnew of Manteca, California, one of my favorite people in the world, graced the wedding with her sweet Christian spirit. The atmosphere during the wedding was one of reverence and deep love, and was set early on by the beautiful opening hymns sung by Becky Baze, Bretta Cating, Brandon Holt, Michael Howard, Greg Pruitt, and Aaron. In fact, the most beautiful moment of the entire ceremony was the song which Aaron had written especially for Brooke and which he himself sung as she made her way down the aisle and to his side. I was touched also by Jerry's response when I asked, "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" He said, "It is an honor. Her mother and I." I happen to know that Aaron's parents are also honored by his choice of Brooke. It was a singular honor for me to have been asked to assist them with their vows. Aaron has lived in my home and worked with me as a fellow evangelist, and I have grown to love and respect him. Brooke has endeared herself to me and my family as well. We are very happy for both of them and pray God's richest blessings upon their new home. The Riseners will

make their home at 2301 Pebblevale Dr. #425, Plano, TX 75075 - Glenn Ballard.

50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Dewel and Mary Miller celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on August 15, 1997. They attend church at the Sanger congregation in California. I had the privilege of baptizing my in-laws 13 years ago. I am happy to see them reach 50 years of marriage and I hope to see many more happy years to come.—Tim E. Dougherty.



OUR DEPARTED

ELLINGTON -- Louina Ellington of Ivanhoe, CA passed away in Visalia, Ca. September 7, 1997. Sister Ellington had been a faithful member of the Church at Woodlake, CA. Beautiful singing was provided by the Woodlake and Porterville Church. Sister Ellington lost her faithful, Christian husband, Brother Earl Thomas in December 1981. She leaves behind one son, Charles and two daughters, Emma Keller and Brenda Bettencourt; two brothers, five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and a host of friends. I felt honored to be asked to speak kind words at her funeral. We at Woodlake will certainly miss her.—Weldon "Buddy" Brumley.

CHAPMAN -- Louisa Jane Chapman, most all her acquaintances called her "Janie", was born Oct. 11, 1905, in Texas to James and Annie Hardin, and departed this life Nov. 11, 1997 a few weeks after her 92nd birthday. In 1924 she married Jim Smith in Healdton, Oklahoma. He died in 1956. She married Harvey Chapman in Aumsville, Oregon in 1957. The writer had the honor of officiating at their wedding in the church house there. Harvey Chapman died in 1976. Survivors include a daughter, LaVerne Hattensty, of Willamina, Oregon; three sons, James Smith of Corvallis, Oregon; Tony Smith of Bend, Oregon; and Mack Smith of Portland, Oregon; 18 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren. Before moving to Oregon, "Janie" lived near Healdton, Oklahoma, and then in Azusa, California. She obeyed the Gospel in her youth, and was considered a faithful member of the Church of Christ at the time of her death. She attended church wherever she lived throughout her life; and for a time, she and her family walked four miles Sunday mornings to go to church at the Bitshop, near Healdton, Okla., after the family had gotten up hours before daybreak to milk by hand 18 head of cows. After moving to Oregon, "Janie" owned and operated Fisherman's Camp, near Hoskins, for many years. She also owned and ran a restaurant in Kings Valley for a time before moving to Cottage Grove. Added to the aforementioned jobs, "Janie" was a homemaker, and had interest in gardening, crocheting and quilting. She used much of her time doing things for her family and for others to supply their needs. She is missed by her family, by the church, and by others who also loved her. The writer conducted services at the church building in Cottage Grove, Oregon Nov. 21, 1997. Her body was laid to rest beside Harvey's in a country cemetery across the road from where they had lived, near Cottage Grove.—Gayland Osburn.

ROWE -- In November much sadness hovered over our meeting at Napoleon, Alabama. Faye Rowe, a dear sister in Christ died. She was from LaGrange, GA and had many friends and relatives in the area. We closed our meeting on Sunday with the morning worship service and drove to LaGrange for the funeral. Jimmie Smith and Alton Bailey preached the funeral. The crowd was very large and the singing was so beautiful. The songs were sung by ladies and gentlemen of the Calvin and Gordan Prince families along with Billy Prince of Nashville, Tennessee. Jimmie and Alton gave some very appropriate words telling of Faye's life as a Christian, her neat appearance at all times and her beautiful singing which inspired so many people. Bro. Larry Thompson spoke more words of comfort at the grave site.—Miles King.

NOTE: It was with shock and great sadness that we received the news of Faye's death. We had been close friends since 1960. The best I can say of her is that she truly lived the Christian life. Our deepest sympathies to all the family.—DLK.

BEST -- Brother Dewey Ebben Best was born July 26, 1904 in Stidham, OK (Indian Territory). He died September 27, 1997 in McAlester, Ok. He was the son of John Hogan and Ann Frances Best. On November 2, 1925 he was united in marriage to Ollie Velma McGuire, who pre-

ceded him in death. He is survived by a son, James Hogan, and three daughters, Gracie Inez Weeks, Ola Mae Groff, and Reba F. Randall. A brother, James and a sister, Tilda Curran, as well as 11 grandchildren and several great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. Preceding him in death were two daughters, two sons, two brothers, one sister and one great-granddaughter. Brother Best faithfully served the Lord as a member of the congregation in Arvin, California until his return to Oklahoma where he worshipped with the Council Hill Church and then as his health began to fail he moved to McAlester to be near his daughter, Inez, who saw to he and sister Ollie until they died. Brother Best was a great asset to the church wherever he lived. It was my pleasure to spend a great deal of time in the "Best" home. There was no way I could express my feelings for this good man, yet I sought to comfort and warn the large gathering at his memorial. He was laid beside Sister Ollie at Lenna Cemetery near Stidham where they were married so many years ago.—Barney Owens.

WILSON -- On December 23, 1997 Wanda Wilson was suddenly killed in an automobile accident in Springfield, Mo. She was 70 years of age at the time. From my point of view, it would be difficult to find a kinder, humbler, more considerate person than Wanda. I had known her the better part of forty years. She moved to Springfield the year after I did and we worshiped at the same congregation. She was born and grew up in the Cassville, Mo. area. Her mother died when she was two years of age and an aunt, Julia Bolin raised her. She is survived by one brother and two sisters, Mildred and Lorene, both of Cassville. We will miss her at Mission Hills. Her kindly smile and ever present helping hand, we shall not soon forget. The writer conducted the memorial service from the McQueen Funeral Home in Cassville, Mo.—Ronny F. Wade

VAN STAVERN -- R. Mearl Van Stavern was born Dec. 10, 1916 and departed this life Jan. 1, 1998 in Odessa, Texas. He obeyed the gospel in 1933 near Competition, Mo., and remained faithfully engaged in the service of the Lord until his departure. He had been in declining health for several years. His survivors include his wife, Dorothy; two sons, Rob and Monte; their wives and several grandchildren, also three brothers: Earl, his twin, Glen and John, and one sister, Leida Zelsman. He will be greatly missed in the home and in the church in West Texas. Bennie Cryer conducted the memorial service.



THE SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant me the serenity,
To accept the things I cannot change,
Change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

Attributed to Friedrich Oetinger (1702-1782) and Reinhold Niebuhr



Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 - Jan. 14 - We are currently in South Alabama working with the church in the Lowery community near Opp. The Lord willing we plan to be here until the first of March. The brethren are making our stay very enjoyable. It is also a pleasure and privilege to be able to work with Kevin Presley who lives and works in this area. The New Year meeting in Oklahoma was stimulating as usual. Great crowds afforded the opportunity to see and visit with many we otherwise could not see for lengthy periods of time. The Lord willing our meetings begin March 15 with the Garrett's Creek congregation near Wayne, WV. We look forward to working with Wyn Baker while there. Please remember us when you pray.

Johnny Elmore, 419 K SW, Ardmore, OK 73401, Jan. 3 - I enjoyed being with the Crestview congregation in Wichita Falls, TX on Dec. 7 and now look forward to being at home for awhile. It was also a joy to attend and participate in the preacher's study in Arlington, TX. Then we were privileged to attend the great New Year's meeting in Oklahoma City, conducted this year by the 21st Street congregation. I think I have never enjoyed the last night more. The boys' talks this year were very good and the singing was tremendous. This year, the bass rolled like thunder, surpassed only by the beauty and power of the soprano, as we strove to praise and magnify the name of Jehovah. If twelve hundred voices can sound this great, just think what it will be when 144,000 with redeemed voices join the song of Moses and the Lamb. I don't want to miss it, do you?

Douglas T. Hawkins, HCR Box 203-C, Rocky Mount, MO 65072 - Jan. 9, 1998 - We have been busy here at home during the month of December. Our goal, Lord willing, is to work more closely with the congregation in Eldon. Recently, I have started meeting with each family in their home for Bible study. Our ultimate aim is to build stronger leaders among the men of the congregation in Eldon. Upon until now, our work in this area mostly centered around the new congregation in Brumley, but during the remainder of our stay in Missouri we plan to work primarily with the brethren at Eldon. We really enjoyed the New Year's meeting. It's always refreshing for us to see old friends and to visit with fellow preachers. We're looking forward to a great year in '98. May God bless us in our efforts for good.

Miles King, Rt. #1 Box 115 Scotland, AR 72141 - Since last reporting I have worked with Bro. Ralph Noack in a gospel meeting at Fairview, Texas. We had a good meet-

ing with one baptized. While in this area we also preached at San Antonio (Nachodoches Rd. & Glendora). We enjoyed being with these brethren and look forward to returning next year. Johnette and I enjoyed the annual New Year's meeting in Oklahoma City. What a wonderful time of singing and listening to the Word of God presented by over 40 of our Gospel preachers! We were impressed also with our young people in attendance. A good number of young men aspiring to preach the Gospel gave short lessons on New Year's Eve and later we sure had good singing until 12 midnight. Then a prayer to our heavenly Father to start the year 1998. We send our greetings to all of you! We hope and pray for lost souls to be won to Jesus Christ and for the church to grow. Our meetings this Spring will be Hammond, Louisiana and Robertsedale, Alabama.

Douglas T. Hawkins, HCR Box 203-C, Rocky Mount, MO 65072 - We closed a very enjoyable Thanksgiving meeting in Fieldstone, MO. The brethren there assist with our support every month for our work around Eldon and Brumley. It was a real pleasure to go to help out in the meeting. We enjoyed the hospitality of Ron and Judy Wood, dear people indeed. Too, bro. Don Pruitt labors faithfully and diligently with the congregation at Fieldstone part-time and then with the church in Houston, MO part-time, in addition to the other work he does in meetings. It was good to be with him and Dianne. I have known Don and Dianne since I was a little boy living on a farm in Council Hill, OK. He and Carl Johnson are two of the very first preachers I remember knowing. (That explains my problems doesn't it. Ha! Ha!) I was privileged to hear bro. Kevin Presley at Burkhart, MO. His preaching was outstanding. I really appreciate him for all his work and dedication in the Kingdom. We have been close friends for a long time. It was good to see him again. Lord willing, by the time you read this, it will be 1998. It's hard to believe that a new year has already dawned. We're looking to many good things this year. God bless the faithful.

Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015 - We have had a young man, Harry Cisneros, recently confess his error in worshiping with cups and classes and start worshiping with us at Deer Park. He got in touch with Melvin Blalock through one of the digressive directories (which obviously lists churches in our fellowship with others) and Melvin sent him some material and talked with him several times on the phone. He started meeting with us and soon after made his decision to stand for the scriptural pattern for worship. We look forward, by the way, to having Melvin Blalock with us for a weekend meeting the first weekend of February. My schedule for the next few months includes the following: December 19-21, Hartwell, AR; January 16-18, Red Oak, TX; February 12-15, LaGrange, GA; March 8-15, Edmond, OK. Last Sunday Brother Chuck Morris prayed that the Lord would bless the church that it might grow spiritually, numerically, and geographically, to which I said then, and once again in this report, amen!

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621, December 12, 1997 - Alan Bonifay and I shared a weekend meeting in Pontiac, Michigan October 3-5. Ron

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Courter helped us fulfill a long-planned book shopping trip in Grand Rapids and the Pontiac brethren had us preach that weekend. We stayed with Carl and Geneva Willis. Geneva is my aunt, Lillian Deem's sister, so I felt right at home. October 17 I preached one night of a weekend meeting at Grass Valley, California. Greg DeGough and Carney Briggs are there. Other speakers that weekend were Michael Fox and Bret Hickey. October 22-26 we were at Houston, Missouri for a meeting and singing school. I enjoyed getting to visit with Don Pruitt who lives and labors in that area. He is doing a great work there. We had over 25 outsider visits to the meeting. Houston is my wife, Cassie's home congregation so we stayed with my in-laws, Ervin and Mary Baker. They are great. November 23-30 we held the annual Northwest Thanksgiving meeting, this year at Cottage Grove, Oregon. We stayed with Gayland and Roetta Osburn and got to know them better. What hospitality! One night Roetta fed 29. People came from Oregon, Washington, California and Idaho, some driving up to eight hours to be there. We enjoyed visiting with everyone who came to the meeting, including preachers David Stands and Delmer Lee. Next, we were in a meeting at Ceres, California December 5-7 and stayed with Wanda Turner. She was nice to buy a new bed so our son, Tye didn't have to sleep on a sofa or on the floor. They have had some conversions lately and are upbeat about their future. Our work continues with the 64th St., Sacramento congregation. People here insist on inviting their friends and acquaintances to church so we have a continual stream of visitors and prospects. We had a baptism in September, making eight for 1997. We had a meeting with Don McCord the first weekend in November and enjoyed his preaching and encouragement.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mountain Home, AR 72653, Jan. 10 - 1997 was a great year for us with additions to our home and home congregation. The brethren here have shown marked improvement and spiritual growth throughout '97. It was good to be able to conduct several meetings across the brotherhood as well. Let me express my appreciation to all of the brethren who kept us and with whom we worked. As usual we concluded the year attending the New Year's Meeting in Oklahoma. The good preaching, great singing and large crowds are always an inspiration. Personally, this meeting is the highlight of my year. We are looking forward to '98 with renewed aspirations. Our meeting schedule begins like this: Pocahontas, AR Feb. 6-8, Lebanon, MO March 22-29, Hillcrest, MS April 8-12, and Brodhead, KY May 3-10. If any of these are convenient for you, please come be with us. Remember us in your prayers.

Kevin W. Presley, Rt. 2 Box 166, Kinston, Al 36453, (334) 898-1301 - Jan. 13, 1998 - 1997 was a good year in the work of the Lord. I count it a privilege to have held several meetings throughout the country. My last few meetings of '97 were in Slocomb, AL, and Burkhart, MO. The meeting at Slocomb was in conjunction with our T.V. program. We had large crowds with some seven digressives in attendance. In Burkhart, MO it was a type of reunion for me. I hadn't been in this area in quite some time and it was thrilling to see so many old friends. A full house of people greeted us at nearly every service. I enjoyed staying in the lovely home of Cliff and Amy Smith. Several preaching brethren were in attendance. I have also enjoyed preaching various appointments at Grassy Fork, TN; Edmond, OK and Pansey, AL. The New Year's meeting was good as usual. It was a pleasure to be with Bro. Lynwood. 1998 looks to be a good year here at home. We are still receiving quite a bit of interest in our television program. I am currently engaged in several studies as a result. Bro. Ronny Wade is currently in the area working with the Lowery congregation for two months. It is a pleasure and an asset to have him in the area. I also am looking forward to the following meetings in the next few months: St. Albans, W. VA, Jan. 20-25; Andalusia, AL, Feb. ? (mission meeting), Fort Worth, TX, Feb. 13-22; Temple, GA, March; Jasper, TN; Mar. 22-29; Bridgeport, TX Mar. 30-April 5; and Birmingham, AL, April 8-12. Pray for all the preaching brethren.

I SHALL NOT PASS THIS WORLD AGAIN

Though this toilsome world, Alas
Once and only Once I pass
If a kindness I may show
If a good deed I may do
To a suffering fellow-man
Let me do it while I can
No delay for it is plain
I may not pass this way again.

— Author Unknown

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 3

PROPOSITION OR RESOLUTION

By DOUGLAS HAWKINS & ELMER MOORE

The Scriptures teach that the cup (drinking vessel) in the communion represents the new Covenant.

Affirm: Douglas Hawkins

Deny: Elmer Moore

Douglas Hawkins - 1st Affirmative

I'm thankful for this exchange and for the opportunity to stand in defense of this proposition. To minimize any misunderstanding, let me tersely define my proposition. By the term "Scriptures," I refer to the word of God. By "teach," I mean to impart the knowledge of. As indicated, the word "cup," denotes a drinking vessel. By the term "communion," I mean the Lord's Supper. By "represents," I mean metaphorically symbolizes. And finally, by the "New Covenant" I mean the new arrangement or the agreement that was ratified by the blood of Christ. These definitions should suffice, but if further clarification is needed, I will be very happy to accommodate Bro. Moore in my next article. I will now systemically prove that this proposition is unmistakably true.

THE NEW COVENANT AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

The Bible teaches that God established a new covenant at the time of Christ's death on the cross and that this new covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ. The writer of Hebrews said in He. 8:8, "Behold the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Due to the imperfect nature of the first covenant, God fully intended to effect a new covenant that would provide the forgiveness of sins to all who believe and obey. Romans 11:27 states, "For this is My covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins." This promise of a new covenant and the forgiveness of sins was accomplished through the shedding of Christ's blood. Just as blood was required means of confirmation for the first covenant, in order to ratify the new covenant, the blood of Christ had to be poured out. Hebrews 9:18 says, "Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood." Taking the blood animals, Moses sprinkled the book and all the people saying, "This the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you" (He. 9:20). Accordingly, the Lord, when referring to his own blood, used the same language as Moses. Christ said that his blood was the "blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt. 26:28). In other words, his blood was the inseparable seal of the new covenant. Because the blood of Christ effectuated this new promissory agreement with its terms and conditions, it was a better covenant (He. 8:6). Before continuing, I want to make a few fundamental observations that I'll come back to momentarily: (1) The blood and the covenant are two separate and distinct things with an integral relationship. (2) The blood ratified the new covenant. It is not a symbol of the new covenant. (3) The new

covenant became effective at the death of Christ (Col. 2:14-17; He. 9:14-17). That the law of Moses codified the specific terms of the old covenant is seen in Ex. 34:28 and Deut. 4:13. Thus, when the old law was "nailed to the cross," the old covenant was annulled, and the new covenant was inaugurated.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST THREE THINGS HAPPENED - THREE THINGS ARE REPRESENTED

Three things of significance occurred when Jesus died on the cross, and in turn, these same three things are emblematically pictured in the Lord's Supper. 1) Christ's body was sacrificed (He. 10:10). 2) His blood was shed (Jn. 19:34). 3) The new covenant was ratified (He. 9). When instituting the memorial, Jesus said: 1) Something is (represents) my body (Mt. 26:26). 2) Something is (represents) my blood of the new covenant (Mt. 26:28). 3) Something is (represents) the new covenant in my blood (Lk. 22:20). Unfortunately, here is where Bro. Moore and I come to a parting of the ways in our understanding of the Scriptures, and so I would like for you, dear reader, to notice comparatively the Lord's three statements. In his response, Bro. Moore will untenably say that the statements "...the blood of the covenant" (Mt. 26:28) and "...the new covenant in my blood" (Lk. 22:20) are identical expressions of the same thought but in reverse order. Are they the same? Absolutely not. They're not even cousins much less twins. One statement declares that something is (represents) Christ's blood — "For this is my blood of the new covenant." And the other statement says that something is (represents) the new covenant — "This... is the new covenant in my blood." The modifying prepositional phrases in the two statements do not change the metaphorical affirmations at all. Godspeed translates the phrase in Mt. 26:28 as "this is my blood which ratifies the agreement" and the phrase in Lk. 22:20 as "This... is the agreement ratified by my blood." In other words, something represents the blood that ratified the agreement and something represents the agreement that was ratified by the blood. This vital point must be clearly understood for it is the vortex of this stormy controversy. To say the phrases are the same is grammatically incorrect. If you can understand that the statement "this is my body" means that something represents my body, and that the statement "this is my blood" means that something represents my blood, then it should not be too difficult to understand that the statement "This... is the new covenant," means that something represents the new covenant.

WHAT REPRESENTS WHAT?

Having conclusively shown that the body, the blood, and

blood.”

3) The New Covenant. Once again, the Bible says in Luke 22:20 “Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.” As you can see, Luke provides additional information that was not recorded by Matthew and Mark. According to Luke (and Paul I. Cor. 11:23-25) Jesus took the cup, filled the fruit of vine, and specifically referred to it by saying “This cup is (represents) the new covenant in my blood.” We are now ready to formulate some conclusions. 1. What represents the body? The bread. 2. What represents the blood? The fruit of the vine. 3. What represents the new covenant? The cup.

INTEGRAL BOND

I previously told you that the blood and the covenant are two things that sustain an integral relationship. Indissolubly bound, one could not possibly exist without the other. Without the stated terms, promises, and conditions of the new covenant the shedding of Christ’s blood would be pointless. On the other hand, if a covenant is made and a new system established, blood is required as a seal. The interdependent relationship is very clear. In the same sense, God chose two distinct elements that are integrally dependent upon each other to symbolize the blood and the covenant. The fruit of the vine could not possibly stand alone, and too, an empty cup would not serve any good purpose. For ease of explanation, I have addressed what represents the blood and what represents the covenant separately, but in reality, the two cannot be disjointed. The Lord took a cup of fruit of the vine, and he explained that by it, both the blood and the covenant are inseparably portrayed. When looking at it from the vantage point of the fruit of the vine in a cup, Jesus said “this is the blood of the covenant” but when looking at it from the standpoint of a cup filled with fruit of the vine, he said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood.” As Bro. Wayne Fussell said, “Just as the New Covenant conveys the benefits of the blood, the cup conveys the representative of that blood. And the presence of the fruit of the vine in the cup is that which makes the cup significant. There is no covenant without blood. The cup does not represent the testament without the emblem of blood.” Bro. Moore, dear reader, my proposition is proven. Jesus said, “This cup is the new covenant.”

Elmer Moore - 1st Negative

I. Introduction

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the teaching of our Lord about the memorial supper He instituted on the night of His betrayal. A word of appreciation to the Guardian of Truth and Old Paths Advocate for publishing this exchange. It is my prayer that this exchange will enlighten brethren as to the issue between us. It is more than just a question about how many containers may be used in the Lord’s Supper. The proposition of this exchange indicates as much. There are some serious differences between us about the Lord’s Supper. It is my hope that this discussion will resolve at least one.

2. Since Brother Hawkins did not number or otherwise label his arguments, I shall assume his major sections to be labeled I, II, III, IV & etc., respectively. I shall enumerate my response to his arguments under these respective sections.

II. The New Covenant and The Blood of Christ

1. I take no issue with what Brother Hawkins wrote about “The New Covenant and the blood of Christ.” I would remind the readers that he obligates himself to do two things. (1) Prove that Jesus gave some significance to a literal container, and (2) that this literal container represented the New Covenant just like the bread represented His body.

2. I want to preface my statements of reply by a few observations. We are admonished to be “not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is,” (Eph. 5:17), to do so

we need to understand that the New Testament was written to the whole world and not just to the people of Texas and Missouri. Consequently, we need to understand that there was a mode of expression that was peculiar to time and place of the recording of the New Testament. Serious students of the New Testament will endeavor to understand what was meant at the time the message was written, and how it was understood then. I do not believe that Brother Hawkins has done this. He writes about metaphor and metonymy and ignores the rules that must be respected when examining such. He treats figurative language as if it were subject to the natural laws of grammar. Bullinger, in his book on figures of speech, writes: A figure is, as we have said before, a departure from the natural and fixed laws of grammar and syntax,” (pg. 11 intro.). This is the same mistake that men have made in dealing with symbols and parables. He also ignores the purpose or design of the Lord’s Supper. The purpose for doing a thing is vital. Our brother understands this about the subject of baptism. We need to understand that Jesus was observing the Passover Feast; a feast that was a memorial. Jesus declared, “This do in remembrance of Me,” (Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:24, 25). He commanded the design and we had better not forget or ignore it. W. E. Vine writes, “In Christ’s command in the institution of the Lord’s Supper, Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:24, 25 not ‘in memory of’ but in an affectionate calling of the person himself to mind” (Page 957). Anything that is made significant in the Lord’s Supper must meet this design. One can readily see that the bread. That represents His body, and the fruit of the vine., which represents His blood, affectionately calls the person Himself to mind. Brethren what is there about a literal container that causes one to affectionately call the person Himself to mind?

III. The Death of Christ: “Three things happened—Three things are represented”

1. Our brother writes that “three things of significance occurred when Jesus died on the cross.” I would remind him that there are many more than three things that happened when He died on the cross: He obtained the remission of sins for man, (Matt. 26:28); The church was purchased, (Acts 20:28); The Old Testament was abrogated, (Col. 2:14), to name a few. He settles on three because that is what his proposition demands. I would remind you that Jesus, when He instituted His supper, mentions two things that involve His blood: the forgiveness of sins, and the ratifying of the New Testament. Both necessitated His blood. Under this heading Brother Hawkins also tells you that I will say that the statements, “blood of the covenant” (Matt. 26:28) and the “covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20) are “identical statements.” I say no such thing. I say what the New Testament teaches: that these two statements are affirming the same truth. Both are teaching that the contents of the cup represent the Blood of Christ which ratified the covenant. The order of record is not always the order of occurrence.

2. Let me tell you what Brother Hawkins has done by failing to understand the nature of figurative language. He has Matthew and Mark contradicting what Luke said. Look at his reasoning. Matthew 26:27 states, “and he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, drink from it all of you, for this is my blood...” Please note by his reasoning the word “this” refers back to cup. Hence, Matthew and Mark affirm that the “cup” is His blood, and Luke affirms, by his reasoning, that the literal “cup” is the New Covenant. Thus, Brother Hawkins has these inspired writers contradicting themselves. To avoid this he will have to recognize his improper use of metaphorical and metonymical language; and when he does this he will have to give up his “container represents the New Covenant” theory.

IV. What Represents What?

1. Under this heading Brother Hawkins correctly states that “by tracing the pronoun ‘this’ back to its antecedent, we learn

that the bread represents Christ's body." He then cites Matt. 26:27-29 where Jesus "took the cup, gave thanks, gave to them, saying, 'drink from it, all of you. For this is my blood...' In Christ's statement, "for this is my blood," the pronoun 'this' refers grammatically to the cup." You will note that he understood that by tracing "this" in v 26 back to bread, he learned that the bread represented His body, but he didn't learn that by tracing the word "this" back to cup that the cup represented His blood. But, my brethren the word "cup" does represent His blood in this passage. Does our brother not see that his reasoning on Luke 22:20 has Matthew and Mark in contradiction with Luke. Matthew and Mark write that the "cup is His blood" and Brother Hawkins has Luke declaring that it is not His Blood but is His New Covenant. Brother Hawkins please take note: Jesus identified what was in the cup, "fruit of the vine." We would not know if He had not told us. No drink was required in the Passover. It was there either by custom or in anticipation of what Jesus intended to do. This is why He said "this fruit of the vine;" and in so doing he explained His use of the word cup. He was not emphasizing a container. Certainly, because of the physical nature of grape juice, a container was necessary but served no other purpose.

2. Brother Hawkins tries to avoid his difficulty by arguing that the "cup is not the blood because the fruit of the vine represents the blood." He has grammatically argued that the cup is His blood. Now he is changing his mind. Why does he get into this predicament? Because he is emphasizing a literal container. He is ignoring the figure of a metaphor and metonymy. He tries to prove that the word "cup" is referring to a literal container that has some significance. He gives an illustration of a cup of coffee. Brother Hawkins this denies what you are arguing, and admits my contention that the emphasis is on the contents and not the container.

V. What Do the Scholars Say?

1. Brother Hawkins tries to prove his point by scholars. He writes, "all reputable bible scholars agree that the word 'cup' in this passage is used literally and means a drinking vessel". Brother Hawkins they do not! You cite Thayer where he defines the word cup and you say he said that the word is used literally. Thayer defines cup to mean a drinking vessel. He then shows how the word is used. He writes, "by metonymy the container for the contained, the contents of the cup, what is offered to be drunk, Lk.22:0" Brother Hawkins there is no such thing as a figurative definition of a word. All words are defined in their literal sense, but they are capable of being used figuratively. Brother, you misrepresented Thayer.

2. He then tries to show the significance of the container from Robertson and Stringfellow. Please look at what these men say. They say exactly what I am contending, which is that the "cup" is named for its "contents". The emphasis is on the contents, not the container. The contents; the fruit of the vine which represents His blood that ratified the New Covenant.

3. Paul, In writing to the church at Corinth stated: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not, [it is, e.m.] a communion of the blood of Christ. The bread which we break, is it not [It is, e.m.] a communion of the body of Christ." (I Cor. 10:16). Brother Hawkins there are only two elements of significance, not three.

VI. Formulated Conclusions

1. Brother Hawkins "formulates some conclusions." In these he again states the integral relationship between the covenant and the blood of Christ. No one denies this. As has been noted there are a number of things that are integrally related. Jesus mentioned two in the institution of the Lord's supper: the forgiveness of sins and the New Covenant. These point to the value that the blood of Christ has in man's salvation. But that does not help his case by arguing that a literal vessel represents the New Covenant and becomes a significant element in the

Lord's Supper.

VII. First Corinthians 11:23-25.

1. I kindly suggest that Brother Hawkins look at his authority, Thayer, on this passage. Thayer points out that the word "cup" is metonymy, where one thing is named for something that pertains to it. He says "Paul uses the word 'cup' in I Cor. 11:23-25 to refer to its contents," (page 533). What does this mean? It means that in whatever way that the "cup" is in the New Covenant it is not the container but the contents. This is why Paul writes that you drink the container.

2. There is no doubt that the blood of Christ ratified the New Covenant and abolished the Old Testament just as the blood of Christ made possible the remission of sins and purchased the church. But our Lord instituted a memorial supper. Whatever we make significant must call, affectionately, the person Himself to our minds. This is the design of the supper. The bread referring to His body and the fruit of the vine referring to His blood.

3. Brother Hawkins mentions a Brother Wayne Fussell but then failed to tell us who he is and what are his credentials.

VIII. Brethren, Brother Hawkins failed to sustain his proposition.

IX. Three Questions for Brother Hawkins.

1. Did Paul present, in I Cor. 11:23, precisely what Jesus taught in Matthew, Mark and Luke concerning the Lords Supper?

2. What two things did Paul state, in I Cor. 11:28, that one would be guilty of if he partook in an unworthy manner?

3. What did Jesus say in Matthew 26:26-28, the disciples were to eat and drink?

Douglas Hawkins - 2nd Affirmative

I'm again grateful for the opportunity to submit my second article of this exchange. I thank the editors, respectively, for the space afforded us in the G.O.T. and O.P.A. Before I begin, let me reassure you that I'm not attacking Bro. Moore personally. I am only taking issue with his position. In this article, I want to focus clearly on the contradictions, misrepresentations, and failures of Bro. Moore's first response. The negative has done a most inadequate job disproving what I have adduced thus far regarding this proposition. In fact, because of truth's impervious nature, Bro. Moore has ignored the critical points that I have advanced. Instead of showing the fallacy of my reasoning, he has just twisted my statements, and then has argued from a postulated premise. I will now carefully point out his mistakes to you and meticulously unravel his "Gordian knot." Intermingled throughout my answer to his first response will be additional material to further show the accuracy of my position and the absolute folly of his.

THE VORTEX OF THE CONTROVERSY

At times, the real points of disagreement are obscured in a discussion. My first article illustrates that the statements "This is my blood of the new covenant" (Mt. 26:28) and "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (Lk. 22:20) are teaching two distinct truths. One is affirming that something represents the blood — "This is my blood of the new covenant." The other is stating that something represents the new covenant — "This... is the new covenant in my blood." Unwarrantably and like I told you he would, Bro. Moore has presumptuously said, "these two statements are affirming the same truth. Both are teaching the contents of the cup represent the blood of Christ which ratified the covenant. The order of record is not always the order of occurrence." However, these statements are wrong. To escape the unavoidable conclusions of my comparisons, Bro. Moore has conveniently said that "the order of record is not the order of occurrence." In the process, he has implied that we may arbitrarily relocate words within a sentence without respecting their specific grammatical function. The Catholics

are sure going to love Bro. Moore. How does his observation of "the order of record is not always the order of occurrence" affect the statement "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved?" Does it cryptically mean "he that is baptized shall be saved and believeth?" Why not? As to the matter at hand, how does his self-appointed rule apply to Jesus' statement, "This is my blood of the new covenant" in Mt. 26:28? In light of his observation, does the statement actually teach that something represents the covenant instead of the blood? If the statement "this... is the new covenant in my blood" means that something represents the blood as Bro. Moore contends, then am I to understand that the statement "this is my blood of the covenant" means that something represents the covenant? Sounds like someone is fancifully tailoring the Scriptures to their practice to me. Let's examine the statements closely.

**THIS IS MY BLOOD (OF THE NEW COVENANT)
THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT
(IN MY BLOOD)**

Notice, the subjects, predicate nominatives, and prepositional phrases are different in both sentences. Contrary to Bro. Moore's implications, the fact these are metaphorical expressions doesn't change the grammatical function of the words in the sentences. In the statement, "this is my blood of the new covenant," the pronoun "this" (referring to the fruit of the vine) is the subject. "Is" is the verb meaning metaphorically represents, and "blood" is the predicate nominative, which is linked to the subject. The statement simply means: this (f. of v.) represents my blood. Likewise, in the second sentence, cup is the subject. "Is" means "represents," and the word "covenant" is the predicate nominative which refers back to the subject. The statement means the cup represents the new covenant. On one hand, Matthew and Mark affirm that the fruit of the vine represents the blood and on the other, Luke and Paul declare that the cup represents the new covenant. Bro. Moore is falsely working from the assumption that Luke and Paul affirm the same thing as Matthew and Mark. Bro. Moore is mistaken. Let him show otherwise.

RULES OF METONYMY AND METAPHOR

Several times throughout his response, Bro. Moore has stated that I have ignored the rules regarding these figures of speech. Bro. Moore, I ask you specifically "where and what rules?" You quoted E.W. Bullinger where he says that figures are a departure from the natural and fixed laws of grammar to intimate that the statement "this cup is the new Covenant" is not to be understood as written. Let me remind you that any rule you apply to Lk. 22:20 (This cup is the new covenant) to alter the phraseology will equally apply to Mt. 26:28 (This is my blood). Are there any laws governing figurative language? E.W. Bullinger says, "It is not open to any one to say of this or that word or sentence, 'This is a figure,' according to his own fancy, or to suit his own purpose. We are dealing with a science whose laws and their workings are known. If a word or words be a figure, then that figure can be named and described." (p. 11 intro.) In other words, Bro. Moore ought to be able to tell us exactly what rules have been violated. It is not enough for him to make vague insinuations. Let me dwell for a moment on these figures, metaphor and metonymy, to show that I haven't ignored their use at all. In fact, my position is built upon them.

1. **Metonymy.** This is a figure based entirely upon association. The kind of metonymy used in the Lord's Supper is where the container is named to suggest or include its contents. Even though you may not recognize the figure of speech by name, you are very familiar with its daily use. For instance, if I were to say "the kettle is boiling." I have used a metonymy where I name the container (kettle) to suggest its contents (water). Here are a few basic rules of this figure of speech. 1) The object named is not the thing suggested. (i.e. The kettle is not the water.) 2) The object named is real. (i.e. The reference is to a

literal kettle.) 3) In metonymy of the "container for the contained" when referring to a liquid, the container named must contain the thing suggested. This is the only association or relationship that exists between the two objects.

Near the end of his article under the section of I Cor. 11:23-25, Bro. Moore says, "Thayer points out that the word 'cup' is metonymy, where one thing is named for something that pertains to it. He [i.e. Thayer D.T.H.] says 'Paul uses the word 'cup' in I. Cor. 11:23-25 to refer to its contents.' (page 533) What does this mean? It means that in whatever way that the 'cup' is the New Covenant it is not the container but the contents." Is that what Mr. Thayer means Bro. Moore? No, that is not what Thayer means at all. Thayer means the word "cup" is used metonymically to include its contents, the fruit of the vine, a symbol of Christ's blood. I have already stated in my first article that the cup must be filled with fruit of the vine before anything is represented in the communion. How do I know that the metonymical use of cup in I Cor. 11:25 and Lk. 22:20 is meant to include but not put solely for the contents? Because, first of all, that is precisely what Mr. Thayer writes on page 15 under his entry on blood. He says, "I Cor. 11:25; Lk. 22:20 (in both which the meaning is, 'this cup containing wine, an emblem of blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood an emblem of the new covenant.')" Joseph Thayer, the very man who said "cup" is used metonymically in the passages under question, explained the exact manner of its use.

Secondly, I also know because the fruit of the vine cannot consistently represent both the new covenant and the blood of Christ. That is contradictory. Bro. Moore is the man hopelessly at odds with the teachings of the New Testament, not me. I don't need to give up my "container represents the new covenant theory." He needs to renounce his unscriptural practice of individual cups. His position has the inspired writers contradicting each other by saying that the fruit of the vine represents both the blood and the new covenant. He vaguely says, "in whatever way that the 'cup' is the New Covenant it is not the container but the contents." I have told you the exact way. When Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant", he specifically referred to the vessel he had taken. The metonymy, as shown by Thayer, establishes that the cup was filled with the fruit of the vine.

2. **Metaphors.** Along with metonymy, this figure of speech further proves any proposition. According to E.W. Bullinger in his book on figures of speech, a metaphor is: "a distinct affirmation that one thing is another thing, owing to some association or connection in the uses or effects of anything expressed or understood." (pg. 735) The established laws of metaphors given by Bullinger are: 1) "The verb 'is' means in this case represents." (735) 2) "There may not be the least resemblance" (735) 3) "The two nouns themselves must both be mentioned and are always to be taken in their absolutely literal sense, or else no one can tell what they mean" (735). Let's apply Bullinger's rules to the metaphorical statements in the Lord's Supper; specifically, the two rules stating the nouns are always to be taken absolutely literal, and the figure lies in the verb "is" which means represents.

This (bread) is my body

This (f. of v.) is my blood

This cup is the new covenant

Bro. Moore said I obligate myself to do two things. (1) Prove Jesus gave significance to a literal container. (2) Prove that the literal container represented the new Covenant just like the bread represented His body. These rules prove just that. Now, in light of these rules, does Bro. Moore still want to argue the "cup is the blood?"

**"THIS" IS MY BLOOD - THE FRUIT OF THE
VINE, OR THE CUP?**

I have explained in detail in my first article what the pro-

noun "this" in Mt. 26:28 has reference to - the fruit of the vine. In responding, Bro. Moore has shyly represented me as arguing "the cup in the blood," but in doing so, has unfairly misrepresented me. Notice, he writes, "He (i.e. me D.T.H.) has grammatically argued that the cup is His blood... He tries to prove that the word 'cup' is referring to a literal container that has some significance. He gives an illustration of a cup of coffee. Brother Hawkins this denies what you are arguing, and admits my contention that the emphasis is on the contents and not the container." I believe Bro. Moore almost saw the point. But I think he must have accidentally drunk the coffee from my illustration and the caffeine made him "jump to conclusions" prematurely. My exact point is that the pronoun "this" does emphasize the contents and not the container. Matthew and Mark didn't write the "cup in His blood." Elmer Moore wrote that. Matthew and Mark record Jesus to say "For this is my blood." How can the pronoun "this" refer grammatically to the cup and yet mean the fruit of the vine? Because, as Bro. Moore and I agree, the fruit of the vine was "in" the cup. The pronoun "this" through metonymy refers to the contents of the cup. Can a pronoun be used metonymically? Absolutely. For instance, if I were to say, "take the kettle off the stove when it boils," the pronoun "it" grammatically refers to the kettle, but through metonymy actually means the contents. The same is true regarding the Lord's statement, "for this is my blood." The cup that Christ had taken is the antecedent of "this", but through metonymy the pronoun "this" emphasizes the contents of that cup, the fruit of the vine. When Jesus said, "I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine," he wasn't explaining the meaning of cup or its use. He was identifying what he had referred to by using the pronoun "this." Bro. Moore is exactly right when he said, "The emphasis is on the contents, not the container." Not only do Stringfellow and Robertson agree, Elmer Moore does as well. Jesus said, "for this (f. of v.) is my blood."

THAYER ON MT. 26:27

One other matter I quickly want to address in this article is Bro. Moore's accusation of me misrepresenting Thayer on the definition of the word cup in Mt. 26:27. I noted in my first article that all reputable Bible scholars agree the word cup in Mt. 26:27 (not Lk. 22:20 as quoted by Bro. Moore) is used literally. For comparison, I referred you to Thayer's lexicon on pg. 533. Bro. Moore contradictively said, "they do not!" and then said, "Brother you misrepresented Thayer." Well, let's see. Thayer on pg. 533 under Strong's #4221 says, "*Poterion* - a cup, a drinking vessel; (a) prop; Mt. 23:25 sq.; Mt. 26:27...;" Bro. Moore, do you know what prop. is an abbreviation for? — Properly or literally. I shall be glad for you to issue an apology for your mistaken accusation.

BRO. MOORE'S QUESTIONS

Question #1. Matthew and Mark declare that something represents the blood and Luke and Paul write something represents the New Covenant. Question #2. In verse 27 (not v. 28 as Bro. Moore noted) Paul said we would be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. Question #3. Bread and fruit of the vine.

Elmer Moore - 2nd Negative

In this, my second negative in response to Bro. Hawkins' second affirmative, I wish to express my confidence that you the readers are fully capable of determining what has or has not been done in this exchange. The affirmative, apparently, does not think so. He seems to feel that he must tell you that I have created an exceedingly complicated problem for myself. He tells you that I have twisted his statements and involved myself in contradictions, misrepresentations and failures. He writes, "I am not attacking Bro. Moore personally." I will let you decide whether he is or not. I have confidence in your

ability to determine these things for yourselves. However, since charges have been made that 1: 1. acted "slyly"; 2. "ignored critical points"; 3. "twisted statements;" 4. "argued from postulated premises"; 5. "made mistakes;" 6. acted without good sense ("folly"); 7. acted "presumptuously;" 8. am guilty of "unscriptural practice of individual cups"; 9. used "fanciful tailoring [of] the Scriptures;" 10. "unfairly misrepresented;" 11. "drink too much caffeine" - effecting my reasoning; 12. guilty of "contradictions, misrepresentations and failures" creating a "Gordian knot" for myself, I hardly know whether to address the issues or try to redeem my reputation. However, since these are merely vain attempts to hide the true issues, I will try to ignore them and stick to the scriptures to prove that Bro. Hawkins' proposition is not true according to my understanding of the revealed word of God. You be the judge. By the way, the statement of item 8, introduces a point of contention upon which there is wide spread disagreement and since this written exchange is suppose to present proofs not unsubstantiated conclusions, is completely out of order in my view. The affirmative used this second article to re-hash his first article and tell you what I did not do. However he totally ignored my rebuttal arguments, giving not even a slight mention of them. What did he have to say about my argument on the purpose of the Lords supper? We are to "do this in remembrance" of Christ. Whatever is of significance must aid us in doing this, must bring to mind an "affectionate calling of the person Himself." The bread and the fruit of the vine does this; the container does not. The container was necessary to hold the fruit of the vine. Also, I called attention to the fact that the New Testament teaches that there are two elements of significance in he Lord's supper and not three, I Cor. 10:16. (Read first negative.)

The affirmative again cites Lu.22:20 and Matt. 26:28 and declares that they are teaching "two distinct truths". He tries to prove this by a conglomerated process that I doubt seriously if anyone will understand. He presents a chart on these two nassaes.

This is my blood (of the new covenant)

This CUP is the new covenant (in my blood)

Bro. Hawkins then states that in the statement "This is my blood of the new covenant" the pronoun "this" is referring to the fruit of the vine. Look at what he does. The word "this" in Matt. 26:26 refers back to the bread. He then argues that the word "this" in Matt. 26:28 refers to the fruit of the vine. He ignores his argument on "grammar." I pointed this out in the first article and he ignored it. According to his argument on grammar the word "this" in Matt. 26:28 refers back to the "cup." Look at the statement. "And he took a cup and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new covenant." Thus, according to his grammatical argument Jesus declared that the cup was His blood. The consequence of his argument has Matthew and Luke in contradiction. Matthew wrote that the "cup" (container according to Bro. Hawkins) was His blood. Luke wrote that the "cup" (container according to Bro. Hawkins) was the new covenant.

Bro. Hawkins takes issue with my statement that the "order of record is not always the order of occurrence." I really thought that our brother knew this. I am embarrassed for him. I thought that students of the Bible knew this. I will give him just one example. In Romans 10:9 Paul wrote, "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved." Was Paul teaching that man is to confess to something that he has not believed? Bro. Hawkins then wrote, "Our brother has implied that we may arbitrarily relocate words." Sir, you know that I did not imply any such thing. This accusation is beneath the dignity of a gospel preacher, you should be ashamed. He then writes "his time E.M. self appointed rule." Just because

Bro. Hawkins (seemingly) have not learned the exegesis of basic Biblical Hermeneutics does not mean that others have not. He mentions the Catholics in this accusation. He is the one that has the kinship with them in this present matter. They argue that the bread and cup (fruit of the vine) literally becomes the body and blood of Christ while Bro. Hawkins argues that Jesus is emphasizing a literal container as something that will affectionately call Jesus to mind; (I will be happy to correspond with Bro. Hawkins on how to properly understand the Bible, when this exchange is over).

In Luke 22:20 Jesus declared, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (New ASV). The cup is that which is poured out. What was poured out? It was the blood of Christ. Hence the statement declares that the cup is the blood of Christ just as surely as does Matthew.

In his section discussing Metonymy and Metaphor, Bro. Hawkins writes that any rule to "alter" the phraseology will equally apply to Matt. 26:28. Certainly! There is no question about the phraseology; the question is what was he teaching. The Catholics will argue with you on the phraseology and insist that the phraseology states that the bread is His body i.e., actually becomes His body. You will tell them (and rightly so) yes that is what He said; but this is what He is teaching. I would remind the readers that the Holy Spirit said, "be not foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17)

Bro. Hawkins cites Bullinger page 11 and apparently thinks that Bullinger is denying what he wrote on the same page. This reference is stating the very first rule in determining how a word is to be used — you do not make a word figurative unless you have to. Bro. Hawkins wants to know what rule. If he will go back and read my first article he may see this and other matters that he overlooked. However, I will answer the question. A word or statement is figurative only if in making it literal you involve an impossibility. To make the statement "this is my blood" mean that it literally becomes His blood, as the Catholics do, involves an impossibility. This is precisely what the affirmative is doing with the word "cup." He argues that "cup" is being used to suggest a "drinking vessel" and in doing so has a literal drinking vessel representing the blood of Jesus. To avoid this he changes his argument on the word "this". One time the word refers back to bread and the next time the word refers forward to "fruit of the vine." He tries to justify this by writing that "Bro. Moore and I agree, the fruit of the vine was 'in' the cup." We do so agree but not for the same reasons. I believe that the fruit of the vine was in the cup of Luke 22:20 for the same reason it was in the cup in Matthew, Mark and First Corinthians. The cup is named to suggest its contents. Jesus, in Matthew, told us what was in the cup, "the fruit of the vine." The same is true of Luke 22:20. The cup is named to suggest fruit of the vine which was in the cup.

Bro. Hawkins proves this in his kettle illustration. He writes, "it" grammatically refers to the kettle but through metonymy actually means the contents." Apply this to Luke 22:17 20. "It" (Luke 22:17) grammatically refers to the cup, but through metonymy actually means the contents. This is totally devastating to Bro. Hawkins contention that the literal container refers to the new covenant. Bro. Hawkins, in whatever sense the "cup" is the new covenant, it is not the literal container but what is in the container.

Brethren, I am amazed that Bro. Hawkins cannot see that what he cites from Thayer and Bullinger establishes precisely what I have been arguing, that the container is named for its contents. His illustration of a kettle does the same thing. He writes that the "object named is not the thing suggested." Bro. Hawkins, do you not see that this is what I have tried to get you to see. The , object named, is not the thing suggested. That which is suggested is the contents. Thus, the cup (contents) represents that which was poured out (the blood of Christ) which

ratified the new covenant and made possible the remission of sins. Both of these expressions are identified in the institution of the Lord's Supper.

Bro. Hawkins denies that he has misrepresented Thayer (I use the word misrepresented without thought as to motive). In his first article he wrote, "All reputable scholars agree that the word 'cup' in this verse is used (my emp em) literally and means a 'drinking vessel' (Thayer pg 533)." Note that Bro. Hawkins writes the word used. The quote that he attributes to Thayer is not about how the word is used. Thayer defines the word to mean a "drinking vessel, and then shows how the word is used. He wrote, "By metonymy of the container for the contained, the contents of the cup, what is offered to be drunk." That is how the word is used in these passages. Bro. Hawkins did misrepresent Thayer in that he applied the basic definition to its use. Yes, Bro. Hawkins, I do know what the initials "prop." means. I wonder if you know what the initials "sq." stands for? It "sq." means that the word cup is used in the same way (the container for the contents) in the following references(s), (I Cor. 11:25-28.). This is why I wrote that in whatever sense the "cup" is the new covenant it is the "contents" and not the container.

Please look at the two statements that the affirmative has been writing about. Matt. 26:27-28. "He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto the remission of sins."

It was the blood that was poured out. This blood did two things. 1. It ratified the New Testament, (Hebrews 9:11-20) 2. It made possible the remission of sins, (Hebrews 9:22). The contents of the cup are identified in Matt. 26:29 — fruit of the vine. We would not have known what the contents were if the writer had not told us. Thus, the "cup" is named for its contents, the fruit of the vine, which is a fair representation of His blood that ratified the new covenant and made possible the forgiveness of sins. What is the literal container a fair representation of in the Lord's Supper? Now look at Luke 22:20, Luke's account of the same incident. "And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, this cup which is Poured out for you is the New covenant in my blood." (NASV). In both passages something was poured out. That which was poured out was the blood of Christ. Matthew writes "blood of the covenant" and Luke writes, "covenant in My blood." In Both passages cup is named for its contents that was a fair representation of the blood of Christ. My friends, these passages are not teaching "two distinct truths" as the affirmative states, they are affirming the same truth. **Question:** Bro. Hawkins tell us where Luke 22:20 and I Cor. 11:25-28 teaches that the fruit of the vine is the blood of Jesus? Don't forget to do this. You are arguing that the "cup" represents the new covenant. What, in these two references, has reference to the blood of Christ?

My Questions

1. I don't believe that Bro. Hawkins answered my question on what Paul presented to the Corinthians in Chapter Eleven. Bro. Hawkins why did you not answer the question? Regardless of that, you, the readers, know that Paul presented precisely what Jesus taught. Paul wrote what he received of the Lord, and what he received of the Lord is what transpired on the night Jesus was betrayed. What Paul wrote was that they were to "drink the cup," (I Cor. 11:27). They were to drink the contents of the cup. Thus, in whatever sense the "cup" is the new covenant; it is the contents and not the container as Bro. Hawkins has affirmed. In question (2) He answers that they would be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Precisely! These are the two elements of significance in the Lord's Supper. Why did he not also say and "of the new covenant" if this was a third element of significance? In question (3), the disciples were to eat the bread and drink the cup. The action involved

had reference to the two elements of significance; the bread and the fruit of the vine.

It is very dangerous to make a law where God did not. It is not safe, it is soul damaging.

Douglas Hawkins - 3rd Affirmative

When a man is unable to overthrow the truths of an argument by pointing out the fallacy of what has been stated, he must resort to tactics that divert the audience's attention away from the issues of the discussion. This is precisely what Bro. Moore has done in his opening paragraph and with the other unrelated matters he has introduced in his second negative. I guess now would be as good a time as any to give him (with sympathy) #13 to add to his lengthy grocery list of complaints. Bro. Moore has clearly evaded his responsibility in this discussion as the negative. A great part of my second affirmative dealt with metaphors and metonymy in answer to his objections that I ignored these figures of speech. In responding, he didn't say a word against it. Why not? Either he plainly could not answer what I have written or else he purposely is waiting until his last article to say something about it so I will not have the chance to respond to him. I need to remind him that it's his job to take up my arguments and not vice versa. Also, if Bro. Moore seriously wants to confuse my attack of his error with a personal attack of this character, then I feel terribly sorry for him. Despite Bro. Moore's allegation that "[I] ignored [his] rebuttal arguments," I want to pick up where I left off and quickly cover the rest of the relevant material that I did not have the space to address the last time. Then I'll note his second article.

"IN REMEMBRANCE"

Bro. Moore contends that the proposition is untrue because it does not serve to meet W.E. Vine's opinion of "affectionately calling that person to mind." Bro. Moore's conclusion is that the bread is a fair representation of Christ's body and that the fruit of the vine fairly represents Christ's blood, but he can't see how a "container" would serve the purpose of calling someone to mind. Let's help him. Bro. Moore, Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant (He. 7:22; He. 8:6). To have a symbol of that covenant is to have something that reminds us of what he accomplished, the ratification of this new and better covenant. To remember what Christ accomplished is to remember him. Bro. Moore, in his first article, also said that a number of things are stated in connection with the shedding of Christ's blood (i.e. the remission of sins, the purchasing of the church etc.) Yes, but Christ didn't say anything represented the remission of sins nor that anything symbolized the church. What he did say though is that something represents the new covenant. What is it? Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant" (Lk. 22:20). Of the cup that Christ took in his hand, he said, "This cup" represents the new covenant. Elmer denies it, but the Lord still said it.

"ONLY TWO ELEMENTS"

Bro. Moore also quoted I Co. 10:16 and stated that there are only two elements of significance mentioned in the communion, the body and the blood. In addition, in the questions of his last article, he pointed out that we would only be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord if we partook unworthily (I Co. 11:27) and that nothing is said "of the covenant" to indicate a third element in the communion. First, the reason is because it is established in several other places in the Scriptures that the blood of Christ is the "blood of the new covenant;" therefore, it does not need to be stated again. Bro. Moore I'm embarrassed for you. I thought you knew that. You see friend, Bro. Moore's sectarian argument proves nothing. (The sectarian will argue that Jesus, in the latter half of Mk. 16:16, didn't say "and is not baptized" attempting to prove that baptism is unessential to salvation. That must be where

Bro. Moore learned his argument. I think I can help him though. Bro. Moore, I'll be very glad to correspond with you when this is over.) Secondly, to enjoy the communion of the blood of Christ is also to share in the fellowship of the new covenant, but conversely, to splash carelessly through the blood of Christ is to desecrate that one ratified agreement. Thirdly, so closely connected are the blood and the new covenant (as I pointed out in my first affirmative) that to state one would be to imply the integral relationship of the other. Fourthly, Paul in I Co. 10:16 and I Co. 11:27 didn't assign representative significance to any element of the communion. The Lord had already done that. Jesus said regarding the cup that he took, "This cup is the new covenant" (Lk. 22:20), giving it just as much importance in the Lord's Supper as the bread and the fruit of the vine. Basically, Bro. Moore's objection comes down to this: Paul only mentioned the body and the blood and said nothing of the covenant in I Co. 10:16 and I Co. 11:27. Therefore, he concludes that there are only two significant elements in the communion. Bro. Moore, where in Ac. 20:7 or Ac. 2:42 when discussing the breaking of the bread does it say anything about drinking f. of v.?" Do these verses teach that there is only one significant element in the communion?

"THE NASV"

In quoting this particular translation of Lk. 22:20, Bro. Moore has sought to prove that Luke teaches the "cup is the blood." However, this particular version inaccurately translates the passage. The phrase "which is poured out for you" doesn't modify "cup" as the NASV has rendered it. Rather, the phrase modifies blood. The New King James Version says in Luke 22:20 "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." Another translation says, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." In these other translations the sense is not that the cup was poured out, but that the blood was poured out or shed for us, which is vastly different from the NASV. Which translation is right? Let's ask ourselves, what was shed or poured out for us? A cup? Fruit of the vine? Blood? Obviously, it was blood. To translate the passage as "This cup, which is poured out for you" is to say that Christ poured out a cup or shed fruit of the vine for us. Is that what you believe Bro. Moore? Christ didn't shed a cup nor did he shed fruit of the vine. Secondly, if Bro. Moore's reasoning is right, the passage means the blood is (represents) the new covenant. It would not mean that the cup is (represents) the blood as he has concluded. The passage in the NASV, says, "This cup (symbol of blood according to E.M.) which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." Hence, the blood is (represents) the new covenant. That is completely absurd. The blood was shed to ratify the covenant, but it is not a symbol of that covenant. The blood and the covenant are two separate things. Bro. Moore's main problem is that he cannot see that the statement "This...is the new covenant" means that something symbolizes the new covenant. He can see that the statement "This is my blood" means that something represents the blood, but he can't see the truth that something represents the new covenant. Will you base your faith upon this faulty translation? Bro. Moore has.

"THE ORDER OF RECORD"

Bro. Moore has stated a number of times (as innumerable as Abraham's descendants I believe) throughout this exchange that "the order of record is not always the order of occurrence." In the preceding article, he said that I ought to be ashamed for accusing him of arbitrarily relocating words within a sentence. Let's look at his application of Lk. 22:20 in light of his example in Rom. 10:9 because they are nothing alike. Maybe then we can determine where the shame rightfully belongs. In Rom. 10:9, we all know that belief precedes a confession of our faith. Notice, that "confessing with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believing in our hearts that God raised him the dead"

are two finished and complete thoughts that are understood in their proper sequence. However, this example is a far cry from saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" means that the cup (contents) represents the new covenant (actually the blood) because the order of record is not always the order of occurrence. To say that faith naturally precedes our confession doesn't alter the truth of either statement, but to say that "This cup is not the new covenant," teaches that the contents represent the blood changes the thought altogether. Bro. Moore, is the order of record ever the order of occurrence? If so, how shall we know when it is? (Oh yeah, I forgot. You will correspond with me). Brethren, if the statement "this my blood" means that something represents the body, and the statement "this is my blood" means that something represents the blood, then why, oh why, pray tell does the statement "This... is the new covenant" not mean that something represents the new covenant? I believe I should say, "shame on you" Bro. Moore. These statements are not the same as you have said, and yes, you have arbitrarily changed the words within the sentence of Lk. 22:20. Furthermore, I have comparatively shown the difference in the statements: "This cup (filled with f.v.) is the new covenant in my blood" and "this (the f.v. in the cup) is my blood of the new covenant" in my first two affirmatives. Despite the insinuation that you, the reader, are too doltish to understand such a "conglomerated process," we clearly see that these statements affirm two different, yet complimentary, truths. (Perhaps Bro. Moore can correspond with you after he's finished with me.)

"MY WATERLOO"

Much to my chagrin, my contention that the literal container represents the new covenant has been "totally devastated" because: 1. Bro. Moore has turned my illustration of the boiling kettle against me. 2. Thayer and Bullinger actually agree with Bro. Moore. 3. I have contradictorily said the literal container represents both the blood and the new covenant. 1. "It" in Lk. 22:17 - Bro. Moore contends that since the pronoun "it" in Lk. 22:17 is used to refer metonymically to the contents of the cup that I'm wrong in what I've contended for. The only problem is that it is in Lk. 22:20 (not v. 17) that Jesus said "This cup is the new covenant." The demonstrative pronoun "this" shows that Christ was referring to "the cup" that He had just taken. If it is solely the contents that are considered as Bro. Moore has insisted, why did Jesus say "this cup?" The Lord just as easily could have said this fruit of the vine to indicate only the contents. Why did Christ refer to the container at all? Furthermore, if it's the contents that represent the blood why did Jesus say, "This... is the new covenant in my blood", meaning that this is the agreement ratified by my blood? In Mt. and Mk. Jesus said "This is my blood", but according to Luke the Lord also said, "This.... is the new covenant." If the Lord wanted something to symbolize the ratified new covenant, what language would he have had to use? Clearly, it requires the container and its contents together to represent both the new covenant and the blood of Christ. Jesus said, "This cup (filled with f.v.0 is the new covenant in my blood." It comes down to this: do you believe the Lord meant what he said? 2. Thayer and Bullinger - Bro. Moore says that these scholars "establish precisely what [he has] been arguing, that the container is named for its contents." Of all the assumptive, specious, and tenuous things I've ever read, this tops them all. Bro. Moore you need to reread what these men have written because they changed their minds. They don't agree with you after all. In fact, 1. Thayer on pg. 15 said the cup represents the new covenant and the wine represents the blood. 2. Bullinger said the nouns in a metaphor must both be mentioned and are to be taken absolutely literally. In other words, literal fruit of the vine represents the literal blood of Christ and a literal cup represents the literal covenant. (Bro.

Moore's desultory remarks about the Catholics are altogether irrelevant.) Why didn't you deal with Thayer and Bullinger? You plainly ignored these points, Bro. Moore. 3. Contradictions - Time and again Bro. Moore has said that I have made Luke contradict Matthew and Mark by saying that the container represents both the blood and the new covenant. I've said no such thing. What I have said speaks for itself. This is just another classic example of Bro. Moore's "sly" misrepresentations. I've said the fruit of the vine symbolizes the blood and the cup represents the new covenant. I've noted that these two elements must be together before anything is emblemized in the communion. (see the end of my 1st affirmative) Now then, I don't have to distort what Elmer has written to show his discrepancy. Bro. Moore has continuously said: The cup (contents - f.v.) is the blood and the cup (contents) is the new covenant. Can't you see Bro. Moore that your reasoning has Luke contradicting Matthew and Mark? The reader and I can. It's not Napoleon Hawkins who has met his Waterloo. It's Elmer Bonaparte. Finally, as to your question, there is no place in Luke or 1 Cor. where the Bible teaches the fruit of the vine represents the blood. That teaching is found in Mt. 26:28 and Mk. 14:24. Let me ask you, where in Acts 2:38 is faith taught? Does the fact that it's not void the role of repentance in the plan of salvation?

THE CONCLUSION

Brethren, the issue boils down to this: do you accept what the Lord said? Jesus didn't say "this cup is my blood," nor did He say "this fruit of the vine is the new covenant." What the Lord could have said, he didn't. The Lord said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." Elmer hasn't been debating me. He's been debating the Lord. This isn't about what Doug Hawkins said. This is about what the Lord said and whether or not the Lord meant exactly what he did say. Why does Bro. Moore take exception to the Lord's statement? The reason is because his back's against the wall to uphold the man-made arrangement of using "individual cups." Bro. Moore noted the consequence of making a law where God has not. Let me add to that. It's as equally dangerous to disobey a law that God has made. In light of the evidence, I must call upon you brethren who use individual cups to abandon the practice and restore the ancient order of worship. Please consider these things prayerfully. A word of thanks to brethren Mike Willis, editor of G.O.T., and Don King, editor of O.P.A., for printing this exchange. Bro. Elmer Moore, thank you for your part and for the hours that you spent preparing your articles to make this discussion possible. And a word of thanks to you, the reader, for the time you've invested in reading this discussion. May God bless this effort. Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant."

Elmer Moore - 3rd Negative

I will try to wade through all of the reckless and loosely connected statements that Bro. Hawkins wrote. If you have difficulty in trying to understand what he wrote, join the crowd. He reminds us of my obligation in the negative and my failure to measure up to that obligation. The negative is to examine proof offered by the affirmative (of which I find very little) and has the right to present rebuttal arguments. This I believe I have done. You be the judge.

The problem with the affirmative is that he admits that in the texts describing the institution of the Lord's Supper figurative language is used. He even admits that you have both a metaphor and metonymy. Then he ignores the basic rules governing them in his explanation of the texts under discussion. This is the same mistake that men make in the study of parables and symbols, making literal that which is symbolic. He charged me with ignoring what he wrote about these figures. He wrote, "He didn't say a word against it". I agreed with his basic

argument, "that any rule about the phraseology will equally apply to Mt. 26:28." I wrote, "Certainly! There is no question about the phraseology; the question is what was he teaching." This rule our brother will not apply. You will note that I presented an illustration of his blunder. I pointed out that in Mt. 26:26 he argued that the word "this" refers back to the bread. He then argues that the word "this" in Mt. 26:28, the same context, points forward to fruit of the vine. Thus, he has the word "this" referring back to bread and forward to fruit of the vine. You see this even if he doesn't. To follow his rule the word "this" in Mt. 26:28 must refer back to "cup." Thus, according to his rule, Jesus is saying that the "cup" (container) is (represents) his blood. Yet Bro. Hawkins is arguing that the "cup" (container) is (represents) his new covenant and in so doing has Matthew and Luke in contradiction of one another. This is the logical consequent of his argument. I presented this in article two and what did bro. Hawkins say about it? He wrote "this is a classic example of his sly misrepresentations." Jesus used both a metaphor (one thing named to suggest another) and metonymy (the change of one noun for another related noun) as in the "cup" for its "contents."

While I am discussing these figures let me also, once again, address what he said about Bullinger and Thayer. He blatantly misrepresents these men. He wrote, "Thayer on page 15 said the cup represents the new covenant." Brethren look at what Thayer said. Thayer is discussing the subject of blood and he writes, "The blood by the shedding of which the covenant should be ratified, Mt. 26:28; Mk. 14:24 or has been ratified ... add, I Cor. 11:25; Luke 22:20 in both which the meaning is, this cup containing my wine, an emblem of blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood an emblem of the new covenant." Brethren this is recklessness on the part of Bro. Hawkins. Thayer states the same thing here that he does on page 533 where he writes, "By metonymy of the container for the contained, the contents of the cup, what is offered to be drunk."

Our brother then writes, "Bullinger said the nouns in a metaphor must both be mentioned and are to be taken literally." Bullinger also writes on Pg. 739, "The whole figure, in a metaphor, lies, as we have said, in the verb substantive 'is' and not in either of the two nouns." He also wrote, "so in the very words that follow 'this is' (i.e. represents or signifies) my body we have an undoubted metaphor. 'He took the cup... saying this IS my blood!' Here, thus, we have a pair of metaphors. In the former one, 'this' refers to 'bread' and it is claimed that IS means changed into the 'body' of Christ. In the latter, 'this' refers to 'the cup' but it is not claimed that the cup is changed into 'blood'."

Bullinger does not support the claim of the affirmative, quite the contrary. Bullinger writes that "this" refers to the cup. Bro. Hawkins continues to misrepresent these scholars.

"IN REMEMBRANCE"

He writes that "in Remembrance" is W.E. Vines opinion. No, Jesus said "this do in remembrance of me". I simply gave Vines definition of the word "remembrance." The word means "affectionately calling that person to mind." The bread representing his body and the fruit of the vine representing his blood does precisely this. The literal container does not. Bro. Hawkins is arguing for the "literal container" but bases his argument on what the Bible teaches about the "new covenant" which is not an issue. I agree that there is something that reminds us of what Jesus did, but it is not the "literal container" of the Lord's Supper. Our brother argues that Jesus said something represented the new covenant and has conveniently ignored what Jesus said about it. He said "new covenant in my blood" We are dealing with figurative language. What did this mean? What ratified the new covenant? Was it a literal container or the blood of Jesus? A container was named to suggest its contents. The contents was the fruit of the vine. What did the

fruit of the vine represent? It represented the blood of Jesus. What did the blood of Christ do? The shedding of His blood ratified the new covenant and made possible the forgiveness of sins. Bro. Hawkins asked the question why did Jesus refer to the container at all? Jesus named the container to suggest what was in it. His audience understood His language. Brethren the two statements, "the new covenant in my blood" (Lu. 22:20) and "my blood of the covenant" (Mt. 26:28) are teaching the same thing.

THE ORDER OF RECORD

Our brother knows what I wrote concerning the order of record. He put it in quotations in this article. Yet in his second article he falsely charged me. I now know he knew better. He then tries to get out of trouble by charging me with "relocating words in a sentence". I showed that the two passages, Matt 26:28 and Luke 22:20, taught the same thing but not in the same order. (see previous article). I wrote, "These passages are not teaching two distinct truths, as the affirmative states, they are affirming the same truth." Remember that these writers are describing the exact same event that took place on the night of the betrayal. Thus, that which they relate to us must be consistent. Matthew was present at that event and knew exactly what the Lord was saying and exactly what took place. Neither Mark nor Luke were present but, being guided by the Holy Spirit, that which they wrote must agree with what Matthew wrote about the matter. I didn't cite Romans 10:9 to argue that it was like Luke 22:20. I cited the passage only to show that "the order of record is not always the order of occurrence." Bro. Hawkins built a straw man to attack and ignored my argument.

HIS "WATERLOO"

In this section Bro. Hawkins tells you that I contended that the word "it" metonymically refers to contents. Is he denying this? He then points out that the word "it" is not in Lk. 22:20. Is he arguing that this is not the same cup in verse 20 as the cup referred to in verse 17? How many containers does he think were there? Note also that he is making some progress. He is affirming "literal container" represents the new covenant. Now he writes "this cup (filled with the f.o.v.) is the new covenant." Thus, he virtually admits what I have been arguing that "the container is named for its contents, and in whatever sense the 'cup' is the new covenant, it is talking about contents and not the container". He has denied his own proposition. If the container becomes significant only after it is filled with "wine" then we must ask ourselves "what made it significant?" After the "wine" is drunk, is the container still significant? What can be done with the container other than wash it and put it back on the shelf or throw it away if it is of the throw-away type? These questions are not trivial because there is the problem of showing when the container becomes "holy" and when it ceases to be "holy." Not so with the "wine" or the "bread." They become of significance, to each individual, during the process and completion of the act of imbibing of each, respectively, and then only if it is properly done, (I Cor. 11:20-29).

I Cor. 11:27

The affirmative attempts to answer my argument on two elements in I Cor. 11:27. He totally ignores my argument and writes about the covenant and its importance, which is not an issue. My argument was based on what the passage states about the Lord's Supper. There are two actions identified. They were to eat the bread and drink the cup. Paul declares "whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord". My argument still stands. There are only two elements of significance. Is it possible that Paul would have ignored the significance of the container if it was of importance. He was teaching the Corinthians the proper manner of taking of the bread and the fruit of the vine. That which he received of the

Lord is that which he taught.

Bro. Hawkins tries to prejudice the reader by referring to "Bro. Moores sectarian argument". I guess he thought that you would not realize that he did not touch top, side, or bottom of my argument. In this same connection he cites Acts 2:42 & 20:7 where the passages refer to the "breaking of bread" and wants to know if this is only one element of significance. No Bro. Hawkins the phrase "breaking of bread" sometimes referred to a common meal and sometimes referred to the Lord's Supper. In these passages the Lord's Supper is suggested in an often used figure of speech, synecdoche, where a part is named and the whole is intended. The part of the Lord's Supper implied, of course, is the eating of the bread. Did you think that this only meant that they just ate the bread and did not drink the cup?

NASV

Bro. Hawkins takes it upon himself to challenge the translators of the NASV. He writes that they "inaccurately translated" Luke 22:20 but gives no authoritative evidence of why he believes this to be true. He reminds me of the Baptist who deny the inspiration of Mark 16:9-20. They do it because they know that it repudiates their doctrine. Our brother challenges the NASV for the same reason. He knows that it utterly destroys his contention. Bro. Hawkins writes that "poured out modifies blood". This does not help him in the least. There is no issue about what was poured out, it was the blood of Christ. What represented that blood is the question? In Mt. 26:27-28 Jesus took a "cup" and said "drink ye all of it [cup]; for this [cup] is my blood." Thus, it was the cup (contents) representing His blood that was poured out. The NASV presents the truth on this passage in Lk. 22:20. I would also remind the reader that Bullinger agrees that the word "this" in the above

passage refers to the "cup"

CONCLUSION

We must handle aright the word of truth. In so doing one must exercise caution in examining texts that involve figurative language. When Jesus said "go tell Herod that fox...". I know what He said, but I must try and understand what he meant. Bro. Hawkins emphasized what Jesus said but failed to understand what he meant. This can be a fatal mistake when dealing with figurative language.

My brethren there are two elements of significance in the Lord's Memorial Supper. This is taught in I Cor. 10:16. "The cup of blessing which we bless is it not [it is, em] a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not [it is, em] a communion of the body of Christ. Also in, I Cor. 11:27, we are directed to "Eat the bread and drink the cup". If we do so in an unworthy manner we become guilty of the "body" and "blood" of the Lord. The Lord's Supper is a memorial. Whatever is of significance must "affectionately call the person [Jesus] to mind." The bread representing his body and the cup representing His blood does precisely this; the container does not. It is my hope that the reader will realize the fallacy in making the physical container an element of significance in the memorial feast. There is no way for the partaker to relate to the container except that it is necessary to contain that which is of significance, the fruit of the vine that represents His blood that was shed for the new testament and for the remission of our sins. It is important that we are continually reminded of this great sacrifice that was made by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

I thank both the editors of the Old Paths Advocate and Guardian of Truth for allowing me space to set forth what I believe about the Lord's Supper.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS ISSUE OF THE PAPER

In this issue of the paper we are running the Hawkins-Moore Debate. This is a written discussion that is being published by the *Old Paths Advocate* and *Guardian of Truth*. Brother Hawkins affirms that the cup is representative of the New Testament. Brother Moore denies. We hope you enjoy reading the discussion.

A PERSONAL NOTE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their concern, calls, letters and most of all their prayers in my behalf during my recent brush with medical uncertainty. While in South Alabama, doctors, by accident, discovered two lesions on my liver. At first there was uncertainty as to exactly what the lesions were. One test was inconclusive giving rise to the possibility of a serious life-threatening diagnosis. In the end, both the doctors in South Alabama and those in Birmingham at the UAB Kirklind Clinic concluded that I had a benign condition known as hemangioma, an abnormal blood vessel growth. We spent some anxious days and nights during this ordeal. We can never express what your prayers and phone calls meant to us. Thank you so much.—Ronny F. Wade.

INFORMATION FOR THE NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

I am currently gathering information for the new 1998 edition of the Church Directory. If there are any changes of which are you aware, please forward them to me as soon as pos-

sible. Such things as change in time of worship, area codes, phone numbers, addresses, etc. are essential to an error free directory. This directory will also contain a preachers list at the back. All who wish to be included need to get the following information to me. Name, address and phone number. I will also include an e-mail address for any preacher who supplies me with the information. E-mail addresses will not be included in the general directory in order to save space. Send all information to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808.

CHURCH DIRECTORY CHANGES

This is to let you know we are now meeting in our building at 1610 Highway 96, Burns, TN 37029, instead of our home. We appreciate the continued prayers for the work in this area. We are trying to maintain the purity of the church against the traditions of men. Our services are 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. each Sunday. Everyone welcome. For information call Walter C. Odom at 615-797-3503 or write. Thanks again and please keep the work here in your prayers. Jer. 6:16—Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.—Walter C. Odom.

TEMPLE, GA. - Beginning April 1st. Morning services on Sunday changed to 10:30. Area code to 770.

MONTEBELLO, CA. - Unless someone can move to Montebello to assist in the teaching, the church will cease to meet June 28, 1998. The building will be sold at that time. If you can help in anyway, contact Gerald Rowland at (213) 980-8439.

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

of



Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 - Feb. 11 - We are currently working with the church at Lowery in South Alabama. Our stay thus far has been very enjoyable. The people could not be nicer or more considerate. One has been restored to the Lord and one has confessed sins. We are hoping for others in the near future. Lord willing, March 15-22 we are scheduled to be at Garrets Creek near Wayne, WV for a meeting, then April 10-19 Ada, OK. We look forward to seeing everyone at both places. May the Lord bless all His people everywhere is our prayer.

Randall M. Tidmore, 10681 Birthstone Drive, El Paso, TX 79935; (915) 590-5774; e-mail: rtidmore@thechurch.com - When we returned to the states in 1993, we were convinced that the Lord wanted us to work here in El Paso. We have continued to work here since then. The work has been trying at times, but overall it has been good. There were a few people meeting here when we arrived, but through time all have moved away. All our current members have either obeyed the gospel, or have been converted from the cups and classes brethren, by the power of the Word of God, since we arrived. This includes a Spanish congregation that the Lord raised up early in 1994. The two small congregations share the building: the English congregation meets Sunday morning, the Spanish congregation meets Sunday afternoon. They are two autonomous congregations.

Bennie T. Cryer, 1439 San Rocco Circle, Stockton, CA 95207, Feb. 9 - The work here in Stockton continues on at a good pace. Ryan Connor began working with us the first of this month. He has proven to be an effective student of the Bible and is able to present it in a goodly and timely fashion. I enjoyed the study in Arlington in December. I learned much about the Old Testament. I appreciated that congregation for arranging the study and the amount of work those who participated had done to prepare for it. Once again, Joe and Joann Norton opened up their home in such a hospitable way to me and several others who attended the study. I worked with the members at Escalon in a meeting January 25-February 1. Attendance was excellent and we were delighted to stay with Homer and Juel Sallee once again. I preached at the Olivehurst congregation yesterday. The brethren there are to be commended for holding on to the faith and serving God to the best of their abilities. We have lost two members by death here in Stockton in the last few weeks. Inez Franklin and Harold Fisher passed away in December. Also, Mearl Van Stavern of Odessa, TX passed away January 1. When I first started preaching in 1952 I had the privilege of working with

Mearl and the Odessa congregation. I have always appreciated what he did for me during those times. I considered it a honor to be able to speak at his memorial service. God bless all.

Roy Lee Criswell, Rt. 2, Box 2535, Cassville, MO 65625, Feb. 12 - Recently we had the opportunity to attend worship with the congregation at 85th and Euclid in Kansas City. Two of our children and their families attend worship there. Our son, Mike is now working with the congregation. It was good to attend services and to be with every one. They asked me to preach at both services on Lord's Day. Here in Aurora we continue to stay busy teaching and preaching the Gospel to the Church and to those who we come in contact with. Our young men are doing a good work in helping in the worship. They are directing singing, reading publicly the Scriptures in worship and leading the dismissal prayer. Lord willing I plan to start helping them in preparing lessons for teaching soon. I have enjoyed the Old Paths and other Brotherhood papers in recent months. Please remember the Lord's work here in Aurora in your prayers. Please notice our new address.

Kevin W. Presley, Rt. 2 Box 166, Kinston, AL 36453 (334) 898-1301- February 10, 1998 - The Lord has blessed 1998 with a good beginning. It was a pleasure to be with the brethren at St. Albans, WV in a meeting during the last week of January. The meeting was well supported by surrounding congregations. It was good to have preaching brethren, Dennis Smith, Wyn Baker, and Bill Leford with us. Bill works with this congregation and I enjoyed spending time with him. Thanks to Lawrence and Madge Lore for their sweet hospitality. The brethren wrote and let me know that an older man obeyed the gospel the following Wednesday night who had attended every night of the meeting. Also, there was one confession of faults. I look forward to beginning a meeting in Ft. Worth, TX this coming Friday night. My schedule for March is as follows: March 20-22, Temple, GA; March 23-29, Jasper, TN; March 30-April 5, Bridgeport, TX; and April 8-12, Birmingham, AL. This is the last month that Ronny and Alfreda Wade will be in the area to work with the Lowery congregation. It has been a pleasure working alongside and spending time with them. I and all preachers solicit your fervent prayers.

Douglas R. Hawkins, HCR 3 Box 203-C, Rocky Mount, MO 65072 (573) 964-0013 - Feb. 3, 1998 - We've had a very mild and enjoyable winter so far here at home. In the last few months I've been working more closely with the brethren from the Eldon congregation by having Bible studies in the members' homes. Overall, things are going well with moderate progress being made. We are anxiously looking forward to our meeting schedule for this year. We begin in Holyoke, CO (Feb. 20-22) and then we go to Oakdale, CA Feb. 27-Mar. 8; Ventura, CA March 11-15; and Washington, OK April 12-19. We'd love to see you if you're in the area. As always we pray God's richest blessings upon his faithful children everywhere.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

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NO. 4

SHOULD WE PRAY DIRECTLY TO CHRIST?

By BENNIE CRYER

Jesus taught His disciples to pray directly to the Father in heaven in the model prayer He gave them upon their request to teach them to pray, Luke 11:1-4. Does this limit us to just praying to God the Father? No, says the author of a book that has a section in it devoted to this subject. He writes, "When we apply this sound principle of interpretation to the subject now under consideration, we shall discover that the Bible give ample authority for the believer to address both the Father and the Son directly in worship, praise, and prayer." (*WORSHIP*, By A. P. Gibbs, Subject: Direct Address To The Lord Jesus, Page 249). The author made an accurate statement that both the Father and the Son may be addressed directly in worship and praise, but when he attempts to tie prayer in with them he makes an error. For example in Colossians 3:16-17 we are taught that "singing" is 'to the Lord.' This might be interpreted to mean we can sing songs that are addressed directly to Jesus such as "Lord Jesus Christ, Our Savior Thou" or "Lamb of God, Our Souls Adore Thee" and this would be acceptable. However, the author seems to forget that in the very next verse (17) Paul said, "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." This seems to exempt our praying directly to Jesus since we are ordered to give thanks "by him" and not to Him. The word "by" is "a primary preposition denoting the channel of an act; through", *Strong's Concordance*, so our giving of thanks is an act that is to be channeled through Jesus instead of being addressed to Him directly.

EXAMPLES??? CONSIDERED

On page 254 the author (Gibbs) gives a list of scriptures that he believes teaches that "the believer may approach the Son of God directly in worship, praise, and prayer, without any mediation whatever." Four of the scriptures, Luke 24:50-53; Hebrews 1:6; Revelations 5:9-10; and Ephesians 5:19 have to do with worship and praise in song. The Scriptures do teach that we can worship Jesus. I suppose no one would question that we can sing to Jesus. I believe we can scripturally do so. One of the scriptures has to do with Stephen speaking to Jesus when he was being stoned to death, Acts 7: 59- 60. Four of the scriptures have to do with Paul, his conversion, and the "thorn in the flesh" that he spoke to the Lord about, Acts 9:5-6, 10-17 (Ananias); 22:10; and 2 Corinthians 12:8-10. The final scripture he lists is Revelation 22:20 where John speaks to Jesus as he closes that prophetic book.

1. Stephen speaking directly to Jesus. Acts 7:59-60. This is not a good example for those who would teach we may speak directly to Jesus today. In v. 55 we are told that Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost and on this occasion that permitted him to view the glory of God with Jesus standing at His right hand. This was a vision that took place in the miraculous age of the church when Jesus manifested himself to His servants on various occasions. In this vision Stephen spoke to Jesus with two statements that we would consider petitions or prayer. Jesus is revealing Himself to Stephen in a special vision so Stephen speaks directly to Him just as others did in visions on several occasions in the New Testament. An example of a New Testament character praying directly or speaking directly to Jesus is needed when it was not in a special, miraculous vision in order for it to be an example for us today.

2. Saul's conversion and the conversation with Jesus on that occasion. Acts 9:4-7; 22:6-11. At the beginning of Saul's conversion process he certainly had a direct conversation with Jesus and in the midst of it a petition that we might consider to be a prayer. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" was the request. However, this occasion is similar to that of Stephen's and involves a special vision that was expected then among Christ's special servants. It certainly is not an example for a Christian today to say his prayers and address Christ directly in them. If we are to pray in the name of Christ that prayer must be by the authority of Christ and He taught us to pray to God the Father through or by Him as our advocate. 1 John 2:1-2. If we think Saul's conversation with Jesus is an example for us to follow today then we might as well take the conversation the Savior had with Ananias in Acts 9:10-16 as an example of how we are to initiate contacts with sinners and wait for Him to contact us directly to instruct us to go to a particular individual. We cannot take these visionary examples as examples to teach us how to pray today. Saul became the Apostle Paul and in 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 he had another direct conversation with Jesus where the Son of God is answering him directly about the thorn in the flesh that Paul had requested to be removed. Again this is a vision situation that Jesus employed in dealing with Paul and the other apostles as He did with John in the next example.

3. The example of the Apostle John's prayer to Jesus

continued on page five

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 4



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 6-9

Should We Pray Directly To Christ? 1

Preservation Of Unity 2

The Querist Column 3

"Keepers Of The Spring" 3

Give Heed 5

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Editorial

PRESERVATION OF UNITY

By DON L. KING

The apostle said in I Corinthians 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Is it really possible to follow this? Certainly it is; if not, inspiration erred in commanding it. The obvious answer is to be consistently true to the Word of God. It isn't a matter of "interpretation." Most of us can read and understand what the Bible says to do in matters important to salvation. Why is it, then, that there are divisions among the children of God? The answer has to be that not all are speaking the same thing. Not all are perfectly joined together. Not all have the same judgment. Who is at fault? We must look within ourselves for the answer. The fault doesn't lie with the God of Heaven.

In I Corinthians 12:24,25, Paul said, "For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." Do we have the same care one for another? To ask the question is to answer it. Obviously we do not. Many years ago, when the innovations were introduced into the body of Christ, there would never have been division in the first place if those insisting on changes had really cared about one another. For instance, those who wanted to begin using individual cups in the Lord's Supper did not say those cups were the only way to worship. It was presented as an alternative way to serve the Supper. Sadly, godly brethren who had (and still have) a conscience against using more than one cup were forced to leave church buildings they had labored to build. They were accused of bringing about division because they insisted on a thus sayeth the Lord for doctrine. Strange, that those who introduced the innovations (cups, Bible classes, instrumental music, missionary society, et. al.) and insisted on change could not, and can not, see that they were the ones responsible for division. What's the problem? Members did not have the same care one for another. To this very day, brethren who use the innovations generally agree that it is scriptural to worship without them. For instance, we could agree and unite on one cup. That is the common ground of agreement. The schism within the body of Christ could be healed if all would agree to do only what the Book says. If all had the "same care one for another," a division could never have occurred when there was (and is) an easy way to avoid it. It is really just that simple: just do what we have plain authorization for and stop there.

It seems to us, that we ought to learn from history. We don't have to fight about everything! As we look toward the new century we are being faced with the problem of which translation to use. Most of us have our favorite. I

continued on page six

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: What is the rapture? Does Luke 17:34-36 and 1 Thess. 4: 15-18 have any bearing on the subject? (GA)

Answer: The theory of the rapture is the product of dispensational premillennial teaching. The advocates of this teaching allege that there are two comings of the Lord at the end of this age. The first, when he appears in the clouds, but not upon the earth. At this time the saints (the righteous living) will be caught up (or raptured) to meet the Lord, where they will remain during the tribulation (a time of great trouble on the earth) which is to last for seven years. At the end of the tribulation the Lord will come with his saints at which time the one thousand year reign on earth will begin. The theory has no basis in scripture at all, and is purely the figment of someone's vivid and overworked imagination. 1Thess. 4: 14-17 often used to support the theory, does not do so. This passage teaches that 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 that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. "Note that before anyone is caught up the saints will arise, and all together (both the righteous dead and the righteous living) will go forth to meet the Lord "in the air," and thus evermore be with him. Paul says we shall ever be with him, not just for the seven years that the theory alleges. Both these facts contradict the theory of the rapture, and make it impossible for this passage to be used in support of it. The events of the last day and their order given in the Scriptures, follow: (1) The dead, both righteous and wicked, will be raised (John 5:28-29). (2) The judgment will follow (Rev. 20:12-15). (3) The saints will be carried to heaven, the wicked assigned to hell (Mt. 25:41-46). (4) Christ will give his kingdom to

God (1Cor. 15:24). (5) The earth will disappear in the all consuming fires of the judgment of God upon the wicked world (2Peter 3:10). The tribulation aspect of this theory finds its basis in the misapplication of Mt. 24:21 which reads ". . . for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall be." A careful examination of this passage shows, not only the foolishness of the rapture theory, but the utter disregard its proponents have for contextual interpretation. In Mt. 24:16 the faithful are told to "flee unto the mountains" during this time of tribulation or trial for protection. The rapture theory has them being caught away into heaven for this period of time. Clearly a contradiction. Matthew 24:1-34 is a discussion of the events related to the destruction of Jerusalem, and has no relevance in meaning to the end of the Christian age. The querist also wanted to know about Luke 17:34-36 which reads as follows "I tell you in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left. " The reference concerns the second coming of Christ. When our Lord comes, it will be night in some parts of the earth and daylight in others. His saints will be found mingled with the rest of the people and engaged in the normal activities of life. The Lord will receive his own as is indicated in 1 Thess. 4:17. They will be taken away from their worldly pursuits and ties to meet the Lord. Those left behind are the lost, the ones who "know not the Lord. " Again, there is here no reference to or any idea of a rapture akin to the theory advanced by premillennial dispensationalists. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, Mo. 65808)

"KEEPERS OF THE SPRING"

By RICK MARTIN

The late Peter Marshall, Chaplain of the United States Congress told a story known as the "Keeper of the Spring." This story is about a man who lived in the forest high above an Austrian village that was located on the eastern slopes of the Alps. This man was hired by the town council to clear away the rubbish from the pools of water up in the mountains that fed the spring that flowed through their town. With faithful regularity, the keeper of the spring moved among the hills removing leaves and branches and silt that would contaminate the fresh flow of water. The town became a popular attraction for vacationers who were attracted to its beautiful clear spring.

Years passed and one evening the town council met for its semi-annual meeting. As they looked over the budget, one man began to question the salary being paid to the obscure keeper of the spring. He questioned why they kept the old man year after year. The council members decided the old man's services were no longer needed.

For several weeks nothing changed. By early fall, the trees began to shed their leaves. Small branches snapped off and fell into the pools, hindering the flow of water. One afternoon someone noticed a slight yellowish-brown tint to the water. Within a few weeks, a slimy film covered sections of the water along the banks and a foul odor was soon detected. Tourist to the little town soon left and many of the residents became sick.

Quickly the embarrassed council called a special meeting. Realizing their error, they hired back the keeper of the spring. Within a few weeks the spring cleared and the little town returned to a normal life.

This story is just an idle tale, but it has an analogy to the times in which we live. What the keeper of the spring meant to the town, true Christians mean to the world. The springs of God's truths have been clogged with the rubbish of man's doctrines and ideas and God's people must be "keepers of the spring."

Even before the apostles died the springs of God's eternal truth began to be clogged with the opinions and doctrines of men. Some of the Jews who did not know the difference between the law of Moses and the Gospel began to clog the springs of truth with Judaism. (Col. 2:16) "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or the Sabbath days." These were some things that pertained to the law of Moses, but some of the Jews tried to put them in the Lord's Church.

In his work with the Corinth Church, the apostle Paul spent a great deal of time removing heathen philosophies from the springs of truth.

Some other man-made doctrines came along and clogged the springs of God's eternal truths. The simple pattern of church organization with elders and deacons over local congregations was replaced by a Roman hierarchy. Baptism as commanded by Jesus was replaced with sprinkling, infant baptism was taught, and for the simple singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, they substituted the playing of instrumental music.

Throughout history, there have been many things that have clogged the springs of eternal truth. Christians, who would be keepers of the springs, must continue to cry out against every innovation, every evil and damnable doctrine that is practiced. It is well and good, and even right, to cry out against these things that are without, but there comes a time when we must look within. There are some things within that have clogged the springs of God's eternal truths and we must clear the rubbish from our own lives.

The Church today is not meeting with a lot of opposition from the world. A reason for that might be that in many cases, you cannot tell the difference. The problem is not the Church in the world, but rather the world in the Church. Too many church members have the tendency to become like the world, rather than completely different from it. Being different from those around us is not a new exhortation. God has always urged his people to follow this advice. (Lev. 20:23-24) "And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things and therefore I abhorred them. But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people." A study of the history of Israelites shows us that they did not always heed God's exhortation. They did not separate themselves and the cost was high. Ultimately, it led to captivity and slavery in a foreign land. Many years later, when the Israelites were allowed to return to their country, God's exhortation was the same. (Ezra 10:1) "Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure, and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives."

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul talks about separation from the world. (II Cor. 6:15-17) "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hat the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said I will dwell in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive

you." Separation is something that God's people must practice.

Most of us have heard how a frog can be boiled to death without any resistance. Placed in a cool pot of water on a cooking surface, the frog remains content and unsuspecting as the heat beneath is increased gradually. The frog's temperature rises with the temperature of the water until it is finally boiled alive. Some Christians have jumped in the "pot" of the world and they are getting use to the heat.

Long ago, Lot chose to pitch his tent toward Sodom. He never considered the character of the inhabitants of the land. In doing so he failed to realize the effect their presence would have on his relationship with God. Today, many Christians have done the exact thing that Lot did. They have adopted a casual view, even participating in worldly things. Worldliness has taken hold of many Christians and it has had an effect upon the Church and the Truth and we must clear our lives of this rubbish!

Another thing that has hindered the flow of the Word of Life is the unwillingness on the part of many church members to sacrifice. Many are not willing to do anything for the Lord and his cause. They are not willing to give of their time in service to God. The Church will never grow as it should if only a few are willing to sacrifice and give of their time. God needs people who are able to give themselves completely to Him. A half hearted service is unacceptable.

The Gospel is the greatest message in the world, yet there are many who are not willing to sacrifice their time and money to get this message to others. The Church of today has the greatest opportunity to spread the Gospel of any age, yet there are so few who are willing to do it.

The early Church labored under the severest of circumstances, but they did not fail in their efforts. Even though many of them were forced to leave their homes, they taught the Gospel wherever they went. (Acts 8:4) "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Gospel."

People must be willing to give of themselves, their time, their care, and their compassion. This is something that is sorely lacking in our society today. The type of sacrificing and giving needed is personal. It usually involves adapting our ways and schedule to fit into the needs of others and the needs of the Church. Some people never think about giving up their own personal pleasure for the Church. It does not make any difference to them if the Church and the Gospel are going to suffer. Sacrifice calls for flexibility. Sometimes people and the church are going to need us when we had plans to do other things.

It makes no difference, whether anyone else does the work of the Lord, as individuals we have a responsibility to do the work. When people do not live up to that responsibility, they are not pleasing the Lord. The unwillingness to sacrifice time and self has caused the springs of God's eternal truths to be clogged.

There are many important jobs in this world—To be a President, King, Queen, or Emperor. Perhaps a great scientist, doctor, lawyer, teacher or Chief Executive Officer of some large corporation. These jobs would bring much recognition as far as the world is concerned. There is one job more important than all of these—it is a job that will not bring much recognition. It is to be a "Keeper of the

Spring." We need "keepers of the spring" to clear the rubbish out of the springs of truth; so that a selfish, thirsty world may be refreshed with the waters of life. Let us, as

God's people, remove the rubbish from our lives and become "Keepers of the Spring."

GIVE HEED

By GARLAND T. SMITH

Hebrews 2:1: "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip (leak out). " Webster defines earnest: 1. Characterized by, or proceeding from, a serious state of mind. 2. Important, not trivial. Syn. Earnest: Serious, Sober, Grave, Solemn.

Colossians 3:17: "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. "Doing all in word or deed by the authority of Jesus causes us to be separate from the things of this world.

Romans 12:2, "Be not conformed (fashioned like) to this world: but be ye transformed." James 4:4, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

There are many "church-goers" who act like, talk like, dress like, and go to the same places that the world goes to. I was talking with one about this and they said, "It's just the way of life!" But I beg your pardon; it is the way of eternal death. It is like a story I heard that a man had a parrot and he carried it to church with him all the time. So one day he carried it with him to the bar and he looked around a few times, then he said, "Same crowd, same crowd." So it can be said of a lot of "church-goers" of going to the same places and doing the same things that the world is doing.

I John 2:15-16: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Every sin that we commit comes under one of the three.

Galatians 5:19-21 gives a list of seventeen things and ends with such like or syn., and tells us they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. There is one thing in these I want to make mention of that you do not hear much said about, and that is "emulations" (notice it is in the plural). Webster defines "emulation": ambition or endeavor to equal or excel (another); rivalry, syn. see competition, (check the word "rival" and it gives more to be understood). Webster defines "competition": rivalry, a

contest between rivals; a match.

To fully give what is being brought in the church today by some, some time ago I went to see a brother, and he had his t.v. on and there on it were a team of girls which was ill-clad and when they turned around across their back was written "Church of Christ." What a shame—trying to bring the kingdom of Christ down, down on a par with such ungodly things as they try to carry Christ in their game. Let us ever remember that there are places that Christ will not go and things He will not do.

In Luke 16:15, Christ said, "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. During World War II, the government sent men around checking on the C.O. and they would ask three (3) questions: Are you opposed to war, politics, and athletics? And he rightly said they are of the same spirit, that is, to be victorious over someone else. What is more highly esteemed than these three? There is none!

Ephesians 6:12: "We wrestle not (in competition) against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." He gives us the sphere where the Christian is to be. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world," and think not that we can be of this world and please him.

In Matt. 13:41, Christ said he would "send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity (lawlessness)." He said in Luke 17:10 that "when ye shall have done all things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. "

According to early historians, the members of the church during the Dark Ages were a very separate people and would have no part with the world, insomuch that they were persecuted and some were killed—not for what they did, but for what they would not do. They would have no part with their politics and games and if they would not recant and take part in those things, they were killed, some were tarred, put upon a pole and set afire, to give light for them to play their games.

How much would we suffer for the cause of Christ and our salvation?

SHOULD WE PRAY DIRECTLY TO CHRIST?

continued from page 1

in the closing verses of Revelations. In 22:16-21 a conversation takes place between Jesus and John. John's request upon hearing that Jesus was coming back responded, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This, like the previous examples, seems to take place in a vision during the closing days of the miraculous age of the church. It is not an example for Christians today to pray directly to

Jesus any more than it is an example for continuous revelation being extended to this age.

4. 1 John 5:14-15. I have also heard that some attempt to use this as a proof text for praying directly to Jesus. These verses read, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that he have the petitions that we desired of him." Since the context shows the pronouns "him" and "his" in these verses are referring to Christ, the Son a God,

this is proof that we may pray directly to Jesus. But such is not the case. First of all these verses teach that the petitions must be according to his will." Christ's will is that petitions and thanksgiving must be by him or through him as our mediator, Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 2., and not to him. The phrase ". . .we know that he hear us' indicates that he is doing His work as a mediator, He hears our prayers, and our petitions are carried to the Father in heaven by Him.

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

In the context that John 16:23-24 is found in Jesus had been giving some information concerning His heavenly origin, the work of the Holy Spirit, and His departure from the earth. They wanted to ask Jesus for some more information. He spoke to them about the matters that were in their hearts and then said, "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." The first occurrence of the word "ask" in these verses is from a word found also in Mark 4:10, "...the twelve asked him of

the parable." In other words, they wanted Him to give them the meaning of the parable which He did beginning with verse 14. This is similar to the meaning of the word in our text (John 16:23-24 where Jesus is telling them they will get their information from a source other than Him. Before, they could ask Him directly. Afterwards, they would get their information from the Holy Spirit, John 1:13. However, when Jesus used the word "ask" the second time in verse 23 and then two times in the next verse He uses a different word that He also used in John 14:14, "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." This is a word that refers to asking for any thing, not just for information. You may compare Matthew 21:22 with this thought. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. The apostles were going to need many other things other than information. God's ordinary plan was for them to ask Him, as the Father in heaven for these things, through or by Jesus His Son. God and Jesus would see that their prayers were answered. Brethren, let us not tamper with God's plan and let us worship Jesus with worship He will receive today by praying through Him to our heavenly Father.

PRESERVATION OF UNITY

continued from page 2

recall my father favored a certain translation over the King James. However, he refused to use it in his preaching because he knew the majority of those in his audience would be trying to follow in their King James versions. He didn't want anything to be a distraction from his sermon. He knew some would prefer the old KJV. So far as I know, he never used anything else preferring to do what would make for peace and harmony within the church. Was he wrong? Should he have insisted upon using his favorite? He could have. He might have been able to get by with it too. However, problems would have resulted and those problems were easily avoided. It was simple, in his view. Just use the version the overwhelming majority of Christians everywhere read on a daily basis. That way when he quoted a passage, they recognized it as being genuine. He was still teaching the ancient Gospel from the Word of God and also avoiding a potential problem. Apparently, he cared for the brethren. That's what Paul has commanded in I Corinthians 12:24,25.

Several of our younger preachers prefer a newer version of the Bible. Do they have a right to study it? Of course. Every preacher uses various translations to better understand the Scriptures. Do they have a right to preach from them? Perhaps so, as long as the truth and no error is taught. However, does it demonstrate wisdom to do so? In our view, the answer is a resounding no! The same familiarity with the KJV exists today among our members as it did when my father was preaching. The same

distractions are present when the teacher reads from a different translation. It is distracting to hear a noticeable difference in the reading from which we are most familiar. Which is the most profitable: to insist on a particular translation we may favor? Or, is it better to avoid confusion, keep peace, and still teach the ancient gospel from the Word of God? It seems to us that if we have the care of the brethren at heart and we really wish to avoid any schism that we will always do what makes for peace, at least when we have a choice.

We must be careful that in our earnest pleadings for a particular translation (that we may honestly believe is superior) we do not deprecate and ravage the Word of God I would not like to stand before the Lord in judgment and try to explain why I found it necessary to cause another to lose faith in His Word. The most of us are not able to discern between the various Greek texts as to which is the best. Surely, we are not going have to go that far? Can we not agree that the Word of God is with man today in the English language and let it go at that? Can we not all agree that to teach the truth is the important thing? Can we not agree to preserve the unity of the church in matters where it is easily accomplished? Very few brethren will take us to task over the use of a translation found in every home and nearly every church pew. Most of us agree that it is the Word of God. If we must explain some archaic language so be it. Explaining the Word of God is what preachers do every time they preach. That, my brother, is your function when you enter the pulpit.

Think on these things.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE READ

The members of Paducah Church of Christ would like to announce that they have moved to a new location. We

have purchased a building.

The new address is: 2500 Adams Street, Paducah, KY. Worship service is the same: 10:30 AM Sunday.

From I-24 take Highway 62 east to 25th Street, turn left on 25th Street, go 1/2 block, building is on left.

For further information contact Michael E. Anderson, phone 502-928-2175.

URGENT APPEAL MONTEBELLO, CA

Unless someone who can teach (or preach) comes to help us at Montebello, CA, it appears that the only choice for the second-oldest Church of Christ in California is going to be to sell its building and disband. Several have quit attending and others will soon be moving out of the area, so a tentative date of June 28, 1998 (last Sunday in June) for the final service is being considered. Please contact Gerald Rowland at P.O. Box 1860, Montebello, CA 90640 or by telephone at (213) 980-8439 if you have suggestions or to discuss this matter. Please pray for us as we struggle with this decision.— Gerald Rowland

GOSPEL MEETING

Billy Orten will conduct a series of Gospel sermons for the Gardens Edge Church of Christ, Wichita Falls, TX, April 8 — April 12, 1998. Services will be 7:30 PM Wed. through Friday; Sat., 6:00 PM; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and afternoon service at 2:00 p.m. All are invited to attend this special time with Billy Orten.

WALTERBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA PREACHER NEEDED

The church at Walterboro, South Carolina is in desperate need of a full time preacher. We are small (about 12 members) and have not had a preacher for many years now. We have lost members over the years. We currently meet only once a week on Lord's Day morning. This is not enough. We desire a settled, mature preacher, experienced in the faith to work with us. We have a few faithful couples who would be eager to assist in regaining backsliders, reach out to new prospects and build up those who are here. We need guidance in doing this. We would appreciate your help.

Please contact: Marshall Walling (843) 538-8331 or Chuck Walling (843) 866-2466.

BROTHER JAMES ORTEN'S BOOK ON MARRIAGE

I have purchased the few remaining copies of the book Marriage In A Chaotic World, by brother James Orten. This book originally sold for ten dollars, now you may purchase them for half price, just \$5 each, plus postage of \$1.50 per book while the supply lasts. I only have about 125 books left, so you need to order now. Send all orders to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, Mo. 65808

THE NEW 1998 CHURCH DIRECTORY

I am currently preparing the new Church Directory for 1998. I need all changes as soon as possible. This will be the last printed request for information. Please send all information to me regarding new congregations, those no longer meeting, change in addresses, phone numbers, area codes etc. at P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, Mo. 65808. The directory will also include a preachers list at the back. If you would like to be included please send name address and phone number. I will also list your E-mail address (preachers only).

MEETING—CRESCENT RIDGE BIRMINGHAM, AL

Spring Meeting with Kevin Presley; April 8 - 12, 1998; Wed.-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Sat., 6:00 p.m.; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

HOLT-HISLE — On February 28, 1998 Deborah Hisle and Brandon Holt shared vows of lifelong love and loyalty as they were united in holy matrimony. This beautiful ceremony took place on Saturday afternoon before a standing-room-only crowd at the church building at 8th Street and Oak Avenue in Ada, Oklahoma. Deborah is the daughter of Joe and Darlene Hisle and Brandon is the son of Dean and Vickie Holt. A quartet consisting of Aaron Risener, Don Coon, Johnny Watson, and Greg Gay (Brandon's uncle) provided the music, and I have never heard more beautiful singing at a wedding. As Joe escorted Deborah down the aisle to present her for marriage, the quartet sang a lovely song Brandon composed himself for this occasion. I felt especially honored that Deb and Brandon asked me to officiate the wedding, and was very much aware during the ceremony that it was twenty seven years ago, in the same month of February, and in the same building that I had the honor of officiating Joe and Darlene's wedding. We now offer Deborah and Brandon our love, prayers and best wishes for long and happy lives together in the Lord.— Carl M. Johnson

AYERS-CONNOR- Saturday afternoon, January 3, 1998, Marcus Wayne Ayers and Shonda Christine Connor were married at Folsom, California. Both Marcus and Shonda have been faithful Christians for several years, having been raised in faithful Christian homes. Marcus is the son of Dale and Susan Ayers of Edmond, Oklahoma. Shonda is the daughter of Joe and Vicki Connor of Folsom, California. A large host of family and friends, a number of which traveled from Oklahoma, witnessed their pledge of love and faithfulness to each other. Songs were performed by Terry Osburn, Erin Rembleski, and Kathie Wolf. Our prayer is that the Father will prosper them according to His purposes in temporal things, and bless them abundantly with spiritual things. Marcus and Shonda plan to make their home in Edmond, Oklahoma. As Marcus' uncle, I was pleased to perform the ceremony. — G. V. Ayers.

OUR DEPARTED

SCOTT - Eudell Scott was born in Randolph County, AL on March 13, 1911 and departed this life on Dec. 6, 1997. She was preceded in death by her husband, George and son, Frank. She is survived by her daughter, Lera, four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Sister Scott was a charter member of the Temple Church of Christ. The church first met in the Scott home for services. We called their house, the hospitality house. Many have enjoyed the warm hospitality of their home. They loved to

keep the preacher when he came to hold the gospel meetings. Sister Scott will be greatly missed. The Prince Family did the beautiful singing. Rick Martin and I were honored to speak at her funeral. — Charles Hurst.

YOUNG – Ronald Wayne Young was born February 5, 1947 at Ada, Oklahoma. He died December 11, 1997 at St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa. Ronald is survived by his wife Barbara, son, Patrick, daughter Tammy, and his parents Charles and Gloyd Young of Tulsa. I knew Ronny for over thirty years and had the privilege of baptizing him and Barbara in 1970. I am honored the family called me to speak some words of consolation and warning.— Carl Johnson.

HISLE - Paralee Hisle was born January 22, 1916 at Protom, Missouri. She died February 2, 1998 in Ada, Oklahoma. She is survived by her husband, Roland, a son, Butch, a daughter Linda Frye, a sister, Bernice Peace, and five grandchildren. I knew Paralee as long as I can remember. She was a gentle, sweet person with a quiet dignified presence and an inspiration to those who knew her. We shall miss her greatly. We extend our love and sympathy to Roland and the family. – Carl M. Johnson

FRANKLIN - Inez Franklin was born October 22, 1910 and died December 24, 1997. Her husband, Everett, preceded her in death October 17, 1973. Inez's husband served as an elder with the first set of elders the Stockton congregation ordained. She was also the mother of Loretta Mason, the wife of one of the current elders in the church. Inez was a godly woman and every bit a Christian lady. She leaves to survive her three children: Loretta Mason, Darrel Franklin, and Sharon Winchester. She faithfully attended worship services as long as she was able. I had the honor of assisting Jimmy Winchester at her memorial service. – Bennie Cryer.

WALKER - Sister Sophia Walker passed from this life on December 19, 1997 after a short illness. She was 86 years old, and had been a Christian since the early 50's. Always searching the scriptures to be sure she was right. She had been with faithful brethren for about 10 years. She will be sadly missed by the congregation meeting in Burns, TN. She left behind one son, one daughter, 21 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great grandchildren, and many friends This writer was honored to give words of comfort and exhortation to those who gathered in the memory of this fine Christian sister.— Walter C. Odom.

NEWMAN - Elbert Alvin (Al) Newman was born October 10, 1913 in Segrada, Missouri and departed this life in the Fountains Nursing Home at Yuba City, California on the evening of February 14, 1998 at the age of 84. Al leaves behind to mourn his passing: his wife of nearly 59 years, Carmen, of the home in Yuba City; two sisters, Etta Fern Fitzgerald of Caldwell, Idaho and Violet Frizzell of Miami, Oklahoma; one brother, Alvin Newman of Manteca, California; eight children, all from California; 16 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. Al was baptized in Missouri in the early

'40's by Bro. Charles Lee, father of Robert Lee, and grandfather of Melvin Lee of Manteca. After Al's retirement from carpentry work he did some preaching and worked with the church at various places in California including Escalon and Fortuna. Years ago when the congregation in Redding, California built a building, Al and Carmen moved there for several months to help with the project. Several years ago Al asked me if I would preach his funeral and I was honored to be able to fill his request. Singing at the service was ably done by Jeff and Stacy Cryer, Sherry Rowe and Rod Watson. I remembered Al as a quiet man who loved his children, loved his wife, and loved the Lord before the large audience that assembled at the funeral home in Yuba City. I used the titles of the sermons from one of his sermon outline books and the outline of one of his sermons to warn the lost and encourage the faithful — Greg Gay

BUTERBAUGH - Carl (Butch) Buterbaugh was born August 31, 1922 and passed from this life December 29, 1997. He was born in the little village of Greenwich not far from Lovejoy, PA. He moved to Akron, Ohio and spent all of his adult life there. He was a member of the Mt. Pleasant Church of Christ at North Canton, Ohio. He is survived by his wife, Helen and several children. Eugene Lockard officiating. Burial was in the Greenlawn Cemetery in Akron, OH.

JENKINS - Sister Patsy Gaylin Jenkins of Cassville, MO was born July 19, 1936 in Jenkins, MO to the late Paul J. and Junith Fay (Bolin) Jenkins and departed this life on January 20, 1998 in the South Barry County Hospital in Cassville at the age of 61 years, 6 months, and 1 day. Patty was a member of the 17th and Townsend Congregation of the Church of Christ. She is survived by several aunts, uncles, cousins, and a host of other friends and relatives. I met Patty when we moved into this area in the early 1970's. After she became acquainted with us she was a friend for life. She always encouraged the preachers who came into the area for she loved to hear the Gospel preached. She made it a point to always invite the preacher back to teach. Among Patty's aunts are Sister Mildred and Sister Lorene Wilson with whom she spent much time. They were always good to her. Brother John Anderson and I were asked to conduct the graveside services in the old Clio Cemetery where a faithful congregation once met and where many of the Christians of this area are buried.— Roy Lee Criswell.

ANDERSON - Nora Elizabeth Anderson, a former resident of Bellview, IL was born to the late John Calvin and Ida Mae Gardner Gates in Bellview, IL on May 31, 1905 and departed this life at the Pleasant Hill Nursing Home on January 7, 1998 at the age of 92 years, 7 months, and 7 days. On February 19, 1924 she was united in marriage to Bro. James Scott Anderson who preceded her in death March 25, 1979. To this union were born four children, Calvin Eugene Anderson of Pleasant Hill, IL; Ruth Crowder of Nebo, IL; James Wesley and Charles L. Anderson were also born to this union, but preceded her in death. Sister Anderson was a great Christian woman. She was the one who kept the preachers when I first started

going into the area some 26 years ago. At that time her husband, Bro. Scott was alive and one of the leaders of the Church. They were both faithful members of the Lord's Church at Mozier, IL that overlooks the Mississippi River.

Several years ago I had been asked to conduct her and Brother Scott's funeral. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Poor Cemetery a short distance from the Mozier Church building.—Roy Lee Criswell.

from the fields

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, March 4 - I have been at home since December trying to help with the congregation here. We have recently had three restorations and a baptism. Five other brethren besides myself are teachers and we have several song leaders. I look forward to meetings March 22-29 at Cameron, TX, April 16 at Frisco, TX, April 19-26 at Earlytown, AL, and June 7-14 at Hillcrest, near Brookhaven, MS.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069 - Things continue well in the church here at Sharonville. I look forward to being at Eldon, MO for the first time Apr. 5-12. If you are within driving distance or find yourself in the area, please come by and help us. Your prayers are always needed.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 31008 Red Arrow Rd, Rocky Mount, MO 65072 March 3, 1998 — We are presently in a meeting in Oakdale, CA. The crowds have been very good so far. It has been a real pleasure to be here. We are making our home with Philip Permenter and his family, old dear friends of ours. Bro. Matt Trent is working part-time with the church at Oakdale. He is a fine man who is working very hard. We will expect a great deal from him in the years to come. Our next meeting is in Washington, OK April 26 through May 3. Barney Owens will be with us at Eldon, MO beginning April 5th. If you are in the area, please come to be with us. As always, may God bless the faithful.

Matt Trent, 10 Willowood Dr. #26, Oakdale, CA 95361-(209) 845-1824, March 5- It is a great pleasure to write in to the field reports for the first time. I have been able to be busy this year in the work of the Lord. I began the year by accompanying Don King on his annual trip to the Philippines. This was the trip of a lifetime. I enjoyed seeing the great work that has been done over there and also enjoyed being with Don and Brother Danao. Since returning home I have been getting settled in at Oakdale, CA (please note my new address and phone number). I am working here part time as well as attending CSU Stanislaus. At the present we are in a meeting with Doug Hawkins who is doing a fantastic job as usual. I am looking forward to going to Stockton this Sunday (the 8th) and also to Sanger (where I grew up) on the last Sunday of March. God bless all of you!

Ryan Connor, 1549 Black Oak Dr., Stockton, CA 95207, March 11 - My work with the Stockton congregation has got off to a great start. It seems like the work just began yesterday. I began the work February 1st, and we are already into the next month. I feel very privileged to have the opportunity to work with Brother Bennie Cryer and the elders here at Stockton, James Mason and Gene Youngblood. I'm very impressed with this congregation. Things run very smoothly under the direction of third and

fourth generation elders and deacons. The congregation is involved in foreign works as well as the work here in Stockton. The Stockton Church of Christ can be described as a working congregation—one I am very honored to be working with. The 64th St. congregation in Sacramento, CA, has asked Frank Harris and myself to organize their annual young people's meeting (April 3-5). The theme is Christian Evidences. It should be a great meeting.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, Mo. 65808, March 9- We ended our work with the Lowery congregation the end of February. The brethren there were gracious and kind to us, and we thoroughly enjoyed our stay. We trust that some good was done. We believe they have a bright future. It was also good to be associated with Brother Kevin Presley who lives in the area and works with the Earlytown church. Their television program is doing well, and Kevin is to be commended for his work and dedication to the cause of Christ. Our meeting schedule, Lord willing is as follows: March 15-22 Garrett's Creak near Wayne, WV., April 10-19 Ada, OK., April 26-May 3 Blue Springs, KY., May 10-17 Harrison, AR., and May 24-31 London, KY. We hope to see many of you at these meetings.

Bennie T. Cryer, 143 San Rocco Circle, Stockton, CA 95207, March - In February the meeting in Escalon closed the first Sunday. I also preached in Olivehurst. We just got back from Clovis, CA where I preached yesterday. We have been attending Bro. Doug Hawkins meeting in Oakdale that closed yesterday and we heard him preach some fine sermons. The work in Stockton is progressing at a good pace. I am enjoying working with Bro. Ryan Connor and between us we are keeping several studies going. Ryan is a fine, young preacher with a lot of talent for studying, preaching, and working with people. The church in Stockton is also doing a great service in helping support and arranging special financing for the work in Hawaii. Bro. Danao and Bro. Bayani have helped in starting a group of people meeting in Keaau on the big island of Hawaii. Several across the brotherhood have been asking when this work would begin because they would like to visit that island. Well, the Lord has blessed this work with a beginning there and if you want to visit that locality you now have a place to worship without flying back to Oahu. The address of the meeting place should be in Bro. Danao's report in this issue of the OPA. God bless all.

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4, Box 188, Ada, OK., 74820— We have just closed the 22nd annual meeting here at Ada in which we invite seven young aspiring preachers to speak. This was one of the very best. We had a great gathering of young people who blended their voices in praise to God and infused the entire congregation with their enthusiasm. The young preachers edified and inspired the assemblies with their affirmation of the truths concerning the names of Jesus. I wish everyone could have been there. It is that time of the year once again when we launch into our meeting schedule. Following is my schedule for the year, if you can support these meetings with your presence it will be appreciated, but if you cannot be there in person please remember us in prayer: Piedmont, AL., March 15-22; Freemont, CA, April 26-May 3; Mt. Home, AR, May 29-June 7; Pansey, AL,

July 19-26; Depaul, IN, July 31-Aug. 9; Lawrenceburg, TN., Aug. 16-23; Odom, MO, Sept. 13-20; Athens, AL., Sept. 23-27; Sharonville, OH., Oct. 10-18; Longwood, FL, Nov. 1-8; Seminole, OK, Dec. 4-6.

Melvin Blalock, 214 Pearl St., Cleburne, TX, 76031. (817) 641-1668, Dec. 27, 1997. It has been far too long since I have reported to the paper. As this year comes to a close I look back over the year with some good experiences and some that were difficult. I continue to work with the Weatherford and Cleburne congregations, and also assist the Duncanville church on a limited basis. We have been blessed with some additions to both the Cleburne and Weatherford congregations. I do personal work in Cleburne and Weatherford. I also preach at these congregations on a monthly basis, as well as Duncanville. Brother Bob Johnson and I take turns helping each other knock doors in Cleburne and Frisco where he works with the church. In addition to my local work I have been privileged to preach at other congregations this year. I preached at San Angelo earlier this year. It is always enjoyable to be with the good brethren at this congregation. They are good to help support our work in this area. I preached at the Paris, Tx, congregation in September and enjoyed the hospitality of William and Denise St. John. It was a blessing to be able to conduct a few meetings this year, though my opportunity to be away from the local work is limited. It was my pleasure to be with the brethren at Hoyte for a two day meeting earlier this year. It is always a delight to be with the Bakers and others of this congregation. In June, my son, Joel accompanied me on a meeting to Union Hill, TN. We really enjoyed being with the brethren in that area. Brother Paul Walker labors with the Union Hill congregation and he is doing a good work. We enjoyed the hospitality of these brethren immensely. Our thanks to the Springer Rd. congregation who invited Joel to speak for them twice while we were there. In July, Bro. Murl Helwig and I conducted the annual Sulphur meeting. It was a great meeting with large crowds and many preachers participating. It was a pleasure to work with Murl and the Sulphur brethren. It was my pleasure to preach at Shreveport, La, during their meeting with multiple speakers. The hospitality in the home of Wayne and Carolyn Fussell was great. In October we were with the brethren at Frisco, Tx, for a weekend meeting. Brother Bob Johnson is doing a good work with that congregation. It was great to be with them and to stay with Bob and Gail. In November we were with the congregation at Duncan, Ok, for a weekend meeting and made our home with Buck and Gearldine Sager where the hospitality was great. We had a good meeting with good attendance. The annual Preacher's Study has just concluded at Arlington, Tx. It was a great study with the preachers doing a wonderful job with their assignments. I was glad to be able to attend most of the study. In addition to our local work for the coming year, we have scheduled a few meetings. I am scheduled to be with the Dear Park congregation in Houston Jan. 30-Feb. 1, for a short meeting. We plan on being with the Turlock, Ca., congregation April 15- 16, and then we are looking forward to a meeting with the Atwater congregation April 17-26. We are eagerly anticipating our visit in California and our opportunity to enjoy the fellowship with many good brethren in that area. We are optimistic about the work of the Lord in 1998. We are hopeful that in some small way we will be able to contribute to the upbuilding of the cause of Christ. May God richly bless the faithful everywhere.—Our apologies to Melvin for his report being published late. God bless you brother. DLK.

Don McCord, Box 1773, Covina, CA 91722, March 2 - I am ever grateful to brethren who still call me for meetings, and give me the honor of doing what I love to do above all else, and that is preach the gospel of the everlasting kingdom; I pray the Lord's richest blessings on them now and after awhile. Meetings follow: Allen, TX, April 4-12; Tyler, TX, June 21-28; Porterville, CA, July 5-12; Monroe, LA, July 14-19; New Hope, MS, July 20-26; McGregor, TX, Aug. 1-9; Piedmont, AL, Aug. 10-16; Tulsa, OK, Aug. 17-23; Walnut Grove, KY, Aug. 24-30; Caldwell, ID, Nov. 25-29, an annual meeting. Our meetings here at home for the next three years: 1998 — Don King; James Orten; 1999 — Ron Courter; Carl Johnson; 2000 — Wayne Fussell; Joe Hisle; 2001 — Joe Norton; Wayne McKamie.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820—Our area has been hit hard this winter by illness and death. We have suffered three deaths within the last week and several other folks are battling serious illnesses. Such circumstances have a sobering effect on us all and make us aware of the tenuous nature of our existence here. My meeting schedule for the first half of the year includes: Tulsa, OK 129th E. Ave. (Feb. 7-8), Fieldstone, MO (Mar. 21 29), Cable Ridge, MO (Apr. 18-26), Cedar Creek, AR (May 15-17), Trussville, AL (May 31-June 7), Indiana, PA (June 14-21), Sulphur, OK Fourth of July Meeting (June 25-July 4), Ozark, MO (July 18-26), and Mozier, IL (Aug. 2-9). Please remember us in your prayers.

William L. St. John, 1420 W. Division, Blossom, TX 75416, email: wsaints@stargate.1starnet.com (903) 982-6729 - As the past year has closed and the new year dawns, please allow us to take this opportunity to thank all of the wonderful brethren we have been privileged to work with this past year. Overall, the past year was a good year for the congregation at Paris and we saw several new additions to the church. The meeting with the preachers in Mexico was enjoyable and we look forward to returning there this fall. The singing school at Paris with Stan Elmore was very beneficial. The bucket I use to carry my tunes in overflowed. Our summer meeting with Barney Owens was wonderful with good effective preaching and as always, it was good to have him in our home. We were also blessed with the presence of John Scott from the Burkhart, MO congregation for most of the meeting. During the meeting my brother Michael (who had been out of duty for several years) repented and returned to the fold. Like Cornelius, we desire the salvation of all men, but particularly our kinsmen and near friends (Acts 10:24). Our fall meeting with Richard Degough was uplifting and fruitful and it was a joy to have Richard and Glenda in our home. Our meetings at San Angelo, TX, San Antonio (Glendora), TX, Cincinnati, OH, Medina, TX, and Pansy, AL were all well attended and enjoyable. We were saddened at the passing of Phil Fender during the meeting at San Antonio. Brother Fender was a dear friend and brother and he is surely missed. May God bless his good family. It was a pleasure to be at the Sharonville congregation in Ohio once again and we were royally treated as we stayed in the home of Barney and "B" Owens. We appreciate the congregation at Medina, TX for their continued labors. It was a pleasure to be in the homes of Walter Wilson and Marvin Uhl. The congregation is small, but crowds were excellent and we look forward to being with them again. The annual meeting at Pansy, AL was well attended and we believe the crowds were the largest so far. The congregation there continues to grow for which we give thanks and praise to God. We pray the good done this past

year and the seed sown will bear much fruit. It was a joy to be at the New Year's meeting in Oklahoma to hear great preaching and singing and to see old friends once again. We look forward to the coming year with renewed zeal. Our next meeting will be in Springfield, MO April 22-26 with the North Area congregation. May God bless the faithful throughout the world and all of our labors for Him. Please notice our mailing address and area code changes and email address. William L. St. John, 1420 W. Division, Blossom, TX 75416, (903) 982-6729, email: wsaints@stargate.1starnet.com

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, Ca 94539, March 15 - We are presently engaged in a very enjoyable meeting at the Planz Rd. congregation in Bakersfield, CA. Crowds are very good and interest seems to be high. It is wonderful to see the good cooperation between the Planz and Brundage Rd. congregations. Brundage Rd. has turned out all but their Lord's day morning services to come and help us. Some from the L.A. area have also been up and we expect this to continue. So far, there have been no visible results, but we believe this will not be the case by the time the meeting ends. We are enjoying a good visit with Darrell and Gail Brewer, old friends, and appreciate their hospitality. A number of preachers have also attended one or more services and we are grateful for their hospitality. The Lord's day following the close of this meeting we are to begin at Covina, CA and we look forward to this effort as well. Bro. Matt Trent and I were able to make a very enjoyable trip to the Philippines in January. This trip is made each year for the purpose of encouraging the brethren there. According to our notes there were 63 baptisms and we were able to visit several newly established congregations as well. It was a pleasure to travel with Matt. He is a fine young man. Also, it was good to be with Bro. Danao again, a brother with whom I have enjoyed a close relationship since 1981 and even before, since we wrote back and forth for several years before that. We continue to need your prayers.

P. Duane Permenter, P.O. Box 80687, Midland, TX 79708, March 2 - The work continues to move along in West Texas. Our studies each week have produced more results along with the preaching and good teaching of the local teachers here in Midland. Since last reporting to the OPA, I have preached here at Midland, Andrews and San Angelo, TX. We have had eight responses to the gospel in the last few months. It is a great privilege to labor under the oversight of the eldership in Midland, TX. My wife is doing much better since last week and we are truly thankful to the Lord for the medication that is helping her problem considerably. My schedule for the next few months follows: Capitol Hill, OK City, OK, March 8; Pochontas, AR, April 17-19; Sharonville, OH, April 22-26; May 8-10, Ardmore, OK; Cleburne, TX, June 17-21; Sulphur, OK, July 1-4, Weatherford, TX July 5, Lodi, CA, Aug. 3-Aug. 9. We are planning a weekend meeting with young men doing the speaking April 10-12 here in Midland and our summer meeting this year will be with Jerry Dickinson July 12-19. It is an esteemed privilege to be a part of our great fellowship of believers. Glorify the name of Jesus Christ as we each live from day to day. Please continue to pray for us in this wonderful cause of our Lord.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Court, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, March 2 - We are happy to report that the Lord's work is going well with the congregation at 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas City. The Lord continues to bless

our efforts. Our crowds have grown and our interest is good. The congregation is made up of young, middle aged, and older members and lots of children. This makes for great possibilities for the future of the church. We have additional teachers now and are developing our novice teachers to the point that we are going to revamp our teaching arrangements in order to use them all effectively. We have some good teachers who give edifying lessons. They are encouraged to stay at home and bend their efforts to building up the local church. We do not make it a practice to call in outside teachers to occupy the pulpit. We utilize our home talent and try to develop the potential abilities of our younger men, and it is paying off. We have outside evangelists who come in for meetings, but we do not call in local teachers from their posts of duty in other congregations to do our teaching for us. We have wonderful Christians with whom to work and we are all growing together in spirituality and in the knowledge of the truth. The Lord willing, our next meeting will be in June with Kevin Presley. Why not make your plans to come and be with us? You will receive a warm welcome. The Lord bless His workers everywhere.

Brett Hickey, P.O. Box 6506, Ventura, CA 93003, February 8 - What has long been a shortcoming at Ventura is now one of its strengths. In the past two or three men have carried Ventura's teaching load. Now we have nine congregational teachers. We enjoyed being with the Fremont congregation. Seeing so many families with young children at one congregation was very encouraging. We were privileged to see Richard and Glenda DeGough on our way to and from Fremont. We appreciate their continued commitment to the "old paths" of New Testament Christianity. As a younger preacher it is reassuring to know there are older preachers, like Richard from which our generation may glean wisdom for the days that lie ahead. Our meeting with Doug Hawkins will be March 11-15. We look forward to being with Manteca on the 4th Sunday and Bakersfield (Planz Rd.) at the end of March. Who says the Lord's church needs to have Sunday School like the denominations? From private studies and parental instruction (Deut. 6:3-8), our young people are becoming well-versed on the Bible and are memorizing a new verse each week. One of the two-year-olds (without one Sunday School class) has memorized Acts 2:38, I Cor. 11:24-25, John 1:1, Eph. 6:1 and Matt. 16:18. In January, we had studies with nine members and thirteen non-members. May the Lord bless the faithful! NOTE: Due to the March issue carrying the debate some material had to be kept over - this is one example. We hope Brett understands. DLK.

MARCH 1 - The Ventura congregation continues to grow in peace and unity. The zeal for our upcoming meeting with Doug Hawkins is at least as high as I have seen anywhere else. Over half of our members have volunteered their time to help pass out meeting invitations door-to-door, at local stores, restaurants, laundromats, etc. Even some of those who have disabilities or have to drive an hour to Ventura have agreed to set aside time to help us. Our visit with the Manteca brethren was short, but pleasant. Their building is barely big enough to hold their members. Jergon, a single man in his 40's, obeyed the gospel in Tennessee years ago. He had attended the local cups and classes church sparingly since he moved to Ventura. When confronted with the truth, Brother Amant needed little encouragement to repent. We have a three week plan to get ready for our meeting. This week we mailed postcards to our best leads. We have sixty people on our most recent lead list. Next week we will call the same leads. We will pass out 1,000 to 2,000 fliers. The

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week of the meeting Doug and I will visit our best prospects. Anita Miller continued her weekly studies. We covered more information about the church. We also went through a study covering the differences between the covenants. Richard Renier came to a couple of services. We studied more with him about the name of the church. He has bluntly voiced his personal preferences in religion. We explained that in our Bible studies, we study what the Bible says. We could talk about philosophy, but that would be a different topic. In our Bible study, no one is pressured into liking what the Bible says or even believing it. The point: if we have a problem with what the Bible says, let us acknowledge our real difficulty. We had another positive study with the Cooks - our zealous Pentecostal friends. Our discussion on the Godhead became a little heated, but the conversation never lost a respectful tone. The passages that seemed most impacting were John 8:12-18 and Acts 2:34-36. There are many passages that teach the Deity of Christ and the relationship between the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit. I would not want to forfeit any of them. Love the brotherhood!

Kevin W. Presley, Rt. 2 Box 166, Kinston, AL 36453, (334) 898-1301, March 6, 1998 - It was a joyful experience to labor with the Fossil Creek congregation in Fort Worth, TX in February. I was thoroughly impressed with this group. They are a large congregation with a host of young families. Their zeal and conservatism are to be commended. They love plain, old fashioned gospel preaching and will accept no less. They will be a bulwark for the ancient faith in generations to come. The meeting was very well attended with standing room only on the last weekend. A number of preachers from the area came to be with us. It was refreshing to see a number of young men taking on the leadership responsibilities in the services. I am grateful to my good friends, Mike and Dina Martin, formerly of Wichita Falls, for opening their home to me for the first half of the meeting. Also, I enjoyed the hospitality of the Randy Cantrell family during the concluding half of the meeting. Both of these families love the church and put it and the truth first in their hearts. The meeting closed with one confession of faults. We closed a short mission meeting close to home in Andalusia, AL this past weekend. The meeting was successful. We were able to make contact with one woman in particular from Ozark, AL. She drove an hour and forty-five minutes to be with us. She heard about the meeting on our television program. She is not presently attending church anywhere. She is searching for what is right. We are planning, the Lord willing, to go to Ozark and hold a meeting in April. I go next to Temple, GA, March 20-22; Jasper, TN, March 23-29; Bridgeport, TX, April 2-5; and Birmingham, AL, April 8-12. I continue to solicit your thoughts and prayers.

Virgilio O. Danao, Sr., 94-545 Mahoe St., Waipahu, HI 96797, February 17, 1998 - Greetings to all the faithful everywhere! The preaching of Bro. Don L. King and Bro. Matt Trent reaped a "good harvest"—a total of 63 baptisms made in different places. One who responded to my sermon

on January 4th was baptized in Roxas, Isabela. We visited at least five new congregations. On January 29th we had a meeting with almost all of our preaching brethren and some of the leaders of the local churches from the provinces at my residence in Roxas. It was a renewal of camaraderie, so to speak, and a firm commitment to our service to the Lord. It was a very touching situation when each one said "good-bye." Once again, the brethren were strengthened by the messages of Bro. King and Trent, especially Bro. Trent, for young as he is, he is knowledgeable in the Scriptures. Bro. Rey Rivera who used to preach with the Christian Church in Bangian and who attended our meeting there, made public his stand with us regarding the Lord's Supper, and we offered prayer for forgiveness in his behalf before we left the place. The brotherhood continues to be grateful for the work Bro. King does in the Philippines. May his tribe continue to abound! We also would like to thank Bro. Trent for his efforts. I thank God for giving me the opportunity to work with these dedicated servants of the Lord by acting as their interpreter again this year. Although our itinerary seemed to be a hectic schedule, we were able to cope with it, and our consolation is the 63 souls won for the Lord. Regarding the work in Hawaii, we have started mission work on the Big Island. Sunday worship service was held for the first time there on February 8th. A couple, and their daughters, who were all members of the digressive Church are now attending our services, together with some acquaintances. The newly started work on the Big Island seems to have a bright future, and because of this, Bro. Bayani and I decided to rent a house for our temporary meeting place and a place for the preacher to stay. The monthly rental is \$375.00, excluding telephone, electric and water bills. We also had to buy seats needed for the Church and the house. We would be grateful if generous brethren could help us shoulder these financial burdens. Please, feel free to inquire from Bro. James Mason of Stockton, CA for further information. I would like to express gratefulness to faithful brethren everywhere, who are extending continued support to the work in Hawaii. Our place of worship on the Big Island is located at #49, 9 1/2 Mile Keaau (this is not our mailing address): As soon as you are on the road outside the Hilo Airport, at the first intersection, turn left and follow the Volcano Road and drive straight until you reach a marker, MILE 8 (which is about 9 miles from the airport). Immediately after this marker, turn right at the first road, to the second crossing and at the left side corner is our meeting place. The Church in Waipahu continues to fare well. We plan a radio program in Honolulu which airs Ilocano and Tagalog programs. It is the most popular radio station among the Filipino community in the Hawaiian archipelago. The income of the local Church here can not cover the expenses for this project, for we are still paying for the lot and the meeting house. I still believe in the effectiveness of the radio program. Through our radio program in the Philippines, we were able to convert whole congregations and individuals who continue faithful to the present. I do not know how our radio program will work here, but it is worth trying. If there are brethren willing to help us in this endeavor, we will be very grateful and will start our radio program in Honolulu. May God bless us all!

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 5

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

By *BILLY ORTEN*

The great apostle wrote in Ephesians 5:31-32, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery but I speak concerning Christ and the church." This last verse is the summation of five chapters Paul has written that are devoted to the relationship of Christ to His church. In verse 23 Paul says, "The husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is head of the church." He then says in verse 25, "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ has loved the church and gave himself for it." Next he makes an appeal for the purity of the church by saying in verses 26 and 27 that "He (Christ) might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Then Paul concludes his discussion on husbands and wives by saying in verse 32, "This is a great mystery, but I am speaking concerning Christ and the Church."

Note the word "mystery" in that last verse. It is derived from the word "musteeron" and means that which is concealed or hidden until the time appointed for it to be revealed. It does not mean something that is mysterious or difficult to understand, but rather a truth that could never be discovered by the human mind. The word is used twenty-seven times in the New Testament, twenty-one times by the apostle Paul, who called himself "a steward of the mysteries of God" in I Corinthians 4:1. Paul defines this mystery in Romans 16:25-26 "According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began. But now is made manifest by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all the nations for the obedience of faith." Note that Paul says the mystery was kept secret since the world began, but is now revealed to us by the scriptures.

God's plan to save man had existed in His mind before the world began, but it was kept secret until the time appointed for it to be revealed. The reason is obvious to us now. God's plan included the death of Christ on the cross. Had Satan

known that, he certainly would not have engineered the death of Christ. Listen to Paul in I Corinthians 2:7-8, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Satan knew Jesus came into the world to save the lost because Jesus stated that as His mission. What Satan did not know was that Jesus would save man by dying on the cross. Satan thought by killing the Son of God he was thwarting the plan of God. Not until it was too late did Satan realize he had fallen into the plan of God. Paul said, "If the princes of this world had known this great mystery of salvation, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Not only was the death of Christ the salvation of man, it was also the defeat of Satan. I do not understand how the death of Jesus was the destruction of Satan's dominion, but the Bible writer says it was. Hear Paul in Hebrews 2:14-15, "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power over death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage." Two wonderful truths stand out in these verses: (1) Christ destroyed the power of Satan. Though he is still here, he is a vanquished foe; and we can overcome him through the power of Christ. (2) We have been delivered from the fear of death. Death may claim us, but it cannot hold us. Because Jesus arose, we also shall arise.

When the time came for God to reveal His plan to save man, He assigned the function of revelation to the Holy Spirit, the third member of the godhead. Being the instrument of revelation, the Holy Spirit filled the apostles and guided them in writing the gospel. The gospel is the avenue through which the Holy Spirit reveals to us God's plan. Hear Paul in Romans 1:16-17, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation—" For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." Note that last statement. Paul says "In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed." Paul is not saying the gospel reveals the fact that God possesses a righteous character; That was revealed long ago in the Old Testament. Paul is saying that God's plan to make you and me righteous is revealed in the gospel. Man's part is to accept and obey by faith the facts and commands of the gospel. Jesus commissioned His disciples in Mark 16:15-16, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Paul calls this plan of salvation the "mystery of the gospel" in Ephesians 6:19 and the "mystery of God's will" in Ephesians 1:9. Having seen that Paul is using the word "mystery" to refer to God's plan to save man, let us

continued on page seven

CONDITION OF CLOVIS COOK

Clovis Cook has been hospitalized with injuries he suffered in an automobile accident April 9, 1998. We understand he is improving and would appreciate your continued thoughts and prayers. Clovis has been a constant, important working partner of the OPA for many, many years. He has faithfully stood by the paper and has given tirelessly of his time and talents throughout his life. The church, the brotherhood, the OPA and the family wish him well and thank him for his continuing support and help. Get well soon, Clovis. We love you.—DLK.

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 5



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-9

- The Mystery Of Christ And The Church 1
- The Farr-Walker Debate 2
- The Querist Column 3
- Promise Keepers: An Unholy Alliance 3
- The Promise Keepers & The Christian. 4
- Fire And Brimstone? 5

FROM THE FIELDS 9-12

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THE FARR - WALKER DEBATE

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

On March 13-14, a series of discussions took place on the issues of Bible classes with women teachers and the number of containers to be used in the Lord's supper. Carl Farr of Little Rock, AR defended our position on these issues and Johnny Walker of Jacksonville, AR was his opponent.

The discussion on Friday night (March 13) took place in Jacksonville where Bro. Walker preaches. It was obvious from the beginning that Bro. Farr was better prepared for the debate and he had a better grasp of the issues than Bro. Walker. Bro. Farr introduced several charts in his first affirmative speech, contending that "when a church calls an assembly for the purpose of teaching the word of God... the teaching must be done in an undivided assembly, using men only as teachers." Bro. Walker not only didn't have any charts to offer, he didn't have any substantive arguments to offer. In fact, he admitted that the early church did not use the class arrangement of teaching. He reasoned, however, that the church cannot grow without Bible classes. From that premise, his arguments grew weaker and weaker.

On the morning of March 14, the same issue was discussed again in our building at 8007 Mablevale Pike in Little Rock, except more emphasis was placed upon the aspect of women teachers. Bro. Farr introduced a chart on "Walker's Blunders"; it summarized some of Bro. Walker's mistakes the night before: (1) Bro. Walker insisted that Bible classes do not violate the one assembly, yet he denied a proposition that affirmed the one assembly. (2) He said that the church cannot grow without classes, but he admitted that the first century church had no classes. (3) He refused to give a clear answer to the question—"Are your classes a gathering of the church?"—while he simply described the size of his building and class rooms in response. (4) He said that having "no scripture for Bible classes" (an admission he made) is like having no scripture for meeting at ten o'clock. He confused an expediency (meeting at ten o'clock) with an addition to the arrangement specified when the church comes together (the one assembly, Heb. 10:25). (5) He said that "silence" in 1 Cor. 14:34 simply means to be "still." But Paul said it means "it is not permitted unto them to speak." Thayer says it means "to keep silence, hold one's peace" (Page 574). Also, the tongue speaker was told to "keep silence" if there was no interpreter (1 Cor. 14:28).

Bro. Farr pressed Bro. Walker to tell him whether classes are public or private. Bro. Walker responded unequivocally that his classes are private. Bro. Farr then asked him: "If your classes are private, will you allow in them everything that can take place in a private situation, like common meals, instrumental music, and feet washing?" Bro. Walker was visibly shaken as he tried to explain what he would and would not allow in his classes! While he ignored the matter of feet washing, he said he would allow meals in his classes, but under no circumstance would he permit instrumental music. He really felt his inconsistency when Bro. Farr pressed him on this point: "If your classes are private, and a woman can teach a man in private, why can't a woman teach a man in one of your classes?" Bro. Walker never could reason his way through this dilemma. It was at this juncture in the discussion that something amusing transpired. Bro. Farr used the example of Aquila and Priscilla in Acts 18:26 to show that a woman can teach a man in a private, individual capacity. However, Bro. Walker responded by demanding that Bro. Farr prove that Priscilla was a woman. He asked, "Are you sure Priscilla was a woman?" Bro. Farr read Acts 18:2 where it says that she was Aquila's "wife." Needless to say, Bro.

continued on page seven

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: With reference to I Corinthians 14:15, what is poetic license? Is it a biblical concept? Does such require an individual to sing if that person feels the song is unscriptural? (MO).

Answer: The verse in question reads "What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." Contextually, the proper exercise of spiritual gifts is under consideration in this passage. Paul is saying that every person who prays or sings psalms is to do so in such a fashion that others present might participate, and in the case of prayers, sanction the petitions made. Regarding this verse David Lipscomb remarked "Neither the AV nor the RV is correct here. The thought evidently is, "I will sing as the Spirit directs or inspires, and I will sing in a language that those who hear can understand"... The following verse shows clearly that Paul's meaning is: I will pray and sing by the inspiration of the Spirit, and in a language that they will understand to their profit. "This passage... is a part of the exercise of miraculous gifts, and the spirit that is named is the Holy Spirit, given to Christians in such measure that they could speak and sing with words that had not yet been revealed to others." (E.M. Zerr). This verse is often misapplied by well meaning brethren who encourage the congregation to "sing with the spirit and the understanding." While it is always necessary for us to understand what we are doing and saying when worshipping God, that is not the primary thrust of this verse. Thus in answer to the querist's first question, I see no relevance to this verse and what is called "poetic license". But what is "poetic license?" According to the dictionary it is defined as "disregard of strict fact or rules, for artistic effect." *The Americana Encyclopedia* says "po-

etic license is the term given to liberties that poets take in regard to diction, grammar, and pronunciation to achieve effect or to adhere to the requirements of a poem such as meter or rhyme." Poetic license is not a biblical concept, in the sense that one can state that which is contrary to the teaching of the scripture. All our songs must be scriptural. We can no more sing that which is untrue than we can teach that which is untrue. If a song is being led in the worship service that is thought to be unscriptural by an individual, then that person should not sing. I personally would never sing something I believed to be contradictory to the revealed will of God. We should take as much care with the songs we select and sing as with the sermons we preach.

Question: Is it wrong (sin) for a Christian to use their contributions to the Church as a tax deduction on their income tax returns? (MO)

Answer: It should be noted first of all that Christians are commanded to give "as they have been prospered. (I Corinthians 16:1-2) Every person who has income should give accordingly. A failure to do so places one in violation of the apostle's command. Christians are also taught to obey the laws of the land, which includes paying taxes (Romans 13:1-7). The current tax code of the United States allows an individual to deduct donations or gifts to charitable institutions as a part of his/her standardized deductions. Since such is allowable under the law, I see no reason why it would be wrong (sinful) for a Christian to take advantage of this right. The government is in effect saying that such gifts are not taxable income. If they are not taxable, why insist on paying taxes on them? (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808).

PROMISE KEEPERS: AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE

By DOUG HAWKINS

In Exodus 23:31-33 God told Israel, "And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the River. For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me. For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you" (NKJV). Warning them of the dreadful results, God told Israel not to make covenants with the heathen nations that were to be driven out of Canaan. In a very short time though, Israel did the very opposite of what God said according to Judges chapter two. These unholy alliances with the heathen nations led Israel into the defiant practice of idolatry. Judges 2:2-3 says "And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars. But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? Therefore I also said, I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be in thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you" (NKJV). In Judges 2:11 the scripture goes on to say, "then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals." Blinded by the influences of these heathen nations, Israel wandered away from God into the foul practice of paganism and idolatry. As is plainly evident, the major contributing factor to the grave apostasy in Israel was the relationships she had forged with these other nations in Canaan. Instead of opposing and uprooting the false religions of the Canaanites, Israel tolerated and eventually embraced them. That incident should serve as a clear spiri-

tual lesson for the people of God today.

Similarly, within religion, there is a present movement for peace and unity among various religious parties. Denominations are attempting to unite with one another in spite of their glaring doctrinal inconsistencies. They are trying to improve relationships by honoring what I would call on unwritten peace treaty, a treaty that states church doctrine shall forevermore be a negligible part of religion. More and more, denominations are interfacing with one another by conducting union meetings, by forming friendship alliances, or by alternately inviting one another to preach in the other's pulpit. The question that immediately comes to mind is how can these people "with one mind strive for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27) when their basic doctrines are so radically different?

Not surprising, even the ultra-liberal churches of Christ in some places are involved with denominations in this same way. For instance, in Ada, OK, recently, a very liberal "cups and Sunday school" church of Christ invited the Lutheran minister along with several other denominational preachers to participate in a special Christian service. In addition to that, the journals among these same liberal churches document that the renowned author and preacher of the church of Christ, Max Lucado, frequently works in cooperation with Baptist churches and their ministers. In fact, on one of his recent radio broadcasts, he invited his listeners to pray the sinner's prayer for salvation and told them nothing of baptism for salvation. (As a side note, if I had any of his books in my library, I'd burn them like the Ephesians did their books of curious

arts in Acts 19.) Another infamous name among these very liberal churches of Christ is Rubel Shelley. Like Lucado, he too advocates open fellowship with denominational churches, especially within the present movement of promise keepers. This practice of having fellowship with denominations is in the face of the apostle John's warning that says it is wrong to extend "God's speed" to people who have transgressed the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11).

The natural outgrowth of increased interdenominational cooperation is the formation of special organizations to provide an open forum for more religious interaction. These interdenominational organizations attempt to coalesce the different religious sects and parties into one unified fraternity. Some of the most popular organizations that come easily to mind are FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes); Cowboys for Christ; Racers for Christ; and the recently touted - Promise Keepers.

Since organizations like these are created for noble purposes with noble ideals, some people have a difficult time understanding the real danger of being associated with them. Referring to our subject at hand, some may say, "what's wrong with learning to be a better father and a man of your word?" (That was the initial vision of promise keepers.) Nothing! You should strive to be a better father and a man of your word, but do you need to be a part of promise keepers to learn that? Absolutely not! You need to read your Bible. Why then was PK (promise keepers) started?

PROMISE KEEPER'S STATEMENT OF FAITH

Bill McCartney, former head-coach of the Colorado University football team, had a spectacular vision of teaching men to be men of integrity. Thus, PK was born. From their own statement of faith, we learn the purpose of their existence and the aim of their mission. They state that: 1) PK is a Christ-centered ministry; 2) PK's conferences allow men from around the nation and world to "join together" for worship, prayer, and teaching; 3) PK seeks to build denominational unity; 4) PK believes that "only through faith, trusting in Christ alone for salvation which was made possible by his death and resurrection can the alienation of sin be removed."

THE PROMISE KEEPERS AND THE CHRISTIAN

By P. DUANE PERMENTER

Every Christian strives to keep his promises. Jesus and the inspired authors of the New Testament teach this repeatedly in various passages such as Matthew 5:37. The Promise Keepers have the admirable goal of making promises and carrying them out; nevertheless we should carefully investigate this organization before accepting it. The Promise Keepers' sincerity and their efforts to do God's will are in question. However, it is our responsibility to scrutinize any man-made organization that claims to serve God. Paul states in I Thessalonians 5:17, "Test all things; hold fast what is good." Jesus also commended the church in Ephesus for testing men who claimed to be apostles and were not (Revelation 2:1,2). The Scriptures expressly instruct us to test men and their beliefs (Matthew 7:15-20). Assuredly, the criterion by which we test are taken from God's Word (I John 4:1,6; 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

After examining the Promise Keepers in light of God's Word, I believe membership in this organization should be rejected for two main reasons: 1) While good intentioned, the Promise Keepers is an organization that substitutes man's way for God's way. Such unauthorized substitutions have never been acceptable to God. 2) Instead of standing against denominationalism, the Promise Keepers embrace it. Participation in, or even association with, that ideology gives it cre-

THE UNHOLY ALLIANCE

Several insoluble problems with this movement immediately come to mind. First, the promise keepers movement and organization supplants the church in her God-given purpose and divine mission. What marked difference is there between PK and a denomination? There is no difference! Like any duly recognized denomination, PK is an independent religious organization funded through charitable donations where men worship and are taught the Bible. They have a briefly written creed, stating the reason for their existence, and they enlist members into their organization. Besides their huge two-day conferences, PK also has local chapters in many communities where private groups meet weekly for Bible study, prayer, etc. Again I ask, what difference is there between PK and a denomination? Second, being a part of the promise keepers' movement places the child of God in fellowship with people of denominations. In light of what the Bible says in 2 John 9-11 and 2 Cor. 6:14-17, how can Christians be a part of this organization. By their own admission, PK seeks to build "denominational unity" and to provide a forum where people can "join together" for prayer, worship, and Bible study. Finally, sharing in this organization makes a person responsible for the false doctrines that the organization teaches. PK plainly teaches salvation by faith only. When a Christian supports, defends, or financially contributes to the movement, they are by all rights culpable for the false teaching. Persons that are a part of the organization are accountable for every soul that is misled.

Brethren, we will never convert people to the truth through compromising the truth. You will never just befriend people into the church, or just love them to heaven. The thing that will save their soul and set them free is the truth! (Jn. 8:32) Listen, the promise keepers organization undermines the sacred purpose of the church, compromises the apostle's doctrine, and places the child of God in unscriptural fellowship with men of denominations. Beware of the unholy alliance, lest ye serve their Gods! - Doug Hawkins, 31008 Red Arrow Rd. - Rocky Mount, MO 65072.

dence and is clearly at odds with New Testament teaching.

AN UNAUTHORIZED SUBSTITUTION

Bill McCartney started Promise Keepers in 1990 while he was a football coach at the University of Colorado. He observed that men have not always fulfilled their role in the home as God intends and that the problem seems to be getting worse. This is true and his "intent" to remedy this problem is good. In fact, the Promise Keepers' mission statement reads: "Promise Keepers is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become godly influences in their world." This sounds appealing, does it not?

But what about God's remedy for this problem? Hasn't the Lord given the church the responsibility of training men and women in the gospel, including their role in the home, (Titus 2:1-6; Ephesians 5:22-33; Titus 1-5; Ephesians 4:11,12, and many other passages)? God has not authorized His people to organize or be a part of any body designed to do the work of the Lord, except the local church. In this case, the observation that many men were not following God's pattern does not mean that the pattern is faulty and needs to be changed. Instead, men ought to change their behavior to follow God's pattern! This mis-identification of the real problem is, no doubt, a result of Satan's deceptive schemes. Many have

joined Promise Keepers without stopping to consider how the Lord regards this association. This lack of careful thought opens the door to Satan's subtleties and often leads men to accept innovations that continue to plague the Church. For example, men sometimes sincerely believe they are working for the Lord when in reality their work changes His divine pattern. The Lord is never pleased with substituting men's ways for His, even when men have the best of intentions. The Promise Keepers is an unauthorized religious organization that substitutes men's ways for God's. Such changes are never acceptable to God and Christians should have neither part nor lot in them. The real solution for the real problem is to follow God's pattern, not organize a new one.

EMBRACING DENOMINATIONALISM

Another important Promise Keepers' belief to consider is their sixth promise: "A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity." Again, this has surface appeal, but the idea suggested in this statement is that we should compromise the truth to obtain unity. The Promise Keepers claim that we must overcome barriers and unite in spite of doctrinal differences. Their plea is, "do not emphasize differences, just accept one another in diversity". This is true when it comes to racial differences; however, Christians cannot unite with denominationalism by accepting doctrinal differences. God is not a respecter of persons and does not care what race we are. On the other hand, He does care what we believe and practice in religion. Plainly, this ideology is false. Christians cannot have fellowship with such a denominational dogma. The Bible is clear in this matter: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath

both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds," (2 John 9-11). In John 12:48, Jesus tells us that whoever rejects His word will be rejected at the judgment. No Christian has any business involving himself in this ideology by involving in this organization. The Bible teaches us that we should have no fellowship with such alliances, or we become partakers of other people's sin.

Church leaders need to take a positive stand on the uniqueness of the Lord's church and against the Promise Keepers and any other organizations that attempt to change God's pattern. We cannot chance passiveness about participation in Promise Keepers. Once this group gets a foothold in the local congregation, dealing with the problem will be very difficult. Promise Keepers is not the work of the Lord and will therefore have an adverse effect upon any local church. Perhaps the best defense against this or any other unauthorized changes like it, is for every Christian man to ensure that he is following God's pattern for himself, as a husband, father and in every other role in life. If we would do that, we would clearly see that no changes are needed!

Remember what Jesus said: "Beware of false prophets; which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.... Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," (Matthew 7:15-21). Clearly, we will not receive a blessing from the Lord in our labors unless we labor according to His Word.—P.O. Box 80687, Midland, TX 79707.

FIRE AND BRIMSTONE?

By BRETT HICKEY

A little over six months ago, an older "gentleman" responded to our ad in the local paper publicizing a debate on the Lord's Supper. He asked whether we used the common cup or individual cups. When I told him we used the common cup as the Lord's example provided and the Lord's command demanded, he made it clear that he could never worship with our group. He was too health conscious to even consider drinking after other people. I told him that basically, as members of the church of Christ, we were more fearful about displeasing God who can destroy both soul and body in hell, than we were about anybody or anything that could only hurt our body. He was incensed. He fired back, "The God that I know and read about would never want man to fear him. God is a God of love." I asked if it would be helpful if I gave him some scriptures that plainly taught that God requires reverential fear of His people, he suddenly noticed that his time had run out. This man and all who try to eliminate fear and punishment from the Bible, have the same problem. They have never read it carefully. As Jesus told the religious upper crust of His day, "Ye do err not knowing the scriptures..." It is amazing that in a survey of the Old and New Testaments, there are scores of scriptures where the fear of the Lord is demanded of God's people. Meanwhile, in our world of religious compromise, more and more so-called "Christian clergy" are inching toward the "Jehovah's Witness" claim that hell amounts to nothing more than the complete annihilation of all that is abhorrent to God. "Fire and brimstone" sermons are judged old-fashioned, pessimistic and inappropriate in today's sophisticated churches. Dignified, respectable services make everyone comfortable, and therefore happy to attend (and contribute). As with all other denominational departures from God's

word, this can be contagious. This is why this subject elicits our immediate attention.

THE RICH MAN

We find, in Lk. 16:19-31, a good place to start unraveling the false claim that there is no place of conscious, unending punishment. Here Jesus relays the somber story of the Rich man who finds himself in a place of intolerable torment. Different people understand this passage differently. Some argue that this story pictures conscious torment after the judgment or after death, but before the final judgment. There is some merit to each of these positions. There is no justification, however, in considering this passage and taking the wholly irreconcilable position that there is no place of cognizant, prolonged punishment after death. We can be certain that this story is not abstract nonsense! Jesus did not waste time telling fanciful fairy tales. Equally important, we know that "God is not the author of confusion" (I Cor. 14:33). Pay particular attention to Lk. 16:24, in which the rich man cries out, "I am tormented in this flame." The Greek word for tormented used here means "tortured." What absolutely, positively, must be understood from this passage is that there is a place, at some point after death, where there is a state of misery and hopelessness. There is no other way to harmonize passages like Mk. 9:43-48, Mt. 25:31-46 and Rev. 20:10-15.

A CONSISTENT MESSAGE

Mark warns five times, in as many verses, about the unquenchable fires of hell. If being thrown into this fire means merely instant incineration, why mention its incessant nature. Taken this way, Jesus' words would be meaningless. In this same passage, He warns repeatedly that this hell (*gehenna*) is a place "where their worm dieth not" - not the

warm, but their worm. This everlasting, pest control problem is just one more graphic indication of enduring discomfort.

John the Revelator adds that those cast into the "lake of fire and brimstone... shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." If this image does not suggest a place of unending suffering for those who "know not God and obey not the gospel," what words would? This passage also demonstrates the reality of an end worse than death and hades. For at the end they both will be cast into the lake of fire.

Another powerful argument can be made from Matt. 25:31-46. Jesus here previews the great separation of sheep and goats on Judgment Day. There are only two possibilities: "everlasting punishment" or "life eternal." There is no "Door Number 3" as some have conveniently imagined for the ignorant and more moderate sinners. The words "everlasting" and "eternal" used here come from the same Greek word for unending. Meditate for just a moment on how long eternal life will be. Now you also know how long everlasting punishment will be.

PART II IS GOD TOO LOVING TO HATE SIN?

Why are some people comforted when they tell themselves that "God is too loving to send anyone to hell?" One reason can be explained in one of two ways: either they elevate themselves to God's level or drag Him down to their own level. In other words, they assume that God reasons just as they do. The prophet Isaiah exploded this myth in Is. 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Another major source of confusion is underestimating God's hatred for sin. The prophet puts it bluntly in Is. 59:2: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." We are taught of God to "Abhor that which is evil," but that is not always easy, even for Christians. If we could develop the same hate for all sin that God has we would not be as subject to temptation as we are. The truth is, we hate the sins that others commit and we are ignorant or somewhat tolerant of our own sins. So it is with sin in general, since we are all guilty of sin (Rom. 3:23), we cannot always appreciate the level of disgust that God has for it. Hence, the phenomenal power of the phrase, "Everybody's doing it." When everyone is committing a particular sin, it begins to look less sinister.

THE PROBLEM WITH HUMAN WISDOM

Paul wrote in his letter to the Corinthian Christians, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." The danger in relying on our own wisdom and understanding is obvious. Numerous scriptures examples bear this out.

Would we be surprised to learn that Adam and Eve reasoned like men and women today? Could they not have said to themselves: "Surely God loves us too much to kick us out of the garden. He would never demand physical labor of us. He would never make us endure death, pain and sorrow. No, not our God!"

Would human reasoning lead us to predict Jesus' forfeiture of heaven to pay the debt for sin? The bitter scene at Golgotha burns away the fog of human speculation and unveils God's true hate for sin. Isaiah again rescues us from ignorance. He prophesies that Christ would be "wounded for our transgressions" and "bruised for our iniquities." We cannot overstate God's animosity toward sin. If God is not too loving for allow His Son, unsullied by the stains of sin, to be

tortured hour after hour on Calvary's cross, is it inconceivable that He would punish a wicked, hardened, rebellious creation that rejected His great sacrifice?

THE HELL OF GEHENNA

What kind of place is Jesus talking about when He personally admonishes us about gehenna? According to Thayer, this hell, addressed eleven times by Jesus, is derived from "...a valley SE of Jerusalem, which was so called from the cries of the little children who were thrown into the fiery arms of Moloch. The Jews so abhorred the place after these horrible sacrifices had been abolished by King Josiah (2 Kgs. 23:10), that they cast into it not only all manner of refuse, by King Josiah (2 Kgs. 23:10), that they cast into it not only all manner of refuse, but even the dead bodies of animals and of unburied criminals who had been executed." But when Jesus issues these warnings about hell, He is not notifying us that all the wicked will be thrown into a burning pile of garbage Southeast of Jerusalem. Jesus cautions us in Lk. 12:5, "Fear him which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell..." So, God's power is not limited to the giving and taking of life. He uses this familiar image to suggest a place that would make that burning dump look like an oasis. He is referring to a place prepared for the "devil and his angels"; a place of intense heat and utter darkness (Mt. 25:30); a place without peace or rest (Rev. 14:11); a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt. 13:50).

To defend their "gospel" of a hell-less eternity, some Bible students scurry out of the New Testament hoping to find a foothold in the Old. There is no such haven. In Lev. 10:1-2 the priests Nadab and Abihu are devoured by fire for their unauthorized acts of worship. Korah and his company rebelled against Moses' authority in Num. 16 and met a similar fate. Ahaziah's troops were also consumed by fire for obeying the evil king's orders in 2 Kgs. 1:9-16. Looking back to such Old Testament events, Paul says in Heb. 10:27-29 that those who despise Christ are worthy of a much worse punishment. Squeezing in the doctrine of complete annihilation of light of these truths, would be insulting even to human reasoning.

JUST PREACHER SCARE TACTICS?

Is the preacher who preaches hell-fire and brimstone just trying to scare you? No, he is just being faithful to his commission. As a preacher, he must be able to say to himself when he goes to bed at night: "I have kept back nothing that was profitable... I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God?" (Acts 20) "That is his duty. So, while he may not be trying to alarm you, but the Lord is. They must get our attention and for most of us His love alone is not enough—at least not at first. In 2 Pet. 3:7-12, the apostle uses the impending threat of judgment to encourage his brethren to "holy conversation and godliness."

Those who teach that there is no place of torment are encouraging people to be, like the foolish virgins of Matt. 25, unprepared. Some of the most stirring words in scripture are found in that text that reads "the door was shut". No amount of pounding or pleading would open that door. There was no earthly reign to give the slothful another opportunity. Ignorance earned no one any special favors or consideration (Acts 17:30; 2 Th. 1:8).

THE GOOD NEWS!

Some have expressed the concern that there may only be room in heaven for 144,000 people. This confusion comes from placing a literal "interpretation" on symbols from a highly figurative book. This assumption places Jesus in an unfavorable light. When He was able to create a world that could support billions of human lives, why would He be limited to a heaven that only had room for a little more than 100,000? This would also make us question the validity of Peter's oft repeated statement of Acts 10:34-35: "God is not

respector of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." The "good news" is, we can be saved from the "lake of fire" where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth" in "outer darkness." After the Judgment, we need not be concerned about a "no va-

cancy" sign at heaven's gate. Jesus assured us that in His "Father's house are many mansions" (Jn. 14:1-3), yet only "few" will be saved (Mt. 7:13-14). Comfort one another with these words.

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

continued from page 1

now return to our text in Ephesians 5:32: "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Christ and Church is the great mystery, the great plan of God to save lost men and women. How can people say the church has nothing to do with man's salvation, when Paul says, "Christ and the church is God's plan."

Look at it another way. Ephesians 1:3 tells us "All spiritual blessings are in Christ Jesus." Note: "all spiritual blessings." Not one single spiritual blessing can be obtained outside Christ, but God does dispense material blessings to those outside His son Jesus. Material things come to the just and the unjust, but every spiritual blessing (salvation, forgiveness of sins, prayers answered, hope of eternal life, etc.) comes to us through Jesus Christ. How do we get into Jesus Christ? The only way we can "be in Christ" is to "be in His body." Look at these parallel verses: (Galatians 3:27,) "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Now look at (I Corinthians 12:13,) "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—." Notice the parallel: "Baptized into Christ" (Gal. 3:27) "Baptized into one body" (I Cor. 12:13). Since there is but one baptism (Eph. 4:5), Being baptized into Christ is the same as being baptized into one body. Baptism is the step that puts one into Christ, which is being in His body. Carry this thought one step farther. Paul tells us the body of Christ is His church. Look at Ephesians 1:22-23, "God put all things under Christ's feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. "The church spiritually is the body of Christ and, therefore, encompasses and encircles every blessing connected with salvation. When people say the church is not necessary to salvation, they obviously do not understand the relationship of Christ to His church. It is not possible to be in Christ and not be in His church.

Let us notice some expressions from Paul that show the importance of the church to Christ and His plan to save man. First, look at Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 1:22-23. These verses tell us Christ is the head and the church is the body. What is a head without a body or a body without a head? How could the importance of the church be made any plainer? Second, Christ is the foundation, and the church is the building upon the foundation. (See I Corinthians 3:11 and I Peter 2:5-6) Peter says, "As Christians we are living stones that are built on the sure foundation which is Jesus Christ."

How important are the foundation and the building to each other? That tells us how important the church is to Christ and His plan.

Another of Paul's analogies of Christ and the church is that of husband and wife. What is more beautiful than the closeness of husband and wife? Paul used that relationship to illustrate the importance of the church to Christ. Ephesians 5:25 says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it." The love of a husband for his wife is like the love of Christ for His church. Paul says, "He gave himself for it."

The favorite analogy of Christ is that of a king and his kingdom, Christ is the king of kings and His reign is over the church, His kingdom. Over one hundred times the kingdom is referred to in the gospels, most of the time by Jesus. The

Kingdom is very important to Christ. He came to establish it, and this was accomplished on the day of Pentecost according to Acts, chapter two, Jesus has told His disciples that it would come during their lifetime and it did. (See mark 9:1) All the above analogies show the importance of the church. The church is the divine plan of God to save lost men and women.

Look at Ephesians, chapter two, where Paul outlines things in the church and things outside the church. Take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the center. On one side write "Outside Christ" and on the other side write "In Christ." Remember we have shown in the paragraphs above that the only way we can be in Christ is to be in His body which is the church. First, note what Paul tells us is outside of Christ, or outside His body, the church. Reading Ephesians 2:12-13 we find, "That at that time you were without Christ, bring aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were afar off have been made nigh by the blood of Christ." On our sheet of paper under "Outside Christ" we list six things Paul mentions: (1) Without Christ, (2) aliens, (3) Strangers from the covenants of promise, (4) no hope, (5) Without God, and (6) a far off. These six things describe the conditions of those not in the body of Christ.

Now look at the blessing of those in Christ, or in His body, the church. The list includes: (1) Reconciliation with God (verse 16), (2) Peace with God (verse 17), (3) access to the Father through prayer (verse 18), (4) No longer strangers and aliens but citizens of His kingdom (verse 19), (5) Saints (verse 19), (6) Members of God's family (verse 19), (7) Built on the foundation of Christ (verse 20), (8) Temple or dwelling place of God (verse 21), (9) Habitation or dwelling-place of the Spirit (verse 22), (10) Heirs of God (chp 3, verse 6), (11) Partakers of the promises of the gospel (chp 3, verse 6), and (12) Having our names written in Heaven (Hebrews 12:23)

What a wonderful thought!! We have all the above blessings and our names are written in heaven. Folks, that is a blessing that can be obtained no where except in the church of Jesus Christ. Note that verse (Hebrews 12:23) again: "To the general assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven." Christ is the first-born (Colossians 1:18), therefore, the church of the first-born is the church of Christ.

Now we go back to Ephesians 5 where we started. Paul sums up all he has written in the five chapters on the relationship of Christ to the church by saying "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Christ loved the church so much that he gave himself for it. Ought not we to love it, also?"

THE FARR-WALKER DEBATE

continued from page 2

Walker dropped that argument like a hot potato!

In the afternoon session of March 14, Bro. Walker was supposed to affirm that the New Testament teaches by command, example, and inference the use of individual cups in the communion. I say "supposed to," because he never once read or even referred to his proposition in any of his speeches, much less tried to live up to what it obligated him to do! Bro. Farr did a fine job showing that multiple cups have no scriptural authority, since it is actually the use of one cup that is taught by command, example, and inference in the

word of God. Bro. Walker admitted from the beginning that Christ instituted the Lord's supper with one container. That admission proved too much for him to overcome. When it was all said and done, "the large assembly argument" was all Bro. Walker had to offer. However, Bro. Farr refused to be sidetracked from the real issue of what is authorized by the Scriptures.

We commend both men for their willingness to contend for what they believe in religious matters (Jude 3). Also, both men conducted themselves as gentlemen, and a good

spirit prevailed throughout the discussions. We only wish that more of Bro. Walker's brethren had attended; we were disappointed by their poor attendance. Why didn't they come? Are they not interested in hearing the Scriptures discussed, or were they encouraged not to come? Either way, this was their opportunity to learn more about issues over which the church has been divided. Our people provided the bulk of the audience and we had several preachers present. Bro. Carl Farr did an excellent job defending the truth. I was honored to serve as his moderator.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MC GREGOR, TX

As of April 5, 1998, MCGREGOR, TX will meet at 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM on Sunday and 7:30 PM on Wednesday.

60th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Floyd and Lillian White of Grovespring, MO celebrated their 60th anniversary on March 25, 1998 with a private family celebration. They have been faithful members for many years at the Claxton Church of Christ where Floyd has been a teacher.



FOURTH OF JULY MEETING LEBANON, MO.

The Annual Fourth of July Meeting in Lebanon, MO. begins Saturday night, June 27, and runs through Friday, July 3. It will be held in the new Cowan Civic Center, 500 E. Elm. Services every evening are at 7:30 pm. and each morning at 10:00 am. There will be no service at the Civic Center Sunday morning, June 28, as each local congregation meets at their regular place and time. The meeting is hosted by the Lee's Summit congregation and directed this year by Barney Owens and Don Pruitt. For further information call: (417) 589-2646; (417) 589-6288; (417) 589-6281.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

HARRIS - NICHOLS - On the afternoon of March 28th, Kevin Dale Harris and Cheryl Ann Nichols made their wedding vows in the midst of a large crowd in the Church of Christ meeting place at 79th and Kansas City, Kansas City, Kansas. The attendance was made up of relatives, friends, and brethren and sisters from several different states, as well as people who work on the job with Kevin and Cheryl. The surroundings were beautiful due to the help of many. The songs were appropriately rendered by several members of the Harrisonville, MO congregation. Kevin is the son of Glane and Bonnie Harris of Manteca, CA. Cheryl Ann is the daughter of Paul and Wilma Nichols of Bonner Springs, KS. The bride's uncle, Ronny Wade, stood up by proxy until Cheryl's hand was given in marriage and then it was my honor and privilege to administer the vows for this fine Christian couple. We wish for them a long and happy Christian life together. They will make their home in the Kansas City area.—Paul O. Nichols.

OUR DEPARTED

WEBB--John E. Webb was born Nov. 16, 1910 at Springdale, AR and entered into rest on March 9, 1910 at Porterville, CA. On Aug. 16, 1954 he was married to Ariel Emerson who survives him. John was baptized into the church as a young man. Services were held March 12, 1998 at Hillcrest Memorial Park, Porterville, CA, conducted by Lavern Lum and Crockett Byars of the Hockett St. Church of Christ. Congregational singing included "How Great Thou Art" and "Beyond the Sunset."

BOLDING--James Herschel Bolding was born Sept. 5, 1929 in Bolding, AR and passed away March 2, 1998 at the age of 68. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Betty; two sons, Dwayne and Bryant; two daughters, Donna Hendricks and Lisa Choate; a brother and sister and four grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Herschel was a member and leader of the church in Strong, AR, and his presence and strength of character will be missed! He was no stranger to adversity in life; in March of 1994 he had open heart surgery and then five months later in August, he was diagnosed with cancer. Yet, through all of this he overcame by faith and as he neared eternity's door, his hope in God grew stronger. A large number of family, friends, and brethren gathered to pay their last respects to the good life he lived. Billy Orten assisted this writer. I was honored to speak words of comfort and warning and to pay tribute to our dear brother.-Billy D. Dickinson.

VAN STAVERN--John Junior Van Stavern was born September 15, 1922 at Red Fork, Oklahoma, to John W. and Lillie E. Van Stavern. He died March 14, 1998, at Presbyterian Hospital in Oklahoma City at the age of 75. In October 1946 John was married to Bonnie Pearl Ruebush who preceded him in death in July 1997. He is survived by a son, Rod; two daughters, Rhonda Van Stavern and Kimberly Van Stavern; and five grandchildren. John loved his family and his family heritage, but above all he loved the Lord. Homer King baptized him when he was eleven years old and he devoted the rest of his life to the cause of Christ. He was pleased he and Bonnie were a part of the establishment of the congregation at Springfield, Missouri. He spent the last 33 years, however, in Moore, Oklahoma where he was a respected and beloved leader in the Moore congregation. John's life centered in the Lord and nothing pleased him more than discussing the Bible with anyone who would listen. One of the last things he said was he hoped he and his whole family would one day be reunited in Paradise. John's family honored me by asking me to speak some words of comfort and warning at the service.- Carl M. Johnson

COOKSEY--Oris Cooksey of Floral, AR passed away on Feb. 16, 1998 at the age of 71 years. He was the teacher in the congregation that met in his house on Jamestown

Mountain. Oris obeyed the gospel in Kansas City in the late sixties and was baptized by Joe Hisle. He is survived by his wife of almost fifty two years, Berthia Faye Ponder Cooksey of the home; four sons and two daughters, two brothers and seven sisters. One son, Roy Cooksey and one brother were restored the Sunday after Oris' death and help make up the six members who still meet in the home. Bro. Pete Covington has driven 53 miles to help out in the services. They are in need of help and are isolated from sister congregations. A large crowd gathered on Feb. 20th at the Batesville Funeral Home, where we sang congregationally, and I was thankful for the assistance of Miles King in the services. Batesville is almost a three hour drive from Harrison and two hours or better from Mtn. Home. I was happy to assist the family in their grief.-Jimmie C. Smith.

RODRIGUEZ--Jesus Rodriguez Balderas was born Jan. 1, 1920 in El Tunal Arteaga, Coahuila, in the Saltillo, Mexico area. He died Feb. 7, 1998 at the age of 78. Jesus died of a massive heart attack. He is survived by his wife Delores and three daughters and seven grandchildren. He is also survived

by one brother, Juan Rodriguez, Rs. of Saltillo, Mexico. Three of his nephews are preachers of the gospel: Juan, Jr., Julio, and Elias. Bro. Jesus was baptized in 1956 in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico in the Church of Christ (Christian Church, Instruments, Cups, Classes). He began preaching for them in 1959. In 1960, he was converted to the true way of worship by Bro. J.B. Torres from Kerrville, Texas. After his conversion he converted Juan Rodriguez Sr. That same year, Jesus baptized a large number of people in Neuvo Laredo, many of whom moved into the interior of Mexico taking the gospel with them. For many years his home was open to the poor from the interior that would come for used clothing from their communities. Jesus lived a simple life, with many limitations, poverty, and sickness. He was faithful to the end of his life. The Covina, CA congregation was his supporting congregation all of the time he preached. Lebanon, MO supported him as well. Jesus Rodriguez will be long remembered for being the first one cup preacher of the Lord's Church in Mexico. Juan Jr. and Julio spoke words of consolation.-J. Wayne McKamie.



P. Duane Permenter, P.O. Box 80687, Midland, TX 79708 - The work continues to move along in West Texas. Our work locally continues with much anticipation for the future. We have a fine group of young people to work with and feel very blessed because of this. We have had a restoration since last reporting. What a blessing to labor under the direction of the elders here in Midland, Art Oestmann and Al Blaze. Our teachers continue to improve and develop each time that they stand in the pulpit. We have been working with three young men to develop their ability to teach and they will give their first presentation in May. Though Satan fights against us, we can do all things through Christ! The brethren here in Midland are going to sponsor an evangelistic effort in June on the island of Mindanao, Philippines. Brother Conrado V. Libertino from Isabella, Philippines, plans to bring a fellow preacher and meet brother and sister Kevin Taylor who has family in Dipolog City. Please pray for this effort. May God bless the faithful.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, April 8 - The meeting at Planz Rd., Bakersfield, CA closed with no visible results in spite of all efforts. Crowds were excellent throughout. The Brundage Lane congregation turned out for all of their services except the Lord's day mornings to come and help. It was wonderful and all appreciated their help. Several other congregations were represented also from time to time. We stayed with Darrell and Gail Brewer and were treated royally. We be-

gan at the Covina, CA congregation on the next Lord's day and continued for a week. This is where Brother McCord has lived and worshipped for many years and it was great to be with them again. Don performed the marriage ceremony for Pat and me nearly 36 years ago. The meeting was well attended with several coming from a number of places including Bakersfield. Area congregations supported us also and a good spirit prevailed throughout. The meeting closed with one confession of wrong. We are home for a time and looking forward to a visit with the R.H. Renner family next week. Joe Hisle will hold Fremont's meeting soon. Pray for us.

Doug Hawkins, 31008 Red Arrow Rd., Rocky Mount, MO 65072 - March 30, 1998 - Away a month, we recently returned home from a trip to Colorado and California. We first held a weekend meeting in Holyoke, CO at the end of February. I believe it was the best one yet. A number of folks from the cups church came over during the meeting, and then too Rod and Wanda Martin came from the Denver area. As usual, we made our home with Pete and Helen Knight, true "lovers of hospitality." Overall, the meeting was very enjoyable. We then held meetings in Oakdale and Ventura, CA. Crowds at the meeting in Oakdale were real good. We have a number of good friends in that area so it's always enjoyable to return there. In Oakdale, we enjoyed the gracious hospitality of Philip Permenter's family. Then finally, we were in Ventura, CA for a five-day meeting. It was a thrill to be with Brett and Louise Hickey, tireless workers for the Lord. I, with many others, can't say enough good about them or the work they do. The enthusiasm exhibited by the congregation was refreshing. A number of people from the community visited the meeting, which excited us all. While in Ventura, we stayed with a dear ole sister, Wilda Egurrolla. She is a real joy to be with. Our next meeting will be in Shreveport, LA May 13-17. May God bless you and yours.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Court, Bonner Springs, KS 66012 - The work of the Lord at 79th and

Kansas Ave., KS seems to be going well, for which we give God the glory. We have some wonderful people with whom to work and things continue to progress. We have an atmosphere of peace and unity. What a wonderful environment in which to work and worship! We are learning and growing together. Several of the younger men are learning to teach and they give some excellent lessons. Others take part in the public worship in other ways. We are thankful for them. We are growing spiritually and in number, which makes us realize our efforts are not in vain. The meeting at Cottage Grove, OR will be April 19-26. I am to be at Deer Park, TX for a meeting May 31 - June 7, the Lord willing. Our meeting at Kansas City is scheduled for June 14-21 with Kevin Presley. Come and be with us. The Lord bless our brethren and our efforts for the cause of Christ everywhere.

Brett Hickey, P.O. Box 6506, Ventura, CA 93003, April 1 - Our studies with Chad Young finally brought forth fruit. He wrote from Southwest Missouri expressing his need for scriptural baptism a few weeks ago. Roy Lee Criswell followed up with a study and after overcoming several obstacles was finally allowed to baptize him. Our meeting with Doug Hawkins was a success. Doug's sermons were strong and relevant. He preached his most powerful sermon "Why I am a Member of the church of Christ" on Friday night before our largest crowd of fifty-seven. There were seventeen different visitors from the community that night. They all left with plenty to think about. During the four day meeting we had 23 different outsiders - nearly 40 when we include those who came to more than one service. The favorable response from the community was proportional to the congregation's hard work. Besides the personal efforts, several members helped distribute about 2,500 fliers to area homes. There were no baptisms or restorations, but the incorruptible seed was sown. Visiting brethren from Covina, Montebello, Bakersfield and Los Angeles also encouraged us. Their interest was especially heartening for our new members. Anita Miller continues to study with us on a weekly basis. We covered several aspects of worship last week. She was not hesitant to accept the truth as it was presented. She came to the meeting on Friday night. After hearing that sermon, the fact that she continued to study with us shows her openness to the truth. Lenea is our latest lead from the Pennysaver ad. She was a member of the Christian church in a nearby city. Initially in our study she seemed disinterested or skeptical, but became quite involved as the study progressed. Jerry Orr, Sr., has been bringing his son to our Saturday studies. These studies were initially started to familiarize our young people with the major Old Testament stories, but several others have been attending as well. Mr. Orr's 12 year old son seems to really enjoy the studies. He has memorized about six scriptures. After avoiding us for several weeks Richard called to talk about the Bible. He has been exposed to the truth in several areas, but seems torn between his personal preferences and the truth. Aurora Kimes came twice to our meeting. She is a soft-spoken hispanic woman who has attended meetings in the past. We had a good Bible discussion on the difference between the covenants. She agreed to a home study this week. We appreciate Wilda Egurrola for keeping Doug and Lori dur-

ing the meeting. We are aggressively looking for a permanent meeting place. We meet in a suitable facility, but about once every month or two we have to find another place to meet. This has caused confusion for members and gives the appearance of instability to the world. The church realizes that the building has no spiritual import, but also sees the benefits of a building in reaching the community. We have found a modest building in a suitable location. Pray for us in this matter.

Jim Franklin, P.O. Box 573, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa - The Malawi Report - January and February 1998 - The weather in Malawi seems to be inconsistent. Rains have continued in a good portion of the country. However, there are areas where rain did not continue long enough and crops wilted. And, there are some areas where torrential rains have caused serious flooding. Many people in the Phalombe district at the foot of Mount Mulanje and Nkhata Bay along the lakeshore have lost both their homes and their crops to flash floods. A few deaths have been reported. A major problem in Malawi this year has been hunger. This is due to the failure of last year's crops. Crop failure is not limited to insufficient rain. Unless hybrid seed corn is planted and the crops fertilized twice, the harvest will be a dismal failure. So many poor people are not able to buy either hybrid seed or fertilizer. Though they work very hard, they will reap only a few puny "nubbins" here and there. The greater portion of my time here in Malawi for the last two months has been that of trying to distribute relief to scores of hungry brethren. We thank God for the concerned, considerate, caring, benevolent brethren in the States who have contributed to this relief. I continue to visit congregations every week to encourage them in the Faith. For example, on the 15th of February, I preached at the Mindimwi congregation in Thyolo district where there were around 400 in attendance. I preached on the subject of the Lord's Supper with special emphasis being made concerning the spiritual condition of the communicants. There were 37 confessions. The work in Mozambique is spreading. As I mentioned in the last report, two men were sent from Malawi to check out the possibility of establishing a congregation in Chimoio, Mozambique. Chimoio is near the border of Zimbabwe just east of Mutare. Good news! Bro. Nkhwazi, the preacher we sent, baptized 27 people. Thus, a new congregation was established. These new brethren in Chimoio insisted that Bro. NMkhwazi visited Beira to preach to others with whom they were associated. Beira is a major seaport city located on the coast of the Indian Ocean. I plan to send Bro. Nkhwazi to visit the work again within a week or so in order that he might encourage these brethren. However, this is not the end of the good news concerning Chimoio and Beira. I have just received a letter from Bro. Mlambo in Zimbabwe informing me that he has just been made aware of a small group of brethren in both Chimoio and Beira which began meeting in October of 1994. It seems that there are now different groups in both Chimoio and Beira of the same faith who are not aware of each other's existence. We will now start making plans to bring these brethren together and for me to visit them as quickly as I can possibly arrange the time to do so. (I need to be cloned!) I am now in the process of preparing subjects for our annual "Preachers and

Leaders Study" during the dry season. Our plans are to conduct studies in congregations central to others in the different districts. We did this last year and it proved to be a much better method of conveying strong teachings to congregational leaders than when we had just the preachers to attend studies in Blantyre. May the Lord bless each and every one of you who support this work, whether financially or with your supplications to God on our behalf.

Reggie Kinser, 4407 Georgetown Drive, Columbia, MO 65203; (573) 446-5934 April 3 - Time moves so swiftly. It is hard to believe we have been working with the church here in Columbia for more than two years. During that time we have seen a lot of changes within the congregation. Several brethren who were here when we came have relocated due to job requirements. This could have been a real setback for the church except for the fact that God has blessed us with a steady increase of new members along the way. Our most recent additions have been Cory Strawn, Gretta Crisp and her three children, and Elaine Cockrum. Ray Cockrum, a long time member was also restored. Also recently restored is our son, Adam. Having "come to himself" like the prodigal son, he has now moved to Columbia in an effort to get his life back on track. Only God knows the number of prayers that have been uttered in his behalf. Asking God to chasten one of your own is more difficult than I could ever imagine. But I feel certain that prayer is one of the reasons Adam has returned to the Lord's church. If I may offer a word of support to parents of wayward children, let me encourage you to pray always and never give up hope. Adam and Danielle Miller, from Joplin, MO, were married in December and are now residing in Columbia. Danielle has also made a public confession of faults. They both seem to have a strong desire to grow in the Lord. I cannot thank the brethren here at Columbia enough for helping to create an atmosphere where people can grow strong in the Lord. Perhaps one of the most positive changes in the congregation is its genuine devotion toward Christian living. Such devotion requires self sacrifice, which these good brethren have been willing to make. Surely God is pleased. To Him be the glory for every good thing. In February, I was privileged to visit the country of Israel for a second time. This time we took a tour group of twenty brethren from several congregations. I was especially pleased to have my fellow soldier, Randy Tidmore along. Visiting the sites where so many biblical events have occurred was both thrilling and enlightening. Everyone in our group agreed that it was a wonderful and joyous experience. In the words of Pam and Andy Peek, "the singing and Bible reading as we journeyed from place to place were a taste of the beauties of Heaven." On our way back home we stopped off at Nottingham, England to worship. This was also a memorable experience. As the service came to a close, the brethren asked us to stay and sing a few extra songs. Many tears were shed as we sang the final song, "Blessed Be The Tie That Binds." Brother John Dodsley was especially kind and hospitable to us. At present, I am continuing to communicate with him regarding matters of fellowship and communion. I regret not being able to spend more time with the brethren while we were there. It is our prayer that the church at Nottingham was encouraged and strengthened by our short visit.

Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015: The meeting in Edmond, OK was a cold one. The first Sunday it snowed and the low during the week was fifteen. The weather was cold and blustery, but the brethren in Edmond were warm and exuberant, and the meeting was a blessing to me. Dale and Susan Ayers made me feel more than at home, their hospitality being exceptional. It was especially good to have the opportunity to be with Edwin Morris during the meeting, a preacher whose wisdom and conviction I venerate. There were a number of other preachers and brethren who came to the meeting from near and far, however I will not try to name them for fear I would leave some out. We are looking forward here in Houston (Deer Park) to a meeting with Jimmie Smith soon approaching, April 8-12. My upcoming schedule includes the following: April 9, Frisco, TX; May 30-31, Duncanville, TX; June 7-14, McAlester (Blue, OK) June 21-28, Cassville, MO; July 3-5, Pleasant Hill, MO; July 12-19, Midland, TX; July 26-August 2, Moore, OK. Pray for the work here and everywhere.

Billy D. Dickinson, 215 Forest Hills Dr., West Monroe, LA 71291, March 16— This has been a busy year for me so far, as I am now looking forward to springtime and the summer months (and hopefully dryer weather). In the first part of February, I held a meeting at Glendale Heights, IL. I enjoyed staying with Baine and Katie Adams. Joe and Hazel Loughmiller drove from Indiana (about a 4 hour trip) to be with us for the first service. That certainly added to the enjoyment of the meeting! The church there is small in number, but they have a good nucleus for future growth and it was a joy to be with them. I was with the North Area church in Springfield, MO on Feb. 15, and I appreciated the opportunity to visit with them that weekend and to become better acquainted with the congregation. It was uplifting to visit with Irvin and Barbara Barnes; they were kind enough to open their home to us. Irvin is having a lot of health problems, but he continues to be a source of strength and edification to that congregation. On March 13& 14, I moderated for Carl Farr in a series of debates in Jacksonville/Little Rock, AR on the issues of cups and classes. Bro. Farr did an excellent job and it was an honor to stand by his side in this effort. (Please see the forthcoming report on the Farr-Walker debate.) Our attendance here at West Monroe continues to be good. Since the first of the year, we've had some confessions of faults and a baptism. March 27-29, I am looking forward to being at Duncanville, TX. I will list my other meetings at a later time as those dates draw closer.

Jimmie C. Smith, 5100 Rail Rd, Harrison, AR. April 2 - Once again I've been dilatory in reporting to the paper. In Dec. I conducted an enjoyable singing school and preached at the Hillside congregation near Pochontas, AR; We enjoyed the OK New Year Meeting; conducted a Good singing school in Mtn. Home AR here we saw much improvement and where Bruce Roebuck is doing a good job, preached one Sunday in Rogers AR in their beautiful new building the first of Feb.; attended five nights of Wayne McKamie's meeting at Hartwell where Wayne adapted masterfully to the situation where one of their leaders was battling for his life after a heart attack. Last weekend we

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heard James Orten in Springfield and John Smith preached here at Harrison Sunday morning. I've had good attendance lately and three young men are making great strides in their teaching. If the Lord Wills I will leave next Wed. for a five day meeting at Deer Park, TX. Ronny Wade is to be with us May 10-17. I also recently attended two sessions of a public debate in Little Rock where a local, bro. Carl Farr did a good job of defending the truth. The Churches are at peace in our area and love abounds. May God Bless His People!

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, April 2 - We just closed a good meeting at the Fieldstone congregation in Missouri. The meeting closed without visible results, but we had good crowds each service, including several visitors from the community. Most of these visitors came to the meeting at the urging of Don Pruitt who works in this area and some of them appear to be good prospects. I divided my stay between the Pruitt's home and the Ron and Judy Wood home and enjoyed their respective hospitality immensely. Several preachers encouraged us during the meeting, including Smith Bibens, James Howard John Anderson, and Ron Haskell. We are looking forward to a meeting here at home with Ronny Wade beginning next week. My schedule for the next several months includes: Cable Ridge, MO (Apr.18-26), Norman, OK (May 1-3), Cedar Creek, AR (May 22-24), Broken Arrow, OK (May 13-17), Trussville, AL (May 31-June 7), Indiana, PA (June 14-21), Sulphur, OK (June 25-July 4), Ozark, MO (July 19-26), and Mozier, IL (Aug. 2-9). Please remember us in your prayers.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, April 5 - Lately, the church here seems to be doing much better with good attendance and interest. Gary Cannon spoke here on March 22nd, and according to reports the fourth Sunday singing was a great success. I was at Hoyte, near Cameron,

TX in a meeting March 15 22, not the dates I erroneously reported last month. Thanks to Wayne McKamie for preaching in my stead on the 14th. It was a real joy to be at Hoyte, not only for the meeting but also to visit with the families there. I think I have never found a more friendly and hospitable group. I thought we had a good meeting with lots of visitors from area congregations; some I had not seen in many years. Preaching brethren Wayne McKamie, Melvin Blalock and Bob Johnson visited the meeting. Next, I am to be at Frisco, TX April 16th, Earlytown, AL April 19-26, and Hillcrest, near Brookhaven, MS June 14-21.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 April 8 - The meeting at Wayne, WV was very enjoyable. We had a house full most every night. Neighboring congregations supported the meeting extremely well. It was a pleasure to work with Brother Wyn Baker. Wyn is rock-solid for the truth, and refuses to be swayed by the purveyors of false and liberal thinking. It was also a privilege to have Brother Dennis Smith, who works with the Eighteenth St. church in Huntington present for most of the meeting. The Lord willing we go next to Ada, OK, April 10-19, Blue Springs, KY, April 26-May 3, Harrison, AR, May 10-17, London, KY, May 24-31 and Spring Valley near Huntington, WV, June 7-14. Please remember us when you pray.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Lane, W. Chester, OH 45069 - Refreshing as spring always is, it is with pleasure that the "Gospel Meeting" season has gotten under way in force. I am looking forward to hear some of my brethren in the next months. It will be my pleasure to be with the Pleasant View congregation at Mitchell, May 15-17. Then to Columbus, GA June 14-21. I hope to see long time friends in these places. Pray for the Lord's work to increase fruitfully.

I DID NOTHING AT ALL *By CK Tawlbee*

For fear of doing something wrong,
 I did nothing at all.
 I saw the hungry on our streets,
 I did nothing at all.
 A child needed shoes for his feet, but,
 I did nothing at all.
 Someone would criticize me, find fault or complain,
 So, for fear of doing something wrong,
 I did nothing at all.
 Could I teach a friend about God? Some say NO!
 For a woman, in their view, is so very LOW.
 Each idea brought forth is quickly shot down
 So I stand back doing nothing at all.

But I read Jesus story of the one talent man.
 The man who out of fear did nothing at all.
 In disgust the Lord cast the man out,
 For he had done nothing at all.
 So now I've decided to strive harder each day.
 Serving and perhaps saving my fellow human on the way.
 With the Bible as my guide
 And the Lord by my side
 I will do all the good that I can.
 For in the Judgement, I would rather be able to say:
 "Forgive any mistakes I made Lord, I've done all the good that I can,"
 Than to stand with eyes cast down and have to admit:
 "For fear of doing something wrong I just did nothing at all.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

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NO. 6

THE WALLS OF JERICHO AND THE TOOTH FAIRY

By JERRY DICKINSON

At first I was surprised and befuddled by his sarcastic comment. But then, as I thought about it for a few moments longer, I started getting upset (even mad) so finally I just switched the station, even saying out loud to myself, "I am not going to listen to this fellow any more!" The comment that so irritated me was made by a disc jockey on a radio station I was listening to as I was headed home after a meeting I had held in Missouri. I neither remember the name of the station nor the name of the disc jockey - neither are important I suppose. At any rate, it was one of those oldies stations and the disc jockey's only comments thus far had been about the songs he played - at least until the sarcastic comment I am referring to.

All of a sudden, out of the clear blue, he stated that he had heard recently that archaeologists have uncovered the ancient city of Jericho and that they found no evidence that the walls fell down flat as the Book of Joshua declares. Not only that, but the archaeologists found no evidence that the city was burned with fire as the Book of Joshua further declares. After mentioning all that he exclaimed sarcastically, "Oh how sad! Next they'll be telling us there is no tooth fairy!"

At first, I say again, I was startled and puzzled by his comment, but then I started fuming at his ignorance and sarcasm and switched to another station. I do not know where the young man got his information or why he felt he needed to share it with his listeners, but I do wonder why he took such delight in comparing the destruction of the walls of Jericho to the tooth fairy. Really, of course, I know why. Men do not want to believe the Bible is truly a record inspired of God and they take devilish delight in any so called evidence that contradicts the Biblical record.

What about archaeology and the walls of Jericho? Is there no evidence that the walls fell down and the city was burned just like the Book of Joshua says? In his book, *The Bible As History*, Werner Keller describes the archaeological expedition in 1930 led by Professor John Garstang. Garstang noted every detail with utmost precision and graphically described the violence by which the ancient walls of Jericho fell. The diggings showed that there were two parallel walls; the inner wall was especially massive, being twelve feet thick. The outer wall or fortification was a six foot brick wall about twenty five to thirty feet high. Houses (like the house of Rahab the harlot) were built on top and connected the two walls.

Professor Garstang described clear traces of a tremendous fire and the space between the two walls was filled with rubble, blackened bricks, charred wood, and ashes. Along the walls the houses had been burned to the ground and their roofs crashed on top of them. The most remarkable of Garstang's discoveries, however, had to do with how the two walls had fallen. The stones of the outer wall had fallen outward and downhill, but the inner wall had fallen the opposite direction - inward. According to Garstang, these observations could lead to only one conclusion: that an earthquake must have shattered the city.

Here is the way the Bible describes it. "So the people shouted when the priests blew on the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shout with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city . . . And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein . . ." (Joshua 6:20,21,24)

The account in the Book of Joshua and the archaeological evidence uncovered by professor Garstang are in perfect harmony. Where then did that young fellow on the radio get his information. Well, I looked in some of the more modern bible handbooks and dictionaries and some of them cite the work of another archaeologist, Kathleen Kenyon, as conflicting with and even contradicting the work of Professor Garstang and other early archaeologists who worked at Jericho.

Holman's Bible Dictionary, for instance, does not even mention Garstang's expedition or his observations. According to the article in Holman, Kenyon used radio carbon dating and concluded that the walls had fallen a thousand or more years before the conquest of the land by the Israelites. Her studies determined that Jericho was not a great walled city but a small settlement when Joshua and the Israelites invaded Canaan. After reading that article I started feeling a bit more sorry for the young disc jockey (as well as others who rely on half truths) because he had not seen all the facts. Then I found an excellent article in the back of a *Thompson Chain Reference Bible* on the various archaeological studies that had been done at Jericho by a Dr. G. Fredrick Owen.

Dr. Owen states that Professor Garstang dated the fall

continued on page seven

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 6



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-9

The Walls Of Jericho And The Tooth Fairy ... 1

Returning Good For Evil 2

The Querist Column 3

Christian Men & Women Make
Christian Homes 3

What Crucified My Lord? 6

FROM THE FIELDS 9-12

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Editorial

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

By DON L. KING

In Matthew 5:43,44, Jesus said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

It is somewhat ironic that this passage is so familiar and yet many of us find it rather difficult to implement the directive. How often do you hear of anyone really paying someone back in kindness for an insulting remark? Do you notice this happening often? Can you recall an incident in your own life where you were mistreated and you retaliated by being good to them? Well, that's what you should have done; that's what we should have done, according to Jesus. There is a very good reason why Jesus said these things. Likely, the key is found in what Solomon said in Proverbs 15:1: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." It is very difficult to speak softly, and with kindness, when another has spoken insulting things. However, we must remember Solomon also said: "A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame." (Proverbs 12:16) What do we know from this? Simply that when we allow our anger to show through, we have designated ourselves as being very foolish indeed! Jesus would have us to be wise (Matthew 10:16), and wisdom (to say nothing of our need to be Christ-like) dictates that we return evil with good. That is the way to really win! Peter said, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contraiwise blessing: knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. (1 Peter 3:9)

Can you imagine the impact this would have during a business meeting when one becomes angry with his brother? What if we handled all our problems in the Bible way? Would we be better husbands, wives, children, preachers, church leaders, elders, and deacons? Do you answer yes? Then why not try it?

Remember the story of Joseph? He was sold into slavery by his brethren. They hated him. Why did they hate him? Because he was good! Because his father loved him! Joseph became a ruler in Egypt and years later when the very brethren who sold him came to Egypt to buy food, he treated them with kindness. Most would have said, "I don't care what happens to you, I have been treated badly and so far as I'm concerned, you had better hit the road."

Children have a great attitude. They are truly remarkable. Jesus used them to illustrate the Christian spirit of forgiveness. He said: "...verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3) Did Jesus mean that we are to act as children? Of course not. However, children have the wonderful ability to get over a problem quickly. Have you noticed that children at

continued on page seven

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Does God sanction the death penalty? If so, who is to carry it out? Wouldn't this be a violation of the scripture which teaches us we should not kill? (GA)

Answer: Few subjects have given rise to more controversy than the one suggested by the above questions. In recent years people with strong feelings on both sides of these issues have protested what they feel to be abuses of governmental authority and individual rights. Dealing with crime has never been easy. In the past, in some places, the punishment often exceeded the crime itself. In Assyria, for example, if a man flirted with another's wife and touched her, his finger was to be cut off; if he kissed her, his lips were to be cut off. A man who slandered a woman's reputation was to be castrated, flogged forty times, sentenced to work a month on the road and fined sixty shekels of lead. (Jerry Vardman, *Archaeology and the Living Word*) Other codes of justice sought to make the punishment correspond to the crime. The Law of Moses was such a system. We read in Ex. 21: 22-24 "And if men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart, and yet no harm follow; he shall be surely fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if any harm follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound of wound, stripe for stripe." In our country today, it seems that often the crime far exceeds the punishment. One may be guilty of killing several people and is given only a few years in prison. Another may inflict cruel punishment upon his victim only to be given a slap on the wrist. Reactions to such examples of injustice have caused many to cry out for reinstatement of the death penalty, with swift enforcement. In answering the above questions, there are two important points that need to be recognized. First, the Bible indicates that there is a standard of justice and morality that God expects of nations. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). David declared "The wicked shall be turned back unto Sheol, even all nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17). Alexander Campbell, in his sermon on Capital Punishment, summed up the matter when he said "the Bible, in the name and by the authority of its Author, demands of all persons in authority that they protect the innocent, that they punish the guilty, and that they dispense justice to all." (*Popular Lectures and Addresses*) Secondly, we need to note that the principle of non-retaliation taught by Jesus in Mt. 5:38 is an obligation of the individual Christian, and not a restraint upon civil governments, who are charged with dealing with those who are lawless (1Tim.1:9). The Christian is a pacifist. He does not kill, he does not go to war, he does not execute vengeance upon anyone. Capital punishment was an integral part of the law of Moses. Certain crimes were

considered worthy of death as in Deut. 21:22. We read in the law of people being stoned (Lev.20:2,27), executed by sword (1Sam. 15:33), and by burning (Lev.21:9). The general teaching of scripture is that in certain cases the government has not only the right, but the obligation to inflict the death penalty. During Paul's day when he was on trial before Festus (Acts 25:1-12), he contended that he had neither sinned against the law of the Jews, the temple, nor Caesar. He declared "If then I am a wrong-doer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die. . ." (Acts 25:11). It seems that Paul acknowledges the fact that there are certain crimes "worthy of death." In fact he says that if he were guilty of such a crime he would not refuse to die. In Romans 13:1-7 the Apostle discusses the relationship of Christians to civil government. He makes the following points: 1. Every soul is to be subject to the higher powers. 2. These rulers are appointed of God. 3. To resist them (except in cases where disobedience to God is mandated, Acts 5:29), is to resist the Lord's ordinance. 4. Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Herein lies the implication of their right to punish the evil-doer. 5. The civil magistrate does not bear the sword in vain. Sword is used as a symbol of the right to inflict capital punishment (Vincent). 6. The civil servant is the minister of God executing judgment upon those who practice evil. Those of us who are Christians must remember that the Lord's Church is not a theocracy as was the nation of Israel. We are not in a position to seek vengeance upon anyone, nor are we to administer the punishments of government. The powers that be "wield the sword," not the followers of the Prince of Peace. Our only weapon is the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17; 2 Cor.10:4-6). The following words from the pen of Roy Davidson seem appropriate here: "God has instituted governments to exercise capital punishment as a deterrent to crime (Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Pet. 2:14). God has also instituted His church and has forbidden Christians to exercise retribution (Rom. 12:17-21; Mt. 5:38-48). According to Romans 13:4 governing authorities are ministers of God's wrath. According to 2Cor. 5:17-21 Christians are God's ministers of reconciliation." The answers to the above questions are: yes, capital punishment may be used, by civil governments whose obligation it is to maintain order and justice. Judicial killing, carried out by the state, falls within the framework of God's plan for civil authorities to deter crime and injustice. Christians, however, are not allowed to be executors of God's wrath, and are out of place when they seek to do so. (For a fuller discussion of this subject, the reader is directed to an article by Wayne Jackson appearing in the book *Moral Issues Confronting The Kingdom* published by the East Tennessee School of Preaching, Knoxville, Tn.) (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, Mo. 65808)

CHRISTIAN MEN & CHRISTIAN WOMEN MAKE CHRISTIAN HOMES

By RYAN CONNER

We have all heard it said of some older couple who have been married for fifty or sixty years, "They have lived

together so long that they look alike." And why shouldn't they? They have had the same surroundings, their hopes

and desires are the same, and their anxieties and purposes are similar. Why should they not be alike? The Bible says "And they twain shall be one flesh" (Mt. 19:5). Marriage brings two lives together. As Christians, we want to be careful in deciding whom we join in marriage. Selecting a marriage partner is a crucial task. It is a choice that will significantly influence the course of a person's entire life. And the longer a couple is together the more alike they will become. With so much riding on this choice, Christians ought to affirmatively decide to marry only another Christian.

A Christian home begins with a Christian marriage. When a man and a woman are united in marriage a new family (home) is formed. This home can only be described as a Christian home when both the man and the woman are Christians. Do you want a Christian home? Of course, you do. So you need to marry a Christian. We need to look at this subject with our eyes wide open.

First, consider the order for the family given in God's Word. The Bible spells this out for us in 1 Corinthians 11:3. The Apostle Paul says, "But I would have you to know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." Here we have God's order for the family. The order of authority and responsibility is given with this principle of headship. As for children, the Apostle instructs, "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Col. 3:20). The order is: God-Christ-Man-Woman-Child. The well-being of the family is dependent upon the observance of God's divinely appointed order. Any change from that form which God has ordained only brings forth a malformed, misshapen, and contorted home, for which there is no cure except a return to God's original order.

The Bible speaks of marriage as a mystery. In Ephesians 5:31, the Apostle Paul quotes from Genesis 2:24, which says, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." In the next verse (Eph. 5:32) Paul explains, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Marriage is more than a mere social contract to be made and broken at will. It is a mystery. The Greek word *pvotepiov*, which is translated mystery here in this passage is referred to as "a locking up or that which serves for a locking up . . . It denotes in general something hidden or not fully manifest" (*Zodhiates' Complete Word Study New Testament*, p. 938). This word does not convey the mysterious as our English word. The idea is simply that marriage as an institution had to be revealed to men and women.

God revealed marriage to men and women. From whom else did the institution of marriage come? We can look to the Constitution of the United States and read the signatures of our founding fathers. We know from where, and from whom, we received the institution of government in our country. But the institution of marriage is much older than the government of the United States, or any other government on the face of the earth. Marriage came from God just as the seven day week also came from God, He revealed it.

The Apostle Paul is contrasting the marriage relationship with the relationship between Christ and the

church throughout the fifth chapter of Ephesians. In Ephesians 5:32 the conclusion is that both the institution of marriage and the institution of the church had to be revealed to us by God.

Every Christian marriage is designed to be a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His church. Earlier in this chapter (Eph. 5:22-27) the Apostle Paul examines the analogous nature of marriage and the relationship between Christ and the church. What is the nature of the union of Christ and His church? "Holy and without blemish," the Bible says. There is no sin in the church. A holy church is deemed a glorious church. Thus, a holy marriage is deemed a glorious marriage. Where do unbelieving sinners fit into this picture? For a marriage to reflect the relationship between Christ and the church it must be without sin. No sinner can be a part of a Christian marriage.

Unbelievers have no part in the relationship between Christ and His church. Therefore, a Christian marriage cannot reflect the relationship between Christ and the church, as the Lord intends, when that marriage is not made up of two Christians. Why would a Christian marry an unbeliever? When a Christian looks to the world of unbelievers to find a marriage partner, has he not strayed from God's design? Will that marriage be a Christian marriage? Sadly, no.

Sometimes, Christians find themselves already in a marriage with an unbeliever. They are left to make the best of their cumbersome situation. Paul wrote, "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him" (1 Cor. 7:12-13). A person who finds himself or herself married to an unbeliever, whether he or she was a Christian before or after his or her marriage, is to remain in that marriage and make the best of it as long as the unbelieving spouse is "pleased to dwell" with the Christian spouse. Nevertheless, this is not what God intended. This is nothing more than plan B. Once a person is married, however, he is married for good. This is why making a good choice for marriage is so important.

Christians must seek to fulfill God's will in selecting a mate. The common way a person selects a mate today is by dating. *Webster's College Dictionary* defines the word woo as "to seek the favor, affection, or love of, esp. with a view to marriage." We commonly call this dating. Some have said, "Every date is a potential mate." This method, of course, is unknown to the Scriptures. Even so, we are not without guidance from God's Word when it comes to selecting a mate.

The first "woman" a Christian man should court is Wisdom. Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived said, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2:1-6). Wisdom in selecting a

mate begins with the Word of God.

While the Bible says little about the method of selecting a mate, the Bible has a lot to say about the duties and obligations of husbands and wives. So, if a person wants to find a mate, and he is serious about serving God, then that person needs to know what God will expect of him once he is married. Some important questions are: What are the purposes of marriage? What instruction has God given so that Christian husbands and wives can fulfill God's purposes in marriage. What are the responsibilities of the husband? What are the responsibilities of the wife? If a person knows what God will expect of him once he is married, then he will be able to use wisdom in selecting a mate.

The question wisdom asks is "Will I be able to fulfill my obligations to God as a husband or wife with this person as my mate?" We are sometimes inclined to ask the opposite question: "Will this person be a good husband or a good wife for me?" We are always looking for Mr. or Mrs. Right. But maybe, we need to work on becoming Mr. or Mrs. Right. Some men might be amazed how many women might become Mrs. Right if they first became Mr. Right. Far too often we hear folks say, "That young man just needs a good Christian woman and he'll straighten up." Well, if he would straighten up, then he might find a good Christian woman. The wisdom of God's Word must be put to practical use. A young Christian woman learns from God's Word that a wife must submit to her husband (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18). She should be asking in advance, "For what kind of man will submission come easily?" Notice, the answer to this question can never be an unbeliever. Yet, even within the church a wise Christian will be selective. A young Christian man learns from God's Word that a husband must be the spiritual "head" of the home (1 Cor. 11:3). Therefore, a young Christian man should be asking in advance, "For what kind of woman will I be able to lead spiritually?" Again, the answer to this question can never be an unbeliever. Of course, the bottom line question is, "Will this person help me get to heaven?"

Far too often our standards for selecting a mate are based on what the world praises, instead of what the Word of God praises. Romans 12:2 says, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." The world esteems physical beauty and charm, but the Word of God esteems inner beauty, purity, and gentleness. The Apostle Peter instructs Christian women, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Young Christian men need to be looking for this kind of woman.

Physical attraction is necessary, but it has a proportional value. A young Christian man may see a young lady for the first time and be very attracted to her. She may be physically beautiful. However, as he gets to know her he may find that her "inner man" is not very beautiful. A young Christian man may meet a young lady and not be attracted to her at first, but after getting to know her better she

becomes very beautiful in his eyes. An outwardly beautiful woman may be found ugly on the inside. Then, even her outward beauty is diminished. Notice that inner beauty is incorruptible. We all know that outward, physical beauty fades away with the passing of time.

The book of wisdom teaches the value of a virtuous woman. Proverbs 31:10-12 says, "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." Again, Proverbs 31:28-30 says, "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised." Who is it that the LORD praises? The woman that feareth the LORD, that is who. Who are you praising when you seek out unbelieving persons of the world, instead of Christians who fear the Lord?

Some still ask, "What is wrong with dating out of the church?" Consider some plain Bible teaching. Christian widows are commanded to marry "only in the Lord" (1 Cor. 7:39). The Apostles of Christ had the "right to take along a believing wife" (1 Cor. 9:5 NKJV). Now, if an Apostle of Christ only had that right to take along a believing wife, and Christian widows are commanded to marry only in the Lord, both having ten times more experience and wisdom than any young person, then it seems clear that Christians marrying unbelievers is not pleasing in the sight of God; young or old.

Above all, when a young Christian knows what God's will is for the family, and in spite of that knowledge seeks a mate outside of the family of God, then he has chosen to disregard the will of God in his life. It is wrong to date out of the church, and it is wrong to marry out of the church. God has given us a design for the Christian home, and we must build our homes according to God's design. Anything less is wrong.

We will consider a few common reasons (excuses) given for dating, and even marrying, out of the church. The most common excuse is that there are not enough single Christians available to date. We have no choice but to date out of the church. First of all, at this moment in time this is simply not true. There are many young people in the church of all ages. We may have to go beyond our local congregations to meet them, but they are around. We may have to make an effort to go to the "big" meetings and visit other states. I personally know of many young married couples who lived in separate states before they were married. It can be done. And it should be added that parents who are concerned about the welfare of their child's soul ought to be sure that he or she has the opportunity to meet other young Christian, if for this reason alone. Beyond all of this, a person who is truly seeking God first in their life is going to have the help of God in finding a mate (Mt. 6:33). Is it really the case that we have no choice but to go to worldly circles to find a marriage partner, or is it rather, that we prefer the company of worldly people?

Another common reason given for dating out of the church is evangelism. This is grasping at straws. Brother Don Pruitt has said well, "Dating is not a mission field." The Scriptures tell us how to do evangelism (1 Cor. 1:21).

The method is preaching, not dating. This excuse is not even worth the space of this paragraph. We hasten on. Another reason given for dating, and even marrying, out of the church is that others have done so, and it has worked out fine. Therefore, they conclude, if it works out okay then there is nothing wrong. The end does not justify the means. It is wonderful for those few Christians who date and marry out of the church, and their spouse becomes a faithful Christian. But what about the many who do not? For the most part it does not work out. Just ask any brother or sister who has been around long enough to know, and they will tell you that more have left the church than remained faithful after marrying an unbeliever.

Another reason given is that dating is just for fun. These folks say, "Ah, we are just dating. I don't really intend to

marry her." The best laid plans of mice and men. This is all fine until someone falls in love. Friendship, companionship, and partnership do not require the dating relationship. If there is no intention to marry, then why be anything more than friends?

The bottom line is this: If you are striving to serve the Lord with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind, then why would you seek out a person who is not serving the Lord to join in marriage? Decide that you are going to have a Christian home that is pleasing in the sight of God. Decide that your marriage is going to reflect the relationship of Christ and the church. Decide that your marriage is going to fulfill all that God intended. The first place to begin is by seeking out a Christian. No less will do. 49 Black Oak Dr. Stockton, CA 95207.

WHAT CRUCIFIED MY LORD?

By CECIL SMITH

When we consider the crucifixion of our Lord, we find certain attitudes among the people that lead up to the death of our Lord. Seeing that these same problems are often found in people in our day, it is certainly worthy of our time to consider what attitudes were directly linked to the crucifixion. Many divisions and digressions have resulted because of these same reactions to the word and to the brethren. Could it not be said that when we react to our brethren in the ways of which we will notice, we are guilty of driving the nails deeper into the hands of our Lord? Paul spoke of those who crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, Heb. 6: 6. Paul also wrote to the Philippians in Phil. 3:1 8-1 9 of those who were the enemies of the cross of Christ. Are we guilty of crucifying our Lord by allowing the same problems the Jews had to go unchecked in our lives?

IGNORANCE CRUCIFIED JESUS

One of the first things that we observe as being responsible for the cross is the state of mind which we call ignorance. In Acts 3:17 Peter delivered the following charge unto those whom he held responsible for the death of our Lord; "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Many people believe ignorance is bliss, yet, Peter delivers a striking blow to this idea as he accuses them in vs. 13-14 of delivering up and denying Christ and allowing a murderer to be released in his stead. He goes on in v. 15 to accuse them of killing the Prince of life. Peter held these people responsible even though they acted in ignorance. We find that ignorance is one particular characteristic that is very prevalent in society even to this day. We very much need to heed the warning of Hosea in Hosea 4:6 "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee." Many today are destroyed for the lack of knowledge. They have rejected it much like the Jews who saw many miracles that Jesus performed, yet, they chose to be ignorant. Many today choose to be ignorant when we consider such issues as homosexuality, women teachers, bobbed hair, baptism, etc. . . In Proverbs 15:32 the Bible states, "he that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding." How often are we guilty of selective hear-

ing, hearing only what we want to hear? We need to wake up! Religious ignorance has caused thousands to face the grave unprepared and has divided the Lord's church. Let us study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth rather than acting in ignorance and taking the chance of crucifying the Lord afresh.

PRIDE CRUCIFIED JESUS

The second attitude responsible for the Lord's death was pride. This was the basis of the reaction of the religious leaders. Their own pride caused them to reject the promised Messiah. They could see nothing good coming out of Nazareth, Jn. 1:46. Also in Mk. 6:3 they were offended at the thought that Jesus was able to perform miracles. They saw him as an humble carpenter, the son of Mary, whose brothers and sisters they were all familiar with. They were looking for a king to come from some great city, from a royal lineage, to lead them forth into battle. But, Jesus came from a little community right up the road, from an humble family and came riding (triumphantly albeit) into Jerusalem upon a little donkey, rather than in a chariot of fire, Mt. 21: 5 . These people were too proud to accept this, and thus they denied his claims and delivered him up. This is also a characteristic found on every side to this very day. When we become too proud to serve the Lord and accept his word on any Bible subject, we are guilty of crucifying the Lord afresh. Jesus, in Mk. 7:22, listed pride right alongside the sin of blasphemy and placed it in the category of things which defile a man.

Pride is also one of the causes of divisions and problems in the church, as people refuse to humble themselves and be defaced if necessary in order to have peace and harmony.

ENVY CRUCIFIED JESUS

The third attitude that caused our Lord's death was envy. We find this particular problem was very easy to see, even for those on the outside looking in. After Jesus was brought unto Pilate, Pilate sought to release him "for he knew that for envy they had delivered him" Mt. 27:18. Pilate knew that these men envied the relationship that Jesus had with the people, and moved with envy, they quickly decided to

deliver him up and destroy him. Envy is also prevalent in our society. Often we also become envious of one another. Maybe someone else is a better song leader or teacher or someone's child is bragged on more than our own. Do we weep with those that weep? Do we rejoice with those who rejoice even if we are not blessed to enjoy the same benefits that they are? Paul would tell us, Rom. 13: 13, to walk honestly, as in the day not in strife and envying.

ANGER CRUCIFIED JESUS

The last attitude that we want to notice is anger. We see this exemplified in a number of places. In John 8: 59 the people were so enraged by the words of the Lord that they tried to stone him. Then in John 7:30 they sought to take him for the purpose of doing him bodily harm. They were so angry that they closed their ears to the truth and sought to destroy Jesus. Anger played a crucial role in the crucifixion of our Lord. Wrath or anger often has the same results in our day. When we become angry with someone, we become blind to the things he may be striving to teach us and react out of anger rather than love. Paul wrote unto

the Colossians in Col. 3: 8 for them to put off anger and wrath. This doesn't mean that we are in sin when we become angry, for Paul wrote in Eph. 4:26 "Be ye angry and sin not." But, we must learn to control our anger and never react out of anger. We need to consider the end result of the anger of the Jews and learn to listen to the words of Jesus in Mt. 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." Brethren, we need to consider these thoughts with all our hearts. There are many issues troubling us today, even threatening to divide the church. I submit to you that some of these issues are not so much the problem, as are the attitudes of the people behind these issues. We need to remember the words of the apostle Peter in 1 Pet. 3: 11 and learn to seek peace, and ensue it. Let us never be guilty of reacting to the word or to our brethren in any of these ways, seeing that they are directly responsible for the death of our Lord. Please, brethren, consider the question of what crucified our Lord before we are guilty of crucifying him afresh before the world and before we cause a division among the Lord's people!

THE WALLS OF JERICHO AND THE TOOTH FAIRY

continued from page 1

of Jericho at about 1400 BC, which corresponds to the biblical record. He then notes that when Miss Kenyon did her work in the 1950's she was asked, by some who had been dissatisfied with Garstang's conclusions, her opinion about the fallen walls. She advised them that Garstang had been mistaken and that the inner wall belonged to the Early Bronze Age - around 2300 BC. At once the news went out over the wires that Garstang had wrongly identified the walls of Jericho. "The walls," the report said, "were a full 1000 years earlier than Garstang had dated them. The fallen walls found by Garstang are now known to be a millennium too early to be associated with Joshua's attack. "The report readily found prominent place in the news, in learned journals, and in books almost everywhere.

Let me pause for a moment and restate the question I asked with regard to the young disc jockey on the radio. Why do men, even learned men, take such a delight in accepting and publishing so readily any information that they feel contradicts the Bible? Obviously, to accept the Bible record as true would demand an obligation to submit to the laws and precepts set down in the Bible. Men are determined to avoid at all costs subservience to the Lord and his revealed word, and therefore any scant shred of information that even slightly appears to cast doubt on the veracity of the Bible is greeted with - may I say it again - devilish delight.

But wait a minute! According to Dr. Owen, Miss Kenyon had only indicated, in her response to her questioners, the time when Jericho's massive twelve foot inner wall was constructed. In other words, the inner wall may have indeed been built hundreds of years before the outer wall, but both were standing when Joshua came. After a later excavation Miss Kenyon found evidence that a city was standing when Joshua's army came and her dates coincide with Professor Garstang's dates.

After reading all these articles (and I claim to be no expert in archaeology or archaeological jargon) it appears

that there is some variance in opinion and interpretation by the various archaeologists with regard to the dates for the construction and even the ruin of the great walls of Jericho. What is certain is that there were two massive walls with houses on top that fell down flat and then were destroyed by fire. And that, after all, is precisely what the biblical record states. I know this much - the more they dig, the more the Bible record is authenticated. On the same trip I noted at the beginning of this article (before that disc jockey stirred me up) I heard Paul Harvey comment that archaeologists uncovered some tablets that mention the Canaanite city of Hazor. Up until this discovery no record of the city of Hazor, outside the Bible, existed and of course many skeptics pointed to that and other cities likewise not confirmed by archaeology as evidence the Bible account was inaccurate.

Well, keep on digging! All the evidence of archaeology, as well as all other scientific evidence of any merit, substantiates to any honest inquirer the veracity and accuracy of the Bible record. The more men learn, in archaeology as in all other fields, the more their opinions change, but the Bible never changes. When we stand on the biblical record we are standing on a rock that is safe and sure. "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Peter 1:25)

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

continued from page 2

church services may argue and even fight? But, before the parents have calmed down the children are playing again. They have forgotten it entirely.

We believe this is the point the Lord made. Unless we change (i.e. are converted) and learn to forgive as children do, we will not enter into the eternal kingdom of heaven. No wonder Jesus said: "...Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:14) Don't be concerned about going to heaven with someone you don't like because they

may have mistreated you in some way. Jesus says those in the kingdom of heaven are going to be like "little children," In other words, those who make it will be those who are able to get over their anger. They will be those who do not hold a grudge.

It is frustrating to go into a place and have to walk the tight rope, so to speak, because some in the congregation

are angry with others. Every preacher has had to deal with this problem. Do not misunderstand, we speak not of doctrinal problems or of public sins which need to be confessed before the congregation. It is the little personal problems which vex the church so many times. Brethren, we had better learn to forgive each other!

Think on these things.-DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Song Books

Glory Gleams is the name of the new song book published by Bro. Lynwood Smith. The books are ready for ordering now. The company which prints the books has been restructured so that Lynwood has to pay for storage of the books. For this reason, he would like to ship the books from the publishing company before they are moved elsewhere. Brother Smith regrets that after more than ten years without a price increase, he is forced this year to raise the price, due to circumstances beyond his control. The price is \$3.00 per book. Send no money until the books arrive, then add the shipping price to the total and mail to M. Lynwood Smith, 2789 Loyd Star Lane N.W., Wesson, MS, 39191. Phone (601) 833-2560.

Directions to Burns TN Congregation

This is a letter to let you know the directions to the church that meets at 1610 Highway 96, Burn, TX, 37029. Take interstate 40 out of Nashville toward Memphis, take exit for Fairview/Dickson, Hwy. 96, go toward Dickson. There is a four way stop, building is on the left about 1/2 mile from there. It is about 10 miles from the interstate.

Note Of Thanks

Carolyn and I would like to thank everyone for your cards, letters, thoughts, visits, phone calls and especially your prayers following our recent auto accident. We enjoyed the several hundred cards and letters we received, the phone calls and the visits. No doubt your prayers helped most of all. Thank God for that wonderful privilege. Several came to the hospital the first night after hearing of the accident and spent much of the night with our children as they awaited word as to the extent of our injuries and if immediate surgery would be required. Your presence will always be appreciated by each of us. Carolyn and I both are doing well, although Carolyn will likely require more

surgery before she recovers completely. I'm back to preaching some and look forward to our first meeting at 36th and Everett in Kansas City, KS the last of March. We will be at Hilltop, KY April 5-12 and at Brudage Lane in Bakersfield, CA May 10-17, Lord willing. Again thanks to each of you for all that you have done on our behalf. Christians are special.-Ron Alexander.

Aaron Risener Ordained

January 26, 1998 was a day of great expectation and joy for the congregation in Allen, Texas. One of their own, brother Aaron Risener, was ordained by the church and charged by this preacher to do the work of an evangelist of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Aaron has been preparing for this day for most of his young life. He is a good speaker, song leader, and has a gift of relating well to people of all ages and backgrounds. In September of 1997 he married sister Brooke Harris, the daughter of Jerry and Beverly Harris, and we are confident she will be an asset to him in his work. It has been my privilege to work with Aaron in private Bible studies and visitation work and I can vouch for his ability. He is a zealous student of the Bible and has a commanding presence in the pulpit.



Aaron will be working under the oversight of the congregation in Allen for the foreseeable future and will further develop his talents. He is available to conduct gospel meetings and I am confident he will be an asset to the Cause of Christ for many years to come. I commend him to you, as well as the new church in Allen for the vision and wisdom they have shown in making his commitment. Aaron may be contacted at 2301 Pebblevale Drive, #425, Plano, TX 75075.-Glenn Ballard.

OUR DEPARTED

WISELEY-Bessie Ila Wisely departed this life on arch 17, 1998 at the Barry County Care Center in Cassville, Missouri at the age of 96 years, 3 months and 25 days. She was born on June 20th, 1901 in Cassville and on August 11, 1936 She married Rolla James Wisely. He preceded her in death on February 15, 1977. Sister Wisely was a

native resident of Barry County, and was a faithful member of the 17th and Townsend Church of Christ as long as her health permitted. She survived by several nieces and nephews. Since I had been called on to conduct her husband's funeral service I was also ask to conduct hers. She will be greatly missed by the Christians in this area.-Roy Lee Criswell

WILSON-Lettie Lorene Wilson of Cassville, Missouri departed this life on April 7, 1998 at Cox Medical Center

in Springfield, Mo at the age of 74 years, 4 months and 18 days. She was born to Tom and Mattie Montgomery Wilson on December 19, 1923 in Jenkins, Mo. She was self employed in Cassville, where she took care of children in her home. She was a dear sister to all of us who knew her. Survivors include one brother, Gene of Grand island, Neb.; one sister Mildred Wilson of the home; and one niece and one nephew. She was preceded in death by Wanda, a sister, her parents and one aunt. She will be greatly missed by all, and our love, sympathy and prayers are extended to Mildred at such a time as this.—Roy Lee Criswell

STANIFORD—Grace Staniford was born December 12, 1906 in Rogers Arkansas and passed from this life on April 25, 1998 in Sallisaw, OK. She had passed her 91st birthday on December 12. She was preceded in death in 1989 by her husband of 64 years, Floyd Staniford. One daughter, Mildred Roth and three brothers and sisters also preceded her in death. Grace had been a member of the Lord's

church for over 70 years. She and Floyd were faithful members of the Lodi, CA congregation for many years. She had moved to Vian, OK in 1994 to live with her daughter and son-in law, Jean and Jack Jackson. They lovingly cared for her until the end. Since 1994 she had attended the Fort Smith, AR congregation but made periodic visits to California where she enjoyed being with the Lodi and Fremont congregations. Grace was Pat's grandmother and had also lived with us for a short time before moving to OK. She was a good woman, a Christian lady in every respect. During the almost 36 years I have been a part of her family, she treated me as a son and always encouraged me in the preaching of the Gospel. May God bless her Christian example and influence for good through the coming years. It was an honor, though a difficult task, to speak comforting words at the funeral in Lodi, CA. She was laid to rest beside her husband to await the great reunion at the resurrection.—Don L. King

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

Peek-Kinser—On the afternoon of April 4, Colby Peek and Kena Kinser pledged vows of love and devotion before a large number of friends and loved ones. Colby and Kena are both devoted members of the church of Bedford, IN. Beautiful singing was provided by Lucas Peek and Kelly Kinser. Our prayer is that their Christian home will be filled with godly reverence and many years of precious memories.—Bruce Roebuck.

Hayes-Gamble—Saturday afternoon, April 25, 1998 Matthew Hayes and Kristi Gamble were married near Auburn, California before a large crowd of family and friends. The beautiful singing was performed by Cammie Nelson, Tina Brancato, Greg DeGough and Terry Osburn. Matt is the son of Jack and Debbie Hayes of Yuba City and nephew of Rod Watson. Matt is a fine young gospel preacher and is working full time with the church in Placerville, CA. Kristi is the daughter of Fred and Donna Gamble of Auburn. Kristi was raised in one of the most hospitable homes in the brotherhood and is a great blessing to Matt. These two are very dear to me. I was glad to work with them in premarital studies and honored to perform the ceremony to unite them for life.—Greg Gay.

Johnson-Hayes—A large crowd of well-wishers gathered to witness the exchange of wedding vows by Staci Hayes and Jacob Johnson Saturday, January 24, in Arlington, TX. Jacob and Staci are both faithful Christians who have grown up in the north Texas area. Staci is the daughter of Mark and Retta Hayes, both longtime members of the Green Oaks Congregation in Arlington. Jacob is the son of Johnny and Pam Johnson, both longtime members of the congregation in Graham, TX. Staci was a beautiful bride, and the ceremony was well planned and executed as witnessed by the many family members and friends who sat in the midst of the beautifully decorated auditorium. Staci and Jacob will live in Arlington and will make Green

Oaks their home congregation. I had the privilege of baptizing Staci into Christ several years ago, and it was an honor to be asked to officiate the wedding ceremony. My prayer is that they will have a long, happy marriage as they continue to dedicate their lives to the Lord's service.—Joe Norton.

Dover-Fletcher—Friends and well wishers gathered at the Wade and Cross Street meeting house, Mtn. Home, AR, May 2, 1998 to share the joy of Brother Harley Dover and Lola Fletcher (Harrington) joined hands and hearts in marriage. Presenting the Bride was her grandson Tony Barnes, with granddaughters Supria and Sunila Barnes as Maids of Honor. Grandsons Tim and David Dover were the Groomsmen. Harley is the father of Larry and Truman Dover. Lola the mother of Barbara Barnes. Truman and Geula Dover graciously opened their home for a festive gathering of friends to be received by the newlyweds. May the joy of the occasion continue with them along with the blessings of God.—Barney Owens.



Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069—As the warm air of summer approaches meetings are beginning all around. We just concluded a fine meeting with Duane Permeanter, whose preaching was pointed and plan, as well as very interesting to everyone. I look forward to working with the Lee Summit church in their annual meeting June 27-July 3. I shall assist Brother Don Pruitt in arranging services. Then I shall be with the church in McAlister, OK July 13-19 and Lexington, OK July 30-26. If you are nearby and can assist us, please do. Pray for us in traveling.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, May 8—It was my pleasure to speak at Frisco, TX April 16 during their meeting and to visit briefly with area preachers, Bob Johnson and Aaron Risener. Sally and I were at Earlytown, AL April 19-26 in their spring meeting. The attendance was less than I expected two or three nights but I thought we had a good meeting. The last weekend, we had visitors from LaGrange, GA, Lawrenceburg, TN, and Brookhaven, MS. We enjoyed the visiting and singing as well. Kevin Presley is creating good interest and doing well with his weekly telecast out of Dothan, AL. The congregation here seems to be doing well with good interest and fairly consistent crowds. We are expecting Duane Permenter to begin a weekend meeting here tonight. I will be at Hillcrest, near Brookhaven, MS for a meeting June 14-21. Please attend if you can.

Paul O. Nichols, 14870 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS, 66012, May 5—Recently we have had two more baptisms at 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas City. One was a mother of three and the other was a sixteen year old high school girl whose parents were Lutheran. We have brother Kevin Presley for a meeting, June 14-21 and look forward to that. Brother Dennis Smith spoke for us on a Wednesday night recently. We held a meeting at Cottage Grove, OR April 19-26 in which there were two adults baptized and one made a confession. We appreciated all the visiting brethren who drove such great distances to be with us, and it was so good to see various brethren and sisters whom we had known in other places and other times. We made our home with Gayland Roetta Osburn who were our fellow workers in Africa many years ago. My next meeting will be at Deer Park, TX, May 31-June 7. The Lord bless the faithful everywhere. My email address is pon.wjn.ks@juno.com.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mt. Home, AR 72653, April 27—On a recent visit to Odom, MO it was a privilege to baptize a young lady into Christ. I go to Odom regularly and enjoy our monthly visits. In the month of March we conducted a meeting in Lebanon, MO. It was a real treat to work with these brethren. Great crowds greeted us each evening. The meeting closed with one confessing sin in cutting her hair and wearing pants. In this "anything goes" society of ours it is encouraging to see that our old buwarks stand fast. Indeed, "we have no such custom." Next we were in Hillcrest, MS for their spring meeting. Brethren from neighboring congregation were present each service making the meeting a great success. I especially enjoyed several visits with Lynwood whom I hold in high regard. Home now for awhile we are making ourselves busy visiting TV leads and conducting Bible studies. It won't be long until our meeting with Joe Hisle May 29-June 7. The remainder of our meeting schedule is: Golden, OK June 15-21, Hoyt, TX Aug. 7-16, London, KY Sept. 27-Oct. 4, and Hilltop, KY Nov. 8-15.

Joe Norton, 1712 Wanda, Arlington, TX 76001, (817) 465-4933, May 14—It has been my pleasure to work with brethren in meetings and short preaching engagements in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri and California since last sending a report a couple of years ago.

Only recently did I return from my first meeting with the congregation at Leawood in Joplin, MO. Crowds were wonderful, interest was high, and attention was rapt during the services. I learned quickly to appreciate the elders and large number of leading brethren there who have the interest of work with them, and I appreciate their inviting me to conduct the meeting. June 17-21, I will be in a meeting with the congregation in West Plains, MO, Lord willing. Any who might be in the area will be welcome during the meeting. After that meeting closes, I plan to go to Ghana in West Africa for about a month. It has been my privilege to work with the brethren at the Fairview, LA, congregation in the Ghana work for several years, and I appreciate their continuing concern for the church and the brethren there. This will be my fifth trip to Ghana. In December, I coordinated the annual Preachers' Study, hosted by the Green Oaks congregation in Arlington, TX. What a privilege it was to work with these home congregation brethren again—a special thanks to Ronny Wade, Ray Fox, Wayne McKamie, Wayne Fussell, James Orten, and Jim Crouch, whose input was invaluable in planning the study. Last Lord's day here at home, we ended our annual spring meeting, this year with Bro. James Orten preaching. We had a wonderful meeting and appreciate James for his sound, but creative messages that were spiritually strengthening for all who attended. Several preachers who work in other congregations locally supported the meeting, and we really appreciated them for doing so. Please remember me in your prayers, especially in foreign work.

Brett Hickey, P.O. Box 6506, Ventura, CA 93003, May 4—We reported last month that Roy Lee Criswell baptized Chad Young in a SW Missouri jail. We initiated these studies over 18 months ago when we were in Mountain Home. Chad was amazed how area brethren visited him after his conversion. Chad wrote, "Your prayers are working and I'm thankful for having family that cares." Chad also mentioned studies with an out-of-duty member of the church. Chad tried to encourage him to turn back to God. Chad's greatest fear is that Christians will ostracize him because of his past. I assured him that most Christians are very grateful that they have been forgiven. They rejoice with others who obtain the forgiveness of sins. We plan to see Chad this summer. Our June meeting in Anderson, MO is only 10 miles from Chad. Anita has studied with us for months. She attended Doug Hawkins' recent meeting. This week we reviewed the identifying marks of the church. She attends a large, Charismatic, "non-denominational" church. She said she could see that the Church of Christ follows the New Testament pattern, but she "feels Spirit talking" at her church. She conceded eventually that "feelings" were the major source of confusion and division in religion. She realizes this is at odds with the plea of Christ and Paul (Jn. 17:20-21; I Cor. 1:10). We re-established scripture as the only reliable foundation for faith and salvation (Rom. 10:17; 8:16). As we ended the study, she commended the simplicity of the church. Jerry and his twelve year old son were baptized this week after the efforts of several people for several months. They have an "Assembly of God" background, but have been attending an area "cups" church with family. After rejoicing with them, we discussed the Lord's Supper passages. We hope

we can overcome family pressure and worship scripturally. Richard accepted our challenge to find anything that was not biblically correct from *The Church That Christ Built*. He is considerably combative and surprisingly stubborn for one who still seems interested in the truth. After a brief absence, he came back gloating that he has found a couple of errors. Despite his obvious research, he witnessed the power of the word combined with reason to expose error. We look forward to our visit at Bakersfield (Planz Rd.) the end of May. In June, we look forward to being with the church at Anderson, MO and many others at Lebanon over the Fourth of July.

Cecil E. Smith, 8170 E. St. rd., 64, Marengo, IN 47140—It's been a long time since I have taken the opportunity to write a field report. The work-here seems to progress at a very slow pace. For each step forward it seems we take a step or two back. We have had a number of studies with a cups and classes preacher concerning our differences and hope to continue these studies. We also have been striving to keep studies going with a few of the members here. We've enjoyed some wonderful meetings here in this place with many outsiders at each meeting. Prayerfully these individuals will have good hearts and allow the seed to grow. It is very encouraging to know that we are offering the gospel to a group of people that otherwise would have to drive some distance in order to here the truth taught. It is a great privilege to be able to assist the work in IN. It was also good to be able to visit New Salem this past month and see those whom I love dearly. It is our desire to continue to preach the word and trust in God for the increase. Please prayer for us in our endeavors. If you are ever in the Louisville area please give us a call.

Roy Lee Criswell, Route 2, Box 2535, Cassville, MO 65625—I am presently engaged in a series of gospel meetings here at Mozier, Illinois. Our crowds have been smaller than usual, but we have had several visitors. Thus far we have had 2 persons who have made confessions, and desired the prayers of the church. The Lord's work in Aurora, Mo. continues go forward. We are trying to do more visiting in the community in order to get home studies. Recently Bro. Brett Hickey contacted me about a young man he had studied with in Mt. Home, Arkansas who was incarcerated while Brett lived there. He told me that this young man wanted to obey the gospel. He is now in prison in Missouri. I visited with him a couple of times, and obtained permission from the sheriff who permitted him to be taken out of prison to be baptized. He has a good knowledge of the Scriptures and seems to be sincere. I realize he will need a lot of encouragement and prayers until he is finally released. Please pray for him and the Lord's work. Also pray for those of us who labour for the Lord.

Douglas T. Hawkins P.O. Box 728 Brodhead, KY 40409 - Tel.# (606) 758 4071 Apr. 29, 1998—As you can tell from our new address we have recently moved to Kentucky. Our house in Missouri sold very quickly. Since we were at a natural transition in the work in MO, the brethren at Lebanon were gracious to let us move on to Kentucky early. Bro. Dan Wissinger from Springfield is taking over the work in the Eldon - Brumley area. We wish him the

very best as he begins his full time work for the Lord in that area. We are really going to miss our brethren in Missouri, but we are thankful for the opportunity to work out of the Blue Springs congregation in KY. Lord willing, we plan to work full time holding gospel meetings. The church in Blue Springs is going to support us part time so we can preach more in meetings. I am very grateful to them for this opportunity. Presently, I am in a meeting at Washington, OK This is one of the very first places I held a meeting when I first started preaching. I am glad to be with them again. I am enjoying them tremendously. Bro. Barney Owens just closed a meeting in Eldon, MO. I really enjoyed being with him throughout the meeting. Barney is a "gospel" preacher in the truest since. I appreciated the meeting so much. Our next meetings will be in Indianapolis, IN (June 3-7) and Greenville, SC (June 14-21). Come if you can. God bless the faithful!

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, April 17, 1998—Our annual Young People's meeting was April 3-5 at the 64th. St. congregation in Sacramento, CA. Once again we had tremendous crowds, up to 200 for the evening services. We used Frank Harris, who works with the church at Santa Rosa and Ryan Connor, who works with the church at Stockton to select the theme, contact the speakers and make all the appointments during the meeting. Our theme was "Christian Evidences." The young men who spoke proved they are very capable of researching difficult subjects and boiling down their presentations to the most essential points. We have had two baptisms at 64th. St. since the first of the year with prospects for more. While we have lost some of our earlier converts to worldliness, the others are growing and developing wonderfully. During January and February we studied with the men of the congregation one night a week on public participation in the church. We now have several more men who are willing and able to help in leading prayers, songs, and at the table. We were in Oklahoma the end of February for my nephew Brandon Holt's wedding to Deborah Hisle. While there I preached at Capitol Hill in Oklahoma City. I have recently enjoyed hearing Doug Hawkins at Oakdale and Alan Bonifay at Fair Oaks. Our grandson Hayden, who will be three in June, had heart surgery in February for a heart valve transplant. The surgery was successful and he is doing fine.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, May 11—Joe Hisle recently closed a good meeting for us. Joe preached the Word without fear or favor and we salute him for it. We give God the praise and glory for all the good accomplished. The church is certainly the better because he came our way. We thank the sister congregations and preaching brethren who attended and helped us in the effort. The young men are growing here and their improvement is shown in their teaching, song leading, serving at the Lord's table, prayers and faithful attendance at services. Some will soon be able to take their turn teaching on Lord's Day morning and more than that, be able to do a good job. Fremont is blessed with youth. Young men and women who have abilities with which to serve the Lord and the energy to do so in a thrilling way. It's wonderful to be with folks who are anxious to do what

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they can. It will soon be time for summer travel and meetings and we look forward to seeing many of you in various places. Don't forget us when you pray.

Jimmy Vannoy, 105 Sunset Circle, Corsicana, TX 75110, (903) 396-2190—The congregation in Corsicana, Texas has had some exciting opportunities in recent times to spread the gospel to the lost. Since this January, we have a scheduled weekly Bible study with the inmates at the county jail. We have found them to be very sincere and receptive, and they listen intently to our presentations. We go in pairs and rotate among four men. Those participating are Mike Jones, Clayton Libhart, Mike Davis and me. Since we started, we have baptized twenty men. We emphasize to them that they are members of the church and that God expects them to assemble for worship when they get out. They continue to get teaching by attending the weekly studies after they are baptized. This kind of work could be an opportunity for congregations throughout the brotherhood to reach the lost. Just check with the jail administrator at your county, state or federal facility. The jail personnel have been very helpful to us.

The Corsicana congregation has also been involved in the Russian work for several years, and many have been saved as a result. This summer, Steve Ramsey, Paul Willmon and I plan to work in Moscow. Considering the very good results in other parts of Russia, we anticipate great things from this work. We need additional support for this work if anyone is able to help.

Wyn R. Baker, P.O. Box 745, Lavalette, WV 25535—As Spring approaches, the work in this area of West Virginia is doing well, and has made steady progress since our last report to the OPA. Just recently in March, we were privileged to hear Bro. William St John of Paris, TX, preach in a gospel meeting at the 18th street congregation in Huntington. His diligence in study, and clarity of speech, made for a spiritually uplifting week, and we are thankful to him for his efforts as a gospel preacher and to all who made this meeting a success! In the week following, at

the congregation here at Garrett's Creek, we too were greatly encouraged and uplifted, by a week gospel meeting with Bro Ronny Wade. Ronny did his usual superb job of preaching the gospel, and the results from this effort truly went beyond our expectations. With the help of local and distant congregations, and a consistent effort made by our own members, we had a full house nearly every night throughout the week, and was able to attract at least 9 new community visitors, some of which are proving to be good leads. A special thanks to Ronny and Alfreda for their time and effort spent during this week, and thanks to all who helped and supported us during this gospel meeting. We look forward to Ronny's meeting in June, at Spring Valley! Since the meeting ended, we are glad to report that we've had one restoration at Garrett's Creek. A lady who recently moved into the area a couple of years ago from Columbus OH, came to services recently and made a public confession of fault, due to her condition of being out of duty for several years. She seems to be doing well at this time, and her son who is not a member of the church has attended services with her and seems to hold a good interest in Bible study. We are encouraged with this sister's dedication in returning to the fold, and we pray for God's oversight and blessings to be upon her and her family. Also, we have two enrolled in our Bible correspondence course, that came as a result of public advertisements in our local paper, and also from the "Bible Talk" phone messages that Dennis Smith records and advertises in the tri-state area. In summary, the work in this area appears to be doing very well, and our prayer is to continue doing all we can to advance the Cause. Our work agenda for the next few weeks, is to stabilize our local work through public and private teaching and to make preparation for the upcoming gospel meeting at Radnor, with Allen Bailey of Irving TX, which runs April 27-May 3. One Final Note: Please pray for the success of a new congregation that has just started meeting this past Sunday (April 4th), in the area of Lexington, KY. Bro Richard Bunner will be working with this new congregation, and we pray for great success to come in this new evangelistic work!

Can You Help This Family?

The family of Brother Philip Scott, who worships with the church in London, KY, is having a difficult time. Their daughter has been in and out of the hospital for several weeks. Sister Scott has had to take a leave from her job in order to care for this child. Hospital bills and other related expenses are overwhelming at this time. These people are worthy of our help. Please send all donations to Philip Scott, 74 Old Hitop Road, Corbin, KY 40701.—Ronny F. Wade

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

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NO. 7

YOU WILL BE CALLED BY A NEW NAME

By JERRY CUTTER

"You will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow" (Isaiah 62:2). What is this new name "which the mouth of the Lord shall name?" The word Christ (the anointed) is not a new name. Jesus is not new, and is sometimes translated Joshua. The words saint, disciple, or believer also are not new. The new name is CHRISTIAN, a new name given to the Lord's children by the Lord Himself. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Proverbs 22:1), and this is a good name.

A few years ago I was listening to a tape of brethren discussing Christmas. One defense of Christmas (Christmas) was that pagans gave us the name Christian. The conclusion was that if we readily accept, and wear with honor, a name the world gave us, then to be consistent, we should not be concerned with something like Christmas. No one present at the discussion challenged this pseudo argument. There are two great admissions in what the brethren said. One was that Christ Mass is of the world (Catholic). This is correct. The other admission was false, and unscriptural. That is, that pagans gave us the name Christian.

In the above discussion, Acts 11:26 was given as a proof text. The Bible says "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." In this clear and simple statement, nothing is said, or alluded to, that would suggest that Christian was a nickname given by pagans to the Lord's people.

We are not discussing the use of the word Christian, but it is well to remember that it is a name, or a noun. However, nouns may be used as adjectives, and often are, as with gospel (gospel meetings), church (church buildings), song (song books), Christian (Christian homes), etc.

The key to Acts 11:26 is found in the word called. The disciples were CALLED Christians. This word is used nine times in the New Testament. Vine explains called by saying "occasionally means to be called or named, Acts 11:26 (or the name 'Christian') and Rom. 7:3, the only places where it has this meaning." "They 'were (publicly) called' Christians, because this was their chief business." Thayer (671) defines called: "3. to assume or take to one's self a

name from one's public business; univ. to receive a name or title, be called: Acts 11:26; Rom. 7:3." In the other seven instances where this word is used in the New Testament, it is translated in various ways, depending on the text. However, the main point is, the word always refers to something revealed FROM HEAVEN ITSELF. It was never something man gave, and certainly not the pagans. Thus, you shall be called by a NEW NAME, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

You will also notice that there is a verse listed along with Acts 11:26. Rom. 7:2-3 reads: "For the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall BE CALLED an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. "Who calls a woman an adulteress (not withstanding the exception) who is married to another man while her husband lives? God does. Not civil law. And all the debating, twisting, and pleading man can devise will never escape the truth of the matter. God calls such a woman an adulteress.

Why was not the new name, Christian, given from Jerusalem? No answer is really required. However, at the time the church was established in Jerusalem no Gentiles were members. The prophecy in Isaiah says that "the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness." When the new name was given the Gentiles were Christians, and Antioch was the center of Gentile activity.

Christian is a great name. We need to be reminded that great privileges and responsibilities go with this name. It is a name to be desired. "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (I John 3:1). I Peter 4:1-16 gives strong advice on what being a Christian means. Verse 16 says: "However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name." (NIV)

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CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 7



A D V O C A T E

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-10

- You Will Be Called By A New Name .. 1
- Long Hair And Women Preachers 2
- The Querist Column 3
- 19th Century Apostles? 3
- "God Is No Respector Of Persons" 5
- The Sabbath Day 7

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

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Editorial

LONG HAIR AND WOMEN PREACHERS

By ANDREW ONG

While many preachers in the cups and Sunday School churches still believe that 1 Timothy 2:11-14 prohibits women preachers, they openly defy the instructions recorded by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 pertaining to the hair ordinance.

This article is written to point out that the hair ordinance of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and the prohibition against women preachers in 1 Timothy 2:11-14 stand or fall together! Paul uses the same basic argument to make his case for both conclusions. In short, Paul was appealing to the 'order of creation' argument in both the cases.

Notice how one of Paul's arguments concerning the hair ordinance is put in 1 Corinthians 11:7-9, *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.*

Now notice how similar the wordings of the argument against women preachers is put in 1 Timothy 2:11-13, *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first form then Eve.*

Both passages argue their respective cases from the fact that the first man, Adam, was created first, and then the first woman, Eve. This argument is not based upon culture, but is based upon the "order of creation." Since it is the same argument for both practices, if one practice does not apply anymore, then neither does the other. The careful Bible student must either accept the hair ordinance as applicable and binding today, or if he rejects it, claiming it was just cultural, then to be consistent he must reject the prohibition against woman preachers upon the same basis, that is, he must teach that it was just cultural. Clearly then, these two teachings must stand or fall together.

Some have made the argument that in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul makes the 'order of creation' and other arguments, in favor of man being the head of woman, and that the hair ordinance is just a cultural application of the headship principle. But the same basic argument could be made about 1 Timothy 2 and its prohibition against women preachers. Robert H. Rowland in his book, "I Permit Not A Woman To Remain Shackled," on page 82 correctly (for consistency) says, "If...long hair...uncovered heads, etc, were mere customs to be followed to conform to the local practices and not applicable today, why were Paul's instructions on women being silent any less subject to the argument that this was also just a practice or a custom? Both passages mention the 'churches' not just in Corinth." His

continued on page eight

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Do you believe that everything we do is worship? I have heard of some who are teaching this. (CA)

Answer: To so teach, in the view of this writer, shows a lack of information about the true nature of worship. While physical external actions nearly always accompany worship, such actions in and of themselves do not constitute worship. Worship is intrinsic, it is an emotion, a thought of the mind. In worship we render respect and homage to God. The worshipper expresses what he feels inwardly by some type of outward expression. In the old testament the most used Hebrew word for worship (*shahah*) means to bow down. However merely bowing down would not necessarily indicate that the person so doing was worshipping God. Abraham, for example, bowed down when he was buying a burial sight for Sarah (Gen.23:7). But in Gen.22:5, Abraham said that he and Isaac "would go yonder; and we will worship (*shahah*) and come again to you." Here his intentions were made clear. In the new testament the most commonly used word for worship is (*proskuneo*) and carries the meaning of "to make obeisance, do reverence to, kiss." Ancient Persians would bow down on their knees, seeking to kiss the hand of the king. Through usage the physical act of *proskuneo* was transferred to the mental act of worship (see John 4:24). Obviously one can "bow down" or "kiss" someone with no thought of worship involved. (Note Mark 15:19 and Mt.26:48 as examples) The essence of worship takes place in the heart, and may not be explained or defined by mere outward actions. Those advocating the idea that everything we do is worship usually contend that the life of a Christian is not compartmentalized into religious as opposed to secular activities, and since everything we do should glorify God (1Cor.10:31), then everything we do is worship. I believe these people are confusing worship with service. While worship is service to God, all service is not worship. To contend that plowing a field, sewing a garment, eating a hamburger etc. etc. constitutes worship, seems far-fetched to say the least. It may be that some have been misled by some of the new translations that have removed the word "service" from Romans 12:1 and replaced it with the word "worship" (RSV, NASV, NIV). On this point Hugo McCord makes the following observation "It is true that in certain contexts that the Greek word in Romans 12:1 (*latreuo*) is properly rendered as worship (as in Romans 9:4). But in itself the word only means serve, whether the service is toward God or men (cf. *latris*, a hired servant;

latron, hire, pay). Sometimes the word refers to a lifetime of service to God (Acts 24:14; Heb. 12:28), and the context of Romans 12:1 shows one's offering his body as a living sacrifice is a lifetime of service, not of meditation (which is what worship is)." The scriptures indicate that worship is not continuous. For example Abraham climbed a mountain to worship on its summit, and then after the worship, returned to his camp at the foot of the mountain (Gen. 22:1-5). If Abraham did not worship until he reached the summit of the mountain, then everything he did (the going and coming down from the mountain) was not worship. David (2 Sam.12:20) learned that his baby was dead. He then bathed, changed clothes, and went into the house of Jehovah "and worshipped." When he had worshipped, he returned home and ate a meal. It is obvious that the bathing, changing clothes, and eating a meal were not considered worship. Luke declared that the Ethiopian officer had come to Jerusalem to worship, then returned to Ethiopia (Acts 8:27), distinguishing between that which was considered worship and that not so considered. From these examples we can see that not everything a person does is worship. As someone has noted, worship is perpendicular—up to God; service is horizontal—outstretched hands to help mankind. Perhaps the following outline will help us better understand the difference between worship and service.

Worship is toward God, John 4:24 Acts 17:25

Worship is internal, Acts 17:25

Worship is vertical, Psa.95:6; John 17:1

Worship is punctuated, Gen.22:5; 2 Sam.12:20

Worship is accompanied with five actions singing, praying, giving, communing, and teaching or studying the Scriptures, Acts 2:42, Eph.5:19

Service is toward mankind, Gal. 5:13; Hebrews 6:10

Service is external, Luke 10:33

Service is horizontal, Mt.10:42

Service is durative or punctuated, Acts 6:2; 1 Tim.5:10

Service consists of unnumbered deeds, Titus 3:1, Gal.6:9

Both worship and service are important areas of the Christian's life. To conclude, however, that everything one does is worship, is to assume something the Scriptures do not teach.

(Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, Mo. 65808)

19TH CENTURY APOSTLES?

By BRETT HICKEY

The Lord's church is well aware of the apostles' unique role in relaying God's word to mankind. This faith-giving fact is based largely on John 16:13 where the Scriptures record that the Holy Spirit would "guide the apostles into all truth." Even the babe in Christ knows as well that there

have been no apostles for about 1900 years.

With this fresh on your mind, imagine if you will, twelve of our most talented and educated preachers starting an elite club and calling themselves "Apostles." In light of 1 Cor. 4:6, that would make many Christians very uncom-

fortable.

Beyond that, picture an even more elite group within this Apostles club calling themselves "the three." Men daring to profane that sacred office would repulse and alarm most Christians - and, well it should!

You will probably be surprised to learn that this is exactly what happened in the Anglican Church from 1850-1881. "The three" are B.F. Westcott, F.J.A. Hort and J.B. Lightfoot. It is an unfortunate coincidence that these same "Apostles" ushered in the revolutionary Greek text responsible for so much chaos and controversy. Many are hesitant to concede that these "apostles" revived the "true revelation" that had disappeared for 1500 years.

Do members of the Lord's church have a right to know who laid the foundation for most of the modern versions? I think we do! In light of I John 4:1, before brethren follow the prophets who recommend retiring the King James Version, they deserve to know a little about these 19th century apostles.

Fenton John Anthony Hort

The ringleader of this group, the mastermind behind the Westcott-Hort Greek text of 1881, is F.J.A. Hort. His son Arthur, *not* an enemy with an axe to grind, published two volumes of his Life and Letters. These books are real eye-openers!

Hort was a liberal Anglican. That's not a slur, but how Hort repeatedly describes himself. Well then, what is a liberal Anglican? Listen to Hort's personal description. He wrote, Mary worship and Jesus worship have very much in common in their causes and results.ⁱ I am inclined to think that no such state as 'Eden' ever existed.ⁱⁱ I am inclined to think (Darwin's book) unanswerable...it is a treat to read such a book.ⁱⁱⁱ But the book which has most engaged me is Darwin... it is a book that one is proud to be contemporary with.^{iv}

Looking For Ghosts?

Westcott and Hort were charter members of the Ghostly Guild. These highly respected scholars spent time looking for ghosts! Not only are ghost hunting, spiritualism and channeling foolish and immature, but they are condemned by scripture.^v

If the reader is not already alarmed, surely he would be concerned that F.J.A. Hort and his fellows believed not in the infallibility of scripture.^{vi} Can we blindly trust the spiritual discernment of such men? Must we accept the unproven theories of men admittedly enamored with Charles Darwin?

Wisdom Of Man Or Power Of God

The Westcott-Hort Greek text contradicts the Received Text (KJV) in the form of 10,000 additions, omissions and changes. After considering both sides of complicated textual issues, the answer to our present difficulty may be expressed by the apostle Paul in I Cor. 2:4-5:

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.

Will we trust the "wisdom of men" or the "power of

God"? Westcott and Hort deny that God has preserved his word down through the ages. They deny that the power of God is manifested in the preservation of His word in over 5000 Greek manuscripts. Instead the Christian is to place his confidence in the cunningly devised theories of scholars.

If the true gospel can be traced back to the completion of the New Testament canon — if the true gospel has been preserved for us today in over 5000 manuscripts over the centuries from various parts of the civilized world — if the quotations of the so-called early church fathers (200-600 A.D.) substantiate essentially this same Greek text — has God not clearly demonstrated his great power in unmistakable terms?

Let me illustrate how man's wisdom attempts to overshadow what appears to be the awesome power and providence of God.

In a criminal trial the testimony of 500 witnesses harmonized beautifully. Two others give conflicting testimony. They contradict not only the 500, but each other. One lawyer says that this proves the 500 were in collusion and that one or both of the other witnesses hold the truth.

Hort enlists this kind of reasoning to defend his controversial New Greek text. Hort claims that it is impossible for so many MSS to agree so completely and yet be independent (significant authorities disagree).^{vii} Consequently, Hort rejects the reading reflected in the KJV for one found in a scant minority of MSS. Hence, the modern versions. Hence, doubt cast on such critical passages as Mk. 16:16 and Acts 8:37.

Was F. J. A Hort just a rebellious young man who never grew up? Barely exposed to Greek texts at age 23, this famous Anglican called the Greek text reflected in our King James Version, "vile" and "villainous."^{viii} It was the height of arrogance and presumption for a novice to make such bold denunciations. Nevertheless, his unrelenting attacks on what many still consider the word of God as a matter of history.

Hort's mother was a staunch conservative. Arthur Hort relays, The Oxford Movement filled her with dread and anxiety as to its possible effects on her son. She was unable to enter in to his theological views, which to her school and generation seemed a desertion of the ancient ways. . .^{ix}

Notice, these were not the words of a radical KJV defender, but Hort's own letters combined with the accounts of the scholar's son and mother. Hort spent the rest of his life defending his early prejudice against the Traditional Text.

Did Hort Have Something To Hide?

Consider this excerpt from a letter he wrote to Bishop Westcott in 1861:

I have a sort of craving that our text should be cast upon the world before we deal with matters likely to brand us with suspicion. I mean, a text, issued by men already known for what will undoubtedly be treated as dangerous heresy, will have great difficulties in finding its way to regions which it might otherwise hope to reach, and whence it would not be easily banished by subsequent alarms.^x

This is F.J.A. Hort — the man Neil R. Lightfoot extolls for giving the “deathblow” to the KJV. An unlikely hero, for sure! This is the same man that devised a set of theo-

ries that overturned the testimony of the overwhelming majority of surviving manuscripts (80-90%).

ⁱ Life and Letters of F.J.A. Hc p. 50.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 78.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 414.

^{iv} Ibid., p. 416.

^v Lev. 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:9-12; Is. 8:19

^{vi} Hort, p. 400, 421 -425.

^{vii} Metzger, *The Tet of the New Testament*, pp. 159- 175

^{viii} Hort, p. 211.

^{ix} Ibid., p. 7.

^x Ibid., p. 445.

“GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS”

By VIRGILIO O. DANA (PHILIPPINES)

Sometimes this statement is used as a basis of some “so-called preachers of the gospel,” in claiming that whatever religious affiliation a person has is not important for God will “choose or pick-up” those whom He will save from all existing sects and denominations today. If this claim is not investigated in the light of the Scriptures, it appears to be biblical. But what does the Bible say? I would like, therefore, to call your attention to ponder and search the Scriptures with me, and find out whether such claim is scriptural.

What Does The Context Say?

First, in order to fully understand the statement — “God is no respecter of persons” (KJV) — let us examine the context of the passages where this is found. Carefully scrutinizing the entire Chapter Ten of the Acts of the Apostles, we can clearly see the reasons why Peter made this statement. Bear in mind, at the time, he was engaged in a conversation with Cornelius and his household. Also, it is important to note that Cornelius was a Gentile. Before, in God’s sight, there were only TWO CLASSES OF MAN: the Jews; and the Gentiles. The Jews (or Israelites) are the descendants of Jacob; and anybody (—whether a Filipino, Chinese, American, etc.—) who is not a Jew is a Gentile. Cornelius and his household were not Jews, so they were Gentiles.

In the Old Testament, the Jews were considered God’s people, while the Gentiles were “afar off.” Many of them did not believe in the Almighty God. Paul said: “Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world” (Esh. 2:11-12). Before they heard and obeyed the Gospel, the Gentiles were far from Almighty God.

But the case of Cornelius was unusual. For though he was a Gentile, he was a “devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always” (Acts 10:2). God heard his prayers. This led the Apostle Peter to his household. To Cornelius and those who were gathered together in his house, Peter said: “You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that

I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gain saying, as soon as I was sent for; I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? And Cornelius said ‘Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth house, I prayed in my house, and, behold a man stood before me in bright clothing. And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are hand in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter, he is lodged in the house of one Simon a Tanner by the sea side: Who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately, therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come, Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God” (Acts 10:28-33).

Based on what Cornelius has explained, immediately Peter perceived that God has already opened the gate of salvation to the Gentiles. Not anymore that the Jews only had the privilege and right to become God’s people: For the fact that He heard the prayers of Cornelius, a Gentile who has no “promise” being “afar-off” from God, proves beyond a shadow of doubt, that now God has also bestowed to them the same opportunity the Jews enjoyed. And because of this, Peter said, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him” (Acts 10:34-35). This proves the Gentiles are now included, and are given the chance to become citizens, members, of the Kingdom and be saved! THIS IS THE REAL ESSENCE of Peter’s statement, “God is no respecter of persons,” for there is no more Jew, or Gentile before Him. Both can now obtain and enjoy salvation!

Present Application Of The Statement

God is no respecter of persons to those who want to be saved! Whoever a person may be—very rich or a beggar, educated or illiterate, blind, mute, etc..., regardless of color and nationality—if he is willing to surrender to God, and obey His commandments, God is ready to bestow upon him the promise of salvation. It is not only those who are wealthy, beautiful, handsome, influential, etc..., who have the opportunity or privilege to be saved! In short, salvation is now offered to all. But only those who want to avail themselves of this wonderful opportunity—those who want to obey the will of God—will be saved! This was understood by Cornelius. That was why, when he was told, he

and his household, humbly obeyed and were immersed in Christian baptism (Acts 10:42-48).

God does not show partiality to those who are members of any existing denomination. He will accept and promise them salvation, if they want to turn to Him. Provided, of course, that they are willing to relinquish their membership in such religious bodies, and be added to the true Church of Christ. Let us remember, there is but one way that connects men to God in Heaven. This spiritual way is our Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Take note, "I am the way..." This connotes that the way is His body. But it is not His physical body. It is His spiritual body, which is the Church. Paul substantiated this truth. He wrote: "Who now rejoice, in my sufferings for you, and fill us that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his bodies sake, which is the Church" (Col. 1:24). This is the only way we must follow to be able to enter God's Kingdom in Heaven. Whoever desires (for God is no respecter of persons) can follow this way by becoming a faithful member of the glorious spiritual body of Christ, the Church of Christ.

Some Pervert This Statement

However, today there are those who are perverting this statement, making it contrary to its meaning, in so far as its usage in Acts 10. Using this is their exerted efforts to show that their teaching regarding salvation is true (?), they claim, as earlier pointed out, that since "God is no respecter of persons," God will "pick-up, select or choose," those whom He will save from the different existing sects and denominations today. But as is shown already, their claim is not scriptural. For, contrary to their beliefs, Peter's statement means the gate of heaven is already opened, and salvation is NOW OFFERED to both the Jews and Gentiles, for everybody!

Moreover, it is not because that "God is no respecter of persons," that all men will then be saved! This reasoning is absurd. This only supports one's opinion which endorses universal salvation—everybody will be saved! The fact is, the Bible clearly teaches that there will be two separate places where man may spend eternity after the final judgement day! Our Lord Jesus Himself (as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew) gives us a very vivid account of the event that will take place on the day of judgement. He says, "When the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'...Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'...And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matt. 25:31-34, 41, 46). So, there are those who will not be saved!

Furthermore, being a sincere member of a certain denomination is not a guarantee for one to claim the prom-

ise of salvation even though "God is no respecter of persons." On the day of judgement, there will be honest and sincere members of religious bodies, who claim to have powers to do miraculous things such as powers to heal sickness, to speak in tongues, and the like—who will say to the Great Judge, our Lord Jesus: "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works" (Matt. 7:22). But the Lord will say to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (v. 23). Let us remember, only those who will obey His will be saved!

Warning!

Your soul is at stake if you are not a member of the true Church of Christ, but a part of a certain sect or denomination. In this case, you are following a way, entering a door, not authorized by God. Jesus warns, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (John 10:1). Extricate yourself from this very dangerous situation! In behalf of our soul, in the name of salvation, take heed to the pleadings of God, in His infinite love, mercy and grace, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). Take note, God is calling His people to "come out." Where? Actually, the principle and application maybe referred to all existing religious bodies—sects and denominations today. Why? So that they may stop being partakers of their sins, and may evade eternal punishment. **GOD SHOULD NOT BE CALLING HIS PEOPLE TO "COME OUT," IF HE WILL "PICK, CHOOSE OR SELECT" FROM THE DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS BODIES THOSE WHOM HE WILL SAVE.** Instead, He should exhort them to remain faithful and steadfast!

Dear reader, if you are a member of a denomination God is ready to accept you and grant to you salvation. Provided, of course, you come out of your present religious affiliation and become a part of the true Church of Christ, the only spiritual way that leads you to heaven. However you are, avail yourself of this wonderful opportunity opened for you and those whose only spiritual obsession in life, is to be able to reach heaven and be saved! Do not believe what some so-called preachers of the gospel claim that God will "pick-up, choose or select" those whom He will save from the different sects and denominations today. This claim is not true, as we have already clearly pointed out. This is not in harmony with the teaching of the Bible. Remember, there is only one way that can bring us all to heaven. This is the spiritual body of Jesus, the Church of Christ. You can never go to heaven by following the other way!

How to follow the way, is very easy to do: First, you have to have faith in Christ Jesus, the Son of the living God (Act 8:37; mark 16:16), and this you obtained by hearing or listening to the preaching of the word of God (Rom. 10:17); Second: You must repent of your sins (Luke 13:3, Acts 17:30), "for all have come short" of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23); Third: you must confess your faith in Jesus (Acts 8:37, Rom. 10:8-9); Fourth: You must be immersed

in water (in baptism) for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38, 22:16, Mark 16:16); Fifth: Remain a faithful member of the Church until death (John 15:7, Rev. 2:10, Matt. 24:13). Dear reader, today is the appropriate day for sal-

vation! Tomorrow may be too late! Now that you have still the strength to obey what God wants you to do. Remember, God is waiting for your return to Him, whoever you are. For "God is no respecter of persons."

THE SABBATH DAY

By BARNEY OWENS

The Sabbath is a subject that has been presented in the past, but since it has been some time and since this question has been asked, it seems good to notice some things in reference to it.

First, A Lesson For Us All

There is not time to let down our guard and there is not an error that we can think has no merit or that will not possibly come face to face in our life. Some seem to think that there are some subjects that we need not present publicly because everyone knows what is right about it, or that there is little need to do private study because it may happen to others or in another place but not to me or where I live. The words of Peter need our constant attention:

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: (1 Peter 3:15)

Regarding The Question

The inquirer wants to know, "why we are to keep Sunday worship and not Saturday." If this is asked that the keeping is the same day on the First Day Of The Week as the Old Testament teaches the Sabbath was to be kept, then there is no similarity. I mean that the ordinances regarding the Sabbath are not to be applied to the Lord's Day. But if it is meant that we "keep the ordinances" required of Christians in worship as delivered by the Apostles, then I am prepared to answer (1 Cor. 1:2, etc.). We shall show before the conclusion that the Sabbath is no longer a command for God's people, therefore the manner of keeping it is not observed.

The Meaning Of The Word Sabbath

The "Sabbath" is literally the seventh (7th) day of the week (each week) which was sacred to the Israelites, and upon which they were required to abstain from all work. This is the day that is commonly referred to as "Saturday." I am not advocating that "Saturday" is synonymous in meaning with the word Sabbath, but I am using it as a frame of reference to clarify the day meant. Nor am I prepared to defend the word "Sunday" as being synonymous with the "Lord's Day" as far as meaning, but since it is commonly used I can refer to it as such because immediately all understand I am speaking of the First Day Of The Week. So, the Sabbath of our questions is "Saturday" and not "Sunday." That should be clear enough.

To Whom Was The Sabbath Given?

Bible students are aware, without my having to prove it, that there are three ages or dispensations in scripture: The first age began with Adam and lasted until the deliverance of the children of Isreal under the leadership of Moses,

commonly referred to as the "Age of the Fathers" or the Patriarchal Dispensation. The second began with Moses being the People's Leader and the Spokesperson for God, lasting until the coming of Christ. There were Judges, Prophets, and Kings that delivered the law of God during this age of progressive revelation. But Moses was the prime source. It therefore is usually called the "Mosaic Age" or the "Jewish Dispensation." The last began with Jesus Christ Who is the Word made flesh and it was in His generation that the complete "last Will and Testament of Christ" was given to the world, and this will be the final age of the world, when Jesus comes again to judge the people. This we speak of as the "Age of Christ" or "The Christian Dispensation." Now what does this information have to do with the question at hand? Just this: The Sabbath is related to one of these ages in a way that is not true of the other two. Let me show you.

PATRIARCHAL

No Sabbath Command
No Sabbath Command
No Sabbath Punishment

CHRISTIAN

No Sabbath Command
No Sabbath Example
No Sabbath Punishment

MOSAIC

Sabbath Command
Sabbath Example
Sabbath Punishment

The Mosaic Dispensation is the one in which God's People were commanded to "keep the Sabbath." The manner in which they were to obey by observance is specified. There are examples of the people in that time observing the Sabbath in strict obedience to God's will. And we find the punishment prescribed and carried out upon those who violated the Sabbath Day. Such is not true in either of the other dispensations. It is true that there are certain Christians who have been converted from the Jews who did go into the temple area and into synagogues in order to take advantage of the opportunity to preach the Gospel, but there was never a Christian taught to observe the Sabbath, certainly not commanded to do so, nor is there a prescribed punishment for the violation of the Sabbath, nor any of those prescriptions carried out by Christians. If there be such in the New Testament, then it should be easy to produce such passages or passage.

The Sabbath was peculiar to the Mosaic Age, the Jewish people, and the land in which these people dwelt.

To Whom Was The Sabbath Given?

This is a point that needs to be made in order to show that the aforementioned idea is true, as well as to demonstrate the fact that we aren't to keep it now, as it was not, and is not a day given to Christians.

And Moses called all Isreal, and said unto them, Hear, O

Isreal, the statues and judgements which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our Fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us alive this day. The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, (I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount) saying...keep the Sabbath Day to sanctify it. As the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all they work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God...(Deut. 5:1-5 & 12-14)

Who is there to doubt that the covenant spoken of by Moses was anything other than the ten commandments given from Sinai? While space demands that I limit the passage quoted to the subject at hand, one can turn to the passages and read the entirety of it if any doubt prevails. Before us is the "sabbath day," the covenant containing or regarding the "seventh day" of the week. The day that is a "sabbath" unto the Lord, a day which Isreal was to "sanctify" by failing to do any labor. Please notice that this was a covenant that **WAS NOT GIVEN TO THEIR FATHERS**, but was one which the Lord God made with them, even those were **"ALL ALIVE THIS DAY."** There is for a Bible-believing person little need to look further, if one should suggest that the **SABBATH WAS KEPT BY THOSE PREVIOUS TO THE ISREALITES' TIME**, we know that such teaching is error. But let me suggest another verse in this setting.

And remember that thou wast a servant in the Land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: **THEREFORE** the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day. (Deut. 5:15, emp.mine BO)

Who received the "sabbath day?" Those that had been captives in Egypt. Who were commanded to keep the "sabbath day" Those that had been delivered and were given rest from their servitude. Why did God command them to keep the "sabbath day?" The key is in the word I gave

emphasis, **"THEREFORE."** The word means, "for this reason." God wanted them to "remember" their former state of toil, from which they had been delivered and were able to rest, by "remembering" the "sabbath day," keeping it holy. The people living in the former age were **NOT** slaves in Egypt, Christians were **NOT** slaves in Egypt. The forefathers were not delivered from Egyptian slavery and given rest from toil, Christians were not slaves in Egypt and were not granted freedom by God, **THEREFORE**, please get that clearly, **THEREFORE**, neither is commanded to keep the "sabbath day" as a holy day unto the Lord God. Another passage: Speak thou also unto the children of Isreal, saying, verily my sabbath ye shall keep: for it is a **SIGN BETWEEN ME AND YOU THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS**; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. (Ex. 31:13, emp.min BO)

First, be it known that the "generations of the Israelites" is no more, these ceased with the coming of the "seed of Abraham" and the fleshly descent of one is of no value, therefore, this passage limits the extension of the sabbath and the keeping thereof.

Secondly, the fact that God said "this is a **SIGN** between you and me," reminds of that the keeping of the sabbath day was not intended for any other than the people Israel after the flesh. No gentile was ever commanded to keep the sabbath day, it was for Israel only. If every people of every land, tongue, and lineage were indeed to keep the sabbath day, then it would have ceased being a "**SIGN**." This we recognize in other things. A sign is peculiar, particular, and unique. The moment it becomes general, universal, and widespread, it is no longer a "**SIGN**." When a young man makes known to a young lady his intentions of marriage, upon acceptance, he places a ring on her hand (our custom). This is a "**SIGN**" between the man and the woman--one man and one woman. But if he acts in the same way toward many other women, the ring loses its significance, it no longer is a "**SIGN**." The **SIGN** was between God and Isreal--not the people of former times and not we who are Christian.-More Next Month.

LONG HAIR AND WOMEN PREACHERS

continued from page 2

position in his book on the role of women in the church today left much to be desired. He advocated women preachers, elders, deaconess, and so on, in plain violation of the inspired writings.

The truth of the matter is that the hair ordinance of the prohibition against women preachers are both divine applications of the divine headship principle. The bible ar-

gues for both teachings using the same argument. God requires that women place herself in subjection to man, and God says that applications of that headship are that the woman would not only be covered with long hair. It is glory to here, for her hair is given her for a covering, 1 Corinthians 11:15, she is also prohibited from preaching. If the hair ordinance is only cultural, then so is the women preachers prohibition. The truth is that they are both still binding today.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Montebello, CA

The last service for Montebello, CA congregation will be June 28, 1998. After much thought and prayer, due to a declining number of people in the area and the membership, it has been decided to put the property up for sale.

The New 1998 Church Directories Are Ready

The new 1998 Church Directories are now ready for mailing. The price will remain the same, \$2.00 per copy plus postage charges. Charging postage is necessary because of a 15% increase in printing costs. It would help greatly and save money if you would order several directories and

sell them to others in your area. Please use the following postage schedule when ordering: 1 or 2 copies \$1.25, 3-5 copies \$1.74, 6-7 copies \$2.24, 8-10 copies \$2.74, 11-15 copies \$3.24, 20 copies \$4.55, 25 copies \$4.86, 50 copies \$8.27 and 100 copies \$14.47. Please send all orders to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808.

Thank You Brethren!

We, the members of Paducah Church of Christ, having asked for financial help from sister congregations a few months ago, are happy and very thankful for all support we have received for the purchase and repair of our meeting house. We have received more than enough to accomplish the job.

We encourage anyone traveling through this area to stop and worship with us anytime it is possible.

The building is located at 2500 Adams Street, Paducah, Ky., just a block from the old building we were meeting in.—Michael E. Anderson

50th Wedding Anniversary

The children of Melvin and Marjorie Crouch are honored to announce the 50th Wedding Anniversary of their parents to be celebrated on July 25, 1998, in Mansfield, Texas. Melvin and Marjorie are faithful members of the Nacogdoches Road Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas, where Melvin has been a leader for over 40 years. If anyone would like to send a card or letter to them, their address is 215 N. 4th Street, Uvalde, Texas 78801.—Martha

Morris:

To Publish Material For The August Issue

As many of you know, we publish each issue a month in advance. For example, the August issue would normally be sent to the printers no later than July 13. Since we will be leaving at the end of June and not returning until about July 20 we are going to have to send the material to them before we leave at the end of June. When we return home, I will send the field reports, etc., that must make the August issue by fax. We apologize in advance for your August paper being a bit late. There is simply nothing we can do about this and hope you will understand and be patient. Preachers, we need your field reports on a regular basis. Please try to send them. Brethren everywhere enjoy and benefit from that part of OPA. Also, we need articles on almost every topic. Try to keep them to 3 or 4 pages at the most and please type and double space them. Your field reports should not be more than 1/2 page of double spaced, typed material and 1/4 page is even better. The same applies to obituaries. Keep them as brief as possible. By so doing, we can insert more material into each issue. If you have problems with punctuation, why not ask another who is skilled to look it over and help you correct it. A preacher once said, "I don't know anything about punctuation so I just sprinkle a few comas here and there." Remember, someone has to read it and correct it and it will help us a great deal if your material comes to us ready for the press.—DLK

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

Albritton-Hayes—Before a host of friends and relatives, Laurie Hayes and Joel Albritton sealed their vows of love and devotion as they were married in Arlington, TX, Saturday, April 4. In the midst of the beautiful flowers and candlelight, well-wishers saw Laurie and Joel seal their relationship and begin their lives together. Laurie was a stunningly beautiful bride, absolutely glowing as she came down the aisle to meet Joel. Laurie, daughter of Bill and Lila Hayes of the Green Oaks congregation in Arlington, has been a faithful member of the church and helper there for many years. She is well-known, respected, and loved by those who know her. Joel, son of Darvin and Lona Gaye Albritton of the congregation in West Monroe, LA, is a longtime member of the church and is also well-known, respected, and loved by those who saw him grown up in northern Louisiana; he formerly attended the Conway, LA, congregation but now attends and is a leader in the West Monroe congregation. Laurie and Joel are making their home in West Monroe. Laurie and her family have been special to me for most of my adult life, and it was an honor to be asked to officiate the ceremony; I was ably assisted by Bro. Billy Orten, who has known Joel all of his life. Singing was beautifully done by soloists Retta Hayes and Eric Courter and a quartet composed of Mike Rogers, Cammie Nelson, Don Coon and John Roodschild. My prayer for Laurie and Joel is that their lives will be

enriched by their love and that they will establish a wonderful Christian home dedicated to His service.—Joe Norton.

Washburn-Sorg—On May 30th before a gathering of family and friends, Joe Bob Washburn and Monica Lee Sorg were joined together as husband and wife. Both Joe and Monica live in Pocahontas, AR and will make their hillside congregation their home church. I was privileged to baptize Monica into Christ four years ago and delighted to perform their wedding ceremony. We, with their family and interested friends, wish them the very best. May God bless their new home.—Doug Hawkins.

Wood-Cole—On the afternoon of April 11, 1998, Monte Paul Wood and Rebecca Aliene Cole exchanged wedding vows. Due to rain, on very short notice, and with the help of many willing friends, the wedding site was changed from a garden wedding to a beautiful setting at the Church of Christ meeting place at 500 Crane St., Turlock, CA. Monte is the son of Ron and Judy Wood of Cabool, MO. Rebecca is the daughter of Howard and Barbara Cole of Salida, CA. Monte is a high school English teacher and Rebecca is a registered nurse. They will meet with the Manteca congregation. Our prayer is for a long and fruitful life in the Lord's service. It was my honor to assist.—Rod Wilson.

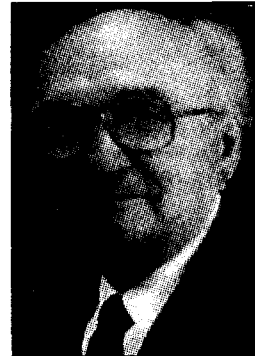
OUR DEPARTED

RICHARDSON-Betty Lou Richardson, age 70, of Joplin, Missouri, died at 3:20 a.m., Friday, May 22, 1998, at the home of her daughter after a short illness. Survivors include a son, Danny Richardson, Catoosa, OK; a daughter, Shelly Rogers of Joplin; a brother Elbert Ramsey, Joplin; a sister Fern Caldwell, Joplin, four grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Betty was a long time faithful member of the Leawood Village Church of Christ. Though severely crippled with arthritis, she continued to drive herself to church three times each week. Though her health was not good, the seriousness of her illness was unknown to all, including herself. She passed away only eight days after doctors confirmed she also had cancer. Betty was a wonderful person and will be missed at our congregation. It was my honor to assist one of our Elders, Jim Stockam, in conducting the funeral services.—Ronald Lankford

JOHNSON-Lola V. Johnson was born Oct. 8, 1914 in Linville, LA and passed away April 21, 1998 at the age of 84 years. She was survived by 3 daughters, Peggy Orten, Robbie Alsford, and Lona Gaye Albritton; 8 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. She was a member of the congregation at Conway, LA where she faithfully served the Lord for many years. She was loved by everyone, both in the church and community, because of her kindness, generosity, and hospitality. She had one of the sweetest smiles of anyone I've ever known! She truly was a "virtuous woman" as described in Prov. 31; verse 31 of that chapter says: "Give her of the

fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates." In the message I delivered before a large gathering, it was her life that spoke for itself and her own works provided the tribute that she was deserving of. Miles King assisted this writer.—Billy D. Dickinson

WADE-Foy E. Wade was born Dec. 20, 1906 in Hill Co. TX, and departed this life May 18, 1998 in Springfield, MO at the age of 91. He is survived by his wife of 71 years, Inez, of the home, one son, Ronny F. Wade, Springfield, Jan Goodgion, Wichita Falls, TX, one brother William F. Wade, Tucson, AZ; four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, and many friends. Brother Wade was a member of the Mission Hills congregation in Springfield, and was formerly a member of the old Trentman Ave. congregation in Ft. Worth, TX. He was also known to many other Christians, due to the fact that he and Inez visited congregations far and near. He was blessed with a strong constitution, enabling him to remain active almost to the end of life. He subscribed to the philosophies of industry, thrift, and self-reliance, but he was also hospitable as well as generous and loyal to the cause of Christ. He will certainly be missed. Funeral services were conducted from Greenlawn Funeral Home in Springfield, May 20, with Stan Elmore leading congregational singing and the writer speaking. We pray God's blessings upon Inez, Ronny, Jan and others affected by this loss, and we expect to meet again.—Johnny Elmore



Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, June 5—I spent May at home, where we continue to have good attendance and interest. It was good to have Duane Permenter with us May 8-10 in a short meeting. We were saddened at the passing of brother Foy E. Wade. We have had no better friend in this world. We enjoyed having the 4th Sunday singing here May 24th. We heard Bob Johnson three nights in his meeting at Ratliff City. Sally and I look forward to being at Hillcrest, near Brookhaven, MS June 14-21 and on to the 4th of July meetings.

Douglas T. Hawkins, P.O. Box 728, Broadhead, KY 40409 (606) 758-4071, June 3, 1998—The year is swiftly passing us by. May was fairly busy for us in the work. Lori and I were with the congregations at Shreveport, LA and London, KY. In Shreveport, the spirit of the meeting was outstanding. Lori and I enjoyed being with those folks tremendously and could not have been treated more kindly. Then, unfortunately, Bro. Richard Bunner, who is now living in

Lexington, KY and I were called to preach at London as replacements for Bro. Ronny Wade. Ronny had to postpone going to London because of his father's illness and untimely death. Overall, the meeting went real well. We are looking forward to meetings in Whitebluff, TN (July 5-12) and Harrodsburg, IN (July 13-19). May God bless us in his service.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, June 3—The meeting at Blue Springs, KY closed with three restored to duty and three confessions of fault. Crowds were large every night at times in excess of one hundred sixty people. Brother Zade McClure is to be commended for his work in this area. He is a tireless worker for the church. It was good to have Brother Kevin Presley with us for several services and also Bro. Richard Bunner who now lives in Lexington and works with the new church there. We were appreciative of the good cooperation of area congregations during the meeting. Next we were in Harrison, AR for a meeting which resulted in one confession of fault. It was a pleasure to visit in the home of Bro. Jimmy Smith and work with him during the meeting. Jimmy is respected not only by the church, but by the community as well. He has dedicated many years to building up the cause in Harrison and had been very successful. We were unable to hold the meeting in Lexington, Ky., due to the death of my father Foy E. Wade (see notice elsewhere). The brethren obtained the services of Brethren Doug Hawkins and Richard Bunner in my stead. The Lord willing we go next to Spring Valley, WV

June 7-14, San Angelo, TX June 21-28, West Plains, MO (AB Hwy.) July 10-12, and Mtn. Home, AR, July 22-26. We look forward to all these meetings. Please remember us when you pray.

P. Duane Permenter, P.O. Box 80687, June 1—Since last reporting I was privileged to preach at Harrodsburg, IN, Pocahontas, AR, Sharonville, OH and Ardmore, OK. The hospitality of the brethren was great. The meetings were enjoyable and it was a pleasure to work with all these different congregations. Here at home our work continues. During the last two months we have had five confessions of faults, one restoration and one baptism. The meeting dates for Lodi, Calif. were misprinted in my last report. The correct dates should be July 31-Aug. 9. We enjoyed having family from Okla. and Calif. visiting recently for a few days. Philip, my son graduated from high school this year and it was a pleasure to have the grandparents come during this time of celebration. We are looking forward to being at Cleburne, TX in a couple of weeks. May the Lord richly bless you is my prayer. Love and peace to the brotherhood!

Bennie T. Cryer, 1439 San Rocco Circle, Stockton, CA 95207, June 6—The church in Stockton sent me to the Hawaiian Islands May 4-18. The first week was spent in Hilo on what they call the Big Island (Hawaii). Bro. Danao, Bro. Bayani, and Bro. Melvin Ventura met me at the airport and we immediately began visiting people while on the way to the house where the church meets and where we would stay. We had several excellent studies and meetings during that week and it looks like the church has a bright future there. The second week was spent on the island of Oahu with the church that meets in Waipahu. We helped conduct many studies and services, helped conduct the funeral of Sis. Bayani's father who was almost 98 years of age, and worked through some problems within the congregation. The church there is growing. Bro. & Sis. Danao are working with them at the present time. I understand Bro. & Sis. Bayani will be moving to Hilo soon so they can work with the new effort there. The Stockton congregation is supporting Bro. Ryan Connors now so he can study, gain experience, and grow in his work as an evangelist. We are enjoying his stay here. I will be in San Angelo, TX July 24-26, and Neosho, MO August 14-23. God bless all of you.

Isidro Pataueg, Bacnor West, Burgos, Isabela, Philippines, May 15, 1998—The Annual Study of the brotherhood here in the Philippines was hosted by the local Church in Catabban, Burgos, Isabela, on April 6-9, 1998. Originally, this gathering was initiated by we preachers, through the leadership of Bro. V.O. Danao Sr., in 1983, and was primarily intended for our young people. But as years passed by, this study grew and became a yearly gathering, not only for young people, but for adults as well. The study this year was well attended by the brotherhood. Brethren and preachers from different places—such as, from the provinces of Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan, Tarlac, Cagayan, Quirino, Apayao, Mountain Province, Isabela, Baguio City and other places—attended. Messages and lectures delivered by our capable preachers strengthened the brethren in the faith. Questions, during open forum, were clearly answered by the lecturers, in the light of the Scriptures. Four were baptized during the study. Two digressive preachers also made public their conversion, and pledged allegiance, to the truth. Brethren were encouraged to share whatever voluntary contributions they could afford to this gathering. And the Church in Catabban, through her leaders, would like to express their gratefulness for all these manifestations of generosity; for

the congregation received more than what she actually spent for the Study. The 1999 Annual Study will be held in Ilocos Norte. The Lord's work here continues to fare well, although Remegio Bayaca went back to the digressive church of Christ; and now is going, with some of their preachers, to some of our congregations trying to convince them to follow him. But the brethren are firm in their faith, and he will not succeed. Rest assured, we will do our best to safeguard the "flock." God bless us!

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, June 12—Last weekend, we enjoyed a weekend meeting at the Fair Oaks, Ca congregation (Sacramento). We had not been there in nine years so it was good to go back. In the early sixties we went there once a month (the congregation then met in Orangevale) and did so for several years. It was good to be with Charles and Barbara Everett again, with whom we stayed. We appreciate those who came from a distance including several preachers. Lord willing, we are to speak at the home church next Lord's day. The young men here are continuing to improve. We study together each Tuesday evening. It will soon be time to leave for the 4th of July meeting. We are to be at the Fort Smith, AR congregation July 5-8 for a short meeting and then on to Marietta, GA for a week's meeting July 11-19. We have preached at both of these places a number of times through the years and look forward to being with them again, the Lord willing. We were saddened to hear of the passing of Bro. Foy Wade. He was a good man, a Christian, and we will miss him for a long, long time. Our sincere sympathies to Inez and all the family. May God bless them and all of us as we tarry awhile.

Kevin W. Presley, Rt. 2 Box 166, Kinston, AL 36453, (334) 898-1301, thebible@alaweb.com—I have lapsed a few months in my reports to the paper so I'll briefly try to catch up. In March it was good to be with the brethren at Temple, GA; Jasper, TN; and Bridgeport, TX. This was my first meeting in Temple and it was very enjoyable. We had some outside interest and a few visitors from other congregations. One confessed faults. At Jasper, the crowds were small at first but increased nicely toward the end of the meeting. Lawrence and Madge Lore from St. Albans, W. Va drove 8 hours to be with us one night. This is a small congregation but they are dedicated to the truth and I appreciate them very much. We also had a good meeting in Bridgeport, TX. It had been a few years since my last visit there and they had evidenced a great deal of growth in that time. We had 75 people there on Lord's Day morning with nearly 40 community visitors throughout the week. It was good to be able to assist a woman in baptism who had been attending for some time. In April I was privileged to be with the Crescent Ridge brethren in Birmingham, AL for the annual spring meeting. We had several visitors and I am appreciative of all the brethren who came from Trussville and other congregations to help us. It was good to see Ricky Martin, Richard Nichols and Larry Thompson while there. In May I enjoyed being with Bro. Bruce Roebuck for a meeting in Broadhead, KY. This meeting was well attended with one restoration. It's always a pleasure to labor with my good friend Bruce. Also, it was good to have my ole' friend Doug Hawkins with us for most of the meeting. He has recently moved to the area to work with the Blue Springs congregation. From there I went to Lawrenceburg, TN for a short meeting. There are some good brethren in this area and always enjoy preaching there. My thanks to Bro. Paul Walker and Ed Daniels, both preachers, for supporting the meeting. It's also been refreshing to hear others preach. I have

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heard Ronny Wade and Carl Johnson preach good sermons recently. Also, it was a thrill to have Johnny and Sally Elmore here recently for our spring meeting. Johnny did some outstanding preaching to crowds which usually included some outside visitors. It had been nearly 30 years since he had preached at Earlytown, and the brethren really enjoyed hearing him preach again. I always look forward to visiting with Johnny and Sally. Things are going well with the work here at home. Our television program continues to generate numerous contacts including a digressive man who has visited services the past five Sunday nights. We hope to convert him. My meeting over the next couple of months goes as follows: KS City, KS (Stony Point) June 14-21; Pearlhaven, MS, July 5-12; Andrews, TX, July 29-Aug. 2; Waterloo, IA, Aug. 9-16; Brazil, IN, Aug. 17-23. Aaron Risener is to hold our summer meeting at Earlytown-July 15-19. Why not come and be with us? May God bless the brotherhood.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-545 Mahoe St., Waipahu, Hawaii 96797, June 1, 1998—In response to our invitation, Bro. Bennie Cryer came to Hawaii primarily to help us in our efforts of evangelism, particularly in the Big Island and to make follow-up work with Bro. John Nolder and his wife who now live permanently in Kona. First, he spent one week-May 4 to 10—in the Big Island. While there, Bros. Felipe Bayani, Melvyn Ventura, Romeo Eugenio and I worked with Bro. Cryer as we conducted daily personal evangelisms—house to house Bible studies. Though there was no baptism made, we were able to study with prospects, especially with two couples—Bro. Venancio and Sis. Jasmin Cabacungan and Bro. Ventura and Sis. Lucina Ulipani—who later made intention to be added to the Church. Bro. Cabacungan and his wife, Jasmin, used to be members of the Christian Church in Cauayan, Isabela, Philippines, where I preached in 1971 to 1980. During our studies with them, they asked many questions regarding the important issues regarding the Lord's Supper, instrumental music, etc. Both of them seemed to be contented and satisfied. They were in Honolulu on May 10th, and they worshipped with the brethren in Waipahu. The Ulipanis were also members of the Christian Church in Toran, Aparri, Cagayan, Phils., a place where I used to go often as a student preacher when I was still studying in the Seminary. Bro. Bayani visited to preach in this place. Bro. R. Eugenio and Bro. M. Ventura brought us to conduct studies with members of their families. Bro. Eugenio's son, daughters and a niece together with her mother, all attended Sunday worship service. Bro. Eugenio's wife is a relative of my wife. We, with Bro. Ron Ofill who came to Hilo, also contacted the Nolders in Kona, and made plans for the possible start of the work in their area. We came back to Waipahu on May 11th, where Sis. JoAnn Cryer was met by Bro. Cryer at the airport. Again, we conducted Bible studies with our prospects here through the assistance of Bro. Tomas Riverea. Bro. Cryer was the speaker in the memo-

rial services—evening of May 15th and the following day, at the mortuary and at the graveyard—on behalf of the late bro. Felipe Dumalanta, father of Sis. Lydia Bayani. On One of the major accomplishments during Bro. Cryer's work with us here at Waipahu congregation is the correction of problems which I did not know in the past. It is good that those concerned are willing to straighten that need to be corrected, though there is still a problem to be ironed out. Bro. Cryer stayed with us in the house we are renting in Keaau, and he easily has adjusted himself to the situation—we cooked (Bro. Ventura was our cook) our meals, washed dishes, etc. We are grateful to the Church at Stockton that sponsors the mission work here for granting our request to send Bro. Cryer to help us in our efforts, especially in the Big Island, and, at least, to see personally for himself as a representative of the brethren, and assess the present situation of the work here in Hawaii. We also thank him for his sacrifices. During the past years, I have had wonderful opportunities to work with Bro. Cryer in the Philippines, and these continue to the present that I am here in Hawaii. Because of this association, the more I learn to appreciate and love him as a dedicated, and honest co-laborer in His vineyard. May God continue to bless him and his efforts for Him. The radio program I started on April 4, 1998 at KNNDI Honolulu is now receiving responses. For two consecutive Saturdays, some denominational preachers, who have programs with the same radio station, started to react on the teaching I preached through our program, especially on the Lord's Supper. One preacher, who is an ardent listener to our broadcast, wrote: "My heart was motivated and my whole being was ignited to accept the whole truth he preached." Of course, he must prove himself first, by believing, accepting and complying to whatever biblical teaching the Church teaches before he is accepted into the fellowship, brotherhood. We are grateful for the two boxes of hymn books the brethren at Brundage Lane (Bakersfield, CA) through Bro. Doyle Elliott sent. These are now used by the Church here during Sunday worship services. Please pray for the Lord's work here! We regret to inform the brethren that after the disciplinary actions implemented against Remegio Bayaca, who used to work with us particularly in Ilocos Norte in the Philippines, because of his questionable marriage, he went back to the digressive church—the very same church he fiercely opposed publicly in the past years; now, he is like a piece of iron that is, little by little, destroyed by its own rust. Apostle Peter has these words to him, "For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, then having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverbs: 'A dog returns to his own vomit,' and 'a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire'" (2 Peter 2:21-22). All the brethren everywhere are encouraged to be vigilant and withdraw fellowship from him (2 John 9-11). May we continue to strive to do His will, and to be always faithful and firm in the faith. God bless!

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

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NO. 8

LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD

By JOHNNY ELMORE

The greatest disaster ever to befall the earth is recorded in Genesis, chapters 6—8. I refer, of course, to the flood. The flood described in Genesis is not a fable or a myth. It was not a local flood, either. The flood was a destruction of such cataclysmic proportions that it is described in the original text by a Hebrew term used only in connection with that particular event.

The flood must have wrought profound changes upon the earth itself, causing the descendants of Noah to live in a far different world than they had previously known. Before the flood, some men lived over 900 years, but after the flood, lifespans were dramatically shortened. We do not know how many people perished in the flood—some have guessed the number to be around 25,000,000—but whatever the number, it was a catastrophe. What caused the flood? What were people doing that almost caused God to destroy the human race?

It is important to know the cause of the flood because the Saviour warned that the same conditions that brought about the flood will precede the coming of the Lord and the destruction of the earth and the works that are in it (Matt. 24:37).

What Caused The Flood?

I cannot elaborate upon all the causes of the flood in a brief article, but they surely must have included advances in technology (Gen. 4:22), materialism (Luke 17:28), unbelief (2 Pet. 2:5) and corruption and violence in a rapidly growing population (Gen. 6: 1 1-13).

In Genesis, there are two genealogical lines—the line of Cain and the line of Seth. Cain, the firstborn son of Adam and Eve, killed his brother, Abel, in an envious rage, perhaps foreshadowing what type of people would be in his line. Another son, Seth, was born, who possessed the obedient attitude of Abel. The Cainites were gifted and industrious in arts and sciences and were notorious for building cities, polygamy, instrumental music, brass and iron metalwork, and murder, but they had forgotten God.

On the other hand, Sethites began to "call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. 4:26). Since this happened at the occasion of the birth of Seth's son, some commentators have seen in his name, Enos (frail one), a recognition by Sethites of human weakness and frailty, in contrast to the pride and arrogance displayed by the Cainites. Midway between the creation and the flood, we are told of the translation of Enoch, a Sethite, who had lived so

righteously for 365 years that God took him that he should not see death.

In Gen. 6:1-8, events came to a great climax. With great numbers came swift development of evil. "Daughters were born unto them" (v. 1). This was not something new, but it is mentioned because of the impact upon society. Now "the sons of God" began to look upon these "daughters of men," as Leupold puts it "indiscriminately." Their quest does not seem to be to find a wife who will help them please God and bring up children to be righteous and God-fearing. The only thing they saw is that "they were fair." Apparently, the sons of God reached the point that they did not care if the "daughters of men" were Cainites or Sethites, but only whether "they were fair."

Sons of God and Daughters of Men

Who were these "sons of God"? Numerous commentators, rationalists and otherwise, have taken this to mean that angels cohabited with earthlings, producing a generation of giants. To me, the very idea is preposterous. I have always believed that the reference to "sons of God" is simply a way of stating that the "godly" line of humanity, the Sethites, intermarried with the ungodly, worldly descendants of Cain, leading to wholesale apostasy and depravity.

Nothing has been said previously about angels; besides, Jesus taught that angels "neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Matt. 22:30). The phrase, "they took them wives of all which they chose," is the standard expression for marital union. It was not illicit intercourse, such as adultery, fornication or even the "strange flesh" of Jude 7, but lawful union, which caused the downfall of humanity.

Here is a warning for all Christian boys and girls. Don't make the mistake so many have made of looking only for pretty faces and shapely forms. Choose a companion who will help you get to heaven. When physical beauty and sex appeal are the only criteria, degeneracy has already set in! Solomon said in Prov. 31:30 "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised."

Conclusion

The account of how the pious descendants of Seth became affected and infected with wholesale degeneracy is critical to the narrative. It explains why it was necessary to doom the whole human race to destruction, with the

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 8



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9-10

Lessons From The Flood 1

Tolerance and Romans 14 2

The Querist Column 3

"The Dish Ran Away With The Spoon" 3

The Church From God's Perspective 5

The Sabbath Day - Part 2 6

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

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Editorial

TOLERANCE AND ROMANS 14

By DON L. KING

Now and then we encounter one who insists that Romans 14 directs the church to tolerate those who are liberal, worldly and carnal in their living. We are told that Paul instructs that the "weak" be "received" in his letter to the Romans.

Paul did indeed instruct that the weak be received in Romans 14:1. However, it is obvious that many are unaware of Paul's subject. Can it be possible that the apostle intended us to simply be oblivious and uninterested in the sins of church members? Let us notice a few places where Paul's meaning cannot be misunderstood. In 1 Corinthians 5:4-7 he said, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one (a fornicator verses 1,2 DLK) unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." In this writing, Paul plainly wants the immoral person removed from those who are still moral before the whole group becomes tainted by the sin. But someone says, "maybe he (the fornicator) is just weak. Why, if you withdraw from him (or her) you can never win them back! We need to maintain fellowship so that we can win them back." That seems to be the reasoning of some but what does the apostle say? Deliver them to Satan! In other words, get them away from the church before others are harmed by their sin. Like it or not, church members are to stay away from those things. There is entirely too much association with immorality. Paul said, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." (1 Corinthians 15:33) Paul's command to the church is "...not to company with fornicators." (1 Corinthians 5:9) In verse 11 he said, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." Later, in verse 13 he said in the same context: "...therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

These passages cannot be misunderstood. They are, many times, disobeyed but probably not misunderstood. Can it be possible that in Romans 14 Paul reverses his command? Of course not. Let us notice some things there. The Christian Jews, at least some of them, had not completely left the Law of Moses. They continued to observe certain days counted holy under the Law and were inclined to condemn the Gentile Christians for not doing so. The same was likely true of the Gentile Christians. They would have continued to observe certain things they

continued on page eight

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Would you please explain 1 Corinthians 7:1-5? (MO)

Answer: In the preceding chapters of the first letter to the Corinthians Paul directs his attention to problems existing in the church that no doubt had been reported to him by others. With the beginning of chapter 7, however, he turns to questions the Corinthians had presented to him. They were concerned about marriage. There were, undoubtedly, some specific situations existing in the church that had caused differing opinions that demanded answers from an inspired source. The phrase "it is not good for a man to touch a woman" in verse 1, refers to marriage. Paul is saying that at times and in certain situations celibacy is good, and marriage is not good. The word "good" is used to denote that in the particular circumstances under consideration, it is in the best interest of man to remain unmarried. He is not saying that marriage is never good, nor that it is wrong. He would later write in Heb. 13:3 "Marriage is honorable in all..." and from Eph. 5:22 it is evident that he holds marriage in high esteem. God declared in the beginning that "it is not good for man to be alone" Gen. 2:18. This phrase must therefore be understood, in light of "the persecution then raging against the Christians; and, on account of these, if a man could restrain his lusts, it was better not to marry" (David Lipscomb). In verse 2 Paul addresses what should happen if one is unable to remain celibate. "To avoid fornication, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." This forbids polygamy, concubinage and all related evils. Also included is the prohibition against forced celibacy. The celibate state is unattainable for most people. For any group to demand that certain ones remain unmarried (such as the Catholics demand of their Priests) is a direct violation of this verse. The scriptural alternative to fornication is marriage. Marriage provides an avenue allowing people to avoid the temptations that often result in immoral behavior. Verse 3 - "Let the husband render unto the wife her due; and likewise also the wife unto her husband." It is interesting to note how delicately, yet forthrightly, Paul deals with this subject. No crass language is needed to say

what needs to be said. He does not resort to the language of the gutter or the heathen to get his point across, and neither should we. His point is simple and basic. In marriage there is a relationship that involves the happiness, satisfaction, fulfillment, and purity of each party. The sexual relationship is a normal and honorable part of marriage, and Paul is saying here that in this area the husband and wife must be considerate of each other and not selfish. To be so, brings dissatisfaction, discontent, unhappiness, and in some cases permanent damage to the marriage relationship. Verse 4 - "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife." Coffman expresses the meaning of this verse well when he remarks "The equality of husband and wife in the marriage partnership is in the foreground here. Neither partner in marriage was to subscribe to any form of "sexless" behavior, because there was a positive duty that each owed the other in marriage." Those who deny or disregard the instructions of the apostle in this verse create a situation that places their marriage in jeopardy, as well as the spiritual welfare of their partner by exposing them to the temptations of the flesh. Remember that one of the practical benefits of marriage was the avoidance of such temptation. Verse 5 - "Defraud ye not one another, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Abstinence from marital relations was permissible only with the mutual understanding of both partners, and that for a season. During this period, both would give themselves to the duties of religion. To deny, without consent, is considered fraud. In such a situation Satan could tempt and take advantage thus exposing them to the very evils the marriage compact was designed to remedy. We would all do well to heed the instructions of this inspired writer regarding the practical and spiritual aspects of marriage, especially in view of the fact that today so many marriages are ending in heartache and heartbreak. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, Mo. 65808.)

"THE DISH RAN AWAY WITH THE SPOON"

By DOUG HAWKINS

In their May 21st issue, *Truth Magazine*, a major publication of the conservative cups and Sunday School churches, printed an article by Patrick Donahue entitled "One Container?". Just as the title subtly suggests, the article's design was to disprove the position that only one cup may be used in the communion. In the article, the writer vainly sought to illustrate that every passage referring to the "cup" in the Lord's Supper is figurative and that the actual number of containers the Lord used to distribute the fruit of the vine is a mystery. I've often wondered why people like Bro. Donahue have such a difficult time understanding what Jesus did that fateful night in Jerusalem when giving this memorial supper and why there is division in the churches of Christ over this question. Obvi-

ously, the division does not exist because of dishonesty or insincerity on either side's part. I've come to understand that it's a matter of conditioning. These brethren are conditioned to think of fruit of the vine every time they read, "and he took the cup." (Mt. 26:27) If the Holy Spirit had actually said "and he took the fruit of the vine," there would be no issue over the drinking vessel. All of us would implicitly know that Jesus took the fruit of the vine in some kind of vessel, but the vessel would be arbitrary. Then too, the number of cups a congregation used in the Lord's Supper would also be arbitrary. However, the Bible doesn't say "and he took the fruit of the vine." Instead, the Bible goes to great lengths to specify that Jesus took a cup. Since the Scriptures tell us exactly what Jesus did, the practice

of using more than one cup in the communion forces these brethren to allege that "cup" doesn't mean "cup." Rather, through convoluted reasoning they say that the "cup" refers only to the fruit of the vine. In part, this was the thrust of Bro. Donahue's article. Being that I don't have the space to take up every one of his points, I'm going to limit my focus to two of them. Among other things, he argued: "1. Metonymy is being used every place that the 'cup' is referred to [in the Lord's Supper]. 2. In metonymy, a single container named does not mean that the contents of a single container is being suggested."

To begin, let me acquaint you with this formidable word metonymy. Metonymy is a figure of speech based upon association or relationship. When father Abraham told the rich man that his five brothers had Moses and the prophets in Lk. 16:29, he used metonymy. Actually the meaning is that the brothers possessed the writings of Moses and the prophets. He named the authors to refer to their writings. There are many kinds of metonymy. In the Lord's supper though, the metonymy used is the metonymy of subject, naming the container to suggest the contents. For instance in I Cor. 11:26, when Paul said "drink this cup," he was using metonymy. We drink what is in the cup. What relationship exists between a container and its contents? The only relationship that exists is for the container to hold the contents. For example, if I filled a kettle with boiling water and put it on the stove. When it boiled, I could refer to the water by saying, "the kettle is boiling." I actually mean the water. Suppose after it cooled, I then poured that water into a cup and handed it to a friend. I wouldn't say, "here, drink this kettle," but I could say, "here, drink this cup" because the water had been poured into a cup. If I then poured the water from the cup down the drain and it froze in the drain trap overnight, I wouldn't say "my kettle froze last night"; nor would I say, "my cup froze last night." But I could say "the drain froze last night." I actually again mean the water. In this homespun example, I've referred to the same bit of water by calling it a kettle, a cup, and a drain. The relationship is that the water was "in" each of the containers at the time I used the metonymy. With that in mind, let me examine Bro. Donahue's points carefully.

1. "Cup" is always metonymical

Bro. Donahue states, "First it will be shown that every time that the communion cup is referred to in the New Testament, the 'cup' refers by metonymy to the contents, and not to the container." He then proceeds to show how by comparing Mt. 26:17; Mk. 14:23; and Lk. 22:17. He says, "From Matthew 26:27 and Mark 14:23 (Jesus 'took the cup') by themselves, one cannot tell if metonymy is being used or not; it could go either way. For example, Matthew 26:27 could mean, 'and he took the container, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of (out of) the container.' It could also mean, 'and he took the fruit of the vine (by metonymy) and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink all of the fruit of the vine (by metonymy) and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink all of the fruit of the vine.' But by comparing them to their parallel passage, Luke 22:17 ('And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves'), it is seen that Jesus was talking about the contents all along: the container is not divided, only the contents."

First of all, Bro. Donahue fails to see that in order for there to be metonymy the cup named has to contain the fruit of the vine that is suggested. That's the only relationship that can exist between the objects. If it's true (which it's not) that every reference to the cup in the communion is metonymical, that by itself doesn't help his cause in the least. By implication, there still is only the cup that Christ took. If I conceded the point that every reference is metonymy, why, if the number of drinking vessels is insignificant, does the Bible use that figure? It would be just as accurate and less confusing to say "he took the fruit of the vine." However, I won't concede the point because Bro. Donahue's reasoning is quite flawed. Just because Christ told the disciples to divide "it" doesn't mean that every use of the word "cup" in the Lord's Supper is metonymical. For instance, I could say, "put the kettle (literal) on the stove, and when it (metonymy) boils, take it (literal) off." My metonymical use of the pronoun "it" has changed my literal use of the word "kettle." The same is true of the Lord's statement. Secondly, every Bible lexicon of which I am aware states that the word "cup" is used literally in Mt. 26:27; Mk. 14:23; and Lk. 14:23; and Lk. 22:17a. This undisputable fact of Christ taking a cup is the example or model that we are to follow when we observe the communion. Like we follow the example of meeting upon the first day of the week (Ac. 20:7), we too must follow the Lord's example of taking the fruit of the vine in a cup. Whether it's metonymy or not, the example is still the same. Bro. Donahue's first point would be altogether moot if it weren't for the painstaking effort of his second point.

2. A single container named, does not mean that the contents of a single container is suggested.

He states, "Thus far it has been proven from Luke 22:17 (divide the cup) that metonymy is being used when the Bible says in Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:23, and Luke 22:17 that Jesus 'took the cup.' It will now be shown that therefore the number of containers that Jesus started with cannot be determined from these verses, because if metonymy is being used, one cannot tell how many containers are actually present, from the fact that only one container is named to suggest the contents." Bro. Donahue then cites several examples as proof of this proposition. (I'm only going to note three for sake of space.) As example he said, (1) "If it were said, 'the bench scored 25 points for Alabama's basketball team last night,' would it be understood that the actual bench that the players sat on scored the points, or that Alabama's substitute players scored the points? This is another example of the use of metonymy, where the container named (bench) stands for the contents (substitute players). (2) 'The man started hitting the bottle.' 'Would this only describe a man who always drank his alcoholic beverage from the same (one) literal bottle? (3) 'The four waiters served a Chinese dish at the football banquet.' Does this necessarily imply that the caterers served the dish using only one literal platter?" The fundamental problem with these examples is that they are not remotely similar to the language used in the scriptures concerning the Lord's Supper. In fact, if true, they prove way more than Bro. Donahue intended. Bro. Donahue believes that the cup refers to the fruit of the vine and that only one cup (the fruit of the vine) may be used in the

communion. Let's see what his examples prove. I could say, "Alabama University is indebted to the work of 'the bench' in both football and basketball." Here I've named "the bench" to refer to the substitute players of two different sports or two different contents. Does this mean that "cup" refers to two different drink elements - fruit of the vine and orange juice? Will either meet the divine pattern? It does if Bro. Donahue's example is parallel. The same is true of the example of a man "hitting the bottle." The man who "hits the bottle" may drink whisky, wine, vodka, or champagne. Does this mean that when Jesus took the "cup" that he took fruit of the vine, orange juice, tomato juice, and Mountain Dew? It does if Bro. Donahue's example is parallel. By suggesting more than one container, he has also suggested more than one drink element. But finally, what about the Chinese dish? In our language dish can be used as another word for food. When I say enchiladas are my favorite dish, I mean they are my favorite food. By using the term dish, I'm referring to food and not to a container. This type of expression is nothing like the lan-

guage used in the Bible. The metonymy used in the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:26,27) is the container (cup) for the contained (f.v.). In other words, Paul commanded to "drink this cup." To do so, we drink the contents of a cup. In the Bible the reference is to a literal cup to suggest that cup's contents. However, the example of the dish refers to no container at all, only a food. It doesn't refer to the container to suggest that container's contents. There is a difference in saying "Egg Foo Young is my favorite Chinese dish (food)" and saying, "he took the dish (bowl) and handed it (bowl) to me and said, 'dip it (bowl's contents) onto your plate.'" Bro. Donahue has tried to imply that the Scripture's references aren't to a cup at all. Sadly though, when you build your faith upon the shifting sands of bad grammar, it will surely fall. Bro. Donahue can't find refuge in his own examples; nor can he do away with the pattern of using only one cup. I guess I could say that the moral of the story is, you can't trust the dish. After all, it ran away with the spoon.—P.O. Box 728, Brodhead, KY 40409.

THE CHURCH FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

By DON L. KING

One of the most interesting passages in the Bible is found in Ephesians 3: a-ll. "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In brief, Paul introduces here the concept that God has from eternity intended for the Church to be established. It was indeed a great mystery, or puzzle, which was hidden for ages within the mind of God. God intended for the principalities and powers (thought to be different orders of angels, etc.) to learn of His great wisdom dealing with the salvation of men, through the Church of our Lord. Literally, the Church of Christ became the institute of learning for all those who for ages had not been able to solve the great mystery. The mystery, or puzzle, was simply the good news or Gospel (see Ephesians 3:3). The Gospel furnished the recipe, if you will, for both Jew and Gentile to unite in Christ (the church) and be saved eternally. Not even the angels had been able to understand this mystery but now it is open for all men to understand. What a God we serve!

Often as one studies the church, he is tempted to confine his investigation to the New Testament only. Some think the Church of Christ is nothing more than a substitute for the kingdom. Of course, the church and kingdom are the same. Both have the same terms of membership, the same laws and the same subjects. However, the church was not a mere afterthought as we have just shown. Rather, it has always been within God's perspective to provide this vehicle to Heaven for men. So the church is not a substitute for the kingdom. The church IS the kingdom!

The Church in the Mind of God

As mentioned earlier, the church has existed in the mind of God from eternity. (Ephesians 3:10,11) There was never a time when He did not intend to bring man the realization of salvation through, or by means of, the church. Every promise that God made dealing with the redemption story was made within the scope of the church. In Eden when God promised Satan that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15), and when God promised Abraham that through his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3; 18:18; Acts 3:25; Ephesians 3:6), the church was obviously in the mind of God. Again, we say: "what a God we serve!" To be able to think of it all is beyond our comprehension; but more than that, my heavenly Father caused the course of history to bring it all to pass.

The Church in Prophecy

God made a promise to David: "When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." (2 Samuel 7:12,13) The prophecy began to be fulfilled in Solomon in that his kingdom was established after David's death and Solomon built the temple. Of course, the ultimate fulfillment came about in Christ and the establishment of His church. (see Luke 1:32,33; Acts 2:29-39)

Isaiah said that "...it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." (Isaiah 2:2) We know that the "house of God" spoken of in 1 Timothy 3:15 is the church for Paul plainly says so. Hence, the "mountain of the Lord's house" in Isaiah's writings has to refer to the Church of Christ!

In Isaiah 32:1,2 Isaiah was speaking of Christ and the church when he wrote: "Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

Daniel promised that God would "... set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed...." (Daniel 2:44) Zechariah undoubtedly spoke of Christ and the church when he said: "...Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH;...shall build the temple of the Lord:...and shall sit and rule upon his throne;....(Zechariah 6:12,13) Can anyone doubt that the church was in the mind of God from eternity? Look at Acts 10:43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Peter said the prophets were speaking of Christ. In fact, he said all them were!

God's Eternal Purpose in the Church

We believe Paul was bringing to pass God's eternal purpose in the church when he preached unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and revealed once and for all the "mystery" (or puzzle) which had been hidden for ages within the mind of God. (Ephesians 3:8,9) This purpose had been gradually and bit by bit unfolded during the preceding generations, but it was not fulfilled until the coming of Christ to the world. (Romans 10:4) Christ and His church are joined together. One cannot have Christ unless one also has His church. To teach otherwise is to teach a false doctrine in the extreme.

The desire of God has always been to save man. This was responsible for the coming of Christ to the world and the establishment of the church. It is a part of God's eternal purpose that all men, both Jew and Gentile, be gathered into one body, the church, with Christ as the head. (Ephesians 1:22,23, etc.) Jesus said, "...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) If that is the case, one must be in Christ to be saved. To be in Christ is to be in His body and to be in His body is to be in His church for they are one and the same (Colossians 1:18, 24) It is absolutely necessary to be in the church in order to be in God's favor. (Ephesians 1:3) However, it does not follow that all who are in the church are in God's favor. We must bear fruit and glorify God in the church. (John 15:1-8; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14,15. As we all can see, the church-or kingdom is like a net. It will catch both the good and badland we must be careful that we are the good.

His Purpose Unfolded in Christ

The church is the family of God. Paul plainly shows this in Ephesians 3:14-16. He shows it also in 1 Timothy 3:15. Just as I have no children outside of my family, so it is with God. If that is the case, to be a child of God we must be a part of His family; and His family is the church. So, no matter how we try to do away with the church, it

is a necessary ingredient to our salvation.

Paul says Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. (Ephesians 3:17) Surely we realize that this means more than our emotional nature! It has to mean that He rules our thoughts or feelings and desires as well as our actions. The person who reads about the Lord of Heaven learns to love and adore Him. The Lord becomes our hero! He is able to thus dwell within us and produce His likeness upon each of us. We think about Him and His teachings so much we become like Him. When He dwells within us by faith we can have a clear conscience and peace "...which passeth all understanding...." (Philippians 4:7) This gives us an idea of what it means to be a member of His church and to "walk by faith." It requires faith for every step of the Christian's Journey.

The Place of the Church in God's Purpose

In Ephesians 3:20,21 Paul said:" Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

In verse 20 Paul shows that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Then he shows that this is accomplished or brought about "...according to the power that worketh in us." The power that works in us is the Word of God. Hear Paul: For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thessalonians 2:13) This must be the way we are strengthened in the inner man as Paul puts it in Ephesians 3: 16. After all, he said in Ephesians 3:4, "Whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." Yes, indeed! Thank God for the Gospel.

Verse 21 shows the place of the church in God's eternal purpose. "Unto him be glory in the church...." When the church ceases to work, God ceases to be glorified. The mission of the church is to preach the gospel to the lost, edify the saints or members, worship God and help the needy saints. Brethren, let us cease to be content with being still. Rather, let us still be content to glorify God in the church. He is glorified by our old time worship and service. We don't have to constantly change things around to make it more interesting for Him. He is interested in the condition of our hearts as we worship Him in truth and in spirit. It is vexing, to say the least, to see the spirit manifested by some today. God is not interested in how we perceive spiritual values. He is interested in our obedience and He will accept that for as long as the world stands and bless us for it. What a wonderful God we serve.-41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539

THE SABBATH DAY - PART 2

By *BARNEY OWENS*

A young brother who worshipped with the church here has taken up with a group who think we have to worship on Saturday. Can you help me to understand why we are

to keep Sunday worship, and not Saturday?

This is the basis for our exploring what is often referred to as the Sabbath Day Question, although there is not much

of a question involved, peradventure one takes the Bible in hand and seeks to "divide it aright" (II Tim. 2:15). I shan't repeat the things already brought forth in the first installment pertaining to this subject, but I must begin with the last point, it being left incomplete. (It might be well to re-read Part I).

To Whom Was The Sabbath Given?

It is sometimes said, "If the Sabbath was a part of the Law given by Moses from Sinai, and that it pertained to the "Mosaic Age" only, then why do we find people "keeping the Sabbath" prior to the giving of the Law from the mountain?"

To my way of thinking that is a pausable objection and well worthy of being looked into more than a little. Around the time of giving of the 10 commandments, which included the Sabbath commandment, we have already learned the following:

1. It was given to people alive that day.
2. It was not given to their fathers.
3. It was given to the people who were in bondage in Egypt.
4. It was given as a rest because they were now resting from slavery.
5. It was a sign between Israel and God, not others.

If then, indeed, people kept the Sabbath in a previous time, we must either dig further to learn the meaning of the passages already presented as their "obvious meaning is not really obvious," or discover that something else is wrong with the objection.

Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat. That only may be done of you. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. (Ex. 12 15-17)

It is clear that these people had to be commanded to "rest" on the seventh day as they had not known of such a practice. It was these and not a previous people that had been delivered by God's hand from Egypt, "THEREFORE" (for this reason) they were to observe the day of rest. Add to that the fact that these were to keep it throughout their generations forever, meaning: 1st, previous people hadn't kept it; 2nd, when the nation of the Israel ceased or their generations were not longer kept in accord with God's will, then the day would not be kept.

The passage informs us, "yes" the sabbath was observed before Sinai, but "not" before the people to whom the 10 commandments were given were delivered from Egypt. The same truth is brought out in Ex. 16:19-30. Therefore to the question: TO WHOM WAS THE SABBATH GIVEN? The answer is to the Nation of Israel, not to the Patriarchs, nor the Christians. A Limited day to a limited people. A National day to a national people.

But What Of Genesis 2:2-3

It is often declared that God Himself observed the Sabbath and that people from the beginning were

commanded to keep it as a holy day. Gen. 2:2-3 shows this. So, even in Eden the Sabbath was Holy. Let us first read the passage together.

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; And he rested on the seventh day from all His work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all His work which God created and made.

Let it be clearly understood that God did create all things in six days and rest on the seventh. About this all must agree. And the seventh day was sanctified because God rested upon it. However, the point that is not stated in these verses is what those who contend that the Sabbath was practiced from the beginning need, and that is the TIME OF SANCTIFICATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY.

The verses teach the moses, writing 2500 years after the creation, to the Israelites, who had been delivered from Egyptian bondage and given the seventh day as a day of rest, gives them another reason why the seventh day was chosen as the rest day; God himself ceased His work upon the self-same day and rested from it. Note the language, "BECAUSE THAT IN IT HE HAD RESTED FROM ALL HIS WORK." Rather than prove "sabbath keeping" from the beginning, it proves the opposite. The Sabbath was given after the people were delivered and they were given response from their labor and toil, and the seventh day was chosen because of what had taken place with God Himself.

The Sabbath Was Taken Away

There have been (as is true today) men who had tried to bind "sabbath keeping" on the people of God since Jesus Christ died, when in fact it has not been God's will for men to keep it. In the days of the Apostles, false teachers went forth beguiling disciples and, in the language of Paul, were "spoiling" them. He sought to combat the efforts of these pseudo-christians in Colossians 2. It would lay for you a good foundation to read the entire chapter, space forbids my quoting all, so, just a few verses.

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled the principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

A verse by verse commentary is necessary here. I wish to begin however with the last verse (17) as this is Paul's conclusion of the statements previously made. He shows that while the things of the former age (Mosaic) were important and had their place, that the blessings of God for men are not there. These led to the better, namely the time of Christ. These blessings are in the "body of Christ," which he had already shown to the church (1:18). God rules in the church by the law of Christ, not over Israel through the law of Moses. The church is now the people of God.

Verse 14 reminded them that Jesus died upon the cross of shame to remove ordinances. It is very important that we not fail to recognize the pronouns used by inspiration here. The Colossians were mostly Gentiles after the flesh,

therefore, they had not kept the law of Moses, yet, the false teachers were trying to bind portions of the Law upon them. Paul shows us this should not be. Why? Number one: the things that were given to "us" (not you Gentiles), but "us," the Jews, have been blotted out. When Jesus died, He ended the Law, so these things that were once observed by "us" are not even binding on "us" now, as they are taken away.

Verse 15 shows that the Jewish leaders who thought they were preserving the Law of Moses were doing away with this One whom they thought sought to destroy national Israel and the traditions of the fathers. They accordingly put Christ to death, but He overcame them because such was God's will. His blood sanctified a better covenant and, His kingdom being established, made Him triumph. The Law with its ordinances is gone; His is enacted and effective.

Verse 16 reveals that which was being done by the false teachers and what was to be the conduct of these Colossians toward their false teaching. I must remind again of the pronouns used. It is not as in verse 14 "us" (Jews) of which Paul and the false teachers according to the flesh were, but now the pronoun is "you," he speaks of. Since the Jews "us" are not even bound by the things pertaining to Moses since the death of Christ, then don't allow men to judge "you" gentiles as to whether you have a right relationship with God depending on those things. He then becomes quite specific about the things that the false teachers were "judging" them in respect to. It included meats and drinks, holydays, new moons, and the sabbaths. That covers all the special observances as far as days go in the Law of Moses. Take a look at what is involved.

Meats and drinks--These were their daily observations.
Holydays--Yearly or annual celebrations acknowledged

by them.

New Moon--Came each month and these they complied with.

Sabbath days--The seventh day of rest enjoined on them.

One can read the 28th chapter of Numbers and get a clear idea as to the feasts and acknowledgments of the Jews respecting these things.

The point could not be any more manifest. The Sabbath day was a day that the gentiles had not kept; they were being judged by others for their failure. Paul says don't let them do that to you. These things INCLUDING THE SABBATH are a shadow and are not a part of the body of Christ. (Vs. 17)

Now, what are we to think and what are we to do when modern day teachers come along and try to bind these things upon us? How are we to react when they try to show us many passages in the old scripture which bound these things, ESPECIALLY THE SABBATH, on those people and try to force the same upon us? Our action is clear, we are not to be "judged" about such practices. Did Jesus Christ die in vain? If the death of our Lord did anything, it "blotted out the...Sabbath days."

Let me add something regarding the "young brother who worshipped with the church...who thinks we have to worship on Saturday." Rather than try to judge men for failing to observe the Sabbath, he should remember the blessing in serving Christ and return to the church before time escapes him. Being on the side of false teachers like those in Colosse is being on the wrong side.

More will follow on this subject, please watch for it. We will be happy for nay comment or suggestions on this or any other subject.

LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD

continued from page 1

exception of one family. When men reach the point that they no longer care what sort of woman is made the center of the home and care nothing for divine grace, they are no longer simply sinful—they have fallen to the level of being only flesh (v. 3). Aristotle said of such a man, "If he have

not virtue, he is the most unholy and the most savage of animals, and the most full of lust and gluttony."

When every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts was evil continually, and when the whole earth was filled with violence, God said, "I will destroy." Will we learn the lessons of the flood? Just as the antediluvians thought they had a lease on life and were preoccupied with worldly affairs, so will men be when the Saviour returns (Matt. 24:37).

TOLERANCE AND ROMANS 14

continued from page 2

had learned in the pagan world and would have been very critical and condemning of the Jewish Christians who did not observe them. This created many problems. The Jews, many of them, had a conscience against the eating of certain meats. They would not eat them. The Gentiles considered this complete absurdity and foolishness. They had never had such inhibitions. So, the stage is set. Brother against brother! What do we know? Simply that God cared—not whether they did or didn't eat them! It was a matter of liberty. Remember this: Romans 14 does not deal with matters of law but matters of liberty. When we know from other passages that a certain thing is wrong, such as the things already noticed, those things can never be placed under Romans 14. Some things are absolute. There is no doubt. For instance, the plan of

salvation: BRCB. Suppose one doesn't agree, he believes in faith only. Can we receive him under Romans 14? No, The plan of salvation is clearly revealed. God's will is known and must be obeyed—no liberty there. What about attendance at the worship service? A "weak" brother forsakes it in disobedience of Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:25. Can we overlook it in view of Romans 14? No, God's will is clearly stated. This is not a matter of liberty for us. God has spoken and we must obey.

Who is the "weak" brother in Romans 14? He is the over-strict fellow who is not willing to give up his old practices learned prior to his conversion. In other words, the "weak" brother is the one who still believed it was wrong to eat certain meats (as it had been under the Law) and insisted that everyone else be just like him. Meats were, and are, a matter of liberty in the Christian age. We can eat meat or be vegetarians. God cares not. It is a matter of liberty to us. He was considered weak because he was

unwilling to give up his old inhibitions. Those who were strong were willing to give them up and cared not what the other fellow ate.

All Paul is saying in Romans 14 is that the fellowship of Christians must not be broken over differences of opinion regarding things indifferent! If it doesn't matter to the Lord, God forbid that we tear the church up over it. However, where God has spoken and His will is known

we must insist on it, contend for it an stand on it even at the cost of fellowship. We simply have no choice. The Bible is clear. If it is a matter of liberty, let it alone and allow each to make his own decision. If not, contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 3)

Let us be careful what we allow because of Romans 14. Think on these things.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chain of Rocks New Building

The Chain of Rocks congregation, 1136 Coalbank Rd, St. Louis, MO moved into their new building last fall. We would like to thank all who helped to make this possible. Your prayers and thoughts during the flood and construction process are most appreciated. Since moving into the new building, we have had several visitors from the community and some are attending regularly. Please plan to worship with us if you are in the St. Louis area.--Steve Meents.

Can You Use This Information?

A brother writes that he has located some very useful information about the Mormon Church and their doctrine. Reportedly, it would be worth your while to have this. If you are interested you may acquire the materials for \$6.00 by writing P.O. Box 60363, San Diego, CA 92160.

Fifty Years Together

Doyle and Korean Trent, of Paramount, CA celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on July 26, 1998. Many friends and family members were present. They were married July 29, 1948, in Ardmore, OK. Later, they moved to California, settled down and raised a family. They have two children, five grandchildren and one great grandchild. The gathering was at the Covina Church of Christ meeting house where they were faithful members. We hope you will join us in wishing them many more happy years together.--Geary Trent.

Raymond and Lela Thomas were married June 22, 1948. They have been faithful members of the 79th and Kansas Avenue congregation for many years, where Raymond is Treasurer. They would appreciate cards from their many Christian friends (20929 147th St., Basehor, KS 66007). A celebration is being planned by their children.



BONDS OF MATRIMONY

Stahl-Kees – Friday afternoon, May 1, 1998, Hans Stahl and Amy Kees were married at the beautiful Sterling Hotel in downtown Sacramento, California. Both Hans and Amy are faithful Christians and have been members of the Auburn congregation for several years. Hans is the son of Larry and Gena Stahl who also are members at Auburn and live in Meadow Vista, California. An intimate gathering of family and friends witnessed their declaration of love and faithfulness to each other in the private ceremony. The wedding was striking for its simplicity and beauty. Our prayer is that the Father will prosper them according to His purposes in temporal things, and bless them abundantly with spiritual things. Hans and Amy plan to make their home in nearby Orangevale, California. I was honored to perform the ceremony.--G.V. Ayers

OUR DEPARTED

FINTO-William Finto was born September 6, 1945 and departed February 17, 1998. He had fought a two-year battle with liver cancer. During this time he would still be at worship services, most of the time in great pain. He loved the prayers given for him and all the cards of encouragement. He left behind his father Alfred Finto, stepmother Mary; wife Dorothy, five sons, one daughter, and six grandchildren. His mother and sister who were taken in a tragic automobile accident in 1956 preceded him in death. William attended the Fairview Church of Christ until his father became too ill to travel the distance from Devine to Fairview. Then he and Alfred started the congregation in Devine and attended there until his death.

FINTO-Alfred Finto was born September 26, 1914 at Fairview, Texas and departed April 2, 1998, six weeks after his son William Finto departed. Alfred was 83 years of age and was survived by his wife, Mary; two sons, Duane and George Rawlings; two daughters, Dorothy Finto and Margie Turner; 14 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren; three brothers, Orbra, Edwin and Lee Finto. Alfred's first wife and daughter taken in an automobile accident in 1956 and his son preceded him in death. Alfred helped in getting the congregation started at Devine where he attended until his death. Services for both William and Alfred were very

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large with extra seating added. They were laid to rest in the Fairview Cemetery. Our deepest sympathies go to this family that has lost two loved ones so close together. It was a sad occasion to speak words of comfort to the family for these two loved brothers in Christ.—Ralph Noack

CROMER-Cuba M. Cromer was born Mary 1, 1921 in Mt. Vernon, KY and departed this life April 23, 1998 in Danville, IN at the age of 76 years. She was preceded in death by her husband, Birtes Cromer, in 1994. She is survived by two sons, three sisters, one brother, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Cuba was a member of the Avon (Indianapolis), Indiana congregation since its beginning ten years ago. Her last six months had been a struggle. She underwent two surgeries last October, and was never able to regain her strength. Although she had spent the past several months on basic life support, her desire to fight on was an inspiration to us all. Her struggles and worries are now over in this life, having made preparation for the eternity to come. She was a faithful member of the Avon congregation, and we will all miss her vivid personality, sense of humor, and her hospitality. It was an honor for this writer to conduct the funeral and express words of comfort to the family and members of the congregation.—Anthony Brockett

EVERETT-Sister Leona Jean Everett of the Fair Oaks, CA congregation passed away May 23, 1998 at the age of 59. Sister Everett was born on Dec. 15, 1938 in Pasadena, CA. She was married to George Everett for 40 years. Leona is survived by her husband, four children and five grandchildren. Leona also leaves behind 11 siblings. Leona's cheerful disposition and Christian example will be remembered by a host of friends. As a testimony of her influence, it is estimated that there were over a hundred people left standing outside when the funeral service began. I had the honor of conducting Leona's service with the assistance of Brother Charles Everett and Brother Gayland Osburn.—Richard Lechner

JORDAN-Leola Marie Jordan, infant daughter of Greg and Lisa Jordan of Brazil, IN was still-born June 16, 1998. The young family was heart broken at the news by the doctor. Everything had appeared to be normal and a routine delivery was expected. As news of their loss spread, many came to the hospital to offer support. On a sunny Friday morning, a large crowd assembled at the cemetery for the service. The singing was beautiful. This preacher tried to speak words of comfort, warning and admonition to family and friends. It was a very difficult day for all who were affected by this loss. If you like, you may write the Jordans at 15 W. Park St., Brazil, IN 47834.—Walter Hunter



Don L. King, 41031 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, July 20—The annual 4th of July meeting was a good one this year, at Lebanon. Crowds were large and the new facility was comfortable. It was wonderful to see so many brethren again. We hear that the Sulphur meeting was also well attended. We pray the Lord that good was accomplished at both places. Following the 4th of July meeting, we held a short meeting at Ft. Smith, AR July 5-8. Crowds and interest were very good and we enjoyed going back there again. Bro. Taylor Joyce lives there and we enjoyed a good visit with him. Our sincere thanks to Jack and Jean Jackson for the hospitality of their home while at Ft. Smith. They picked us up at the airport in Springfield, MO, took us to the Lebanon meeting and on to Ft. Smith. Later, they took us to Atlanta, GA for the meeting at Marietta and stayed with us for about half the meeting. They are family members, but wonderful friends as well. We began at Marietta on Saturday evening, July 11 and continued through the 19th. Crowds were very good, especially the last of the week. There were at least 10 (perhaps more) congregations represented, some from out of state. Brother Rick Martin, an able preacher in his own right, lives there and does a good work. He and Jane allowed us to make our home with them and it was a treat. We look forward to returning, Lord willing, in 2003. We

are at home for a few weeks before going to Hawaii on August 14 to help the brethren in Honolulu and also the new work on the big island in Hilo. We have not been back since we began the work several years ago and it will be encouraging to see the growth. Pray for us.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@juno.com, July 7—We just closed the annual Sulphur Fourth of July Meeting and it was a good one. As usual our crowds were small at the beginning of the meeting, but they grew significantly toward the middle, and by the night of the third of July we had approximately 800 in attendance. Thirty-four preachers spoke for us, including Julio and Juan Rodriguez. I enjoyed working with Bob Johnson as co-director and thank George Hill and the Sulphur brethren for their valuable help during the meeting. Since my last report I have also conducted meetings in Cedar Creek, AR, Trussville, AL, and Indiana, PA. I enjoyed each of those meetings and feel some good was accomplished. We had visitors from the community and surrounding congregations at nearly every service. Two young ladies obeyed the gospel during the meeting at Indiana. My schedule for the next few months includes: Ozark, MO (July 19-26), Mozier, IL (Aug. 2-9), Gale, OK (Aug. 28-30), Little Rock, AR (Sept. 23-27), Jamesville, MO (Oct. 14-18), Duncanville, TX (Nov. 28-29), and Seminole, OK (Dec. 4-6). Please remember us in your prayers.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, Mo. 65808, July 9—The meeting at Spring Valley near Huntington, WV closed with one brother being restored to duty. We had good cooperation from surrounding congregations, which helped make the meeting successful

and enjoyable. Next we were at San Angelo, TX. Crowds were large and attentive. One brother came over from digression and one made confession of faults. Our television program is seen weekly throughout the West Texas area. It was good to have Duane Permenter visit several times during the meeting. The fourth of July meeting in Lebanon, MO was enjoyable again this year. The new Lebanon Civic Center is an excellent facility for such a meeting. It was good to see so many from various places and hear the good preaching throughout the week. The Lord willing our next few meetings are as follows: West Plains, MO (AB Hwy.) July 10-12, Mtn. Home, AR, July 22-26, New Salem near Brookhaven, MS July 31-Aug. 9. Lovejoy, PA Aug. 23-30. Please remember us when you pray.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, July 5—Our meeting at Deer Park, Texas was both interesting and enjoyable. We had some gratifying crowds and it was wonderful to be there and see so many old acquaintances and friends whom we had not seen for several years. We appreciated the cooperation and assistance of other congregations. Two were baptized. There was a couple who attended the meeting who were an inspiration to all of us—Larry and Marie Ballard. Larry was taking dialysis three times a week and was suffering from cancer. He would take his treatments of a morning which always made him feel bad, and in the evening he would have Marie bring him to the meeting, a drive of about forty-five minutes. This took place night after night until the meeting closed. The day we left town we stopped by and ate lunch at the Ballard's. Larry had a treatment that morning and was not feeling very well. He lay on the couch while we visited. As we said our "goodbyes" I took his hand and told him we loved him. Larry died a week ago yesterday in the triumph of living faith. Goodbye dear friend until we can join you on the other side.

Johnny L. Fisher, 184 Brace Rd. Summertown, TN 38483, July 13—The churches in this area are in the midst of their summer meetings. The Chapel Grove congregation has just closed a meeting with Allen Bailey. We had a great revival with seven baptized into Christ and twenty-seven confessions of fault. I certainly can recommend Allen to all the churches to do evangelistical work. He put his entire being into the meeting and Chapel Grove has learned to love him as a brother in Christ. We are now preparing for our annual "TN Labor Day Meeting" at Chapel Grove. We want to thank everyone who has supported this meeting and invite all the brethren to attend. I am still doing well with my cancer, as far as we can tell it's not spreading. The prayers of you brethren have helped me so much. I thank you so much! We have so many who are critically ill in this area. Leo Burns, a beloved elder at Chapel Grove, is having a hard time with cancer. Please remember him as well at the rest of us in your prayers.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln, West. Chester, OH 45069—It was a joy to be with the churches at Mitchell, IN and Columbus, GA again. Our next meetings will be with the congregations at Mtn. Grove, MO August 1-9; and Valliant, OK August 10-16. If near by—plan to assist us

in reaching the lost. Your presence always helps. Pray for us.

Anthony Brockett, 7429 Oceanline Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46214, E-mail ABBrockett@aol.com—Our work here in the Indianapolis area is off to a good start. Since our move here last August, the brethren here have been helpful in gathering leads and contacts. We have had good crowds as of late, with a number of outside visitors. We were recently blessed with two restorations. For this we are thankful. We have three brethren here who are very capable teachers in the congregation and are a tremendous help in the labors of the Lord's work. Brother John Trisler and I have been conducting a home study with some of the members here, with good results. We are currently sending out a monthly congregational paper, with a growing mailing list. We were recently saddened by the death of one of our local members, Sister Cuba Cromer. She had been ill for some time, and will be missed. 1998 has been a busy year so far in my preaching travels. I have had the privilege of preaching at: Oyster Bay, FL; Longwood, FL; Temple, GA; La Grange, GA; Jonesboro, GA; Mitchell, IN; Bedford, IN; and most recently in Walnut Grove, KY. We just closed out a short weekend meeting in Grassy Fork, TN. It was a pleasure to be with the brethren down there again. We were also able to attend the meeting at Pleasant Grove, IN with Billy Orten in March. It is great that he has regained the strength to be out preaching the gospel again! It was good to be at the Bedford congregation in March to hear Doug Edwards. We also had the opportunity to attend one night of the meeting that Kevin Presley and Bruce Roebuck were holding at Broadhead, KY. It was good to see them again and visit with the folks there. May the Lord bless the faithful everywhere and those who labor for His Cause.

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4, Box 188, Ada, OK 74820—Greetings to all the brethren everywhere. Time is certainly getting away from us, spring has passed and summer is upon us. We have some really good reports on our efforts in gospel meetings for which we give God and the power of His word the credit. Since last report we were in Piedmont, AL for a wonderful meeting which resulted in two being baptized. Their joy of the meeting was dimmed by the death of Bro. Wade Morrison, but even in death his good example lives on and was very likely an influence upon one of those who was baptized. While in Piedmont Darlene and I enjoyed the hospitality of Bro. Terry Studdard and his family. From AL it was on to Fremont, CA where again we had a most enjoyable stay with the brethren. It is always a treat to be with this young, energetic congregation. Although we saw no visible results, as we say, one could not help but see the enthusiasm of these brethren for the Lord's business. Results will bless their efforts. It was good to be associated with Bro. Don King, I esteem Don most highly for his good works. From CA it was back to Mt. Home, AR. We had an old time gospel meeting here! I mean old time in the interest shown by the community and the efforts of the members. We had five (5) baptisms during the course of the meeting. Two of those baptized were total strangers to the church having been brought to the services by a good sister who happened to live in the

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same apartment complex with them. Bro. Bruce Roebuck works with these brethren and it was our great pleasure to stay with him, Tanya and their sweet children. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my preaching brethren who made special efforts to support these gospel meetings. Bros. Bennie Cryer, Richard DeGough, Alan Bonifay, Doug Hawkins, Jimmie Smith, Rodney Watson, these men

and perhaps others who names have slipped me were in attendance one of more times at these meetings. There's more: Pansey, AL, July 19-26; Depaul, IN, July 31-Aug. 9; Lawrenceburg, TN, Aug. 16-23; Odom, MO, Sept. 13-20; Athens, AL, Sept. 23-27; Sharonville, OH, Oct. 10-18; Longwood, FL, Nov. 1-8; Seminole, OK, Dec. 4-6. Please remember us in your prayers.

“WAITING ON THE LORD’S TABLE”

By RICHARD NICHOLS

To “eat of this bread” and “drink of this cup” may be the most sacred act a human being can perform today. During the Lord’s supper, each Christian should be seriously engaged in remembering the Lord’s death on Calvary’s cruel cross (Luke 22:19). He should see the Lamb of God sacrificed to take away his sins as well as those of every other communicant (John 1:29). He should see the shed blood of God’s son, which purchased the church (Acts 20:28); he should realize he is bought with a price—that price being the death of Christ (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23).

When a brother assumes the post of “waiting on the Lord’s table,” he must realize how grave the responsibility is. His appearance should be as dignified as it can ever be, his manner should be with as much honor as he can give, and his speech should reflect his respect for the Lord and his reverence toward holy things. He needs to choose the most appropriate words he can command concerning the Lord’s supper. You see, it is an extremely high honor to stand where a Christian stands, and a profound privilege to speak of the greatest sacrifice ever made.

To treat the occasion as something light is an outrageous sin. During the worship in a congregation where they had plans to eat dinner together under the trees at the back of the lot, a brother rushed up to the table, uncovered the bread and the cup of the Lord’s supper, and said, “Well, we’ve had a long service, I can smell the food, and my stomach’s growling, I bet you’re hungry too...So let’s get this over with.” Question: Did this man discern the Lord’s eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body” (1 Cor 11:29).

When taking care of the sacred institution, proper passages of scripture, intended to remind the Christians of the significance of the communion might be read. He might also make remarks about the meaning of the supper. He might give appropriate illustrations. But nothing should ever be said which would tend to keep the communicants from their sacred function of remembering Jesus death as they partake.

Don’t ever make inappropriate illustrations. We once heard a man compare Jesus’ death on the cross to a fighting soldier who dies on the battlefield. That was totally out of place. The reason the soldier died, was that he wasn’t able to kill his enemy before he was killed or at least escape. Jesus could have called ten legions of angels to deliver Him, but refused to escape. Instead, He did His Father’s will. He would not so much as allow the apostle Peter to attempt to protect Him with a sword, but stated that no man takes His life from Him, but rather He lays it down in sacrifice. He would not retaliate against His enemies, but rather prayed for them saying, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” He acted on the will of His Father, while the soldier is compelled to go into battle by the civil government. Christ’s goal was to die and take away the sins of the world, while the soldier’s goal is to stay alive, annihilate the enemy, and go home.

Brother, please take seriously the task that is before you when called upon to take care of the Lord’s table in worship. Instead of hindering the worshippers from their duty to “remember Jesus and show forth the Lord’s death,” you need to help them, aid them, and encourage them to the best of your ability.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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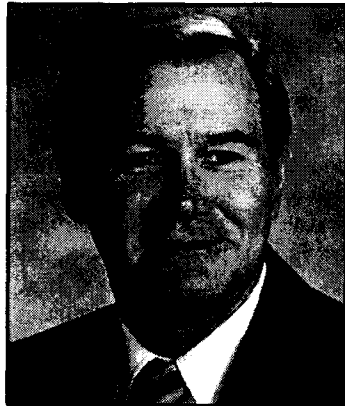
"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 9



Billy Orten
1930-1998

Brother Billy Orten Departs

Just after arriving in Central Pennsylvania on Saturday August 22, I received word of the passing of Brother Billy Orten. Billy had been seriously ill for several weeks following surgery for a brain tumor. Just a little over three weeks ago, my wife and I visited him in the hospital in Shreveport, La. He was not doing well at the time. We were afraid that our good-bye would be the last meeting on this earth. His son Jamie told me that the last meaningful thing his father said to him came in a conversation a few days before his passing. When he asked Billy, "How are you doing?" (he of course referred to his physical condition) came the reply "I am in a strait betwixt two." This was an indication of what many of us knew; Billy was not only ready to go, part of him wanted to go. At about 5 p.m. on that Saturday the Lord graciously ended his suffering and took him home. More will follow in the October issue of *Old Paths Advocate* about the life, death and memorial service for our beloved brother.—Ronny F. Wade

THE WORLD OF ROMANS ONE

BY WAYNE MCKAMIE

The Roman letter was written from Corinth on the third missionary journey of the apostle Paul in the winter of 54 or 55. Paul was in the home of Gaius, and Tertius was by his side as he wrote by the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Paul began this great letter by saying, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." I think it is interesting that Paul, a rich, powerful, influential Jew, was proud to be a servant, a bond slave of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice also that Paul was called to be an apostle, "separated unto the gospel of God." Paul was not separated to a monastery, a nunnery, a mountain top or a commune, but to the gospel of Christ. Paul was separated to the gospel the good news, not new news, but the good news of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ.

Paul says some things that we need to hear in our day. In fact Romans One is a case history of the human race. In it you will find a diagnosis, a prognosis, and a remedy prescribed. This case history is not lovely.

In Romans 5:21, "sin hath reigned unto death." In Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." One thing you may be sure of, Romans One gives the whole truth about the human condition. Romans One is dark and foreboding. It's thunder and it's lightning! The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. In verse 24, the scripture says, "God gave them up." In verse 26, again, "God gave them up." In verse 28, the scripture says, "God gave them over." The problem was sin. It is amazing how we like to

trace our problems to anything, ANYTHING other than the real problem of SIN!

I was in Baylor University when John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas. I remember the ensuing discussion and the commentators as they talked about how a man could be gunned down in cold blood by another human. They said, "Maybe it was due to the frontier spirit that prevails in Texas. Perhaps it was the fault of the motion picture industry." They never really got around to discussing the real reason.

Just as today we tend to ascribe it to every reason under the sun except the real problem which is sin.

The Bible is a very honest book. The Bible tells it like it is! The scripture says, "There is none righteous, no not one." All perversion is traced to the human heart. Until the heart is cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, nothing good is going to come and nothing good is going to happen.

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error

continued on page five

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 9



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-9

The World Of Romans One 1

Consistency, Thou Art A Jewel 2

The Querist Column 3

Sacrificing The Future Of Pleasures

Of The Past 3

Local Teachers Are Important! 4

FROM THE FIELDS 9-11

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Editorial

“CONSISTENCY, THOU ART A JEWEL”

By DON L. KING

Recently, we saw a television documentary about women who have gone to prison for murdering their newborn babies. As distasteful as it was, we listened as a very sad tale emerged.

A young lady in her late teens had become pregnant and had somehow kept it a secret from her parents with whom she lived. She delivered the baby girl in the bathroom at home. Her parents paid no heed and apparently were completely unaware of the entire matter. The young lady said the child was stillborn and she simply wrapped it in plastic bags and discarded it in the garbage can in the garage. When asked what she did then, she replied that she went to the family room and watched television with her mother and tried to pretend that everything was all right. Later, she was found out and the child recovered by authorities. An autopsy indicated the child had died after being discarded. She was tried and sentenced to a fifteen years to life term. The program seemed to be sympathetic toward the young lady who is trying to appeal her sentence. Then, a second young teenage girl was profiled who had done almost the same thing and was also serving a prison sentence. She too was seeking an appeal and sympathy. She claimed that she was not a bad person but had merely made some bad decisions. Everything would be fine now, if only she could have her sentence repealed.

You may or may not have seen this particular program. However, this situation is repeated many times each year. As I watched and listened, I wondered about the inconsistency of it all. Here were two young women who had been convicted of murdering their own babies. I could not keep the thought out of my mind: if they had aborted those babies BEFORE birth no one would have said a thing! What would have been the difference? The very same children would have been killed, murdered by a physician. In today's America and many other places, that's all right.

We are told that as late as the seventh month a baby can be murdered. Oops, excuse me, “aborted.” The method of partial birth abortion is so ghastly and inhuman I will not describe it except to say the child is partially born before being killed by the doctor. The baby boy or girl might well survive on its own except for the killing procedure. This in the name of medicine! Doctors who have taken an oath to preserve life have begun commonplace and wholesale murder. How inconsistent! How blind! If the child is killed after birth, authorities call it murder. The person who kills the child may go to prison for life. If before birth it is only a harmless medical procedure. Everyone involved is free, society smiles and politicians vow it is a woman's choice to do with her body as she pleases. As far as we are concerned, it seems that they must realize how

continued on page seven

THE QUERIST COLUMN

BY RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is it scriptural to help those who are not Christians out of the church treasury? Does Mt. 10:8 support such an idea? (AL)

Answer: Matthew 10:8 reads "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give." This verse has nothing to do with giving money to anybody. The teaching here is simply that the Apostles should pass on the benefits of the power they had received from Jesus to others. The power to perform miracles had come from the Lord. They were *not* to charge, in any way, for what they did. As H. Leo Boles remarks, "They had freely received and they were to give freely; they were to sell no miracles, not to sell the gospel; no bribe could be taken for healing any one." This verse in no way teaches that the church today can take funds out of its treasury to help non-Christians. To so teach, is to misapply it. But, are there other passages that teach we can use the money in the church treasury to help people who are not members of the church? If there are, this writer is unaware of them. In fact everything that is said on the subject in the Bible is directly opposed to such an idea. The Scriptures teach that the church is to provide for its own, the needy saints (Acts 2:44, 45; 4:32; 6:1-3; 11:27-30; Romans 15:25-26; 1Cor. 16:1-2; 2Cor. 8:8; 2Cor. 9:1,12,13). We find an example of this practice in Jerusalem, where none of the saints lacked (Acts 2:44 and 4:32). However, in Acts 3, the beggar at the gate beautiful, asked alms of Peter and John. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none..." The church had funds, but Peter did not refer him to the church. Peter did not say, "Let me talk to the brethren about this matter. I'll see if I can get you some help." Nor did he say, "This is a good opportunity for the church to make a name for itself in the community." Wonder why? Because the church had no responsibility in the matter. The obligation of the church is to save the world through the preaching of the gospel, not by contributing to their financial needs. Notice the following scriptures that prove this point: Romans 15: 25-31 "But now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things...Now I beseech you, brethren, by the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judaea, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints." Please note the following points in these verses: the church relieved saints-- "ministering to the saints," "contribution for the poor among the saints," "my ministration which I have

for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints." Saints are specified. No mention is made of non-Christians being the responsibility of the church. Why? Obviously the task would be impossible. The governments of the world cannot even feed all the hungry people in the world. How on earth do you think the church could undertake such a task? How would we pick and choose among the needy of our communities and decide which ones to help and which ones not to help? Our obligation is limited to the those in the church who are in need. What happens when a church has more needy saints than it can relieve? In the verse mentioned above other congregations sent funds to the Jerusalem church to enable it to relieve its own destitute saints. Such is a pattern for us today. If a congregation has more needy saints than it can care for, then other churches may send to that church to assist them in caring for those in need. Another important point that we need to consider in the above verses is that benevolence is the fruit of Christianity, it is not for the purpose of producing it. Because the Gentiles had been partakers of the Jews' spiritual things, they should minister to the Jews in carnal things, (i.e. they should help them in their need). The Gentile churches did not do benevolence to make Christians. The benevolence was extended to those who were Christians. The gospel, not benevolent work, is God's power unto salvation (Romans 1:16). The argument that the church will look good in the community, if it helps someone in need, places the emphasis where the Bible does not place it. We are not trying to convert people by helping them out of the church treasury. We are trying to convert them by preaching the gospel to them. Look carefully at 1Corinthians 16:1-2 "Now concerning the collection for the saints. . ." The collection was for the saints. This verse should settle the issue once and for all. The Bible specifies for "whom" the collection would be used. "The saints." Specific authority excludes. There are no non-believers in 1Cor. 16:1-4. Note also that the same order had been given to other churches "I gave order to the churches of Galatia. . ." The benevolent funds of the church are to be raised by the saints contributing into a collective treasury on the first day of the week. To collect the money on a Tuesday night gathering of the church would be in violation of the command. The money was to be used for the "saints." To use it for non-saints is to violate the pattern. Question: If we may use church funds to help non-saints, may we also gather those funds every night during a gospel meeting? If not, why not? One other thought needs to be added. As individual Christians, we may, and should help those in need about us. Such benevolence is and always has been characteristic of God's people. However, to teach that the church may or should relieve the needy of the world is without scriptural foundation. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

SACRIFICING THE FUTURE FOR PLEASURES OF THE PAST

BY RICK MARTIN

One of the most tragic stories found in the Bible is that of Esau and Jacob. Esau was an outdoorsman who liked to

get out in the woods and hunt. After one particular hunting trip, he returned home and found his brother Jacob putting

the finishing touches on a pot of stew.

Esau was extremely hungry, so hungry he thought he would die. He began to plead with his brother to give him some stew. Jacob saw great possibilities here and he seized the moment and required Esau's birthright in exchange for a bowl of stew. Esau agreed to this exchange and relinquished his blessed privilege for a simple bowl of ordinary stew.

We may think how could anyone be so foolish? However, each time we give in to the tempting whim of the moment, we too are sacrificing the future for the pleasures of the present. Many sacrifice the future for the pleasure of the present. This is done when people constantly think of themselves and their desires. Some never think about God and the higher values of life. The Bible tells us there will be people who love pleasure more than God. (II Tim. 3 :4) "Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." These people mind only earthly things (Phil 3 :19), "Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."

We sacrifice our future when we focus on things that are temporal rather than eternal. There are certain things that should be more important to us than anything else and these are the things that are eternal. The things of this world soon fade away. The house that we desperately want will one day crumble. The automobile that we desire will become out-dated and give way to rust. We need to view everything in light of eternity. Any decisions made, money spent or love invested, should be with a view to eternal values. Spiritual things are the things that will last forever (II Cor. 4:18), "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Temporal things will not last, so why constantly worry about these things? The important thing is to judge things by the eternal standard of God's Word. Involvement with temporal things brings no lasting satisfaction, and the pleasures they offer are but for a moment. Eternal things will bring everlasting joy and satisfaction. When we focus on temporal things we are sacrificing our future.

We sacrifice the future when we have little respect for spiritual things. God, His Word and His ways demand devotion and worship. When things of the world are allowed to have preeminence over God, we are cultivating the right condition for yielding to wrong desires.

The "fear of God" was a strong motivation for obedience in both the Old and New Testaments. This does

not imply horror, but rather respect. When we fear God, we give Him the glory due His name. We love the things He loves and hate the things He hates. When we stand in reverence of God we have a relationship that centers around pleasing and honoring Him in all our decisions and actions. Reverence of God is a strong defense against the appealing, but deceiving arguments of the Devil. Reverence of God is measured by the amount of time and attention given to God through commitment to His Word, His people and His commandments. We show our reverence of God by being committed to Him and to His cause. God must be preeminent and things of the world should hold no allurements or charms.

We sacrifice our future when we make decisions without God's guidance. When we try to live out our lives using our own strength instead of God's we are destined to fall victim to Satan. When we do not understand that Christ is to be our life and that He is sufficient, we are more susceptible to times of despair and discouragement. These down times can be breeding grounds for hasty and carnal decisions. God and Christ can be our strength if we will let Them. We must know Them, and the way to do this is to have a knowledge of the Word. Jesus was able to overcome the Tempter by relying on the Word. Christians must turn to the Word to resist the lure of the present.

We sacrifice our future when we fail to consider the consequences of our actions. There is a cause and an effect for everything. When a decision is made today it is like a rock tossed in the pond of tomorrow--its consequences ripple through future days, months, and years. The pain of unwise decisions can be avoided by projecting the consequences on a mental screen. Before doing or saying something, we would be wise to picture in our minds what the consequence of doing such a thing would be. We should ask "What will happen as a result of this decision? How will it affect my relationship with God. How will this impact my relationship with friends and family? How will this affect my future abilities to serve God and Christ?" If we will ask ourselves these questions and answer them truthfully, we will usually make the right decision.

So many sacrifice the future for pleasures of the present. Ask yourself this question, "What is the bowl of stew in my life?" Is there something or someone for whom you are giving up your birthright? Whatever or whomever it may be, it is not worth the attachment. Nothing can compare with the blessings of obedience to God. No earthly pleasure can come close to the rewards of doing His will. Don't relinquish your blessings as Esau did. Do not sacrifice the future for pleasures of the present.

LOCAL TEACHERS ARE IMPORTANT!

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

Strong leadership and effective teaching are absolutely essential to the strength and growth of a congregation! In fact, those two factors go hand in hand because a strong and wise leadership will see to it that the church receives the edification it needs. We need to realize that it is difficult, if not impossible, for a local church to rise above leadership and teaching that is weak, misguided, and ineffectual. That's why I would like for us to consider the importance

of the local teacher.

While it is a worthy effort to encourage our able young men in the church to become preachers of the Gospel and to get involved in evangelistic work, let us never forget that there is also a need in every congregation for local teachers. By "local teachers," I mean men who are members of a local church and who contribute their part in edifying and building up the church in their locality.

The Bible shows that the work they do is vital and indispensable: "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers..." (Acts 13:1). "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). It's obvious from these two passages of Scripture that teaching plays a vital role in the life and work of a local church. Notice how Paul went on to make this clear in Eph. 4:12, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." This tells us that effective teaching is necessary to bring members of the church to maturity (where they can discover their rightful place in the kingdom of Christ as those fully equipped to serve God). Also, take note of the expression, "For the edifying of the body of Christ." To edify means to build up in the sense of promoting spiritual growth.

Some believe that "pastors and teachers" in Eph. 4:11 refers to the same office or same person. In other words, being a teacher is part of the function of a pastor or elder in the church. Vincent gives the following explanation: "The omission of the article from teachers seems to indicate that pastors and teachers are included under one class. The two belong together. No man is fit to be a pastor who cannot also teach, and the teacher needs the knowledge which pastoral experience gives" (**Vincent's Word Studies Of The N.T.**, p. 390). The point I want to emphasize is that before a man is qualified to be ordained to do the work of an elder, he must first be "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2). Tit. 1:9 explains that to include the idea that he is "holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

Yes, an elder must be an effective teacher of God's word; he must be someone who knows how to both edify the church and use the sword of the Spirit to combat false doctrine. Brethren, if we ever have elders in the church, those men will come from the local teachers of a congregation! That's the point I want you to see.

Having established that the local teacher is vital to the life and the growth of the church, this brings us to the next point: Local teachers need the awesome responsibility that goes with this work! James 3:1 reminds us that teachers should not approach their duty to teach in a flippant or careless fashion: "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." The word "masters" here translated "teachers." It is the same word used in Acts 13:1 and Eph. 4:11. James is saying that before we undertake this work we need to appreciate the tremendous responsibility that goes along with it. In fact, James says that we who are teachers will

be judged with a greater strictness. Why? The reason is because the teacher has a responsibility that all men do not have and he will be judged in special areas pertaining to that work: Did he teach the truth? Did he speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15--motives will be taken into consideration)? Did he teach what was needed (Acts 20:26-27)? Did he practice what he taught others to do (Matt. 23:3)? Such matters as these will be taken into account in the day of judgment. Surely a most sobering thought!

Let me conclude by pointing out that there are at least two qualifications for a local teacher to meet. First, teachers must be faithful servants of God. 2 Tim. 2:2 says, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men..." Being a local teacher in the church is not a "right" that someone just automatically and arbitrarily receives, but rather it is a privilege and it is something that must be earned. By that I mean that the person must prove himself worthy of such a task and responsibility by being faithful to God's word. A person whose life is not above sin and reproach cannot be an effective teacher and should not expect to occupy such a position! Secondly, teachers must be capable of edifying the church. The latter part of 2 Tim. 2:2 says, "...faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." This includes several ideas: (1) It seems to me that it assumes that the person has some natural ability to stand before an audience and publicly proclaim the word of God. The truth is that not everyone has the ability to teach and the Lord does not intend for every man in the church to be a local teacher (1 Cor. 12:29). (2) To be able to teach others includes the knowledge necessary to instruct and edify. Notice that 2 Tim. 2:2 demands that the message of truth be transmitted to faithful men. (3) Teaching, like any other endeavor, takes effort and experience. A person does not become an effective teacher over night; it takes desire, practice, and time. However, if the person has some natural ability and the incentive, he can grow as a teacher and will learn how to be skillful in handling the word of God. Again, this is seen in the qualifications of an elder. As we've already established, an elder must be "apt to teach." This includes the idea of being "skilled in teaching." Hence effective teaching is a skill, and like any other skill or techniques involved in teaching, the more effective he's going to be at his "craft."

The church needs and deserves strong and effective teaching! Local teachers, please realize how important you are to the work of the church. Remember: "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness" (James 3:1, RSV).

Amen and Amen!

THE WORLD OF ROMANS ONE

continued from page 1

which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters; haters of God,

despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 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. 1:24-32).

What an amazing view into the world of Romans one! Notice in verse 24, "God gave them up." If you have ever

heard a note of finality struck, it is that passage. It sounds like clods on the coffin of humanity, if you will! GOD GAVE THEM UP! He withdrew his restraining grace and let them have what they insisted on having. He gave them over to the consequences of their own sins.

This all says that even in this life, we can be given up. It is possible for us to fall out of the hands of the living God. What a tragedy! Romans One is a portrait of man without God. What I fear is that this will become the portrait of America. God gave these people "over" to spiritual and moral uncleanness and let them reap their own due reward.

God gave them up to "VILE" affections! In other words, "wrong fulfillment of evil desires." The wrong fulfillment of natural desires becomes what the scripture calls "vile affections." In describing the world of Romans One, Paul says, even their women did burn in their lusts one toward another, indicating that the world of Romans One, had stooped to a new low.

With this, Paul introduces us to the slimy, sleazy world of homosexuality. If you have ever wondered if the Bible is current, if the Bible is relevant, if the Bible addresses anything today, if it bears any concern for the present, all you need to do is read Romans One. The world of Romans One, was very much like the world of 1998. The things stated in this chapter have a very familiar ring, do they not?

In the last few years, society has been wrestling with this problem. It is the understatement of our day to say that "homosexuality has come out of the closet." In San Francisco, in 1983 there was a parade in which 300,000 people participated to sustain the very thing that Romans One condemns. Sometime ago 200,000 people marched while Mayor Ed Koch declared it to be gay and lesbian pride week in New York City. We have churches who claim 50,000 homosexuals as part of their membership. Some years ago the Catholic church in San Francisco made a statement in regard to this problem and said in effect that such is not to be held as sinful, that such ought to be treated with compassion and understanding, that we should take a nonjudgemental approach, and that we should seek to avoid alienation of all such people.

It may sound like the voice of one crying in the wilderness of these modern times, but Paul said, "they changed the natural use." Paul needs to be heard in our culture, in our society, in this very day. We have films, clubs, plays, churches and even preachers who would excuse, defend, justify and glorify the very thing which Paul condemns. We have reached a day when reason is out the window and self will has moved in.

I deny that any individual is born a homosexual. I readily recognize that there is a tremendous amount of such activity in our time, all of which is a result of a series of wrong decisions, each of which the person is responsible for making. Decisions that were made out of step with and contrary to God's natural order.

Genesis 1:27, says, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; MALE and FEMALE created he them."

1st. Corinthians 6:9, speaks of "abusers of themselves with mankind."

Romans One again, "even their women did change the natural use." Both men and women LEFT the natural use

(the use of the body according to God's order) and burned in lust, men with men and women with women. But let's face it, the virus of evil spread even to the women and they became as bad as the men. Notice the sexual language, men, women, male, female.

Evidently as far as God is concerned and as far as Paul and the Holy Spirit are concerned, there is a natural use and an unnatural use. The natural is ground into the constitution of the sexes that the Lord made in the very beginning. It is the unnatural that is under judgement in Romans One.

Notice another thing Paul says in Romans 1:27. He says, "receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." Paul says they are under judgement now and on the road to ultimate judgement. Paul states that such carries its own penalty. Paul says it carries its own DUE penalty. How true!

Years ago I attended a seminar where some of our leading health officials predicted that by 1990, one hundred thousand people will die in the United States as a result of this. They told this particular group that in the next 2 years that there will not be a public school in the United States that will not be touched by this problem.

A recent conversation with a clinical psychologist, gave a real view into this world. He works with children who are abused and perverted. He said he sees some unbelievable and abominable practices resulting from everything from drunken parents to Satanic worship.

Many years ago a leading health official from Great Britain came to the United States. After walking through one of the great syphilis wards of New York City, he said, "God Almighty certainly writes a legible hand!"

Are we building another Sodom and Gomorrah? Study Genesis the 19th chapter. Will we soon be pleading with God, as was Abraham of old to destroy us not? On Feb. 26, 1983, I attended a debate in Denton, Texas between Dan Billingsly and Dr. Ralph Blair of New York City. I listened with amazement that evening as Dr. Blair sought to defend the proposition, "Homosexual practice is consistent with a Christian's lifestyle.

Even a casual look at Romans one will teach us that this is not the case at all! Homosexuality flies in the face of God according to this chapter. Homosexuality flaunts God's law, His divine principle, and His divine order. How do you think the term, "Sexual revolution" sounds to an unchanging, eternal God?

May God help us as a community, as a world, to wake up and to realize that we cannot put a new robe on the prodigal while he is still in the hog pen. You will remember in the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15, that it was only *after* the prodigal came home that the father placed a robe on his back and a ring on his finger. We must not get into the position of advocating bigger and better hog pens. We must not get in the position of killing the fatted calf for those who are still in the far country.

What is the root of the problem? Romans 1:28, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge." Frankly, there were those of that day who didn't want to hear it. There are those today who still don't want to hear the message of Romans One. It is a dark and foreboding message, but it is a message we need to hear. They were void of judgement. They had no sense of direction. They

didn't know where they were! What an appalling picture.

Romans One is the portrait of man without God. Man without God is a horrendous picture! Shall it become the portrait of America? Shall it become the portrait of your home town? The world of Romans One was a world on death row! The smell of death was in the air. We need very much today to listen to what the scripture is saying to us.

One of the most troubling things about studying the world of Romans One, is that it sounds like the 6 o'clock news. What we are looking at in Romans One are the footprints of God. We are listening to the foot fall of God walking away from us!

Please notice the last verse, "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."

At one time these people had known the judgment of God. When they knew God they glorified him not as God.

This tells us that the knowledge of a coming judgment does not necessarily keep us from present sin.

Why did Paul preach this message? Was it only to tell of the impending death of Rome? I think it was also to convince them of their desperate need of the gospel! In verse 16, Paul told them, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation."

Sin isn't going away. There are no new sins. There are new ways to commit the same old ones. But, you can change. You can be born again. You quit sins by repentance. No wonder Paul said, "such WERE some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," 1st. Cor. 6:11.

Publisher's Note: This material is also in tract form. Contact Irvin Barnes, 3218 East Farm Rd. 88, Springfield, MO 65803.

"CONSISTENCY, THOU ART A JEWEL"

continued from page 2

inconsistent their position is.

Not long ago, a man who in a drunken stupor killed a woman and her unborn baby in a car crash, was charged with TWO counts of murder. The unborn baby was also a victim, said the courts. We couldn't agree more but why is it murder by the drunk but only birth control by the doctor? Consistency, thou art a jewel! Let's remember that either way a child is killed.

In 1997 a pill manufactured in France hit the USA. A woman can take the first pill in the privacy of her home and end the life of her unborn child. Two days later a second pill will cause the dead child to be born. All this in the name of convenience and medicine.

We mention this not because we fear that Christian ladies among us are guilty. God forbid! We bring this to your attention lest any of us might become complacent because of its commonplace occurrence. It is sin. It is a terrible sin and our young people must never waver in their perspective of it. Just because it happens often (millions of children have been aborted in the USA) doesn't make it right. Abortion is one of many sins we are commonly faced with as we near the turn of the century.

The Lord made clear his view concerning the value of the unborn. To Jeremiah he said, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jeremiah 1:5) Does God know us before we are born? Absolutely.

In Exodus 23:7 the Bible says, "Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked." What could be more innocent than an unborn child?

In Exodus 21:22,23 the Spirit inspired Moses to write: "If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will

lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life." If men caused a woman to have a premature birth, but the child lived, the men were to be punished as the husband desired and pay a fine which the judges would decide. However, if the child died or the woman died the matter became a capital offense. The death penalty was expected. Life for life. How different it is today.

Human life is cheap and many of the world see no harm in what is happening in the abortion procedure. The same folks, however, get all worked up over the death of an animal. In Miami, Florida a man who killed a puppy (its barking woke him up) got nine years in prison.

In another case some laboratory rats were saved at the last minute by some frantic folks who would not tolerate their being tossed into an incinerator after the lab had finished with them.

Those who intervened were called the rat's "godparents!" Consistency,....

We are used to people demonstrating over the use of fur coats. An animal gave its life so that the fur could be harvested. Many are opposed to hunting and killing animals even for food. Yet the same ones say not a word when precious little boys and girls are killed in every conceivable manner by doctors performing abortions.

As people get farther and farther away from God and His holy will, they become more and more inconsistent. Their focus is skewed. Frankly, it appears the world is reaping the harvest of years and years of cultivating evolution and humanism in our educational system. The meaning and value of human life has been lost. God said, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." (Proverbs 14:34) A casual study of history will show that a sure way to destroy a nation is to do away with their belief in God and promote a lack of respect for human life. America better take heed. May God help us all to hate the awful sin of abortion. Preachers need to cry long and loud so that brethren never lose their horror of it.

Think on these things.-DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Billy Orten "A Win-Win Situation"

For many days now you have been fervently praying that Billy Orten would survive a malignant brain tumor and be made whole and well. By this time you read this report, we should have the answer to our prayers. Going into this terrible ordeal, Billy has had the attitude expressed by the Apostle Paul many centuries ago. "To live is Christ, to die is gain." When Billy was facing the decision to either have surgery or accept the prognosis of much suffering and sure death, he told his family and others, "It seems that there is no alternative. I must allow them to try and help me. Either way I win; if the surgery is successful, I will return to my family and the work for the Lord that I love; If not, then I get to go and be with the Lord. It is a win-win situation. (Don King told me that he hoped he would have the same attitude if he were faced with the same alternatives.)"

At this writing, Billy is not responding verbally. He has gone through a very low period, but in answer to your prayers, he is significantly better. All of his vital signs are excellent. He is receiving nourishment through a feeding tube without the nausea that has plagued him throughout this ordeal. We believe that he is trying to respond because of certain signs squeezing Peggy's hand, opening his eyes, turning toward familiar voices and so forth. We are very encouraged at this point. The Orten family has reached this decision: to pray believing that the Lord will heal Billy and return him to us whole and healthy. They, however, bow humbly to the will of a loving Lord who always does that which is best. We all now wait for the Lord's answer. We thank you in advance for your faithful and fervent prayers that returned him to us from dire circumstances two years ago and can again—Wayne Fussell.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

ELDRED-HUSTON—On an afternoon of May 30, 1998 before many friends and family members, Joseph Eldred and Christine Huston exchanged vows of matrimony. Both Joe and Christine live in Marion, Iowa and attend the congregation in Marion. Joe has been a member of the congregation there for over 10 years and Christine has been a member for nearly two years. It was an honor and privilege for this to be the first wedding I was allowed to officiate. My prayer is that they have a long, fruitful life in service to God.—Christopher Enos.

WOOD-TWOMBLEY—On Aug. 1, 1998 before a gathering of friends and loved ones, David Wood and Malisa Twombly were united in marriage in Brumley, MO. The couple plan to make their home in the Eldon area and attend the congregations in Brumley. We wish them the very best in their lives together and pray God's richest blessings upon them.—Doug Hawkins.

OUR DEPARTED

MCKINNEY -- Brother L. D. "Mac" McKinney was born Sept. 10, 1910 in San Angelo, TX and departed this life in Fresno, CA on June 16, 1998.

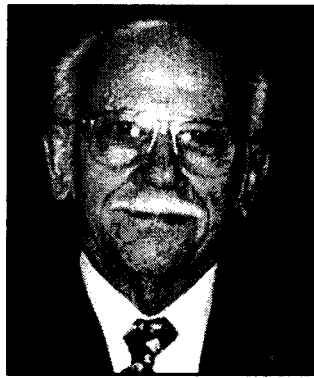
"Mac" leaves behind to mourn his passing his wife, Ina Olena McKinney of 64 years; two sons; two daughters, fifteen grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren. All the family were present for the funeral service.

Last year "Mac" and Ina were inducted into the Clovis Hall of Fame, honored for their contribution to making Clovis the city it is today. Years ago "Mac" was very energetic coming to the fore-front to help build the church building in Clovis. "Mac" and Ina have always opened their home to gospel preachers. They loved the Lord's work and were always abounding in the work of the Lord. I was honored to preach "Mac's" funeral. Brother Benny Cryer also said words of encouragement at the graveside service. The singing was beautiful. It was just a couple of months ago when I finished preaching "Mac" said, "Let's go get some fish and then you come to our home and we will talk about the "Church."

Brother McKinney will surely be missed at Clovis. Dedication, loyalty, persistence are terms that this writer thinks of when the name Mac McKinney is mentioned. We extend our love and sympathy to the McKinney family and expect to meet "Mac" on the morning of the resurrection.--Weldon Buddy Brumley

BALLARD - Lawrence J. Ballard was born in Grinnell, Iowa, December 25, 1924, and went to be with the Lord June 27, 1998. Larry was a great leader of God's people in Houston, TX for many years. He and his wife, Marie, were baptized by Fred Kirbo after hearing him preach through an entire meeting. They were examples of how people obeyed the gospel years ago. With his leadership the Sunset Heights church was started in Houston. Recognizing his exemplary life and leadership, the church eventually chose him to be one of its elders. He told his family shortly before his death what they had known all along, "Remember, the church is number one!" The Lord and His church came first in his and Marie's lives. Their two sons, Glenn and Randy, are gospel preachers. Their daughter, Laura, is married to a gospel preacher, Larry Lay. Their other daughter, Kathy Roberts, has a faithful Christian family. Larry's seven grandsons were his pall bearers. There is one granddaughter and three great-granddaughters, and one "adopted" daughter, La Donna Enochs, of Austin. He is also survived by two sisters, Mary Tuttle and Ruth Shores and two brothers, Jack and Paul Ballard. Larry was well-known and respected in the Machine Tool Industry. In addition to his employment with Hughes Tool Co., Wessendorf Nelms, and Nichols Machinery, he also operated Ballard Machine Tool Service until he retired. A large crowd of friends, relatives and fellow Christians from many cities gathered to show their love for this great man and his wonderful family. Larry Lay spoke beautiful words

on behalf of the family and his cherished father-in-law. Glenn Ballard expressed the gratitude of the family for their outpouring of love and concern for his father. Terry and Becky Baze headed up a group of terrific singers. It was my honor to deliver the eulogy for my dear friend and brother. - Wayne Fussell



The family of Larry Ballard would like to extend our deepest and sincerest appreciation to all those across our

great brotherhood who have shown such love and support during dad's extended illness and eventual passing. We know literally hundreds of prayers were offered up on his behalf and ours also. Each of us has received a number of cards and letters, phone calls, plants and flower arrangements, hugs, and other expressions of affection. Many from around the country have also sent contributions to the building fund for the (formerly) Aurora St. congregation. Dad had so wished to see the completion of that building and your assistance will help make it a reality. You all can never know the impact of your kindness and encouragement. It is in the darkest times that the light of God's love shines brightest. You have reflected that love, and been an instrument of his grace; for that we will ever be grateful.—Marie Ballard and Family



Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, MO. 65808 August 18--The meeting at West Plains, Mo. (AB Hwy.) was enjoyable. We had good cooperation from several nearby congregations. Our next was in Mtn. Home, Ar. Crowds were large, with several visitors from the community. We were especially happy to have a number attend who regularly watch our T.V. program in that area. Bruce Roebuck lives and works in this area. He is respected and loved by the church. From Mtn. Home we went to New Salem, near Brookhaven, Ms. for a good meeting. Crowds were large and consistent throughout. Four were baptized. Bro. Lynwood Smith lives here and it was our privilege to him present for the entire meeting. We have many friends in this area of long standing and it was good to be among them again. The Lord willing we go next to Lovejoy, Pa. Aug. 23-30 and Nashville, Tn. Sept. 16-20. We look forward to being with brethren in these areas. Lately we have had the privilege of hearing Bro. Johnny Elmore in his meeting here at home. Johnny, true to his style, preached the gospel without fear or favor. We are the better for having heard him. Our prayers and love go out to all those throughout the brotherhood who are sick and suffering, as well as to those who are sorrowing over new made graves. There is a better day ahead. Thank God for that.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, July 28, 1998--We attended the Lebanon, Missouri 4th of July meeting this year after a ten year absence. It was great to see everyone there. We enjoyed preaching at Lee's Summit the Sunday after the meeting was over before coming home. We just closed an eight day meeting at

Duncanville, Texas. The meeting was not only supported well by members of the congregation, we also had approximately 100 visitors from surrounding congregations. Many came to more than one service. It was good to see and visit with preaching brethren Melvin Blalock, Terry Baze, Gerald Hill and Joe Norton. We stayed with my sister and brother-in-law, Vicky and Dean Holt and enjoyed the family visit.

Douglas T. Hawkins, P.O. Box 728, Brodhead, KY 40409 (606)758-4071--Since last reporting to the O.P.A., I've been privileged to hold meetings in several places. In June, I was with the churches in Indianapolis, IN and Greenville, SC. Both meetings were well attended. I hope that good was done in both areas. We enjoyed our stay with Anthony (preacher in Indianapolis) and Tina Brockett in IN and Roger and Sherri Knight in SC. We could not have been treated any better at either place. In July, I was in Whitebluff, TN and Harrodsburg, IN. It was a real treat to be back in these areas with these brethren again. In Whitebluff, I thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality of M.R. and Shirley Kimbro. They are dear people and sterling examples of what Christians should be. Overall, the meetings this summer have been good, and I pray strengthening to the churches. Our next meeting is with my home congregation in Blue Springs, KY, Sept. 27-Oct. 4. Bro. Barney Owens will be preaching the last weekend of the meeting (Oct. 2-4). Come to be with us if you can. God bless you all!

Sergei Govozdevu, Moscow, Russia—I work with the churches in Moscow and Zelenograd. I have been a Christian for five years. I have struggled with sin since that time, but about 1 1/2 years ago, I decided to change my life and work with zeal for the Moscow church. The work was discouraging, because I had to take care of the new Christians here. The preachers from America who worked in Moscow have helped me to do the Lord's work with joy. They also helped to increase our faith, especially mine. The work is greater now with a new congregation, new members and others to talk to. We need a preacher who will come and live in Moscow to work with the church.

Problems can be worked out so that you can come. Contact Jimmy Vannoy for information. We thank the brothers and all who helped for their work in Moscow and Zelenograd. I wish you the love of Christ and the best from God.

Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Tupelo, OK 74572—I speak each Sunday and have regular appointments. I speak at Denison, TX, our home congregation, the third Sunday and every other Wednesday night. We also have two weekly radio programs, one at Atoka and one in McAlester. At present the only time we have free is every other second Sunday. We surely enjoyed the July 4 meeting at Sulphur. We are looking forward to the New Year's Meeting. We do need your prayers. We have several on our prayer list. We do believe in prayer.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069—From all appearances the yearly meeting at Lebanon, MO was a good and enjoyable one. I wish to thank all who attended and helped Don and I, some by taking part in leading the services and others by joining in, enabling all to worship in an acceptable manner. Since then it has been my pleasure to be in meetings with the congregations at McAlester (C & Tyler) and Lexington, OK. Several preaching brethren came to these and helped out. Also the John Scott Family came to McAlester for several days and Buddy Brumley while visiting from CA drove from Ada to Lexington throughout. I am grateful for the encouragement. Presently I am to Mt. Grove, Mo, crowds are good and interest is high. From here I go to Valliant, OK. Oct. 2,3 and 4 I am to assist Doug Hawkins in a meeting with the Blue Springs church in Kentucky. Continue to pray for the Cause we love.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, July 23—Please make note of my new address! Also, my new telephone number is (417) 864-8879. It was a privilege and joy to live in West Monroe, LA for the past 20 years. However, after much prayer and reflection, we decided that it was time for a change and to move to a new work. While we were saddened about leaving all our dear friends and brethren there, I am excited about my new work with the North Area congregation here in Springfield and am looking toward the future. Irvin Barnes has toiled with this church for many years but is now suffering with severe health problems. I am looking forward to working with Irvin in this effort and plan to utilize his experience and knowledge of the area and the needs of the congregation. I have great respect and admiration for Irvin as a Gospel preacher and hope to build upon the success he has had. I am presently engaged in a meeting at Aurora, MO. We are having excellent crowds and I'm enjoying the opportunity to work and visit with Roy Lee Criswell. I'm also looking forward to a meeting at Seneca, MO Oct. 21-25. The fourth of July meeting at Lebanon, MO was a spiritual boost; the Cowan Civic Center is a wonderful facility and added to the enjoyment of the meeting. Doug Hawkins and I will conduct the meeting

next year. Please remember us in your prayers.

Melvin Blalock, 214 Pearl St., Cleburne, TX 76031, July 28, 1998—This year has been a busy year thus far, as well as a sad year for the Blalock family. During the first weekend in February we enjoyed conducting a meeting for the Dear Park congregation in Houston, TX. We experienced large crowds at each service. We enjoyed our stay with the Chuck Morris family and our association with all the brethren. It was good to visit with Bro. Jerry Dickinson who worships with this congregation. When I left for the meeting my mother was in the nursing home after having surgery for a broken hip and suffering from a broken shoulder. Shortly after my return home she died. She passed away on Feb. 4th, and we buried her beside my dad at Loco, OK, on Feb. 7th, which would have been my dad's ninety-eighth birthday. My mother was ninety-two and a long time member of the church. In addition to my local work with the congregations at Cleburne and Weatherford, we preach at the Duncanville congregation on a regular basis. We have enjoyed preaching at San Angelo, TX, Crescent, OK, and N.W. 21st St., O.K.C. We were privileged to preach at the Turlock, CA, to nights in April before beginning our meeting at Atwater, CA, on Friday night. It was great to be with these good brethren. When we were at Turlock we enjoyed the hospitality of Richard and Glenda DeGough. One could not have been treated better. I enjoyed brethren Richard DeGough, Bennie Cryer, Alan Bonifay, Ryan Connor, Matt Trent, and George Vergara support the meeting. It was so good to see Sister Helen King and the sisters who came with her. Our next meeting is with the congregation at Ratliff, OK., Aug. 28-30. We are thankful to be busy in the Lord's work. May God bless the faithful everywhere.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, August 10—Fremont enjoyed a two day meeting with Alan Bonifay which closed yesterday. Alan did a great job and we are the better for having heard him. One made confession of wrongs. To God be the praise. Lord willing, we are to leave for Hawaii on the 13th (this week). A number of years ago, we assisted in the beginning of that work along with Brother Virgilio Danao of the Philippines. The Hawaii work is a direct outgrowth and work with Brethren Bayani and Danao again. There is not a new congregation on the island of Hawaii itself which we may get to visit as well. The original congregation is in Honolulu on the island of Oahu. So, it is growing and we thank the Lord for that. Also, I thank the Fremont congregation for their support on this trip. They have faithfully sent me to the Philippines each year since 1981. May God bless them. If the Lord wills, we hope to have E-Mail by the time the next OPA is due. This will allow the preachers to send field reports to us electronically. We hope this will make it so easy to report that more of you will do so. The reports are the first part of the paper to be read. Also, Brother Stan Elmore (and perhaps others) plan to develop a web-site on the Internet for the paper. This will be soon, Lord willing. This will allow untold thousands to read at least selected

portions of *Old Path Advocate* each day! Pray for us.

Brett Hickey, P.O. Box 6506, Ventura, CA 93003, July 17—Our recent travels were rewarding. The 4th of July meeting at Lebanon, MO featured a host of gospel preachers from across the country. All, but especially preachers, were admonished to be honest with the lost, erring and worldly. All were instructed to fight the good fight of faith as soldiers of Christ. During our meeting at Anderson, Mo., we enjoyed the hospitality of Nick and Sally Nichols. Bible discussions came naturally in their home. The presence of outsiders and backsliders made for a genuine gospel meeting. Area brethren helped pack the house Friday and Saturday night. At least ten congregations from three states were represented. The Anderson brethren demonstrate the impact of “passing it on.” Four generations of one family were present. Over twenty members of another family attended. Our brief stop at Hartwell, AR was long overdue, but well worth the wait. We look forward to an extended visit next summer. We caught some of Lynwood Smith’s meeting at Rogers, Ar. Lynwood still preaches with power and passion. The Rogers congregation has grown over the past ten years. Locally, we gleaned two new studies from the Pennysaver ad. A recent visitor who has family in the church began studying with us. We have several studies by mail with prison inmates from several states. One in Illinois says he is ready to obey the gospel. Our visit with the brethren at Mtn. Home was brief, but eventful. Bruce Roebuck was out of town, so the brethren put us to work. Joe Hisle’s meeting ended only days earlier with five baptisms. Joe’s meeting with Bruce’s ongoing work brought fourth more fruit during our stay. While we were there, we assisted Joanna (in her early 20’s) in obeying the gospel. There is an interesting background to three of these recent baptisms at Mtn. Home. Each was contacted by a single mother who was baptized three years ago. Everyone in Michelle’s apartment complex knows her and her convictions. She was converted the hard way—by cold calling. Dared we dismiss this method as ineffective? Let us use every resource available in reaching the lost.

Jimmy Vannoy, 105 Sunset Circle, Corsicans, TX 75110 (903) 872-5419—Steve Ramsey, Paul Willmon and I worked for four weeks during July in Moscow, Russia. We were sent by the congregation in Corsicana, Tx. and

received financial support from Bridgeport, Tx., Medina, Tx., Houston (formerly Aurora St.), Jacksboro, Tx., Cleburne, Tx., Healdton, Ok., San Antonio (Nacogdoches) and Knoxville, Ga. The work in Moscow was important for three reasons. First, souls were saved, and this is always important. Second, a strong congregation in Moscow is needed because people from all over Russia and the world go to Moscow for a time and then return home. Christians would carry the gospel with them when they return home. One of those baptized was from Cameroon, Africa, (two) from Afghanistan and one from Ukraine. The third reason is that the new religion law in Russia requires a fifteen year period for a church to complete registration. To begin this process, an initial registration must be completed. The church must have ten members who are citizens of that city to initiate that process, and those converted during this work will help. Once Moscow has begun this process, other churches in Russia should be able to begin their registration process with less difficulty. Eight were baptized, four in Moscow and four in Zelenograd, a city 2 1/2 hours north of where we worked in Moscow. The work of the preacher is to sow the word, and we were able to teach about 200 people, many of them several times. It is God who gives the increase. A new congregation has been established in Zelenograd, and Sergei Govozdevu will be working with them, as well as with the Moscow congregation. He is a tireless worker, always willing to approach total strangers with the gospel. He is now receiving partial support to work with the Moscow and Zelenograd congregations. Kostya Alekseev, evangelist from Tambov, did an excellent job as coordinator and translator for the work. Kostya and I also travelled to Michurinsk for a weekend. There were some problems there, but things seem to be in good condition now. It would be impossible for me to do this work without Kostya’s help. He works with the congregations in Tambov and Michurinsk, in addition to working with me on my annual trip. The Corsicana congregation supports him and is in need of \$700 additional monthly support. Contact me for more information. There were no problems related to the new religion laws and no interference from the government. I encourage other congregations to work to begin congregations in new cities, or to support the new congregation in Zelenograd. Contact me for information.

“SPEAKING TO YOURSELVES IN PSALMS”

By BRETT HICKEY

The authority of Christ is required for our religious practices (Col. 3:16-17). Where are instruments authorized? When pressed to defend their practice, some claim to find authority in Eph. 5:19. Let us focus briefly on the assumption that Paul sanctions the use of all Old Testament psalms. Since OT psalms mention instruments, are they not sanctioned for use in public worship?

When reading this passage, our religious friends visualize church psalm-books. In their opinion, these psalm-

books could include any Old Testament psalm set to music. On the surface, this argument has merit. Read the psalms again! The sentiment of some psalms clearly clashes with Christ’s teaching.

One Davidic psalm that proves this point in Psalm 144. The musician writes, “Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight...” (Ps. 144:1). The most intense instrumentalist would be hard-pressed to harmonize this scripture with Mat. 5:44.

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Jesus flatly declares, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

Even more incompatible with the doctrine of Christ (Mat. 18:1-6) is a psalm of vengeance against Israel's bitter, political enemy. The psalmist proclaims, "Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth they little ones against stones" (Ps. 137:9). This may have worked for David the warrior King, but what religious group would want that in their hymnal?

The confusion over the psalms should be remedied by Paul's repeated writings on the covenants. A sampling could include Rom. 7:1-7; Gal. 3:10-25; Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 8:6-13. These and other passages warn Christians not to rely on the Old Testament to justify their practices. Paul's most concise clarification is in Gal. 5:4. He writes, "You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace (NKJV)." This pointed scripture also unarms those who expect God's grace to overlook willful disobedience.

Lamentably, this overwhelming arsenal of scriptures only stimulates more "cunning devised fables" among in-

strumental music advocates. "Well," they say, "all this talk about the law only applies to the first five books of Moses. Anything else from the Old Testament that is not specifically condemned in the New Testament is acceptable."

Paul reminds Corinth as well as 20th century Christians: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal by mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against he knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:4-5--NKJV)" the word of God serves as the "sword to the spirit." This sword cuts through all the double-talk.

The Old Testament Psalms are an indisputable part of the old law. In Rom. 3:10-19, Paul quotes from at least five different Psalms. Then he says that "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them under the law..." Quoting from Ps. 82:6 Jesus answered the bloodthirsty Jews, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? (Jn. 10:34)" A similar proof can be found in Jn. 15:25.

Upon examination, the texts presented to justify drums, guitars and pianos can only be used in defending the first century practice of praising with the "fruit of our lips". Let us unite on that which is right and cannot be wrong.

Twelve Rules For Raising Children

1. Remember that a child is a gift from God, the richest of all blessing. Do not attempt to mold him in the image of yourself, your father, your brother, or your neighbor.
2. Don't crush a child's spirit when he fails. And never compare him with others who have outshone him.
3. Remember that anger and hostility are natural emotions. Help your child to deal with these feelings and handle them in a wholesome manner or they may turn inward and erupt in the form of physical or mental illness.
4. Discipline your child with firmness and reasons. Don't let your anger throw you off balance. If he knows you are fair, you will not lose his respect or his love.
5. Remember that each child needs two parents. Present a united front. Never join with your child against your mate. This can create in your child (as well as in yourself) emotional conflicts.
6. Do not hand your child everything his little heart desires. Permit him to know the thrill of earning and the joy of achieving. Grant him the greatest of all satisfactions, the pleasure that comes with personal accomplishment.
7. Do not set yourself up as the epitome of perfection. This is a difficult role to play 24 hours a day. You will find it easier to communicate with your child if you let him know that Mom and Dad error, too.
8. Don't make threats in anger or impossible promises when you are in a generous mood. Threaten or promise only that which you can live up to.
9. Do not smother your child with superficial manifestations of "love". The purest and healthiest love expresses itself in day-in-day-out training, which breeds self-confidence and independence.
10. Teach your child there is dignity in hard work, whether it is performed with callused hands that shovel coal or skilled fingers that manipulate surgical instruments.
11. Do not try to protect your child against every small blow and disappointment. Adversity strengthens character and makes us compassionate.
12. Teach your child to love God and to love his fellow men. Don't send your child to a place of worship, take him there. Children learn from example. Telling him something is not teaching him.—*Selected*.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 10

WHAT ABOUT LYING?

By CARL M. JOHNSON

President Clinton's recent admission that he "had misled people" about his extra-marital affairs reminds me of Earl Long, another politician who was much more candid about his own mendacity. After one election, Long, the fabled drinking, carousing and hog-hunting 1950s Governor of Louisiana, reneged on a campaign promise in a big way. When a delegation of betrayed supporters showed up in Baton Rouge to protest, the Governor refused to see them. "What will I tell them?" asked a desperate aide. Long's legendary response: "Tell them I lied!" President Clinton probably would have fared better with the American people when he addressed the nation on television the night of August 17, if he had been as forthright as Governor Long.

The President's vague admission that he's been misleading us for months, however, has generated a national debate over the pros and cons of lying. Many of the President's defenders argue that everybody lies, and since everybody does it it's no big deal.

This argument certainly resonates with many Americans. Our culture has conflicting emotions about lying. On the one hand, nearly everyone condemns lying. On the other, so many people do it every day. After all, how many of the commands of God can be broken so easily and with so little risk of detection over the telephone?

In a culture where truth is regarded so lightly, it is easy for any one of us to minimize our own deceptions, half-truths, and outright lies. We begin to think, "Look, this is just the way the game is played. If you are going to get ahead, you have to say whatever needs to be said. Everybody does it! And I can't hold my own, much less gain any ground, if I worry too much about honesty."

Lying, however, is not a fine art to be practiced discreetly. It is an offense against God and man. One of the things that should be a hallmark of distinction between Christians and non-Christians in our society is the Christian's high regard for truth.

While on trial before Pontius Pilate, Jesus says, "For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice" (John 18:37).

You can almost see the cynical smile breaking out on his face as Pilate responds by asking, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). Pilate is a military man turned politician and it is probable he has gotten where he is by manipulating the truth. He likely trusts no one among his associates, has to be on his guard constantly against their lies to him, and he is incredulous at Jesus' serious concern about truth. It is as though Pilate is suggesting that, since no one has perfect

knowledge and human intelligence is not infallible, "truth" is just a nonsense word and has no legitimate place in the human vocabulary. Apparently, many Americans still feel that way.

To Jesus and his disciples, however, truth is an all-important topic. Prior to his appearance in Pilate's praetorium, Jesus tells people who believe in him, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

In John 14:6 Jesus claims to be the very personification of truth: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Jesus adds that when we lie we implicate ourselves as a child of the devil: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).

You just can't deal in lies and be a child of God!

Another part of the current national debate about lying is that there are different kinds of lies and that some lies are justifiable. The President's defenders argue that if he lied about his extra-marital sexual exploits to protect the feelings of his family, his lying was for a noble cause and therefore is not wrong.

People have long tried to make distinctions in lies. We talk about "little white lies," and "great big whoppers." We talk about "innocent lies" and "hurtful lies." In the fourth century Augustine listed eight categories of lies and said all of them were sins. Mark Twain, probably with tongue in cheek, listed 869. A cover story in *TIME* magazine condenses all lies into three major categories:

1. Lies to protect others—"I love your dress" lies.
2. Lies to protect yourself—"The dog ate my homework" lies.
3. Lies to damage someone else—"Trust me on this one" lies ("Lies, Lies, Lies" 5 October 1992).

The article's authors conclude that the lies in the third category are the only ones always wrong. "The others are sometimes justified," they argue. "Everyone knows that sometimes it is better to lie than tell the truth."

I have heard this argument repeated several times on television the past two weeks. A few days ago on *Cable News Network*, actress/talk show hostess Rosie O'Donnell was shown teaching a group of elementary school-aged children that certain kinds of lies are not only permissible,

continued on page five

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 10



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 6-9

What About Lying? 1

"Look To The Fields" 2

The Querist Column 3

Among Friends 3

FROM THE FIELDS 9-12

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Editorial

"LOOK TO THE FIELDS"

By DON L. KING

As we look about us at the fast-paced world in which we live, we often find ourselves faced with the necessity of making decisions. Some of these have to do with our spiritual welfare and the future of the church. They can't be put off any longer, in our view. The destiny of the church and our brotherhood, as we know it, may well depend on the decisions being made today. Some of the matters being discussed in local business meetings, while seemingly minute and imperceptible, may be powerful influences in determining which way we go.

The world is lost, sin-cursed, and we haven't changed it a great deal in our generation. Of course, we have works in several parts of the world today. There is no denying we have made great improvements toward evangelizing the world in the last forty years or so. However, it is also an undeniable fact that people are being born much faster than we are reaching them. Too, with the population of the world now about the five billion mark, there are probably more living souls today who haven't heard the gospel than at any time in history. What responsibilities we face! We must be ever mindful that preaching the gospel requires a concern for the lost on a worldwide basis. We must cease to be content with holding a gospel meeting in the local meeting house. (and doing nothing more) Surely our responsibility surpasses that! What about the millions, yea billions, who are walking about each day blissfully unaware of the truth? Do we feel any responsibility there?

There are huge inequities in the world of our time. Not only as far as financial but in hearing the gospel. One man supposed that about 98% of the preachers are preaching to only 5% of the people. Frankly, we are reasonably sure that the percentage is much lower.

It is easy for us to demand an increasing level of luxury. We all enjoy it, we may as well admit it. The truth is that for most of us yesterday's luxuries have become today's necessities. As a young lad, I made over thirty trips across the desert in a car with no air conditioning. Today, we take such luxuries for granted. Many congregations feel that their meeting houses simply must have these conveniences. Many of us remember when few indeed could manage the luxury. Are we suggesting that such is sinful? Not at all. Yet, the facts are that a vast majority of the earth's population has no concept of living (or worshipping) in such luxury. When we hear of those who feel we should curtail our efforts at worldwide preaching while enjoying all the luxuries at home, it is saddening to say the least. We know that a sin-cursed world has no hope of hearing the gospel and being saved unless we send it to them. Jesus said: "...behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." (John 4:35 Brethren, the work is calling!

Always when we speak of mission work, the subject of money comes up. Of course, we are aware that the dollar is steadily shrinking. Yes, the costs of preaching the gospel are rising. However, the Lord doesn't have any shortages.

continued on page five

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Would softening the requirement for the eldership of a plurality of faithful children logically require the softening of the requirement of a plurality of elders per congregation? (CA)

Answer: First of all it should be noted that there is no authority for softening the qualifications set forth in the Scriptures for those desiring to be elders. We have no right to require less than the word of God mandates, nor do we have any right to require more than the Holy Spirit stipulated. This writer personally feels that mistakes have been made in both areas. Brethren who become over zealous and who rush the process of identifying and appointing men to this office, run the risk of being too lenient. The idea that one can be appointed, even though he does not meet all the qualifications as well as we would like him to, and then grow into the qualifications is unscriptural. One either meets the requirements given in the bible or they do not. If they do not, then they should not be appointed. There are, however, on the other hand areas where judgment and sound reasoning must be used. For example, the elder must also be apt to teach. We all know that some men are more capable at teaching than others. The fact that an individual might not be as good a teacher as someone else does not mean however that he cannot teach, instruct, or convince the false teacher. This is an area where we must use wisdom and judgment in the selection process. There are some qualifications, however, that are very definite and leave no room for judgment. For example, the elder must be the "husband of one wife." He must be a married man. A man is either married or not. If he is not married, he cannot be an elder. The elder must also have faithful children. However many children he has, they must all be faithful. They must all be Christians. Could one qualify if he has only one child, if that child were a faithful Christian? I believe he could for the following reasons: (1) the word "children" does not necessitate a plurality. It is used with reference to elders in its common application and, neither legally, naturally, or in the Old and New Testaments does it

convey the idea of a compulsory plurality. For example in Missouri, where I live, State statutes require that "All parents having children under the age of sixteen years must enroll them in school." Does this mean that parents having only one child need not comply with the statute? Of course not. In our everyday language, we use the term "children" in the same way. In grammar this is known as "the plural of necessity" i.e. it comprehends the singular. If, for example, the PTA sends out invitations to all parents who have children in a school inviting them to a meeting, we understand that even though parents have only one child they are invited. (2) In the Old Testament, a case in point is found in Sarah at the birth of Isaac: "And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? For I have born him a son in his old age." (Genesis 21:7) Here the term "children" is equivalent to "a son." In the New Testament we have a case in point found in I Timothy 5:4 "any widow who has children" is to be supported by them. Surely we would not argue that one son or daughter of a widow would be eliminated from any obligation, for that would contradict verse 8 and 16 where the singular is employed. Again in I Cor. 7:14 "else were your children unclean." Does Paul exclude the only child here? Of course not.

Examples of such usage in both Old and New testaments could be multiplied, but these are sufficient. For these reasons I do not believe, that saying a man with one faithful child is "softening" the requirement; it is meeting the requirement. Does this logically mean then that we may have one elder over the congregation? The answer is no, it does not mean that. The reason being "elders" plural, were appointed in each "church" singular. There is no plural of necessity here, because the plural does not comprehend the singular. If you have a child, you have children. However, if you have an elder, you do not have elders, and the scriptures teach that each church had elders (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, Phil. 1:1). (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, Mo. 65808)

AMONG FRIENDS

By BARNEY OWENS

And one shall say unto him, what are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. (Zech. 13:6)

A saying among people of our times is uttered when one thought or professing to be a friend, demonstrates his own selfishness to the expense of the so-called friend, which is, "with friends like that, who needs enemies!"

While it is terrible, it is nonetheless true; often one's enemies will deal more fairly than one's friends. We know where our enemies stand. Their interest is not in our well-being or future welfare. But, our friends, that is another matter, as we expect them to be kinder, gentler, and sympathetic to our wishes and needs. Regretfully, such sometimes produces our demise.

Our Text Speaks Of Jesus

The question and answer of Zechariah befits our Savior before the traitor Judas Iscariot. It can be enlarged to include the remainder of the Lord's disciples, plus the

present purpose is to draw from the prophesy and broaden the circle to include Christ's friends today.

Jesus Has Shown Himself Our Friend

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (Jn. 15:13)

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. (Jn. 10:17-18)

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly...God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:6&8)

These reveal the love of Jesus Christ to we who were the worst of creation. Can anyone doubt His friendship? He willingly laid Himself upon the altar for our sake. He was not one whit better because of His death, rather we

have received the benefit of His suffering and death. There was no power upon this earth that could wrest life out of Jesus, however, He was such a friend to the helpless that He gave Himself up to those who could not prevail against Him, to undo the power that has overcome mankind, His friends. Jesus knew (from the father's commandment) that those who were powerless to take His life, were also powerless to deny His taking life again by resurrecting. The old hymn is true: "What a friend we have in Jesus..."

Friends Like Judas Are Very Much Alive

While we disdain Judas Iscariot, his spirit is found in many of those who think of themselves as Jesus' friends. Following in the multitudes who speak in reverent terms, attend places that claim to worship Christ, and are spoken of by others as the Savior's friends, are those who wound the hands of Christ. Is that possible? Let us look seriously and explore the thought.

Disobedience Wounds Christ

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. (Jn. 15:14)

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Lk. 6:46)

We read of the betrayal of Judas and it brings shudders to the heart, yet we who think ourselves friendly to Christ are not less abusive of the Savior when we disobey Him. True friends will be true to the best of ability possessed without regard to circumstances, personal feelings, or, even the feelings of others. Friendship and obedience are one and the same according to the aforementioned passages.

1. **Baptism.** Multitudes are found in this land who profess friendship to Christ, yet fail to heed His will when He commands baptism. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mk. 16:16). The statement is clear enough. What must one do to be saved? The answer is: "Believe and be baptized." What will the friends of Jesus do? They will believe and they will be baptized. What is the purpose? To be saved! What will the betrayer do? He will not believe and/or will not be baptized. But one says: "If I believe, I have obeyed Christ." Yes, to a point, but in vain, because that is not all required to be saved. Should I say, "Come to my house and knock on the door and I will open for your entrance." If you come to my house without knocking, must I open for our entrance? Certainly not! The requirement to receive the blessing (entrance) is two-fold. Arriving at my house and knocking. To receive the blessing of Christ (salvation), there are two things required by His commandment, believing and being baptized. One who believes is not saved until and without baptism. The fact is, one's faith is questionable if he isn't baptized. An apostle so reasons: "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy words, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." (Js. 2:17-18).

2. **Worship.** Many claim friendship to Christ, but think that friendship is a partnership, meaning they have the right to decide what should and should not be done in worship. If something displeases, then it can be discarded, even if Christ has commanded it. When the populace is not attracted to a certain commandment in reference to worship, then there can be a substitution. Jesus said: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (Jn. 4:24). As we have seen regarding Mk. 16:16, worship is two-fold to be acceptable. The commandments which are performed outwardly are not

mere formalities, they are to proceed from the heart. This is spirit (from the heart or mind) and in truth (outwardly displaying obedience). To practice and contend, as many do, that as long as we are sincere, God will accept us, is to belie Jesus. In fact, it is "will worship." "...why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances...after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship..." (Col. 2:20-23). Anytime, anywhere one is heard to say, "It doesn't matter what we do in worship," such are NOT friends of Christ. When we think that all must obey except ourselves, we are NOT friends of Christ. If the time arrives in our individual heart, that we think we can pick and choose what we are going to do in worship, or that we can alter worship in any way, we are NOT a friend of Christ. And I hope I am addressing my own friends, so may I say in a friendly way, "If you disagree with what is herein stated, then you are invited to put your hand to the task and demonstrate why this is not the truth. I assure you, it will be considered in a friendly matter."

Immoral Living Wounds Christ

Jesus came into the world to relieve us of our sins. When our sins are taken away, we then are to live better.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and Godly in the present world: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Titus 2:11-14)

Many in the world openly profess that they believe, "once one is saved, he is always saved." Such think that a person can never commit a sin severe enough to cause damnation in hell or separation from God eternally. While there are others who contend that his is not according to truth, conduct themselves as though it were so, even to the point of securing for themselves "forgiveness in advance," that is to say, they ask God, or those whom they think His representatives upon earth, to forgive them for what they are "about to do." Then there are members of the "Body of Christ" who believe that the things which they were forgiven of upon obedience to the Gospel may now be practiced with God's approval. That one can repent without making the needed changes in life.

1. **Overlooking Sin.** As for the nations apart from the Jews, who were called "Gentile," it is a fact that God "winked at their sins," looking forward to the time when there would be no respecter of persons with Him. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent; because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31).

2. **God's Children Are To Live Right.** When living as sinners, Christians were "servants of sin." (Rom. 6:16-17). But upon obedience to Christ, His blood shed in death redeemed them, allowing them to have their sins taken away and to live a "new life of righteousness." (Rom. 6:3-4 + 18). While there remains the possibility to sin, God has provided a way of escape, (I Cor. 10:13). That way again is the way of forgiveness, (I Jn. 1:9-10). Always God's children turn in repentance, acknowledge their wrongs, rather than try to cover sin by covering them up,

or trying to find someone to stand by them in wrong-doing.

It is sad when congregations will allow, no, more than that, promote those who are living immorally, with marriages that are in plain contradiction to the teachings of the Master, so-called "homosexual lifestyles, gambling, cursing, drunkenness, etc. etc. While such is shamefully practiced by those in the world, how it makes the Savior bleed because of the wounds thus inflicted upon Him. What Judas did is absolutely no worse.

When we are tempted to do wrong, may we remember. "On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame." There the Lord's hands were pierced, the crown of thorns wrapped His head, and finally the spear wounded His side. The agony He endured should now be over, but, alas, it is not; the pain is renewed by our actions. Not by His avowed enemies, but we who call ourselves friends. "Oh, my Lord, with friends like us, You have no need to worry about Your enemies."

WHAT ABOUT LYING?

continued from page 1

but are actually virtuous—lying to someone about their appearance to make them feel better for example.

Most "little white lies" belong in this first category. These lies are well-intentioned deceptions designed to grease the gears of society. In this context, we are told, people want to be fooled. No one expects, and few would welcome, searing honesty at a dinner party. When a couple leaves early because they are frankly bored to tears, the hostess, it is argued, would prefer to hear, "We have to leave because the baby-sitter has a curfew."

On rare occasions lying to protect others seems to be a matter of life and death. I have often heard people refer to the Old Testament story of Rahab, who protected the spies at Jericho by hiding them and lying to the police about their whereabouts, to justify this category.

Joshua tells the story of Rahab and the Hebrew spies in her city (2:1-7). A careful examination of the narrative shows Rahab is nowhere commended for her lies. She is saved by grace through faith in spite of the fact that she has been both a prostitute and a liar! This pagan woman recognizes the God of the Hebrew people is the true God. In spite of her immoral sex life and her willingness to play fast and loose with the truth, God saves her, but He does not commend her for either of her past sinful activities.

"Suppose," someone asks, "you are hiding in my house and a madman is chasing you. He knocks at the door and

asks whether or not you are there. What do I do?" Some would answer without hesitation, "Of course you have the right to lie in that situation to protect the innocent person."

Is my temptation to lie in that situation, however, motivated by the desire to protect you or me? The one in harm's way at that moment is more nearly the liar than the intended victim.

Lying is not the only option available to protect ourselves in that situation. Who says I am obligated to open the door to such a person? Bolt the door, call the police, sic the dog on him.

If these options are not open, there is nothing wrong with telling the person, "Yes, he's here. But I'll not turn him over to you!" Might that expose you to harm? Might you have to wrestle with him, try to disarm him, or suffer at his hands? Yes. A brave and honorable reaction to the situation which exposes you to danger is preferable to the cowardly option of telling a lie.

A Bulgarian proverb says: "You are permitted in time of great danger to walk with the devil until you have crossed the bridge" (Shelly, *Living By the Rules* 101). This seems to be the attitude of too many Americans about telling the truth. When under great stress, we want to be permitted to "walk with the devil" just long enough to get past the trouble. It is that kind of logic, however, that has contributed to the sorry condition our culture is in today. Christians should want to walk in company with Christ always, and not interrupt that walk by resorting to lies or other devices of the devil.

"LOOK AT THE FIELDS"

continued from page 2

I recall my father saying, "God is not broke." He still isn't. Only we who live on the earth with our minds and treasures here, (rather than on things above-Col. 3:1,2) have shortages of money. If we think of "our money" we are thinking the wrong way. If we consider our treasure in heaven, it is all God's money.

If we allow ourselves to spiritually look only toward ourselves we ought to die, and we will. The fields were never whiter unto harvest than right now. Brethren, we need to look up, not down. One preacher said, "90% of mission work is being done by only 10% of the congregations supporting it." Can this be true? If it is, shame on us!

If our arithmetic is correct, we spend in excess of one million dollars every year in America holding gospel meetings. We mention this not to criticize (the church will always need preaching but to point out the fact that we have plenty of money to preach the gospel wherever the opportunity arises. Our brethren have not always been so well fixed. Some of us recall when many lived in homes that were unpainted, drove automobiles that were old and

worn out and worshipped in buildings with no modern facilities whatsoever. Not so today! God be thanked for the financial security many have among us. We can now afford to send preachers wherever the need is. The problem is, we are still contenting ourselves with preaching to the church at home. More is needed!

Some time ago, we read the following: "We can preach the gospel to the whole world any day we want to. We have the men. We have the money. We have the Bible knowledge. The reason we are not doing it is because we don't want to. If we could get elders, deacons and preachers to spend as much of their own money going to see the fields that are so white as they spent on sports and hunting trips we would send and support multiple preachers in a hundred nations. Until they are willing to do that, please excuse us if we doubt that even they, much less the church as a whole, take their religious commitment seriously. Brother go ahead and bury your mother-in-law, and take your good wife and go to the other side of the world if necessary to preach the gospel. Preachers have to do it. If evangelization is left to the elders we will never get out of the city limits." Obviously, this fellow saw major problems among their elders.

A huge multitude is being born into the world every

day. A huge multitude leaves it every day. We have a responsibility to see to it that they hear the truth. At least they could have the opportunity to avoid Hell and see Heaven. However, it will cost us. It will cost us in time, effort and money.

We fear the slow death which will inevitably set in when the church is no longer outraged over what Satan has done

to our world. We must learn to hate a passive role in saving the lost. We simply must get involved, *passionately* involved. May the Lord bless us as we swing the sword of the spirit with a terrible vengeance. We need the vision of a lost world ever before our eyes as we go about the business of living the Christian life.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Can You Help?

Since the work in the Philippines began in March of 1981 we have supported several preachers from America. At present there are approximately 25 men who are being supported full time. From the beginning the brethren in Fremont, CA have guaranteed their support. This means we either send it ourselves (which we often do) or ask others to become involved. There are presently four preachers who are needing support. Preachers in the Philippines usually receive in the \$150 to \$250 range per month. They are doing good work, brethren. There are about 200 baptisms every year among some 75 congregations. New work is being planned on new islands in the Philippines as you read this. Can your congregation support one or more of these worthy men? They are poor and worthy of your support. You can send your support directly to them by check, money order or bank to bank transfer. Your choice. We will be happy to provide you with all the necessary details (addresses, bank account numbers, etc.) You may contact us by phone at (510) 651-1842; Fax at (510) 651-3926 or write us in care of Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 64539. This matter is urgent; if you can help, please do so now.—DLK

Can You Help Send The Paper To Foreign Readers?

It is much more expensive to send the paper overseas due to much higher postage rates, etc. Also, our foreign readers often are not financially able to pay their subscription price. We are unwilling to remove any name if they desire the paper. If you wish to help, let us hear from you soon. Thank you! —DLK

Statement of Ownership

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New Album

Rejoice Records has produced a new album in tribute to M. Lynwood Smith. It is *PRAISE* Volume I. The album features twenty-five songs written by Brother Lynwood and narration of his history in writing gospel music. The ten singers deliver an excellent representation of a Capella singing. *PRAISE* Volume I is available on CD or Cassette tape. For information write: Larry Bradford, 613 Buckaroo, Peculiar, MO 64078, (816) 779-6135 or e-mail: Rejoice-Records@juno.com.

Church Directory

The congregation at 79th and Kansas Ave. Kansas City

will no longer be meeting for the Lord's day evening service at 6:00. The new time will be at 3:30 p.m. beginning Sept. 6, 1998. Please make a note of this new time in your church directory.

50th Wedding Anniversary

DICKINSON—Bill and Jimmie Dickinson will be celebrating their fiftieth anniversary on October 10, 1998. A reception will be held in Houston, Texas hosted by their children and grandchildren on Saturday, October 10. Brother and sister Dickinson are members of the Deer Park, Texas congregation. They are the parents of Jerry and Billy Dickinson, two of our gospel preachers, and of Carolyn Keele and Marilyn Bowen. We are sure they would be glad to hear from you as they celebrate this wonderful milestone and achievement in their lives together. May the Lord give us more Christian homes like theirs. If you wish to drop them a card their address is: Bill & Jimmie Dickinson, 13508 Castilian, Houston, TX 77015.



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60th Wedding Anniversary

HELVEY—August 29, 1998 Earl and Flora Helvey along with a good crowd of family and friends met at the 64th. Street building in Sacramento to celebrate their 60th. wedding anniversary which will be on Sept. 17, 1998. Ed Powell, Jimmy Winchester, and Don French spoke of good memories of the past and Earl and Flora's son John spoke for their children in a nice tribute to their parents and their relationship. Earl and Flora's home has been a haven of hospitality through the years and their faithfulness to always be at worship has been a great example to others. Flora's health has deteriorated with Alzheimer's but she was still able to enjoy the day. As she sat down in her seat of honor at the front of the building she pointed to Earl to say "That's my husband." I was privileged to also say a few words and lead the group that gathered in singing some songs.—Greg Gay

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

PARISH-EISFELDT—On Saturday afternoon July 11, 1998 Jeff Parish and Melinda Eisfeldt were united in marriage before a large audience. Jeff is the son of Chris and Janie Parish and Melinda is the daughter of Robert and Doris Eisfeldt. The wedding vows were written by them and repeated as they committed their lives to each other. It was a beautiful wedding with wonderful singing.

Many family and friends made it a joyous occasion with their support as they began a new life together. They are both members of the Lord's Church and plan to make their home congregation at Paris, TX. It was an honor to officiate. Our prayer is that they may have a long and happy Christian life together.—Randal Baker

HARRIS-MEARS—On August 8, 1998 a large crowd of family, friends and brethren gathered to witness the marriage of Gregory Wayne Harris and Deanna Lee Mears. Greg and Deanna had put together a beautiful ceremony with several songs, sung by Cammie Nelson, Machelles Nelson, Eric Courter, Stephen Middick, Charles Barnes and Mark Triplett. Greg surprised Deanna by singing the last song to her with back up from the other singers. It was a joyous occasion as these two young Christians committed their lives to one another. I was honored to be asked to perform the ceremony. I have known Deanna since she was little and Greg for a number of years. They will make their home in the Kansas City area. May God bless this union.—Ron Alexander

SMITH-BROCKETT—On the evening of June 26th in Ada, OK, in the presence of many well-wishers, it was my good pleasure to officiate at the ceremony uniting Kip Smith and Cynthia Brockett in marriage. Kip is the son of Jimmie and Cindy Smith, Harrison, AR and Cynthia is the daughter of Ronnie and Doris Brockett of Ada. Music was ably provided by a vocal quartet composed of Richard and Joy Nichols, Eric Courter and Kevin Presley. The couple will establish their home in the Fort Worth, TX area and worship at Fossil Creek. We wish for these two dedicated young Christians a long, happy and fruitful life together.—Johnny Elmore.

OUR DEPARTED

Brother Billy Orten—A Tribute By Don McCord

Brother Billy Harold Orten, outstanding, long-time preacher of the gospel, Christian, my brother in the Lord, devoted son to his precious parents, Fred and Zula; faithful husband to Peggy; exemplary father to Jamie, Joey, Melissa and Christy; beloved grandfather, trusted friend to many; Mathematics teacher; Counsellor, neighbor. Billy was a peacemaker, though not a "yes-man." He respected the law of consistency as much as any man I know. For years, wherever this writer preached in reach of him, he gave me unconditional support. That was Billy Orten's style. The tributes of his fellow-preachers, the beautiful flowers in profusion, the soul-comforting singing, the hundreds present, some standing for more than 2 hours, all bespoke the greatness of this man of God. I shall not forget him. Up the road, I will draw strength from my brother, "being dead he yet speaketh." What a gentleman among men! "None knew him but to love him; none named him but to praise him."

ORTEN—William Harold Orten was born April 2, 1930 at Ethridge, TN. He died August 22, 1998 at Life Care Hospital in Shreveport, LA. He was 68 years old. He is survived by his wife, Peggy Johnson Orten of Conway, LA, four children, James William Orten of Farmerville, LA, Joey Brent Orten of Conway, LA, Melissa Dawn Orten

of El Dorado, AR, and Christy Gaye Orten of Conway. Billy is also survived by his parents, Fred and Zula Orten, of Ethridge, TN, by a brother James Orten of Edmond, OK, and by two sisters, Joan Long and Jean Stephens of Ethridge, TN. Billy was a graduate of Louisiana Technical University and a member of the Church of Christ from his youth. So read the obituary of Billy Orten at his funeral August 25, 1998, but it tells us so little about a life that has touched the lives of thousands. His funeral said much about this great man of God. The funeral director said that on visitation night a record number of people came through his funeral home. Only one-third of the people who attended the funeral could get into the church building in Conway. I have never seen so many flowers. People gladly sat and stood in the heat as ten preachers found it difficult to cut their talks short. After hearing these preachers talk about Billy and the work he had done, people from the community said that they never dreamed that he had been involved in so many great endeavors. Eighteen preachers were in attendance, most of whom participated in some capacity. It was my difficult, yet honored, duty to preach my good friend's funeral, assisted by James Orten, who spoke on behalf of the family. Lynwood Smith, Miles King, Billy Dickinson, Jack Cutter, Wayne McKamie, Taylor Joyce, Don Pruitt and Joe Norton also spoke and Gerald Hill led the prayer. Johnny Fisher and Deaton Norsworthy were pallbearers. Don McCord conducted the graveside service. Christians came from many states to show their love for this loving child of God. We will miss his brilliant, fair, loving, reasonable, knowledgeable, wise, kind, cheerful voice in our brotherhood. How blest we were to be touched by his life.—Wayne Fussell

JOHNSON—Lauren Ann Johnson was the daughter of Benny E. and Sondra Johnson of Victoria, TX. She was born September 13, 1978 and passed away August 12, 1998 at the tender age of 18 years. Her death was the result of a road accident with three friends. Lauren was a member of the Church of Christ and had just recently attended a gospel meeting at San Angelo, TX along with many other young Christians from various parts of the brotherhood. She had received a scholarship and was planning to attend Tyler Junior College, Tyler, TX this fall. Lauren was a good student and was a member of the national Honor Society and Who's Who in American High Schools. Her mother and father are both school teachers and were justifiably proud of their daughter, a good Christian girl. She leaves to mourn her passing her mother and father, one brother Mathew Ben Johnson of Victoria (attending college in Oklahoma), her grandparents, C.B. and Merle Sutton of McAlester, OK, many relatives and a host of friends and fellow Christians. She was the niece of our beloved preaching brother, Carl Johnson of Ada, Oklahoma. I was honored to officiate at the graveside service at Ada before a large crowd of grieving men and women. The singing was beautifully rendered by fellow Christians.—Paul O. Nichols.

SPIVEY—Sister Lola Alice Early Spivey of Kinston, AL passed on to her eternal reward on August 26, 1998 after an extended time of illness and deterioration. She was 98 years old. "Little Mama" as she was affectionately called by family and friends was a long-time member of the Earlytown congregation near Samson, AL. She was a homemaker and the wife of Bro. Talmage Spivey who preceded her in death in 1985. She was the mother of two

fine women in the Lord who are left with their families to mourn her passing but rejoice over her reward. Her two daughters and son-in-law Helen Quates and Norma and Jim Coale are all members of the Earlytown Church of Christ. This family is well known over the brotherhood and has been the haven of hospitality to many a preacher. Sister Lola with her quiet and godly demeanor will be missed. What an accomplishment to live the majority of your 98 years in the Lord's service! I was honored to speak words of memorial and of exhortation to a large gathering of family and friends.—Kevin W. Presley

PATE—Our brother-in-Christ Ray Pate departed this life on September 4 about 3:10 a.m. at the Columbia Medical Center in Sanford, Florida. Brother Pate was 78 years old, and was born in Highnote, Alabama. His family brought him to Geneva, Alabama where he grew up, attended school, and that's where he met Christine Burkett, a daughter of Cyrus A. and Nannie Brukett who were very active in the Church of Christ at Earlytown, Alabama. Ray and Christine were married and to the union was born one son, Larry C. Pate. The Pate family are now, and have been, very active members of the Longwood Church of Christ from its beginning, in the early 1950s. On Sunday evening, August 30th, brother Pate dismissed with prayer at the Church. Neither he, nor anyone else, knew this would be the last time Brother Pate would lift his voice to God in a public assembly. His funeral and Interment is set for Tuesday, September 8 with Brother Barney Owens from West Chester, Ohio speaking words of comfort to the congregation. The singing will be wonderful, I know, which will be presented by Brother Phillip Prince and members of his family from the Jacksonville congregation. The family needs your prayers and good thoughts in this time of trouble.—Edison Thompson

JOHNSON - Lauren Ann Johnson was born September 13, 1979 in Victoria, Texas and died August 12, 1998 in a tragic auto accident just outside of Victoria. Lauren is survived by her parents, Benny and Sondra who live in Victoria, and by one brother, Matt who lives



and is going to college in Ada, Oklahoma. Lauren graduated from high school in May and was planning to attend Tyler Junior college this Fall. She was very popular at Victoria High School (both Benny and Sondra have been teachers in Victoria for many years) and therefore a large crowd of around six hundred came to grieve with the family at the service in Victoria. I worked with the church in Victoria from 1977-1980 and I was living there when Lauren was born in 1979. She was a sweet girl with the most beautiful curly hair I have ever seen. When I heard that Lauren and Matt were baptized by their uncle Carl Johnson in Ada four years ago I called and talked with both of them and told them how happy I was at the news. It was a difficult and emotional service for everyone as you can well imagine, including me, but I sought to focus everyone on those eternal truths that bear us up in our darkest hours. It is hard, at times like these, to separate

our emotions from our intellect, i.e., what we feel from what we know. It is wonderful, however, to realize that no matter how hurt, troubled, or bewildered we feel, we can cling to what we know about God, about the Lord Jesus, and about the Bible. I exhorted all to concentrate on the things we know are true, inasmuch as we know Him who is Truth epitomized. Hold on with all your might to those things you know are true! I spoke words of exhortation at the service in Victoria. Another service was held in Ada where Lauren was to be buried.—Jerry Dickinson

LAMKINS—Altha Della Lamkins was born March 2, 1910 near Plato, Mo. and departed this life on June 9, 1998 at Houston, Mo. after a lengthy illness. Altha was a long time member of the Houston church and will be missed by all. Altha is survived by two daughters, Faye Kirkpatrick of Houston and Edith Atkinson of Marshfield, Mo. She was a noted violin player and had received state wide recognition for her talent. The writer offered words of encouragement.—Ron Alexander

LEGGE—Brother C. H. Legge of Grandview, TX, passed from this life at his residence on August. 4, 1998. He was born in Sardis, MS., December 12, 1924. He was 73 years old. Brother Legge is survived by his wife, Pauline, one son, five daughters, two brothers, and four sisters, twelve grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren. Brother Legge was a member of the South Walnut Church of Christ in Cleburne. He was very faithful in his church attendance. He was always willing to do what he could to help with the worship. We relied upon him a great deal as one of our song leaders. He will be greatly missed by his family and by the church. The writer endeavored to speak words of comfort and warning to a large gathering of friends, family and brethren in Christ at the Blue Bonnet Hills Memorial Park in Colleyville, TX, where he was laid to rest.—Melvin Blalock.

HACKWORTH—Junior Lee Hackworth, the son of James Ervin and Mary Mooney Hackworth was born November 18, 1930 in Stuart, Okla and departed this life on August 31, 1998 in his home in Aurora, Mo. following an extended illness. He was a faithful member of the Southern Hill Church in Aurora. He was united in marriage on June 17, 1954 to Marie Farris who preceded him in death on July 9, 1983. To this union 3 children were born. On March 10, 1992 he and Shirley Phillips were united in marriage. He is survived by his wife, Shirley of the home. 1 son; Jeff Hackworth of Ash Grove, 2 daughters and sons-in-law: Joyce and Steve Baugus of Tunas, Mo. and Janet and Steve Partain of Elk City, Okla. 1 step son and wife: Tim and Sherri Phillips of Lamar, Mo. 2 step-daughters and husbands; Lori and Clyde Phillips, Jacksonville, Ark. and Denise and Jack Swain of Mt. Vernon, Mo. 1 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren, Also 2 sisters, 1 aunt and several nieces and nephews. Junior will be greatly missed by his family and all of us who knew him. We express our love, sympathy and prayers to Shirley and all of the children. I considered it an honor to have been ask to conduct the service.—Roy Lee Criswell

FRIZZELL—Ledford Harvey Frizzell was born Nov. 25, 1901 in Van Zant County Texas and departed this life May 23, 1998 in Okla. City, OK. at the age of 96. He was married to Mary Matilda Hughes on Dec. 21, 1922 in

Sulphur, Oklahoma. At the time of Mary's death in 1987, they had been married almost 65 years. Together they raised six children. A seventh died in infancy. He is survived by one son; Richard and four daughters; Charlotte, Wanda, Willie Mae, and Geneva. He is also survived by 12 grandchildren, 25 great grandchildren and 6 great great grandchildren. In the early 1940s, Brother Frizzell moved to California and lived there until his retirement in the late 1960s, at which time he returned to Oklahoma. He was an active church leader while in California and is highly respected for his works' sake in that state. He was also a leader at the church in Wynnewood, OK., and at the Capitol Hill congregation in Okla. City. Bro. Frizzell was perhaps best known for the many church buildings he constructed. He built at least 8 churches in several different cities. He did this after his retirement and as a labor of love. His funeral service was conducted at the Moore, OK. congregation, a building he constructed. Bro. Frizzell's long life was rooted and grounded in spiritual things. He loved the church with all his being. He constantly read the Bible (without glasses at age 96). He talked to others about the Lord. He died in the arms of a triumphant faith and with a hope of something far better than this life has to offer. He was laid to rest beside his wife at Oaklawn Cemetery in Wynnewood, Oklahoma.—Bill Davis

HINTON—Susan Irene Hinton was born Nov. 6, 1910 at Stidham, OK, into the home of Robert Lee and Susan Elizabeth (McDowell) Patterson. She died at Tulsa, OK at the age of 87, July 15, 1998. She was united in marriage to Buster Hinton, Oct. 4, 1930. She lived in Ceres, CA for 40 yrs. Preceding her in death was a son, Elza Augusta (Sonny) Hinton Jr. Three sisters: Rosa Counts, Ervin Haley, and Minnie Hickey. Two brothers: Dewey and Robert Patterson. Surviving her are her husband, Buster, two daughters: Billie Katherine Sullivan of Modesto, CA, and Charlotte Sue Spriggs of Reville, Ca, three grandchildren and a great grandchild. She was an avid reader of the Bible and upon returning to OK she worshipped with the church at Council Hill. During the Memorial Service the singing was done by members of the church from the surrounding area in a wonderful way, inspiring and encouraging all present. Words to warn and comfort were presented by this scribe.—Barney Owens

VAN STAVERN—John Junior Van Stavern passed away on March 14, 1998, at Presbyterian Hospital, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, at the age of 75. He was born at Red Fork, Oklahoma, on September 15, 1922, to John W. and Lillie E. Van Stavern. At age 3, John and his family moved

to a small farm near Competition, Missouri, where he grew up during the Great Depression. Shortly after graduating from Lebanon High School in 1942, with World War II in progress, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served as a Medical Corpsman, stationed in New Guinea and the Philippines. After the war, John returned to Missouri and while attending a gospel meeting in Lebanon, Missouri, in March of 1946, he met the "love of his life," Bonnie Pearl Ruebush, the daughter of Willard and Ruby Ruebush. For them, it was love at first sight and they were married in October of 1946, beginning a life of over 50 years together. In 1948, John and Bonnie moved to West Texas, where he went to work in the oil fields. But, because of a back injury, he was forced to find lighter work, and moved back to Missouri. In 1957, he returned to Odessa, Texas, to take a job with a furniture store—a job which began a long career in the furniture business. Eventually, his career brought him to Oklahoma City and finally to Moore, where he and Bonnie decided to settle down for good and there they resided for 33 years. Though John loved his work, he loved his family more. He considered himself blessed to have three children and five grandchildren... his son, Rod, and his wife, Carol, and their sons, Zac and Adam...his daughter, Rhonda, and her three sons, Chris, Chad, and Joshua...and his youngest daughter, Kim. John was so proud of his family and his family heritage. After he retired, he spent many, many hours tracing family genealogy, contacting distant relatives and surprising them with his frequent visits. He was a devoted father, loving grandpa, and a loyal friend to the many he adopted as members of his family. John is survived by a sister, Leida Faye Zelsman, of Versailles, Missouri; his older brother, Earl, of Levelland, Texas; and his younger brother, Glenn, of Springfield, Missouri. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Bonnie, in July of 1997, his parents, John and Lillie, three older brothers, Bill, Oval, and Mearl, and a sister, Freida, who died in childhood. Although he loved his family and his friends so dearly—above all, John loved the Lord. He was baptized at age 11 by Brother Homer L. King and devoted the rest of his life to the cause of Christ. He served as a leader and a teacher, and he was proud that he and Bonnie were a part of the establishment of the congregation at Springfield, Missouri. He loved the congregation at Moore and considered every member there, a member of his family. He was a man who patterned his life around the Lord and nothing pleased him more than to discuss the Bible with anyone who cared to listen. One of the last things he said was that his hope was that he and his whole family would one day be reunited in Paradise.



Douglas T. Hawkins, P.O. Box 728, Brodhead, KY 40409 (606) 758-4071 e-mail: hawkins@kih.net. September 2, 1998—We recently closed a couple of very inspiring meetings. During the first part of August we were with the church in Strong, AR. We had wonderful support from the area churches. Many people came virtually every night.

The meeting closed with 6 baptisms, and 4 confessions. While there, we stayed with John and Marvene Saunders, dear people indeed. Marvene is a beloved matriarch in her family, having been faithful to the Lord all of her Christian life. She's an admirable woman. Next, we were in Columbia, MO for a weekend meeting the fifth Sunday in August. The meeting there closed with one confession. It was enjoyable to make our home with Bart and Jessica Shaw. I don't know of any two people who love the church more than they do. It shows in their lives. Bro. Reggie Kinser is doing outstanding work in that area. May God continue to bless him. Lord willing, we will hold meetings in Bakersfield, CA (Planz) Oct. 11-18; Orange, CA Oct. 19-25; Kansas City, MO (85th) Oct. 28-Nov. 1. We would love to see

you, if you can come.

Edward Williamson, 9330 Hwy. 63, Houston, MO 65483, e-mail: ed@summersville.k12.mo.us August 17—The congregation at Bendavis, MO continues to spread the gospel here in southern Missouri. We have been blessed with good attendance and several visitors. In July, I held a meeting the congregation in Paducah, KY. I was privileged to work with brother Shelby Taulbee in this effort. My family and I appreciate the hospitality of Gene and Nancy Anderson and the Paducah congregation. It was especially thrilling to have several from the Powe, MO congregation join us for Sunday services. I continue to work with the congregation at home and also preach occasionally at Ava and West Plains. If you know of someone in this area whom we can contact please let me know. May God bless His people everywhere!

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, Sept. 8—I was at Hillcrest, near Brookhaven, MS June 14-21 in a gospel meeting, closing with one confession of faults. It has been several years since I was there and we enjoyed visiting with Sam and Irma Smith and all the congregation. On several nights, the building was almost filled, thanks to wonderful cooperation from New Salem and Pearlhaven congregations. We also had visitors from Alabama and Louisiana. Brother Lynwood Smith attended most of the meeting. I attended the camp meeting at Sulphur, OK July 28-29 and then we were at Lebanon June 30-July 3. My next meeting was at Mission Hills in Springfield, MO Aug. 9-16. We were blessed with good attendance with numerous preaching brethren. We just returned from attending the Labor Day meeting at Irving, TX. I expect to be at Atwater, CA Oct. 2-11, and New Salem, near Brookhaven, MS Nov. 18-22.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, Aug. 26—We were saddened by the passing of our dear brother and fellow gospel preacher Billy Orten. He and his family put up such a valiant fight in his effort to regain his health and strength - heart transplant, cancer, brain tumor and several surgeries. We will miss him. We are thankful that God is raising up some other fine and spiritually strong young men to take the place of some of us who are passing on. We who are older know it cannot be long until we also will be called to pay the debt to nature. It was a joy to be with the church in Sentinel, OK, July 18-26. I held my first meeting there fifty two years ago this month. People were so good to us and I look forward to another meeting there in the year 2000, the Lord willing. My next was at Ada, OK, Aug. 7-16, where I have held several meetings in the past. I enjoy going there because people appreciate just plain gospel preaching. We had some large crowds and many congregations represented. We had people attend the meeting who we had not seen for several years. It was good to see and visit with some of our fellow gospel preachers. While there I was reminded of the tent meeting we held on that same property forty years ago where the church building now sits. We attended two funerals of members of the church while at Ada — one for an older person; the other for a young person, which reminds us that death is no respecter of age or condition. We leave today for a meeting at Seneca, MO (Aug. 26-30). The Lord bless us all in His work.

P. Duane Permenter, P.O. Box 80687, Midland, TX 79708, Sept. 1—This last month being at Lodi, CA, was enjoyable. The brethren worked hard for a good meeting

though this time of year is a busy time for people. Several area preachers were present. This is always an encouragement to a meeting. George Battey was in the area during the meeting and attended one night. It was my pleasure to stay in the home of Jim and Vera Winchester. They know how to help a persons feel right at home. During the last service, Jim baptized a twenty-year-old man by the name of Dustin; Jim had worked and studied with him since before the meeting. Dustin attended every service of the meeting, and he will be an asset to the cause in Lodi. Being at home again it is a pleasure to labor with the church in Midland. The work continues to progress. Our meeting in July with Jerry Dickinson was a success in many ways. The brethren worked hard and we had around thirty outsiders attend the meeting. We are now working with some of those people who attended with hope of winning them to the Lord. Brother A.B. Taylor was successful in convincing one of his sisters in law who was worshipping in error to take a stand with us the week after the meeting. I am looking forward to a meeting at Fremont, CA, Oct. 18-25 and Oakdale, CA, Nov. 22-29. Jan. 1 I am going with Don King to the Philippines. The song tapes for Lynwood's new book *GLORY GLEAMS*, should be ready by the time this report is read and you may order them by sending your check to the above address. The price is \$10.00 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling per set of four tapes. Each song in the book is first pitched and then the soprano is sung of one verse. This has been prepared to help in the learning of new songs in the book. Please remember us in your continued prayers. May God bless the faithful.

Kevin W. Presley, Rt. 2 Box 166, Kinston, AL 36453, (334) 898-1301, July 29—Since last reporting it has been a privilege and pleasure to labor with brethren in gospel meetings and here at home. In June I enjoyed a meeting at 79th and Kansas in Kansas City, KS. I could not have asked for a more cooperative congregation and hospitable brethren. The meeting was well attended, especially in the last half, and a number of non-members were present. I made my home during the first few days with the Curtis Freeman family. You will never find a more charitable and hospitable family. Curtis arranged to leave work each evening to come to the meeting and then would return to the job. Such dedication makes the church there strong and unwavering. It was also good to stay with Paul and Wilma Nichols in their lovely home. Preachers are usually experts at keeping preachers and this was no exception. Paul is a man of deep conviction and I appreciate him for that. He has done good work with these brethren and is highly regarded. It was also good to preach at Edmond, OK and Joplin, MO while on this trip. The Lebanon meeting was a success in my estimation. I enjoyed the strong preaching and the good association. My last meeting was at Pearlhaven, MS where great crowds prevailed throughout. I am indebted to the surrounding congregations for their support. We had a real good meeting. The fine hospitality of the Mike Smith family made the week very comfortable and enjoyable. The meeting closed with two baptisms and two confessions. It was good to spend time with my good friend Lynwood Smith. It's always a treat to hear other gospel preachers. I have been in the audiences of Lynwood Smith, Wayne McKamie, Joe Hisle, and Aaron Risener who held our summer meeting at Earlytown. He preached the old gospel message every night, which pleased us very much. I would recommend him and his preaching to any congregation. Our work at home is progressing nicely. Our television program continues to enjoy success. Last week I was able to teach an

entire digressive congregation in Clio, AL on the cup issue. There is a good chance they will take their stand with us. Also, we baptized an older couple from near Florida last week who have been watching the program and attending services. I begin this week in Andrews, TX and then on to Waterloo, IA and Brazil, IN. May God bless the faithful brotherhood.

Don McCord, Box 1773, Covina, CA, Aug. 29—Once again, brethren have given me the privilege this year of doing what I love to do best of all, preach the gospel of the everlasting kingdom. In April, I was at Allen, TX, an exemplary congregation in many ways. They ordained Aaron Risener preacher of the gospel with a commitment to him and he to them. The latter part of June found me in Tyler, TX, where Terry Baze and Glenn Ballard do a commendable work there and at Athens. What a peaceful, growing congregation! The Bazes and Earl Roes took care of me commendably. July 5-12, I was at Porterville, CA where people are at peace, and growing spiritually. My home was in the Lavern Lum home, hospitable indeed, July 14-19, I was at Monroe, LA, where a sweet young lady was baptized. Miles King was there to help us. Cooperation from Conway, Fairview, W. Monroe, Shreveport; New Hope, MS was appreciated. Wayne Fussell's help is always appreciated. From there I went to Walnut Grove, KY, always a treat for me; I was at home with the Hurles Pace family; having Bro. Zade McClure, and Bro. Doug Hawkins help us was special to me. Visitors from Ohio, Indiana, and W. Virginia were certainly appreciated. Aug. 2-9, McGregor, TX meeting, too, was unforgettable; the home of Wayne and Jean McKamie was my safe haven. Wayne and the congregation are always an inspiration to me. Good crowds came from several places. Aug. 10-16 found me in Piedmont, AL where I was treated better than I deserve in the Charles Hurst home; what an unforgettable occasion was the ordination of Terry Studdard and Russ Gilley to the eldership, their qualifications can not be questioned; how gracious, accepting, cooperative was the congregation in every scriptural way; may God bless them! Aug. 23-30, I was at 11st St., Tulsa, OK, with visitors from several places. I was treated wonderfully, making my home at the Joe Neil Freeman home in Claremore. Jack Cutter can always be depended upon to support a meeting in reach of him. Aug. 24-30, I was at New Hope, MS where I made my home with the Joel Smith family; I was never treated better anywhere. I appreciated more than I can say the presence of those attending from New Salem, Pearlhaven, Jerusalem, Jericho, Jackson and Hammond. The interest of the black brothers and sisters was impressive to me, as well as the way they were received. Wayne and Carolyn Fussell drove about 5 hours one way to attend; families from Monroe, LA encouraged us immensely. I will never forget my visit in Bro. Lynwood Smith's home where I was cordially received. My next meeting, Lord willing, will be Caldwell, ID, in Nov. the annual meeting by brethren in the Northwest. Nov. 1-8, Bro. James Orten will conduct our meeting at home; Bro. Taylor Joyce will be with us Nov. 15. On Sept. 8, I open my classroom for the 45th year, Lord willing. I look forward to being more settled for a time to work with dear brethren at home and to continue work on the Revelation commentary. Please pray for me.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA, 94539, September 10—We enjoyed attending the California Labor Day meeting in Sanger. It was seemingly well attended and a good spirit prevailed among the

brethren. It was my pleasure to preach at the Clovis congregation on Lord's Day to a good crowd. Lord willing, we are to begin at the Brumley, MO congregation this Lord's Day and continue for a week. We look forward to that. The home church continues in peace for which we are grateful. Some of the young men are really growing in their ability to teach and lead singing. We have had several song practice sessions lately with the new song book. The group seems to enjoy trying to learn some of the new songs. We are, of course saddened to hear of Brother Billy Orten's death. We have known him all of our life. Our first thoughts were of some of the things we shared together through the years. He was a multi-talented gospel preacher, very able indeed, and we shall miss him terribly. Our sincere condolences to Peggy and the children as they must learn to cope without him. May God bless them all. The brotherhood will feel the loss of this good man for many years to come. Don't forget us when you pray!

Miles King, Rt. # 1 Box 115, Scotland, AR 72141 (501) 592-3956—Sept. 2nd..... We continue to receive and enjoy reading the *Old Paths Advocate* each month. This Summer we have enjoyed Bro. Richard Nichols in our area. He was here preaching the gospel and teaching singing lessons at Little Rock and Jerusalem (Cedar Creek). During August I have held a meeting at Birmingham, AL (Crescent Ridge) We had a good meeting and appreciate the good cooperation from the nearby Trussville congregation and have brethren attend from Napoleon and Glencoe, AL.. I was also glad to be associated with preaching brethren Richard Nichols, Gene Grant and Calvin Prince. When I returned home I soon received the sad news of the passing of our dear Bro. Billy Orten; a true friend and wonderful gospel preacher for many years. I was able to return to Louisiana to the funeral and be with the family and friends and be with some ten or twelve other gospel preachers. The funeral was large and the services were beautiful. I want to write more in the journal next month about our association with Billy Orten—his sermons, writings etc..

Roy Lee Criswell—The Lord's work here in Aurora, Missouri continues to make progress. This summer we were very happy to have Brother Billy Dickinson hold us a 9 day meeting. On the last Lord's Day of the meeting we rejoiced in that 2 precious souls obeyed the Gospel. One was a daughter of church members and the other was a man we had studied with several times. On Wednesday night after the meeting I baptized one of our grand daughters, and a couple of weeks before the meeting started I baptized another young lady of another member who attends here at Aurora. So far we have had 5 precious souls obey the gospel here at Aurora this year. During our meeting with Bro. Billy Dickinson he did some outstanding preaching. Lord Willing our next meeting will be September 18th, 19th, and 20th with Bro. Glen Osburn. We are looking forward to having him. We have been able to hear some very good preaching in this area. It was good to hear Bro Benny Cryer several nights in Neosho. He did an outstanding job in presenting the gospel. It was good to be able to visit with him and his wife JoAnn. This was our first time to really be together since we worked in Africa some 31 years ago. Lord Willing I am scheduled to hold a gospel meeting in Marion, Iowa October 4th thru 11th This will be my first time to be in that part of the country. Bro. Richard Reed lives close by in Cedar Rapids, so I am looking forward to visiting with him. We were saddened by the death of Bro. Billy Orten and Bro. Junior Hackworth

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here at home. Please pray for the lord's work and for those of us who labour in His vineyard.

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@juno.com, Sept. 2—Our meeting at Ozark, MO was a good one. This congregation is only about a year old, and we had several visitors from the community and wonderful support from the surrounding congregations. Numerous preachers came to help us out including Ronny Wade, Ron Alexander, Dan Wissinger, David Griffin, Irvin Barnes, and Don Pruitt. Smith Bibens is laboring with this congregation and it was a pleasure to be with him during the week. My next meeting was in Mozier, IL. It had been fourteen years since my last meeting there and I enjoyed my return. Ed and Jolene Bullard and Glen and Roberta Van Stavern came to the meeting for three days and were a big help. The meeting resulted in three confessions of faults. Our short meeting at Galey, OK closed without visible results, but we had excellent crowds every service including some visitors from the community, and we are confident some good was accomplished. My schedule for the remainder of the year includes: Little Rock, AR (Sept. 23-27), Jamesville, MO (Oct. 14-18), Frisco, TX (Nov. 6-8), Napoleon, AL (Nov. 11-15), Duncanville, TX (Nov. 28-29), and Seminole, OK (Anniversary Meeting—Dec. 4-6). Please continue to pray in our behalf.

Ron Alexander, 117 E. Hillsboro, Marshfield, Mo. 65708 Aug. 31—We have enjoyed meetings at Hilltop in Liberty, Ky., Brundage Ln. in Bakersfield, Ca. and at Frayser Blvd., in Memphis, Tn. in recent months. Each time we go to Hilltop we are impressed with the outside interest shown by the community. They have grown much in the past few years. Brundage Lane was one of the first places I preached after we moved to Ca. in 1966. Support from Planz Rd. was great as we enjoyed seeing everyone in that area once again. Both churches seem to be doing very well. We also enjoyed being at Frayser Rd. again. Cooperation from the Hollywood St. congregation was very good as always. We look forward to meetings at Lone Rock, Ar. and at Jacksonville, Fl. in Sept. Carolyn still faces a lot dental work as she recovers from our accident. We appreciate so much your prayers in the past and ask your continued prayers for us and the Lord's work.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Hughson, Calif. 95326—Our meeting in May with brother Wayne McKamie was certainly a good one. There were nine confessions and the church was built up in the faith. Wayne left us encouraged, helping us to realize more than ever the rewards of living the Christian life. He did not spare in anyway nor did he show respect of persons in his preaching. Let the "chips fall where they may" was his way, and it was appreciated by everyone in the congregation at Turlock. The crowds were excellent, in excess of 300 people. Brethren from all over the state came and cooperated, helping with their presence. It was a joy to have Wayne and Jean stay in our home. Of late I have heard good gospel preaching from these men: Ryan

Conner, Jerry Barrett, Smith Bibens, Jimmy Smith, Doug Hawkins, George Vergera, Don King, Benny Cryer and others this year. The Turlock church is at peace, and blessed with several teachers. May I say we appreciate the young people who came to support our meeting in May. I look forward to preaching in Fremont, a congregation that has encouraged me and supported me for many years, along with Modesto, Atwater, and my home, Turlock. I say Amen to the articles of late by Doug Hawkins and Duane Permenter concerning "Promise Keepers." Brethren need to stay away from them, and glorify God "in the church" (Eph. 3:21). There will always be the scam institutions of the Holy Spirited praise the Lord crowd who outwardly appear righteous, but ignore the will of God, and believe they can write their own "ticket" to heaven. May God bless his people in everyway possible.

Bennie T. Cryer, 1439 San Rocco Circle, Stockton, CA 95207, September 10—The work here in Stockton is progressing. The elders are doing a good job planning the work of the church and launching out into other fields of labor that needed someone to help them with their particular needs, financially. The Hawaiian work is a part of this endeavor and we certainly appreciate those who are sharing in the support of that work. Ryan Connor is still working with us in Stockton and is growing in knowledge and ability. We just attended the California Labor Day Meeting at Sanger. That congregation did a good job of hosting it and taking care of the large gatherings of people that came, not only from California, but also from several other states. In July, I had the privilege of speaking at Atwater, Bakersfield (Brundage), CA, and Midland, TX. We worked with the San Angelo, TX church in a weekend meeting the latter part of July through the first Sunday in August. This is the congregation I grew up in and it was good to be with them once more. Bro. Matt Trent from Oakdale, CA, one of our young preachers, met us in San Angelo and traveled with us the rest of our trip. From Texas we went to Lawrenceburg, TN and preached several times at the Chapel Grove congregation to large crowds. It was a pleasure to be able to stay with Leo and Bernice Burns once more. We have shared so many happy days with them over the years. From there we went to Springfield, Mo and attended one night of Johnny Elmore's meeting. It was good to see him and stay in the home of Ronny and Alfreda Wade again. From there we went to Neosho, Mo for a fine meeting in an area where so many congregations cooperate together in their meetings and provide a large listening audience for every service. We stayed with Roscoe & Betty Lawson and thank them very much for their hospitality as well as all the others who invited us into their homes. Several gospel preachers attended the meeting as well as two families who came in their motorhomes for a part of the meeting. We appreciated the leaders of the Neosho church and all the young men and women that attended the meeting. Bro. Matt Trent was a big help in this meeting. He seemed to impress the brethren with his mannerly conduct, abilities, and study habits every where we went. God bless you all.

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, NOVEMBER 1998

NO. 11

HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT - PART 1

BY ALAN BONIFAY

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; (Eph. 5:14-18)

It is Paul's last phrase in this passage that intrigues. How are Christians to be filled with the Spirit? In answering this question we must consider four salient points:

1. *The meaning of the Greek word translated "filled."*
2. *The mood of Paul's sentence and the effect it has on our understanding.*
3. *The impact generated by the parallel passage discovered in Colossians 3:16.*
4. *Paul's detailed explanation of how the Christian is to accomplish being "filled with the Spirit."*

Filled

The concept of the word "filled" in the New Testament is more interesting and diverse than one might suspect. In fact there are several Greek words that are all translated by the English word "filled." For example, the Greek word (*pimplemi*) appears 24 times in the New Testament. It means "to fill up or make full." It is used literally and actively four times. Six times it describes a person being filled with some emotion, such as fear or amazement. In these cases it is used passively. Interestingly, it is used passively of people being filled with the Holy Spirit, eight times (Lk. 1:15, 41, 7; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9 (Balz and Schneider, Vol. 3, p. 88).

These observations are confirmed by Abbott-Smith (360); Thayer (509); and Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich (663). Worthy of note is the fact that in every occurrence of this word in the New Testament with reference to the Holy Spirit it occurs in the passive voice—that is, being filled as opposed to actively filling something or filling oneself. In other words, those being filled with the Spirit were being acted upon by the Spirit. They were under the Spirit's influence. The revelation is clear that in each case miraculous activity on behalf of the one or ones being filled with the Spirit is under consideration (Lk. 1:13-17, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:g). This word *pimplemi* is not the word used in Ephesians 5:18.

Another word used with reference to the Holy Spirit is (*pleres*). It is used 16 times in the New testament, and

carries with it two ideas. One idea is "to be filled" in a purely spatial sense or tangibly; for example, as a vineyard full of weeds or 12 baskets full of scraps. However, when this word is used of persons, it conveys the concept of being full of power, gift, feeling, characteristic or quality (Balz and Schneider, Vol. 3, p. 106; Bauer Arndt and Gingrich, 675). For example, Luke 4:1 says, "Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan." The meaning here is revealed clearly in verse 14: "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee." In other words, supernatural miraculous power was exercised by Jesus from this time forward. This word—*pleres*—is not the word used in Ephesians 5:18.

The word that is used in Ephesians 5:18 is the word (*pleroo*). It is a more common term in the New Testament for "to fill or make full" and is found 87 times in the New Testament. It is used predominantly in the expression "that the Scriptures may be fulfilled." It is also used to mean 'to pervade with an influence, to possess fully.' Its meaning is not always miraculous Balz and Schneider, Vol. 3, p. 108-109; Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, 676,77). Here in Ephesians 5:18 it is obvious that the meaning does not include miraculous power, because all believers of all time are to "be filled with the Spirit." It is abundantly clear in scripture that the miraculous age has long been over Acts 8:14-18; I Cor. 13:8-13; Eph. 4:8-13). The idea is that believers are to be filled with the Spirit's communication—the Word of God (note Col. 3:16).

"Be Filled" — A Command

The mood of this verb "be filled" (*plerousthe*)— is imperative (Perschbacher, 332). In other words, all Christians everywhere, for all time, are *commanded* to "be filled with the Spirit." This filling is not optional. It is obligatory. It is not something to be pleaded for in earnest prayer. It is not a gift from God (commands are not gifts). It is something Christians are to do in order to "walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). An additional noteworthy fact is that the voice of this verb is passive (Perschbacher, 332). In other words the subject of the sentence (in this instance "you" Ephesians who are members of the Church) is to be acted upon. They were to be filled with something. The five succeeding participles, as we shall see, describe the means by which they were to obey the command to be

continued on page six

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 11



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8-10

How To Be Filled With The Holy Spirit - Part 1 1

“Sowing And Reaping” 2

The Querist Column 3

Adultery: A Tragedy For All, Even Kings And Presidents 3

Singing To The Lord 4

My Friend, Billy Orten 8

FROM THE FIELDS 10-12

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Editorial

“SOWING AND REAPING”

By BENNIE T. CRYER

The words of a song written by a Mr. Cunningham and a Mr. Williams expresses an idea we all need to keep vividly in our minds and teach our children to let it be a guiding principle in their lives:

Brother you'll reap whatsoever you sow, The Bible declares it we know;

Then sow the good seed where-so-ever you go, For you 'll reap what-so-ever you sow.

The Bible does declare this in both the Old and New Testaments in no uncertain terms

For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: Hosea 8:7

In Galatians 6:7 this principle is stated more plainly:

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

This principle, which can produce a good harvest or a bad one in a person's life, is based on a part of creation that is recorded in Genesis 1:11-12:

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

Just as surely as an apple seed will produce an apple tree, a squash seed will produce squash, and Johnson grass seed will produce Johnson grass, so an evil choice or deed will produce a harvest of evil things. If the seed is evil the produce will be evil as well. This is a principle that can work for our benefit as well. If the seed is good seed it is capable of producing a good and bountiful harvest. God created all things and set this principle in motion in the natural, moral, and spiritual kingdoms. Furthermore, it is a natural thing for a single seed to produce a harvest that will contain dozens of similar seeds. In other words, the harvest for a single choice or deed of evil in our lives has the power to produce many more evil choices and deeds in our lives and the lives of our children. You sow to the wind and you shall reap the whirlwind said the prophet Hosea.

Adam and Eve found out the power of this principle early in their existence on this earth. They lived in a paradise on earth in healthy and mature bodies. All they had to do was tend the garden and refuse to eat of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Genesis 2:16-17.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. 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.

We know from Genesis 3 that Eve and then Adam disobeyed God in eating of that forbidden tree.

continued on page seven

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: In Genesis 1:26-27, when the Bible says God made man in His image and likeness, does this mean that our body is similar to the one He has? When the Scriptures speak of God's face, hands, arms, etc., does this mean that God literally has these body parts? (CA)

Answer: Genesis 1:26-27 reads, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." From these verses it is evident that man was made in a way that bears an exact resemblance of God. The disagreement comes over what points of resemblance Moses intended to express by the phrase. Since Moses did not explain himself, we are left to study and harmonize other passages that relate to this topic. McClintock and Strong say: "The common opinion is, that this phrase denotes certain excellence which man originally possessed, but which he lost, in part at least, by the fall." Those texts usually cited in behalf of this position are Gen. 1:26, Col. 3:10, and Eph. 4:24 where a renewal after the image of God is mentioned, which is understood by some to mean a restoration of this image, implying that man must have lost it. Objections to such a view is the fact that the image of God is described in many passages as existing after the fall, and as still discoverable in men; as Gen. 9:6, James 3:9, 1Cor. 11:6-7, and Gen. 5:1-3. Some of the ancients believed the "image of God" referred to physical characteristics, while others rejected this idea. A few commentators (among them Zerr) also believe that the body is meant, while the majority of others believe it refers to the soul. Still others contend that the phrase "image of God" means the dominance man had over other creatures, and in this way man was like God. Since God is incorporeal, and has no bodily shape, it seems to this writer unrealistic to suggest that this is the image we bear today as the offspring of the Great Creator. Equally untenable is the idea that the image of God in man consisted in the dominion he has over the animals and earth, since the image and likeness of God has something to do with his nature not His activity or power. It should be noted that the scripture does not say man is "made in the image of God's dominion," but in the image and likeness of God himself. Thus, it is the belief of this writer that the expression "made in the image and likeness of God" refers to the spirit and spiritual aspects of man, for the following reasons: (1) God is called the "Father of spirits." A likeness is certainly intimated here between man and God in the spirituality of their nature. The same implication is made by Paul in Acts

17 when he declares "forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art, and man's device;" referring to the idolatrous statues by which God was represented among heathens. If the likeness of God had consisted in bodily shape, this would not have been an argument against such human representations of deity. Thus the conclusion must be that our resemblance to God does not lie in the physical, but rather in some higher, more noble sphere i.e. the spiritual. Adam Clarke says "Now as the Divine Being is infinite, he is neither limited by parts, nor definable by passions; therefore he can have no corporeal image after which he made the body of man. The image and likeness must necessarily be intellectual; his mind, his soul, must have been formed after the nature and perfections of his God." (2) McClintock and Strong make a very convincing point when they say "This natural image of God, in which man was created, was the foundation of that moral image by which also he was distinguished." The Scriptures testify to this truth. "Lo this only have I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many evil inventions," Eccl. 7:29. (I.E. man was morally good as created by God.) "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him," Col. 3:10. "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. 4:24. Adam Clarke sums it up in the following quote: "God is the fountain whence this spirit issued, hence the stream must resemble the spring which produced it. God is holy, just, wise, good, and perfect; so must the soul be that sprang from him: there could be in it nothing impure, unjust, ignorant, evil, low, base, mean, or vile. It was created after the image of God; and that image, St. Paul tells us, consisted in righteousness, true holiness, and knowledge, Eph. 4:24; and Col. 3:10." (3) "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" John 4:24. In Luke 24:39 Jesus said that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Hence God, being a Spirit, could not have a body like the one we humans have. But what about the passages of scripture that refer to the hands, face, etc. of God? Anthropomorphism is a figure of speech used by sacred writers, which attributes to God parts, actions, and affections which properly belong to man. When the members of the human body are ascribed to God, we must understand the lesson intended, not that God actually has such members. For example, the eye of God represents God's knowledge or watchful care over us; the arm His power and strength; His ear, the regard He pays to our prayers etc. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, MO 65808)

ADULTERY: A TRAGEDY FOR ALL, EVEN KINGS AND PRESIDENTS

By JIMMY VANNOY

Americans have just been reminded about how horrible the consequences of adultery can be on this earth, as they see President Clinton making a multitude of apologies and

going through many humiliating experiences. He may even face impeachment for lying and encouraging others to lie.

This case of adultery in high places is reminiscent of

David's sin with Bathsheba. In both cases the results were tragic, just as they will always be for presidents, kings and all ordinary people. God called David "a man after my own heart" (Acts 13:22), but David did not always live as God wanted him to. A vivid example was committing adultery with Bathsheba and attempting to cover the act by murdering her husband.

One evening, David was walking on his roof when he saw a beautiful woman named Bathsheba bathing on top of her roof. Both David and Bathsheba were wrong. Bathsheba could see clearly that there was at least one roof taller than her own and that it was possible that someone would see her from that roof. She should have been bathing in a more secluded area. The Bible says that she was very beautiful to "behold," and that is what David did wrong. He beheld her; he gazed at her, allowing his passions to rise until he felt compelled to act on them. David could have avoided this escalating lust by tuning away from the roof-top scene and putting his mind on other things. He failed to do so and suffered greatly for it.

Arrangements were easily made because Bathsheba's husband Uriah was away at war, and David simply sent a trusted servant to Bathsheba's door. She would certainly not refuse the summons of her king, so she came, and they committed adultery. People always seem to think they can involve themselves in illicit sex without any consequence, but this is never the case. Adultery causes guilt, unwanted pregnancies, broken marriages, children separated from their parents, lying, murder, sexually transmitted diseases, emotional turmoil, mental illness and separation from God. The consequences of adultery always outweigh any supposed benefits. Cain said of his sin, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!" (Genesis 4:13) So it is with all sin, but it is especially true with the sin of adultery.

Problems began to mount for David when Bathsheba sent word that she was pregnant. Since Uriah had been at war for a long time, he would know he was not the father, so David had him brought home quickly so that David could cause Uriah to think he was the father. But he refused to go in to his wife, or even into his house, because he said

his fellow soldiers did not have this privilege, so he would not allow himself the comforts of home.

David now panicked. The noble Uriah had thwarted his plan, so more desperate action became necessary to hide his sin. David had Uriah to carry back papers to Joab, the commander of the army, which contained his death sentence. Uriah was to be placed in the front of the battle, and then everyone was to withdraw from him. This plan worked, and Uriah, the noble soldier, was dead. David had killed a good man to hide his own sin.

David then married Bathsheba, and God later told him that the baby Bathsheba bore would die. David prayed and mourned, hoping God would change his mind, but the baby died a few days after it was born.

Both David and President Clinton suffered because they refused to control their lust. We are people with free will, and it is possible for us to control ourselves. We will be blessed if we do.

Sometimes even good people like David begin to lust after another person, and instead of eliminating those thoughts from their minds they dwell on them and commit adultery. The process is described in James 1:14,15. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it finished, bringeth forth death." This process can be stopped by anyone by simply eliminating the lustful thoughts from the mind, thus averting the tragedy of adultery.

The consequences of adultery are always terrible, and we can learn from an ancient king and a modern president how bad it can be. The greatest tragedy is being sentenced to eternal hell if we do not repent. Even Christians are not exempt from the temptation of adultery, and we need to be reminded of the tragic consequences of this horrible sin lest we give in to temptation. "That each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor." (I Thes. 4:3,4)—Jimmy Vannoy, 105 Sunset Circle, Corsicana, TX 75110

SINGING TO THE LORD

By GREG GAY

Every Christian needs to understand why we sing the way we do during worship, without the aid of mechanical instruments of music. Our singing sets us apart in the religious world and I encourage every congregational leader and gospel preacher to keep the subject of the music of the church alive and well among us.

The first reference to music of any kind in the Bible is in Gen 4:21: "And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." Jubal is just 7 generations from Adam, the first man on the earth, so music and the concept of musical sound has been common for most, if not all of the approximate 6,000 years the earth has stood.

The first reference to a song of any kind is when Jacob fled from his father-in-law Laban. Laban chased after him and caught up with him. Among the things he said included: "Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee

away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?" (Gen 31:27).

Angelic singing is referred to in Job as occurring during the time of the creation. "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:4-7).

The first recorded lyrics of any song is the song of Moses in Ex. 15 after the children of Israel witnessed what happened to Pharaoh and the Egyptian army when they tried to follow Israel thru the Red Sea. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea" Exod 15:1 (the song goes on thru verse 21). Some have wondered if figurative expressions are OK in our songs. There are figurative references to God's hands and nostrils in this song.

This song, like many others recorded in the word of

God, told of an actual event that happened in the lives of the people. In the days when written material was either carved in stone or laboriously written on scrolls, there had to be a way to keep the knowledge of the past alive. Most often the important events of the people were recorded in songs that were passed on from generation to generation.

Songs were very important to Israel as we can see in the inspired preservation of their song book, the book of Psalms, which contains 150 psalms varying in length from the massive Psalm 119 with 176 verses to the diminutive Psalm 117 with only 2 verses.

David, the man after God's own heart, according to Acts 13:22 is the author of many of the songs of the children of Israel that are in the book of Psalms. He is called "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23: 1). Solomon, David's son, was also a prolific writer of songs: "And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five" (1 King 4:32).

Singing is a Way to Express the Greatness of God

Consider the following verses: "Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works" (1 Chr 16:9). "For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding" (Ps 47:7). "The LORD is my strength and my shield, my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him" (Ps 28: 7). "Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding" (Ps 47:6-7). "My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed" (Ps 71 :23). "I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee" (Ps 138: 1).

Singing in New Testament Times

When we look to the New Testament we find singing was an expression of worship and praise to God while Jesus was here on the earth. After the institution of the Lord's Supper, before going to the Garden to be betrayed, Jesus and the disciples sang a song: "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (Matt 26:30). This is presumed to be part of Psalms 113-118 that were traditionally sung before and after observance of the Passover meal.

Once the church came into existence as recorded in Acts 2 singing continued in the church as an essential and commanded item of worship. The writer of

Hebrews tells us: "Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Heb 2: 12).

Paul addressed problems in the church in Corinth that dealt specifically with their worship. While some of these problems were specific to spiritual gifts, he lets us know singing was part of their worship. "How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor 14:26).

As we can see from this verse, it is possible to observe items of worship incorrectly. That is why Paul says all things must be done unto edifying, or for the strengthening

of the church. Later in the same chapter Paul adds: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Cor 14:33). "Let all things be done decently and in order," or "in a fitting and orderly way" (NIV) (1 Cor 14:40).

Our singing is not just for the purpose of making a musical sound, but also for understanding the message of a song. It is the combination of musical sound and understanding that stirs our hearts in the way God intended. Can we be stirred by sound alone? Yes we can. Can we be stirred by words alone? Yes we can. But, when those two things are put together the result is a special combination that is approved and blessed by the Lord that is intended to contribute to the joy of being a Christian.

This is what the Lord wants us to understand when Paul writes: "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor 14:15).

Musical Instruments

In the Old Testament many musical instruments were used in worship to God. One example is found in the following verses: "And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished" (2 Chr 29:27-28).

Notice from this verse what singers did. They sang. What did trumpeters do? They sounded. There is a difference between those who sing and those who play a musical instrument, even in the old Testament where worship with a mechanical instrument was common. We must make the point that "sounding" is not singing.

David is given credit for originating the use of instruments in worship. "And the priests waited on their offices: the Levites also with instruments of music of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD. . . " (2 Chr 7:6).

Should We Use Instruments in the Church?

Why don't we use instruments of music today? Actually, we do. We don't use the instruments of David, instead we use the instrument God has specified.

In New Testament worship the instrument is specified. Paul wrote our brethren at Colosse: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col 3: 16). Paul wrote a parallel passage to Ephesus: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph 5: 19).

Attempts have been made to argue the word "Psallo" which is translated "making melody" means to use an instrument. In the time of Christ, that particular word meant "to sing" and that is the message of these verses. Our heart is the instrument we are to play expressed thru our voice to the praise of God.

Once singing is specified mechanical instruments are necessarily prohibited. We are familiar with this type of

reasoning. Once Gopher wood was specified no other wood was allowed in the building of the ark (Gen. 6:14). We don't expect a list to follow of other woods that can't be used, because we have the positive command of what is to be used. In the music of the church we are given what is to be used, our voices. We don't expect a list to follow of instruments that can't be used, because we have the positive command of what is to be used.

Singing is the natural expression of a joy-filled heart, and is not just limited to a time of worship. "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms" (James 5:13). There are several references to singing in the book of Revelation which lead us to conclude there will be singing in heaven as part of our praising God thru eternity. Our wonderful singing at our big meetings is just a warm-up for what we will enjoy heaven!

Today when we sing in our worship God wants everyone to sing, whether or not they can carry a tune. Singing is not described as a perfect sound, but rather as a "joyful noise" (Ps 95:1). I am always concerned when I see people just sitting there during the singing part of worship. Everyone needs to sing praises to God.

How do we keep the music of the church alive as we go into the next century?

1. One thing is certain, we need to continue to sing as the Bible commands with grace, or gratitude in our hearts to the Lord and without the aid of mechanical instruments.

2. Sing often. Someone has to be the leader in getting singing to be a regular part of getting together. Singing does not have to be confined to four songs before prayer. Why not sing before and or after services or pot lucks? You don't have to sit down and get everyone's attention. Just get a book, grab one or two others and say: "Let's sing."

3. Learn to sing. Singing schools have really fallen on hard times but there are very capable brethren all over the country who can conduct them if congregations will just ask. Our kids who take music in school can also help the music of the church by applying their knowledge to our singing. It is a biblical concept for those who are more knowledgeable than others to instruct in music. "And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skillful" (1 Chr 15:22). I count among my treasures several of the old Stamps-Baxter books my grandfather and others used in days gone by to teach the church the "do, re, mi's."

4. Sing the parts. There is no sweeter sound this side of heaven than singers of the Church of Christ singing without the aid of instruments. Singing without instruments is called "a cappella" and the particular style of music we usually sing is called "Southern Gospel," which has a unique sound

because of the four parts that are sung. While it is not necessary to sing one of the parts other than the melody, or soprano, if God has blessed you with the ability to sing alto, tenor, or bass please use that talent. If you need help learning how to sing a part, sit beside or in front of someone who sings the part. Listen to them, and sing with them. Before long you will be able to hear that part easily.

5. Sing different songs. It is not unusual for a congregation to pick out a dozen songs or so from each book and just wear them out. Personally, I prefer changing song books as often as Bro. Lynwood Smith publishes one, but even if a congregation decides to keep the same book for years song leaders can alternate the songs they lead to ensure there is variety in the singing. What a great service Lynwood has provided through the years in publishing our books, and Homer King before him! Having a common book, or at least common songs in the song books we use, is just one of the "ties that bind" us together in our fellowship.

6. Learn new songs. Duane Permenter will soon be advertising a set of tapes that contain the soprano part to every song in Lynwood's new book, *Glory Gleams*. I encourage every congregation that struggles to learn new songs to buy a set of those tapes from Duane to help their song leaders.

Singing is Intended to be Important for Life

Our children learn to sing and put a coin in the contribution long before they know what worship is about. Often children have favorite songs that they sing over and over. Our grandson Hayden's favorite song is: "Holy, Holy, Holy." He has a standing request with anyone he can influence to lead that song. I think the Auburn congregation where he attends is pretty tired of that song, they have sung it so much for him. One day when Hayden was visiting with us at 64th. St. he asked me to lead his song. He said: "Sing Holy, Holy, Papa." Now, who can turn down a three year old's request? I sure couldn't. When I sat down he whispered to me, "Thank you Papa." I know he does not know what the words mean to the song, but one of these days he will. And I hope he will always want to "Sing Holy, Holy."

Isn't it wonderful that God blesses us with the ability to sing from an early age until we no longer are able to function. A dear sister at our congregation is suffering with Alzheimer's and has just about forgotten everything about life. There are a couple of things she still remembers well: her husband of 60 years and how to sing. When one of the old songs is led, she just sings right out. Surely that is what the Psalmist meant when he said: "I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being" (Ps 104:33).

"HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT - PART 1"

continued from page 1

filled with the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 3:16

We have previously alluded to the parallel passage in Colossians 3:16: Writing to Christians, Paul says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." The Greek verb here 'let dwell in' is (*enoiketo*), and is also imperative (Perschbacher, 145). By comparing the contexts of both

of these passages it is obvious that Christians are to be filled with the Spirit by allowing the word of Christ to dwell in them richly. The passage in Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," demonstrates the effect; while Ephesians 5:18, "be filled with the Spirit" reveals the cause; the Holy Spirit who inspired the Word of Christ.

How to Be Filled With the Holy Spirit

Paul further establishes that the miraculous is not under

consideration here by following the command with five participle phrases explaining how Christians are to obey the command to be filled with the Spirit. Daniel Wallace, in his *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, makes these interesting observations about Ephesians 5:19-21 in his chapter on "The Participle": In this text the five participles are debatable. (Wallace does not mean that it is debatable whether there are five of them, nor whether they are participles. What is debatable is the *kind* of participles they are—AWB). Some have suggested means, manner, attendant circumstance, and even imperatival. As we have seen, manner is not too likely if we follow the axiom that the idea of the main verb . . . would not be removed if these participles were absent. As we shall see later, attendant circumstance and imperatival participles are rarely, if ever, found in a construction such as the one in this text. Means fits well with the grammar of the passage (*viz.* the participle of means is often used in the present tense after a present imperative). But it may not fit well with the theology of the Pauline epistles . . . Result may fit well both syntactically and exegetically. (639) Mr. Wallace goes on to justify his opinion that these are participles of result (i. e., these participles measure the result of the Christian's obedience to the command to be filled with the Spirit) and to explain why he does not believe that they are participles of means (i.e., they reveal the means by which the Christian is to obey the command of verse 1). Although Mr. Wallace rejects the idea that these participles explain how to be filled with the Holy Spirit, four points are worthy of note:

- 1) Mr. Wallace readily admits that participles of "means fits well with the grammar of the passage;"
- 2) That they may rather be participles of result is simply his opinion,
- 3) That it may, in fact, be that such a view does not fit well with Mr. Wallace's theology and fits perfectly well with Paul's;

4) That even he cites others as suggesting (as I believe) that these participles describe how the believer may obey the command to be filled with the Spirit.

Interestingly, Alexander Campbell agrees that these participles describe the means by which the command is to be obeyed:

There may be many participles added to one imperative to express the manner of conforming to the command—not one which, however, indicates any act, but an execution of the command given. The first chapter I read after reading the criticism of my friend Christianos, was the fifth to the Ephesians. In which I observed four participles in sequence of one imperative. It is inexplicable why Bro. Campbell did not count the fifth participle in the sequence. Perhaps he simply overlooked it.—Aws. In the Greek New Testament it reads 'be filled with the Spirit.' This is the command, and it is in the imperative mood of course. The participles are speaking, singing, praising, giving thanks. Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and praising, or making melody in your hearts to the Lord, and giving thank on all occasions to the Lord. In this manner the command given in the imperative, "Be filled with the Spirit," was to be obeyed." (*The Millennial Harbinger*, Vol. 1, p. 154)

A similar grammatical construction is discovered in Matthew 28:19,20. The command to "Go ye therefore and teach make disciples of—NASB; all nations" is followed by two participles of means—telling the apostles how to obey the command:

- 1) "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;"
- 2) "teaching them to observe all thing whatsoever I have commanded you" (Wallace, 633).

In our next article we will discuss each of the participles in Ephesians 5:18 in turn, examining them as the means by which each believer is to obey the command to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

What would they reap from this single act of disobedience? A. Campbell wrote in *The Christian System*, p. 30, "A single action or event often involves, in weal or woe, a family, a nation, an empire. . . Neither actions nor events can be appreciated but through their bearings and tendencies upon every person and thing with whom they come in contact. The relations, connections, and critical dependencies in which persons and actions stand are often so numerous and so various that it is seldom, or, perhaps, not at all, in the power of man to calculate the consequences or the value of one of a thousand of the more prominent actions of his life."

Adam's and Eve's disobedience was a prominent and significant action in their ves. Would their action affect them drastically? We know it did! A multitude of consequences were hurled at them in just a short while. Read Genesis 3 for a host of them. They had sown to the wind and were now reaping the whirlwind. Soon after they were driven from the beautiful garden Cain and Abel were born. In Genesis 4 Cain killed his brother, Abel. Physical death had entered the world and has been with us ever

since. Now, this whirlwind harvest has spread from Adam and Eve personally and has been extended to their family. They had planted the seed of disobedience and now, the harvest from that single seed was multiplying. Disobedience was almost everywhere. Time could not stay the harvest because when there is a new made grave as we close this century and enter in to the last year of this millennium you can truthfully say, "The harvest is still being reaped from that single act of disobedience.

Fathers and mothers, you may not be the federal head of all mankind as Adam and Eve were, but like them, you are sowing seed that will just as surely produce a harvest. You are the head of your family and a single action or event can produce a whirlwind harvest if that be the kind of seed you sow. I know concerned fathers and mothers who left the church at a critical time in their lives and the lives of their children. They, as parents, came back to Christ and have been faithful in His service. The tragedy is: their children are lost. They pray, talk, and work with their offspring often times to no avail. I have heard them say with tears in their eyes and a breaking heart, "If I had just remained faithful my children would not have been lost."

The wonderful thing about this principle of reaping what

we sow is we can sow good seed. We can sow obedience instead of disobedience; humility instead of arrogance and pride; a good character instead of bad habits, and love and friendship instead of jealousy and hatred. I thank God that I know so many parents that have sown so many good

seeds and are now in the sunset years of their lives enjoying the fruit of their labor by seeing two, three, and sometimes four generations still "coming to church." May their tribe increase!

MY FRIEND, BILLY ORTEN

By WAYNE FUSSELL

Through the years, it has been my good fortune to obtain many good friends. I tell folks that I am a rich man because I have this great treasure of friendship. But once in a lifetime there seems to come along that special person who becomes your "best friend." He is that friend who is there at all times, good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant, when you are up and when you are down. Solomon said, "A friend loveth at all times..." (Proverbs 17:17). As Glen Post said, "Billy Orten was a true friend." This is the kind of friend Billy Orten has been to me for well more than forty years.

That friendship began when I was only 17 and Billy was 21. He was the man; I was the boy. He was the preacher; I was trying to be one. What an encouragement he was to me when he took me and another young man to Corcoran, CA for a meeting. He even allowed me to preach one night during that meeting. He was so patient with my youthful mischief, like messing up his perfectly groomed hair in which he took great pride. What an example he was to me in those days when I needed such a role model!

What sweet memories strike responsive chords in my heart as I think of the many experiences Billy and I had together! We prayed together, played together, courted together, sang and preached together. We even married girls from the same state and lived only 100 miles apart. He was my "buddy." When he or I needed anything, each of us knew who to call and who would respond. He was my mentor. When important decisions had to be made, he was the first one I called. With the "wisdom that cometh down from above" he would advise me, and he never advised me unwisely.

Before we married, along with Tommy and Jimmy Shaw, we formed the famous "Keystone Quartet" and recorded on both 78's and long-play albums. In those youthful days, it was a joy to assist him and Tommy in a tent meeting in Monroe, LA. They delegated me the responsibility of remaining with the newly formed church, which I did for several months. Our paths crossed constantly through those years until we married and both moved to Louisiana where we have enjoyed working together for many years.

Although our friendship has gradually gotten deeper through the years, it is in the past two years that I have fully realized just how precious that friendship is. We almost lost him in 1996 while he awaited a heart transplant in the hospital here in Shreveport. It was during that time that we prayed and wept more than ever before. In fact, his experience taught me more about prayer that I ever knew before. I learned what it means to "labor in prayer." Folks all over the country rallied to his side in prayer - and God heard and answered. One man said, "Billy was supposed to die in 1996 but you prayed so hard that the Lord decided to let you keep him for a while." From November 8, 1996, when he received his new heart, until June 1998, Billy has been a blessing to us all. His preaching and writing took on a new fervor and depth as a result of his experience with the "valley of the shadow" and he moved us all to greater commitment to the Lord and His church. Don McCord said after Billy's meeting at Covina, "The church in Covina will never be the same." This is the impact he made wherever he went during that brief year and one-half.

During his ordeal with a malignant brain tumor, we prayed just as fervently. But this time the Lord answered with a gentle "no." The suffering had to stop. His servant was ready for "home." We don't now all the answers to "Why?" We only know that the Lord knows best and he does always "that which is right." We are just thankful that the Lord gave us time with our friend to let him know just how much he meant to us and to profit by his presence a little longer.

We will all miss Billy Orten. We will miss his wonderful love, gracious gentleness, unexcelled fairness, heaven-sent wisdom, superb preaching, positive attitude, humble simplicity, generous sharing of himself, and all of the other traits of a great preacher and praiseworthy Christian which he exemplified. His family misses him greatly. The churches in North Louisiana will never be the same without him. Christians all over the world who have been touched by his life miss him. I miss-him - oh, how I miss him! But my best friend is now with our mutual Best Friend, and that is "far better" for my friend.—Wayne Fussell,

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Study Tour To Israel

Have you wanted to stand on the Mount of Olives where Jesus prayed in the Garden and from which He ascended to heaven? Would you like to see Bethlehem, visit Nazareth where Jesus grew up, walk the streets of old Jerusalem,

see Golgotha where Jesus was crucified, and even sail the Sea of Galilee where He calmed the storm? You can do all of this and more. This is not an ordinary sight-seeing tour. We will discuss the Biblical significance of places we see, as we see them, and read the Scriptures about them more fully in the evenings.

Last May, 34 Christians from across the U.S. took this trip and everyone agreed they were spiritually enriched from it. A similar trip is being planned for April 1999. Several Christians who wanted to go last spring could not

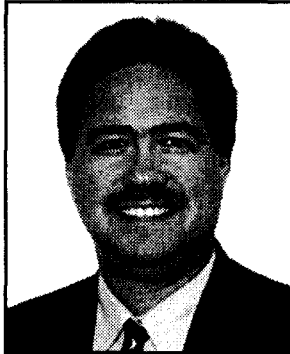
do so for lack of space and others have expressed an interest. This trip will be much the same as the first one, except that on this one we are being invited to give formal gospel singing performances.

Our guide last spring was impressed with the singing we did at several sites (for example on the Mt. of the Beatitudes) and he is urging us to allow him to arrange gospel music presentations in local synagogues. He assures us that many Israeli citizens will attend. Our singing caused him to ask for a private conference with me to discuss our religion and later to request a correspondence course from the church. Perhaps such singing could be the catalyst to put us in touch with other Jews who would be interested in hearing the gospel.

If you are interested in the trip, please contact me for more information. If you like to sing and are interested in the trip, I would especially like to hear from you. James Orten, 4113 N.E. 141 Street, Edmond, OK 73013; phone (405) 478-1854; e-mail <jdorten@aol.com>.

Meet Brother Phillip Prince

Brother Phillip Prince is entering the evangelistic field full-time, after having preached part-time, while holding down a secular job, for several years. Phillip is a young man of many talents, who comes from a rich background in the faith. His father, Gordon, is an elder in the church at Jacksonville, FL and his uncle Gillis Prince preached the gospel for more than fifty years. Phillip is being sent out by the elders of the Jacksonville, FL church, where he works. Phillip and his wife, Tammy have two daughters ages eleven and nine. He began holding singing schools at the age of eighteen, and has been a songwriter for many years. He held his first meeting at Napoleon, Alabama in August of 1980. Phillip will be available for gospel meetings and singing schools anywhere he might be called or needed. He is qualified to do any work that a preacher might be called on to perform. His address is Phillip Prince, 12025 Turkey Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32224-Phone (904) 781-2486. For further information about Phillip you may contact Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, Mo. 65808 or Alton Bailey, 410 Ginger Circle, LaGrange, Ga. 30240.



Fifty Years Together

Brother and Sister Eugene Lockard of the Lovejoy congregation in PA recently celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Eugene Lockard and Betty Waltermire were married Aug. 10, 1948. Through the years, their home has been the home for many preachers who were in that area holding gospel meetings. Eugene has worked some with the churches in central PA and is respected for his dedication to the cause of Christ. In a time when many marriages are failing, it is refreshing to hear of those that have not. The Lockards have three children, Kenneth Lockard, Marsha Gardner and Lori

Slater, all faithful Christians. We wish them many happy years together.

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

THOMPSON-CAWOOD—Aug. 15, 1998, John Paul Thompson and Pamela Sue Cawood were united in marriage at the Rosalie House in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. This was a beautiful Christian couple, a beautiful occasion in a lovely old mansion in the historic district of Eureka Springs. Even time brought a great ingathering of relatives and friends to witness their vows made before and to the Father. John Paul and Pam are faithful members of the Rogers congregation. They will make their home in Bentonville, AR. We wish them the very best.—J. Wayne McKamie.

NEEL-RIGGS—On the evening of August 14th, around 8 p.m., Michael Neel and A'ndrea Riggs were united in marriage before several family members and friends. The outdoor ceremony took place in Terrell, TX. Michael and A'ndrea will attend the new congregation in Rockwall, TX. Their current mailing address is P.O. Box 978, Terrell, TX, 75160. It was my pleasure to perform this wedding, which was my first, and to be associated with such a delightful young couple. We pray for their new home and God's continued blessing upon them.—Aaron Risener.

ELDRIDGE-RICHARDSON—On Saturday afternoon, September 12, in a beautiful setting in Stone Chapel, on the campus of Drury College, Springfield, Missouri, Sara Eldridge and Kendall Richardson were united in marriage. Sara and Kendall are both members of the Lee's Summit congregation. I have known Kendall most of his life and was honored when he and Sara asked me to officiate the ceremony. May God richly bless their new home and help them to keep the solemn and sacred vows they made on this beautiful moment in their lives.—Carl M. Johnson.

OUR DEPARTED

SPOONTS—Velma B. Spoonsts was born Aug. 17, 1922 in Lawn, Texas, the daughter of James R. and Mary Stewart. Velma grew up in many places being a preacher's daughter. Many of you knew Velma Bertie Stewart during those early years. On Sept. 20, 1939, she married Bro. R. C. Spoonsts and they were together for more than 58 years. Velma obeyed the gospel at an early age and was a faithful member in McGregor at the time of her death. She was preceded in death by four children and a grandchild. Survivors include her husband, R. C. Spoonsts of Waco; a daughter; five grandchildren, a sister, and a brother. Her many struggles, illnesses, and problems came to an end on July 31. The church in McGregor misses her greatly. It was an honor for Don McCord and me to conduct the funeral of this sister, this preacher's daughter. She was buried in Rosemound Cemetery in Waco.—J. Wayne McKamie

HARDIN—Estelle Hardin was born on Mar. 16, 1916

in Lincoln County, MS, the daughter of Johnson and Mary Smith. Estelle was one of eleven children born into this home. She was preceded in death by a sister and by four of her brothers. Estelle Smith was married to Max Hardin in 1942. Bro. Max Hardin preceded her in death in 1983. Estelle was a member of the Church of Christ, baptized early in life. She has been a faithful member through the years and member of the Hillcrest congregation, Brookhaven, MS. Those of her family that survive are two sisters, Hallie Lea and Ina McCoy; three brothers, Sam, Thomas, and Denver Smith. Estelle also leaves behind 18 nieces and nephews and a host of other relatives and friends. Estelle had been ill for a long time. Just a short time before her death she told us that she was tired and ready to go home. And that's what she did on Aug. 3. Her last words to us were "IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT."—J. Wayne McKamie

JONES—Earl Jones, was born to T.R. and Leona Shockley Jones on March 5, 1913 and passed away September 9 1998, at the Lincoln Community Nursing Home, where he had been cared for since July 9, 1997, when it was no longer possible for him to live alone. On May 7, 1938 he was united in marriage to Bessie Taylor at Climax Springs, Missouri. They spent their married life on farms in the area except for 2 years spent in the Armed Service. In 1947 they purchased the old family farm where he was born. Bessie became a victim of Parkinsons Disease and he cared for her in their home until her death on December 18 1973. In 1974 he was baptized into the Church of Christ where he attended faithfully until his health no longer permitted him to do so. The Thomas family did a beautiful job singing at his funeral.— John Anderson

CROMER—Garner Morris Cromer was the son of John and Losie (Doan) Cromer. He was born in Rockcastle County, KY August 16, 1940. He died September 13, 1998. He is survived by his wife Christeen, his son Edwin, and daughter Gail Cromer. Two brothers Eddie B. and J.R. Cromer, two sisters Bobbie Burdine and Irene Sowder. Four grandchildren Tabatha, Melissa, Teri, and David Cromer. Preceding him in death are his parents, one brother M.E. and one sister Evallee Stone. Garner was a body shop technician who owned his own business and trained others, several of whom are members of the church. I had the privilege of baptizing Garner into Christ. He worshipped with the church at Blue Springs, KY, doing what he could for the Lord's Cause. Many came to pay respects, while words reminding all to prepare for death by obeying the Lord and serving faith fully as Brother Garner was spoken by this writer. Singing was done by members of the Sharonville, OH congregation (relatives of brother Garner).— Barney Owens

MINK—Amos D. Mink was born April 23, 1925 at Mt. Vernon, KY. He died at home in W. Chester, OH at the age of 73, Aug. 23, 1998. Amos was the son of James w. and Mary Mink. He was united in marriage to Lela Overbay on June 5, 1951. To this union one child, Pamela was born. Preceding Amos in death were his parents, three brothers: Caleb, Louis, and Raymond, three half-brothers: Bill, George, and Delbert, Five half-sisters: Oinie Bussel,

May McFerron, Minnie Decker, Ola Renner, and Locie Kirby. He is survived by: his wife Lela, daughter Pamela Knight, grandchildren Jason and Crystal Knight, Two sisters: Ethel Barron and Vadie Barron. Amos retired from the Sterns and Foster Co. He was a faithful member of the church, worshipping with the Sharonville congregation, until in the last weeks he was unable to attend. Amos was a friend to all as hundreds came to pay their respects. He brought joy to those of us who knew him best. He will be missed.—Barney Owens

PATE—Ray Clayton Pate was born to John Clayton and Alma Pate July 6, 1920. He died September 4, 1998. He is survived by his wife Christine to whom he was married February 7, 1942, his son Larry, two granddaughters Kimurly Winkle and Cristy Pate, two great-grandsons, Clayton and Collin Winkle. One sister, Cassie P. Romano. Ray was born at Highnote, AL moving to Central FL in 1952. He was retired as a civil service worker. Ray worshipped with the Longwood, FL congregation. Those who have worshipped with these Christians will remember Ray making the opening announcements and cheerfully greeting all visitors. He attended worship when in pain and when lesser people would have stayed home. He loved the Lord, his people and his own family. He will be missed at home and in the place of worship for a long time to come. Phillip, Gordan and Flora Prince came from Jacksonville, FL to graciously sing. Words of warning, exhortation and comfort were spoken by this writer.—Barney Owens.



Don Jackson, 504 E. 4 Street, West Point, GA 31833, Telephone: (706) 645-5664, Email: jacksonknology.net— It has been several years since my last report to the OPA. My family and I moved from Seminole, OK to West Point, GA. We are working with the Lord's people at the West Point congregation. We have experienced some growth and loss during the past five years. We continue to labor realizing the end is ever nearer. We have held meetings and preached at several congregations in the South and Southwest in the past few years. Please note my new mailing address.

Douglas T. Hawkins P.O. Box 728 Brodhead, KY 40409 (606) 758-4071 - Oct. 1, 1998—I am presently in a meeting here at Blue Springs, KY where I'm working. We are having good crowds in the meeting and several need to obey the gospel. Lori and I thoroughly enjoy living in this area and we are very fond of the brethren here. Throughout September, we were primarily at home. I attended a night of the eastern Labor Day meeting hosted by the Huntington congregation. As usual, I enjoyed seeing those brethren

again. From there, I went to Tennessee. This of course is where Lori was raised and it has become my second home. Like most, we were saddened to hear the news of so many beloved brethren passing on to their reward, especially Lori's uncle Billy Orten. We last saw Billy well and fit in May during our meeting at Shreveport, LA. He will definitely be missed by those in the Louisiana and southern Arkansas area, to say nothing of his family. May God bless us as we all wait to go the same way. Our next meetings are in Cable Ridge, MO (Nov.8-15) and Walnut Grove, KY (Nov.22-29). Come if you can. God bless the faithful.

Johnny Elmore, 419 K SW, Ardmore, OK 73401, Oct. 5 – At the present time, I am enjoying visiting Johnnie and Diane Broughton while in a gospel meeting at Atwater, CA. I have enjoyed visiting Larry McElroy, also. Preaching brethren, Bennie Cryer, Matt Trent, and Aaron Risener, have helped us out so far, as have some neighboring congregations. We look forward to having Paul Wilkerson at Ardmore October 23-25, in a short meeting, which will climax with the fourth Sunday singing. I expect to be at New Salem, near Brookhaven, MS November 25-29 (*note date correction*) for the first time in a number of years.

Barney Owens 8782 Meadowview; W. Chester, OH 45069- A meeting with the church at Blue Springs, KY was delightful. I assisted Doug Hawkins in the effort. Personal problems made it less enjoyable than it other wise would have been, but the people there were receptive and a joy to be with. One brother returned to the Lord's work having been away from his post of duty for 30 years. We begin a meeting here at Sharonville with Joe Hisle, with great anticipation. My next is with the Burkhart congregation near Neosho, Mo. It is November 25-29. Should you be near there, please come and help us. The Lord's blessings I hope will fall upon all continually.

Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Dr., Citrus Heights, CA 95621, October 7, 1998— In August Cassie and I were in Hawaii to celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary and worshipped with the brethren on Oahu near Honolulu. To our pleasant surprise, Don King was there working with the church. We enjoyed our visit with him, Bro. Danao and Bro. Bayani. I was glad to preach for them Sunday night. We were at North area, Sacramento Aug. 27-30 preaching on the plan of salvation. We had two baptisms. We were able to attend all of the California Labor Day meeting at Sanger. The brethren did a great job hosting the meeting. I was with the Tucson, Arizona brethren Sept. 27-30, our first time there. I stayed with Niles and Janet Stein and enjoyed them and their two boys a lot. The Tucson brethren are hospitable and great to get to know. From there I went to Phoenix Oct. 1-4 to finish the week. I stayed with Art Lynch who continues to do a great work. Our work at 64th. St. continues with new opportunities for studies. We recently had a baptism, the son of members here.

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, 074820, carlmj@juno.com, Oct. 8—We just closed a good meeting in Little Rock, AR. The brethren worked very hard in preparation for the meeting by canvassing the

neighborhood around the church building and inviting their own neighbors to services. As a result we had visitors at every service, and the brethren also successfully booked several home studies. I salute the Little Rock brethren for their hard work and am confident the Lord will continue to bless their efforts. I made my home with Russell and Sanara Duckworth during the meeting and enjoyed my stay immensely. Brother Paul Nichols held our last meeting here at home and it was certainly good to see and hear Paul again. It was also good hear Don Pruitt in his meeting at Healdton, OK recently. My schedule for the remainder of the year includes: Jamesville, MO (Oct. 14-18), Frisco, TX (Nov. 6-8), Napoleon, AL (Nov. 11-15), Duncanville, TX (Nov. 28-29), and Seminole, OK (Dec. 4-6). Please continue to pray in our behalf.

Johnny L Fisher, 184 Brace Rd. Summertown, TN. 38483 - Sept. 14, 1998—The brethren at Chapel Grove have just finished hosting the TN. Labor Day Meeting. As usual they did a wonderful job by opening their homes for visiting brethren, preparing meals, and arranging the services. We believe that it was the best one yet, and are looking forward to an even better one next year, the Lord willing. Don Pruitt did a wonderful job arranging the speakers and overseeing the services. I want to personally and on behalf of the congregation, thank all the preachers, teachers, song leaders, and every individual who traveled here to support the meeting. We have scheduled Joe Hisle to help us with the meeting next year. If it's the Lord's will, plan to be back. I was privileged to attend the funeral service for brother Billy Orten. We have parted from a dear friend and beloved preacher of the gospel. Please pray for his family. I want to personally commend the brethren who took such good care of the family during their trials. Remember us in your prayers.

Melvin Blalock, 214 Pearl St., Cleburne, TX—Oct. 5, 1998. We continue to be busy in the Lord's work. We have just concluded a weekend meeting at Cleburne with Brother Jerry Dickinson. Jerry preached some wonderful sermons and the church was greatly benefited. His father, Bill Dickinson accompanied him and we were blessed to have both of them. Jerry is a firm gospel preacher and you don't have to wonder where he stands on important issues. We recently had the privilege of baptizing two precious souls into Christ. One of these is a daughter of a sister at Weatherford. I baptized her mother when she was sixteen and I have now had the privilege of baptizing three of her children. I also baptized a friend of this family, a man who lives in Fort Worth and attends the Fossil Creek congregation. We continue to study with him every Tuesday. We are busy with the Weatherford and Cleburne work and we continue to preach at the Duncanville congregation once a month. It was our privilege to hold a weekend meeting at Ratliff City, OK, in August. The brethren have a nice meeting place and a good nucleus to work with. I am very impressed with these brethren's dedication to the Lord and their upholding the truth. I enjoyed my time with them very much. May God bless the faithful everywhere.

Miles King, Rt. # 1 Box 115, Scotland, AR 72141, Oct.

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

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4,1998—We just closed a meeting here at the Scotland congregation with Luke and Brad Post. They both did some good preaching and we were so glad two car loads attended from their home congregations in Fairview and Conway, Louisiana. We had good attendance from our area and everyone seemed “lifted up” with a lot of good singing, preaching, fellowship and praying. Recently I have preached at Tyler, Texas and enjoyed visiting our children in that area. While there received a call from the Bakers at Hoyt congregation informing me of the death of their mother, sister Lillie Mae Baker. I have been in their home many times during the past 30 years—such a dear Christian woman and of course honored when they asked me to preach the funeral. I was glad to work with the family; also Bro. William St John and Melvin Blalock in the funeral services. Our meeting at Bowling Green (Rockfield cong.) Kentucky is set for Nov. 5th thru 8th.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539 - We recently closed a meeting at Brumley, MO which was enjoyable to say the least. This congregation is relatively new but has good interest and zeal. Brother George Windes and family live among them and do a good work. Too, brother Dan Wissinger is working with the congregation at Eldon as well as Brumley and has helped them a great deal. Area congregations were good to attend and we were grateful for their help. It was also good to have visiting preachers with us nearly every evening. Among several who came were Ron Alexander, Clovis Cook, Ronny Wade, David Griffin and Gary Weaver. We enjoyed being there a great deal and pray the Lord will bless them in the work. Since then, I have preached at home and at Grant's Pass, Oregon. Duane Permenter is to hold our meeting at Fremont beginning this Saturday evening. For only the second time in the 28 years we have lived here, I will not be able to attend. Lord willing, we are to begin this Lord's day at Harrodsburg, IN for a week's meeting. It has been several years since we have been there at all and this will be our first meeting with them. We look forward to it. I recall being there with my parents in the fifties. Don't forget us when you pray.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808—The meeting closed at Lovejoy, Pa. with two baptisms. It was good to see so many of our friends in that part of the Lord's vineyard. Bro. Eugene Lockard works hard and faithfully in an effort to discharge his duties as leader and teacher in that area. Next we attended the fiftieth anniversary of the Eastern Labor Day meeting. A great crowd assembled from all over in celebration of this event. It was good to see everyone. The meeting in Nashville, TN was enjoyable. This church is made up of mostly young couples who are both dedicated and zealous in their efforts

to spread the gospel in the Nashville area. We believe they have a bright future. Our next meeting was in La Grange, GA. This church continues to march forward. Bro. Alton Bailey lives here and is esteemed by the members among whom he has lived and worked for years. The hospitality of Alton and Florence as well as the rest of the church was outstanding. The Lord willing our next meetings are Wichita Falls, TX (Crestview) Oct. 18-25 and Allen, TX. Oct. 25-Nov. 1. Please remember us in your prayers to our heavenly Father.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View, Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012—The meeting at Stateline, Seneca, MO was wonderful. We had large crowds, good cooperation and interest, and the congregational singing was the best of any meeting I have held this year. Many congregations were represented and several outsiders attended the services. We were thrilled to see so many young people who seemed so interested and participated any way they could. The future of the church, not only in the Seneca area, but in different places seems brighter because of so many younger members who we see from place to place. The church building at Seneca reflects good financial judgment and planning. It is spacious and well arranged. The labor was principally furnished by the members, thus keeping expenses at a minimum. And it is almost paid for. It was my first meeting with them and we thoroughly enjoyed it. We are back home and working with the home church. The work at 79th and Kansas, Kansas City has been a real enjoyable experience since we moved here. We are continuing the development of new teachers, and one of them, Kerry King is now writing gospel songs. We have some wonderful people with whom to work and love living here. May the Lord bless our righteous efforts everywhere.

SEVEN HUMBLE TOOLS

Shamgar had an ox-goad;
Rehab had a string;
Gideon had a trumpet;
David had a sling;
Samson had a jaw bone;
Moses had a rod;
Dorcus had a needle—

All were used by God.

—Selected

Our purpose is to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"To continue speaking the truth in love," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," "keeping the ordinance as delivered."

"Thus saith the Lord, 'stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where in the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.' (Jer. 6:16) "And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste, places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in." (Isa. 58:12).

VOL. LXXII

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NO. 12

SOWING AND REAPING

By *BENNIE T. CRYER*

The first article on this subject established several principles seen in the actions of sowing and reaping. 1) We are going to reap what we sow whether the sowing has been done intentionally or unintentionally. Whether you planned to sow or not makes no difference. If you are alive and breathing you are sowing seeds that will produce a future harvest, Galatians 6:7. This can be seen in the story about a young man that was about to be executed for a crime he had committed. His mother came to visit him and he suddenly blamed her for his being a criminal and now about to die. The mother responded by saying, "Son, I never taught you to do wrong." "No mother," he replied, "you never taught me to do wrong, but the problem was you never taught me to do right." That mother had been sowing seeds that helped produce criminal behavior and did not even realize it. 2) The seeds we are sowing may be good seed producing a beautiful and bountiful harvest or bad seed bringing forth detrimental tares or weeds in the lives of those our influence touches, Matthew 13:24-25. 3) The harvest contains much more fruit than the amount of seed we sowed, Hosea 8:7. And 4) the church has been extremely blessed by godly parents who have sown good seed about them and are now blessed by seeing three or four generations of their family faithfully serving the Lord.

Good people can sometimes be seen sowing bad seed. Consider Lot in the Old Testament and the consequences of the seeds he sowed in the choices he made. In speaking about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in 2 Peter 2:7-8 the Apostle speaks of Lot being a just man and his deliverance from the destruction.

(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) Lot was just and righteous. In spite of that he sowed some bad seed that produced an evil harvest in his family. When Abram gave Lot the choice of area to which he would take his family, herds, and herdsmen he made a choice that proved to be foolish because he was distancing himself and his family from God's people and good influence and in pitching his tent toward Sodom, Genesis 13:12-13, he placed himself and his family near the inhabitants of Sodom who "were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." This is the first time the Holy Spirit used the word "wicked" to describe the ac-

tions of men. Adam Clarke in his commentary on these verses writes about the meaning of the word in this passage: To break in pieces, destroy and afflict; meaning persons who broke the established order of things, destroyed and confounded the distinctions between right and wrong, and who afflicted and tormented both themselves and others.

What kind of harvest can you expect to have if you distance yourself and your family from righteous people today and associate with people who pay no attention to God's established order of things? You can do this by moving far enough away from the church and the righteous influence of your brothers and sisters in Christ or by just coming to church on Sunday mornings, hurrying home, and then associating themselves (you and your family) with people of the world for the other 166 hours in the week. Don't you think there is danger of reaping a harvest very similar to Lot's?

Lot was wrong enough to resist the temptations and influences of the wicked in Sodom. The problem is: Will his wife and children be influenced by these things? This situation was compounded by information found in Genesis 14:12 where it speaks of "Lot...who dwelt in Sodom." Before this he had only pitched his tent toward Sodom. This indicates he was leaning toward that wicked place. Now he is dwelling there in the city among all these wicked folks. Lot is about ready reap the harvest from the seeds he has sown along the way.

First of all the enemies of the king of Sodom came, and in the first recorded was captured Lot and carried him, and his goods away. They did not distinguish between him and any of the inhabitants of Sodom. He looked just like the rest of them so he was a part of their booty, Genesis 14:12. Abram, his uncle and the one he had distanced himself from came and rescued him from this predicament just as faithful brethren are exhorted to rescue erring brethren in Galatians 6:1. Though Lot evidently got all his goods back, Genesis 14:16, he lost them again in the destruction God rained down on Sodom. His house and his possessions perished in that conflagration. Although he knew about the coming destruction he was so caught up with Sodom that he lingered until finally the angels had to take Lot's

continued on page eight

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXII No. 12



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS	9-10
Sowing And Reaping	1
Mormons Are Reaching People ...	2
The Querist Column	3
Timely Suggestions	3
When God Gives Up	4
Things Which Are Strange	5
Foot Washing - An Act of Worship Or Hospitality?	6
The World	7
FROM THE FIELDS	11-12

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Editorial

MORMONS ARE REACHING PEOPLE

By DON L. KING

Personal evangelism is a very interesting topic. Nearly everyone has an idea or two about it. There are those who believe knocking on doors is a good way to do it. Some say the idea of knocking doors is out-dated and doesn't work anymore. Others insist it is effective in some areas but not in others.

Let's face it, knocking doors is not an enjoyable way to reach people for most of us. If you want to meet rude people at their worst, knock on their door and offer to study with them. One gets the door slammed in one's face now and again. Now and then, a fellow comes along who enjoys that type of work and is successful in it. Many do not. A preacher once told me that in his estimation, knocking on doors was worth about ten cents an hour.

In the local paper today is a thought provoking article about the Mormons and their way of reaching people. Some of it is very valuable and needs to be known by all of us.

The article tells of two "Elders" who are working in a Chinese neighborhood in Fremont. They have taken the time to learn Mandarin, a Chinese dialect. If the people can speak English they use that language. If not, then they talk with them in their native tongue. This certainly indicates a great deal of time spent in preparation before they even started to do "personal work." They work hard too. Usually in an hour and a half of going door to door (which they call "tracting") they try to meet about 25 people. The article doesn't say how many hours per day is spent in this way but it is obvious a large number of people can be introduced to their religion every day. From the growth they are experiencing it appears they are indeed meeting many people.

What is really interesting is that these fellows are not supported by the Mormon Church for their time or work. They are, reportedly, supported by family from home. According to the article, the "missionary work" is not required by the church either. However, it is encouraged.

We just wonder: suppose we set up a plan whereby our members would be "encouraged" (not required) to go out and do personal work. Keep in mind that these young men who volunteer to go on a mission, know in advance that it will be a two year work! They are sent in pairs and they are inseparable for the duration of two years. Women spend a year and a half spreading the doctrine. One can't help but wonder how many would volunteer from our ranks?

According to the article, there are 24,000 Mormon missionaries in the U.S. who voluntarily donate two years of their lives to do mission work! Brethren, that's 24,000 who volunteer to work hard, live away from home, have no girlfriends and, for the most part, have no social life at all. This with only the barest essentials as can be sent from

continued on page nine

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Do you believe it would be right to go and preach for and/or worship with a congregation that calls on brethren to participate in their worship services who are from congregations that use cups and classes? (MO)

Answer: I, personally, would go anywhere I could and preach the truth, as revealed in God's word. If invited by a Baptist denomination group to conduct a meeting I would begin Monday night, for example, and preach through Saturday night as fervently and sincerely as I knew how, what the Bible teaches on baptism, the establishment of the church, scriptural worship etc. etc. If by Saturday night I had not converted them to the truth, I would not stay there on Sunday morning and participate in their services. I would do the same with any group that I considered in error because of false teaching and practice. I also believe it would be wrong to go to such places and not preach the truth both publicly and privately. I would have no love for the souls of men if I did not warn them of their false ways. Long ago God declared "Son of man I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand." (Ezek.3: 17-18) This principle still applies today. We must warn those who teach and practice error of their wrongdoing. To fail to do so is unthinkable. Those who use cups in the communion and Bible classes with women teachers are either right or wrong. They either teach and practice the truth or they teach and practice error. If they teach the truth, then we should welcome and have fellowship with them. If they do not, then we should not have fellowship with them. Note what John wrote: "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for who greets him shares in his evil deeds." (2John 9-11) Guy N. Woods says of this verse "The teaching of Christ here is not teaching about Christ or teaching which is Christian in substance or nature, it is the teaching which Christ did per-

sonally and through those whom he inspired. It is the teaching of Christ, because he is, in the final analysis its author and from him it issued. It is thus an infallible standard and no deviation from it is possible without apostasy." (Commentary on 2John) Macknight says "The person who either neglects to teach any part of the doctrine of Christ, or who teaches what is not the doctrine of Christ, is culpable, and does not acknowledge God. " Thus, those who deviate from the truth, have left the infallible standard. But how should those so described be treated? Hear John: "If anyone cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting." Does this sound like we should receive him and call on him? Certainly not. Regarding this verse James Burton Coffman says of the phrase "give him no greeting": "This signifies church approval, or commendation. For a congregation of the Lord's people to extend to false teachers housing, approval, and recommendation would be for the church to preside at its own execution. " Congregations who receive and use men who openly and knowingly worship with cups and classes, men who teach that such practices are not wrong, are courting disaster. They are clearly going against what John taught in these verses. I could not go and worship where such takes place. How, in the name of truth and consistency, could one worship and work with a church who receives and has fellowship with those the Bible declares to be apostate in teaching and practice? I cannot see how one could do so without upholding the practice itself. Some declare that the way to resolve such problems is to merely allow church autonomy. Let the decision be made by each local church as to who will and will not be used in its services. We must remember that while the Scriptures teach the autonomy of the local church, no church is given the right to transgress the Word of God. Any church who crosses the line between what is taught and what is not, or what is right and what is wrong has gone too far. Does church autonomy allow a congregation to use individual cups? If not why not? The answer and reason is obvious. We should all desire to work with as many brethren and churches as possible, but not at the expense of truth and right. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, Mo. 65808)

TIMELY SUGGESTIONS

By HOMER A. GAY

Save your family. When Jesus had cast the Devils out of the poor creature in Luke 8:26-40, the man out of whom the Devils were cast wanted to go with Jesus. He was well; he was clothed, and in his right mind, and evidently thought that would be the best thing for him to do. But Jesus said to him in verse 39, "Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee." Now, Jesus must have felt that it would be much better for this man to try to convert his own kinfolk and friends rather than to go out among strangers to work. In Mark 5:9, of

the same account He said "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

Andrew was of the same mind (John 1:40-41). He discovered Jesus; who he was, and he "first findeth his brother, Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ"

Cornelius, of Acts 10th chapter, was this kind of a man. When the Angel which talked with him told him that Peter would tell him "words whereby he and all his house could

be saved," he sent for the preacher, and busied himself "calling together his relatives and friends."

Now all of this seems very reasonable and plausible to me. It would seem that if there is anybody that I should be interested in trying to save, it would be my brother. And if there is anyone would listen to me and believe me, it should be my brother. Surely, I should be interested in my family. I would hardly have the heart to leave my family in danger, and go out to hunt for someone else to help. I truly love my wife and children, my brother and sister, my father and mother, and my friends. They know me better than does anyone else; surely I could talk to them more easily than I could to strangers. If I am living the right kind of a life, I believe they will come nearer listening to me than strangers would; and we may never know just how much good we may humbly do in this way. Look at Andrew. We do not know much about him; nothing is said about him ever doing great things, converting thousands of people to the Lord. But he did bring Simon Peter to the Lord and Peter is one to whom the Lord gave the keys of the Kingdom; three thousand souls obeyed the gospel at the first sermon he ever preached! Nothing is said about Cornelius ever being a great preacher, but he got the crowd and the preacher together, and the crowd obeyed the gospel.

I see the Catholics, in all of their error, and they do not hold big revivals, as other sectarians do. No, they just keep their children in their faith. And if one of their members marries outside their religion, they compel their members to bring their children up in the Catholic faith. If we would be as careful and as strict with our children as they do theirs, we might have more truly Christian families today. It is a sad day when Christian parents will leave their children at home to watch the television or listen to the radio, or go visiting, while they go to church. How many parents see this mistake after it is too late to help matters!

Let us try to influence our children, our brothers and sis-

ters, our fathers and mothers, our wives or husbands, our boss or hired hand, our near friends and kinfolk. We might make them feel neglected when we leave them out of the picture, and go to work trying to convert strangers.

When the spies went to spy out the land (Josh. 2), and were kindly treated by the harlot, Rahab, they promised to remember her with kindness when they came in to possess the land. They told her "And thou shalt bring thy father and mother, and thy brethren, and all thy fathers household home unto thee." And in the sixth chapter of Joshua, verses 22-23, we learn that Joshua sent the young men into the harlot's house and brought out her and all her kindred. She had influenced them to come in to safety with her. We should make an effort to wield as much influence as this harlot did.

Even though David made many mistakes, and had a lot of trouble in his family, yet his son, Solomon, came out and made a great king. I think David's farewell address to Solomn is one of the masterpieces of the Bible. David knew that Solomn knew of his life, and of the mistakes that David made, but David was big enough to say "I have sinned." So, in 1 Kings 2:1-3, he says: "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whethersoever thou turnest thyself.

If you cannot do big things, try to convert your closest friend—you might be the very one that can. "Tall oaks from little acorns grow. If you can't be the oak, be the acorn.

(Selected by Miles King—from *The Old Paths Advocate*, March 1st, 1952)

WHEN GOD GIVES UP

By BRUCE ROEBUCK

As the apostle Paul opens the book of Romans he makes it abundantly clear that God does give up on men from time to time. In verse 24 of chapter 1 he words it "God also gave them up to uncleanness," in verse 26 "God gave them up unto vile affections," and finally verse 28 "God gave them over to a reprobate mind." Barnes offers this note, "It was not that God *compelled* them; or that he did not give them knowledge; nor even is it said that he arbitrarily abandoned them as the first step; but they forsook *him*, as a consequence he gave them up to a reprobate mind." When one rejects the truth and persists in sin there comes a time when God gives them up to their sinful desires. How sad the state of man when he will not hear the tender pleadings of our God. When I first began to study this idea the question that leapt to mind was: Why? Why is it that man continues in his own self-willed way? Why doesn't he simply trust in God? Several answers presented themselves.

First of all, I submit to you that people are consumed with the "now mentality." We are told that we only live once, therefore, live it up! Once I lived near a lake and every Sunday morning during the summer I noticed it was full of all manner of watercraft. Skiers, divers, anglers, and sunbathers spent the Lord's day on, in, around, or under the water. Why? They were living for the day. Enjoying the moment. Their pursuit of pleasure was paramount. This is no new problem, however, Jesus noted it in Luke 17:26-27, "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." These were concerned with only their life and enjoyment. That same attitude greets us in the church. Why is it that brethren forsake the assembly to go on fishing and hunting trips? Why is it that brethren forsake gospel meetings to go to all manner of ball games?

Why is it that men find time for their hobbies but none for our God? Because they want to be entertained and nothing must come between them and their fun. Paul touches on this in 1 Corinthians 15:32, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die." If there was no resurrection then we should live only for today. However, because of the hope of eternal life we are to prepare for resurrection with Godly devotion. We devote our life to obeying the Lord you see. John 5:28-29 puts it like this, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Others continue in sin because they do not love the truth. In 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 Paul speaks of this kind of person. There he points out that because they do not love the truth God will send them strong delusion. Notice, it is not simply a love of truth, but a love of the truth. Without a love of the truth we will never be what God desires of us. You see, it is the truth of God's word that makes men free (John 8:32). Free from sin, self, and Satan. The truth of God's word gives us liberation from corrupt taskmasters. It is the truth that sets men apart to the service of God (John 17:17). Obedience of the word of God makes Christians different from all men. It defines the very reason for our existence. It is the truth of God's word that makes us grow as Christians (1 Pet.2:2). The child of God who does not study the Bible is doomed to remain immature and incapable of spiritual strength. Yet, some reject the truth when it condemns their lifestyle. Some ridicule Christians for believing in scriptural worship, pure living, and fervent dedication. The reason? They themselves do not love the truth. Therefore, man's persistence in sin will cause God to give us up.

But, notice also, the symptoms of God's rejection. The evidence that man has persisted in immorality is easily seen in popular sitcoms, where premarital, extramarital, and homosexual affairs are flaunted as normal behavior. Lying, cheating, and stealing is the order of the day. When the president of the United States is a proven adulterer and accused of perjury and his approval ratings climb through the roof, something is wrong. God has given them up to "vile affections." The first symptom I would have you consider is the plague of dishonesty. Dishonesty seems to be the norm of our society. From car salesmen to politicians lying of some sort has come to be expected. Yet, David declared, "Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous." (Psalms 31:18) For the Christian honesty is not simply the best policy, it is the only policy. Paul said, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;" (Colossians 3:9) The second symptom to consider is the growing acceptance of homosexuality. The August 1, 1997 *Baxter Bulletin*, our local paper, ran a rather informative article in which they stated, "The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is calling for more sex education in church and more study on the participation of gays in the church." Notice, the question is not, "Is this arrangement right?" rather "Where can we use them best?" Yet, God does not accept this "lifestyle." It is a perversion of God's divine plan for marriage. An unnatural state of human relationship. His plan included one man and woman loving and caring for one another for a lifetime. It also unequivocally negates God's plan for procreation. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 1 Timothy 1:8-10, Leviticus 18:22 as well as a host of other scriptures condemn this sin. These are but a few of the many symptoms of a world gone astray. The point is clear, we must today be a people receptive to God's guidance. For without that submissive spirit in due time God will give us up.

THINGS WHICH ARE STRANGE

BY ANDREW ONG

"And Nadab and Abihu...offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them." Leviticus 10:1

Have you ever wondered what things are strange to God? We can gain some insights into this by studying the Bible and meaning of the word "strange." "Strange" means that which is foreign, unfamiliar, or contrary to the ordinary or the expected. Acts. 17:18-20 says that when Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection to the Athenians, he was accused of setting forth "strange gods and strange things," These things are unfamiliar and foreign to the Athenians!

Strange Fire

Although not bound by the precepts of the Old Law, today Christians can gain much by examining the Old Testament scriptures, Romans 15:4. Referring to various incidents in the lives of the Israelites, Paul says, "These things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition." 1 Corinthians 10:11.

The Old Testament scriptures contain several examples

of things that are strange to God. One example is found in Leviticus 10:1-2. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered unto God "strange fire" which God had commanded them not. This fire was strange to God in that it was foreign unfamiliar, or unlike that which the Lord had commended. God's command was to burn it with fire from the altar before the Lord (Lev. 16:12), and then excluded fire from every other source. Fire from sources other than the altar were strange and unacceptable to the Lord. For their sin of disobedience in offering strange fire unto God, Nadab and Abihu were devoured by fire. Clearly, the Lord is displeased by that which is strange or contrary to what He was authorized in the Word.

Strange Things Are Being Taught And Practiced Today

Today, even among the churches of Christ, many strange things are being taught and practiced. Listen to the quote: "Let us learn to love each other overlooking disagreements

in doctrine, overlooking those things of the flesh and only observe the inner man." This statement was made by a preacher from the "cups" church of Christ. Evidently, the main theme is for us to "love one another and forget about doctrine." It makes one wonder what doctrines are to be overlooked? Can one ignore the Lord's doctrine? Can one ignore error which the Bible teaches will cause people to be lost? Why did Jesus say, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32)? Jesus warned against false doctrine in Matthew 16:12. The Hebrew writer warned saying, "Be not carried away by divers and strange teachings" (Hebrews 13-9). If doctrine is not important, then how can one obey such passages as II John 9-11?

Strange Things Offered In Worship

Today, many things are being practiced in worship which are strange to God. As follows are four things which are strange to the New Testament pattern or worship and thus, are strange to the Lord.

1. *The Use Of Instrumental Music.*

God has plainly commanded Christians to offer the fruit of their lips from the heart as a sacrifice of praise in worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16 Heb. 13:15). He has specified the instrument, that is the heart, with which Christians are to make melody unto God. To make melody in worship with a mechanical instrument is to use a "strange instrument" and to produce "strange music" unto God. This is offering something the Lord does not want and will not accept.

2. *A Plurality Of Cups On The Lord's Table.*

Jesus gave the divine pattern for the Lord's Supper by actually acting it out with His disciples before His death (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20). This pattern specifies everything which is to be included and excludes everything not specified. When Jesus gave IT (a pronoun referring to the cup, a literal drinking vessel) to them. He commanded them to "Drink from it, all of you" (NKJV). The emphasis is not only a drinking of a particular liquid but is on a drinking liquid out of a particular vessel--the Cup of the Lord (1 Cor. 10:21). Many cups on the Lord's table are *strange* to God and do not constitute the "Cup of the Lord," rather, each communicant has his "own cup." A strange number of cups should not be found on the Lord's table as they are contrary to the Lord's command, "Drink from it, all of you."

3. *A Plurality Of Loaves On The Lord Table.*

All of the accounts of the Lord's Supper tell us that Jesus took a loaf and blessed and brake IT and gave IT to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." This one loaf spiritually represents His ONE body sacrificed on the cross. Many loaves on the Lord's table are strange and out

of place, since many loaves could not possibly represent Christ's one body. To be scripturally observed, the Lord's Supper much include one loaf of unleavened bread broken from and eaten by all the participants. "Because there is one loaf, we, the many, are one body; for we are all partakers of that one loaf" (1 Cor. 10:17, translated by Alexander Campbell).

4. *The Doctrine That The Unit Of Communion Is The Individual And The Practice Of Individual Communion*

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is not the communion of the body of Christ?" According to *Thayers Greek-English Lexicon*, communion is "the share which one has in anything...i.e. in the benefits of Christ's death, 1 Cor. 10:16" (p. 352). An individual cannot "share in the benefits of Christ's death" unless he has someone to share with Christ does not share in the benefits of His own death since He had no sin. The ones who participate in the sharing are the Christians assembled for the communion. The idea and practice of individual communion is strange to God because it is not found in the Scriptures. It is also strange to God because it violates I Corinthians 11:33. In this verse, Paul commands the members of the congregation to wait for one another so that the Lord's Supper may be observed together, not separately. The expression "individual communion" is, in fact, self-contradictory. It is impossible to have individual communion. In the May 22, 1913, issue of the *Gospel Advocate*, David Lipscomb wrote, "Communion is a joint-participation of two or more in one work or service. The communion of the Lord's Supper is the joint participation of the members in the loaf and in the cup...To divide the cup and the bread into many parts, and for each to partake of his own bread and cup, destroys the idea of communion: it separates them into many instead of a communion into one. It is very certain the bread and the cup were not divided into many parts in the days of Jesus and apostles."

Conclusion

It is interesting to note that in both English and Greek "stranger" are from the same basic word. A stranger is "a strange individual." Those who practice strange doctrines and will find themselves strangers to God and they will be told, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:23).

The world regards all those who refuse to go along with them as strange (I Peter 4:4), but it is better to be strange to the world than a stranger to God. All "strange things" will be uprooted on the Judgment day (Matthew 15:13). 7, Jalan 50 Kaw 3, Taman Klang Jaya, 41200 Klange, Malaysia.

FOOT WASHING - AN ACT OF WORSHIP OR HOSPITALITY?

By ANDREW ONG

Washing the feet of another is a practice that, in the Bible, is associated with an act of humble service, hospitality, and courtesy.

When Abraham met the three men who came to tell him

he and Sarah would have a child, Abraham offered them the comforts of his home by first offering water to wash their feet (Gen. 18:9,10).

Abigail, the wife of the ill-tempered Nabal, came to David

after the death of her husband, and said, "Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord" (1 Sam. 25:41).

The washing of feet was looked on as a lowly act usually done by a servant.

When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples it was not merely for sanitary or hygienic purposes; it was an act of lowly service to others and obedience to God. He gave an object lesson and said to His apostles, "...even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28).

During the final week Jesus lived on earth He spent His time equipping His disciples to continue on after He ascended. To demonstrate His humility, Jesus washed the feet of His disciples. Competition and rivalry had arisen among these chosen men. Which of them would occupy the most prominent place in the coming kingdom?

Zebedee's wife, mother of James and John, made a direct appeal to Jesus for an exalted position for her sons (Matt. 20:20,21). Notice how the Lord responded. "Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant (verses 24-27).

As Jesus stooped to wash their feet, Peter asked, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" He recognized instantly that something was out of place. He should have been washing the feet of Jesus. He probably remembered the gentle rebuke of the Lord on an earlier occasion (Luke 7:37,38,44-46).

After Jesus told His disciples He would soon leave them it appears that some of them were beginning to think in terms of who would take over and be the leader. Jesus taught them that those who look for a position of great respect must humble themselves in service to others. Our Lord taught His disciples what true greatness in the Kingdom meant. He took a child and said, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:4).

In all of this, was Jesus instituting a religious act to be practiced by His disciples after the church was established? Hardly. After Jesus had washed their feet, He said to these men, I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, a servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him" (verses 15,16). The disciples hardly needed an example of how to wash someone's feet. We can assume they knew that very well. The ex-

ample Jesus gave was not how to wash the feet of others. What they did not know was true humility. The example of the Master serving the student was designed to show them what humility is all about.

Some religious folks have suggested that foot washing is an ordinance or an act of worship and should be practiced as such today.

It is erroneously pointed out that on the same night our Lord instituted the Supper, He washed the feet of the disciples. The careful Bible student knows that this is incorrect. The Bible clearly teaches that the supper in John chapter 13 was not the Passover supper, but was the supper in the house of Simon the leper in Bethany two days before the Passover (Mk. 14:1-3). Foot washing is not an act of worship associated with the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper was unknown prior to the time of Christ. The two have no relationship to each other in either the Old or New Testaments.

The Jews had been practicing washing each other's feet for centuries. Foot washing was one way people in the Old Testament times and during the life of Christ on earth demonstrated hospitality toward a guest. It was a show of good manners.

Foot washing has been a custom among the eastern cultures for many generations. People who wore sandals and walked hot dusty roads found it refreshing to have their feet bathed in cool clean water. That foot washing is not an act of worship to be included in the church today is obvious. When the apostles later established churches they did not ordain foot washing as an ordinance of the church. Neither is there any record of this rite being performed by Christians in the early centuries. The absence of any instruction relative to it as a so-called "church ordinance" shows clearly that God did not intend it to be practiced as a religious act. There is one reference to it in 1 Tim. 5:10, and there it is a DOMESTIC duty, not a congregational obligation. The evidence, then, rules out foot washing as a church ordinance.

One has no more right to bind washing of feet as a religious act not eat prior to washing their hands — not for sanitary but religious reasons. Jesus accused them of engaging in vain worship because they taught for doctrine the commandments of men. He said, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition" (Mk. 7:1-9). The same thing applies to washing feet — when done as an act of worship.

In short, the lesson taught by Jesus is that no matter how great one may become, he is never too great to serve others.

THE WORLD

By JIMMY VANNOY

Are we losing the battle against worldliness? I hope not, but my observations and what I hear from others has caused me to be alarmed. Do preachers and teachers teach very many lessons against worldliness? I do not know, but what I have seen and heard indicates that we need to step up our

efforts.

Worldliness is simply Christians acting and thinking like the people of the world. I believe the problem is as acute now as it has ever been. Technology has brought movies and television shows into the home which were unavail-

able a few years ago. I listen to my daughters tell me about things that young Christians are involved in. I go to meetings and see women in immodest apparel and with cut hair. Some Christians are involved in watching movies which show bare skin and include cursing. Also available are movies which glorify homosexuality, promiscuity, cheating on one's spouse and murder. Can the Christian take such things into the mind and not be affected? Anyone who thinks they can is only fooling themselves. "Be not deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits." I Cor. 15:33 Some Christians fool themselves into thinking they can take in the filth that this world offers and associate with people of the world and yet be unaffected by it. Those who think this are fooling themselves.

I John 5:19 makes clear the distinction between the Christian and the world. "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." Imagine a sheet of white paper. Now draw a line in the middle from top to bottom. Put the word "Christian" on one side of the line and "World" on the other side. I John 5:19 teaches that there is a difference, a definite distinction between Christians and those of the world. For one thing, Christians are saved and the world is lost. For another, the values of the world are different from those of the true Christian. "For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." Luke 16:15 The values of God are exactly the opposite of those of the world. To involve ourselves too deeply with the people and things of the world will subtly begin to change our values toward those of the world and therefore away from God.

Now, back to the paper with the line down the middle. Some Christians want to get as close as they can to me line that divides, becoming as much like the world as they can without becoming a part of the world.

They want to blur the line, minimizing the distinction between the Christian and the world. This is a dangerous game which the Christian cannot win. True Christians will be different from the world, and we should distinguish ourselves as God's people in all circumstances.

We need to be careful about what we love. The world gets more attractive all the time, and we must be careful

that we do not fall in love with all that it offers. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." I John 2:15 Some Christians need to check to see where their affections are.

Peter calls that which is of the world "corruption." (II Pet. 1:4) There is a real danger that the Christian will be corrupted by his association with the world. Be on guard. Peter says that we need to escape the "pollutions" of the world. (II Peter 2:20) We should run away from what the world offers, and not toward it, lest we be polluted.

James speaks bluntly about the danger of association with the world. "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:4 The choice is ours. We must choose to be a friend of God or the world. We cannot have it both ways.

What can the Christian do to combat worldliness? (1) Do not let in the filth of the modern media into your mind. (2) Find and make opportunities to be with other Christians. (3) Put God's Word in your mind. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalms 19:7 (4) Shine for the Lord. "That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." Phil. 2:15 Christians should seek to shine in this corrupt world, in all circumstances showing the distinction between the Christian and the world, instead of trying to be like the world. This will bring ridicule and rejection, but we should not be trying to seek the acceptance of those of the world but of God.

There is a very grave problem today. Some Christians are trying to become more like the world rather than letting their lights shine to show the distinct difference between the Christian and the world. I encourage you to investigate your own life to see if you have this problem, and I encourage preachers and teachers in the congregations to take a close look at themselves and the other members. See if you don't see some members drifting toward the world. If so, preach about it. Attack it with the Word!

SOWING AND REAPING

continued from page 1

hand, the hands of his wife, and two daughters and set them outside the city, 19:16, and told them to go quickly to a place to safety. Lot even argued with them about the correct place to go. You would think he would readily recognize the stupidity of his choice of location when Abram gave him the opportunity to choose where he wanted to he would have said, "I made a mistake before, let God tell me where to go this time." Instead of the mountains he wanted to go to Zoar. Then Lot lost his wife as she looked back toward Sodom even though they had been instructed to hurry and not look back, 19:17. She turned into a pillar of salt, v.24. Lot is now reaping his harvest. He had sown to the wind and was now reaping the whirlwind. Later on in a drunken state he committed incest with his two daughters. From this event two sons were born that became the

founders of two mighty people, the Moabites and the Ammonites, who were enemies of God's people and caused them misery for hundreds of years.

Remember brethren, Lot was considered righteous and just before God. He still made some choices and decisions (which are ways of sowing seed) that were bad enough to cause his wife to be lost and brought into the world through his daughters people that would have destroyed all of God's sons and daughters if they could have. The same thing can happen to preachers, church leaders, and godly members today. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

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EDITORIAL*continued from page 2*

parents at home. Do you still wonder why the Mormon Church is growing at a huge rate? These young men are completely and totally committed to their religion! A religion which teaches some of the most ridiculous and unbelievable things to be found anywhere. Alexander Campbell, who read the Book of Mormon soon after its invention (1830) sarcastically scoffed at the idea that anyone might believe it to be inspired. He vowed it to be full of "Smithisms." He said, "It is patched up and cemented with 'and it came to pass'- 'I sayeth unto you' 'Ye saith unto him' and all the King James haths, dids, and doths; in the lowest imitation of the common version, and is, without exaggeration, the meanest book in the English language: but it is a translation made through stone spectacles, in a dark room, and in the hat of the prophet Smith, from the reformed Egyptian!!! It has not one good sentence in it, save the profanation of those sentences quoted from the Oracles of the Living God. I would as soon compare a bat to the American Eagle, a mouse to a mammoth, or the deformities of a spectre to the beauty of Him whom John saw in Patmos, as to contrast it with a single chapter in all the writings of the Jewish or Christian prophets. It is as certainly Smith's fabrication as Satan is the father of lies, or darkness the offspring of night. So much for the internal evidences of the Book of Mormon." (*Millennial Harbinger*, Vol 1831, Pg 95)

Yes, indeed, it is an unbelievable doctrine. Yet, they are volunteering by the thousands every year. No talk of how much pay they can get! They are not worried about the living conditions. They often stay with some member and

ride bicycles all day long. How fast is this system growing? It is reported that in the early 1970s the Mormon Church had about 14,000 missionaries. Today, they claim 58,000 missionaries worldwide. Do the math. 58,000 people are meeting 25 people an hour (29,000 pairs). They are speaking with 725,000 every hour around the world. A branch of the Mormon Church in San Jose CA has doubled in size this year.

They admit that the door to door method is less effective in today's society than ever before. Yet, they continue to use it and are growing. The article also points out that 65% of all their studies with people are brought about by referrals of people within the Mormon Church. What a lesson for us! Their people are trying to convert their friends.

Most of us have seen their television advertisements for a free Book of Mormon or other literature. They claim these ads on TV draw between 120 and 220 calls a day in the San Jose area alone. 15% of their home studies are brought about by the TV ads.

We should blush with shame at the feeble efforts we have made through the years at fulfilling the great commission. We doubtless have the truth. We surely worship right. We can read it all in the Book of Books.

Only recently have we started using the media to reach the lost. Few indeed are television ads and programs. Yes, we are aware that denominations such as the Mormon Church are rich. However, the reason they are growing is that they have members who are totally committed and are working hard every day for the benefit of the organization. They are growing in spite of the fact that their doctrine is to most people simply unbelievable.

Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANCHORAGE, AK

Larry and Mandy Pfeil meet in their home at 10:00 AM, Sunday mornings. Mandy is the great-granddaughter of Bill and Eunice Roden. They have found others interested in the truth and welcome visitors and preachers to stop by. Pray for them and the work. They can be contacted at (907)753-3207 for directions to their home.

NEW SONG BOOK

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the well received response to the new song book and your encouragement and support in this endeavor. Please check with your treasurer and make sure payment has been sent for the cost of the book plus postage. We have some orders outstanding and would appreciate your checking into this matter. Please send all payments and new orders to: M. Lynwood Smith, 2789 Loyd Star Lane NW, Wesson MS 39191 (601)833-2560

OKLAHOMA NEW YEAR'S MEETING

The dates for the Oklahoma New Year's Meeting will be

December 26-31, with services starting at 10:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. The meeting will once again be held at Western Heights High School at 8201 SW 44th in Oklahoma City (SW 44th and Council). The first service will be Saturday evening, December 26th, at Western Heights. Sunday morning there will be no services at Western Heights; we will meet at the church building in Norman (911 N. Lahoma Street). Visitors are encouraged to attend any of the local churches in the Oklahoma City area. Sunday evening we will meet again at Western Heights, where the remaining services will be held. Brother Lynwood Smith will conduct the meeting. If you need more information call Charles Davis (405-794-5759) or Jerry Harris (405-366-8715). The New Year's Meeting is a special time with wonderful opportunities for worship and fellowship. Why don't you make plans to attend?

NEW CONGREGATION MEETING

There is a new church meeting in Dothan, AL due, in part, to the television program of Brother Kevin Presley. At the present they have no permanent meeting place, but hope to have one in the near future. In the meantime you may contact Kevin at (334) 898-1301 or Troy Spradley at (334) 983-4411 and they can give you directions to the meeting place. Times of services are 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Sunday.

The Church In Wichita, Kansas

The church in Wichita, Kansas known as the Heartland Church of Christ meets at the Casado Campus Center at Friends University 2100 W. Kellogg and Meridian. Times of services are Sunday 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The names of the two contacts listed in the current church directory remain the same.

OUR DEPARTED

KNEPP—Meredith Knepp Sr. of Amarillo TX passed from this life at his home Oct 16, 1998. He was born in Kalona, Iowa Dec 15, 1922. He was 76 years of age. His wife Virginia, (Gina) 3 sons, 1 daughter, 1 brother, 1 sister, 10 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren survive him. He was an active member of the Grand Ave Church of Christ in Amarillo. He was at services even when he didn't feel well. He was a good speaker and singer and song leader and will be missed by his family and the church. We express our prayers and sympathy to Gina and all the family. I was honored along with Richard Frizzell, DJ Hastings and Brandon Stephens, to participate in the services where I spoke words of comfort and encouragement to some, and words of warning to others.—Bob Orear

SHARP—Dorothy Mae Sharp was born May 9, 1920 in Orlando, Kentucky and departed this life, after a long illness, September 7, 1998 in Cincinnati, Ohio at the age of 78. She was the daughter of Flem and Maggie Parrett, and survived by one son, Harold Sharp of Florida, and daughters, Cathern Stacy, Janice Neeld, and Sherry Mink, all of greater Cincinnati, Ohio; one sister, Pansy Robinson of Mt. Vernon, Kentucky; 14 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. Dorothy and her husband George, who preceded her in death in December, 1983, were members of the West Chester congregation in Ohio. In the nearly 18 years this writer was acquainted with this dear lady, only words of praise could be expressed. She was a quiet, gentle, kind sister who truly "esteemed others more than herself". Her presence will be greatly missed, and her "Empty Seat" in the church house today reminds us of what used to be. Funeral services were conducted at the West Chester church building where this writer officiated and the beautiful singing done by selected members from the congregations at Dallasburg and Hamilton.—Bill J. Ferguson

VINCENT—Billy C. Vincent was born Nov. 16, 1930 at Carnegie, OK and departed this life Aug. 7, 1998 at his home at Byars, OK. Billy was one of two children of the late Albert and Ida Vincent. Billy had been bedfast for several months and received the best of care from his devoted wife, Mary. Billy's graveside service was held Aug. 11 at the McGee Cemetery at Stratford, OK with over 100 people attending and beautiful singing conducted by members of the Ada and Galey congregations. Billy and Mary were members of the 3rd St. Church of Christ at Sentinel, OK

for about 15 years but were members of the Galey congregation at the time of his death. Billy is survived by his wife, Mary, of the home, one son, one stepson and two stepdaughters, and one sister. Billy will be very much missed by all. The writer conducted the service.—Mike Hopkins

GADBERRY—Omer "Glen" Gadberry of Clovis, CA, longtime member of the Church in Clovis passed away on Oct. 26, 1998. Brother Glen had been ill for quite awhile though active in the service of the Lord. Glen was 81 years young and is survived by his wife, Mary Gadberry of Oregon, two daughters, 14 grandchildren and five sisters. The sweet singing was provided by the members of the Church of Christ at Clovis. The writer endeavored to speak words of comfort and also words of warning to a large gathering at Clovis Memorial Park. I considered it an honor to have been asked to conduct the service. I shall always remember Glen, because Glen had a way of keeping all of us on our toes. Sometimes we forget and it's comforting to have brethren who remind us of those "biblical things" from time to time.—Weldon Buddy Brumley

ADKINS—Bro. Buford Willie Adkins was born Aug. 31, 1913 in Carter Co., Okla., departed this life Oct. 9, 1998, in Montclair, CA. He is survived by his wife, Belle; 3 sons, Duane, Kent, Wash.; James, Upland, CA; Bill, Pomona, CA; 4 daughters-in-law; 12 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren; 1 great-great-grandchild. In 1979, Brother Michael Fox baptized Buford with this son, Terry, at Covina, CA. Terry has since died, victim of a car-transport accident, leaving a wife and 3 growing children. Concerning Terry's untimely death, Buford, not long ago told me, "I cry everyday, and the hurt never goes away." If you never knew Buford and Belle Adkins, you have indeed missed something very special down here. They are pillars here at the church at home; for years, when the Adkins were not at the assembly everytime the church meets, there was something mighty wrong. For instance, Terry was killed on Mon., Belle and Buford were in their pew, second from the front, on Wed.; Terry was buried on Fri., Belle and Buford were in their pew again both times Lord's Day, and so it has been. Giving financially to the church is a priority for these people, retired and a fixed income, they do and have done better than any folks I know. The Adkins moved from Ardmore, OK in 1942. The funeral was graveside, Bellevue Memorial Park, Ontario, CA, Oct. 13. A large crowd assembled, the congregational singing was as pretty as you ever heard, directed by Brady McCord. It was the writer's privilege and honor to address the family, brothers, and sisters in Christ, and friends. We will miss our dear brother for a long, long time.—Don McCord

And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.—
I John 5:14



Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, Nov. 12— We recently had the pleasure of holding a week's meeting at the Harrodsburg, Indiana congregation. I had been there many times through the years but had never held a meeting. I was treated well and enjoyed it very much. The meeting closed with one confession of wrong. A very special "thank you" to Howard and Ruth Heath who picked me up at the airport and took me back again when the meeting was over. What would preachers do without such friends? Visitors and preachers came from a number of places including Cincinnati, Ohio and various places in Indiana. We appreciated every effort made. We are at home now and enjoying it. We were at Yuba City, CA last Lord's day and preached to a good crowd. We heard Wayne McKamie preach a good sermon last evening in Lodi, CA. Thank the Lord for good preaching and preachers. Lord willing we are to be at Escalon, Ca in the near future. Also, it will soon be time to make the trip again to the Philippines in January. We recently purchased a new computer for the paper. The new machine will now allow preachers to send materials to us by E mail. The material can then be sent to the printers electronically saving us much time and, we hope, money. Though we had wanted this for some time, we found that the old computer was inadequate and a new one was cheaper than updating the old. If the Lord is willing, we will have an E mail address for you by the next issue. Pray for us in the work.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, Nov. 9— It has now been four months since moving here to Springfield. We are settled in and I feel we have gotten off to a good start. I am studying with a couple who worship differently than we do with reference to the communion and the class arrangement of teaching. I am impressed with their sincerity and I believe they want to do what is right. Our studies have been cordial and they have expressed a desire to know why these differences exist between us. I am also in the process of setting up some other home studies, especially with a young lady who was recently baptized. My meeting last month at Seneca, MO was a good one. We enjoyed our stay in the home of Ken and Denise Middick. The last year we have had an opportunity to get better acquainted with Ken and Denise and we consider them dear friends. Good cooperation from the surrounding congregations prevailed during the course of the meeting and we also had several preachers present. I am looking forward to being with the Mission Hills congregation on the south side of Springfield for a weekend

meeting, Nov. 13-15. Also, we have just completed a meeting here with Alan Bonifay. Alan did some strong teaching and everyone was surely benefited by the preaching of the Gospel. Melvin Lee of Manteca, CA came with him and this added to the meeting in a variety of ways. May the Lord bless us all as we near the end of 1998 and approach the new year!

Ronny F. Wade P.O.Box 10811 Springfield, Mo. 65808 Nov. 24— Since last report we closed a meeting at the Crestview church in Wichita Falls, Tx. Oct 25th. Our crowds were good throughout with visitors from the community and several surrounding congregations. Brethren from Olney were there every night of the meeting. Preaching brethren Johnny Elmore and Joe Norton were also welcomed visitors. Next we were at Allen, Tx. with the new congregation meeting there. We had excellent crowds and cooperation from several churches in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. This church is burning with zeal and it shows in their efforts to do good for the cause of our Lord. Preaching brethren Joe Norton, Gerald Hill, Bob Johnson, Melvin Blalock, Jim Hickey, Ralph Noack, and Jimmy Vannoy were present one or more times. This was an encouragement to me and a plus for the meeting. After this meeting we returned home to Springfield where we are working with the church here and attending to our T. V. broadcast out of this area. We are also assisting the church in Nashville, Tn. in getting a T.V. program started there. We hope to go on the air the first Sunday of January. May God bless the faithful everywhere and especially those of the church who are sick and suffering. It seems of late that there are so many with serious life-threatening illness among our number. May God be with them and their families.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, November 8, 1998—The meeting at Atwater, CA closed without additions, but we had good attendance for most of the meeting. Thanks to Larry McElroy for getting me from and to plane connections and to Richard and Glenda DeGough for their hospitality. We heard Stan Elmore at Ratliff City Oct. 16, 17 and Paul Wilkerson here in Ardmore Oct. 23-25, which climaxed with the fourth Sunday singing. I am looking forward to my last meeting for the year at New Salem, MS Nov. 25-29, and the New Year meeting here in Oklahoma.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069—I am happy to report that our yearly fall "Meeting" was successful. Brother Joe Hisle preached each time we gathered. Crowds overall were good with some interest from outsiders. We hope that ground work was laid for growth in the future. We were also blessed with visitors from several surrounding states. Since the meeting has ended one has confessed worshipping in error by drinking fruit of the vine from individual cups. We are thankful for this disciple's stand for truth. We welcome visitors who might be travelling there at any service. Pray for me.

Douglas T. Hawkins, P.O. Box 728, Brodhead, KY 40409

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(606) 758-4071, November 4, 1998—We've just returned home from meetings in California and Missouri. In California, we were with the churches in Bakersfield (planz) and Orange. Both meetings were very enjoyable. The church in Bakersfield is working very hard to evangelize the area. They are running T.V. commercials, a radio program, and newspaper ads. More churches need to follow their lead. They truly have a mind to work. I appreciate these brethren dearly. It was also good to see Brian Elliot of the Brundage Lane congregation. In Bakersfield, we were privileged to stay with our dear friends, Frank and Tina Broncato, and in Orange we enjoyed staying with Alvin and Virginia Smith. It was our third time to be at Orange and like the other times, we truly enjoyed being in that area again. Bro. Don McCord was with us several nights of the meeting at Orange. I was glad to see him. From California, I went straight to Kansas City, MO to hold a 5-day meeting at the congregation at 85th and Euclid. Like the others, this meeting was very enjoyable. While there, I made my home with Mike and Beth Criswell, dear people indeed. I couldn't have been made to feel more at home. Mike works diligently with the congregation there at 85th and does his work without any fanfare. He is to be commended for his work's sake. We are looking forward to being at home in Kentucky this winter. Speaking of home, it was good to have Bro. Barney Owens with us the first weekend of October. True to his style, he preached us the gospel of Christ without fear or favor. One was restored. As always, God bless the faithful.

Don McCord, Box 1773, Covine, CA, Nov. 1—Our meeting with James Orten is Nov. 1-8. Nov. 15, Taylor Joyce will be with us. Ron Courter's meeting will be April 18-25, 1999; Carl Johnson comes in Fall of 1999; Wayne Fussell and Joe Hisel come in 2000; Joe Norton and Wayne McKamie come in 2001; all of this, of course, the Lord willing. Larry Lay comes here once a month, a worthy servant for Him is he. Seeing Lori and Doug Hawkins at Orange, and hearing Doug was great. Lord bless our precious young preachers to whom we "pass the torch." May they not become "lop-sided," to quote Bro. Homer King years ago. The past summer, it was my privilege to be associated with, though all too briefly, among others, 3 promising young men as preachers of the gospel, Brad and Luke Post, and Morgan Stripling. Lord bless them, and may their tribe increase. The meeting at Labor Day in Sanger, CA was one of the best, if not the best, in the 50 years it's been my privilege to attend, off and on. Ron Jordan, the Sanger brethren, their families performed commendably. There were no "battling rams" used against the church and brethren; not constructed "a whipping post,"

of his own making, hailing the church, brethren, sisters thereto for a flogging. We will learn that brothers and sisters don't have to be "beat over the head" to learn the truth, practice sound doctrine, flee worldliness, digression, sinful, immoral living, that we can contend without being contentious, even disagree without being disagreeable, that we can preach the gospel in all of its power, plainness and persuasion, and not be offensive, abrasive, arrogant, sinful in doing so. To "living waters" we lead, not force or drive. God bless the church, every member! "...His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22-23). Since coming home to my precious wife, dear children from one of the busiest summers of my preaching time (thanks to the good Lord, and dear brothers and sisters), I have preached here at home, Orange and San Marcos. Nov. 25-29, I will be at Caldwell, ID, for the meeting the brethren in the Northwest hold annually. The Lord willing, yes, the following: Ceres, CA, Jan. 16-17; Oakdale, Feb. 12-14; Phoenix, Tucson, April 4-11.

LIFE'S LITTLE THINGS

The passing of the years and the myriad experiences of mature life but impress and enforce the importance of giving careful attention to life's little things. They are the stuff of which all life's big things are made. And there is no greater folly than to be indifferent toward these numberless little things. Such an attitude assassinates character in the cradle and stifles achievement in the very take-off. The employees of a post office of a certain Texas town saved the short pieces of twine which come wrapped around the bundles of letters, winding them into a ball. At the end of four years, it was twenty-nine inches in diameter, weighted seventy-five pounds, and contained an estimated length of thirty miles. The short pieces of spare time which come wrapped around the doings of every day in the average person's life would, if systematically saved by applying them to the reading and study of the Scriptures, result in the accumulation of a vast amount of spiritual knowledge, and the ability to serve most worthily both our God and humanity in the name of Christ.