

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. 1

THE CHURCH - A 63-YEAR PERSPECTIVE

By DON McCORD

Indeed, how distressing and discouraging it is these days to read and hear things that indicate that the church is losing ground, "going to the dogs," drifting into denominationalism, sectarianism, cultism, digression, and becoming "liberal," growing weaker. This writer's humble and candid conviction is that such a dismal perspective is not the way it is. It is my honor to have a perspective spanning over 6 decades in the church; humbly, I consider this a blessing to share with others. It is with confidence, based upon this long perspective, that I aver that the church is alive and well. Certainly, there are weaknesses in some areas in need of repair and rejuvenation, areas of shame and regret, I hasten to assure you though, that such is the exception and not the rule, by far.

I humbly make the following personal reference, one of several, that will hopefully help my readers to see the validity of this perspective. It was my honor and privilege the past year to preach in at least 10 states in the Union, spanning east to west, Kentucky to Washington; and north to south, Illinois to Alabama. Preaching this far and wide in this wonderful brotherhood affords a perspective that one cannot have any other way, I can attest, dear Reader, that I find in the church the finest people on the face of the earth. Never question their devotion to the truth, their love for sound doctrine, their respect for the church, and their commitment to opposing false doctrine in preaching and practice.

It was my privilege to become a member of the church, as a 13-year-old young man, more than 63 years ago, during the Great Depression. This gives me a perspective that I could not have had otherwise. We met from house to house, and generally our only mode of getting from place to place was on foot. The Bible was our only guide. We had never heard of any of "our" preachers. **Old Paths Advocate** was unheard of among us. Preachers that brethren called for our meetings had few scruples about how to worship scripturally. We worshiped with singing, no instrument; teaching and preaching in one assembly; the communion was with one loaf and one cup on the Lord's Table. I now look back in awe at how this was; the explanation is, brethren read what the Book

said about the singing, the teaching and the Table, and did what it said. However, unbelievably, a denominational man might be asked to lead the singing; another one might be asked to lead a prayer. Oh! How far we have come. We would not think of doing such this day and time.

I cringe to hear in some quarters that our singing is not as good as it used to be. In some places this may be so, but generally speaking this is not the way it is. This year, I have heard the best singing I have ever heard by brothers and sisters. Throughout these 63 years, it has been my honor to see us grow and grow in our singing. Brethren have always been good singers and leaders, but we get better all the time. Generally, our preachers are the best in the world; no other group equals them. Preaching has never been better in recent times.

I would be remiss in this little perspective to neglect to mention our endeavors at evangelizing. Certainly, there is much to do all over the world. However, when we look back over the past 50 years, oh, the difference we see. There are thriving congregations in our own country in places now that were unheard of not many years ago. Worldwide, on six of the seven continents, congregations assemble every Lord's Day and worship just as you and I do. This could not be said a few years ago.

Elders in the church were virtually unknown not so long ago. However, such is not the case any more. We have a ways to go, but we are on the way.

Everywhere I go, I see aged men who are "sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience" (Titus 2:2). Too, everywhere I go, I see aged women "in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things" (Titus 2:3); and, everywhere I go, in congregations where they are members, under the authority of congregational leadership, I see the aged women in their private sphere, teaching "the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands—" (Titus 2:4-5). Too, everywhere I go, I see sober minded young

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Editorial

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

By DON L. KING

The way different persons react to matters in the church and brotherhood is interesting. Some are always pessimistic and see most situations as disastrous and foreboding. They seem to have the perspective that things are going from bad to worse and before long the church will just have to fold up and quit. This very thing has been suggested to me several times. A number of things could contribute to such a subjective view of things. It could be that the congregation where they worship has weakened, grown lax and worldly, so they reason that such must be the case everywhere. Other things might be at fault also because some folks are just determined to see the glass half empty rather than half full.

Elijah seemed to manifest a pessimistic attitude in I Kings 19. He had been so active for the Lord, and so faithful, that he became a fugitive and feared for his life.

Jezebel had men looking everywhere for him so that his life might be taken. As he hid in a cave, apparently at Mt. Horeb, (verse 8) the Lord came to him and asked, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" The prophet answered that he had been "jealous" (from a Hebrew word that can mean to be "zealous") for the Lord because the people of God had been so disobedient. He informed God that he was the only one left who was faithful and he was hiding because he knew there were people who wanted to kill him. God reacted by immediately giving him more work to do. He was told to go and anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, Jehu to be king over Israel and then he was to locate Elisha to be a prophet in his place. Then, in I Kings 19:18 the Lord told Elijah that he was not the only one left after all! There were seven thousand who had not bowed to idolatry. Elijah had been isolated long enough from others who served the Lord that he had become discouraged and dejected. His whole picture could have been brightened had he been with others like himself. Yes, Elijah was pessimistic but he was wrong!

There is no denying that it is discouraging when it seems the whole world is against what one is laboring to accomplish. It is indeed discouraging when church members love the church so little that almost everything becomes an excuse to miss the services on Lord's Day evening or mid-week. Every preacher has experienced the hurt and sick feeling that comes upon him when leading members leave his meeting to go on vacation, attend a ballgame, or just sit at home "resting" while he preaches the gospel and is away from his family and loved ones. Others may

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TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN

(PART III)

By BARNEY OWENS

The text for this series of articles is Matthew 15:9 *"But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."* This was a problem in Jesus' day, as men rejected the will of God for the theories men proposed to the world. It has not ceased until this day. The problem is housed in *"authority."* Accepting, teaching, and practicing the commandments of men is a rejection of the teaching of God as revealed in scripture. It is to rely on the lower (earthly) instead of the higher (heavenly), trusting the creature (man) rather than the Creator (Deity). Jesus reminds us that such is worthless to the soul, empty as to bearing fruit for God, and vain in accomplishing a reward.

A parallel principle is found in Matthew 21:23-27. Jesus encountered the priests and elders of the people regarding the question of *authority*. They wanted to know *"by what authority He was teaching."* Jesus promised to answer their question, if they would first answer one for Him. His question to them involved the forerunner John.. *"Was his baptism"* asked Jesus, *"from heaven or men?"* In other words, who commanded John to baptize? Their dilemma was easily perceived. If of heaven, then it must be obeyed. If commanded or *authorized* by men, then it could be set aside and rejected. They had not obeyed John, (rejecting the counsel of God against themselves Lk. 7:30), yet the people obeyed John as sent from heaven. They knew, as we know, the teaching for doctrine the commandments of men is vain.

Anciently and today the problem is not the realization that the **teaching for doctrine the commandments of men** is folly, it is recognizing it in specifics. Therefore, a continuation of some of these doctrines is considered.

There Is No Eternal Hell

The basis for this teaching is that eternal punishment is too long to punish anyone even for a life that is committed to sin. The punishment is not torment but *"physical death"* only. When one serves sin he does not live forever in *"hell"* but is annihilated. Essentially evil men are no different from the beast, being committed to the earth are *"forever dead,"* say these exponents.

Let us remember in the first place, to speak of *"eternal hell"* is a misnomer because the statement confuses time and place. *"Eternal"* speaks of time, while *"hell"* is a place. The place that the wicked shall be cast is *"hell."* The duration of their being there is *"eternally."*

Will those cast into *"hell"* have any pain and suffering of which they are aware? The Bible teaches that such will indeed be the case. Jesus explained

that one might have a vital member of the body that would be offensive. In such cases, it is far better to sacrifice such members than to retain them and be cast *"into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched."* (Mk. 9:43). He continued using a vivid description in the next verse, saying, *"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."* It is apparent that the *"worm"* refers literally to the worms that subside on the carcasses of the dead. Figuratively, it is the gnawing of the conscience ever reflecting on the former life. Never does this anguish stop. The fire does not consume in hell but ever afflicts. There are few pains comparable to those inflicted by fire; therefore, the Lord uses it to impress us with the grievous and abiding affliction in hell.

While the **teaching housed in the doctrines of men** find it repulsive for men to be punished in hell eternally for a life that is devoted to sin, reason as well as scripture is appealed to on other matters. Let me illustrate.

How long should one suffer for taking the life of another human being? Many can remember (and others have heard of) the time John F. Kennedy, President of the United States, was shot to death. How long did the vile deed take? A man raised a rifle, aimed it, and pulled the trigger. Let us allow plenty of time, say, a minute. How long should the shooter be punished? Shall we multiply it a hundred times (1x100)? Divide that by 60 minutes and it is just less than two hours. Is that the time he should have spent in jail? Or, maybe multiply it a thousand times (1x1000). Divide that by 60 minutes and we have a little short of 17 hours. Should he be placed in jail 17 hours? A million times then. That works out to a bit less than 16667 hours or not quite 695 days. Such thinking is not only unreasonable, it is ridiculous. The enormity of the crime demands more punishment. He was the President of the greatest nation in the world. This being true, the enormity of sinning against the Creator of heaven and earth requires the severest punishment. In addition, God provided the way of salvation for the sinner, when it is repudiated, the punishment must match the crime.

Those rejecting punishment that must go on eternally and teach others to believe the doctrine, have no trouble believing that the righteous will be rewarded for eternity. Do you recall how Jesus stated it? Having spoken of those who had not walked in His precepts, He declared; *"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."* (Mt. 25:46). In this passage the righteous are set over against the unrighteousness. Eternal life stands in contrast to everlasting punishment. The length of one is the duration of the other. The words could be transposed without damage to language or meaning. One could say *"eternal punishment"* and *"everlasting life."* To accept and teach eternal life, demands that everlasting punishment be accepted and taught.

When men **teach for doctrine** “**there is no everlasting punishment,**” those who bear them have no reason to turn from iniquity. The doctrine is an encouragement to sin. May we all read our Bible lest we believe this empty teaching.

Religious Names, Titles, Etc.

This subject has been broached more than once in these pages through the years, yet it seems inquiries continue regarding these. They are deeply embedded **in the doctrines of men** and are **heard much in teaching**. Religious titles and names are cherished in the hearts of men and are for that reason one of the brightest stars in the heaven of the erroneous **doctrines taught by men**. The strange thing is the contradiction in which it places religious teachers.

To have a religious name that is not found in God’s word, one must allow the same privilege to others. There is no stronger contributing factor to religious division than religious names that have their authority from men. Each man seeks refuge in his own party. Fellowship among those who would otherwise honor Christ presenting a wall that cannot be penetrated to the unbeliever, skeptic, and blasphemer, crumble by fighting and seeking to maintain separate parties.

Some in these organizations preach loudly that “a name is insignificant,” or “there is nothing in a name.” However, they will not for any reason abandon their chosen names. Is that not strange? If there is nothing in a name, why not drop any name that is not found in the scripture? If a name is insignificant, then let us cease using any name not used by early Christians and unite on a name revealed in the New Testament. I have long since concluded that those preachers who make such statements either are deluding themselves or think others are simpletons to listen and think they have convinced everyone.

Why cannot we accept the practice used by inspiration? Paul in writing to the congregation at Rome declared “*the churches, of Christ salute you,*” (Rom. 16:16). Now if there were several “churches” known as “*churches of Christ,*” what would one be known as or called? Wasn’t it “*a church of Christ?*” Is that or is that not a scriptural name of the church? What would be the contention of some of the churches today if they could turn to the New Testament and find the name they wear and advocate? Suppose a passage declared the Roman Catholic Church salutes you, or the Baptist Church salutes you, or the Methodist Church, or the Presbyterian Church, or Lutheran Church, or the Assembly of God Church, or the Nazarene Church, or the Pentecostal Holiness Church ... salute you?” I dare say, you wouldn’t hear either of these groups saying “there is nothing in a name” or “names are not important.” They make such statements to mislead the simple, knowing the name they wear is not to be found in scripture. If a name is so “**unimportant,**” then wear a name that is scriptural and on which believers in Christ can unite.

The truth of the matter is the distinction of these

churches would be lost without their particular names. The names they wear are worn for the specific purpose of distinguishing them and setting them apart from others.

God looks and has looked on a *name* as important. Think about the following:

1. From Sinai God declared that His *name* was not to be taken in vain Ex. 20:7.

2. David declared “holy and reverend is his *name.*” Ps 111:9.

3. Prophecy pointed to a new *name* for God’s children to wear Isa. 62:2.

4. The name of Christ has been exalted above every *name* Phil. 2:9.

5. Christ’s *name* is the only *name* by which men can be saved Acts 4:11.

6. Repentance and remission of sins are to be preached in the *name* of Christ Lk. 24:47.

7. Baptism is to be administered in the *name* of Jesus Christ Acts 2:38.

8. Everything Christians do is to be in the *name* of Christ Col. 3:17.

9. We are to bow before the name of Jesus Christ Phil. 2:10.

10. Every tongue is to confess the *name* of Christ Phil. 2:11

11. The whole family of God is *named* for Jesus Christ Eph. 3:14-15.

12. Early disciples were commanded to cease preaching Christ’s *name* Acts 5:28.

13. Christians rejoice when suffering for the *name* of Christ Acts 5:41.

14. Human *names* worn by Christians are condemned I Cor. 1:12-13.

This far from exhausts Bible teaching on the importance of a *name*, these are named presently just because they come to mind. Is it possible to read these and still contend “there is nothing in a *name*,” or “a *name* is unimportant?” Men will contend for this erroneous idea only in religion. Mothers spend hours prior to the birth of a child selecting (to their mind) just the right name. Why are daughters of Christians not named Jezebel? Or, sons of Christians not called Judas? In the Old Testament God called the first man “Adam.” Adam gave “Eve” her name. Abram’s name was changed to Abraham. Jacob’s name was changed to Israel. One of the wicked characters described there was Jezebel. In the New Testament, the forerunner of Christ was called “John,” by the direction of the angel. Likewise, the son of Mary was named “Jesus” by heaven’s direction. When Jesus came to the tomb of His friend, He called out, “Lazarus, come forth.” He named the tomb that was to be emptied. The wicked betrayer of the Lord was named Judas.

When Phillip journeyed to the city of Samaria he preached Jesus Christ to the people (Acts 8:5). The specifics of his preaching is described in Acts 8:12, “*But when they believed Phillip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of*

Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." It is stated that he preached the name. Are we to understand as per these **doctrines of men** that Phillip preached something in which there was nothing? Or, that he preached something that was unimportant? Excuse me if I remove myself from that teaching.

To teach religious titles and names not found in scripture or to deny the importance of the names of inspiration is to **teach for doctrine the commandments of men**. We know that there are many that wear such titles religiously as spoken of in this article, let us hear from you. We are also aware among our readers are a number of preachers who persuade others to wear religious names and title based on the doctrines of men, now is your opportunity to contend for your belief -- let us hear from you.

If you do not have Part I or Part II of this series, please send for it. May the eyes of the blind be anointed with the saving balm of God's word.

HOW FAR IS INNOCENCE FROM INIQUITY AND SINCERITY FROM SIN?

BY DOUG HAWKINS

"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. Many will say to me in that day, 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? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mt. 7:21-23) As startling as it seems, these verses clearly show the importance of doing the "will of God." The poor condemned souls of whom Jesus speaks were not immoral drunkards, murderers or adulterers, as one might suspect. But just the opposite, they were religious. However, Jesus refers to this group as workers of iniquity, a word we can more easily understand as lawlessness. Jesus does not accuse them of being charlatans, hypocrites, or of intentionally leading followers astray. From all indications they very sincerely were doing what they thought was right, very much like the vast majority of religious people today. However sincere they may have been, they apparently were grossly indifferent toward Bible authority and ignorant of God's will, which again is also the case of so many today. That's what the term lawlessness or iniquity has reference to.

Currently, most people in the world blindly ignore the importance of proving things by the word of God (I Thess. 5:21), standing fast in the faith (I Cor. 16:13), holding fast to the sacred traditions (I Thess. 2:15), and keeping the ordinances as delivered (I Cor. 11:2). In fact, a discussion on the scripturalness of a

practice, a belief, or an organization sounds like a foreign language to them. You might as well be discussing the Pythagorean theorem. Folks will more likely talk about how sincere someone is or how much good something seems to be doing, but very rarely of how sound it may be doctrinally.

Usually, people's sincerity goes without saying. That by itself, however, does not make a matter right (Pr. 14:12). Nothing says, for instance, that Cain was insincere when he offered his sacrifice (Gen. 4:8), but it was rejected, not being what God commanded (He. 11:4). Certainly, Uzzah in innocence tried to do good by saving the ark from toppling, but that didn't make up for failing to seek God after "the due order." (I Chron. 15:13) Naturally, most of us know already that a blatant disregard for the apostle's doctrine and the doctrine of Christ will cause someone to be eternally lost (Acts 2:42; 2 Jn. 9). What we should also see is that no matter how innocent something seems or how sincere people are, that doesn't compensate for doing wrong.

Presently, like some of you, I'm greatly concerned about the unrest that's among some of our own people. Some of our people are boldly venturing toward the edge and pushing the boundaries of God's inspired word, despite Solomon's warning not to remove the ancient landmarks set by our fathers (Pr. 22:28). Historically, nearly all of the "NEW" things that men have invented and introduced into religion have been intended for some worthy cause and seemed innocent enough in the beginning. Who can deny that "clinical baptism" or sprinkling, as it's known in common terms today was started for a good cause? Men felt that the sick, being bedfast, should be accommodated in this way when being baptized. As well intended as it may have been, it is absolutely wrong. The Bible teaches that baptism is a burial in water (Rm. 6:3; Col. 2:12). Would we question their sincerity? I hope not — just like, I don't question the motives of most of our people.

We must constantly be reminded, though, of the Bible's principles that keep us in the old paths. Ignoring these principles of the truth and the subtle departures there from, eventually ripen into digression and apostasy. It's not a far step for a woman teacher to go from a Sunday school classroom to the pulpit or from a woman's retreat to a public lecture. The Bible still plainly says that her role does not involve teaching publicly or in the Church (I Cor. 14:33-35; I Tim. 2:11,12). When someone first conceived the idea of a Bible college, it was for the noblest of reasons. Today, these same schools are supported from church treasuries and are hot beds for the latest liberal doctrines. Using institutions and outsourcing Christian duties are not God's eternal plan. God never foresaw the need for organizations to evangelize the world, to instruct saints on Christian living, or care for the needy and fatherless. Missionary societies, the Herald of Truth, Bible colleges, promise keepers,

orphanages and the like have all resulted from the best of intentions, but they are institutions assuming the role of the church and individual Christians. For that reason, they are wrong. We need to remember that through his inspired word, God has thoroughly furnished us unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:16,17), and within the local church, saints are to perform their Christian duties. Each congregation is to maintain its own affairs, independent of all other congregations. "Pooling" church funds or earning interest on a checking account may seem harmless enough, but it's the beginning of improperly handling the Lord's money. No big deal you say? Maybe it's not. Would you go as far to say that the church could start investing her money in the stock market or begin a business to generate revenues? Oh, that's going too far, you say. Why? It's the same principle followed to its end. This is more than "bickering" about nothing. In fact, many of the articles you've read in this paper about women retreats, Bible bowls, and liberalism may seem like caviling to you, but may I remind you that it doesn't take very many misguided steps to get to iniquity and sin. Many of my brethren have been accused of making a big deal out of nothing. I wonder if those same parties would say that same thing when the next generation uses the Lord's money to build gymnasiums or sponsor camps; when they have an open forum of discussion for men and women during the assembly; or they openly applaud when someone sings a solo or makes a good point in a sermon. How far is innocence from iniquity and sincerity from sin? NOT VERY FAR!!

THE CHURCH - A 63-YEAR PERSPECTIVE

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men showing themselves "a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned—" (Titus 2:6-9). Certainly, in these areas, there is room for growth and improvement; we are on our way.

I express sincerest gratitude to you who have honored me in reading this little perspective. In 63 years, much more has been seen than mentioned here. As I look back, I find what I see amazing. How wonderful it is to see the "stone—cut out without hands—become a great mountain, and (fill) the whole earth" (Dan. 2:34, 35), and to be a part of her "that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Solomon's Song 6:10). The church is going onward, not backward; she is going upward, not downward. She is, indeed, alive and well. There is an army out there that will see to it that she will ever be alive and well, in all of her purity, and commitment in doing what is right. Going denominational, sectarian, "liberal"? Don't you believe it!

Not the church that bears and wears His Name! Never!

EDITORIAL

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boycott his meeting for personal reasons while he must stay on and preach as though he is unaffected. However, for one to become discouraged to the point that he decides everyone, and every place, is like that is a mistake. When the Lord comes again there will be brethren faithfully living the Christian life, attending services of the church regularly and serving God according to the Bible pattern. As the gospel song says, "I have read the back of the Book and we win!" So, it is never the time to throw up our hands and quit.

I still recall the time, nearly thirty-five years ago, when Pat and I were riding in the car with Lynwood Smith and were discussing the church and her various problems. I remarked that it would seem like folks who were Christians could, after all these years, manage to "get along." Lynwood looked over at me and said, "What's the matter with you boy? Haven't you been reading your Bible? Why, the church wasn't thirty days old before trouble came! There's always been trouble and will be until the Lord comes again!" I have never forgotten that lesson. The church, as it was established, is perfect but we are not. So, we just keep on keeping on.

Sometimes there are folks who seem to be in denial. No matter what, they deny there is any problem. Somehow, if the problem is denied it just won't exist. That attitude seems as flawed as the one in which every thing is seen as dark and dismal. There are difficult situations which confront every generation in the Church. There always have been and, likely, always will be. Brethren are not always going to agree on every little thing. This seems especially true with reference to biblical subjects which are not germane to salvation. Before we "call out the army and go to war" with one another it is wise to stop and consider whether or not the matter over which we disagree is going to cause anyone to be lost? If the answer is "no," and it sometimes is, we should be much easier to get along with than if it is a matter of being saved or lost. In such cases, we can disagree without being disagreeable. Satan must dance with joy when brethren stop fighting wrong and fight one another. There's no reason for that to ever be the case! However, if the disagreement is about a soul condemning matter the Christian has no choice but to "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3)

As we begin the New Year we pray the Lord to bless us with an earnest desire to work toward greater spiritual maturity throughout our brotherhood. As Paul wrote the Roman letter he urged those brethren to "...follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." (Romans 14:19) Anyone consumed with a rebellious and fractious spirit needs to read those words carefully

and often. It is simply wrong, sinful, to purposely set a course which is known beforehand to be troublesome, unnecessarily, to the church. Every church leader must learn to think of this before allowing things to take place in the congregation he knows may be the beginning of trouble. Every preacher needs to think about his sermons in meetings. Are these topics needed and called for? Are they merely hobbies that may be inflammatory? Does the material deal mainly with matters not germane to salvation, etc.? Paul gave some wonderful advice in 2 Timothy 2:22, 23 when he wrote: "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes."

Where do we go from here? Our prayer is that we are going toward a greater maturity and following after the things that make for peace. Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS



50 Years

Bennie and Joann Cryer

Bennie and Joann Cryer (the former Joann Crews of Lawrenceburg, TN) of Yuba City, CA will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on January 10, 2003. Brother Edwin Morris married them in a double wedding ceremony with Joann's sister Ruth and Boyde Pilkington in San Angelo, TX in 1953. They have two children and four grandchildren. They plan on spending their anniversary in Hawaii with Doyle and Nancy Elliott of the Bakersfield, CA Brundage Lane congregation. Bennie has worked with the congregations in Yuba City and Stockton, CA, and is presently working with the Olivehurst, CA congregation. He is also well known for holding meetings across the United States. Bennie and Joann have been active in the missionary field, spending almost 6 years in the African countries of Malawi and Zambia. Bennie has also been to India and has made many trips to the Philippines with Brother Don King on missionary journeys during past years. Bennie enjoys fishing and hunting with his son Jeff Cryer, a deacon of the Yuba City, CA congregation and his young young grandsons. Joann is well known for her hospitality, and her home is a primary destination for many preachers and individuals wishing to enjoy visiting with the couple and particularly to partake of Joann's fine cooking.

MY POSITION ON CARNAL WARFARE

I cannot participate in military service in any form, directly or indirectly, in combatant or noncombatant service, because:

1. My duty and obligation to my God is superior to all other obligations (Acts 5:29; Matt, 22:37).

2. My God in the Bible forbids that I 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)-Jesus.

"My Kingdom is not of this world" (Jno. 18:36).

"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).

To enter any military branch or service, combatant or noncombatant, I would be compelled to "swear" (take an oath), but the Bible forbids that I do so ("Swear not at all"-Jesus. Matt. 5:34).

4. To enter any military service I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden - "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14).

5. To be in any branch of military service in any way, I would be a part of the organization and would therefore have fellowship in the service, but such is prohibited; thus. "'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5: 11).

6. To serve in any way in the military service, I would be deprived of obeying the command to assemble on 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, 1 Cor. 16:1, 2).

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

1. **Alton M. Loosier**, 1700 N. F.M. 87, Bonham, TX 75418

2. **Monica Young**, 11550 Hwy 32, Lebanon, MO 65536

3. **Tyler Jackson**, 504 E. 4th St., West Point, GA 31833

4. **Stephen B. Wallace**, 117 Victoria Ave., Trussville, AL

5. **Clay Harrison**, C/O 419 "K" Southwest, Ardmore, OK 73401

6. **William Davis II**, 1811 Shady Ln, Pulaski, TN 38478

7. **Joshua Purcell**, 109 Eagles Haven Dr., Summertown, TN 38483

8. **Tory D. Blake**, 4100 Factory Creek Rd., Ethridge, TN 38456

9. **Benjamin S. Blake**, 4100 Factory Creek Rd, Ethridge, TN 38456

10. **Cody Henson**, 162 Brace Rd., Summertown, TN 38483

11. **Thomas John Byrd**, 109 Eagles Haven Dr., Summertown, TN 38483
12. **Timothy Chaney**, 6556 Craighurst Dr., N. Highlands, CA 95660
13. **Debra Chaney**, 6556 Craighurst Dr., N. Highlands, CA 95660
14. **Danielle Chaney**, 6556 Craighurst Dr., N. Highlands, CA 95660
15. **Peggy Chaney**, 6556 Craighurst Dr., N. Highlands, CA 95660
16. **Tharnthip Oriyavong**, 79 Marilyn Circle, Sacramento, CA 95838
17. **Julio Rodriguez**, 1637 Weyland Dr., #1118, N. Richland Hills, TX 76180
18. **Jonathan Rodriguez**, 163 7 Weyland Dr., #118, N. Richland Hills, TX 76180
19. **Amber Rodriguez**, 1637 Weyland Dr., #1118, N. Richland Hills, TX 76180
20. **Seth Stockham**, 6044 Gateway Dr., Joplin, MO 64804
21. **Spencer Stockham**, 6044 Gateway Dr., Joplin, MO 64804
22. **Karlin Talbot**, 3331 N. St Louis Ave., Joplin, MO 64801
23. **Alex Talbot**, 3331 N. St Louis Ave., Joplin, MO 64801
24. **Stephen Elmore**, 1103 Hillside, Webb City, MO 64870
25. **Mark Robbins**, BengalsMar@aol.com (Florida)
26. **Jonathan Bray**, 725 Bodega Bay, Keller, TX 76248
27. **Benjamin Bray**, 725 Bodega Bay, Keller, TX 76248
28. **Chris Hogland**, C/O 725 Bodega Bay, Keller, TX 76248
29. **Derek W. Guy**, 114 W Greenbriar Ln., Colleyville, TX 76034
30. **Michelle Nicola Guy**, 114 W. Greenbriar Ln., Colleyville, TX 76034

A DEBATE ON THE DAY OF WORSHIP: THE 7th DAY SABBATH OR THE 1st DAY OF THE WEEK

The debate was held in Jonesboro Ga. on Aug 1st & 3rd between Bro. George Battey and Osmond Baptiste of Ft. Lauderdale Fla., a 7th Day Adventist minister.

The propositions were, Aug 1st. Resolved: The seventh-day Sabbath of Exodus 20:8 is still binding upon men today. Osmond Baptiste (affirmed), George Battey (denied)

Aug 3rd. Resolved: The "first day of the week" of Acts 20:7 is the day upon which Christians today must assemble for worship. George Battey (affirmed) Osmond Baptiste (denied).

The highlights of Mr. Baptiste's affirmative arguments on the 7th day were: (1) In the O.T. Gen

2-3 God blessed and sanctified the 7th day and rested upon it. Since everything that was created in 6 days is still existing today, i.e. light, darkness, sun, moon, fish, birds, man and woman, etc, so the Sabbath day must also continue to exist.

2) Exo 20:8 He argued God wrote the 10 commandments "Himself with His own finger," and the rest of the Law was written by Moses and therefore the "handwriting of ordinances" in Col 2: 14-16, which was done away with was what Moses wrote and not what God had written. In other words there were two parts to the old Law, Moral and Ceremonial.

From the N.T. He argued (1) Jesus kept the Sabbath all of His life: Lk 4-16 (2) Jesus would be expecting people to be keeping the Sabbath when He returns at the end of the world: Matt 24:20 (3) Paul kept the Sabbath day.- Acts 11:14, so did the Gentiles.- vs 42, 44, so Christians kept the Sabbath day. (4) Heb 4:1 - 11 is emphasizing the 7th day weekly Sabbath, and Christians are still commanded to keep it.

Bro. George answered and denied the points of his arguments thusly: (1) In Gen 1 and 2 God blessed other things as well as the Sabbath, such as, man and woman, Gen 1:28 and later pronounced a curse upon the woman in childbirth and the man in labor and toil and both in physical death Gen 3:16-19. God therefore has and does change or end something blessed.

2) As to a distinction between what God wrote on the stone tablets and what Moses wrote in the book of the Law, George showed the O.T. made no such difference with several verses such as Neh 9:13-14, and neither did Jesus in His day Compare Matt 15:4, Mk 7:10 and Lk 2:22 with Lk 2:23. The Law of Moses is identical to the Law of God. Therefore the "handwriting of ordinances" which was taken away in Col 2:14-16 included "all" that had been written by God and Moses. Mr. Baptiste argued that the 10 commandments were never referred to as a covenant. George again showed that to be false Exod. 34:28, Duet. 4:13, Duet. 9:9-11. George also showed that 2 Cor 3:1-14 described what was written on tablets of stone to be "a ministry of death," which glory was passing away, (temporary), to which Mr. Baptiste never responded. George also showed in Rom 7:1-7 that Christians could not be under two laws simultaneously, and the Law we were dead to included the 10 commandments (v. 7, "thou shalt not covet"). Mr. Baptiste never responded here either.

Responding to Mr. Baptiste's N.T. arguments George showed:

(1) Jesus kept the Sabbath because He was born, lived and died under that Law. Gal 4-4, Heb 9:15-17

(2) That in Matt 24, 20 Jesus was not referring to the end of time but to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the gates to the city would be closed on the Sabbath day and prevent escape from the Roman siege. Mr. Baptiste quoted Eze 46:1-2 to insist the gates were open on the Sabbath, but George pointed out that was a misquote referring to the gates of the

Jewish temple and not to the gates of the "city."

(3) As to Paul being in the synagogue on the Sabbath it was for the purpose of preaching the gospel of Christ and converting them from the old Law to the N.T. law of Christ, Acts 13:38-39 and persuading them to obey the gospel, Acts 17:2-4, 18:4, not to worship on the Sabbath! The Gentiles referred to in the text were Jewish converts worshipping according to the old Law, Acts 13:42-43.

(4) George explained that Heb 4:1-11 was not speaking about the 7th day Sabbath but was talking about a promise," entering into His rest, (v. 1) not a commandment and that the text is speaking of "another day" (v. 8) and not the 7th day Sabbath.

In conclusion Mr. Baptiste was well prepared to represent the 7th day position, and did as well as anyone could have. He knew most of his scriptures by memory and spoke very forcefully, however the truth presented by Bro. Battey was much more powerful and convincing to an open mind. George did a superb job of presenting the truth being diligently studied and masterfully prepared, and once again it was shown that error is no match for God's truth when learned and compared. There have been several Bible studies resulting from the debate and leads that are still appearing. May God continue to bless and manifest His truth, and correct and expose all false teaching of it.

The debate was recorded on both audio and video tapes and anyone interested may contact Bro. George Battey or Bro. J.C. Pressley of the Jonesboro Ga. congregation. Also George printed a booklet on each proposition which contains the entirety of his arguments. These are also available while in stock. It was my privilege to moderate for Bro. George Battey.
- Gene Grant

For Publication In The February OPA

During the month of January we plan to be in the Philippines as we have for the past 22 years. When you send material for publication in the February *OPA* (which will have to be sent in January) please send all materials to Ronny F. Wade, PO Box 10811, Springfield, MO, 65808. After the 15th of January you may resume sending to me in California as usual. Our thanks for your patience. DLK

The Role Of Women In The Home And In The Church

Johnny Elmore tells us he still has some of the new tracts left. If you not have these for the tract racks in your congregation, etc. you need them. All of the comments we have heard so far have been complimentary. You may order from Old Paths Advocate at old-paths@juno.com or from our regular mailing address at 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539. The price is still \$45 per hundred plus \$5 for postage. In numbers less than 100 per order the price is .75 cents each plus postage. These tracts are

close to being sold out and we do not plan to reprint them. Order today.

Your Help Is Still Needed

We are trying to build the number of subscribers to *Old Paths Advocate*. Can you help? You can help by being sure you renew your subscription promptly. Also, you may help by telling others about the paper and offering to send their subscription in for them. Several have bought gift subscriptions for their friends and neighbors lately. What a great way to help them perhaps learn the truth. Those who send us ten (10) subscriptions will receive one year free for themselves. Others have sent donations to help defray the expenses for foreign subscriptions. We never intentionally remove a name in a foreign land though most can not afford to pay for their own subscription. The work in the Philippines began as a direct result of the paper having been sent to Bro Danao, by someone unknown to us at the time. This proves the paper is a valuable tool in foreign lands. Postage to far away places is much more expensive, of course. We appreciate your help and please keep in mind that no one receives any pay for the work done on OPA. Every cent is used to keep the paper going in one way or another. Church leaders can help by announcing the paper occasionally at their home congregations and preachers can be of great help by announcing the paper in their meetings. Write us and let us know we can count on you in 2003. DLK

OUR DEPARTED

WILSON--Floyd J. Wilson was born Sept. 3, 1914 and departed this life on July 15, 2002 at his home in Dallas County, Mo. On Feb. 12, 1937 he was united in marriage to Lola Wills and to this union three sons were born. Floyd is survived by his wife Lola of the home; three sons; Wayne and his wife Linda, Carl and his wife Barbara, and Deryl and his wife Becky; four grandchildren and six great grandchildren Floyd was baptized as a teenager and had attended the Lees Summit Church of Christ for over 40 years. Floyd will be missed by everyone who knew him. Bro. Clovis Cook and I offered words of comfort. Ron Alexander

WALLACE--Goldie Anderson Wallace was born Dec. 4, 1930 and passed from this life on April 25, 2002. She was united in marriage to Charley Wallace on Sept. 9, 1955 and to this union three daughters were born. She is survived by three daughters ; Brenda Crodrick, Ruby and Wallace and Karen Williamson; three brothers and three sisters; eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren; a host of friends and family. Goldie was a long time member of the Highway 17 Church of Christ in Houston, Mo. Goldie will be missed by all who knew her. Bro. Don Pruitt was away in a meeting, so the writer filled in for him and offered words of comfort. Ron Alexander

ROBERTSON—Mildred Jordon Fritz Robertson passed from this life September 20, 2002 at Marshfield, Mo. Mildred was born February 6, 1918 near Hartville, Mo. On April 20, 1934, she was united in marriage to Tharman Howard Fritz and to this union three sons were born. After Howard's death in 1969 she married Omar Robertson. She was preceded in death by her parents, both husbands, Howard and Omar, two sons, an infant and Darrell Fritz, one brother and three sisters. She survived by one son and his wife, Dale and Jo of Tulsa, OK, one daughter-in-law, Ruth Fritz of the Kansas City area, and ten step-children and their spouses. After Howard and Mildred married they moved their family to Kansas City where they were leaders in the old 10th and Ray congregation. Howard and Mildred were responsible for booking my first gospel meeting in 1966. When their son Darrell passed away, he was an elder at the 36th and Everett church in Kansas City, KS. After Omar and Mildred married they lived at Niangua, Mo. and when we started the congregation at Niangua, Mildred was a charter member. Mildred will be missed by all who knew her. Her home was always open, she was a good cook and she loved to visit. Many preachers and their families have enjoyed her hospitality and fine meals. Bro. Clovis Cook assisted me with her service. Clovis and Velma had been long time friends with Howard and Mildred. Ron Alexander

COBLE—Faye Smith Coble was born Jan. 19, 1913 and passed from this life on Aug. 7, 2002 at her home near Vanzant, Mo. Faye was united in marriage to A. J. (Buster) Coble and to this union were born four sons and one daughter. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, one son, Jerry Coble and one daughter, Shirley Ann Coble. She is survived by three sons, Don and his wife Linda, Lincoln and his wife Debi, and Dale and his wife Mary Jane, two brothers and two sisters. Faye was baptized at an early age and was a member of the Fieldstone Church of Christ for many years. Faye loved the farm and grew over seven hundred varieties of flowers. From which she sold seed all over the world. Faye had a strong will power and determination. She was never confronted with a situation that she didn't think she could handle and usually did. She will be missed at church and by everyone that knew her. Bro. Don Pruitt and I offered words of encouragement.—Ron Alexander

TURNER—Esther M. Turney was born Aug. 6, 1917, in Newton County Missouri. She passed away Oct. 16, 2002 at the age of 85. Esther married Leslie Turney on Oct. 6, 1940 in Webb City, MO, and he preceded her in death on Dec. 27, 1968. She was a lifelong resident of this area. While her husband was living, she worked with him on the family farm. Also, she taught school for many years, and was involved in several other activities as well. She was a member of the church of Christ for 72 years. At her passing, she was a member of the Neosho congregation. She is survived by six children: Phyllis Thurman and her husband Larry, Donna Drennan and husband Larry, Carolyn Pendergraft, Virginia Smith and husband Richard, Gaila Peters and husband Richard, and Michael J. Turney;

two brothers, Clinton Crabtree and Truman Crabtree; two sisters, Deloris Strait, and Wanda Bach; 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. She was dearly loved by her family, and respected and loved by those who knew her in and out of the church. Her services were held at Clark funeral home in Neosho, MO. She had requested before her passing that, when she passed away, she wanted congregational singing at the service, and, also, indicated who she wanted to speak. The family asked Bro. John R. Scott of the Burkhart congregation to lead the singing, and I was ask to speak. She was a fine Christian woman.—Jack A. Cutter

YORK—Bobby Loudermilk, Mike Whitworth, and I officiated at Lonnie's "going home service" (as Mike put it) yesterday, Nov. 6th. After having lots of rain and cold weather lately, we were so thankful that God blessed us with a beautiful day. Since Lonnie was still a devout and ever growing Christian at the time of his passing, the family desired that the service be light-hearted and uplifting, and so it was: stories of personal experiences were told to make us laugh and remember many of the good times we had in our relationships with him over the years. Bobby gave an example or two about how easy it was (especially for him) to play a practical joke on Lonnie and how well he'd take it. Mike told about an incident when Lonnie got onto his boys from the pulpit one day in Wichita when his wife, Linda, was away, perhaps visiting family. Then I told a couple stories about my relationship with him, such as how he once filled his mouth with water and (when I was utterly unprepared for it at a church luncheon) squirted me through the gap between his two front teeth. I related such accounts because (especially twenty years ago when 'the squirting' occurred), most people thought of Lonnie as a totally intellectually and serious-minded person. We also borrowed some characteristics from his life that he would want us to imitate, such as being an avid planner for the future (both near and far) and (though he wouldn't have said this of himself) being very dedicated and steadfast. The service also included three solos by Dean Stetler (Eric York's father-in-law) and Mike Criswell led a congregational song for us: "A Glad Homecoming Day". Our appreciation goes out to all the families and congregations who sent so many beautiful flower arrangements and to all who attended the service, especially the many preachers who traveled great distances. Lonnie will be sorely missed, not only by his immediate family, but also by his church family here in Lawrence, Kansas. —Tony E. Denton



Johnny Elmore, 419 K SW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net. December 8--I have been around home mostly for the last two months. I look

forward to the new year and would like to remind our readers that the southern Oklahoma 4th Sunday singing will be at Ardmore in January, 2003. We invite you to attend all-day services on January 26. I expect to be at Allen, Texas Jan 31-Feb. 2, Weatherford, TX March 3-9, Dothan, AL March 23-30, and May 4-11 at Napoleon, AL. May God bless us with growth and much success in preaching the gospel in 2003.

Taylor A. Joyce, 1713 Savannah Drive, Fort Smith, AR 72901, tayjoyce@aol.com, Nov. 26 - Since my retirement from secular employment earlier this year I have been more active in preaching away from home. In recent weeks I have worked with congregations in four states. In Wednesday through Sunday meetings at Tucker, OK, Dardanelle, AR, and West Plains, MO, I spoke on the theme "The Seven Last Words of Christ." In weekend meetings at Wichita Falls, TX, and Norman, OK, I presented a four-part exposition of I Corinthians 15. In Wednesday through Sunday meetings at Alton, MO, and Little Rock, AR, my theme was "Pondering the Prepositions" with emphasis on the mission and character of Jesus. Last week, I presented a series of studies at my home congregation, Texas Road in Fort Smith, on the theme "The Preaching That Saves." All of these were PowerPoint presentations which enabled me to project material on a screen during the presentation and to provide those in attendance with a handout for note-taking and future study.

Douglas T. Hawkins 3711 Castlewood Ct Somerset, KY 42503 - (606)678-4347-.hawkins@kih.net - December 10, 2002 - For me, meetings for the year of 2002 are officially over. I'm thankful for the opportunity to have been in almost every place I've gone this year. The last meetings I've held have been in Holyoke, CO ; Lexington, OK; and New Salem, MS. In Holyoke, as always, I made my home with Pete and Helen Knight. Their home has truly become home away from home. I've been there so many times that it almost feels like visiting family. I can't express how good they and their family have been to me through the years. It was also good to see so many friends in Lexington, OK. A number of preachers came during the meeting and I appreciate them all. Finally, my last meeting of the year was with the church in New Salem, MS. While there, I stayed with Bro. Lynwood Smith. Having just got out of the hospital, he was still weak and recuperating, but took very good care of me, despite his condition. We had a grand time. I'm looking forward to the next few months at home. It's already time for me to start scheduling things for next year. I'm very sad at the passing of Dwight Patton of Chapel Grove, TN. His funeral service was very touching. I've thought of his family so many times since.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS, 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com. Dec. 9. -- Since our return from the trip to Malawi, Africa in

October I have been at home working with the home congregation. I baptized one person here Nov. 27th. The congregation here has contributed to the hunger needs in Africa and begun supporting three of the African preachers. Recently I was listening to two BBC radio broadcasts in which hunger in Africa was being discussed. In one of them it was estimated that 38,000,000 and in the other, the estimate was 40,000,000 people would face starvation in the next few months. In America people worry about overweight and dieting. In Africa people are concerned with keeping body and soul together. Brethren, when an appeal is sent out from a preacher in a foreign field because of certain needs, don't ignore it just because you are not familiar with the situation. The needs are real, or he would not make the appeal. The apostle Paul said, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6: 10). And don't send a man to another country to preach the gospel and do the work of the Lord, and then "hamstring him" because of lack of adequate support. May the Lord bless all of our righteous efforts.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail old paths@juno.com December 11. We have recently enjoyed preaching at Stockton and Yuba City congregations on Lord's day as well as at Fremont. Immediately following the New Year's meeting at Lodi we plan to leave for the Philippines, Lord willing. Duane Permenter is to meet me in Manila along with Bro Danao and together we will visit as many congregations as time allows. Since I will be out of the country, please send your articles, announcements, field reports, etc. to Bro Ronny Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808. My thanks to Ronny for putting out the February issue. Preachers, we always need your articles and field reports. Try to get them to us by the 10 of the month to assure publication in the next issue. We appreciate those who have renewed their subscriptions recently and also those who have subscribed for others as a gift. Still others have sent donations to help pay for foreign subscriptions which is almost always needed. God bless you all. We still need to build the subscription list so let's keep up the good work! Pray for us.

Jimmy Vannoy, 105 Sunset Circle, Corsicana, TX 75110, e-mail: jwvannoy@yahoo.com -- I recently returned from my tenth annual trip to Russia. This year, I worked for three weeks in Moscow and one week in the Tambov Region. I worked with the Moscow congregation conducting English lessons using the Bible as text, studying the Bible with Christians, and talking with straying Christians about returning to the Lord. Two of the English students were baptized. I enjoyed working with the Christians in Moscow. I worked with Kostya Alekseev, a native evangelist, who is in the process of moving to

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Moscow to work with the church there. He will work with other English students who expressed interest in the gospel. The Corsicana, TX congregation, with the financial help of several congregations and individuals, has aided Kostya in making this move. I spent the last week in the Tambov Region, 350 miles southeast of Moscow, where I began working in Russia in 1993. I conducted Bible studies with Christians, studied with unbelievers, and talked to straying Christians. Two were restored while I was there. It was wonderful working with Christians who have remained faithful since the work there began. There are many strong, faithful Christians in the Tambov Region. Nikoli Kotelnikov, who has been a leader of the church in Tambov since its beginning, began to work as a full-time evangelist while I was there. He is well qualified for this work and will be an asset to the region. The Corsicana congregation is responsible for the support of Kostya and Nikoli. If you have any questions about these works, I encourage you to contact me.

THE LORD'S WORK IN GHANA

By JOE NORTON

Success stories always spark attention, and success stories in the spreading of the gospel always seem to stimulate a double amount of interest. Because of the Lord's abundant blessings, the borders of His kingdom have spread successfully into Ghana in West Africa. The purpose of this report is to share with the brotherhood information about this work and to give glory to God because of its success.

The work there, having begun almost 20 years ago, has grown to almost 80 congregations. In the mid-1980s, Bro. James Orten began communicating with a brother (a Ghanian named David ArkuMensah) who had lived in England for a time, had learned the truth about the one-cup faith from the British brethren, and had decided to give up a lucrative position in Britain to return to Ghana to take the truth. Bro. David and his wife, Sharon, returned to Ghana and have labored since that time in spreading the truth about one-cup in the communion. Because of that communication between James and David, many have had an opportunity to know the truth. James continued to nurture the new work and began to make trips there (along with some other American preachers) to preach

the truth, to conduct studies in various places as the brotherhood grew, and to provide leadership training. At the same time, our brethren in Britain have maintained a continuing interest in Ghana and have been responsible for helping to support the work for all of these years. They have made visits to the work, have helped in building church buildings, have been very generous in helping the sick and needy, and have sent many printed materials to Ghana.

In this country, the first congregation to take the responsibility for the work was Garden's Edge in Wichita Falls, Texas; and those brethren were its chief coordinators for several years. In 1993, the Fairview congregation in northern Louisiana took the oversight, and Bro. Billy Orton joined James in a leadership role in the work. In 1995, I became involved and have continued to coordinate the effort. When the Fairview brethren began a new work in Farmerville, Louisiana, the new congregation (designated D'Arbonne) assumed the oversight of the work and continues in that role today. The Louisiana brethren have been very generous in their support of the spreading of the gospel in Ghana, but more importantly they have maintained an intense interest in its success and have remained very close to what has gone on in the work. The work has grown rapidly in recent years, and many now know the truth because of their efforts and because of the Lord's blessing. With continued blessing, we see the potential for growth well beyond the almost 80 congregations there now. The work has even spilled over into neighboring Togo and to Benin, and we see even more wonderful spiritual opportunities in the future. The congregation in Harrisonville, Missouri, has accepted the challenge of leading the development of the new work in Togo.

This success story came about because a brother cared enough to follow up on a remote lead half way around the world. The Lord can turn our seemingly insignificant efforts into wonderful success stories if we just give Him an opportunity. May He provide us many more such opportunities to spread His kingdom around the world. The church at D'Arbonne is working hard and contributing generously to meet legitimate needs of the churches in Ghana. If you have questions about any area of the work, please feel free to get in touch with one of the elders by calling Mark Elliott, Sr. (318) 323-9434 or Joe Norton (817) 465-4933 or email jlorton@attbi.com

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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).

VOL. LXXVII

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NO. 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANS 8

BY DON MCCORD

Our chapter at hand is one of the most interesting, intriguing, and informative in all the Book. It has been called "the heart of Romans." Its 39 verses are spiritually rich, profound and powerful. Within its context is found the Christian's victory song: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (vs. 31); "— we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (vs. 37). Its subjects are the grandest and noblest; they are God the Father, Christ the Son, the Holy Spirit, and Christians. It is addressed by inspiration by way of Paul to the church of Christ, then and always; the Christians at Rome, the first recipients, know about the church of Christ, because Paul in chapter 16, verse 16, brings her to center stage.

Christians are described as being "in Christ" (vs. 1), the sweetest prepositional phrase I know. It is Paul's common idiom, and theme of all his writings, used by him something like 169 times. He further describes us as "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" in verses 1 and 4, exact phraseology two times, in rapid succession. He continues in truths like these relating to us: "in the Spirit" (vs. 9); "if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body" (v. 13); "the sons of God" "led by the Spirit of God" (v. 14); "ye have received the Spirit of adoption" (vs. 15); "children of God" (vs. 16); "heirs of God," "joint heirs with Christ" (vs. 17). "which have received the first fruits of the Spirit" (vs. 23); "the saints" (vs. 27); and "the called according to his purpose" (vs. 28). These descriptions should move all Christians to wear the name nobly, with consummate gratitude for the privilege.

God the Father, within the context of this chapter is mentioned in these impressive particulars: "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" (vs 3); "the carnal mind is against God;" "the law of God" — "the carnal mind not subject to" (vs. 7); those "in the flesh can not please God" (vs. 8); "He (God) that raised up Christ from the dead" (vs. 11), and "the will of God" (vs. 27).

Christ, in the chapter is spoken of in the following unique particulars: As God's "own Son" (vs. 3); "Christ in you, the body is dead because of sin" (vs.

10); Christians are "joint heirs with Christ if so be we suffer with him" (vs. 17); "did He (God) predestinate us to be conformed to the image of His Son" (vs. 29); His own Son "delivered up for us all" (vs. 22). "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (vs. 34).

The Holy Spirit; within the context of the chapter, is referred to 18 times as "the Spirit" in 39 verses, an impressive statistic, not to be taken lightly. He is referred to as the "Spirit of life" (vs. 2), and "the Spirit of adoption" (vs. 15). In further description, he is referred to as the "Spirit of God" and the "Spirit of Christ" in verses 9 and 14. Robertson L. Whiteside, in *A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints at Rome*, concurs on pages 173-174, "But the Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit. He dwells in the Christian; that is plainly affirmed. And I dare not deny what Paul here affirms. The Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of Christ. 'But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' That statement should engage the serious attention of every professed Christian.

That "the Spirit of Christ" and "the Spirit of God" in this chapter refer to the Holy Spirit or the Holy Ghost is attested to by other reliable expositors. Among them are Robert Milligan; David Lipscomb; Albert Barnes; Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown.

Within the context of Romans 8, we are reminded of how Christ speaks of the Holy Spirit. He always attributes to Him *divine personality and intelligence*, two attributes that we find in Romans 8. To the apostles, not to you and me, Christ promises, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me; and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26). "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide

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A PITIFUL FEW

By JERRY DICKINSON

Many years ago, so the story was related to me, Ervin Waters was in a debate with a man regarding the scriptural observance of the Lord's Supper. The man Ervin was debating could not meet the scriptural arguments Ervin presented so he decided to resort to ridicule and insult. "The churches Brother Waters associates with," the man stated sarcastically, "that use only one cup in the communion are a pitiful few. There are not very many congregations that believe that way and the number of members in those congregations is very small compared to other churches of Christ. They are a pitiful few!" At first, Ervin just ignored the man's sarcastic sneers but the fellow just kept repeating that phrase, "A pitiful few." Finally, Ervin got enough of it and in his next speech said, "My respondent keeps calling those of us who use one cup a pitiful few. He thinks that is an insult, but really it is a compliment. I remember that Jesus said in Matthew 7:14 that there will be few that enter the strait and narrow way. Also, Peter wrote in I Peter 3:8, 'Be pitiful.' Let's see now: few will walk the narrow road, and we are to be pitiful. We are a pitiful few!" Turning to the man, Ervin concluded, "Thank you sir for the compliment!" The man did not use the phrase, a pitiful few, again in any of his speeches.

I thought that was a wonderful story of bygone days when I first heard it, but I think there is still a valuable lesson and principle in that incident we are in danger of forgetting today. The Lord is not impressed with numbers! We are, but the Lord is not. Many today extol the virtue of big numbers and big crowds. I even hear some in the church nowadays belaboring the idea that our churches are not big enough. Some seem to think that just because a church has a lot of people in the pews that makes a strong church. On the other hand, if a church has just a few members then that church is weak and something is wrong with that congregation. Those statements could be true, but they could be wrong! You cannot judge the spiritual strength of a church by the number of people who attend. To do so is to make a fatal mistake.

In fact, when numbers become the goal of a church, and the criteria by which success and strength are measured, something else is always sacrificed. In order to have big numbers you must sacrifice something, i.e., the truth regarding the plan of salvation and worship, convictions regarding morality and Godly living, or just good old fashioned Bible preaching. Look around at the so-called mega-churches of today and see if the key to their huge crowds is not the absence of the very things listed

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN THE BIBLE

By STEVE SMITH

Jesus' audiences frequently remarked at how different His teaching was. They said things like, "No one ever taught us like this man!" What was it about His teaching that was so different from the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees?

While these studious teachers considered themselves experts in the Law, they taught narrowly and inconsistently. They added their own opinions, traditions, and made-up rules. Meanwhile, Jesus taught people the guiding principles of the Kingdom of God. These principles, especially the way Jesus taught them, made sense to His hearers. The narrow and inconsistent teachings of the scribes and Pharisees did not.

In Matthew 23:23, Jesus told the Pharisees, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."

The Pharisees' practice of tithing even the tiniest herbs that grew in the comers and fringes of their gardens was very strict. In the eyes of the Law's keenest observers, it had the appearance of great piety.

But the way they tithed violated the guiding principle God had given for tithing. God told His people in Deuteronomy 14:22-23 some of His fundamental principles. His primary tithing principle is in verse 23, "...that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always." Their tithing did anything but teach them to fear the Lord. Had they learned to fear God, they would not have overlooked the "weightier matters" in the law. These matters of justice, mercy, and faith were the guiding principles the Pharisees violated in their lives, while their observance of the "lesser" matters was observed with calculated precision. Jesus said, "These things you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."

Jesus went on to say in Matthew 23:24, "Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!" Their guilt was in ignoring the larger principles of God (i.e. swallowing camels), in favor of their favorite rules and traditions (i.e. straining out gnats).

When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, He responded, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind,"³⁸ "This is *the* first and great commandment."³⁹ "And the second is like it – 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39). These two great truths presented by Jesus were commands, without a doubt. But they are also the most fundamental, guiding principles of God. Jesus went on to say in verse 40, "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." The Random House Dictionary defines a principle as "a general or fundamental rule or truth on which others are based." Certainly this fits what Jesus

identified as the first and second great commandments. They are the general, fundamental truths upon which the entire law and the prophecies were based.

Principles are given to us so that we can use them to guide the decisions, choices, and activities of our daily lives. It is impractical to expect the Bible to give specifications covering every possible decision, situation, and activity. There are undoubtedly laws taught in the Bible that have clear "black-and-white" application. The Bible also teaches principles, and God expects us to allow these principles to guide our day-to-day living, where "black-and-white" doesn't always apply. It means that we have to understand these principles, and decide daily how to apply them in our own unique circumstances. As we grow in these guiding principles, we take on the solid food of God's word, and have our "senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14).

Jesus taught us the guiding principles of God's kingdom through His parables. In fact, His parables are examples of how to apply the principles of God's kingdom in our lives. If we examine the parables, we find the principles. Here are some examples.

In Matthew 18:21-25, Jesus taught the parable of the unforgiving servant. This demonstrates the fundamental principle that showing mercy is required to obtain God's mercy. Jesus also taught this explicitly in Matthew 7:1-2.

In the parable of the Samaritan (often called "the Good Samaritan"), Jesus taught the guiding principle of helping our neighbors, and that anyone in need of our help is our neighbor.

When Jesus washed His disciples' feet, He taught the principle that greatness is in serving, and that humble acts of service are not beneath Christ, nor Christians.

These are just a few, and the Bible teaches many other, guiding principles. If we're not careful, we can fall into the trap of the Pharisees and scribes – of straining out gnats (meticulously and precisely focusing on our favorite rules) and swallowing camels (overlooking the fundamental principles of God's kingdom).

We can help ourselves identify and follow God's guiding principles by reading His word humbly, prayerfully, and with an open mind. This means the whole Bible. We will miss the guiding principles if we only draw occasionally upon a few favorite verses and proof-texts. Principles are found in the Bible as recurring themes and common threads. They are the larger, more general, and fundamental truths upon which others are based. The more of the Bible we become familiar with, the better we are able to identify these recurring themes as principles for Godly living.

As we learn to look for and apply these guiding principles, our daily Christian lives will become simpler and more consistent – more consistent in themselves, and more consistent with God's will.

WE HAVE FOUND THE CHRIST!

By GREG GAY

Long ago the Jews were anxiously waiting for deliverance from bondage – again. This had happened to them over and over in hundreds of years of existence as a people. God blessed them with independence and freedom so long as they were obedient to him but when they turned to idolatry and sin God allowed them to be overcome by other nations. At this time, nearly 2,000 years ago, the Jews had been conquered by the Romans and were no longer an independent nation. Since Old Testament prophecies pointed to deliverance for God's people the Jews often discussed the Messiah, the promised and expected deliverer.

When Jesus began his ministry he started recruiting men who were Jews to travel with him. We will let John the Apostle introduce us to two of the Apostles: Andrew and Simon Peter. We join John's gospel right after the baptism of Jesus by his cousin John the Baptist:

John 1:35-42

35 ...the next day after John (the Baptist) stood, and two of his disciples;

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What

seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted,

Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt,

and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew,

Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

42 And he brought him to Jesus

We hear very little about Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He is mentioned a few times in the Gospels and is named as being one of the Apostles in the first of the book of Acts. After that we are told nothing about him. We can only trust Heaven will reveal the rest of his service to God. Till then, the brief glimpse we have is most impressive. Andrew not only found Jesus, the Messiah for himself, he also shared that knowledge with his brother and brought him to Jesus.

Today, we have found the Christ! We are Christians, saved by the shed blood of the Lamb of God upon our obedience to God. Praise God for the wonderful opportunity to obey the gospel and be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins!

Do we keep that joy to ourselves? Or, can we be like Andrew? Who is waiting for us to find them that we might bring them to Jesus?

WORSHIP VS. OBEDIENCE

By JIMMY VANNOY

Throughout the ages, most people have looked for ways to avoid obeying God. Preferring to do their own will instead of God's, they rebel against his commandments and live according to their own desires. God has placed within us a conscience and a need to worship a higher being. In order to soothe their consciences and fulfill the need to honor a higher being, the rebellious often participate in worship services, religious rituals and holidays, while they continue to live in disobedience to His will.

The people in the days of Zechariah tried to please God by observing certain special days, and they came the prophet to ask if God wanted them to continue observing these days. "Should I weep in the fifth month and fast as I have done for so many years?" (Zechariah 7:3) The weeping in the fifth month was a holiday commemorating the fall and total destruction of Jerusalem in the fifth month of 586 BC. It was comparable to Texans commemorating the fall of the Alamo each March 2. The destruction of Jerusalem was a devastating blow to the Jews, much like the tragedy of September 11 was to the United States. There was certainly cause for weeping on this day, and there was nothing wrong with them remembering this sad and tragic part of their history. However, God was not pleased with the actions of these people. He told them, "When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months ... did you really fast for Me – for Me? When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink for yourselves?" (7:4,5) These Jews were like so many today and through the ages, who went through worship services, religious ritual and the celebration of holidays to please themselves, not God. Notice the frustration of God, as He repeated the phrase "For Me." In His rebuke, God mentioned the "seventh month." This holiday was the Day of Atonement, commanded in Leviticus 16:29-34. It was one of the most solemn and important days of the year for the Jews. The problem was not that they were observing an unauthorized holiday or that their methods of worship were unscriptural, but that they were doing it for themselves. These holidays involved time off from work and special meals with much good food. Like many today, their observance of these days was to please themselves and not God.

But there was another problem with these people. They pretended to be so interested in pleasing God that they came to Zechariah to ask him to check with God to see if they should continue to observe these holidays, yet every other day of the year, they were rebellious and disobedient. God said to them, "Should

you not have obeyed the words which the Lord proclaimed through the former prophets?" (7:7) They were trying to soothe their consciences by substituting worship services and holidays for obedience. There is no substitute for obedience! God demands that we devote our lives to obeying all of His commands. Nothing else will satisfy Him.

God through Zechariah declared to these people exactly what He wanted from them. "Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother." (7:9, 10) These commands involved treating other people right. The response of the people was that they "shrugged their shoulders and stopped their ears." (7:11) "They made their hearts like flint." (7:12) Since they would not hear God to obey Him, He would not listen to them when they called to Him. (7:13) Their prayers went unanswered and there was no help for them in their times of trouble and sorrow.

King Saul tried to substitute worship for obedience when he disobeyed God's command to completely wipe out all the Amalekites and their animals. Samuel came to Saul at Gilgal after he returned from the battle with the Amalekites, and Saul greeted him enthusiastically by saying, "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have performed the commandment of the Lord." (1 Sam. 15:13) But Samuel replied, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" (15:14) Rather than accepting the blame for not killing the animals of the Amalekites, he blamed "the people." Of course, he was king over the people and could direct them in any way he chose. He said, "But the people took of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal." (15:21) Saul was substituting worship for obedience and excusing his disobedience by expressing a desire to worship God. Samuel responded with a profound statement which we should stamp in our memories. He said, "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams." (v. 22)

Even when we worship in spirit and in truth, exactly according to the teachings of the New Testament, our worship can be unacceptable and displeasing to God because we do not live our daily lives in obedience to His will. How many Christians faithfully worship God on Sunday morning, and even on Sunday evening and Wednesday night, yet they live disobedient lives? God is not pleased with such people and will not accept their worship. They may not be murderers, adulterers or thieves, but they do not put God first in their lives. They do not take time to study the Bible personally and with their families. They do not invite people to church and try to lead others to Christ. They do not take time to serve those in need, visit the sick and

help those who are in distress. They just go about their daily business of work and recreation, never considering the work God has for them to do, yet when time for public worship comes, they are there, soothing their consciences with the knowledge that they are worshipping according to the New Testament pattern.

If we want God to accept our worship, we must live in obedience to Him and in service to others, putting His will above our own every day of our lives. Worship is not a substitute for obedience.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANS 8

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you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew things to come" (John 16:13). This weak, mortal man dare not dispute such a credible Witness, the Son of God, as to the divine personality and intelligence of the Holy Spirit. It is just as true and reasonable that divine personality and intelligence belong to the Holy Spirit as it is that hearing, faith, repentance, confession and baptism for the remission of sins, belong to the plan of salvation; and that one loaf of unleavened bread and one cup of the fruit of the vine belong on the Lord's Table.

Within the context of our remarkable chapter, it is fitting to recognize at this point that the seven "ones" that Paul delineates in Ephesians 4:4-6, include most appropriately, not only "one Lord" and "one God and Father of all", but "one Spirit" as well. It is also fitting to recognize the "seven Spirits" in "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1), as the "one Spirit" of Ephesians 4:4. Marvin Vincent says in *Word Studies of the New Testament*, "—the Holy Spirit is called the seven Spirits."

The Amplified Bible amplifies: "—the seven Spirits, that is, the sevenfold Holy Spirit."

The brief "Revelation" record of the Holy Spirit follows: "the seven Spirits which are before his throne" (1:4); "the seven Spirits of God" (3:1); "the lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God" (4:5); "—stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (5:6). What a magnificent place the Holy Spirit has in the divine arrangement! This is incontrovertible, in view of inspired evidence.

The Holy Spirit indwells the Christian. This is evident in verses 9 and 11, emphatically stated. Paul, to the Corinthians, put the same truth this way, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of **the Holy Ghost which is in you**, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19). To Timothy, Paul says, "**the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us**" (2 Tim. 1:14). In Romans 5:5, Paul says, — the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by **the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.**" There is

nothing miraculous, or out of the ordinary, that the Spirit indwells the Christian. God, too, indwells His child (2 Cor. 6:16). Christ also indwells; so attests Paul in Eph. 3:17, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). The word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). Reason would dictate from these inspired truths that in the Christian, his faith, the word of God and the Spirit are inseparable; though not the same., but so interrelated, they cannot be separated. That our spirit indwells our body is an evident truth; in view of this fact, and what the Scriptures teach pertaining, it should be no mystery that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian.

This brings us to our next point relative to the Holy Spirit within the context of Romans 8. **The Holy Spirit and our spirits bear witness, one with the other (vs. 16).** Of utmost importance here is the preposition "with." witnessing is not "to," "of," "for," a vast difference does "with" convey. There is reciprocity in the witnessing or testifying. That "we are the children of God" is the objective. How can this work? We know that the word of God is the sword of the Spirit. The Spirit witnesses through the word that to be a child of God one must hear, believe, repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins. Our spirits in turn within us bear witness with the Holy Spirit that this is what we have done. We see the reciprocity; we see the witnessing "with, we see the witnessing being done both ways, the Word playing an indispensable role.

Here is another example of the Spirit witnessing with our spirits and vice versa, the Word, as always, playing its remarkable role. The Spirit witnesses with our spirits, through the Word, that on the Lord's Table there is of necessity one loaf of unleavened bread and one cup of the fruit of the vine. Our spirits within us bear witness with the Holy Spirit that this is precisely what we do. Countless other valid examples can be given to exemplify the witnessing of the spirits, the Holy Spirit and ours. There is nothing miraculous, or out of the ordinary. What a great resource for the Christian is the witnessing of the spirits; the Holy Spirit witnessing, testifying through the word with our spirits, and our spirits witnessing with the Holy Spirit, as we conform to the word in all we do.

In prayerful conclusion, **"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (V. 26).**

At the risk of appearing presumptuous, this writer, weak man that he is, avers kindly, humbly, and cautiously, with all the honesty and conviction he possesses, that he knows, from first-hand, ordinary experience, what Paul means in this verse. Many are the times, dear Reader, you have no idea the times, in my many infirmities, as Paul says, I do not know what I should pray for as I ought. The burden is so

great, the need is so real and diverse, and my not knowing what is best, I cannot express, I cannot verbalize; I cannot articulate. I am reduced to a state of "groaning" within myself that Paul speaks of in verses 19, 22 and 23. The Holy Spirit is not "groaning;" it is I. It is at this time, Paul says the Spirit makes intercession with my "groanings" that I cannot utter, that I cannot express, cannot verbalize, cannot articulate. There is nothing out of the ordinary, just the ordinary, everyday needs of a weak man, needing help with his ever-present infirmities in praying. There is much about the process of the Spirit's intercession in praying that I do not know, but I believe with all of my heart the truth taught by Paul within this context. I humbly, from everyday experience, attest to its practical validity. Many processes I do not understand; that does not mean I do not believe in them, and that they are not real and true. For instance, I know little about the birth process, but I believe in it; I know little about the death process, but I believe in it; I know little about the sleep process, but I believe in it.

I kindly leave you with two final observations by what I consider reliable expositors relative to the "groanings." Moses E. Lard says, "The groanings which give inarticulate expression to these wants are not the Spirit's groanings. They are our groanings." H. Leo Boles agrees, "The groanings are not the groanings of the Holy Spirit, they are our groanings -."

EDITORIAL

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above. It worries me, if I may say so, that some among us are focusing so intensely on numbers as their goal and criteria of success. (I think I ought to say, parenthetically, that we who believe in following the New Testament pattern for the church are never going to be as big as these mega-churches, or even as big as churches of Christ who have digressed from scriptural worship. It is not going to happen, brethren. It is not going to happen, that is, unless we sacrifice our convictions!)

Please do not misunderstand. Sure, it would be awesome if every one of our churches were filled to the brim and had large crowds each service. And yes, I do believe that a good point is made when it is pointed out that we are not working as hard as we should and inviting folks to our services as we could. The way to see our churches grow is by the members working harder. No doubt about it! There is nothing wrong with wanting to see our churches grow numerically and seeing as many people saved as possible - surely every one wants to see that. But, I aver again, when numbers become the goal we are not on the Lord's side. The Lord is not impressed with numbers!

Luke 14:25 tells us that great multitudes began to

follow Jesus. When He saw these great numbers of people following him he turned to them and said something quite remarkable and, and at first glance, quite shocking. What was it? Did he say, "I am so glad to see this huge multitude of people. This is what I am looking for – great crowds, and the more the better." No, instead he told them very pointedly that no man could be his disciple unless he hated his parents, his wife, his children, and his own life. Not only so, but he added that every man must bear his own cross or he cannot be the Lord's disciple. Wow! What a turnoff for a big crowd. I daresay not many of us preachers would get up and try to turn away a big crowd that came to hear us preach. We would be impressed with the numbers. We don't get to preach to big numbers too often! What is the point Jesus was making? What was he trying to do? Just run people off for the sake of running them off? (That is what we are accused of sometimes.) No. The point our Savior was making is clear. He is not interested in mere crowds; he is searching for people who are really convicted and dedicated to Him and his Cause.

The classic story in the Scriptures illustrating this principle is the story of Gideon in Judges 7. Gideon had called together an army to deliver Israel from the Midianites and the children of the East who were tormenting the people. Gideon counted his force and discovered he had 32,000 men. You might think that was a good-sized army, but Gideon was a worried man. After all, the Bible says the Midianites and the children of the East lay along the valley like grasshoppers and their camels were without number. The Bible indicates that there were something like 135,000 soldiers arrayed against Gideon's 32,000. Gideon was outnumbered 4 to 1. No wonder he was worried. But then the Lord came and said, "Gideon, the men with you are too many." Too many? Outnumbered 4 to 1? The Lord explained to him that if Israel won the battle with 32,000 they would not give God the glory, but think they had delivered themselves, and against great odds at that. God wanted to show them that the victory was not by numbers but by His hand.

God instructed Gideon to tell all those who wanted to go home instead of fight to leave. Gideon did, and 22,000 left. Now Gideon is down to 10,000 men. Israel is now outnumbered 13 to 1. The Lord returns and informs Gideon he still has too many men. "Command the men to drink," the Lord commands, "And I will show you your fighting force." There were 300 men who put their hands to their mouths and lapped water. "There," says the Lord, "is your army. With these 300 I will deliver 135,000 into your hand." Gideon's soldiers are now outnumbered 400 to 1. If they win now there is no doubt they would have to give God the glory. These two tests have been called the fear test and the fervency test. God is not interested in mere numbers, but he is interested in the few who are fearless and fervent in their

discipleship. God did deliver Israel and proved once and for all that He is not impressed by numbers. It is dedication to the Lord and to the Lord's cause that impressed God. God does not look at churches they way we do. God is looking for quality, not quantity!

Take a look at the history of God's dealing with man as revealed in the Scriptures and you will discover a winnowing process all the way through. God was ever diminishing numbers in a search for the faithful remnant who would take him at His word and serve him no matter what the majority did. God's true disciples have always been a small minority, from the days of Noah, to the time of the prophet Elijah, on down to the ministry of our Savior. John the Baptist said Jesus would come with a fan, or a broom, in his hand and would purge the threshing floor until only the faithful remnant were left. The Lord, to this day and through the preaching of the pure gospel message, is sifting the hearts of men, diminishing numbers until only the faithful few who accept Him and cleave to His teachings are made manifest. "For many are called," Jesus proclaimed, "But few are chosen." We may be a pitiful few in the eyes of men, but if we are fearless and fervent followers of the Lord Jesus Christ we are the chosen few. May we continue to preach about that strait gate and narrow way that leads to life. Let us magnify the truth so that the few who are searching can find their way through the maze of man made doctrines and oversized mega-churches.

NEEDING AN OPHTHALMOLOGIST

By MARK GRANT

One night during a thunderstorm, a mother was tucking her young son into bed. She was about to turn the light off when he asked in a trembling voice, "Mommy, will you stay with me all night?" The mother gave him a warm, reassuring hug and said tenderly, "I can't, Dear. I have to sleep in Daddy's room." After a brief pause, the boy replied, "The big sissy!" Let's us look beyond the humor of this story for a moment and think about the child's reaction. His fearful plea was understandable, yet his response was very human. Most of us can easily see the faults of others but fiercely resist admitting the truth about ourselves.

This was exactly what Jesus talks about in Matthew the seventh chapter. "*Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye*" (Matt. 7:1-5).

These verses have really been misunderstood and often abused by those who resent being corrected for their sinful living. The word “judge” has a broad application and can mean “to judge, to give a verdict, to form an opinion, distinguish between, evaluate, to condemn.” Most scholars agree that the word used in our text means, “to condemn.” The best way to understand the meaning of a scripture is to look at its parallel. Luke says, “*Judge not, and you shall not be judged Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned Forgive and you will be forgiven*” (Luke 6:37). Thayer explains, “judge” to mean, “*of those who judge severely (unfairly), finding fault with this or that in others, Mt. vii. 1; Lk. vi. 37; Ro. ii. 1.*” Jesus however, is not teaching that it is wrong to judge between right and wrong. All of us as Christians have the right to make moral and spiritual judgments. Jesus taught us to expose false prophets (Matt. 7:15-23). Paul taught that the church must discipline flagrant sin among its members (1 Cor. 5: 1-12). Christians are to settle their own personal disputes rather than going to secular courts (1 Cor. 6:1-6). Christian leaders are to mature and recognize the difference between right and wrong and do what is right (Heb. 5:12-14). It is conclusive then, that “judge” in this verse is not a prohibition against deciding between right and wrong but is used in the sense of a harsh, overcritical, condemnatory judgment. The Greek word for “judge” is which has the same force in Romans 2:1; 14:10-13, and James 4:11-12, indicating that the type of judging forbidden in this verse is that of presuming to determine salvation, or telling others “you’re going to hell.” Christ did not even do this while he was on the earth. Jesus said, “*I did not come to judge the world but to save the world*” (John 12:47). The exercise of such judgment is all the more sinful in that it is premature. Paul said, “*judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes*” (1 Cor. 4:5). Regrettably, some still insist on their right to determine salvation in others that does nothing more than usurp the role of God. Jesus said, “*But I will show you whom you should fear; Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes I say to you, fear Him !*” (Luke 12:5). James said, “*There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?*” (James 4:12). There is only One who has power to cast and condemn someone into hell and those whose flagrant violations of “*judge not, that you be not judged*” have wrought considerable damage to the church.

To further understand Matthew 7:1 you also need to take it in the context of the surrounding verses. “*For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you*” (Matt. 7:2). Again, Jesus is not forbidding Christians from forming opinions as to what is right and wrong. Jesus himself taught, “*Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment*” (John 7:24). Jesus does admonish Christians not to condemn with severity or hasty

judgments that are based on Jealousy, suspicion, envy, or hate. One should judge another, as he would wish to be judged if he is going to follow the Golden Rule. If our attitude is mixed with pride and self-righteousness, our words will come back to haunt us when we stand before God. What we say may be true, but the way we say it must always be with humility and a sense of our own shortcomings. “*There is one who speaks like the piercing of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health*” (Prov. 12:18). All of us as Christians need to realize that we will be judged or condemned with the same degree of severity, both by man and more importantly God, that we pass on others. Our own standard of judging others will be applied to us. Our judging others is not to be driven by our own insecurity and pride, but rather by the same compassion and mercy God shows toward us. James wrote, “*For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment*” (James 2:13). Jesus tells how the unforgiving servant himself was judged with the same severity as he had judged others, and ends: “*So My heavenly Father also will do to YOU if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses*” (Matt. 18:35). Christians are to encourage one another to stir up loving attitudes and actions (Heb. 10:24,25). But we are all growing in Christ, so we must never judge each other in a proud or haughty way. Instead, we should lovingly build up one another. Any other attitude reveals a self-righteous heart.

The final point that Jesus makes about judging is the need for self-examination. Jesus said, “*And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye*” (Matt. 7:3-5). Jesus is teaching the importance of judging ourselves before we judge others. The speck and the plank represent the difference between that, which is tiny and almost invisible, compared to that which is obvious and blatant. The meaning is, that we are swift and sharp to judge the small offences in others, but refuse to consider the offences in ourselves. Instead of being quick to point out the sins of others, we need to judge our own sins—the “planks” in our own lives first. When we remove the “plank” from our own eye we will be able to see clearly and then we can advance to correct the faults of others. It’s a painful process. Yes, it may even hurt. But it will make us much more patient and sensitive toward others who have the same problem overcoming sin as ourselves. Jesus is teaching us that the best way to judge the imperfections of others is to be free from greater ones ourselves. Then there will be no hypocrisy in our conduct. To judge any other way, we may find ourselves needing an ophthalmologist.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Promoting Unity and Truth

The Eleventh Street Acres Congregation 1104 South 141 St. Tulsa, OK is hosting a study designed to explore ways to promote unity among brethren based upon the truth of God's word. Some of the topics that will be addressed are: "What happens when brethren disagree on various Bible subjects?" "How can we disagree without destroying the unity we all seek and want?" "What kinds of attitudes lead to the destruction of unity in the church?" "How should we deal with rumors that are often broadcast far and wide?" "What part do brotherhood papers play in our over all quest for peace and unity?" These and many other issues will be addressed. We encourage all preachers and interested brethren to attend. The time: February 24, 2003 beginning at 1:00 pm and Tuesday until 12 noon. For further information you may contact James Orten at 918-274-3797 or Ronny Wade at 417-883-2315.

Changing Times For Services

The Richmond IN congregation is changing its evening services time from 5:30 to 4:00 Eric Stone, 513-523-0689

OUR DEPARTED



MARKHAM LANKFORD—On the afternoon of December 13th over 1200 hundred people gathered at the High School gymnasium in Seneca, MO to honor the memory of ten year old Markham Lankford who tragically died in an automobile accident the preceeding Saturday. His Christian parents are Jamie and Terry Lankford, members of the Leawood Village church in Joplin. This fine young man attended services regularly with them, and was intently interested in learning about God's will for his life. He admired church leaders and preachers. In fact in his young mind, he had already decided he wanted to be a preacher some day. Saying goodbye to our loved ones is always difficult, but especially so when one is so young. The large gathering attested to the high esteem in which he and his family are held both in the community and church. Survivors include his parents, a brother and sister, grandparents and a number of other family members along with un-numbered friends. This writer along with Brother Jim Stockham, Elder in the church at Leawood, preachers, Kevin Presley, and Brandon Stephens conducted the memorial service. And while our hearts

ache and our spirits grieve at his leaving, we all look forward to that day when we can be reunited on the shores of sweet deliverance.—Ronny F. Wade

BUTT—Vaughn Lee Butt was born February 19, 1923 and his spirit departed from its tent of flesh some three hours before dawn on November 17, 2002. Vaughn is survived by his wife Doris, sons Darrell and Duane and daughter Jorita and their families. The children and their mates in marriage are all members of the Lord's kingdom. A large number of grandchildren have also already surrendered their lives to the reign of Christ. He is also survived by two sisters, who are members of the kingdom made without hands. Vaughn confessed his faith in Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and was baptized into Christ on February 25, 1935. This was the genesis of a span of some sixty-five plus years as a diligent and faithful member of the Lord's church. Vaughn's earthly sojourn was spent in cultivating and sowing seed in the soil of the created earth and in cultivating and sowing seed in the soil of those created in the image of God relying on God to give the increase. The manifestation of this was overtly clear in the double line of neighbors, friends, family and brethren that stretched far beyond the walls of the funeral home and took the immediate family six hours to receive. This double line stood patiently in the cool evening weather waiting to express their sympathy, respect and support. It was evident that the message of salvation and hope we shared with our departed brother, was one that he lived better, than I can preach. We, the passing should be encouraged and made more mindful of the faith by the lives of brethren that have been diligent in responsibility of family, work and church guided by the faith once delivered. Furthermore, to see such lives have gained the respect of their fellows, while known in the community for their uncompromising conviction regarding the truth of heaven should not leave us unmoved in our faith. The spiritual legacy was underlined by the host of grandchildren that have given allegiance to the Lord on high. The words spoken focused on family life that develops responsibility through love, wisdom and everyday consciousness of the word of God, as seen in the life of Vaughn's family. The message focused on the Bible view of death and that the children of God sorrow in death, but not as others do without hope. The living were admonished to prepare for their day of death by realizing their only hope of eternal life is in Christ. Therefore, men need to search the very depths of their being and search the word of God and obey the gospel, so they can be confident through the Lord in the day of their death or in the day of the Lord's return, which ever be first. Brothers Brian Burns, Ron Courter, Walter Hunter and Miles King participated in the services and a number of brethren sang songs of praise and hope.

WHITWORTH – Lynda Whitworth left this world for her reward early Lord's Day morning, October 6, 2002, at the age of 56. She is survived by her husband, Mike; 3 children: Cammie, Erika, and Daniel; four grandchildren; her parents: Clayton and Bonnie Fancher, and her brother and sister, Rodney and Karen. Lynda was a wonderful Christian woman, known and loved greatly by Christians all over the world. A crowd of approximately 350 people gathered on October 9th for her "going home service." The singing by several members of the church was beautiful, comforting, and uplifting. John Pruitt read the obituary and prayed, Bob Loudermilk delivered the eulogy, and Daniel Whitworth (Mike and Lynda's son) shared some humorous and touching memories of his mother. Lynda was known for many good things, including hospitality, visiting the sick, encouraging people, and going the second mile to serve anyone needing help. During her illness and after her departure, her family received numerous cards, calls, or visits from people whose lives had been impacted in some significant way by this precious servant of the Lord. Lynda accomplished many things in her 56 years on this earth. She married a Christian man and, together, they built a strong, successful Christian home and raised three wonderful children who are all Christians. She worked diligently in serving the members of the Heartland congregation in Wichita, Kansas where she was a member. She accompanied her husband, Mike, in mission trips to Russia. With a college degree in education, Lynda could have pursued a career as a school teacher. She chose a different path instead and decided early on to put all of her energies into building a Christian home and serving her brothers and sisters in Christ. I'm reminded of what Paul wrote about Phoebe, 'I commend to you our sister Phoebe a servant of the church'.... she has been a great help to many people, including me" (Romans 16:3). This passage summarizes Lynda's life so well: "a servant of the church..." and "a great help to many people." Her son, Daniel, said it well: "She wasn't just ours; she was everybody's." I was very honored to be a part of this special memorial service for such a dear friend and a great servant of our Lord. – Bob Loudermilk

A Fitting Tribute To Dwight Patton

When my wife informed me that my friend and co-worker in the church was seriously ill and might die, I was alarmed and dismayed. "NO, NO ... we need him," was my first thought. Those of you who knew Dwight Lee Patton of the Chapel Grove congregation in Tennessee will readily understand my feelings of panic.

Dwight was one of those people who seemed to be able to be everywhere and do many jobs at the same time. No matter the chore, he would look at me with a twinkle in his eye and say "I'll get it done." And I

knew that he would. How easy it was for me to serve as an elder alongside this bundle of energy. When the lung disease (pulmonary fibrosis) progressed, although he retired from his secular job on disability, he never slowed the church work. Dwight just pulled along his oxygen tank and kept on going.

Dwight was ordained as an elder at Chapel Grove on a cold January Sunday in 1997, and soon he proved to be a leader of extra-ordinary talents. He held leadership studies for the young men in his home on Monday nights. Today Chapel Grove is blessed with several young men that are very capable to fill the pulpit and edify the congregation. On any given Sunday, 2-3 of these men are usually dispatched to the surrounding area to support smaller churches.

His genuine love for people could build you up and raise your spirits with just a handshake and warm smile. In all the years that we shared together (along with Fred Orten) the duties of leading the church, we never exchanged a cross word. Although, we disagreed on many occasions, Dwight always made me to feel valued, esteemed, and much loved. Dwight knew how to disagree without being disagreeable.

Another area where Dwight shined was in hospitality. I feel it is safe to say that his home was unsurpassed in this area, and it was never more evident than during our annual Labor Day Meetings. How many folks do you know that will empty the furniture from several rooms of their home to make room for wall-to-wall sleeping bags. At times his home sheltered, comforted, filled the stomachs and fed the souls of more than 60 guests. He never turned anyone away. Even when they arrived in the wee hours of the morning, he and Reba would crawl out of their bed and give it to guests; while Dwight crunched down in a chair and his wife on the floor. We home folks fretted and worried when he began to look pale before the meeting closed.

I am writing this tribute not only to honor a great leader, but in hope that someone who is discouraged and down-hearted might be inspired and uplifted by Dwight's wonderful example. While some folks miss church services for the slightest ache or pain, Dwight attended Sunday worship the last time running a fever and leaning heavily on his oxygen tank. Even that day, his zeal and enthusiasm was contagious.

His Maker summoned him on Monday November 18 and Chapel Grove is still reeling from the loss. We all loved this man and he returned that love in full measure. Now, we must interpret God's decision as His confidence in us that we can go on without him, (II Samuel 3:38) "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"

Sincerely, Ronald Long

WARREN, MAUDIE IDA – Wednesday afternoon, December 9, 2002, a few brethren and sisters in Christ, friends, and neighbors gathered together at the cemetery in Odessa, Texas to

remember and pay their respects to one that had lived among men for 90 years, 5 months and five days. Before she died, she had requested, I was told, that I say a few words at her funeral and I was honored to do so. No one knew of any other family members living, so her extended family, the church, was there to say good bye to their beloved sister in Christ. Brother Al Baze gathered singers from Midland and Odessa to sing a few of her favorite songs. She and her husband, also deceased, were baptized into Christ by Brother Bob O'Rear while working with the church in Odessa. We reverence her because of the tender memories that we have of her and it was with heavy hearts that we consigned her body to its original element, while understanding that her spirit is in the hands of God, as the Scriptures declare "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7) She was a frail, funny and sweet lady who did what every Christian ought to do, she: "Thought more about other's welfare, than her own" Phil. 2-4) May God help all of us to emulate her wonderful spirit in this regard. -C. A. Smith

LAWSON-Betty Mae Lawson, born June 29, 1929 departed this life October 18, 2002 at Freeman hospital in Neosho, Missouri following a year long illness. Betty was a real fighter all the way but always said whatever the outcome she was ready for life or death. Her Loving Husband Roscoe Lawson, five daughters, and two sons, survive her. I must also mention the host of family and grandchildren as well that came to show their love for this beautiful lady. The service was held in Neosho October 22, 2002 at the Clark Funeral Home. The singing was so wonderful and well selected for Betty who loved to hear our brethren sing of the Lord and things of Heaven. Many came to support the family and say goodnight to this woman of many talents. Betty was unique in that she possessed the ability to put a smile on even the pruned faces of the most disgruntled, and drag a warm hug from even the coldest disposition of heart. The Sunday services were lifted up a notch or two when Betty walked in to bring her morning grace of smiles and freshness. The young folks always took note when Betty walked in the room for they found a unique warmth that wasn't to be found among most. Visitors may have forgotten the sermon, but none ever seem to forget that little woman that gave them a reason to come back and visit. I found it easy to comfort the family as Betty had already preached the sermon for me by the life she lived and the way she served others first. On Wednesday we traveled to Iowa to conduct the graveside services for the family and friends that knew her best long before she came to bless us in Neosho. What a host of folks that gathered at both locations to testify of her mark in life for the cause of the Lord above all else. -Roger L. Owens, Neosho, Missouri



Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811 Springfield, MO 65808 rf Wade@getatlas.com Jan. 15 - The last part of 2002 was very productive and enjoyable for us as we labored in the vineyard of the Lord. The meeting at Stockton, CA was especially gratifying since it had been years since I had been there. I made my home with James and Loretta Mason, who treated me royally. A number of preachers attended making the meeting all the more meaningful for me. Among them Don King, Alan Bonifay, Bennie Cryer, Greg Gay, and Matt Hayes. Next we were at Liberty, Ky then on to Washington, Ok and finally Dothan, Al for the annual New year meeting. This year's meeting was a great success. Eighteen States were represented, with the majority of the people being from the South. We look forward to an even greater meeting next year, Lord willing. We were with the Oyster Bay church near Crawfordsville, FL Jan. 2-6. Our TV program runs in this area and we were able to visit a number of the leads that have come in from that. Brother Mark Deatherage works among them, and prospects look promising for future growth. Nine outsiders attended the meeting. Next we are scheduled to go to Lebanon, MO Jan 24-26, Lee Summit, near Lebanon Feb. 14-16, Arlington, TX Feb. 21-23, Shreveport, LA March 5-9, Ardmore, OK March 12-16, and Mitchell, IN March 27-30. Here at home the work continues well. Our crowds have grown so that we have to put out folding chairs almost every Sunday morning. Three have been baptized in the recent past. The Lord bless his people and their efforts everywhere.

C. A. Smith, 810 NW 6th St., Andrews, TX 79714 casmith810Aol.Com - God showered His love, grace, mercy, and blessed us abundantly here in Andrews throughout 2002, and we foresee much more of the same in 2003. For this, we are indeed thankful, and plan to glorify Him in word, thought and deed. None here would ever say that God is not gracious and good, for we have trusted, tested, and tried Him, and we know that Our God is true. Our humble prayer for the year 2003 is that every barrier that divides the body will fall, that all the tensions that have troubled us in the past will be no more, and that we will all work together with God, to the up-building of the Kingdom of our Lord, so that we can do and be what Christ prayed for us to do and be, when He prayed in John 17:22 ... "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Should my dear wife and I live until Feb. 14, 2003, we will celebrate our fiftieth anniversary. I have truly learned that it takes time, dedication and patience to make a home that is pleasing to almighty God and I must say that every effort we put in to making such, was well worth it. I recently read three

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quips from a paper that I receive that are humorous, but have thoughts that we need to ponder. "Whether a man winds up with a nest egg, or a goose egg depends on the chick he married." "The woman's work that's never done is most likely what she asked her husband to do." Then there is this one: Wife - "Do you love me still?" Husband - "Yes, better than any other way." May God bless the marriages of His people that they too may find the joy and happiness that Iva Jo and I have found.

Douglas T. Hawkins 3711 Castlewood Ct Somerset, KY 42503 - (606) 678-4347 - hawkins@kih.net January 10, 2002 - I'm really looking forward to another year of meetings. My schedule will get under way in the month of February and will be steady throughout the year. While home these few months, I'm working to study with some of the families in our area. I returned home from the Alabama New Year's meeting. It was well attended and very well conducted. It was very enjoyable. We pray God's blessings to be with us all for this coming year.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303 (334) 678-8999 January 2, 2003 With the past year and all of its heartaches left behind we are looking forward to a new beginning. The year 2002 was a difficult year for our congregation because of some unfortunate events. We lost one in death and had some to move to other areas. However, we remain encouraged by growth we have seen from this community as a result of our local television work. Two Lord's Days ago we assisted an elderly Baptist woman in obedience to the gospel. She has been watching the program for several years and recently made contact with us and was converted. Also, we had an older couple take their stand for scriptural worship this fall and they are proving faithful. We have a lot of work to do however in the coming year, and with God's help we hope to accomplish all that we plan. Our next gospel meeting is Feb. 23-Mar. 2 with Johnny Elmore. We are already looking forward to it. My meetings ended on a positive note in 2002. This fall we were with the churches at Bakersfield, CA (Brundage), Atwater, CA, Trussville, AL, and Lebanon, MO. All of these were well attended and

we found the brethren to be so kind and hospitable in each place. At Lebanon, we assisted two young men in obedience to the gospel, which left everyone encouraged it seemed. Lord willing, I am to begin my meetings in the month of March. I am keeping a more limited number of engagements this year to allow me to concentrate more at home. I am to be in the following places soon; March 23-30, Springfield, MO (Mission Hills); April 6-13, Fieldstone, MO; May 23-25, Ozark, MO; June 1-8, Conway, LA. My family and I hope to see many of you along the way this year. We have just closed our annual New Years Meeting in Dothan this past week. It was a great success again this year. Our crowds reached 315, which is a good showing for our part of the country. The preaching was superb, timely, pointed, and soul stirring. Bro. Ronny Wade did his usual good job in conducting the meeting. Lord willing, the meeting will be held again this year on the same dates, December 27-31. We hope you will go ahead and mark it on your calendar. We look for the meeting to continue to grow and do much good. May the Lord bless all of His in this new year with renewed faith, determination, and optimism.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mtn. Home, AR, 72654, broebuck@cox-internet.com, Jan. 4 - We just returned from the Alabama New Year's Meeting. Crowds were larger than last year, and we expect it will continue to grow in years to come. Reviving the Alabama meeting was a great idea; we pray for its continued prosperity. The church here has prospered in spiritual growth. I'm thankful to see the leadership working so well. Recently, it was necessary to readjust our schedule of meetings and we were united in desiring men who preach and practice exactly what we need. The younger men have grown quickly in their desire to teach, lead singing, and learning to preside at the Lord's table. In addition to the work here we enjoyed conducting meetings through out the country. The meetings were well attended and we thank God for the opportunities and results. This year our spring schedule is LaGrange, Ga Feb. 5-9, Marietta, Ga March 14-16 and Bandy, KY March 23-30. May the Lord keep us united in faith and practice.

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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. LXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, MARCH 2003

NO. 3

DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH

By DON McCORD

Discipline within the context of I Corinthians 5 and other pertinent passages is the thrust of this undertaking. It is this writer's humble conviction that today there is discipline in the church. We, who make up the church which Christ died for, are not a group of undisciplined renegades, a group of unregenerate ne'er-do-wells. When the contrary is suggested, I cringe with silent, polite resignation; we know better than that. We are not perfect by far, and discipline is an ever-present need, but I know first-hand that the church I am honored to be a member of is not filled with undisciplined members.

That discipline in the church is demanded and exemplified in the Scriptures is evident. We often think of discipline as punitive only; that is., characterized by punishment or chastisement. It is so characterized for sure, but vastly more than punishment in discipline is taught in the Scriptures.

W. E. Vine, in *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, says of "discipline" the following "saving the mind," "an admission or calling to soundness of mind, or to self-control." Under "chastisement" is suggested, training, instruction, "correcting with word, reproof, admonishing," "instruct, learn, teach;" "suggesting discipline that regulates character".

In the College Edition of Webster's *New World Dictionary of the American Language*, we read of "discipline:" "treatment that corrects or punishes," "training that develops self-control, character, or orderliness and efficiency;" "the result of such training, submission to authority and self-control."

Joseph Henry Thayer says in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, "the whole training and education of children;" "whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, esp. by correcting mistakes and curbing the passions; hence, instruction which aims at the increase of virtue"; chastisement, chastening."

In I Corinthians 5, we find a case deserving severe discipline, and we find Paul admonishing the church as to procedure. The sin is fornication, incest, "as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one

should have his father's wife" (v. 1). Instead of mourning, the church is "puffed up" (v. 2). They are "glorying" in the debacle (v. 6). Paul tells them to deliver the guilty one to Satan "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs. 4, 5). They are admonished "with such an one know not to eat" (v. 11); that is, they are forbidden to have a common meal with him. This is most serious business! In my more than 60 years in the church, I have never seen a case like this. I have known of cases of immorality, adultery, fornication, perversion, but none compare with this one. Certainly, the cases just mentioned deserve severe discipline within the context of this chapter, too. We sometimes hear divorce and remarriage considered within the context of the chapter. It is only fair to keep in mind that divorce and remarriage are not being discussed by Paul; neither is mentioned within its context, either by command, example, statement or necessary inference.

Within the context of discipline in the church, let me kindly say that in dealing with divorce and remarriage, and what to do about them, it is this writer's humble conviction, that we have done a pretty poor job; our history the last 40 years proves this, regardless of how we look at Matthew 19:9 and related passages. The tide has not been turned by any group. If we want to form a line of guilty ones in doing a pretty poor job in this matter, this writer will take the first place in line. "Living in adultery," an expression not used in the Scriptures, is used commonly today. In so accusing people, we are liable to charge them with a heinous sin that may not be scripturally substantiated. A serious sin is this, accusing a couple of "living in adultery" when they are not. The church is not full of adulterous unions, resulting in a host of unclean children in the church. Traditions, nowhere taught in the Scriptures, get us off track; let us beware, I humbly beg!

Within the context of I Corinthians 5, I cite an example of what "living in adultery" really is; that is, a man still married to his wife, living with another woman. I am not using the expression "living in adultery" as it is commonly used; I hesitate using it,

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Editorial

CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE

By DON L. KING

In the first Corinthian letter, chapter 13 and verses 4 through 8, Paul majestically lists the characteristics of *agape* love. He said, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

What a description is this! Please notice, that these are not things the Christian has the liberty of taking or refusing. The characteristics are so vital that there is little doubt souls will be lost because these ingredients are lacking. In other words, if we want to go to heaven, these things are going to have to be a part of our character.

"Charity (love) suffereth long." This means that genuine love will cause a Christian to be patient, or long-suffering, as he endures the insults and injuries others thrust against him. How important is this? It is so important that the apostle says that a person who speaks with the tongues of heaven and earth is nothing without this love. (1 Corinthians 13:1) He further said that even if he (Paul) had all the gifts mentioned (in chapter 12) and even if he had the special faith that would allow him to accomplish anything and everything so that nothing would be impossible, even to the moving of mountains, without love he would be nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:2) How humiliating it is to realize we are so often just the opposite. Church trouble would truly be a rare occurrence if we could manage to keep this characteristic active in our lives. He adds, "... and is kind." Authorities tell us this denotes the act of being merciful. Well, of course, we are always merciful to those we love. Why are we sometimes unmerciful? The answer is painfully obvious, isn't it? It should never be the occasion of happiness to be unmerciful to others. That's always wrong.

"Charity envieth not." It is unimaginable to think of being envious toward our child isn't it? We really are given great joy to see our children do well whether in the church or everyday life. What about those who become envious of others who do well in the church? How sad to hear of people who reportedly mistreat brethren, apparently, because of envy. We ought to be happy and rejoice with them in their well doing. A wise man once said, "It would be amazing to see what

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THE NARROW WAY (MATT. 7:13-14)

By GLEN OSBURN

There was a time when the terms "liberal" and "conservative" were used to talk about how one viewed the inspiration, inerrancy and authority of the Scriptures. Now, however, it appears that these terms are being used in some political or social sense to label or brand those who would adhere, or refuse to adhere, to some religious cultural customs. Let's take a look at how we use these words and the concepts to which we have attached these labels.

Religiously, we could say that one is "conservative" if one keeps a tradition in accordance with biblical authority. If there is NO New Testament command, binding example or implication of authority for a habitual practice then a practice could be said to be "customary" but not binding (i.e. cloth over the communion table). If, however, someone begins binding a custom that has no biblical authority, they become "liberal" regardless of how conservative their motive might be. If the legislator no longer feels bound by the limits or constraints of biblical authority – that person has become "liberal."

Are the Amish "conservative?" Just because some may call themselves "conservative" does not mean that they, in fact, are. Consider the Amish or the Mennonite movements. No one questions whether they are culturally conservative, they are. But are they "religiously" conservative? You would probably say "Yes" if the scope of your question is all "religious movements." The Amish obviously bind or put limits upon themselves that most religions do not. "But," someone might assert, "aren't they 'biblically' conservative?" The answer must be "No," for they bind things upon men that the Bible does not (beards, black clothing, asceticism, etc.). When a person deviates from the Bible in religious authority they lose the right to be called, or call themselves, religiously "conservative." They may, unquestionably, be culturally conservative, but not biblically conservative.

Was Jesus "liberal?" If your criterion is violating human tradition and custom, then the answer is "Yes." He chided the scribes and Pharisees for binding some long-standing cultural customs classifying them as "the commandments of men" (Mark 7:6-7). Jesus took what looked like a "liberal" stance when He refused to order His disciples to obey the "traditions of the elders" (Mark 7:3, also Matt. 15:2-20). But, no matter how long the Jews had been practicing these traditions or how entrenched they were in their culture, they were not God's commands. Jesus severely condemned their presumption to legislate for God: "He answered and said to them, 'Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" (Mark 7:6-7).

Was Jesus "liberal?" No! In reality we would call

Jesus "conservative" for reproving the Pharisees for binding their uninspired traditions, and for demanding their submission to Scriptural authority (Mark 7:9-13). His refusal to go along with their uninspired opinions and customs proved His allegiance to the "word of God" (Mark 7:13). At times we too must take unpopular stands, regardless of what we may be labeled, in defense of the truth.

Can one be "too" conservative? If we are talking about keeping something that the Scriptures bind, then "No." We must devoutly keep that which God enjoins upon us to keep. This, for lack of a better term, is religiously conservative. If, however, we are talking about binding something that the Scriptures do NOT bind (i.e. circumcision, holy days, cultural traditions, etc.), then "Yes," one can be "too" conservative. Those who are "more conservative" religiously than God are wrong. Often those who bind human traditions like to think of themselves as "ultra-conservative" (such as the Amish, and Jewish leadership at the time of Christ), even though they have gone beyond the boundaries of the Word of God. The Pharisees protection of Jewish culture (their form of conservatism) helped blind them to the truths of Christ (Matt. 23:16-19).

To illustrate; let's say a congregation decides that it will limit its fellowship to only those who use the King James Version. Regardless of how they would view it, they have developed (or agreed upon) a "creed" and bind something that they have no biblical authority to require. (You cannot justify unscriptural legislation by appealing to congregational autonomy.) They may view their regulation as "conservative" but their lack of submission to the limits of biblical authority has actually made them "liberal." They defeat the very cause they are trying to defend.

The Bible warns in 2 John 9 (NASB), "Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son." When one "goes too far" (Strong's #4254) one "does not have God." In reality then, one is neither "conservative" or "liberal," one is either abiding "in the teaching of Christ" or "not." To put it another way, the Bible does not speak of "conservative" or "liberal" Christians, just obedient or sinning ones (1 Cor. 11:2, 17, James 2:9). Though the Bible does not use the words "liberal" or "conservative," the Bible definitely addresses the concepts these words represent. The Bible uses the word "heretic" meaning a "divisive" or "factious" person (Titus 3:10). W.E. Vine goes on to say this word (and its derivatives) applies to someone who would create strife and division based on: "an opinion," especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division and the formation of sects, Gal 5:20 (marg., "parties"); such erroneous opinions are frequently the outcome of personal preference or the prospect of advantage; see 2 Peter 2: 1, where "destructive" (RV) signifies leading to ruin...(b) "a sect;" this secondary meaning,

resulting from (a), is the dominating significance in the NT, Acts 5:17; 15:5; 24:5,14; 26:5; 28:22; "heresies" in I Cor. 11: 19 (from *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, Copyright (c) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers).

We need to "hold fast" (I Cor. 15:2) to the doctrine of Christ and resist the human tendency to want the power to legislate our preferences where God has not ("adds to" – Rev. 22:18), or to loose where God has indeed legislated ("takes away from" – Rev. 22:19). Digression can, and does, appear in either form. The "winds of change" blow in both directions. You can "drift away" (Heb. 2: 1) from the point of truth in any direction. The path of truth is "narrow" (Matt 7:13-14) and when one steps off either side of the path of righteousness, "to the right or to the left" (Deut. 5:32), they have gone astray (I Pet. 2:25).

Brethren today who appeal for all things to be done according to "the pattern" (Heb. 8:5; Phil. 3:17) should be referring to the Bible's authority for that pattern. Those who appeal for us not to abandon ancient "landmarks" (Job 24:2) should be referring to "landmarks" that the Bible enjoins, not customs that have their beginning in post biblical history. Those who appeal to "the old paths" (Jer. 6:16) should be referring to the Bible, not this paper, nor the customs or culture of one's parents, grandparents or great-grandparents – regardless of how sanctified and courageous they may have been. The historic leaders of the church are worthy of admiration if their appeal and practice supported submission to, and a reverence for, the Bible's authority. Our loyalty to Christ must supersede our respect for our parents, our preachers, our "pastors," or our predecessors (Matt. 10:37). We must all bow before Jesus (Phil. 2: 10).

We are tempted in every generation to venerate the customs we are familiar with, like the Jews in Jesus' time and the Amish today. But when it comes to pleasing God and defending the traditions that He wants us to keep (I Cor. 11: 1-2, 23), we must appeal to the authority of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17). We persistently ask others to submit to this appeal, we would be hypocrites not to do so ourselves. To do otherwise is to compromise the authority of the Word of God, and that is in fact "liberal."

Let us always remember, "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD" (Proverbs 17:15).

THE LAST WORD – JER. 6:16

By ROBERT KORNEQAY

Throughout our history, we as a people have often rallied behind "catchy" battle cries.

Phrases seem to motivate us with extra encouragement or give us a sense of purpose or a reason for our actions. "Remember The Alamo" and "9-11" are two that most everyone has heard.

I suppose it is for reasons like these that the battle

cry of the church today most spoken is *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. Jer. 6:16.* Certainly because this advice is from the Lord is reason enough to cry this phrase from every roof top.

Today I am afraid many of our younger generations do not understand what we mean when we quote this great phrase. I am afraid many of our own are getting caught up in the quote rather than the meaning or the message behind it. The denominational world did much the same a few years back with my personal favorite "Jesus Saves." Everyone was saying it, and it seemed it was printed every where you looked. (Car bumpers, billboards, road signs, etc.) Well, of course Jesus saves, but the sad thing about it is, most all who marched around proclaiming "Jesus Saves" did not have a clue how He saves or why it is important for Him to save. Most all who said it never got any benefit from it. What a shame. It is for this reason I write this article, so our young or unlearned will not follow the same course.

First of all, asking for the old paths today is not always a good thing. There are several laws that were changed throughout time by God himself. But rest assured, dear reader, that when God changes a law he always notifies mankind and informs us of the changes. He always gives us specific instructions through His Word- and we are never left in the dark concerning his will. Please consider these examples with me.

#1. *In Ex. 7:1* Moses was given instructions from God to smite the rock for water. After a period of time God later told Moses to speak to the rock for water (*Num.20:7-8*) We all remember the disobedience of Moses kept him from entering into the promise land. Moses could have cried out that he was just asking for the old paths but he would have been using the phrase out of context. Besides, when God gives a new law concerning an old situation it is always the latest law that God expects us to obey. It is His last word on the subject.

#2. Tithes- I suppose nothing has been more corrupted throughout history than tithing. A quick look in the years 1300-1500 AD will reveal that not only did the government want to get in on it, but it lead to the selling of penance by the catholic church. What started out as a simple way to finance the Levites and the tabernacle (*Lev. 27:30-33* and *Num. 18:21-28*) turned into hatred and death for those who opposed and exposed the corruption. (burning at the stake, gallows, etc.)

While it is still practiced today by many denominations, God has given us a new law to replace tithing. *1 Cor 16:1-2* Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Again in 2 *Cor* 9:6-7 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

This, my friends, is the last word from God on the subject so we are obliged to obey it. While it is true many (most) denominations still cry "ask for the old paths-you must tithe" we, being better informed and honest, know that our old path is to heed *1 Cor* 16:1-2 and 2 *Cor* 9:6-7.

#3. Under the old law, murder and adultery were strictly forbidden. Those who never murdered or committed the act of adultery under that dispensation were held blameless even though they might have felt in their hearts the desire to do so. How times have changed! Jesus, realizing that man needed to progress spiritually, put into effect a new law when He spoke the following: *Matt* 5:27-28 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. and *Matt* 5:21-22 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council- but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

The minute He spoke those words *Ex* 20: 13-14 became obsolete. No longer could anyone claim "ask for the old paths" of the old law because Jesus had secured a new "old path" for us to follow. Jesus gave a replacement law that is binding on us even today because it is the last word on the subject.

#4. Another replacement law that we have concerns the "Lord's Day," our day of worship. For years and years the children of Israel kept the sabbath as they were commanded. Today there is a large group holding on to that outdated "old path" completely ignoring the examples and commands that we have on this subject. (*1 Cor* 16:1-2: *Acts* 20:7: *John* 20:19 etc.)

It would be foolish for us to go back in time a few years and try to live our lives according to the laws of our government (United States). We all understand that congress and our state governments are constantly updating and changing the laws of the land. Could you imagine trying to explain to a judge that you broke a current law because it was not unlawful back in 1952. How fast would he tell you that you are bound by the current law, no matter what the law was fifty years ago? No one can dispute this reasoning with our common laws of the land. We all need to understand that we should use the same logic and common sense with the laws of God. It is always the last word from God that we are to obey.

#5. The veil: How different would our worship services look today if our women kept the custom of wearing the veil? I know there are religions today that still enforce the veil but what is God's last word on the subject? Women are given their long (uncut) hair for a covering (*1 Cor* 11: 15). Paul tells us that when a woman prays to God she needs to be covered (vs 13), and if she is not, it is a dishonor to her head (vs 5&6) and a shame. Verse 15 does away with the veil custom and gives women a new law that they have to live by. Their uncut hair relieves them of wearing a veil. Therefore the last word on this subject is for women to have uncut hair.

#6. Our last example of an old law being replaced by a new law is in the use of instrumental music. Certainly no one can argue that musical instruments were used long ago (*1 Chron* 15:16; 23:5, 2 *Chron* 5:13; 7:6; 29:26-27, *Isa* 23:16). Again, it is not our purpose to deny this was an "old path" once used. Our issue on this subject is that we were given a replacement law (*Amos* 6:1-23, *1 Cor* 14:15, *Eph* 5:19) and therefore we were given a new "old path" to follow. One cannot claim "authority" today by using an outdated law. We have to follow the most current law because it is the last word on the subject.

As I mentioned before, I am very thankful that when God changes a law He always informs us. That way, we are never in doubt about His will for mankind. With a formula of finding out the last word on any subject we can all be secure about God's feelings towards that particular subject. That is why we cry "ask for the old paths" no matter how much man may try to add to or take away from God's word. We cry out "ask for the old paths" because it is God's last word. Consider the following.

#1. The Lord's Supper: One does not have to go back very far to find out when the Churches of Christ first started using individual communion cups. G.C. Brewer admitted that he thought he was the first Church of Christ preacher to advocate their use after "a good many fights from his own brethren." The first Church of Christ to use them was the Central Church of Christ in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The next one was in Fayetteville, Tennessee and then Murfreesboro, Tennessee. G.C. Brewer was fought both privately and publicly when "several brethren took me to the task in the religious papers and called me digressive." However, in 1915, David Lipscomb wrote a short paragraph in the *Gospel Advocate* saying that he had changed his view in reference to the communion cup and that he did not believe it was any digression or a corruption to use as many as one wanted. In their opinions it settled the matter and brought the controversy to an end. (their words not RWK, pages xii and xiii, *Forty Years on The Firing Line*) Frankly, no opinion could be farther from the truth. We must cry out "ask for the old paths" and find out what God's last word is on the subject. The last word is the apostle Paul telling me to imitate him as he is imitating Christ (*1 Cor* 11. 1) Verses 23-

28 plainly tell me that Christ took a cup, gave thanks, supped, and told me "this do ye". Brothers and Sisters, I know how to imitate that. BY DOING THE SAME THING THAT JESUS DID! We do not need G.C. Brewer's or David Lipscomb's last word on this subject, theirs matters not. The only word that matters is that of the holy scriptures-God's word.

#2. Women Teachers: Today, this subject is fastly becoming the most neglected of God's word. By that I mean, people today will readily agree what the Bible has to say about the woman's role in teaching. However, they are quick to reply that: 1. That teaching is outdated (only for that period of time), or 2. Paul was a male chauvinist and it really is not the way God feels about it, or 3. Even though the Bible teaches against women teaching in the worship service or publicly there is nothing wrong with it. I suppose there may be more arguments that people use, but generally most proponents of women teachers fall into one of these three categories.

I feel that nothing seems more strange than when I hear of a "woman preacher" or "woman pastor". When two words are put together that are completely opposite of each other it is called an oxymoron. Certainly when I read scriptures like the following no term could be more appropriate for a "women preacher" than oxymoron. *1 Cor 14:33-35* 33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. 34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. 35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church and *1 Tim 2:11-12* 11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

Yet as we mentioned above there are women today that put God's last word aside and reach out for the authority and leadership that God designed for the man. How sad it is that God's last word on this subject is not good enough for some women. But as we know the nature of those that are unruly, they make up excuses for what they want to do despite what God tells us we should be doing.

We readily admit there were many good women who are excellent examples to be followed. Lois and Eunice are prime examples to be imitated by the Christian woman, mother and grandmother (*2 Timothy 1:5 & 3:14-15*). Other women as Dorcas (*Acts 9:36*), Priscilla (*Acts 18:26 & Romans 16:3*), The Daughters of Phillip (*Acts 21:8-9*), Lydia of Thyatira (*Acts 16:14*), Phoebe, Prisca, Mary "who bestowed much labor on you," Tryphena and Tryphosa, Persis, Julia, and the sister of Nereus (*Romans 16:1,3,6,12,15*) certainly were instrumental in the success of the early church. Even Phoebe (*Romans 16:1*) who Paul labeled as "a servant of the church" and "a helper of many" would be an

excellent example for a woman to follow today. But, can any one of us today say that any of these women over-stepped their boundaries, their limitations, that God gave them in *1 Tim. 2:11-12* and *1 Cor. 14:33-35*? I think not. These women were filled with God's Word and they worked within that sphere. We urge our women today to do the same.

3. Marriage within the church: It seems that the attitude of some today is that there was once a time that it was OK for God's people to inter-marry with those with foreign beliefs. Dear Readers, let me make it perfectly clear. There was never a time that God allowed or approved of his people to intermarry with different religions. One only has to study the reason for the children of Israel's captivity, their return to Jerusalem (*Ezra*) to understand God's hatred of this practice (*Malachi 2:11 & Nehemiah 13:23-27*). Yet there are many who will neglect the new testament scriptures and continue in this awful sin. What exactly is the last Word we have on this subject?

As far as I can tell, the apostle Paul was the last one to deal with this subject. Evidently there were some in the church in Corinth who questioned Paul about it. (Both Corinthian letters seem to deal with concerns they had questioned Paul about) In his first letter he wrote them in *1 Cor 6:15-16* Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh and in *1 Cor 7:39* The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

It seems that this answer was too vague for them, or it was not the answer they wanted so it appears they asked him again. (This certainly seems in line with the history of God's people. Even though God had repeatedly warned them not to inter-marry. *Deut. 7:1-6; Exodus 23:31-33*;) So Paul addresses this subject again in *2 Cor 6:14-17* Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath 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 walk in them-, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. Who that is honest among us can doubt this last Word from God? These words were written around AD 50-60. Until I hear differently from God, I am bound to abide by it and bound to preach it, because it is his last Word on this subject.

Can we today proclaim "ask for the old paths"? Certainly. For the true Christian there is no other battle cry. However, let us all understand that when we shout

this phrase, we need to use it where God has given his last Word on a subject.

SPRING

By GREG GAY

Following the cold, dark and dormant winter comes the tender shoots of grass, flowers, buds and blossoms to announce to the world: "It's spring!" What a wonderful time of the year (except perhaps for those among us with allergies).

In our little flowerbed by our front door we have daffodils and tulips. As the end of winter nears you can see the first few shoots start to emerge from the ground. Then, they almost leap daily in response to the sunshine. And, before you know it they are blooming with the colors of spring.

Daniel writes, "he changeth the times and the seasons" (Dan. 2:2 1) so we know springtime does not happen by accident or evolution. It is one of God's appointments for the earth.

Springtime is a time of celebration of survival of the winter. It was also, in my growing up years, a time for airing out the house. You could actually open a door and leave it open on a few sunny mornings and afternoons where just days before you rushed to shut the door against the cold.

Springtime as I was growing up was also a time for preparing for the next winter. We always plowed the ground for a garden to plant vegetables. We had to get the garden planted so the plants would have time to produce their crop so we would be able to eat from them while it was summer and preserve what we could by canning or freezing to eat the following winter. The smell of freshly plowed earth evokes special childhood memories for me even today and is a reminder of spring. Solomon wrote: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted (Eccl. 3:1-2).

Springtime is all of these things: a time of awakening, a time of renewal, a time of celebration.

No wonder Heaven has been compared to springtime. There we will be changed from the mortal, corruptible bodies we now possess to the immortal, incorruptible body God has planned for us.

Paul talks about that wonderful change in: 1 Cor 15:51-54

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the

saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Let this season of renewal be a reminder of the springtime of eternity that awaits all of us at the judgment and let us be faithfully looking forward to that time.

Paul and Barnabas described God in a wonderful way to those who did not know him: Acts 14:15,17 "...the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: ... he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Let us be thankful for the Giver of the seasons who fills our hearts with food and gladness.

Thank God for spring!

DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH

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because it is not used in the Scriptures. For sure, there is such a thing as so living, but we need to be "sure of our ground" when we so accuse. I hear people accused from time to time, and without scriptural basis; this, I humbly aver, bothers me. Now, to the example to which I referred. While in a meeting near the brother, a real example of "living in adultery." I deemed it my duty to see him. He is a long time friend, brother in Christ, whom I love dearly, admittedly in deep spiritual trouble. I felt I must see him, and help if I could. Two more brothers felt the same. We knocked at his door, he graciously met us outside, and very politely, upon our questioning if it were a good time to see him, told us it was not, but that he would see us the next day. The next day, one of the brethren and I returned to see him. Again, we met him outside, and retired to a park nearby. Our brother admitted that he was an adulterer, that if he died then he would be lost, and that he held no bitterness toward the congregation where he was a member., for disciplining him, that the brethren did what they had to do. I admired him greatly for his attitude. We talked, reasoned, cried together, and prayed together. We could not eat with him as in former days. We parted with unforgettable regrets. Dear Reader, you have just read a scriptural case of "living in adultery", within the context of I Corinthians 5, one of the saddest scenarios we can read.

Other references relating to discipline in the church follow. In Matthew 18:15-17 is outlined the procedure a brother is to pursue in the discipline of a brother who has trespassed against him. In Romans 16:17-20 is the procedure in disciplining those "which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine". They are to be avoided. They are not to be "buddies with", nonetheless not counted as an enemy, but admonished as a brother (2 Thess. 3:14-15). In Galatians 6:1, Paul writes of a man "overtaken in a fault." He is to be disciplined by those "which are spiritual," who are to restore him "in the spirit of meekness," the restorer as the disciplinarian is to consider himself lest he be tempted, too. In 2 Thess. 2:6-11, Paul gives instructions about disciplining of "every brother that

walketh disorderly," we are to "withdraw your (our) selves." From the context, the disorderly walker is one who will not work, and is a busybody. Paul admonishes, as part of the discipline procedure, the disorderly walker, too, "that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." This is self-discipline, correction following admonition.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:14, Paul mentions four kinds of Christians and suggests measures whereby to discipline. The unruly are to be warned; yes, this is discipline. The weak are to be supported; again, this is discipline. The feeble minded or discouraged are to be comforted; disciplined, yes. Patience toward all is to be exercised; discipline?— we might ask. Certainly, this is discipline. Again, there is such a thing as self-discipline, which may after all be the most difficult to enforce.

I blush to mention the following In conclusion, it needs to be addressed, nonetheless. We sometimes are faced with congregations in the same locality, worshiping scripturally, exactly alike, using preachers for meetings who are in fellowship with one another, and the congregations engage in a boycott strategy, not attending one another's meetings, in the name of discipline. Irresponsible statements such as, "We are not in fellowship with them" are heard. For such there is no scriptural precedent; that a congregation worshiping right, using faithful men as preachers, is ignored by other congregations is unheard of in the Scriptures. When Paul was correcting Corinth, certainly corrections had, to be made, but he never, based on the inspired record, told other congregations to "disfellowship" them, even though, remember, they were puffed up" about that incestuous and fornicating man and woman among them.

The seven churches of the Revelation must have been worshiping right, or Christ would have gone on record correcting them, but in spite of all the things wrong, he never instructed a congregation to have nothing to do with certain other congregations. Surely, had this been the right thing to do, He would have commanded it.

Yes, discipline in the church, demand it, exercise it, preach it, practice it. Let us know what we are doing, and do it! Yea, verily..

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

could be accomplished if no one cared who got the credit." It appears that a lack of love is at fault, eh?

(Love) "is not puffed up." Scholars tell us this means one who is not conceited.

We must be careful about thinking too highly of ourselves. It shows, and betrays a lack of love.

(Love) "doth not behave itself unseemly." Never does a person with a heart full of love for his brother behave toward him dishonorably. He just does not go about to hurt his brother. No disgraceful actions come from feelings of love. We have all been hurt to hear of harsh things having been said about us, or to us, unjustly. Wherein is the fault? Love is too little or missing altogether.

"Seeketh not her own." This just means we would never work undercover in order to gain an advantage over a brother or sister. You see, love will even do away with so-called "hidden agendas."

"Is not easily provoked." It goes without saying that it is much easier to keep our tempers in check when speaking with those we really love. We are often quick to be irritated or angry, and speak harshly to those we claim to love. In fact, we have all known those with whom we are reluctant to discuss matters because they are given to anger. Among God's people this should never be the case.

"Thinketh no evil." This characteristic will help us refrain from making false charges against others because we just don't want to believe they could be guilty. Does this mean we overlook sin? Not at all, but we are not likely to surmise they are guilty because we refuse to think evil of them. When a brother is found to be guilty of sin appropriate action must be taken, of course.

(Love) "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." What a bitter pill this is for those who have learned to dislike someone to the point of actually feeling glad to see the person either do wrong, or make mistakes. Love never causes one to behave in such a fashion. Rather, love causes the person to be happy because his brother has done well. If his brother is experiencing joy, he does also.

Remember, brethren, these are things that will cause us to be lost eternally. It is, of course, soul condemning to be immoral, tell lies or live in a sinful manner. However, this is a matter on the positive side with which we absolutely MUST comply in order to be saved. Think on these things. DLK (More next month)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank You From Lynwood Smith

I wish I could meet each of you and thank you. Your cards, letters, phone calls and prayers were well received and accomplished an enduring purpose during my recent spell of sickness. It was obvious that they were not picked at random, for the verses were so appropriate and suitable and meaningful. I could never fully answer them all, so please allow me via this means to thank you from a tender and grateful heart. Your love and concern shall not be soon forgotten. May the Lord bless you all and preserve you unto His heavenly Kingdom. — As ever, Just, Lynwood

Preacher Needed

We at the Hartwell congregation at Huntsville, AR are looking for a full time preacher. We need someone who can help us train our young men as teachers, and help us out in our personal work also. Contacts: Paul Gifford 479-738-2402 Clifton Wood 479-738-1510

Sulphur, OK Camp Meeting

The annual meeting will be held JUNE 26 – JULY 4, 2003 with Brothers Joe Hisle and Wayne McKamie

conducting the meeting. For more information, please contact Bob Shepard (580)622-3950; Don Stehr (580)622-5556; George Hill (580)622-2779. Make your plans to now to attend.

Church Directory-Tulsa, OK

Effective March 1, 2003, the 11th St. Acres Church of Christ in Tulsa, OK will change its Sunday afternoon meeting time to 3:00 PM. All other directory information remains the same.

Opposition TO Carnal Warfare List

The list of names for this public announcement is growing. Lord willing, we will publish a statement of opposition to carnal warfare in the next issue which will be April. If you wish to have your name listed, please send it right away with your objections stated. Please include your complete address. If the national draft should ever be reinstated and you go before the draft board to apply for a conscientious objector's classification, it will be wise for you to have made public your objections prior to your application. DLK

Thank You From Old Paths Advocate

Recently, we have been blessed with several donations to help pay for foreign subscriptions and it couldn't have come at a better time. We have quite a number of new names from foreign lands who wish to receive the paper. Also, several have sent in new subscriptions and renewals some of which are from more than one year each. Keep up the good work! The paper does so much good in our foreign works that we simply must keep it going to them. We receive letters from foreign preachers who tell of getting sermon material from the articles which they pass along to the congregations. We don't want to overlook the good that can be done in America, however. Our brethren need the paper too. Please, remind your brethren to renew or subscribe today. Thanks again for all the financial help you sent, it is needed and being used strictly for sending the paper out. Please keep in mind that none of us who work to publish the paper have ever received a single penny for our work. It is purely a work of love for the brotherhood. DLK



Fifty Years Together

Harvey and Bertie Hammonds of Houston, TX, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on April 3, 2003. They have been faithful members of the Church in Houston, TX for many years. Harvey and

Bertie have been known over the years for their generous Christian hospitality. Harvey retired from the United States Post Office after 28 years, and served as an Elder at the old Aurora Street congregation (now Fairbanks) for approximately 6 years. In the early years of their marriage, Bertie taught school. She later resigned herself to keeping the home and rearing their three children. Please join us (their children) in this celebration by sending cards in c/o Jeff Hammonds at 1735 Burning Tree Road, Kingwood, Texas 77339.

Lebanon, MO 4th of July Meeting

The meeting is scheduled to be held June 27 through the evening of July 3rd. As always, there will be no service on July 4th. Lees Summit brethren tell us the first service on Friday night (June 27) will be held in the Lebanon church building at 7:30 P.M. Beginning with the Saturday morning service at 10.00 A.M. the meeting will move to the Cowan Civic Center where it has been for some years. We look forward to working with Ron Alexander as well as the Lees Summit congregation during the meeting. -Don L. King

OUR DEPARTED

CLEMENTS - Addye Clements, of Wichita Falls, TX, was born to Emory and Lillie Mae Smith October 16, 1907. This great Christian lady passed away on October 24, 2002, at the grand age of 95. She was married to Leonard Clements in 1927, and to this union were born seven children. She outlived three of her children: Joyce Schmidt, Kenneth Clements, and George Clements. She leaves four children to mourn her passing: Swanelle Spradley, Trish Heskett, Eva Nell Cook, and Gerald Clements. Addye had eighteen grandchildren, thirty-one great grandchildren, and four great-great grandchildren. She was a faithful member of the Garden's Edge church in Wichita Falls. She was the one who opened the building at each service and took her seat on the second pew from the front. She has been a member of the Lord's church for eighty years. She was the daughter, great granddaughter, and niece of church of Christ preachers. She loved the Lord, the church, and the pure word of God. Addye was my dear friend; it was my honor to speak at her memorial service. May God help us to live as she lived. - Wayne Fussell.

BERRYMAN - Ed Berryman, born July 2, 1926 in Oakman, OK, died December 31, 2002, at the age of 76. He married Lenora Whitson August 10, 1946, and she preceded him in death November 9, 1987. Ed later married Virginia Newton Delozier, March 25, 1989. Ed is survived by Virginia of the home; Charles Berryman (son), Kaye Cranford (daughter), Russell Delozier (step-son), and Beverly Fiveash and Brenda Simpson (step-daughters). He is also survived by 16 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. I knew Ed all of my life. Ed had a great sense of humor and loved to tease, but he was very serious about the church. He was a long-time deacon in the Galey congregation. He suffered greatly with Lou Gehrig's disease and one of the most difficult phases of that process was when he was no longer able to attend worship services. May God bless Virginia who was so devoted to Ed. We are all going to miss him, but we are confident Ed is better off now with no more suffering. - Carl M. Johnson

PARKER – Sister Catherine Parker passed from this life on Dec. 7, 2002 at the age of 79. She was married 35 years to the late James Parker. From that union, fourteen children were born (one of whom preceded her in death). She was very faithful to the Lord's Church. Many times she came to worship when it would have been easy for her to stay home. She loved the church very much. Sister Parker came out of cups and Sunday school worship back in the middle 70's. She was a lady with much influence. Because of her, several of her family are members of the church. She is missed by all who knew her. For all who did not know her, Sister Catherine was of the black race. Brothers and Sisters, isn't it past time that all of us put more effort into trying to convert all of God's creatures. Brother Todd Smith represented the congregation at the funeral. – Bobby Wright

RICHARDS – Bill H. Richards was born March 4, 1919 and passed from this life January 30, 2003. He was united in marriage to Dortha Haulcomb. The 11th Street Church of Christ in Tulsa, Oklahoma was their church home. They attended services there many years. Bill is survived by his wife, Dortha also three sons. Clovis and wife Vivian, Billy Joe and wife Betty, and Rick. Also many friends and at least one long time special friend, me. It was very humbling to me that Bill himself requested that I officiate at his funeral. Lately much is being said about closure. We've got to do this or that to find closure so we can get on with our lives. The way our old soldiers are all passing I wonder, shouldn't we pause and try to hold on to some of the memories that these "old-timers" have left? Maybe we should put back in our lives the phrase "If it's not broke, don't fix it." Christ said "Remember Lots wife." He instituted his memorial almost 2000 years ago saying "This do in remembrance of me," Do we get the idea that Christ is talking about closure? When Paul wrote the 11th chapter of Hebrews I don't believe he had closure in mind. As Don King so often says I wish you would think on these things. – Ed Bullard



Barney Owens 8782 Meadowview Ln. W. Chester, OH 45069 – Since last reporting we have had an enjoyable meeting here with Duane Permeanter. It has also been my pleasure to be with the church at

Mitchell, IN, and Burkhart, MO during their annual Thanksgiving meeting. I am scheduled to be with the congregation on Garrett's Creek, Wayne, WV Feb. 9, Paris, TX Mar. 5-9, and Atlanta, GA April 13-20. Smith H. Bibins will be with us here April 23-27. Thanks to all for your continually prayers.

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820 carlmj@cableone.net February 10-1 enjoyed every minute of the Oklahoma New Year's meeting this year. From the opening sermon preached by Jimmie Smith to the closing prayer led by C.A. Smith, the meeting couldn't have been more enjoyable as far as I'm concerned. The Broken Arrow congregation outdid themselves in hosting the meeting. The Tulsa Union High School auditorium is the largest and most accommodating facility I've seen. Our crowds were estimated at between 1,200-1,500. My only regret is that of the fifty preachers in attendance, we only able to get thirty-four on the speaking agenda. We are looking forward to our twenty-seventh annual March weekend meeting March 7-9. We have a good theme for the meeting and we anticipate some good sermons from the seven young preachers we have lined up. My schedule for the next couple of months includes: Sulphur, OK (Feb. 21-23), El Cajon, CA (Mar. 12-16), and Harrisonville, MO (March 23-30). May God's richest blessings be upon the brotherhood.

Greg Robbins, 108 Sunvalley Dr., Gatesville, TX 76528 – This is the first time I have had the opportunity to write to the *Old Paths Advocate*. I hope it will not be the last. I held my first gospel meeting in La Marque, TX. It was very encouraging to have all who attended this meeting all three nights. The Houston congregation supported the meeting. The brethren there did a wonderful job in song leading and the prayers were so beautifully spoken. It is my opinion that we have some of the most talented people in the church. In closing, I am a young man that desires to preach the gospel.

Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 rf Wade@getatlas.com – The meetings at Lebanon and Lees Summit were both well attended and very enjoyable. One was baptized at Lees Summit. It was good to renew old acquaintance and visit with people we have known and loved for years. Lord willing we go next to Arlington, TX Feb. 21-23; Shreveport, LA March 5-9; Ardmore, OK March 12-16; Mitchell, IN March 27-30 and Linville, OH April 20-27. The work in Springfield is progressing and we thank God for his blessings on it.

Brett Hickey 823 W. 5th St. Tyler, TX 75701; (903)533-9782; brett-louisehickey@juno.com; February 7. I held a Saturday night gospel meeting at Tyler two weeks ago. We had an enthusiastic

service and full house with 10 guests from the community. A number of these continue to study with us and express interest in coming back to be with us. We are presently studying with eight non-members and thirteen brothers and sisters. We expect a number of honest hearts to soak up the gospel during Duane Permenter's meeting at Tyler, February 26 – March 2. We have a solid line-up of speakers for our Young Speakers' meeting at Tyler, May 2-4. We enjoyed being with the Athens brethren last month. The next few months we look forward to Saturday and Sunday services this month at McGregor, nine days with the Bedford, IN brethren (March 8-16) and eight days with the Turlock, CA congregation (May 18-25). I am thankful for the steadfast example of so many of our older preachers. Pray to the Lord for more laborers. The harvest is great!

Jimmie C. Smith, 5100 Rail Rd, Harrison, AR 72601, cjsmith@alltel.net Since last reporting I held a weekend meeting at Galey, Ok where I was greeted with a full house at each service. Brandon Stephens is working part-time with the congregation there and is held in high esteem. People in that part of Ok will drive a long distance to attend gospel meetings. I enjoyed the presence of preaching brethren Clarence Kessinger, Joe Hisle and Richard Frizzell. I was saddened to see Ed Berryman in a deteriorated condition and whose passing shortly thereafter was a blessed relief. He and Hollis Kite were longtime stalwarts at Galey. The next weekend I was in a meeting at Montreal, MO. which was a first for me. There we too had a house filled to capacity with brethren attending from far and near. Dan Wissinger is doing a good work in that area and we enjoyed outside visitors at this meeting also. We enjoyed the association also of preaching brethren Ron Alexander and Jeremy Smith. It was a real pleasure to have Ron and Carolyn spend a Sunday with us here at Harrison where Ron brought two good sermons. I also enjoyed spending a Lord's day with the brethren at Hartwell last month. The places and people mentioned in this report are "close to my heart." The funerals of loved ones are coming at far too rapid a pace. The recent reports of the rapid spread of the gospel in foreign countries has been refreshing, along with a long sought unity. We thank the Lord for a refreshed spirit.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mtn. Home, AR, 72654, broebuck@mtnhome.com Jan. 4 – We just returned from the Alabama New Years Meeting. Crowds were larger than last year, and we expect it will continue to grow in years to come. Reviving the Alabama meeting was a great idea; we pray for its continued prosperity. The church here has prospered in spiritual growth. I'm thankful to see the leadership working so well. Recently, it was necessary to readjust our schedule of meetings and we were united in desiring men who preach and practice exactly what

we need. The younger men have grown quickly in their desire to teach, lead singing, and learning to preside at the Lord's table. In addition to the work here we enjoyed conducting meetings through out the country. The meetings were well attended and we thank God for the opportunities and results. This year our spring schedule is LaGrange, Ga Feb. 5-9, Marietta, Ga March 14-16 and Bandy, KY March 23-30. May the Lord keep us united in faith and practice.

P. Duane Permenter, P. O. Box 80687, Midland, TX 79708, Jan 28 – Greetings to all in the name of Jesus Christ. The work in Midland continues to progress and the time of our departure to Zambia, Africa is set for the week of June 1. Please pray for us in this effort. My spring schedule is as follows: Feb 16-23, Lexington, OK; Feb 26 – Mar 2, Tyler, TX; Mar 14-16, Oakdale, CA; Mar 21-30, Lodi, CA; Mar 31 - Apr 6, Atwater, CA; Apr 13-20, Planz Rd, Bakersfield, CA; Apr 24-27, Tucson, AZ; May 14 – Chapel Grove, TN; May 30-Jun 1, Edmond, OK If you can assist in one or more of these efforts your presence will be very much appreciated. The trip to the Philippines resulted in several things but one of the highlights of the work was 87 new souls being added to the Lord's church. It was a pleasure to be with Don and Brother Danao once again in this great work. My phone number will be (915) 559-4002 until we move to Zambia. Please note my email remains the same, duane@dnlpermenter.com wherever I am. I try and check it as often as I can so if you send me something I will get back to you as soon as possible. God bless the faithful everywhere.

Tony Melton, P.O. Box 1241, West Chester, OH 45071, Tel: (513) 779-2807. Email: tonym81@hotmail.com. It has been quite some time since I wrote a report to the *Old Path Advocate*. My family and I moved from Tegucigalpa, Honduras to Cincinnati, Ohio. We are working with the congregation that meets in West Chester, a suburb of Cincinnati. The congregation here seems to be growing spiritually stronger. We have had three baptisms and some have made confessions. Also, I held gospel meetings in Fayetteville and in Goshen, Ohio. It was a blessing for us to work with these faithful brethren. In addition to this, I have been making trips to help in the work in Latin America. Last March I made a trip to Guatemala and held studies with some of the brethren, and visited churches there and in El Salvador. Then in June my son, Paul, and I went to Tegucigalpa and held a gospel meeting as well as studies with the preachers. Then in September, I was blessed with the opportunity to help with the preachers' study in Saltillo, Mexico. Finally brother Randy Tidmore and I went to Honduras in December and visited various brethren and participated in a series of studies with all the preachers of Central America. Reports concerning these efforts may be found on brother David Risener's web site: <http://www.>

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newtestamentchurch.org/ Also, with the help of brother Randy Tidmore, I have been publishing a monthly paper called the *El Mensajero Internacional* (*The International Messenger*). We started this paper last January, and Randy is offering it on his web site: <http://www.iglesiadecristo.org/> We are now sending out 177 copies to South America, Spain, Dominican Republic, Cuba and Central America, 131 to Mexico and 56 to people in the USA and Puerto Rico. I think only five of these subscriptions are being sent to brethren that we know. The rest are going to denominational people or digressive brethren. The subscription list continues to grow. I really appreciate the congregation here in West Chester, Ohio, and the Leawood congregation in Joplin, Missouri, for making this work possible. Please pray for us. May God bless the brotherhood.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail old.paths@juno.com, February 14-The trip to the Philippines was both enjoyable and profitable for the Cause of Christ. There were 87 baptisms and at least 21 congregations (perhaps 4 more) converted from digression along with a number of preachers. Please read Bro Danao's report in this issue where he gives details. I enjoyed being with Duane Permenter and Bro Danao while doing the work. It is wonderful to see Filipino preachers, some of whom are supported from America, working among the congregations. These men are supported directly from local congregations, including Fremont. They report directly to their supporting congregations and take care of their own work in their areas. When problems develop, they are promptly taken care of among the local congregations by local preachers and brethren. No American has ever lived among them and none is needed. Since returning home, it has been our privilege to preach here and hold a short meeting at the Planz Rd. congregation in Bakersfield, CA. The brethren worked for the meeting. A good spirit prevailed among everyone and all seemed to enjoy the occasion. Studies had been conducted well in advance and as a result there was one baptism and one restored from digression. We appreciated the hospitality shown us by Darrell and Gail Brewer, long-time friends with whom we have always enjoyed visiting. Our next, Lord willing, is at Allen, TX March 9-16.

Jonathan Bunner, P.O. Box 22774, Lexington, Ky

- On December the 9th my family and I left Mexico for Ecuador, South America. That same night we arrived in Quito, which is the capital city of the nation. When we arrived at the airport brother Hernando Motta was waiting for us. Brother Motta insisted that we stay in his home that evening, so that is what we decided to do. The next day brother Motta drove my family and me to the city of Ambato. The trip was a short two and a half hours in his car. Brother Hernando Motta is Colombian, but has lived in Ecuador for several years. He is a cups preacher that brother Juan Rodriguez and I met last November. Juan has been studying with him through the internet about the use of one cup for the Lord's Supper. We pray that brother Motta will soon change his way of worship. If we can convert brother Motta he could be a great tool for the work in all of South America. He travels frequently to Colombia and Peru to preach the gospel. Here in Ambato, I found some of the members of the congregation discouraged. My wife and I are doing our best to encourage them and from what I have seen most of the members are some better. Satan has tried to destroy the little work that has been done in Ambato. For example, brother Segundo Gonzalo who was taking care of things these past few months has gone back to the cups church. After talking to him personally at his business he says he has an opportunity to become a full time preacher for the cups brethren. His only desire is be a full time preacher even if he is in error. Brother Segundo has his mind made up that this is what he is going to do, so the only thing I can do is pray for him. Good News... We do have some good news to report. A girl named Mariuxy has attended worship three times since our arrival. She shows that she has a great desire to learn more of God's Word. Mariuxy attended services while brother Pedro Alvarez lived here, but when he left she stopped coming. Sister Alicia Morales and her family are faithful too. Alicia's son Paul is member of the church in Springfield, Missouri. Paul's sister Cristina is member here in Ambato, but his other sister Govana, and his father Gabriel are not Christians. Thankfully after our arrival they began coming to services again. I think with time Govana and Gabriel will obey the gospel. We would like to ask for your prayers in this new work in Ecuador. We trust that the Lord is going to bless the work as time goes on. Of course, Satan does his job, but we will continue the fight for the truth and resist him at every turn.

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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. LXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, APRIL 2003

NO. 4

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

By Billy D. Dickinson

The local congregation is the only organization that the Lord has given His church. Please let that sink in as we begin a study of this subject! Paul wrote in Rom. 16:16, "The churches of Christ salute you." Notice that "churches" is the plural form of the word, and it has reference to congregations at different localities: "the church of God which is at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:2), "the churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2), "the church of the Thessalonians" (I Thess. 1:1), and "the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:4).

The New Testament reveals that the church in its local sense is not only a relationship, but it is also an organic body- i.e., an organization. Observe these facts about the local church: (1) In the Scriptures, local churches were always spoken of as SEPARATE UNITS. Different epistles were sent to different congregations, such as Paul's letters to Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, etc. (2) When Christ wrote letters to the seven churches of Asia, He demonstrated that each congregation had a "PERSONALITY" and a set of circumstances all their own. He also dealt with the "works" and faults of each group. (3) Each local church was made up of MEMBERS. When discipline was necessary, it was administered by the local church toward its own unfaithful members. I Cor. 5:13 says, "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (4) Each congregation had its OWN LOCAL LEADERSHIP. As men met the qualifications, elders were ordained in "every church" (Acts 14:23). In writing to the church at Philippi, Paul greets both the members and leaders of that congregation: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1).

Since the Lord has given the church ONLY a local organization, that is how he intends for the church to function and work! So, as we think about the work of the church, we are interested in determining what the functions of the local church are as outlined in the New Testament. Bearing in mind that the Scriptures present the local church as the working unit of the body of Christ, here is the question that needs to be answered: What are the COLLECTIVE ACTIONS assigned the church?

It is necessary in the beginning to emphasize that God's word makes a clear distinction between individual action and CHURCH ACTION (the collective action of a congregation). We need to have an understanding of this distinction, but I fear that some don't! Sometimes people argue erroneously that what the Christian individually can do, the church can do. Their reasoning (?) goes like this: "We are in the church always. The church is the people. Therefore, whatever we do, we act as the church all the time." Thus, they fail to make a distinction between individual action and CONGREGATIONAL ACTION.

It is true, of course, that we are members of the church at all times. Whatever we do and wherever we go, we always conduct ourselves as people who are in the church. BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT EVERYTHING I DO AS AN INDIVIDUAL CONSTITUTES CONGREGATIONAL ACTION (OR THAT I NECESSARILY DO IT AS AN AGENT OF THE CHURCH)! In fact, there are some things that I can do/should do as an individual that the church cannot do in a congregational capacity. Likewise, there are certain functions that the Lord has assigned to the local church that must be fulfilled in a congregational capacity.

Let's notice some examples where the New Testament draws a clear distinction between individual action and church action. First, consider the following words of Christ: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matt. 18:15-17) The procedure given by the Lord here starts as purely an individual matter. When the offending party will not repent, however, it goes from a personal, private situation to something that involves the church taking disciplinary

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Editorial

CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE (PART II)

By DON L. KING

First Corinthians chapter 13 is, to many people, the most wonderful chapter in the New Testament. It is often quoted but practiced by few. F.W. Farrar, in the *Pulpit Commentary* wrote: "It is a glorious hymn or paean in honor of Christian love, in which St. Paul rises on the wings of inspiration to the most sunlit heights of Christian eloquence. Like Psalm 45, it may be entitled "A Psalm of Love." Without doubt, the qualities given through inspiration here are worthy of our greatest efforts to understand, teach and practice. We must ever keep in mind that the attributes of agape love must be incorporated into our lives if we expect to make Heaven our eternal home. These are not like a buffet where we may pick and choose as we like. These are matters of eternal consequence. As we stated last month, it is soul condemning to be immoral, tell lies or live in an otherwise sinful manner but these things are often given slight consideration by many of us.

(Love) "beareth all things." That is, it endures wrongs or mistreatment without complaint and carries the adversities, troubles and vexing problems of life without complaining. A case found in Matthew 17:24-27 comes to mind. Just as the Lord and disciples were arriving at the city of Capernaum, they were approached by those who collected tribute money, a sort of taxation. They brusquely asked Peter if the Master paid tribute? The implication was that perhaps Jesus avoided paying what he owed. Peter assured them that He did indeed pay tribute. However, when Peter apparently approached Jesus about it, the Lord explained that actually He didn't owe it. Then, in a wonderful demonstration of love, He explained that Peter should go fishing and take a piece of money out of the mouth of the first fish he caught so that the tax could be paid. Why did Jesus do this? The reason He gave was "lest we should offend them." (Verse 27) It mattered not that it was an unfair request. It mattered only that they not be offensive unnecessarily. So many times church members care little about the feelings of others with regard to what they perceive as their "liberty." Rather than to keep their arguments secret, they insist on doing as they please regardless of the harm to others who may, or may not be, correct in their objections. It seems too many do not have love that "beareth all things."

(Love) "believeth all things." Agape love causes the person to take the kindest view of their brother's actions and circumstances. Rather than see the action in its worst possible perspective, it takes the high road. When judging a person's conduct, such a fellow will

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Does it matter when the Lord's Supper is observed in the Sunday service? Where I live, they have it first, and some leave as soon as they have taken the supper.

Answer: The Scriptures do not furnish us with the order in which the items or actions of worship must take place. Some have claimed that Acts 2:42 represents such an order, however, the arguments made to sustain this contention fall far short, in this writer's view. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." One must remember that the order of mention is not necessarily the order of occurrence. While I agree that the things mentioned do represent various acts of service that are observed in the worship gathering, the order in which they took place is neither implied nor specified. It should be noted that singing is not mentioned here even though it is something that we render in worship to God. If there is no set order specified in the scriptures, then we are free to select any order that we choose. However, it would be a mistake to conclude that one of our acts of obedience is more or less important than the others. Evidently those to whom the querist refers feel that the Lord's Supper is more important than the singing, edification, giving etc., and that once the Communion has been served they are free to leave. Such is not the case. One has not scripturally worshipped until all the parts of the service have been completed. Even though the order in which we observe the various elements of the service may be left up to us, the right to pick and choose between the ones we participate in is not. We have not scripturally worshipped until we have observed all the Lord requires of us.

Question: Since our memory tends to leave us as we grow older, would there be anything wrong with having a list of things written down that one wanted to mention in his prayer?

Answer: I personally do not think there would be anything wrong with such a practice. At least that would be my judgment. The fact that I refer to a list of things I have written down would not affect the prayer, so long as our prayers are from the heart, and in harmony with God's laws that govern prayer.

Question: Is it irresponsible for preachers and congregations to permit a preacher to go without health insurance and then maybe incur a hospital bill for a huge sum of money? The bill may be so large that a general appeal is made to the brotherhood in attempt to get help in paying the bill.

Answer: This is another question that deals with a matter of judgment. We cannot say that a congregation must supply a preacher with health insurance, nor can we force preachers to buy and maintain health

insurance. However, it seems to me that good and wise judgment would encourage both. Our world today is vastly different than it was just ten years ago. Medical costs have skyrocketed out of sight. One serious illness can bankrupt most anyone. For this reason, if for nothing more than protection, it seems prudent that everyone be covered partially or completely by some kind of medical insurance. In some cases, preachers struggle to get by. Their pay may be less than it should be. But because they want to preach and feel the need to continue they take risks financially that could be devastating in the event of a serious illness. Most companies provide some kind of benefit package for their employees that includes medical insurance. Why should not churches? If a laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7), he is worthy of the protection insurance would provide. A church may choose to support the preacher enough so that he can provide his own insurance. Should that be the situation, then the church should make it plain that the preacher needs to obtain medical coverage to sustain him or his family in the event of an illness. It seems to me that these things are "common sense" things that brethren and preachers should discuss and agree upon. Nothing is worse for the preacher or the church than to find themselves in a situation where a medical bill exists for half a million dollars that neither can pay. We need to count the cost (Luke 14:28), and be wise stewards both individually and collectively. To ignore such is to be irresponsible, in my opinion.—Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com

FREQUENCY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

By BARNEY OWENS

...The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said 'take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: This do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. (I Cor. 11:23-26)

The above is the account of the Lord's Supper as given by the Apostle Paul. The command of Christ and repeated by Paul is clear enough, "as often as we eat it, it is to be in remembrance of Christ." The question we wish to pursue presently is "how often do we eat the Lord's Supper?" There are various ideas respecting how often this is to be done. Roman Catholics (changing the name to "mass") partake of it as often as daily, and especially on other Holy Days. The Lutherans follow closely behind in their understanding except as to the frequency, as they think that even a weekly observance makes it too common,

therefore is unnecessary. Presbyterians administer it on Sunday mornings after the worship once a month or once a quarter according to the wishes of each church. Methodists are much the same, some churches eating it the first Sunday each month, others quarterly. It is difficult to find out what governs Baptists. Apparently, they are governed by the various conventions to which they belong. Primitive Baptists (at least the old fashion) hold to once a month. Seventh Day Adventists teach "to observe the Lord's Supper at regular intervals is unimportant." They eat it on the night (annually) they think Jesus was betrayed. Jehovah Witnesses likewise eat the Supper once a year. Pentecostal groups are wide in their application of how often, from once a month, to quarterly, to on Easter and Christmas. In speaking with one of this persuasion, I was told "it depends on what the pastor wants to do." I believe this to be a perusable explanation, as I personally was present at a wedding when the preacher served the Lord's Supper to the newly weds. Most churches will not impose any consequence to those who fail to eat the Lord's Supper even when offered. Legion are those claiming to follow Christ, but willingly forsake the assembling to eat the Lord's Supper when offered in their particular churches. Churches of Christ eat the Lord's Supper on each first day of the week.

More than likely these are not all the positions held regarding just when the Lord's Supper is to be eaten. I am convinced of one thing that looking for the truth among the churches leaves us wandering helplessly. The only thing left for us is the Bible. Let us look into it to see what Christ and the Apostles have to say about the matter. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." (Isa. 1:18).

HOW OFTEN DID CHRISTIANS OF THE FIRST CENTURY EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER?

In the Corinthian letter Paul assured them of the impossibility of eating at the Lord's Table and the table of devils (I Cor. 10:21). There is an eating and a drinking at the Lord's Table which Jesus said was to be in His Kingdom (Lk. 22:30). Before mentioning the Lord's Table, Paul made reference to eating and drinking (Vs. 16-17) which clearly is the Lord's Supper. He spoke of it as "the breaking of bread." As to when disciples broke bread we need only turn to Paul's own practice.

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. (Acts 20:7).

If their practice had been to eat the Lord's Supper once every year, the particular day of a specific month would have been sighted as the day of breaking bread. It would be as America's Independence Day, July 4th. We do not refer to Independence Day as the first day of the week or Sunday, even though it may fall on Sunday, we still say the 4th of July. Had it been a monthly observance then it would have said "on the

1st day of each month," or some such manner. But the language "on the first day of the week" nails it down to each first day of each week. There has never since creation been a week that did not have a first day. When the first day of the week arrives, disciples are to eat the Lord's Supper. It is clearly stated that they came together "to break bread." Yes, admittedly others things were done while they were assembled, however, the reason for gathering was to eat the Lord's Supper. How frequently did these disciples come together for the purpose of eating the Lord's Supper? Each first day of the week.

And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (Acts 2:42).

This shows that constant attention was given to the things that are named. If these things were done one time and then lain aside, it certainly could not have been said that "they continued steadfastly in them." For instance, if they prayed one time and that ended it, there was no persistence in it. Likewise, continuing steadfastly in the breaking of bread demands a continual action. Is there anything in the passage that suggests the frequency?

This was shortly after the establishment of the church. We are told by way of introduction to these things: "*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*" (Acts 2:1). Pentecost means "the fiftieth part." This day was the "fiftieth day." "*And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven sabbaths shall be complete. Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number **fifty days**; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord*" (Lev. 23:15-16). Notice carefully it always came on the "morrow after the seventh sabbath" which meant Pentecost always fell on the **first day of the week**. The church was established on the very day of the week that Jesus arose and it was on this day that the disciples began to "continue steadfastly in breaking bread." The frequency of eating the Lord's Supper (breaking bread) is affirmed to be on each first day of the week.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come...Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. (I Cor. 11:26 & 33).

The Corinthian church was to eat the Lord's Supper when they came together. Paul reminds them that they have houses to answer the call of nature when they are hungry. Therefore, they left their various places of abode to come together in one place to share in the Lord's Supper. They were not to eat it in their individual houses. The Lord's Supper is "*the communion of the body and blood of Christ*" (I Cor. 10:16-17). Communing together is sharing together. The question is, how frequently did they leave their

houses and gather to eat the Lord's Supper? We are given the precise time when the church gathered. *"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him that there be no gatherings when I come"* (I Cor. 16:2). Here is a religious service commanded these brethren. And this religious service was to be performed on a particular day, which is specified—"the first day of the week." What possible reason could there be for selecting "the first day of the week?" Why not choose the second, fourth, or sixth day? Because the disciples of Christ have the practice of gathering on "the first day of the week" to break bread or to eat the Lord's Supper. Since the church was together, it would be an opportune time to "lay by in store." This proves the frequency of eating the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week.

The same practices were enjoined upon the churches of Galatia. *"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week..."* These congregations did the same as the Corinthians, which means they too ate the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some 15; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (Heb. 10:25).

This verse teaches that the disciples were to assemble. If one failed to assemble, it was a violation of this command. The assembling requires a day for the assembly to take place. The day they were to assemble is not mentioned, that fact must be learned from other passages. However, whatever the day was, it was commanded by the Lord. Remember I Cor. 11:33 says *"Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another."* As we have just seen, I Cor. 16:2 shows the day they assembled was "the first day of the week." Notice:

1. The assembly was not to be forsaken.
2. They were to assemble to eat the Lord's Supper.
3. They assembled on the first day of the week.
4. Therefore, the assembly they were not to forsake was the assembly on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper.

Those who recognize the authority of Jesus Christ as revealed in the scriptures must assemble on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper. Any other practice is without scriptural authority.

PRACTICES AMONG CHURCHES OF CHRIST

As stated in the beginning, churches of Christ gather each first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper. However, much to the shame of some, there have been some perversions among those who have the spirit of Jeroboam—it has become "too much." (I Kgs. 12:28). Eating the Lord's Supper has been customized to fit worshippers instead of worshippers submitting to the will of Christ. How so?

1. The Lord's Supper is carried to those who are in

the hospital, etc. There is absolutely nothing in the scripture that hints of such a practice. It is doing what the scriptures are as silent as the tomb on such practices. As we have seen the Lord's Supper is to be eaten when the disciples "come together." An assembly is the only authorized place of eating. If we can learn anything from the Old Testament (Rom. 15:4), when the children of Israel ate the Passover, it was to be done in the house. If the number to eat was too small, then others were to be invited, but no part of the lamb was to be taken out of the house (See Ex. 12). The practice is borrowed from denominationalism.

2. The Lord's Table is spread twice. Disciples gather to eat the Lord's Supper, but for the benefit of those who are not present, they may eat later at an evening service. Again, there is absolutely no passage that teaches this idea. In fact, the church is to "come together to eat." The problem with this, as well as other digressions from the truth on the Lord's Supper, is that some brethren and congregations have no conception of the New Testament teaching on the meaning of the word church (assembly). The assembly is divided for teaching, the bread is divided (various loaves), the fruit of the vine is divided (into many individual cups), and then the assembly is divided by hours in worship. In addition to these, if the Lord's Supper is eaten after sundown (often occurring during winter), it is not the first day at all, but the second day.

The frequency of the Lord's Supper is not left to each congregation or individual. To ignore New Testament teaching on this matter is to walk where angels fear to tread, *"but in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men"* (Mt. 15:9).—Barney Owens

THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

BY JIMMY VANNOY

The power of the word of God is so great that it is beyond full comprehension, but it is possible to get an idea of how powerful it is by looking at its effect in three areas: (1) the creation of the universe, (2) prophecy and (3) the salvation of souls.

The power of the word of God in creation can be clearly seen when we realize that God simply *spoke* the universe into existence. The phrase "Then God said" is found nine times in Genesis 1. Each time God spoke, commanding that a certain thing be created, it happened immediately, just as He told it to happen. Six times in Genesis 1, we find the phrase "and it was so," indicating that everything God spoke happened in just the way He spoke it. An example is that which occurred on the second day of creation, found in Genesis 1:9. "Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear'; and it was so." It is quite amazing to consider that God spoke the universe into

existence in six days, when we contemplate its vastness, complexity and beauty.

The universe is so vast that astronomers cannot imagine how large it is. When a more powerful telescope is invented, it only shows that the extent of the universe is still beyond its reach. The best and smartest scientists can only scratch the surface of the complexity of the creation. They are constantly learning more and more about it, but they acknowledge that there is still so much more to learn and that the number of scientific frontiers is endless. Thus it will ever be, as long as the universe continues to exist. God's creation is so beautiful that the most accomplished artists this world has ever known have not been able to fully capture its beauty. And keep in mind that God *spoke* it into existence in six days. David expressed his awe at the creating power of the word of God when he said, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." (Psalm 33:6) This vast and marvelous universe will some day come to an end, but the word of God will endure. "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." (Isaiah 40:8)

The power of the word of God can be seen in the fact that God spoke about the future, and it happened just as He said it would. One example is the prophecy of God delivered to David by Nathan the prophet in II Samuel 7:12-17. This is one of the most important prophecies in the Old Testament because God says that the house, kingdom and throne of David would be established forever. It is summarized in vs. 16. "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." This prophecy is important to us because it is fulfilled in Jesus and His church. David was so thankful to God for revealing the fact that his descendants would rule forever that he said, "You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come." (II Samuel 7:18) David knew that because God had *spoken* this prophecy, it would come to pass. The power of the word of God can be seen in the many prophecies which He has spoken that have now been fulfilled exactly as He delivered them, and we are confident that those which have not yet been fulfilled will come to pass just as He said they would.

The power of the word of God can be seen in its role in salvation. It is important to understand that the written word of God is just as powerful as His spoken word. When the word of God is planted in the heart of a humble and honest person, the results will be a changed life and the salvation of the soul. It is the word of God which produces faith. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17) The word can cause the vilest sinner to become a new creation, born to a new life of godliness and holiness. "Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the

word of God which lives and abides forever." (I Peter 1:23) When God's word is accepted into a meek heart, the result will be the salvation of the soul. "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21)

This article has only touched the surface of understanding just how powerful the word of God is. If we begin to comprehend its great power, we will do at least three things. (1) We will praise and glorify God, honoring Him for the power of His word. (2) We will read it more, realizing the powerful effect it can have on our lives. (3) We will determine to obey all that we learn from our study of God's word.—*Jimmy Vannoy, 105 Sunset Circle, Corsicana, TX 75110*

A STATEMENT FROM ONE OF OUR FILIPINO BRETHREN

The following was written by Brother George B. Puragganan whom we met during this year's trip to the Philippines. He had been worshiping in error but due to an encounter with Brother Fernando Alvaro, a faithful preacher who himself was converted from digression about twenty years ago, he began studying the issues. By the time we arrived in their country in 2003, he wanted to study more and forthwith took his stand with us along with several more of his preaching brethren. He wrote this short article and we thought it would be of interest to the readers of Old Paths Advocate.—DLK

Brethren,

After a careful study on the issue of Lord's Supper, hereunder is my observation. The way we observe the Lord's Supper is very important. We all believe we must use unleavened bread and grape juice BECAUSE JESUS USED THEM. We believe we must take the bread first and then the cup of the Lord BECAUSE JESUS DID THAT. We believe we must give thanks before we partake BECAUSE JESUS DID. Since all these things are important and must be done BECAUSE JESUS DID THEM, why would anyone want to use a plurality of cups to contain the fruit of the vine when JESUS COMMANDED US TO DRINK FROM ONLY ONE CUP?

God does not allow us to change His commandments because of expediency. If He tells us to do a thing a certain way, we must do it that way. It was Jesus Christ the Lord who commanded, "This do." That, is as explicit and direct a command as was ever given to man by God. Do what I have commanded--take this cup (containing fruit of the vine) and ALL of you drink from it (out of it). Mark says they did just that. If you think you can change that command of the Lord and that pattern shown you by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, you may do so. However, the Lord may ask in return, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?"

If you will read the accounts of the Lord's Supper

carefully, you will notice that Jesus took a loaf, gave IT to the disciples and told them to eat. He also took a cup and told them to "Drink FROM IT, ALL OF YOU." If Jesus had NOT been giving an example for us to follow, He would not have been so specific in what He did and said. The Bible would say, "He took the fruit of the vine..." if the cup were an expedient. Then we could use as many cups as we thought appropriate. But the Bible does not say that. It says, "He took the cup..." All Greek authorities say this means an absolutely literal drinking vessel. I know that some people say metonymy is involved here, but metonymy is involved only when literal language makes no sense. We know a person can take a literal cup and hand it to someone and tell him to drink from it. That is exactly what Jesus did, but rather than handing it to one person, He handed it to a group with the command, "Drink FROM IT, ALL OF YOU." He was telling them how many cups to use and how many people were to use it. "IT" refers to ONE OBJECT--one cup. "ALL OF YOU" refers to everyone there. This is a direct command on HOW TO DRINK. The command was not merely "drink." The command was "DRINK FROM IT."

We are informed WHAT to drink by necessary inference. Jesus said HE would not drink again of the fruit of the vine inferring that this was the drink element in the cup. The Bible nowhere tells us what that "fruit of the vine" was. However, the words involved and the setting of the Passover prove conclusively that the reference was to unfermented grape juice.

We are informed HOW to drink by a direct command. Jesus did not say, "Drink." Nor did He say, "Drink some of this." He said "Drink FROM IT, ALL OF YOU." When He said, "Drink FROM IT," that put a restriction on our drinking. We cannot drink from just anything and still be obedient to His command. We must do exactly what He said for us to do. The emphasis is not on the fruit of the vine and it is not on the cup. The emphasis is equally distributed--"Drink"--the fruit of the vine "FROM IT"--out of one cup--"ALL OF YOU"--everyone assembled. To do otherwise is to be in defiance of this command. Think about it!

I am inviting you to come personally for further study and comment. Is it wrong to change? Acts 8:3; 26:9; 1 Tim. 1:13, a CRITICAL DEFENSE.

In His Service,

George B. Purugganan Sr.

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

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actions against the brother. Clearly our Lord here is making a distinction between church action and individual action!

Consider how I Cor. 11:18 uses the expression, "when ye come together in the church." What does Paul mean by that? He is referring to the local church

being assembled "into one place" (verse 20). incidentally, that is what Paul means in I Cor. 14:35 when he says that "it is a shame for women to speak in the church." Brethren have argued that when a woman teaches a man in a private, individual capacity, she is teaching "in the church" because she is always in the church (in the sense of membership). BUT THAT IS CONFUSING INDIVIDUAL ACTION WITH CHURCH ACTION! Yes, we are always in the church as far as membership goes, but the local church is not always assembled into a congregational capacity. That's what the expression means in I Cor. 14:34-35. Paul is saying that women are to keep silence in the gatherings of the local church regarding edification.

Let's get back to I Cor. 11. In this chapter Paul writes that it is wrong to eat a common meal when we come together in the church because that is not the purpose of the church assembly. Yet, he went on to say that as individuals we have every right to eat at home: "What? Have ye not houses to eat and drink in?" (Verse 22). Paul tells them in verse 34 that this is where they should eat their common meals, and not in the assembly of the church: "And if any man hunger, let him eat at home." If Paul is not making a distinction between congregational action and individual action, why is it wrong to eat a common meal "in the church," while it is permissible to eat it at home?

Also, I Tim. 5:16 reveals something that is to be done by the individual that the church is NOT to do: "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." Paul is saying that if I have widows in my family (perhaps a widowed mother or grandmother, Verse 4) that I am able to support, I am not to pass that responsibility on to the church. Paul says: "LET NOT THE CHURCH BE CHARGED." I repeat that here is something I am to do as an individual that the church is not to do!

When we talk about the work of the church, we are referring to the responsibilities that the Lord has given the local church as it functions in a collective sense. Please bear in mind the following: I as an individual might operate a BUSINESS, but that does not mean that the church should be engaged in such without scriptural authority. I can eat a common meal at home and engage in wholesome ENTERTAINMENT, but that does not prove that this is a part of the work of the church. As individuals we might have a PICNIC together, but that does not authorize us to have a "church picnic" (a function of the local church as part of its work and program). As individuals we may go CAMPING, but does that authorize the local church to build and fund a camp for recreational purposes? No! To argue otherwise is to fail to differentiate between individual action and church action.

I will show in future articles that according to the

New Testament the functions of the local church included, and was limited to: (1) worship, (2) evangelism, (3) edification of the saints, (4) benevolence, and (5) scriptural discipline. Since revelation LIMITS the work of the church to certain specified functions, this constitutes the PATTERN laid out in God's word. One final point: Before we are tempted to branch out into other activities as the church, someone needs to provide us with book, chapter, and verse that justifies a departure from the divine pattern!—*Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com*

EDITORIAL

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mentally place the best possible construction on the action. I have often wondered what this might do for us as we select men to be elders in the church. How different it might be if, when some doubt is presented, we decided to give the person the benefit of the doubt rather than the other way around. Does it really have to always be negative? We do not wish to be misunderstood here. Either a man possesses the qualifications or he does not. It must also be kept in mind that the qualifications were given in order that the church could have men in possession of those qualities *during* the time they served as elders or overseers. It is obvious one must be qualified while serving in a scriptural capacity. The fact remains, however, that love will help us to see men in a better light than if we are seeking some way to view them as unqualified.

(Love) "hopeth all things." This seems to point to a love that expects things to be better someday. Hope involves not only desire but expectation as well. Unless these two ingredients are present, the idea of hope is incomplete. Such love will cause a brother to have desire and expectation for the repentance of a wayward Christian continually. This kind of love just never gives up on someone. It always hopes for improvement. This in no way implies that we should be gullible, but it certainly does mean that a believer must not be overly suspicious of his brethren.

(Love) "endureth all things." The word used for "endureth" here seems to refer "...to heavier afflictions than those sustained by the "beareth" of verse 7." (McGarvey) It apparently "....refers to gross ill-treatment, violence and persecution, and such grievances as provoke resistance, strife, etc...." (McGarvey) The idea is not merely a persistence that keeps on keeping on in the face of tribulations. Rather, it seems to be an endurance that forgives offense such as the example Jesus gave in Luke 17:4. In other words, agape love will always motivate one to forgive his brother again and again. Why is this the case? Because one in possession of such love really wants to do just that, he wants to forgive.

Many things will come and go, but love will always be important. "Charity (love) never faileth." I Corinthians 13-8. We cannot go to Heaven without

it. Think on these things.—DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Recently quite a number of our readers have enquired about whether the assistance for foreign subscriptions is still needed. The answer is yes. We just added about thirty new names of brethren who live in the Philippines, etc. who have no way of paying for the paper. As we explained before, (October 2002) the average cost of a foreign subscription including postage is at least \$16.80 or perhaps a bit more. This means the cost of sending these thirty new subscriptions will cost the paper over \$500 during the next twelve months. This expense continues from year to year. Consequently, your help is always welcomed and needed. We normally do not allow a foreign subscription to expire because the person receiving it usually reproduces it several times and passes it along to others who also benefit. We have preachers who write that they often get sermon material and 'are so very grateful for the help. It is interesting to realize that we have never once received a complaint from a foreign reader about anything they have seen in *OPA*. If you have questions, feel free to write us.—DLK

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE HOME AND IN THE CHURCH

The tract by the above title is pretty well sold out. We understand Johnny Elmore may have a very few left if you wish to enquire.

CHANGE OF WORSHIP TIME

Brother Bob George has informed us that the congregation meeting in the North Area of Sacramento, CA at 2570 Darwin Street has agreed to begin meeting on Sunday afternoons at 3:00 P.M. beginning with the first Lord's Day in May. Please make the notation in your directories.—DLK

IMPORTANT, PLEASE READ

Occasionally a reader writes us with either a question or perhaps a complaint regarding some point made in an article published in *Old Paths Advocate*. The articles published contain the views of the writer whose name is at the top of the piece and do not necessarily reflect the understanding of anyone associated with the paper. In the future, we will endeavor to display the address of the writer at the close of the article and all correspondence should be directed to him. A statement to this effect will become a permanent notice somewhere in the paper from now on.—DLK

CONGRATULATIONS

The Church of Christ at Hayes St. and Springfield Road, Lebanon, MO is honored to announce and congratulate four Christian couples who celebrate

their 61st to 65th wedding anniversaries in the month of March, 2003. These couples have shown much love and devotion for the church, and the congregation has been truly blessed by their steadfast Christian examples. Please join us in wishing them well.



Charles and Esther Jordan
Married March 17, 1942
Address: P.O. Box 532
Lebanon, MO 65536.



Clyde and Maxine Lamkins
Married March 29, 1941
Address: 16973 Oleander Drive.
Lebanon, MO 65536.



Franklin and Maxine Meents
Married March 11, 1939
Address: Richland Care Center
P.O. Box 756, Richland, MO 65556.
Franklin celebrated his 98th birthday on March 8, 2003.



John and Lucy Bassman
Married March 12, 1938.
Address: 420 Mayfair Drive
Ballwin, MO 63011
John has been moved to a care center in St. Louis

What wonderful examples. In a day when wedding vows seem to mean so little to so many, isn't it great to know that there are still those among us who really meant what the promised each other so long ago.

65TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



Floyd L. and Lillian (Humphreys) White will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on March 25, 2003. They have been faithfully attending the Claxton Church of Christ, east of Grovespring, MO, for 60 years. They have four children: Joleen Burris (husband Jerry), Melba Claxton (husband, Jim); Junior White (wife, Sharon); and Gwen Hogan (husband, Lavon). They also have seven grandchildren (one deceased) and nine great-grandchildren. Floyd and Lillian were married March 25, 1938 at Waynesville, MO. They have spent most of their married life farming a century old farm located east of Grovespring, MO. It was previously owned by Lillian's uncle, Newell Smith, who was member of the Lebanon Church of Christ. In 1996, unable to take care of the farm, Floyd and Lillian moved to Grovespring, MO. They can receive mail at 9430 Hwy. 5, Grovespring, MO 65662.

OUR DEPARTED

LECHNER—Brother Floyd Lechner of the El Centro, California congregation passed away on October 1st, 2002 at the age of 90. Brother Lechner was born September 22, 1912 in Kanawa, Oklahoma.

He moved to the Imperial Valley from Oklahoma at the age of seven. Brother Lechner had many jobs through the years but first and foremost he will be remembered as a preacher of the Gospel. He was the backbone of the church for more than 70 years. During that time Floyd taught thousands of sermons, performed more than 100 weddings, more than 60 baptism ceremonies and officiated numerous funerals. Even when we was in his late 80's he was still trying to convert people. Almost every time he went to the bank he would find someone to talk to and let them know their soul needed salvation. He left a great legacy behind. It is hard to imagine El Centro without Floyd Lechner. Brother Lechner is survived by two sons, Rich Lechner of the Auburn, California congregation and Charles Lechner of the El Centro, California congregation; two daughters, Loretta Piranio and Carolyn Webber both from the El Cajon, California congregation; brother Cecil Lechner of Blythe; eight grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and numerous other family members. The memorial service was well attended. Evangelist Fred Lay of the El Cajon, California congregation officiated. Many friends and families shared their wonderful memories of this great man. Floyd will be missed by all.—Matt Hayes

Note: This was somehow misplaced along the way. Our sincere apologies to all the family.—DLK



Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct, Somerset, KY 42503, hawkins@kih.net, 606-678-4347, March 4, 2003—I recently closed a very enjoyable meeting in Jacksonville, FL. The brethren there are very pleasant to work with. While there, I made my home with Philip and Tammy Prince. I couldn't have been treated any better. Before Jacksonville, I was with the church in Whitebluff, TN. Though small in number they are big in heart and spirit. I've gone to Whitebluff several times over the years. I'm always honored to be with them. They love preachers and preaching. My next meetings will be in Opp, AL (Apr. 6-13) and Chestnut Ridge, KY (Apr. 23-27). I'm looking forward to the year. Lord bless all of his children.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, March 1—We closed an enjoyable meeting at Allen, Texas yesterday with one who confessed wrongs. Some of the near-by congregations helped in the meeting with attendance and also preaching, brethren Marcus Ayers and William St. John came one night each. We appreciated the great hospitality shown us by the Gary Robinson family and pray that some good was accomplished. We are to begin at Harrodsburg, IN next Lord's Day, March 23 for a week's meeting and then to Wilsonville, OR April 6-13. We ask your prayers for us.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, March 1—The first part of my meeting schedule for this year is as follows: March 26-30 at Ratliff City, OK, May 2-4 at Kansas City, KS (36th & Everett), and July 20-27 at McAlester, OK. I am looking forward to being at all of those places. My work with the North Side congregation here in Springfield will end in a few months. When I moved here, we agreed upon a five year period. How swiftly the time has flown by! For almost two years, I served as an elder. That was truly an honor for me, and a great learning experience. The decision has been made that I will labor with the church at Jamesville, a small congregation south of Springfield. Unless something unforeseeable happens, my work with them will begin in May. This will not involve a change of address, at least for the present, so my telephone number, etc. will remain the same. Please remember us when you pray! May the Lord bless our efforts at Jamesville with great success. We have established some lasting friendships here in the Springfield area, and I feel that our work with North Side has been rewarding. The Lord blessed us with numerical growth, although we have had our ups and downs like most congregations do, and several of the young men are on their way to becoming skilled teachers of God's word. I have enjoyed living here, and I am pleased that working with Jamesville will allow me to stay in the area.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, 3/3/03—In addition to continuing my work with the Olivehurst, CA congregation I have preached in Waipahu, HI, and Stockton and Escalon, CA since the New Year began. I also attended the winter study at the Placerville, CA congregation where Alan Bonifay has been presenting a very interesting and informative study on the first four chapters of Romans. The Lord willing, Alan will present the next four chapters in January-February next year. The congregation there has done a good job in hosting this winter study for the last three years. The Olivehurst congregation is working hard trying to develop new leads for Bible studies by going door to door. Jerry Little is doing a lot of the footwork in this special effort. Our prayer is that it will help open doors of opportunity for the cause. Joann and I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your cards, letters, and gifts sent to us in the celebration of our fiftieth wedding anniversary. May God bless all of you in your service to Him.

Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015, 713-455-4731, misterjld@aol.com—I am about to leave for a meeting in Mountain Home, AR which will run March 9-16. Last weekend I was in a meeting at Sand Grove, TX which was well attended and everyone seemed to enjoy. Upcoming meetings for me include: Duncanville, TX, March 28-30; Rogers, AR, April 18-20; Houston, MO, June 8-15; Brazil, IN, June 22-29; Ratliff City, OK, July 6-13; Blue Springs, Kentucky, July 16-20; Flintville, TN, July 27-August 3. The church here at Deer Park is coordinating the support of eight preachers in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico and the work is expanding rapidly. As Brother Juan Rodriguez has reminded us, Mexico is a huge country and the Yucatan is different in many ways from the parts of Mexico where we have previously evangelized and where the majority of our churches are. The work is a new work in Mexico and doors of opportunity are opening consistently and constantly. If your congregation would be interested in helping, contact us and we will give you the information needed. Juan is to travel to the Yucatan in the next few

weeks and study with all the preachers in the area and encourage them to work together and coordinate their efforts as much as possible. Let us pray for this work, and all the work being done by faithful, stalwart preachers and brethren throughout the whole world.

Jimmy Vannoy, 105 Sunset Circle, Corsicana, TX 75110—Brother Kostya Alekseev has now moved to Moscow, and his family will join him as soon as school is out. The congregation in Corsicana appreciates all who helped him make this move. Kostya has been very ill this winter. He has had two extended times of illness and also fell and was unable to get around for a while. Please pray for his health. He is doing better now. There are now nine members in the congregation in Moscow, and there have been two regular visitors lately. Kostya is taking advantage of every opportunity to share the gospel with his friends and to meet friends of those he knows. He has gone to several suburbs of Moscow to meet people. He is taking advantage of every opportunity to share the gospel with others. He is also searching for any who have been baptized in other cities and have since moved to Moscow. Please e-mail him at the address below if you have information about any Christians there. Moscow is fast becoming like the United States in that people are getting so busy earning money and spending it that they do not choose to take time for spiritual things. Kostya is now prepared to help any preacher who plans to work in Russia. He will do the following things: pick you up at the airport, take you to the train station, buy train tickets in advance, exchange money, translate, pick you up the train station, get you back to the airport, receive advance packages, and any other service to help you in your travel. All he asks is that you reimburse him for expenses he incurs while helping you. There is no need now for Christians to come from other cities to perform these services when Kostya is in Moscow and is ready to help you. You may contact him to make arrangements at tak4ever@fromru.com.

Reggie Kinser, 501 Peabody Road, Columbia, MO 65202, (573) 874-3535, rkinser@msn.com, March 4, 2003—Our work here at Columbia continues to go well. We have been extremely busy with the television program since the first of the year, and our efforts have been well blessed. We just recently baptized a lady from Jefferson City as a result of that effort. Joyce Kivendyo is originally from Tanzania, where she grew up in the Lutheran Church. She has lived in the Missouri area for more than 30 years, and had been studying with the Jehovah's Witnesses for the past three years. Her search for the truth led her to respond to the TV program, and after a series of Bible studies she obeyed the gospel. She is the first conversion we have had as a direct result of the program, since the brethren at Lebanon asked us to take a more active role in that work. The brethren here at home are obviously thrilled to be a part of this good work. Joyce informs me that she has relatives in Tanzania that she hopes will have an opportunity to hear the pure gospel of Jesus Christ. Lord willing, we will do all that we can to help make that happen. In addition to Joyce's conversion we have also had many other responses to the program. Recently, I presented a five-part series entitled, "Catholicism or Christianity?" The response to that series was excellent, including a Catholic Priest who wrote me a thirty-page letter. After our dialogue on the internet we met in person for a Bible study. This was the first time I have had the privilege of studying with a priest, so it was a new experience for me. Needless to say, there were a

lot of things we disagreed upon. However, the meeting was very cordial, and I believe the truth was upheld. I just received an email from him this week admitting that an argument he made on communion, in our first meeting, was in error. We are praying that other elements of truth will become apparent to him, as well. At present, we continue to correspond and have plans for further studies in the near future. Our thanks to the brethren at Lebanon and to the other congregations in the area that help support the TV program. It is through the *united efforts* of many that opportunities like this are realized. In addition to these good things, the brethren here at Columbia continue to speak the gospel message to their neighbors. We presently have very promising studies with several other people on a weekly basis. Through the efforts of many and with the blessings of our Father, the work at Columbia continues to prosper. Please pray for us in the work.

Jonathan Bunner, P.O. Box 22774, Lexington, KY 40522—I have wonderful news to report to you for January. The Lord has blessed the work here in Ecuador. Let me begin in Ambato because this is where I live and work, so I know more about the work here. On our trip to Ecuador last November we met brother Segundo Villasis from the cups church. Brother Villasis is blind, but very active in preaching God's Word. In fact, he has a live radio program that he does seven days a week from 5 am to 6 am. To make a long story short, brother Villasis made his stand with us in the middle of December. In November brother Juan Rodriguez and I studied with Segundo Villasis about the use of one cup on the Lord's Table. He took some time to meditate on what we had studied and decided we taught the truth. Brother Segundo Villasis is a wonderful person and has been a great tool to our congregation in Ambato. Through him I have received more contacts and even converted other brethren from error. For example, another brother Segundo whose last name is Chiliquinga. This brother Segundo and his wife Alexandra were worshipping in their home with another brother whose name is Vicente Torres. All of them are now worshipping with us. It was not very difficult to convince them about the use of one cup. Last year they had discovered this fact all on their own. The only thing I had to teach them was to drink from the same cup because they would bless one cup, but then pour it into three cups. On January 19, 2003, we had our first baptisms. Our new sister, whose name is Fani Lopez was baptized for the remission of her sins; Fani is brother Vicente's girlfriend. That same day brother Segundo Chiliquinga was baptized. He wanted to be baptized because he felt that he was not baptized correctly before. This same Sunday my father and Ryan Connor were here visiting us. There are six more people that we think will soon obey the gospel. Two of those people are listeners of the radio program. Brother Chiliquinga and I preach on the radio every Saturday from 6 am to 8 am. Usually I do all the preaching and brother Segundo reads the verses. The program is called "Waking Up With Christ". This program is live, but we do not accept live phone calls. If someone has a question, then we answer them off the air, wait until the next week, or make an appointment to visit the person in their home. The two hours of program includes songs, prayer, reading, and preaching. When my father was here he and Ryan went with us to do the program. Last month I wrote about brother Hernando Motta. He has made his stand with us, so now we have two faithful congregations in Ecuador. Brother Motta lives in Quito where he is preaching also. He told me that he also baptized someone on the last

Sunday of January. Brother Motta and I are sure that we will be able to convince more congregations in Ecuador to change from cups to one cup. We would need a work fund to do the traveling for that to be done. Brother Motta is well respected among the brethren in Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. His influence could be one way to convert more brethren from error. As you can see the Lord has blessed the work so far. We believe in the coming weeks and months there will be lots more fruit.

Don McCord, Box 1773, Covina, CA, Mar. 9—Meetings 2002 went well; brethren and sisters in 10 states of the Union could not have been better to me. God bless them! Meetings 2003, Lord willing, will find me at the following. Washington, OK; Albany and Cottage Grove, OR; Auburn, CA; Capitol Hill, Oklahoma City; Hartwell and Rogers, AR; Cassville and Burkhart, MO; Valliant, Norman, and Council Hill, OK; LaGrange, GA; and Lawrenceburg, TN. My sincerest gratitude again to my brethren for continued confidence in asking me for meetings. They thus give the privilege of doing what I love to do above all else, preach the everlasting gospel. Our meetings at home 2003 will be conducted by Jack Cutter, Taylor Joyce and Don King. We are at peace, sweet peace. Home brethren are so good to me and my family; I am ever grateful to them and the Lord. I ask the Lord's blessings on all of them. It is such an honor to be a member of the Body of Christ, and to have as life's crowning blessing, being a part of this great brotherhood.

Dan Wissinger, 1287 South Berkshire, Springfield, MO 65809—Since last report we have had four baptisms in the Central Missouri area that includes the congregations at Eldon, Brumley, and Montreal. These conversions are a result of the Bible Correspondence Course, TV Programs, family referrals and home studies. The Brethren have been good to give me names of people to call on and accompany me at home studies. I have recently become more aware of the great advantage of one of the brethren being with me at the studies. The year 2002 has been an interesting one for me, in addition to the challenge of the work in this area I was asked to assist in a preaching tour in Zambia, south-central Africa. It was good to spend these two weeks with Duane Permenter who is planning to take Roger Boone's place in Lasaka this summer. I very much enjoyed spending time with the Roger Boone family and was made to realize the awesome task that Roger is faced with on a daily basis, which he handles so well. This great work is accomplished by the very efficient oversight of the Edmond, OK Congregation. I want to say thank you to all that express interest in the work of the church here in Central Missouri.

Ronny F. Wade P. O. Box 10811 Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, March 10—The meeting at Arlington, TX was enjoyable. We were able to visit with many friends of yesteryear and meet new ones. We trust that good was accomplished through our studies of God's word. Yesterday we closed a good meeting in Shreveport, LA with the Midway congregation. Crowds were large with visitors coming from a number of places and encouraging us with their presence. One was baptized. It was my good pleasure to see and associate with Brother Wayne Fussell. Wayne and I have been friends since our teen-age days. The Lord willing we go next to Linville, OH April 20-27 and Fayetteville, OH April 30-May 4. The meeting at Mitchell, IN has been changed from March 27-30 to May 15-18. We look forward to being with these churches in an attempt to build up the Lord's kingdom.

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THE BACK PAGE...

THE TRUMPET IS SOUNDING, YET NO ONE IS ALARMED

By CARL M. JOHNSON

In the second week of February, television news reported that America had been put on "orange alert," indicating a high risk that terrorist attacks could occur in our country. Reporters also told us of Homeland Security's three-step plan to prepare ourselves for surviving a terrorist attack.

The main focus of the plan is to make an emergency supply kit that would comfortably allow us to survive a period of three days—the amount of time needed for the danger to pass from a biological, chemical or radiological attack. The kit should include a change of clothes, sleeping bags, food and water. We should gather basic emergency supplies, including flashlights, extra batteries, first-aid kits, prescription drugs, toilet articles, and duct tape and heavy duty plastic garbage bags that can be used to seal windows and doors.

When the initial warning was broadcast several stores such as Home Depot and Wal-Mart said alarmed customers swarmed their stores and cleaned them out of duct tape and plastic sheeting. Obviously, the warning was very effective.

The practice of communities keeping watch and warning its inhabitants of impending danger is almost as old as civilization. There is a scene that recurs often in the Old Testament of watchmen stationed upon hills outside of a community. No one knew for sure when an enemy might descend in some grim raid, and the success of that raid depended upon its being unexpected. Life was filled with nervousness. Occasionally, some desperate watchman, who had narrowly escaped with his life and nothing more, would burst into the community and shout "Set the trumpet to your lips, sound the alarm, the foe is here!" (Cf. Hosea 8:1). The trumpet would blast its warning through a startled land, and the peace of the night would be shattered. In every street you would hear the sound of hurrying footsteps and the anxious whispering of people speaking low, because fear was already knocking at their hearts.

In World War II sirens warned Allied communities of impending air raids. Today in Oklahoma communities are warned of tornadoes by sirens with a loud, distinctive whine. These sirens have saved untold numbers of lives through the years by warning people of killer tornadoes in time for the people to take shelter.

It is bewildering to me, however, that most people in every age will respond to civil defense warnings and yet will not respond to the warnings of God. The prophet Amos describes Israel as such a people in his day. Israel had become rebellious toward God. Jeroboam corrupted the worship in Bethel by putting idols in the house of God and making priests of the criminal element. In an

effort to awaken the people to their sinful condition and cause them to turn back to Him, God sent a series of calamities upon them including economic collapse, drought, crop disease, locusts, plague, and warfare, "yet ye have not returned unto me, saith the Lord" (Amos 4:10).

In addition to sending these calamities upon Israel, God also sent His prophet Amos to explain to the people the meaning of the calamities and warn them that unless they returned to God in repentance they would be destroyed.

In Amos 3:6, however, we have the chilling response of Israel to God's warning "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?" It was incredible to Amos that people were alarmed by the blast of a trumpet in the city warning about the threat of an approaching enemy, but the same people were not alarmed by the warnings of God.

Amos' words are as appropriate for America today as they were for Israel. Our country has been in a moral free-fall for several years. God has been systematically phased out of any type of government operated institution, such as courts and public schools. Over two million abortions are performed annually, while homosexuality is celebrated and protected. Illegal drugs and gambling remain multi-billion dollar industries. Oklahoma leads the nation in the divorce rate, and today it is considered normal to "live together" without being married. Yet, God warns that those who do "such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21).

Denominational churches have corrupted worship by synthesizing it into entertainment while some in the Lord's church have been so preoccupied with infighting that they have lost sight of our mission of evangelism. Consequently, we have shown no significant growth in America in the last two decades according to the latest census.

Over the same period, however, we have suffered from natural and contrived calamities that should have awakened us to the tenuous nature of our existence here, and the need to turn back to God. We have seen record droughts, followed by devastating floods; monstrous tornadoes, hurricanes and earthquakes that have caused unparalleled destruction, financial collapses, school shootings, sniper killings, and continual terrorist activities. All the while, the Lord warns us, "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches..." (Rev. 16:15).

God is sounding the trumpet loudly. I wonder, is anyone alarmed?—*Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net*

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. LXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, MAY 2003

NO. 5

MISINFORMATION

By JERRY DICKINSON

Though a prisoner in Rome, Paul was allowed a certain freedom, including a rented house and the opportunity to receive visitors at his request. He invited, therefore, the Jews living in Rome to his lodging for the express purpose of explaining to them the reason for his imprisonment. Many, Luke tells us in Acts 28, came to his lodging and Paul began by saying, "Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans." Paul goes on to explain that he was not in chains because of any wrongdoing, but because of the "hope of Israel" and he had called these men to explain that to them. It seems that Paul had the idea that these Roman Jews had received letters from Jerusalem about him, but in this he was mistaken. In fact, the Jews respond by telling Paul that they had received no letters concerning him, nor had any who had lately come from Jerusalem spoken of him. But there was something they have heard a great deal about and that was "the sect" Paul proclaimed and stood for. They did want to hear about that. It is almost as if they say, "Paul, we are not really concerned about you personally, but we are concerned about the movement you are a part of. The reason for their concern, of course, is revealed when they declared, "For as concerning this sect, everywhere it is spoken against."

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." What a service! Paul started in early in the morning and continued all day. Luke informs us that, "some believed and some believed not." That is always the case when the Gospel is preached: there are those who believe the truth proclaimed and those who will not believe. What is amazing is that these Jews did come and gave Paul a hearing. They had received a lot of misinformation about the church of Christ and they wanted, as we say, to hear "from the horse's mouth" regarding the things they had heard. There is still today a great deal of misinformation

about the church, and how gratifying when people will give us an opportunity to set the record straight. If you will give me the same opportunity those Jews gave Paul, I would like to correct some misinformation about what we stand for as members of the church of Christ. We are still the "sect" spoken everywhere against, and that is due in large part to the fact that folks just do not have their facts straight. Note some of the misinformation being disseminated.

1. **Narrow Minded.** One bit of misinformation that many people have about the church of Christ is that we are narrow-minded. We are so narrow and fanatical, some claim, that we will not consider other viewpoints and think we are the only ones who have the truth. Now this is misinformation. Christians must be open minded to the truth. Those of Berea were more noble than those in Thessalonica, we are told, because they received the Word with readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily to see if what they were taught was so. (Acts 17:11) We must have ready minds, open to the truth or we cannot please God. Personally, I am always ready to talk and listen to anybody who wants to talk about the Bible. We need to be open to the truth no matter who brings it to us. When I say we must be open minded I mean, of course, open minded to the truth. Don't give me your opinions! Give me the scriptures! Establish your beliefs and practice by Biblical authority and Biblical principles. If you can do that then I must be open minded enough to accept the truth. So, when folks say we are narrow minded and closed minded that is misinformation. Having said that, let me emphasize that we must be narrow minded when it comes to obeying the truth. After all, Jesus declared, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:14) Paul wrote in I Corinthians 11:2 that it is praiseworthy to "keep the ordinances as delivered." And in Revelations 22:18, 19 we are warned not to add or detract from God's Word as revealed lest we have our names deleted from the book of life. Sounds pretty narrow, doesn't it? If the accusation is that members of the church of Christ are narrow minded, closed minded

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Editorial

STRENGTHEN THE THINGS THAT REMAIN

By DON L. KING

In the third chapter of Revelation is recorded the letter Jesus sent to the church at Sardis through the apostle John. There are some things within the letter we should find interesting, to say the least.

The city of Sardis was once the capitol of the great kingdom of Lydia and the home of Croesus, who apparently was a very rich ruler. Some time back we were privileged to travel to that part of the world and actually view the locations of many of the seven churches of Asia. It was a moving experience, to put it mildly. The church at Sardis was located in the interior about a hundred miles east of Smyrna and Ephesus. While the city of Sardis had seemingly lost much of its former greatness and had begun a decline, it was still a pretty good city during the first century. There was a congregation of the Lord's church there and it must have had considerable influence at one time. Scholars theorize that the church might have been established by the companions of Paul, though no one knows for sure.

From what the Bible tells us, it appears that Sardis must have considered itself a viable congregation and very much alive. However, the Lord pronounced that the church was dead in Revelation 1:1. Probably, their situation was similar to the church at Ephesus who had lost their first love and was commanded to repent and do the first works. If they did not do so, the Lord promised to remove the candlestick which seems to have been the identifying influence of the church there. Historians tell us that the church ceased to exist soon after the warning. From then on, the area declined and fell into total idolatry. When one visits today it is obvious that the light of God's Word has been gone for many centuries. The church at Sardis apparently shared the same fate.

No doubt the congregation considered itself alive and well. It is very likely they were continuing as they always had as far as worship was concerned. Verse one tells us that they had "a name that thou livest." Scholars say this means they were "nominal" Christians, or Christians in name only. Much as we see today in many places. The members gather on the Lord's Day, as always, to worship. They worship according to the scriptures and then go their way to do as they please. They may not actively live a life of sin, but neither are they spiritually alive and vibrant. The apostle Paul spoke of widows who seemed to live only for pleasure in 1 Timothy 5:6. He said: "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." In other words, it may be said that their profession of righteous living was a mere name. It is pretty easy

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: With reference to the bread in the communion, please answer the following questions: (1) is it wrong to use salt?, is salt leavening? (2) is olive the only oil to use? What about Crisco shortening and oil? (3) how thick must the bread be before it is considered a loaf?

Answer: The institution of the Lord's Supper took place on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. Exodus 12:8 gives us a description of the passover meal that was eaten, at that time, "And they shall eat the flesh (of the lamb without blemish) in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs they shall eat it." A further statement also specifies the kind of bread used, and is given in Ex. 12:15 "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread..." Thus we conclude that when the scriptures tell us that Jesus took "bread" (Mt. 26:26) it was "unleavened bread." But what is unleavened bread? In Bible days bread was leavened by using a portion of a former mixture of leavened, or fermented dough. This "leavened dough" was obtained by exposing a lump of dough until it fermented by yeast. This "old lump or fermented lump" would then be placed in the new dough and over time would cause the dough to rise thereby producing leavened bread. Unleavened bread, was the very opposite. It was bread that had no leavening agent or lump in it, causing it to rise. Exodus 29:2 describes unleavened bread as follows "and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil and unleavened wafers anointed with oil (you shall make them of wheat flour)." We see from this passage that the addition of oil did not cause the bread to be leavened. Notice also Leviticus 2:1-13 where the meat offering had to be made with fine flour, oil, frankincense, and salt with no leaven or honey. Hence, the bread was unleavened even though both oil and salt were used. Since the only specification for the passover bread was that it be "unleavened," we must be careful not to make demands that the bible does not make. As Brother Greg Gay noted in his excellent tract *The Bread Which We Break* "We must leave out leavening agents such as yeast, baking powder, baking soda, eggs (since air beaten into eggs can expand when heated), and injected air or steam." Since the use of oil, or salt does not cause the bread to become leavened, to demand that such not be used is to demand something the scriptures do not. But what about the size of the loaf? Vine in his *Dictionary of New Testament Words*, defines bread or loaf as follows: "signifies a small loaf or cake, composed of flour and water, and baked, in the shape either oblong or round, and about as thick as the thumb..." Since the Lord did not specify the size or shape of the loaf he took, neither should we. The Lord did, however, take bread. As Brother Homer Gay used to say "he did not take toast and he did not take dough, he took

bread." Sometimes, it appears that the loaf is hardly baked. In fact it is so "doughy" one cannot break it. That is wrong. It should be baked until it is "done" or actually becomes bread. It should not be baked, however, until it is so brittle that it cracks or crumbles when one attempts to break it. Nor should it be so thin that it crumbles when one attempts to break it. Those who prepare the bread should practice until they are able to produce one that is suitable for use in the communion service. Older women in the congregation would do well to teach and train the younger women on the proper preparation of the bread to be used in the observance of the communion.

Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rwwade@getatlas.com

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH PART 2

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

As I continue to write about the work of the church, I want to emphasize that I am actually referring to the work of THE LOCAL CONGREGATION. If necessary, please review my first article where it was shown that the local church is the only organization that the Lord has given His church. This topic does NOT have to do with what we as individuals may or may not do, as we live our lives on purely an individual basis! Instead, it has to do with the responsibilities given to the local church as it functions in a collective sense.

According to the New Testament, the collective actions assigned the local church included, and were limited to: (1) worship, (2) evangelism, (3) edification of the saints, (4) benevolence, and (5) scriptural discipline. Let us first consider how the local church is to assemble regularly to WORSHIP GOD. In 1 Cor. 11, Paul uses the expression, "in the church," several times: "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it." (Verse 18) "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper." (Verse 20, ASV) "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another." (Verse 33)

The above verses show that there were times when the local church assembled to worship and to render spiritual service. Paul is writing specifically in 1 Cor. 11 about eating the communion. On what day did the early Christians assemble to commemorate the death of Christ? Here is what the Bible says about the church at Troas: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts 20:7) In their assemblies the Corinthians also contributed into the treasury of the local church (1 Cor. 16:1-2). That is certainly implied by Paul's instructions: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, THAT

THERE BE NO GATHERINGS WHEN I COME." This was something that they did collectively, pooling their resources together into a local treasury, as opposed to an individual fund kept at home. Notice that they were to do this on the very day the early church assembled to eat the communion the first day of the week!

There are times when we assemble into a **CONGREGATIONAL CAPACITY** to eat the Lord's supper, to give of our means, and to do other specified acts of worship that are authorized and required. While we can, and should, worship God in praise and song on an individual basis, there is also a time **AS THE CHURCH** that we are to assemble to worship God! We read of public prayers and preaching engaged in by the church: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42) The Lord has assigned certain functions to the local congregation and corporate worship is one of those functions.

The work of the local church also involves **EVANGELISM**. The mission of the church has to do with the spreading of the gospel for saving souls! That is what "the great commission" is all about: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. 28:19-20) "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16)

Let me begin by pointing out that the **INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN** has a personal responsibility toward evangelism. As we have opportunity and the ability, we must be sharing the gospel with others and influencing people to obey the truth. Let us be like the early disciples who "went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Each individual Christian in the first century felt responsible for engaging in "personal evangelism." Do we?

The local church, however, also has the responsibility of sending qualified men to preach God's word. Congregations regularly supported Paul to preach the gospel: "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service." (2 Cor. 11:8) The churches of Macedonia contributed to Paul to supply his needs (Verse 9). We learn from Phil. 4:15-16 that the church at Philippi sent financial assistance to Paul: "For even in Thessalonica, ye sent once and again unto my necessity."

There are two points that I would like to emphasize: (1) How did those churches come up with the support for Paul? In other words, where did the sum of money come from? As far as I know, there is only one answer to the question. The instructions given by Paul in I

Cor. 16:1-2 show how the church gathers funds to meet a need; members pool their resources together into a local treasury. (2) Those who preach the gospel are authorized to receive support from the church. That's the principle stated in 1 Cor. 9:14, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Paul is referring to financial support in the context, and he is saying that the preacher is to be supported based on service rendered, and not because he is viewed as a charity case.

When a congregation helps to send a preacher out by their assistance, they have "**FELLOWSHIP**" with the evangelist in "the furtherance of the gospel." That means that whatever he accomplishes for good, as souls are added to the church and men are strengthened in the faith, it is "**FRUIT**" that abounds to the account of that local church! Paul makes that plain in writing to the Philippians: "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now." (Phil. 1:3-5) "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account." (Phil. 4:15-17)

When congregations will not support a preacher unless he is laboring in their midst, this demonstrates a **SELFISH SPIRIT**, and it also shows a lack of understanding about how evangelism works! When we support the gospel in ripe areas of the world like Africa, Mexico, Philippines, Ecuador, etc., we share in the success that the gospel is having in those fields that are "white already to harvest" (John 4:35). Evangelism is the great work and mission of the church and it should have top priority in our present and future plans. Each congregation should be evangelistic minded and seek opportunities to spread the gospel in the community and abroad. In future articles, we will cover the rest of the collective actions assigned the local church.

MISINFORMATION

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and fanatically opposed to listening to any other point of view but their own - that is a false claim. Christians must always be ready to listen and study with anyone who honestly is seeking the truth. If, on the other hand, the charge is that we are too strict and narrow in adhering to the written Word of God, and we need to bend and compromise for the sake of union with those who refuse to keep the Lord's commandments as delivered—then let the charge stand. God forbid we ever be narrow and closed minded, but may we ever, with strict and narrow focus, keep the ordinances

as delivered.

2. The Old Testament. "I have heard that the church of Christ does not believe in the Old Testament." I do not how many times some one has told me that. I always explain that they have received some misinformation. In fact, I love to preach from the Old Testament as much as from the New Testament. The Old Testament is the Word of God just as surely as is the New Testament. Every word of the old is inspired. We believe every bit of it just as written. As one old preacher humorously put it, "I believe the Bible just as it is written. When the Bible says a whale swallowed Jonah, I believe it. In fact, if the Bible said that Jonah swallowed a whale, I would believe that too!" Let me hasten to affirm, however, that although the Old Testament is inspired, and we learn a great deal about how God still deals with man today, we are not governed by the Old Testament scriptures in this age. We are governed by the New Testament and not the Old Testament today. In Ephesians, 2:15 and Colossians 2:14 Paul affirms that Jesus abolished the Old Testament law and nailed it to his cross. In Galatians 3:25 Paul plainly declares that since Christ has come we are no longer under the law. The Old Testament law was given by inspiration and we learn great lessons from studying it, but we are under the New Testament scriptures now. We look to the New Testament for guidance in worshipping and serving the Lord. The failure to recognize that we are governed by the New Testament instead of the Old Testament has led to many of the erroneous practices accepted in so many churches today. For instance, there are many who think polygamy is acceptable, and even though not practiced openly for fear of legal reprisals, there are religious people who practice it secretly and believe they will even have multiple wives in heaven. When you question them about this they simply point to the Old Testament and tell you that Abraham, David, and Solomon had multiple wives. It is in the Bible! The problem is that God did indeed allow polygamy in the Old Testament, but we are under the New Testament today and in the New Testament we are told, "Let every man have his own wife." (1 Corinthians 7:2) Again, there are those who insist we keep the Sabbath (Saturday) holy. I had a man tell me one time that worshipping on Sunday was the mark of the beast! Where do people get the idea they should keep the Sabbath holy? Right out of the Bible! In fact, it was one of the Ten Commandments. Is that for us today? No, dear reader. We are under the New Testament, and therefore we rightly worship on the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7) But once again, there are those who use instruments of music in worship. Where do churches get the authority to use instruments in worship? The same place others get multiple wives and keeping the Sabbath the Old Testament. David used to praise God and therefore, some insist, it is all right for us to use them too. David also had ten wives. Does that make

polygamy permissible for us today? David did not worship on the first day of the week. He kept the Jewish Sabbath. Should we keep the Sabbath because David did? The New Testament scriptures are our guide and standard and they clearly show that we praise God by singing and making melody, not on instruments, but in our hearts. Yes, we believe in using the Old Testament to learn great lessons and principles that help us in living for the Lord, but the authority and pattern for our salvation, service, and worship is in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Water Salvation. The accusation that members of the church of Christ believe in water salvation or water regeneration is the result of misinformation. I do not believe in water salvation. Just plunging someone under water will not result in the remission of sins. I know of no one who believes such a preposterous idea. If I did believe, dear reader, that all I had to do was immerse a person in water for them to be saved, then I guarantee you I would be dunking some folks whether they were willing or not! I have some loved ones and friends who have never been baptized and if all it takes were getting them under the water, I would be dragging them into the baptistery whether they agreed or not. But, who believes such? Baptism is only efficacious if a person willing submits. A person must first believe, repent, and confess Jesus before baptism has any value. There is no such thing as water salvation. With all that said, nevertheless, let me positively aver that the New Testament teaches that water baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation. The forgiveness of sins only comes after a person has been immersed in water, i.e., baptized for the remission of sins. In every instance where baptism and salvation are mentioned in the same text, salvation always comes after baptism. Note the following, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38) "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16) "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." (Acts 22:16) "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us." (1 Peter 3:21) In all these passages, and others, salvation or the forgiveness of sins comes after baptism. A preacher made this statement in his sermon one time and a man in the audience shook his head back and forth, showing he did not believe it. The preacher proceeded to quote the above scriptures and as he did the man's head slowly stopped shaking, and by the time the preacher quoted the last scripture the man was nodding his head in agreement. That's great! When we learn we are mistaken we need to stop shaking our heads and start nodding in agreement and affirmation of the truth. Nobody believes that water saves. No. Jesus saves! But, the blood of our Savior saves us when, after believing, repenting, and confessing, we are baptized in water, as the Lord himself enjoined, for the remission of sins. May the Lord help us all to ignore the misinformation being disseminated and propagated

and look through the maze of man made churches and doctrines to the truth revealed in the New Testament scriptures.—Jerry Dickinson, 13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015, 713-455-4731 Misterjld@aol.com.

EDITORIAL

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for us to fall into the same trap. Some just go through the motions and would not consider themselves as being dead spiritually. Yet, Jesus says the church at Sardis was dead! What a lesson for us today!

Then, in verse 2 the Lord said, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain." What an interesting concept here. Paul gave a similar exhortation in Ephesians 5:14 when he wrote, "Wherefore he that saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." This means that much as a soldier on guard duty, they should arouse themselves to a useful and faithful effort to do the Lord's work. Yes, the church at Sardis was "dead." However, there were still some who had not defiled their garments (verse 4) and were worthy of walking with the Lord in white. This presents an interesting picture. Here is a church that is pronounced "dead" by the Lord Himself. However, within this "dead" congregation are some members who are still alive but ready to die according to verse 2. Notice that Jesus said, "...strengthen the things that remain, **that are ready to die...**" (Emphasis mine DLK) It is interesting that the Lord did not tell those members to leave and go elsewhere. That might be what some of us would advise but He told them to "strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die."

What might be required to see that the church in Sardis is strengthened? Would it call for some strong preacher to go in there and help them? Might it be that a good lively gospel meeting, with strong preaching by a faithful man could be of help? What about a faithful man going there to set in order the things that are wanting? Is that the scriptural thing for any faithful gospel preacher to do? Would it be of help for sister congregations to perhaps make themselves visible at gospel meetings, etc.? The answer to all of these questions is yes. Furthermore, when a faithful preacher went there to "strengthen the things that remain" (assuming the worship was still being conducted scripturally) he would deserve the backing, well-wishes and cooperation of his brethren everywhere. What better way to help the weak and dying (even dead) church be strengthened than for everyone one to come to her aid and make a real effort to revive, restore correct and "strengthen the things that remain?" In other words, how can the church be strengthened if no one can go and preach? Are we to suppose they are required to strengthen themselves from within before anyone could go and help? Who believes it?

Are we suggesting that we should simply overlook the sin that may be known to exist? Of course not, that's what we are concerned about in the first place! Neither are we suggesting that a preacher should go into a place where he knows of sin and then conduct himself as though all is well. That would be hypocritical to say the least. The work of an evangelist involves setting in order things that are wanting. (Titus 1:5) Admittedly, this calls for a preacher who is capable and qualified to set those things in order. However, it also requires that the preacher go into some areas where problems are known to exist! That is one of his responsibilities, is it not?

It is often the case that a gospel preacher goes into a place having little or no prior knowledge of problems of any kind. It is simply not possible for any of us to know what goes on in every place. Brethren need to consider this before being critical of his going. After all, he may only be doing what the Bible tells him to do in the first place.

Think on these things—DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TWO CONGREGATIONS TO BE UNITED AS ONE!

We would like for the brotherhood to know that, upon the request of the brethren of the Crescent Ridge congregation here in Birmingham, Alabama, we of the East Jefferson congregation have agreed to unite to form one congregation. We will be meeting at the Crescent Ridge church building off Crestwood Blvd. (US 78) in Irondale, AL. The first service as one congregation was on Wednesday, April 2, 2003. We are now having three services per week—Lord's day 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and Wednesday 7:00 p.m. It was also agreed that we would put forth effort to establish a new work in this area sometime in the future. The last services conducted as the East Jefferson congregation on Old Springville Road were on March 30. No other services will to be conducted at that location.

CHANGE IN CHURCH DIRECTORY INFORMATION.

Delete the Trussville, AL congregation which now meets with the Crescent Ridge congregation at Birmingham, AL. Please delete the name of brother Gene Berry who is now deceased and replace it with the following information—Harlon Howell, 5392 Old Springville Rd., Pinson, AL 35126, 205-856-5674.

THANK YOU

Thanks to all my brothers and sisters in Christ. During my illness over the last 2 1/2 years I have received so many cards and phone calls from thoughtful friends. I am also very appreciative for all the prayers that have been offered for me. There is

nothing in this world as great as my brothers and sisters in Christ.—Joe Loughmiller

SOUTHEASTERN MEMORIAL DAY MEETING JACKSONVILLE, FL

This annual meeting will be held Wed. thru Sun., MAY 21-25, 2003 and will be conducted by Brother Allen Bailey. Services will be Wed.-Fri. 7:30 PM; Sat., 10:30 AM and 6:00 PM; Sun. 11:00 AM and 2:45 PM. Visiting preachers are to speak at the Sat. AM services. Please make plans to attend.

ALL MATERIAL SHOULD BE SENT TO RONNY F. WADE FOR THE JUNE OPA

Since Pat and I will be moving to a new address very soon, please send all materials for publication in the June issue to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808. Beginning with the July issue resume sending your materials to me at our new address: Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550. We suggest making a note of the new address in your church directories for future reference.—DLK

MY POSITION ON CARNAL WARFARE

I cannot participate in military service in any form, directly or indirectly, in combatant or noncombatant service, because:

1. My duty and obligation to my God is superior to all other obligations (Acts 5:29; Matt. 22:37).
2. My God in the Bible forbids that I engage in carnal warfare in the following references:

- i. "Put up thy sword," "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52)—Jesus
- ii. "My Kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).
- iii. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Corinthians 10:34)
- iv. "Love your enemies" (Matt 5:44); "Turn the other cheek" (Matt 5:39).
- v. "Recompense to no man evil for evil" (Romans 12:17).

3. To enter any military branch or service, combatant or noncombatant, I would be compelled to "swear" (take an oath), but the Bible forbids that I do so ("Swear not at all"—Jesus, Matt. 5:34)

4. To enter any military service, I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden - "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:14).

5. To be in any branch of military service in any way, I would be a part of the organization and would therefore have fellowship in the service, but such is prohibited; this, "Have no fellowship with the ungruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11).

6. To serve in any way in the military service, I would be deprived of obeying the command to assemble on the Lord's Day (Sunday) to worship God in the Bible, at least part of the time, hence would disobey God (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

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

principles.

Thomas Humphrey, Rt. 5, Box 540, Broken Bow, OK 74728; **Regina C. Humphrey**, Rt 5, Box 540, Broken Bow, OK 74728; **Marion Humphrey**, Rt 5, Box 545, Broken Bow, OK 74728; **Adam Humphrey**, Rt 5, Box 545, Broken Bow, OK 74728; **Matthew Humphrey**, Rt 5, Box 545, Broken Bow, OK 74728; **Marie Humphrey**, Rt 5, Box 545, Broken Bow, OK 74728; **Ashley Robinson**, 2210 Forest Grove Est Rd, Allen, TX 75002; **David Robinson**, 2210 Forest Grove Est Rd, Allen, TX 75002; **Brandt Smith**, P.O. Box 589, Rhome, TX 76078; **Matt Nichols**, 3645 Warwick Blvd, #22, Kansas City, MO 64111; **Melanie Nichols** 3645 Warwick Blvd, #22, Kansas City, MO 64111; **Adam Wesley Warren**, Rt 1, Box 755, Webbers Falls, OK 74470; **Greg Robbins**, 108 Sunvalley Dr., Gatesville, TX 76528; **Evan Adair**, 1436 Mallard Dr., Del City, OK 73115; **Brian Matthew Minter**, 1512 Belaire Ct., Roanoke, TX 76262; **Chad Stuart Minter**, 1512 Belaire Ct., Roanoke, TX 76262; **Allison Elizabeth Minter**, 1512 Belaire Ct., Roanoke, TX 76262; **Ambria Michelle Smith**, 1512 Belaire Ct., Roanoke, TX 76262; **Carius S. Wolf**, 8511 S. FL Avenue, Floral City, FL, 34436; **Jason K. Hays**, 10 W. St., Inverness, FL 34451; **Christopher L. Hays**, 6570 N.W. 61st Ave, Ocala, FL 34482; **Jonathan J. Wolf**, 2912 E. Oakton St, Hernando, FL 34442; **Ryan Anthony Yotter**, 14207 S. Harris Rd, Greenwood, MO 64034; **Davette Bradford**, 613 Buckaroo, Peculiar, MO 64078; **Bryan Slaybaugh**, 626 S. Walnut Cr, Mansfield, TX 76063; **Wes Hubbard**, 626 S. Walnut Cr, Mansfield, TX 76063; **Morgan Lee Stripling**, 8586 Wilderness Trail, Scotland, AR 72141; **Zachariah Sean Sluyter**, 7328 Highway 15, Farmerville, LA 71241; **Laura Hurd**, 1597 Glynn Ct, Hampton, GA 30228; **Jeremy Wilson**, 8017 Indiana Rd, Houston, MO 65483; **Jerad Gentry**, 7525 Brownhill Rd, Houston, MO 65483; **Jena Gentry**, 16495 Kansas Ln, Houston, MO 65483; **Jodie Wilson**, 8017 Indiana Rd, Houston, MO 65483; **Jacinda Baker**, Box 3, 6250 Hwy 63, Houston, MO 65483; **Jennifer Marie Smith**, Shackelford Springs, Apt.#6, 312 N. Pitts, Marshfield, MO 65706; **Justin Lee Smith**, 17762 Godfinch Rd, Neosho, MO 64850; **Barry Heathcote**, 1106 Dobbins Rd, Corsicana, TX 75110; **Matthew Ryan Denton**, 2635 Missouri St, Lawrence, KS 66046; **Martin M. Edens**, 21958 Hwy 295, Wesley, AR 72773; **Bret Matthew McKinney**, 3347 Campbell's Mill Rd, Blairsville, PA 15717; **Joshua Linwood Nilson**, **Lance Charles Nilson**, **Zachery Haney Nilson**, **Dennis Walter Nilson**, **Teresa Leann Nilson**, 1228 N. Rt. E, Harrisburg, MO 65256; **Ashley Windes**, Box 461, Windes Ridge Rd., Richland, MO 65536; **Carl Frost**, 1384 C.R. 309, Georgetown, FL 32139; **Sean & Derek McNeill** (brothers), 15939 Hwy CC, Neosho, MO 64850; **Stephanie Frizzell**, 1884 Pineville Rd., Neosho, MO 64850; **Landon M. Lay**, 1600 W. Persimmon Apt. H-6, Rogers, AR 72756; **Andrew Weaver**, 1805 Campbell Pkwy. 4, Joplin, MO 64801; **Steven Frizzell**, 1805 Campbell Parkway Apt. 4, Joplin, MO 64801; **James Frizzell**, 1884 Pineville Rd., Neosho, MO 64850; **Mikeal Crandall**, 7958 Marten Rd., Neosho, MO 64850; **Jared Nichols**, 255 McMillan Rd., Anderson,

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OUR DEPARTED

BULLARD—Lula Bullard, a member of the church at Ada, OK, was born March 19, 1908 at San Angelo, TX and departed this life March 27, 2003 at the age of 95. She was married to Horace L. Bullard, who preceded her in death in 1970. Survivors include a daughter, Martha Sweatt, of Ada; two sons, Lee Bullard, of Ada, and Ed Bullard, of Tupelo, known to many as a preacher of the gospel; one sister, several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. One son, W.H. Bullard, of Los Angeles, CA preceded her in death. Our sister lived a good, faithful life, serving others as a Christian. A large crowd attended the funeral March 22, attesting to the esteem in which she was held. I considered it an honor to be asked to speak at the funeral.—Johnny Elmore

GORE—Gene Albert Gore passed away March 9, 2003 and was laid to rest next to his wife, Earnistine, in the Pine Cemetery near the home they had lived most of their lives. I was privileged to baptize Gene on July 4, 1976. He humbled me by requesting that I preach his funeral. Gene and Earnistine were both faithful members of the Legal Church of Christ. We all need your prayers.—Ed Bullard,

FALVEY—On February 10, 2003 brother Frank Falvey crossed the rolling river to the farther side. This gentle person was born in Lincoln County, MS on December 12, 1927, and was still a resident of that County at the time of his death. He had been a member of the New Salem church since the early days of this life. Frank was a quiet man, a man of little fanfare. He went about his daily life working, helping others, and serving wherever and whenever possible. To know him was to respect and admire him. He was a true friend and faithful brother. He is survived by his wife, Paulene, of over fifty years, one son, one brother, four sisters and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The memorial service was conducted at the New Salem church by Lynwood Smith and this writer. A large gathering of family and friends were present to pay their respect to the memory of this good brother.—Ronny F. Wade

ROSE—Myrtle Rose was born June 3, 1912 and won the victory over life on February 18, 2003. Grandma, as I knew her, was a woman who loved the Lord and trusted in His guidance. In spite of the loss of three children, the poverty of The Great Depression, and long-term health problems she never lost her positive outlook on life. No matter what happened, life was God's gift to be used to glorify Him. Prayer was never far from her lips. Jack Cutter, who assisted me in the funeral service, summed it up well when he noted that grandma was a "Pioneer Woman" forged by adversity and hardship. Like the woman of Proverbs 31 she cared for her household and demonstrated grace and virtue. Grandma was a long time member of the church that met in Henryetta, OK. At her service the family and extended family sang her favorite old hymns. Jack Cutter and I

spoke. The service was a tribute to her life and the lessons we learned from her. Grandma is survived by four daughters and their husbands: Zella and Roy Criswell, Geneva and James Roe, Wanda and Bob Keesee, Loraine and Carrol Smith. She is also survived by a great number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As her grandson I was honored to be a part of the service and my gratitude is extended to Jack Cutter who not only assisted in the service but was constantly at grandma's side before she died.—Mike Criswell

BASSMAN—John Victor Bassman, born May 12, 1912, departed this life March 19, 2003, in St. Luke's Hospital, Chesterfield, Missouri. On March 12, 1938 he was united in marriage to Lucy Chloe Wilkerson and to this union four children were born. He is survived by his wife Lucy (nee Wilkerson) of the home, two daughters, Chloe Murphy, Englewood, CO and Claudia Nelms and husband Jack Ballwin, M), two sons, Victor, of Manchester, MO, Woody Bassman, of Lake St. Louis, MO, four grandchildren. A host of relatives and friends. He was employed as a Locomotive Engineer with by the Missouri Pacific Railroad for many years. He loved the outdoors, fishing and hunting, and enjoyed working with bees. He was baptized into Christ as a young boy, and affiliated with the Hayes St. Church of Christ, in Lebanon, MO where he remained faithful unto the day of his demise. He was of the old school who believed that right was right and wrong was wrong. He believed in the query "what sayeth the scriptures" He was a long time friend of mine, as is his wife Lucy. He had a long illness. I visited with him often. His interment was at Crocker, MO. His funeral was well arranged. Singing was done by church singers. Floyd Massey, of the Lebanon congregation assisted this writer. The funeral was in the church at Lebanon, as requested by John himself.—Clovis T. Cook

SMITH—Clifford K. Smith of Joplin, MO was born on June 12, 1976 and departed this life on March 27, 2003 at the young age of 26. He bravely fought cancer for over 9 years. Cliff's optimism and his calm spirit encouraged all who knew him. He never complained about his illness or the pain associated with it. He went about trying to lead a normal life and trusted in God throughout the time of his illness. Cliff obeyed the gospel almost nine years ago and was a faithful member of the Leawood Village Church of Christ in Joplin until the time of his death. In 1995, he was married to Amy Miller of Joplin. She was a devoted and loving wife and courageously stood by his side until the end. He is survived by his wife, Amy; his parents, Richard and Virginia Smith of Neosho, MO; one brother, Justin Smith; one sister, Jennifer Smith; his mother and father-in-law, Mark and Ilene Miller of Joplin; and a brother and sister-in-law, Aaron and Amy Miller and his niece, Heather Miller, all of Joplin. The funeral service was a fitting tribute to this fine young man. The Leawood church building was filled to overflowing. It was an honor for this writer to be asked to conduct the service, being assisted by John Anderson, Aaron Miller, and

Bruce Roebuck. The singing was beautifully rendered by "The Believers" quartet of Joplin. His body was laid to rest in the Burkhardt church cemetery. May God bless this broken-hearted family in the days to come and may we all look toward a happy reunion on the hillsides of Heaven where there are no graves.—Kevin W. Presley

SMITH—Clarence Kenneth (C.K.) Smith, was born February 16, 1927 in Camden County, Missouri. Departed this life January 7, 2003, at his home in Springfield, MO. Kenneth's health begin to fail him some time ago and progressively got worse until the day of his death. This writer has known Kenneth and Clara (his wife) for over sixty years. He was strong in the faith and never turned his back on what was right, and to my knowledge, never refused to speak out against that which was wrong. We have stood shoulder to shoulder in the good fight of faith. I have worked with Kenneth in five different congregations. I was by his side the most of the last day of his life and part of the night. Kenneth had a nice funeral, being well arranged and expedited. Ronny Wade and I, conducted the funeral. Kenneth, was employed by the Shell Oil Company the most of his life. And when his years were finished he retired from that company. He was a handy man and could do so many things. He will be greatly missed by his friends, and his family and the church. He is survived by his wife Clara, of the home, two sons and a daughter as well as several grandchildren.—Clovis T. Cook



Rick Martin, 300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 39189, mmartin@bellsouth.net—The congregation here in Marietta just recently had a meeting with Bro. Bruce Roebuck. The meeting was enjoyable and Bruce did an excellent job preaching the Gospel. In recent months I have preached at several places here in the south, including Opp, AL; West Point, GA; Napoleon, AL and here at home. I just closed a meeting at Harrison, AR. It was good to meet new brothers and sisters in Christ. I appreciate the brethren having the confidence to ask me. We enjoyed being in the home of Jimmie and Cindy Smith. They were gracious hosts. Jimmie is to be commended for his work. Several preachers were able to be at the meeting. I am grateful to Bruce Roebuck, Miles King, Billy Dickinson and Ronny Wade for attending the meeting. Several Congregations in the area were represented. Brother and Sister Virgil Hogland, from the Locust congregation were present at nearly every service. They deserve special thanks. We have several meetings going on in our area at this time. Please continue to pray for the work.

Cullen L. Smith, 4217 McNiel Ave., W.F. TX 76308, cullensmith@hotmail.com, 940-689-9314. April 10—

The Crestview congregation is currently enjoying a meeting with Brother Paul Nichols and he has certainly lived up to his reputation. We will be better for having listened and we hope and pray Paul and Wilma have many more years to serve the cause of Christ. Their enduring stand for the truth certainly is an example for generations to follow. I closed in McGregor, TX March 23. Despite some illness in the congregation we had good attendance and one Brother King was in the hospital in the morning and at the services that night. That kind of dedication is really an asset. It was great to be with Bro. Wayne and the McGregor congregation. They all worked for the meeting and it paid off. Many thanks to the home of Billy and Pam Wilson for their hospitality and most enjoyable time. I look forward to being with the 79th and Kansas congregation in Kansas City June 8-15, Bedford, IN June 16-22, and in Gailey, OK July 13-20. May God bless the workers worldwide.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, April 14—The meeting closed at Ardmore, OK with large crowds and one being restored to duty. It was a real treat for me to be able to be with my long time friend Johnny Elmore who lives and works among the church there. He is respected and appreciated by the church for his many years of tireless labor. After several weeks at home, we leave, Lord willing this weekend for meetings at Linville, OH April 20-27, Fayetteville, OH April 30 to May 4, then on to Mitchell, IN May 15-18 and LaGrange, GA May 31-June 8. Here at home, and at surrounding congregations, we have enjoyed the preaching of Kevin Presley, Rick Martin, Richard DeGough, and Johnny Elmore, all of whom have conducted meetings of late. The Lord bless His people.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, April 5—Last month I was in El Cajon, CA for a good meeting. We had good crowds including some excellent prospects for conversion. It was a pleasure to be associated with preaching brethren Larry Lay and Elias Rodriguez, who is doing a splendid work among the Spanish speaking people in San Diego. My next meeting was in Harrisonville, MO. Again, we had good attendance with a number of visitors from the community. Fellow preachers who came to help us out included Paul Nichols, Mike Criswell, Charles McConnell, and Gary Garcia. John Pruitt, who is recovering from a severe heart attack, attended every service and was an inspiration to us all. May God continue to bless him and all these good brethren. We look forward to the beginning of a meeting here at home with Wayne McKamie in about a week. My schedule of meetings for this year includes: Tulsa, OK 129th E. Ave. (Apr. 12-13), Mountain Home, MO (Apr. 20-27), Earlytown, AL (May 18-25), Ash Camp, WV (June 22-29), Miami, OK (July 13-20), Moore, OK (July 25-Aug. 3), Pads, TX (Sept. 5-14), Healdton, OK (Sept. 21-28), Lee's Summit, MO (Oct. 4-12), Cable Ridge, MO (19-26), Kansas City, KS 36th & Everett (Oct. 29-Nov. 2), Oakdale, CA (Nov. 7-16), Joplin, MO (Nov. 19-23), and Davis, OK (Dec. 5-7). Please continue to mention us in

your prayers.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, April 3—We had the privilege of being a part of the annual study at Miami, OK again this year. We heard some good teaching and appreciated the opportunity to be there. Those brethren always arrange a good study. I was assigned the subject "Sixty five Years Perspective of the Church" which helped remind us of the things which we have gone through to be where we are today as a brotherhood. The Lord willing, we leave Saturday for a meeting at Wichita Falls, TX, April 6-13. It has been several years since we were there. We are to be in a meeting with the church at Little Rock, AR June 15-22; Mountain Grove, MO, July 19-27, and Clebourne, TX, August 6-10. We look forward to being with these brethren and appreciate the invitations. We will be praying that lasting good will be accomplished in all these efforts. If you are near any of these places, please come to be with us.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net, April 8—This has been a busy year for me so far. We were at Allen, TX Feb. 14-16 in a weekend meeting. We were at Dothan, AL Feb. 23-March 2, where we enjoyed being with Kevin Presley and area Christians. We had some good crowds with good outside attendance. I was at Weatherford, TX March 3-9, teaching at three services and giving singing instruction on the side. I spoke on "The Restoration Movement in America" at the annual study in Miami, OK March 15. Ronny Wade spoke for us here in a meeting March 12-16, climaxing with a great singing. We heard Billy Dickinson two nights during his meeting at Ratliff City in March. I spoke at Lebanon, MO, April 2, and have just returned from a short meeting at Eldon, MO April 3-6. The church there has made progress since beginning in 1988 due to the labors of Dan Wissinger and others who preceded him. Sally and I expect to be at Jamesville, MO April 13-20, Napoleon, AL May 4-11, and Columbia, MO May 28-June 1. I am thankful for all those who have helped me and supported me in our efforts in the past and ask your prayers as we press on.

Bennie Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, April 5—We continue our endeavors with the Olivehurst, CA congregation. The congregation is working and growing. Duane Permenter taught us a good lesson at one of our Tuesday evening services last month. We have some young men in the area training to be preachers and they bless us with their teaching on a regular basis. Among them are Greg Cardosa and Keith Hall. They are making great progress in their growth toward greater service in the kingdom. We visited Duane Permenter's meeting in Lodi where a large crowd had gathered to hear one of his fine presentations. He and his family are preparing to move to Lusaka, Zambia in a few weeks. They will replace Roger and Judy Boone who are moving back here to work with the Placerville, CA congregation. They have worked in Zambia for many years and the work has grown and prospered with

their ministry. We are looking forward to working with the Aurora, MO congregation in a meeting June 20-29. It will be a pleasure to be working in close association with Roy Lee Criswell and Zella once again. Joann and I will never forget our labors together with them in Malawi. After this meeting we plan to attend the July 4th meeting in Lebanon, MO. May God bless all of you.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, March 31—The month of March was an enjoyable and profitable month for us. Our meeting here at Dothan with Johnny Elmore was an encouragement to us all. Johnny did an outstanding job with each sermon and it was a pleasure to be with both him and Sally. Several people from the cups church attended one or more nights of the meeting. It was also my privilege to hear Bruce Roebuck during his meeting at Marietta, GA. His preaching was true to the scriptures and very timely. He is certainly an asset to the church wherever he preaches. My family and I returned last evening from a meeting at Mission Hills congregation in Springfield, MO. Although a seasonal “bug” made it’s way through our entire household during the meeting, the services were still a real thrill. The church at Mission Hills is thriving under capable leadership. The building was packed at every service and the brethren were enthused about the meeting. On the last Lord’s Day, there were 147 in attendance. They have to set out chairs at their regular Sunday services now. It was good to be with all of the preachers from that area. Let me especially note the wonderful hospitality of the church there. We made our abode with Floyd and Betty Harris and could not have been treated any better! They are wonderful people and went out of their way to make us comfortable. Lord willing, I am to begin this coming Lord’s Day in Fieldstone, MO and then in June, I plan to be with the church at Conway, LA. Finally, the work here at home has suffered a few setbacks in recent months. However, we hope to overcome and resume a pattern of growth very soon. The television program continues to generate regular response from our community. Pray for us!

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA - 94550, old_paths@juno.com, April 14—March 23-30 we were with the church in Harrodsburg, IN for a week’s meeting. We were able to attend one night of Doug Hawkins meeting at a nearby congregation before our meeting began. Doug preached a good sermon and we enjoyed it. The meeting at Harrodsburg was pretty well attended by neighboring congregations and a few outsiders as well. The church seems to be at peace and a good spirit prevailed among all. April 6-13 we were in Wilsonville, OR for a week’s meeting. This was a first for us though we knew many of the brethren from years gone by. It was obvious that an effort had been made to work for the meeting. Gayland Osburn and wife were there for it all and David Stands and family were able to stay for much of the meeting as well. Melvin and Lynette Lee came from Manteca and stayed for the week. Others came nearly every service from several miles away. Quite a number of outsiders attended and also several from the local cups church came about four

services. Our daughter in law, Kelly King came up and attended along with some of her family who live nearby. The building was pretty well full much of the time. We appreciated the hospitality shown by all and especially Delmer and Diane Lee who kept us in their home and made us feel welcome and comfortable. We pray good was accomplished. We will be at home now for a time and are looking forward to it. If the Lord wills, Pat and I will be moving to Livermore, CA in about two weeks. Please note our new address.

C.A. Smith, 810 N.W. 6th St., Andrews, TX 79714—On February 6, 2003, Iva Jo and I departed for Hawaii, accompanied by our dear friends, Al and Carrie Baze of Midland, TX. We stayed in Hawaii, on the islands of Ohau and Maui for eight days, absolutely overwhelmed by the sights we saw and the people we met. The occasion for they and us was our fiftieth anniversary. The high light of our trip was to meet with the saints on the island of Ohau. To visit with brother and sister Danao once again, as well as to become acquainted with the other brothers and sisters that meet there, was indeed a delight. Brother Danao asked us to preach, but I told him, even though the services were in English, that I believed it would be in the best interest of the saints there, if they were to be edified that he preach. This proved to be true, for as brother Danao preached on the subject, “Keeping the Ordinances,” when making a salient point, would make it in English, and for the benefit of his brethren, he would make it in their native tongue. Thus, all of us were edified, as it should be when the church comes together. We enjoyed being there so much, but it was good to get back home, get harnessed up, so to speak, and busying ourselves with the task of trying to build up the church of our Lord here. We are looking forward to Spring/Summer and the meetings that will be taking place hither and yon. Please pray for us as we labor in the vineyard of He who died that we might have life, and that more abundantly. May God richly bless all of His everywhere.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Hughson, Calif. 95326—We leave tomorrow for meetings in Niangua and Buffalo, Missouri. I look forward to being with them and having good meetings. There are so many good friends and brethren we love and look forward to seeing them again, that it is impossible to mention their names. We have had baptisms and several confessions in the last few months at Turlock. The young men continue to develop in their teaching. Glane Harris has done a good job training them and motivating them to be able and sound teachers. We are blessed with their talent and interest in doing what they can for the cause. Their parents are to be commended for setting the example before them, and encouraging them in the work. The Memorial day meeting in Turlock is fast approaching and we anticipate a wonderful meeting as all of them have been. Bret Hickey will do the preaching this year, so please make your plans to come be with us. May God bless the brotherhood with health, sound preaching, peace and unity, according to his will. We have the greatest people on earth in the Church. Pray for us.

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THE BACK PAGE...

A MAN NAMED MOSES

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Last Wednesday (March 26, 2003) John Pruitt and I drove from Harrisonville, Missouri to a cemetery in St. Joseph where we located the grave of Moses E. Lard and paid our respects to the memory of this second generation Restoration Period preacher.

Lard's life story is one of the strangest in all the history of the Restoration Movement yet his triumph over poverty, ignorance, and many other obstacles places him among the greatest men of that era. He was born in Bedford County, Tennessee on October 29, 1818. His father Leaven Lard (can you imagine being named "Leaven Lard?") Sounds like a couple of ingredients used to make biscuits) was a restless frontiersman and around 1829, he moved his family westward to Missouri in hopes of finding new freedom and plenty of game for food.

Not long after settling his family in Clinton County Missouri, Leaven Lard died of smallpox and left his wife and six children with no means of support. Moses' mother did the best she could to hold the family together, but she eventually found the burden too great. She concluded she had no recourse but to send a very young Moses and a brother out into the world to make their own way. She gave each of the boys a little New Testament and her blessing, and with tears streaming down her cheeks and her lips quivering, she sent them out from the home forever.

By 1835, when Lard was seventeen years old, he still had received no schooling, but he began to teach himself how to read and write. Lard came upon a copy of Walter Scott's Gospel Restored, devoured its contents, and was eventually baptized into Christ at the age of twenty-three.

When Lard was twenty-seven years old he was encouraged to enroll in Alexander Campbell's Bethany College by General Alexander W. Doniphan of Richmond. Although he was married, had two children, and had to work to provide for his family, Lard completed a four years' course in three years, and graduated as valedictorian of his class.

Upon his graduation from Bethany College, Lard moved his family back to Missouri, locating in Independence where he began to develop as a preacher. Like all young preachers, he made a lot of mistakes and received a lot of criticism, but due to his own determination and the encouragement of supporters who saw great potential in him, Lard emerged as the greatest orator of his generation.

In 1857, J.B. Jeter, a distinguished Virginia Baptist preacher published a book entitled, *Campbellism Examined*. The book misrepresented the Restoration

Movement's efforts to restore the faith and practice of the apostolic churches. Alexander Campbell asked Lard to respond to Jeter's assault and Lard produced *Review of Campbellism Examined*. In his review Lard dissected, with merciless logic, every fallacy of Jeter's. The book left Lard's brethren overjoyed, the Baptists in dismay, and gave Lard a reputation as a writer as well as that of a preacher.

In September of 1863, while the Civil War was at its crest, Lard began publishing a quarterly journal. For more than four years he published his journal under the most harrowing circumstances. However, the essays in *Lard's Quarterly* possess such eloquent literary qualities and poetic imagination that they raised religious writings to heights never seen before. His fame as an essayist caused *The New York Ledger* to offer Lard \$5,000 a year to contribute essays to its pages. He declined the offer because he said he could not produce "grist from a mill" but only spontaneous essays from the depth of his soul. Lynwood Smith first introduced me to *Lard's Quarterlies* about thirty years ago. Lynwood had me sit down while he read a lengthy obituary Lard wrote about a brother named Allen Wright. I was absolutely mesmerized by Lard's prose poetry, beautiful word pictures, and sweet pathos.

Between the years 1873 and 1875, Lard devoted himself to writing his *Commentary on Romans*, which he personally considered the greatest literary work of his life.

Later in his life, through a strange and ironic series of misunderstandings between Lard and his brethren, Lard was accused of betraying the Restoration cause. Former friends cooled toward him, calls for meetings almost ceased, and he lived in virtual isolation until he died June 17, 1880, in Lexington, Kentucky.

In the obituary of Allen Wright that I mentioned above, Lard describes Wright's grave and concludes with the words, "In that silent wood, in the shade of that plain house, among those plain brethren, is a fitting place for the dust of plain Allen Wright to rest" (Vol. 1, 40). I recalled those words when John and I saw Lard's own grave last week. His grave too is very plain. The headstone is about three feet tall and so weather-beaten you can hardly read its inscription. I realize earthly monuments are of no eternal value, but this sad little memorial doesn't seem fitting for a man who sailed to some unprecedented heights during the Restoration Movement. It more accurately reflects the sad, misunderstood, lonely man Lard had become at the end of his life.—1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net

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. LXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, JUNE 2003

NO. 6

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN (PART IV)

By BARNEY OWENS

The things taught by men for doctrine are almost endless. During the days of the Old Testament, these were prominent as God's people were continually confronted by such. The thing filling us with amazement is how easy these doctrines take precedence over the commandments of God. In all ages past, the hearts of men were waned from God by false teachers and doctrines. When the Lord came upon the scene, the doctrines of men that had grown into traditions presented a constant battlefield for Him. Although many things have changed, one constant coming down to us is the doctrines of men warring against the commandments of Christ.

The voices and pens of God's people must be lifted up continually against these corrupting doctrines. I suppose the appalling factor is "ease." In our physical world, we have always sought an easier way of doing things. We have replaced walking with air travel. No longer are scrub boards used to wash our clothes; we pop them into an automatic washing machine. Cooking takes less effort and time; more time off from work is the norm nowadays. And, on and on, the list could grow. These are not wrong, of course, however, when this ebbs into religion then the danger should be apparent. But, alas people pursue "the easy way" to their own destruction, as the Lord admonished, *"But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."* (Mt. 15:9). We shall look at some more of these doctrines taught by men for commandments. Presently we shall study a moral issue confronting the church continually.

One Put Away (Divorced) By Another May With God's Approval Remarry

To begin with, every idea about divorce and remarriage cannot be considered in this article, because there are almost as many ideas as there are people to discuss them. In addition, as families and loved ones become involved in various marital situations people change positions (beliefs). To put it in a nutshell, it is contended by some that every person has a right to a marriage partner regardless of previous relationship. If one becomes a Christian or if one repents as a Christian and asks forgiveness, God will pardon and accept the present marriage.

Jesus was confronted with the problem of divorce and remarriage. Matthew revealed the encounter in Matt. 19:3-12. He first reminded all of the intention of marriage. It was ordained and intended to be one man and one woman for life (Gen. 2:20-25). There is not to be found a closer physical relationship in the world. In fact, it is so close that the church and Christ are likened to it (Eph. 5:22-33). Death should be the only thing severing the two (Rom. 7:1-4, 1 Cor. 7:39). Separation and divorce were not in the picture in the origin of marriage.

This was unsatisfactory to the Pharisees who had brought up the question to Jesus, just as it is unsatisfactory with the multitudes today. Therefore, they asked why Moses commanded a man to put away his wife. There are at least two things involved here: (1) They understood exactly the meaning of the first precept regulating marriage. (2) There is seemingly a contradiction in the word as spoken by Adam and those spoken by Moses (Deut. 24:1-4). The Lord reminded them that Moses commanded "a writing of divorcement" to protect the divorcee, as the reason was to be stated. Once put away the divorcee with "bill" in hand could remarry. This was due to the hard heartedness of the Jews', a spirit that pervaded throughout their history. The same spirit demanded a King for Israel, rejected both John and Jesus, and finally rejection of the gospel and persecution of Christians. Keep in mind, it is not that Moses commanded divorce, but commanded the "bill of divorcement" to be written in cases of divorce. In the age of Moses (Rom. 7:4, Col. 2:14) divorce was suffered. We never suffer (allow) the rule, we suffer (allow) the exception. This was limited to the physical seed of Abraham under Moses' Law.

In response to their assertion, as He often did, Jesus looked forward to the coming of His Universal Kingdom, unlimited in territory, and without restriction of circumstances (Matt. 19:11-12). At that time, says Jesus, there will be one reason a man may divorce his wife and marry another. *"And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth*

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Editorial

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH #3

By BILLY D. DICKINSON

According to the New Testament, the collective actions assigned the local church included, and were limited to: (1) worship, (2) evangelism, (3) edification of the saints, (4) benevolence and (5) scriptural discipline. In previous articles, the first two items were covered. I will now deal with edification and relief for the needy saints.

The church not only has the mission of saving souls and bringing people into Christ's kingdom through evangelism, but it also has the task of EDIFYING ITSELF and building up the body. Please notice how Paul uses that very expression in Eph. 4:11-12; "And he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Yet, it was the Lord's desire to see the church established and then built up, and the saints PERFECT--i.e., helping them to higher and holier lives, and fully equipped to serve the Lord in an effective way.

When the first converts were saved and added to the Lord's church, Acts 2:42 says that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." We also read of Paul and Barnabas returning to the places they had been for the purpose of "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith" (Acts 14:21-22). There are TEACHERS in the local church who have the responsibility of edifying the congregation: "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas and Simeon that was called Niger, the Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch and Saul" (Acts 13:1). ELDERS are exhorted by Peter to "feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pet. 5:1)

This is one of the purposes of the church assembly: "LET ALL THINGS BE DONE UNTO EDIFYING" (1 Cor. 14:26). We not only gather to worship but we also come together for instruction and exhortation in spiritual matters (Heb. 10:25). Brethren, it is a shame and a disgrace when local teachers fail to edify due to a lack of preparation, and a congregation is lacking in leadership when poor teaching is allowed to hinder the growth of the church! Yes, the local church has the responsibility of providing for the maturity and edification of the local membership.

The work of the church also involved the area of BENEVOLENCE. The New Testament teaches that the local churches cared for the poor saints that were among them. Since we cannot determine the truth on this subject by emotional appeals, we are interested

continued on page six

NO LEAVEN IN HEAVEN

By BRETT HICKEY

While issuing the positive pronouncement "Blessed are..." for each of the eight beatitudes of Matthew 5, Jesus had no problem preaching negative sermons. In Matthew 23, Jesus blisters the scribes and Pharisees with eight "woes." This embarrassing denunciation is ample reason for Christians to loathe the twin labels "Pharisee" and "legalist." While they play a prominent role in the gospels, we find only a few individual Pharisees ever presented in a positive light (Nicodemus, Gamaliel and Paul) and even less flattering words about the Pharisees in general. A. T. Robertson in his Word Pictures on Matthew and Mark, 182, says of the eight woes, "These are all illustrations of Pharisaeic saying and not doing." In Luke 12:1, Jesus confirms this conclusion, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." But what is hypocrisy and who is the hypocrite? Mr. Thayer says hypocrisy is "acting, pretending." The hypocrite is an impersonator, one who is not really living for the Lord, but tries to convince others that he is, by mimicking the expected activity of the child of God. Jesus singles out specific instances of Phariseeism in Mt. 23:13-23:

"Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men

Ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers

Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves

Ye say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor?

Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Ye strain at gnat, and swallow a camel.

Ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

Even when confronted by the son of God, the Pharisees refuse to admit the error of their ways. Jesus' critique shows that the Pharisees ("separated ones") merely used the name of God and Judaism to satisfy their own carnal needs, the greatest of which was their desire to maintain an air of superiority.

While Christians may loathe hypocrisy in others, that does not excuse them 1) for neglecting the worship assembly; 2) for not worshipping according to the New Testament pattern; 3) nor for not striving to be strong in the Lord. Isaiah tells us (9:17) that "every one is an hypocrite." We all "put our best foot forward." Although it was an exception in their lives even Peter and Barnabas had to be corrected for this

fault (Gal. 2:11-13). The problem with many of the Pharisees was that pretending was not the exception, but a way of life. Christians are responsible for sincerely striving - inside and out - to measure up to the moral and doctrinal standards set by the Holy Spirit in Scripture. "Now... fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth" (Josh 24:14).

The Doctrine of the Pharisees

Jesus also warns his disciples to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees" in Mt. 16:6. He goes on to explain in verse 12 that he was referring to the "doctrine of the Pharisees." In his commentary on Matthew, Albert Barnes lists five ways in which false doctrines are like leaven:

1) They are at first slight and unimportant in appearance, as leaven is small in quantity as compared with the mass that is to be leavened. 2) They are insulated into the soul unawares and silently are difficult of detection. 3) They act gradually. 4) They act most certainly. 5) They will pervade all the soul, and bring all the faculties under their control.

In the previous chapter (15:8-9), Jesus identifies two aspects of the Pharisees doctrine. As noted earlier, the leaven of the Pharisees pointed to their hypocrisy. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." But, the leaven of the Pharisees also stood for false teaching, especially the substitution of human ideas for Divine directions. "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Clearly, when Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for "straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel," He was not criticizing them for respecting, obeying and binding Scriptural truths, but for neglecting or rejecting parts of God's word (Mt. 23:23-24), or, what is worse - if possible - for replacing God's teaching with human teaching. So, it is not "Phariseeism" or "legalism" to insist on baptism for salvation, for Jesus himself said, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Asserting that our worship must be Scriptural does not make one a Pharisee but a disciple of Christ, for Jesus also said, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in Truth." It is not legalistic to contend for the identity of the church established by the New Testament pattern, for the Holy Spirit does so in Jude 3: "...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which, was once delivered unto the saints." One is not radical, but right, and in the best of company, if he maintains that both the righteousness of Christ and our own righteousness is necessary for eternal life, for the beloved disciple wrote in 1 Jn. 3:10, "In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God..." and Jesus said in Mt. 5:20, "...except YOUR righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Meaningful Labels

Anyone willing to stand up for their convictions risks being labeled. Since labels are moving targets, it is sometimes hard to understand the accusation against us. If there were fixed meanings to these terms, we might be more careful in how we use them lest we be guilty of slander. If accused of being a "legalist" or "liberal," we could also demonstrate that such is not the case. Consider G. C. Brewer's definitions:

1) Legalist - one who believes in a ceremony or a code or a creed, and rests his hope upon his loyalty to this. Looks to the law for salvation, therefore, has no real need for a Savior.

2) Liberal - one who believes that the commandments of God may be observed or not observed, according as it pleases a person or according as circumstances make it convenient or inconvenient to observe the law. Professes belief in grace of God, but actually "turns the grace of God into lasciviousness."

3) Conservative - one who believes in Christ, and rests his hope in Christ, and rests his hope upon the healing mercy and saving power of Jesus Christ. He believes in the love manifest through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the subsequent offer of forgiveness to all who return that love by keeping his commandments.

Using these definitions, liberalism and legalism are clearly wrong. More than that, these are the perversions of godliness that triggered Jesus' fiery response in Matthew 23. Beware of the leaven of legalism and liberalism. If we are to please God, we must purge the leaven. There will be no leaven in heaven.—823 W. 5th St., Tyler, TX 75701

CHARACTER MATTERS

By GREG GAY

Perhaps you have seen this statement within the last few years as a bumper sticker. While I think the bumper sticker was directed at misbehaving political figures the statement is certainly true for everyone, especially Christians.

Long ago when Saul, Israel's first king, proved to be unfaithful God turned to a young man named David to be the next king. Look at the Apostle Paul's description of David's character as a young man: "...I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will" Acts 13:22.

Certainly a person after God's own heart would be a person of excellent character, displaying moral and ethical excellence everywhere in their life and a willingness to change when corrected by the Lord's word.

Character Matters: in all our exchanges with our neighbors. Let us lead our block in honesty and friendliness.

Character Matters: when we work on our jobs. Let

us be a good example in having a good attitude and in working hard.

Character Matters: in our homes. Let us be first in treating everyone in the home as we want to be treated.

Character Matters: in all our exchanges with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us go out of our way to encourage someone else by our attendance at worship, a call, a note, or a visit.

And, most importantly, our Character Matters to God who sees our heart and everything we do.

So, do we pass this bumper sticker test, to be people of good character? I certainly hope so, because Character Matters!—1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747

SHOCK AND AWE

By TAYLOR A. JOYCE

Before the onset of the Iraqi Freedom campaign our military planners said it would begin with something they called "shock and awe." Although we saw only a small part of it through the lens of a single fixed camera in Baghdad, we had to agree that it lived up to its billing. More spectacular than any Fourth of July celebration, precision guided bombs and missiles filled the night's darkness with deafening sounds and huge flashes of light. As impressive as it was to those watching by television, one can only imagine the shock and awe of those on the scene in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities who experienced the terrifying bombardment first hand.

Bible students must have noted the similarity between this display and the descriptions given in God's word of judgment day when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:9). That too, will be a time of shock and awe.

Many will be shocked and awed by the realization that judgment is a reality; that they are actually being called to account for their earthly deportment. These are the ones who, while on earth, have said, "I don't believe a loving God would actually punish someone in hell for his misdeeds. God is much too loving for that." They have, however, failed to note that the same passage (John 3:16-36) which most forcefully emphasizes the love of God also warns that those who spurn that love through rebellion and disobedience will be subject to wrath, "He who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him" (3:36 RSV). *Wrath* translated the Greek word *orge* which according to several scholars is used to describe the universal, abiding opposition of God to evil.

Judgment day is called a time of "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil" (Rom. 2:5-9). The same descriptive term is found in Rev. 6:17 where those who are

unprepared to face God in judgment cry out to the mountains and rocks "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne. Commenting on this passage, some writers have used words like *unthinkable* and *unimaginable* as they pondered the frightful description of this scene when unregenerate men would prefer to be crushed by falling stones than to face God. There will indeed be shock and awe when it comes to pass just as it is written; "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue confess to God" (Rom. 14:10).

On that day some who thought they were saved will be shocked and awed to learn they are lost, "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. Many will say to me in that day, 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: And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23). In this crowd you will find the sayers ("Lord, Lord") who were not *doers* ("everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not"). Here are *preachers* ("have we not prophesied in thy name?"). Here are the *exorcists* (and in thy name cast out devils?). Here are *miracle workers* ("and in thy name done many wonderful works?"). Lost! Every one of them! What shock! What awe!

It need not be that way. "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 John 2:28). Commenting on this verse Guy N. Woods wrote: "It was the apostle's hope that all those to whom he wrote as well as himself might live in such fashion as to be able to stand unafraid in the presence of the Lord...Those who are ashamed will, in that day, shrink from the Lord in guilty fashion, fully aware of the fact that they are unprepared to meet him." Clearly, it is possible to escape the shock and awe, but only if we prepare now for that awful day.—1713 Savannah Drive, Fort Smith, AR 72901

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE

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adultery: and who so marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." (V.9)

The passage is not that difficult to understand. Simply put your finger over the phrase "*except it be for fornication*" and it reverts to the original design of marriage. With the finger removed, it is clear that there is only one exception that allows the breaking of the marriage bond. One may put away (divorce) his companion and remarry without committing adultery if that one is guilty of sexual immorality.

There are two questions that must be answered to arrive at the truth and a proper understanding to avoid the error and false teaching to which many have fallen

prey.

1. *If fornication is not involved is remarriage acceptable?* The question is answered by Jesus in the sermon He preached on the mountainside, Matt. 5:32: "*But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.*"

That should settle the matter. If one divorced his companion and fornication is not involved then he put her in a position that (causeth) her to commit adultery. That means that no remarriage is allowed.

2. *If fornication is involved, may the guilty party (or parties) remarry?* It is beyond me how anyone can think that the party guilty of fornication can possibly have the right to remarry. First of all, that would put a premium on sin. One would be able to continue in sin that grace may abound (Rom. 6:1-2). If one wished to be free because of incompatibility or some other reason (not involving fornication), then they could commit the sin and when put away, freedom to remarry would be there. Secondly, Jesus clears the air by saying, "*who so marrieth her that is put away doth commit adultery.*"

Those who commit fornication and are divorced by their companion may not remarry with the Lord's approval. Those who divorce their companion for any reason other than fornication place themselves and those whom they divorce in the position of never being able to remarry with God's approval. Fornication committed and being the reason for divorce, the one and only reason one may put away his companion and remarry with the approval of God. Some may say, "*That is a hard saying.*" That was exactly the thinking of the disciples of Jesus, yet it remains true. "*His disciples say unto him, if the of a man case be so with the wife, it is not good to marry.*"

Those Living In Adultery Are To Be Fellowshiped By The Church

Fellowship is always a thorny question. To deal properly with it has been, and I suppose in the future will be, the source of contention and strife among believers. The source is often a failure to consider the teaching of the scripture relative to who can remarry. However, that is not all, as some think once the remarriage takes place and one is baptized or prayer is offered in the case of Christians, from that point forward should expect and demand acceptance by the congregation.

A statement made often is "*one cannot live in adultery.*" Scripture teaches differently. Paul lists several sins in Colossian 3:5 which they were to put to death. He then adds, "*in the which ye also walked some time when ye lived in them.*" I would think that what could have been done in their past, could presently be done, and likewise a possibility in the future. Several works of the flesh are listed in Gal. 5:19-21. In the latter part of verse 21, we are told "*they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" The

word do means to practice. A doctor may be on the golf course yet he is said to "practice" medicine. We say of a man who is a regular drinker, his practice is to imbibe alcohol, although he may be presently taking a nap. *To live in something, is to do it, to practice it.*

If one is in a marriage that is adulterous, one can rightly say, he practices, lives in, or adultery is something that he does. It is contended that this is to be overlooked and fellowship is to be extended by the congregation. Is this right and according to truth? First from the standpoint of reason, would any be so bold as to contend that other sins are to be treated in this fashion? Is fellowship to be extended to a thief? Those living together in a homosexual relationship? Those who worship in error? On and on the list could grow until we have mentioned the more than one hundred works of the flesh.

Apart from reasons, what saith the scripture? There was a man who was committing fornication with his step-mother in 1 Corinthians 5. The church clearly was glorying in this man—why (?) I cannot say that I know. Perhaps he was talented, or a good giver, or a good worker in the church, but whatever he was, or was not, they should have mourned about his condition. Their glorying was not good. Several reasons are noted by the Apostle.

1. *Because the sin would corrupt (leaven) them all.* Sin when allowed to unchecked will cause others to accept it. They may not practice the same sin, but sin itself will grow within the congregation, Vs. 6.

2. *The only way to stall the corrupting influence of sin is to cast it out.* This is true because Christ became our means of salvation from sin, Vs 7-8.

3. *Fellowship was not to be extended to those openly practicing, or living in sin.* Not only the sin of sexual immorality, but others as well, Vs. 9-13.

4. *Satan is the father of all sin and those who will not stop sinning (repent) must be turned out to their master,* (Rom. 6:13). I mention this one last because there are brethren who think they are doing a great favor to those committing sin by fellowshiping and defending them, when in reality they are destroying the spirit for the flesh, Vs. 5.

Those who practice and teach that "*people living in an adulterous marriage are to be fellowshiped*" are teaching and practicing a doctrine and commandment of men. It has been my observation that some of the preachers are quite selective in preaching on this subject. Adultery may be mentioned in a sermon, however, nothing is ever mentioned about "adulterous marriages." The blood of men's souls is surely going to be required at our hand brethren (Ezek. 3:17-21). Paul reminded the Ephesians that he had kept back nothing that was profitable to them, declaring the whole counsel of God, tearfully warning them night and day (Acts 20:26, 27, 31). We, like the watchmen of old need to ask ourselves "what of the night?"—*Barney Owens, 8287 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069*

EDITORIAL

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in what the Scriptures authorize the church to do regarding benevolence. The issue really comes down to this: DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT RESTRICT THE BENEVOLENT WORK THAT THE CHURCH CAN DO? God's word answers in the affirmative—the church is NOT authorized to do anything it wants in an unlimited way in the area of benevolence!

We have already looked at a verse that proves the point: "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, AND LET NOT THE CHURCH BE CHARGED; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" (1 Tim. 5:16). Why did Paul give this restriction? The answer provides a principle that we need to understand: "THAT IT MAY RELIEVE THEM THAT ARE WIDOWS INDEED." Paul is saying that if the church tries to support all widows without any discrimination or restrictions it will drain the church of its resources, and then the church could not relieve those who are really supposed to be helped!

The truth is that the Lord never intended for His church to be a worldwide benevolent organization. That is not the work of the church; nor is it the purpose for which it was established. THE LORD HAS NOT COMMISSIONED THE CHURCH TO UNDERTAKE THE MISSION OF MEETING THE PHYSICAL NEEDS OF ALL HUMANITY! It couldn't do it if it tried, the resources of the church would be exhausted before it ever got started. The church is not primarily a relief society. Instead the primary work of the church is SPIRITUAL in nature, it has to do with the evangelism and meeting the spiritual needs of man.

However, the New Testament shows that the church does have a responsibility in caring for the needy saints. Please observe that in every case of benevolence where the church engaged in helping the needy, the needy ones are always spoken of as SAINTS or BRETHREN: (1) Acts 2:44-46 "All that believed" (2) Acts 4:32-35 "Them that believed" (3) Acts 6:1-6 "Disciples" (4) Acts 11:27-30 "Brethren" (5) Rom. 15:25-31 "Poor Saints" (7) 2 Cor. 8:4 "Saints" (8) 2 Cor. 9:1, 12-13 "Saints" (9) 1 Tim. 5:16 "Widows Indeed"

Here is the Bible pattern! Every verse on the subject shows that it was always to a Christian. Furthermore, the Scriptures teach that the benevolence of the church is more than just a mere gift of money, but it is also a token (or proof) of FELLOWSHIP between Christians. In 2 Cor. 9:13, Paul commends the Corinthians for the contribution they had sent to the needy saints in Jerusalem, and he refers to "your liberal DISTRIBUTION unto them." The word "distribution" is the same word translated "FELLOWSHIP" elsewhere the Greek work *koinonia*, that's why Thayer defines the word like this in his lexicon: "A benefaction jointly contributed, a collection, a con-

tribution as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship" (P. 352). Since there is no fellowship between the church and the world (2 Cor. 6:14-18), it should be obvious that church benevolence involves the saints only.

Someone says, "Oh, I see! You'd let a baby or orphan starve to death before you would help them." This is a reckless charge to lay at the feet of any child of God! Surely there isn't a Christian reading this article that would let a baby or anyone for that matter go hungry if it was possible to help. The argument misses the point because it overlooks the fact that we have an individual responsibility to help others. When we have the opportunity, as INDIVIDUALS we are to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). But if we want to know what the work of the CHURCH is in the area of benevolence, we must look to the Scriptures and see what is authorized! When emotionalism is used to cloud an issue, the truth is always obscured as a result, where the subject is baptism, worship, war, racial prejudice, or CHURCH BENEVOLENCE.

In my next, and final, article on this subject, I will write concerning church discipline.—2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BUDDY BRUMLEY EXETER, CA

Many thanks and blessings go out to all of you that sent cards, e-mails and calls while I was in the hospital. I just went in for a simple orthoscopic knee surgery. Forty-seven days and many setbacks later with a staph infection, I am now currently at home under healthcare with the assistance of my wife, Carolyn. Lord willing, I hope to see you all at Sulphur this summer.

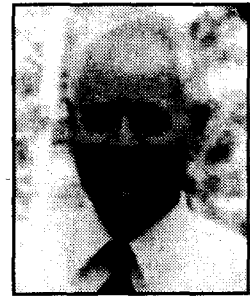
"50 YEARS TOGETHER"

Cliff and Pat Arney of Oklahoma City, OK will celebrate 50 wonderful years together on June 1, 2003. They have been faithful members of N.W. 21st Church of Christ for 40 years. Cliff and Pat have always opened their home to preachers as well as others who needed a place to stay. Cliff retired from the Medical Supply business after 49 years. He has also taught at many congregations and was an elder for approximately 10 years. Pat was and still is a wonderful and devoted wife, mother, grandma and homemaker. Together they have 3 children, all faithful members of the Lord's church. They also have eleven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Please join their children in celebration, by attending a reception on June 7, 2003 or by sending cards in c/o: Beverly Crawford/Arney, 3152 SW. 72nd, Oklahoma City, OK 73159

OUR DEPARTED

LOUGHMILLER—Brother

Joseph Loughmiller of Brazil, IN departed this life May 8, 2003, (the 60th anniversary of his marriage to Hazel Modisett), while in the Union Hospital at Terra Haute. He had been ill for the past several years, but had continued to travel to gospel meetings, and



work in his home congregation as his health permitted. Joe was a man of many talents, a kind and generous soul who befriended untold numbers of people. He and Hazel were among the most hospitable Christians I have ever known. Their home was always open to brethren and they knew how to make you feel welcome. Joe was born in Clay County, IN on July 27, 1924. He spent most of his life in and around that area. He was baptized into Christ in August of 1943 and remained faithful to Lord the rest of his life. The memorial service was conducted from the Moore Funeral Home in Brazil and the night of visitation over 500 people filed past his earthly remains paying tribute to this good man and his family. He was truly a joy to know, and a blessing to those whose lives he touched. He is survived by his wife (Hazel), three daughters, one brother, several grandchildren and a host of friends and brethren in Christ. A group of Christians beautifully sang four of his favorite songs, brother Greg Jordan led the prayer, brother Jimmy Smith prayed at the gravesite, and this writer counted it an honor to speak at the service.—Ronny F. Wade

SMITH—On October 29, 2002 Sybil Smith, a long time member of the Stockton, CA congregation, passed from this life into the next. Sybil was the faithful wife of Winfred Smith, who also is a member of the church in Stockton. Together, Sybil and Winfred were among the longest standing faithful members of the congregation where they attended. Sybil was the daughter of one of the congregation's charter families, C.L. and Annie Tankersly. Sybil was not quite 81 years old when she died, and she and Winfred had been married over 60 years. Sybil's faithfulness to the Lord and to her husband for so many years are a comfort to all who survive her passing and cherish her memory. Her husband Winfred continues to assemble with the congregation and would appreciate visiting with any who have time to stop by. The funeral was conducted by Jim Winchester of the Lodi congregation.

KESSINGER—Ray Edward Kessinger was born July 21, 1921, at Lick Creek, WV (near Charleston) to Charlie and Cora Mae Kessinger. He died May 11,

2003 in a nursing facility here in Ada, OK at the age of 81. Ray was preceded in death by daughter Billie Keyser. He is survived by his wife Juanita; three daughters, brother: Clarence Kessinger; nephew: Buddy Kessinger and niece: Carol Sue Brumley, all of Ada, OK; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Ray was a painting contractor for many years and also an active preacher of the Gospel since the 1940s. Ray preached regular monthly appointments at congregations in Oklahoma until he was stricken with cancer several months ago. I knew Ray all of my life. When I was a child I used to ride with him to his preaching appointments in Tulsa. Since I had a sister living in the Tulsa area and had been there many times, Ray said he needed me to show him the way up there and also needed me to help keep him awake on the drive back home at night. I suspect now he just enjoyed having some company when he traveled. Ray was small in stature, but possessed a powerful speaking voice. That powerful voice was always tempered, however, with love for the Word he preached and love for the people to whom he preached. After being stricken with the cancer that allowed his leg to shatter Ray was confined to a bed for several months before he died. During that time his faith never wavered. He told me when he was initially admitted to the hospital that he was "putting it all into the hands of the Lord. If I live that will be fine. But if I don't live, that will be okay too. I'm putting it into His hands." I have heard other people make statements like that when facing similar circumstances, but there was no question in my mind that Ray really meant what he said. Ray asked me years ago to preach his funeral when he died and he reminded me of that request often as the years passed. I felt honored that this preacher I knew from the time I was a small child would make such a request of me. God bless Ray's family and extended family of brothers and sisters in Christ. We miss him.—Carl M. Johnson

CABANISS— Charles Cabaniss was born September 9, 1929 in Belton, TX and died January 13, 2003 in Houston, TX. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, two daughters, one son, and several grandchildren. I had known Charles since I was a teenager. Charles was raised in the church in the Belton area but Dorothy was not a Christian when they married. They moved to Houston and were not going to church when they happened to run into George and Mary Titlow who were also from Belton. The Titlows invited them to church, they came, Charles made a confession, and my dad baptized Dorothy. From that time on, they were consistently faithful and always present at gospel meetings in the Houston area. Charles was a big talker with a marvelous personality. He never met a stranger. Visitors at church services did not get away until Charles had talked to them and invited them back.

Charles was District Sales Manager for Coca Cola for many years and always furnished cokes for get togethers and church lunches. Many years ago a group of young people came and passed out flyers for a mission meeting we were having in North Shore and Charles supplied all the cokes the kids could drink. I told him that I had heard that if you put a piece of raw meat in a glass of coke it would dissolve the meat and some thought that is why cokes were bad for your stomach. "Listen Jerry," he replied passionately, "Water will do the same thing. Any liquid will dissolve meat if you leave it in long enough." He was not going to let anybody speak ill of Coca Cola! On the way to a meeting in the area last night my dad noted that it would be odd to not see and talk to Charles at the meeting. It was odd. We all miss him in the churches in Houston, but long to talk with him again at the last great meeting at the resurrection of the just.—Jerry Dickinson

HENSLEY— Mr. Kenneth Hensley, 72, passed away April 17, 2003 in Columbia, TN. He was a member of the Springer Road congregation in Lawrenceburg, TN. Kenneth was the son of the late Theodore and Anne Hensley. He lived for several years in Pontiac, MI. He is survived by sisters and a brother. Kenneth was a friendly person, well liked by all. Our prayers are with the family.—Paul Walker

TIDWELL—Mr. Elvin Tidwell passed away April 23, 2003 in Lawrenceburg, TN. His wife, sister Joyce Tidwell is a member of the Union Hill Church. He is also survived by several other relatives. May God's blessings be with Joyce.—Paul Walker

CLARK—Sister Ollie Orten Clark was born in 1902 and passed away April 17, 2003. She was 101 years of age. Sister Clark is survived by one daughter, five sons, a sister and one brother, Fred Orten who is currently 99 years of age. Sister Clark was a sweet lady and a member of the Chapel Grove Church of Christ. God bless the family.—Paul Walker



Don Pruitt, 1111 Garst, Cabool, MO 65689, 417-926-9987 (new address and phone)—The work in this area continues to go well. We just closed a good meeting with Kevin Presley at Fieldstone with one sister being restored. At Houston, we are looking forward to having Jerry Dickinson on June 8-15. We enjoyed being with the church in Lawrenceburg TN the end of March. The remainder of our schedule is as fol-

lows: White Bluff, TN June 1-8; Napoleon, AL Aug. 3-10; Jasper, TN, Aug. 11-17; Hamilton, OH Sept. 13-21; Jacksonville, FL Sept., 24-28 and Bedford, IN, Nov. 2-9. Brother Ron Wood and I were back in Malawi and Mozambique in March. We went there two years ago to assist in writing the documents for the Mozambique government that would allow us to register the church in that country. The church has been meeting in a few places along the border of Malawi for a number of years. In fact, Bill Davis and Ron Courter preached there in the early 1970's. But the work has begun to grow at a very rapid rate. Two years ago we had about 100 churches. By early this spring, we had about 300 congregations. The main reason we went back this spring was to meet with a group of brethren who had differed with the New Testament pattern of worship. On March 14, Bill Davis, Jim Franklin, Stephen Kasenda, Ron and I met with a group of 35 preachers and church leaders that were the leaders of those churches. It was the most incredible day of my whole life. We sat at the table with these men who represented 370 congregations and about 18,000-20,000 souls. Not only was the pressure of the moment so great but we had to work through 3 different translators. But God is good and it is so wonderful to be able to sit so close while he does His work! These brethren have taken their stand with us and we look forward to working with them in the days that lie ahead. So we now have close to 700 congregations in Mozambique. Please pray for us and these brethren to this great work.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview, W. Chester, OH 45009—In March I had the privilege to help in a meeting at Paris, TX. I cannot count the times I have been among those brethren and sisters. Every minute was enjoyable. It was a pleasure to be with William St. John who works with the church. In April, I was with the church in Jonesboro, GA. Interest ran high in the old time Gospel. George Battey works with the church. This was the first time I have spent any time with George. I found him sincere in all things. It was good to have Gene Grant and Rick Martin. In both these meetings brethren came from far and near to help us. Here at home we have just closed our yearly spring meeting. Smith Bibens preached to us. We enjoyed his being with us. Of late, I have also heard brethren Richard Reed, Kevin Fox and Ronny Wade. Your prayers are desired always.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, May 3—I just closed a good meeting at the Mountain Home, MO congregation. I stayed with long-time friends Dallas and Imogene May and enjoyed it very much. With the exception of "blue Monday," we had excellent crowds from all over that part of the country. I enjoyed visiting with preachers Irvin Barnes, Don Pruitt, Roy Lee Criswell, and John Anderson during the meeting.

My next meetings are Earlytown, AL and Ash Camp, WV. Be sure to check out "The Back Page" of this issue of the *OPA*. We intend to make this page a regular monthly feature. The page will contain a brief article each month that will be contained entirely on that page. The monthly articles will include a variety of types, including current events, historical perspectives, scripture exegesis, and we may even print some particularly good letters we receive with some comments. A few people have already commented to me about the new feature, but others have told me they "didn't notice it." Check it out and let us know what you think. May God's richest blessings be upon the brotherhood.

Greg Gay, 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747, papagreg@aol.com, 916-771-2376, May 2, 2003, *Note new address and phone*—In January we moved to a new home, still in the Sacramento area. Since the first of the year I have preached at Stockton, Auburn, Redding, and Placerville in addition to our usual work at 64th St., Sacramento. I'm just about finished with a commitment for once a month work with the Placerville congregation. Roger Boone is moving from Africa to Placerville this summer so the brethren are really looking forward to that. The first weekend in April we had a young people's meeting at 64th St. using men who are just starting to preach full time or are used in the area as guest speakers. Crowds were down a bit from previous years as we transition to a new generation of young people. Justin Owen, our son-in-law, has just started preaching full time after studying diligently for several years with several preachers while also working a full-time job, Justin, Lori, and their two children, Kelan and Olivia have moved to Stockton to work with them to get off to a good start. Justin is a fine young man and shows much promise. April 19-27 I was at Fossil Creek in Ft Worth, Texas. I stayed with the Randy Cantrell and Keith Minter families and was treated royally both places. Area congregations attended well and I was glad to see preachers Cullen Smith, Melvin Blalock, Allen Bailey, Johnny Herrera, Marcus Ayers, Joe Norton, and Gerald Hill who attended the meeting one or more times, I also spent some time visiting with David Risner about the directory portion of his website: newtestamentchurch.org which I help maintain. I have just finished updates to the national directory: *Where The Saints Assemble*, and am having it printed. Brethren were great to respond to my mailing with advance orders and corrections.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas-com, May 19—The meeting closed at Linville, OH with one baptism. Surrounding churches helped us out by attending the meeting, and for this we were grateful. Next we went to Fayetteville, OH and enjoyed the company of the brethren there including Bro. Michael Kidd who lives

there and works in that area. We were blessed with the presence of several preachers including Barney Owens, Bill Ferguson, Tony Melton, and Brian Burns. On May 14 we were privileged to be with the brethren in Bloomington, IN where Floyd Harris Jr. labors, and then on to Mitchell, IN for a meeting May 15-18. Our stay here was enjoyable and we trust good was accomplished. Brethren Walter Hunter and Anthony Brockett attended one or more services. Lord willing we go next to LaGrange, GA May 31-June 8. Our hearts were saddened at the passing of Brother Joe Loughmiller. He has been such a pillar in the church for so long. He will be greatly missed.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS, 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, May 5. -We had not been to Wichita Falls, TX for a meeting in over 20 years, and it was a real joy to be with the brethren at Crestview April 6-13, and with Cullen Smith who is working with them. We were treated royally. We had several members come from out of town to be with us. Among our visitors were dear friends Lloyd and LaRue Cox who came from Fort Worth in spite of Lloyd's health problems. I know it took a special effort for them to be there. The brethren of that congregation were friendly and encouraging. We hope some good was done. I was asked if I would go to the Philippines for a study with a number of preachers who have recently taken there stand for scriptural observance of communion and other things. But at this time both the US government and the Philippine Embassy advises all Americans to cancel all plans for travel to that country because of the dangers at this time. Maybe at a future time we can make the trip. Our next meeting will be at Little Rock, AR, June 15-22, the Lord willing. It will be good to be back in that area after so many years. The Lord bless all our righteous efforts.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, May 20-Since last report we have been close to home trying to get things arranged in some semblance of order. If you have written me, please be patient as we are still receiving mail which has been forwarded from our previous address. It has been our pleasure to preach several times at home lately and we have really enjoyed being here. One has been baptized recently at Fremont, for which we are thankful. Brethren get together here on Tuesday evenings in a private home to study the chapter to be presented on Wednesday night. It has been very enjoyable and profitable as well. We enjoyed hearing Wayne McKamie at Stockton for two sermons during their meeting together recently. Lord willing, I am to begin shortly at West Monroe, LA for a meeting and we pray for a good one. Our thanks to Ronny Wade for putting the June issue together for us this month. You may resume sending your materials to me now, as usual. May God

bless the brethren everywhere.

WORK REPORT-MARCH 2003 TRIP

Dear brethren,

Greetings to you all in the name of Jesus Christ.

Our church at Secbad welcomed brother Brian Burns and brother Doug Edwards on 19th March, 2003. This was one of our happiest moments to see some of our brethren in US. First of all thank to God our Father for His Grace and Mercy for their travel and work in India during this war time. Our meetings started on 20th. We had conducted several Bible studies and Gospel meetings in Secbad. During evening times we visited different places and houses to preach and teach the word of God. By the power of the word of God delivered by brother Brian Burns and brother Doug Edwards eight souls were added to the Lord's churches in Secbad area. And church members in different places were encouraged spiritually through Bible studies. We all very much thankful to the brethren for their wonderful lessons. Some people came forward to ask some questions. Our preachers brother Raja Prabudasu. Prasadarao and Luke helped us a lot in conducting these meetings. Then we moved to another District called Guntur, here we had conducted Bible studies and evening Gospel meetings. We had covered 5 villages in spreading the Gospel. In Gonepudi village 8 souls were saved. We gave them baptism at midnight like Jailor and his family in the city of Phillippi (Acts 16th chapter). Here our preacher Balasundararao working since three years. We had another Gospel meetings at Nadigadda village where 45 souls were added to the Lord's Body. Here our preacher Gaseervadam doing hard work for the growth of the church. Then we moved to Srisailam and conducted Gospel meetings and one soul was added to the Lord's church. We visited some houses where people were sick. Again we returned to Secbad and conducted worship service at Begumpet. On 30th March 2003 brethren returned back to US. Secbad church members again gave happy sendoff. We all really enjoyed great fellowship with brethren and they gave wonderful lessons and encouraged preachers church members and in some places explained the New Testament pattern of worship by correcting some errors. Dear brethren once again thanks for your prayers, support and help in sending brother Brian Burns and brother Doug Edwards to India for the development of the Lord's churches. We are all thankful to you and to God for your kindness and zeal for His service. Totally in this trip 62 souls were saved, Please pray with us for their spiritual growth. Totally six preachers are working with us in different places. Seven churches are worshiping in the manner taught in New Testament. In this trip churches also strengthened and received many lessons from the Bible for its growth. Some of our preachers shared their needs with the brethren so that they can dedicate

more for the church work. Please pray for their support and work. So far I am sharing a little with them from my monthly support from you. But brethren, there is still a lot of work we (Indians) have to do here in India. We need to teach some more preacher the true worship. We need to take care of the New born babies in Christ. We need to reach some of the places where there is a need for Gospel. We need to strengthen the churches in different places. So we plead you to continue your prayers, help, encouragement, preaching, teaching with us for the work in INDIA. May God bless you.

Your brother,
SAGANTY LAZARUS.

From Ecuador,

The Country That Lies In The Middle Of The Earth

The Lord continues to bless the work in Ecuador and South America. The congregation in Ambato is growing very rapidly. On the last Sunday of February we had another member added to our congregation. Vairon is a young man that we have been studying with for about a month and a half. He and his wife Germania have attended worship most of the time that I have lived here. Vairon finally decided to be baptized on the last Sunday of the month. We are very excited for him and pray that his wife will soon obey the gospel. Please remember them in your prayers because they have many temptations that they must overcome. Vairon was an alcoholic and gang member and his ex-companions make his life miserable because he has nothing to do with them anymore. We have seen a great change in Vairon's life even before his baptism. Several days before his baptism, he cut his hair, changed his dress style and controls his vocabulary better. There are several other people that we pray will soon obey the gospel. There are also more brethren from the cups that we have come in contact with. For example, a sister named Elsa and her mother Maria have visited our congregation twice. The problem with the cups churches in Ambato and Quito is they now know us and are prohibiting their members to talk to us. In fact, they tell their members that we are a sect and that we teach false doctrine. Thankfully, there are some brethren that are still willing to listen to what we have to say. Brother Segundo Chiliquinga and Segundo Villasis have been great to help get the work to where it is now. Brother Villasis has his radio program that is daily from 5 am to 6 am and Saturdays and Sundays from 5 am to 8 am. Brother Chiliquinga and I do the program on Saturdays. This program is a wonderful tool and has been a way for us to get help. He has told me that he cannot continue without some sort of monthly help. He says with \$250 to \$300 a month he can continue. If there is a congregation willing to support this program, that would be great. Brother Chiliquinga is a great tool because he has a car and is willing to take me to some of the bible

studies that we have. There are parts of Ambato that are impossible to get a taxi or bus at night so brother Chiliquinga has solved this problem for now. Brother Chiliquinga has also brought his brother-in-law and sister-in-law to worship services. They are not Christians, but like what they have heard and studied with us. We think as time goes on they will obey the gospel. On February 9, 2003 brothers Juan Rodriguez and Jaime Contreras from Mexico came to visit us in Ambato. We were thrilled to have them here with us even though it was just a few hours. They were on their way to Lima, Peru with brother Hernando Motta. Thankfully their trip was a success. A new congregation has been established in Peru. Lord willing, brother Motta will be moving to Lima sometime this year to preach in that area. Since he will be leaving Quito I will be preaching there on Sunday afternoons. I am very busy here in Ambato and do not have time to go to Quito during the week. We need someone in Quito soon. I now have a post office box for those of you that want to send snail mail. It is at the bottom of this report. My phone number is as follows 593-342-0096. Juan Rodriguez, Hernando Motta, and I have a web page; IglesiadeCristoLatina.com. We invite you to visit our homepage. Of course, it is all in Spanish but there are pictures also for those that do not speak Spanish. The webpage is a great tool for all of Latin America.

In Him,
Jonathan Bunner
Apartado Postal #18-01-241
Ambato, Ecuador-February 2003

"Hello God"

Hello, God. I called tonight
To talk a little while;
I need a friend who'll listen
To my anxiety and trial.

You see, I can't quite make it
Through a day just on my own;
I need your love to guide me,
So I'll never feel alone.

I want to ask you please to keep
My family safe and sound;
Come and fill their lives with confidence
For whatever fate they're bound.

Give me faith, dear God, to face
Each hour throughout the day;
And not to worry over things
I can't change it anyway.

I thank you, God, for being home
And listening to my call,
For giving me such good advice
When I stumble and I fall.

You number, God, is the only one
That answers every time;
I never get a busy signal,
Never had to pay a dime.

So thank you, God for listening
To my troubles and my sorrow;
Good night, God, I love you too,
And I'll call again tomorrow!

—Selected By Tony Denton

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THE BACK PAGE...

RUNNING WITH HORSES

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Oklahoma's own Jim Thorpe, "The World's Greatest Athlete," once out-sprinted a thoroughbred horse-for about fifty yards. I read somewhere that Olympic champion Carl Lewis once was challenged to race a horse, but turned the challenge down. I guess it was enough for Lewis to have competed with men.

Over five hundred years before Christ, God tells His prophet Jeremiah that Jeremiah will soon be running against horses (Jeremiah 12:5). There is a significant background to this text. Judah's good king Josiah is killed in battle and the Kingdom of Judah falls back into the hands of the old guard-the idolatrous prophets and priests Jeremiah has inveighed against for several years and they quietly put out a contract on the prophet's life.

When Jeremiah learns of the murder conspiracy he begins to cry the blues asking God, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" (12: 1). I know the tune. I have sung it myself before, "Life's not fair!" In response, the Lord says to Jeremiah, "If thou hast ran with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with the horses?" (12:5). In short, God is telling Jeremiah, "If you think this is bad, you haven't seen anything yet!" If Jeremiah is so discouraged over the conspiracy of the priests and false prophets and is ready to quit his post as a prophet of God, how will he bear up when he learns that his own family is going to conspire against him later? How will he bear up when he is cast into a miry pit and imprisoned as a traitor? How will he fare when the armies of Babylon cut off the city of Jerusalem, food becomes so scarce the people resort to cannibalism, and the inhabitants blame all of their woes on the prophet?

Truly Jeremiah's trying times are only beginning. What he is experiencing now is comparable to running against men, but he is without doubt destined to run against stiffer competition. His trials to the present time are training sessions helping him develop endurance for what will later seem to him like running a marathon against horses.

So what about us? Is it possible we complain about the tribulations we are experiencing now, not understanding tribulation is God's way of helping us develop endurance for the greater trials that lie ahead? (Romans 5:3; Hebrews 12:1; Cf. Luke 16:10).

Suppose that out of the blue you are suddenly struck with horrible disaster like Job. Would you have the grit to pull yourself together as he did and the faith to say, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord?" (Job 1:21).

Suppose a day comes to you as it did to Ezekiel, when with no warning God tells Ezekiel that He is suddenly going to take the life of the person Ezekiel loves the most-his wife. God tells Ezekiel, however, not to cry, complain, mourn, nor show he is grieving. Later, Ezekiel says, "So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded" (Ezekiel 24:18).

Really there is no supposing about the above matters, because with certainty, in time, and in our turn, we too are going to experience heart-breaking tragedies in our lives.

For years you and I may go on our sunny way, living happy, seemingly charmed lives. We hear of crises and calamities befalling others, but they seem so distant they appear to have nothing to do with us. Then, it happens to us too. What then? Do we blame and curse God? Abandon our Christianity? For many people Christianity is a fair-weather affair. A little rain and it crumbles. A touch of strain and it snaps (Matthew 7:24-27).

There is a lot I do not understand about life. But I absolutely cannot understand how people in trouble, loss, and bereavement can peevishly turn away from God (John 6:68). After all have we not lost enough without losing Him too?

The wise Christian is the one who recognizes that the tribulation we experience today produces endurance (Romans 5:3) for running successfully the marathon of Christianity (Hebrews 12:1). When tragedy strikes you, therefore, please continue to read your Bible, attend worship services, pray, do works of benevolence, and find someone with whom you can talk (Galatians 6:2). Never forget that God is righteous and that regardless of how dark life may appear, if you are faithful to Him you shall receive the ultimate victory (Revelation 2:10). If you will ever keep in mind and do these things you "can run and not be weary," (Isaiah 40:31) even though you have been compelled to run with horses.-1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net

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. LXXVII

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NO. 7

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH #4

By *BILLY D. DICKINSON*

Scriptural discipline is also a function assigned to the local congregation. The church is like any other organization in this respect--discipline and order must be maintained or chaos and disorder will be the result. Some members of the church commit certain sins, not because of a rebellious attitude, but because of ignorance. It may be the case that they haven't had the opportunity to learn better, such as with new converts. Babies in Christ need to be dealt with patiently and, instead of overlooking their faults, they need INSTRUCTION about how to behave themselves in the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15).

However, there are sinful situations that must not, and cannot, be tolerated by the church! When a brother or sister in the Lord persists in those things and refuse to repent, there comes a time when withdrawal of fellowship must be exercised by the congregation. I believe it is correct to say that for the most part this has to do with REBELLIOUS SINS--i.e., they either refuse instruction or they refuse to do better. Corrective discipline should be exercised as the last recourse, after the brother or sister has been exhorted, warned, and ample time given for them to see the error of their way.

Also, it is a CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY: "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 unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. 5:4-5) This is not something done in a corner somewhere, but it is a function that involves the whole congregation. If it is scripturally carried out, all of the members should refuse to "keep company" with them socially until repentance takes place (1 Cor. 5:11). Brethren, here is a COMMANDMENT from the pen of the Apostle Paul: "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:13). Do we think that we can wilfully disregard that command and still be pleasing with God?

The purpose for church discipline is twofold: (1) It is meant to SAVE THE SOUL of the individual who is in sin (1 Cor. 5:5). When one is withdrawn from by

the church, where the association of faithful brethren is no longer enjoyed, hopefully the guilty person will feel the disgrace and shame of that condition. The result is repentance and reconciliation, as with the incestuous fornicator (2 Cor. 2:6-8) in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. (2) It is meant to KEEP THE CHURCH PURE (1 Cor. 5:6). While it is true that those who are disciplined do not always repent, that does not mean that church discipline should be discarded as a failure. Congregations that allow blatant error (like divorce and remarriage for ANY CAUSE) and even immorality to exist in their midst unchallenged are putting the whole congregation at risk! Paul declared that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," and clearly some brethren have little or no appreciation for that principle. When we refuse to exercise scriptural discipline as the Bible teaches, at some point we become guilty of putting MANY SOULS in jeopardy for the sake of pacifying a few. How foolish!

The Bible specifies those who are subject to discipline. Let's notice some passages of Scripture that deal with the subject: "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." (1 Cor. 5:11) Paul's language here indicates that he is referring to a brother who persists in those sins without a penitent heart; it has become a way of life. Among those mentioned is the FORNICATOR--those who are pursuing an immoral lifestyle. Incidentally, unscriptural marriages fall into this category because it was the LORD who defined it as adultery (Matt. 19:9). While some actually doubt that there is such a thing as an "unscriptural divorce" or an "unscriptural marriage," those who respect the teaching of Christ on this subject need to take a stand for the truth! Notice that he also names the RAILER--one who is a reviler, heaping abusive speech upon others.

"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself"

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Editorial

FOREIGN EVANGELISM

By DON L. KING

The questions are asked, "Why is foreign evangelism so important, and do you think it is really worth the time and money it costs?" Sometimes, though not nearly as often as I would like someone asks how his or her congregation can get involved? These are valid questions and they deserve consideration.

Notice what the Bible says in John 4:35-37: "Say not ye, There are yet four months and then cometh harvest? Behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, one soweth and another reapeth." In this passage the Lord is comparing a harvest of grain with a harvest of souls. The first was four months in the future while the latter was ready even as He spoke! You say, "Why is all this foreign work so important? This is why! The world is the field, not just the USA, and they are lost in sin. When will we all learn that God sees no "foreign fields"? He sees the whole world as a field.

The United States is where we live. Right here is where the only Christians in the world, who have the needed funds available, live. If we don't answer the call, no one else is likely to do so, because no one else can afford to. We dare not face the Lord, the righteous judge with the lame excuse that it was just too expensive to preach to the rest of the world. Let me be plain so that I am not misunderstood: Our work needs careful planning and execution so that money is not wasted. Even so, we must understand that it costs money to go to faraway places and function safely. It needs to be done by competent people who are excited about the work and extreme care must be given to see to it that what we do is done in a scriptural manner. Otherwise, great harm can be done that may require many years to overcome.

Sinners are called by the gospel of Christ. Paul wrote, "Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." He also spoke of the fact; in 2 Corinthians 4:7, that the treasure of the gospel had been placed in earthen vessels, or the apostles. In other words, God placed men in the chain of events by which sinners could be called to salvation. In Romans 10:13-15 he wrote, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

BY RONNY F. WADE

Question: Would you please discuss how one becomes an Elder in the church.

Answer: In order for one to become an elder, he must first meet the qualifications given in the word of God. It does not matter how winsome his personality may be, or how well he is liked by the church, if he does not meet the qualifications, he cannot scripturally be appointed. These qualifications are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. It will not be the purpose of this article to go into a detailed discussion of the qualifications or the various interpretations given them by different writers. I will however, briefly state what I believe these requirements entail. They are as follows: (1) the elder must be a man 1 Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:6. This obviously excludes women. (2) the elder must desire the office. One cannot scripturally be forced into the eldership. It is the belief of this writer that one should not be "pushed" into the eldership just to have elders. One who does not really desire the office, will most likely be reluctant to fulfill the duties thereof. (3) blameless i.e. "one against who no evil charge can be sustained; one who is above an established charge of evil." (4) husband of one wife 1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:6. It is the contention of this writer that the scriptures teach that an elder must be a married man, but cannot be a polygamist. (5) must be the father of faithful children 1 Tim. 3:4; Titus 1:6. His children must be Christians. They (all of them) either are Christians or they are not. If they are not, the man does not qualify. If he has children out of duty, he does not qualify, for his children are not faithful. (6) vigilant or temperate (R.V.) 1 Tim. 3:2. The meaning of the word carries the idea of being sober, circumspect, and reserved. (7) temperate Titus 1:8. The elder must be one who has mastery over himself, one who is in control of self. He is self-disciplined. (8) sober or sober-minded Titus 1:8; 1 Tim. 3:2. The meaning is sober-minded, prudent, sensible, discreet, master of self, reserved, sedate, etc. (9) must be of good behavior 1 Tim. 3:2. The meaning here is that he must be moderate, orderly, well-behaved, modest, well-arranged, a man living with decorum. (10) given to hospitality 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8. One who loves strangers and will receive them into his home. A requirement of all Christians. See 1 Peter 4:9. (11) apt to teach, holding fast the faithful word to give instructions 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9. Apt or skillful in teaching. One who is able and capable of teaching. One who is qualified by reason of knowledge to teach others. (12) good report of them which are without 1 Tim. 3:7. He must be well thought of by outsiders. A man who has a good reputation in the community. (13) must not be given to wine 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7. An elder must not be subject to wine or intoxicating liquors of any kind, but abstain completely from fermented juice

of grapes. (14) no striker 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7. A striker is one who hits with force, either, with the hand or an instrument. He is not apt to strike others who oppose him. (15) not greedy of filthy lucre 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:2. He must not have a greed for money, or resort to base or evil means of obtaining it. (16) patient or gentle 1 Tim. 3:3. (17) no brawler, i.e. not contentious or quarrelsome 1 Tim. 3:3. (18) not covetous or one who is free from avarice, not loving money. 1 Tim. 3:3. (19) not a novice or a man who is a beginner at Christianity 1 Tim. 3:3. (20) not self-willed, i.e. not stubborn; not proud; not self-indulgent; nor self pleasing Titus 1:7. (21) not soon angry or not prone to anger, not irritable, or irascible Titus 1:7. (22) a lover of good men Titus 1:7. One who is a lover of good, a friend to goodness, or in love with what is good. This man is devoted to all that is good and helpful to others. (23) just Titus 1:8. A just man, upright and fair. (24) holy Titus 1:8. One who leads a holy, separated, pure life. These are the qualifications given by the Holy Spirit, and one cannot be an elder unless he meets all of them.

The second step in the process of becoming an elder is the selection of that man by the church. One may not select himself. There is no such thing in scripture as a self-appointed elder. Since the church is to be subject to the elders, it only stands to reason that the church should be involved in their selection. In Acts 6:1-6 we have an example of the church selecting certain men for service in the care of the church. Note the words "Look YE out AMONG YOU..." Once these men were identified, they were then appointed. Hence the selection is one thing, and the appointment another.

That brings us to the final step to be taken: the appointment or ordination of the men who meet the qualifications and have been selected by the church. The indication of scripture is that preachers or evangelists did the ordaining. (See Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5) Appointing merely designates the selected men to the work. A scriptural way of so doing is outlined in Acts 6:6; Acts 13:3; Acts 14:23, and includes prayer, fasting, and laying on of hands. The latter being merely a designating one to service.

Qualifying, selecting, and appointing elders should be a primary concern of every church. Any church that has men who qualify but fails to appoint them is not a scriptural church. By the same token any church that does not have men who qualify, but fails to work in that direction is also unscriptural. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 or rwwade@getatlas.com)

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THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND OUR JUSTIFICATION

By BENNIE CRYER

Romans 4:25, *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* Though we have sinned by the grace of God we can stand before Him justified and righteous. Jesus died, was buried, but arose from the sepulcher to make this possible. What a blessing the resurrection of Christ is! The world has just celebrated Easter Sunday and paid different kinds of homage to the resurrection of Christ. Not many recognized the accomplishments of the resurrection of the Son of God for their own lives today. His resurrection is not just a historical event. God made it possible for that resurrection to be active in our lives today. We must participate in Christ's resurrection with Him. This was true with the members of the church in Colosse. How did they do this?

Risen With Christ

Colossians 3:1, *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* How was that possible? Had they visited Jerusalem in order to be risen with Christ? They did not have to. Almost exactly thirty years had passed since the resurrection in Jerusalem which was about five hundred miles from Colosse. Though time had passed and Jerusalem was far away they had participated in the resurrection in their home city. They were risen with Christ though they may have never visited Jerusalem. Travel agents encourage people to visit the Holy Land. They advertise that you can see the place where Jesus was born; walk where he walked; visit where he prayed. You can even walk THE WAY OF THE CROSS and stop at each of its stations. You can stand on the hill where he was crucified and visit the sepulcher where he was buried but rose again the third day. My family and I have visited there and seen these things. We were not participating in His resurrection when we stood there by the empty tomb. In fact, you could visit that tomb from which he arose a thousand times and never share in the resurrection of Christ in such a way it would justify you before God. The sight of the empty grave might thrill you but just seeing it will not save you. You must be an active participant in His resurrection and not just a historical spectator. In God's scheme of redemption He provided a way for each individual all over the world and in every age to participate in the resurrection of His son. Consider how the Colossians did it.

God's Plan For Sharing In The Resurrection Of Christ

Colossians 2:12, *Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.* Notice the word "wherein" in this passage.

It teaches the "where at" and the "in what" the Colossians were risen with Christ. It was in baptism where they were raised with Christ. In baptism God uses the same power to make you a new person as He used when He raised Jesus from the grave. God Himself chose where he would use that power in your life. He chose the place. Where is it? It is in baptism. False teachers have been successful in divorcing baptism from salvation. Jesus was raised for our justification. We are justified when we are raised with Him. We are raised with Him when we are baptized. When people belittle baptism as a mere work of man they are leaving God's plan and power out of it. You cannot become a new creature in Christ Jesus without baptism. God chose baptism to be the "when" and "place" of salvation. You must choose what God has chosen in order to be justified. This is what Paul the apostle taught where ever he went as is evidenced by his Roman epistle.

The Saved In Rome Had Participated In His Resurrection

Romans 6:3-5, *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.* Paul, along with the members of the church in Rome, had been baptized into the death of Christ. They had been buried with Christ and raised with Him. When they were raised from the watery grave of baptism they had a new life to walk in. This participation in His resurrection occurs today when an alien sinner obeys God's command to be baptized. He then becomes a new creature with a new life to live.

What Is The New Life Like?

Colossians 3:1-4, *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ²Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. ³For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God* The members of the church in Colosse were risen with Christ. They were to seek those things which are in heaven (spiritual things). Not only were they to seek such things, they were to set their affections on them instead of being so focused on the things here on earth (material things). The rest of chapter 3 describes the active and "risen with Christ" life. Beginning with verse 5, immoral activities are to be mortified or put to death. Verse 8 starts explaining some of the emotional and verbal sins that must be "put off." Verse 10 begins teaching the things they were to "put on" to replace the sinful things they were to "put off." In this way they were to continually (present participle) be renewed.

This was an ongoing process. The detailed account of what they were to "put" on is given in verses 12-

17. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. ¹⁴And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. ¹⁵And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. ¹⁶Let 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. ¹⁷And 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.* These verses have a modern, 21st Century application. They teach us that if we are risen with Christ we are going to treat each brother or sister in the church in the right way. They also instruct us that this new life will be filled with the word of God, praise, and thanksgiving. These observations are a few things the resurrection of Christ should mean to us today.—4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953.

BUSY HERE AND THERE

By RICK MARTIN

In 1 Kings 20:39-40 we read of an event that took place in battles between Benhadad and Ahab. "And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it." This servant was given a serious charge to keep the prisoner until the battle was over. When the king returned to get the prisoner, he was not there. He was gone. The only excuse the servant could give for the prisoner's escape was "while I was busy here and there he was gone." This man failed to keep the charge that was given to him.

We have been given some duties and responsibilities to perform. We must be good, faithful stewards. (I Corinthians 4:2) "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Stewardship involves every obligation and responsibility the Christian has in both physical and spiritual matters. We need to understand what it means to be a steward and get our lives in order. The steward was given control over the belongings of someone else. He was not overseeing his own property. We have been given duties and responsibilities and we must carry them out.

Are there perhaps times in our lives while we have been busy here and there, doing this and that, and we fail to do what we were sent to do? Have there been

times when we failed to do what we were charged with? While we were busy here and there, taking care of things that really did not matter, we failed to do the important things.

How many parents have been busy here and there and they look around and their children are gone? As parents we have a responsibility to make sure that our children are taught the truths of God's Word. That responsibility cannot be shuffled off to local church leaders, teachers, evangelist or anyone else. (Ephesians 6:4) "And, ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." If the ways are of God are important to us, then we will reflect these values to our children. Moses told the people of Israel to teach the words of God diligently to their children. They were to be willing to invest the time, energy, effort and patience to teach their children the truths of God. As they went about their daily activities, these principles were to direct their thought patterns and govern their actions. We are living in a time of materialism, sexual promiscuity and negative peer pressure. These are moral and social forces that can destroy our children if we are not careful. The challenge of rearing children in the biblical way is perhaps greater today than ever before.

Some parents get busy here and there and fail to teach their children about God, Jesus and the Church. When we take time for our children we affirm their self-worth and value to us. We must fulfill the charge that we have been given to bring our children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Commitment, diligence, and perseverance are essential attributes of Christian parents. These attributes are necessary to rear our children with godly values that will withstand the pressures of a godless age. If we get too busy here and there, we may look around and our children may be gone.

Sometimes people get busy here and there and we look around and knowledge of God's word is gone. The prophet Amos spoke about a famine for the Word of God. (Amos 8:11) Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:" Many people lack a basic knowledge of God's Word. The Word of God has been placed on the back burner because people think other things are more important. The Word is often neglected and abused.

We must feed on the Word (1 Peter 2:2) "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:" We appreciate the value of nourishment for our bodies and our souls do not deserve any less. Our souls were created in the image of God and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. A lack of knowledge has always destroyed God's people. (Hosea 4:6) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to

me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."

We need to make sure that we study the Word on a regular basis. (Acts 17:11) "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

We need to be ready to give an answer and contend for and defend the Faith. (1 Peter 3:15) "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (Philippians 1:17) "But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel"

In some places people have become dependent on the preacher system. Congregations will often hire a preacher to come in and work, because the members are busy here and there, with other things. This will often soothe the member's consciences, because they have hired a man to do the teaching and the personal work. We need to keep a watchful eye and not let this get out of hand. We must all have knowledge of God's Word.

We must demand that the Word be taught without addition, subtraction, modification, or revision. It has been put in our trust. We need to be careful, because when we get busy here and there we neglect to study the Word. If we are not paying attention false teachers will appear teaching things that are unscriptural.

Have we gotten busy here and there and misused the material possessions that God has placed in our trust? Most of us are fortunate in that we have about anything we want or need. How are we using these things? Do we use our money in the service of the Lord? Are our homes a place of Christian hospitality? (1 Timothy 6:17-18) "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate."

God has entrusted us with many precious possessions. He expects and demands that we be faithful stewards. We must live up to our responsibilities. How often do we get busy here and there and neglect the things that are important? We need to be sure not to get too **Busy Here and There**.—*300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189*

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(Tit. 3:10-11) The HERETIC is a "factions man" (ASV) who is bent on having his own way, even if he has to destroy the church to get it. He is a dangerous man, perhaps the most dangerous of all, and that is why he gets ONLY TWO opportunities to repent! Brethren, it is foolish to sit back and watch a man tear up the church, especially when you know that you are dealing with a modern-day Diotrefes (3 John

9). What Paul wrote in Rom. 16:17 also comes into play: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

There is the DISORDERLY WALKER that must be dealt with: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." (2 Thess. 3:6) Vine says that this is a military term, denoting not keeping rank, insubordinate (P. 322). The example that Paul gives has to do with those who were "working not at all, but are busybodies" (Verse 11). Just as insubordinate behavior cannot be tolerated in the armed forces, the same holds true for the LORD'S ARMY! Brethren, when members of a congregation are encouraged to do anything they want to do, believe and teach any doctrine they wish, and disregard any Bible command they find offensive, insubordination and open-rebellion are going to be the natural result.

Finally, the one who will not seek forgiveness for a PERSONAL OFFENSE is to be withdrawn from by the church: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matt. 18:15-17) Let's make a few observations: (1) When a brother sins against us in a personal way, we need to follow the procedure given by the Lord here. Too often we are prone to talk to everyone else about the problem, rather than going to the one who has wronged us. (2) If we approach the brother with the right attitude, more than likely we will receive a favorable response. (3) If the offending party is what he ought to be, love and justice will compel him to ask for forgiveness. (4) However, if the brother is brought before the church and he still will not repent, Jesus said to "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." What did He mean by that? We know from the Scriptures that the Jews would not eat nor would they have any association, with heathens and publicans (Matt. 9:11; John 4:9). Christ is saying the same thing taught by Paul in 1 Cor. 5: "I wrote unto you in an epistle NOT TO COMPANY with fornicators...with such an one no NOT TO EAT" (Verses 9 & 11).

We have noticed the following in a series of articles—According to the New Testament, the collective actions assigned the local congregation included, and was limited to: (1) worship, (2) evangelism, (3) edification, (4) benevolence, and (5) scriptural discipline. May the Lord help us to be busy in doing the work of the church!—*2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803*

EDITORIAL*continued from page 2*

how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things?" Then, in verse 17 Paul applied these things: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If any are to be saved, it must be through the gospel which we are willing to send. It is as simple as that. Are you interested in the souls of men? Then send the gospel to them because Jesus says the fields are white already unto harvest. There is no time to spare while we wait to make a decision, which should have been made long ago.

God does not send the gospel where His people will not go. There will be no knowledge of God anywhere until the Word of the Lord is carried to them. Likewise, there can be no harvest of souls anywhere unless His people are willing to either go or send someone. If the Scriptures are plain on anything it is plain that the world is lost in sin and they will remain so until we send the message of salvation. It might be that some really do not see the urgency of the matter. Some may not have considered that the world is really lost. If one doesn't understand that, of course, he will not be evangelistic. When we face the truth that the world is really lost, surely our love for God and man will constrain us to be like the Lord in seeking and saving the lost. Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." (Luke 19:10)

We often hear it said that we need more preachers to enter the fields. Of course, we agree. However, if we perhaps had more mothers like Eunice and Lois (2 Timothy 1:5) we would have more preachers like Timothy! If we perhaps had more mothers like Hannah, who would determine and promise to give their sons to the Lord all the days of their lives, we might have more men like Samuel! As long as so many raise children to be successful only in worldly matters we will continue to lament the shortage of dedicated men in the church. When we see more and more Christian parents not only allowing their children to miss services for recreational sports, but the whole family missing, it is no surprise that a shortage of faithful men is sure to be the result. How could it be otherwise? Brethren, we need to wake up and see where we are headed because we are drifting away from the things that really matter.

Should we be making trips to investigate whether or not an opportunity exists here or there? In our opinion, that is not a profitable effort for the most part. We don't need to run around the world looking for a place to preach. There are plenty of leads all along and they need to be investigated by brethren who are experienced and competent. Some may be genuine leads while many may not be. If an

inexperienced fellow goes into such a situation the result may often be disappointing. A lot of money can be spent and no real result forthcoming. In our judgment, it is almost always a mistake to go into any third world country spending a great deal of money. Though our intentions may be honorable, it is too easy to send the wrong signals to those who have been desperately poor and impoverished all their lives. It is simply not possible to change the poverty level in any land. Even the United States Government is unable to do so. This means we must be content to work within the economic structure we find in place, supporting preachers in line with the level of their brethren.

We have the money to do the work we need to do. There are competent and experienced men among us who are willing to go. They are willing to take those along who are less experienced so they may learn from those who have greater knowledge. The Scriptures furnish us with proof that it is profitable for brethren to travel in pairs. It is too bad more congregations are seemingly not interested in being involved. It is a rare opportunity to preach in lands where folks are eager to obey the gospel. Let us continue to preach here at home while looking farther away as well. Brethren, let us be "ready unto every good work." (Titus 3:1) Think on these things.—1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Labor Day Meeting

21st Annual Tennessee Labor Day Meeting hosted by the Chapel Grove Church of Christ, Lawrence County TN and conducted by Wayne Fussell. Visiting teachers and preachers will also be heard at each service. Dates are August 27-31. For accommodations and other information contact Steve Patton (931) 829-2485 or Ed Daniel (931) 964-3458 Email: e_daniel@bellsouth.net.

Change Of Address

Please note the following change of address: Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, Home Telephone: (925) 454-0530, Business & Fax Number: (925) 454-8995

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

GOULD-RANEY—Barbara Gould and Josh Raney were united in Holy Matrimony May 16, 2003 in a beautiful, evening ceremony in Ada, Oklahoma. Josh and Barbara are faithful members of the congregation here in Ada. She is my great-niece, the daughter of Troy and Ronda Gould, and the granddaughter of Darrell and Rosa Gould. A large crowd of friends and family gathered to witness the ceremony as Josh and Barbara exchanged vows of lifelong love and

loyalty. It was my privilege to officiate the ceremony, and it is my prayer that God will bless them as they keep their vows, and help them to find new and meaningful ways to let each other know how much they do love, honor, and cherish each other through all the years to come.—Carl M. Johnson

OUR DEPARTED

PRUITT—Lois Agnes Robertson Pruitt passed away May 26, 2003, at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, at the age of 86. She was born August 2, 1916, in Myron, Arkansas, the oldest daughter of Frank and Agnus Robertson. She was united in marriage October 25, 1937, to Wilburn A. (Bill) Pruitt in McKittrick, California and lived most of her life in Oklahoma City before moving to Kansas City three years ago. She retired as an Oklahoma State employee in 1980. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Bill (who died in 1964 at the age of 47), and her daughter Jo Jameson. She is survived by three sons: Charles and wife Shirley, John and wife Glenda, and Don and wife Dianne; son-in-law Charles Jameson and wife Olga; brothers: Shelby and Ewin Robertson; sisters: Thelma Branch and Myrl Dean Govier; 14 grandchildren, and 19 great-grandchildren. I knew Sister Lois and have had a close association with her family most all of my life. She was a kind, hospitable woman who treasured her family and the church. She suffered with some chronic health problems and I know her last days were extremely difficult for her and her family. Don called me the evening she died and asked me in behalf of the family to conduct the funeral. I was honored by their request and did my best to speak a few appropriate words to the overflowing crowd who gathered at the Vondel Smith Funeral Chapel for the service.—Carl M. Johnson

LEMONS—Laura Elise Lemons of Coalgate, OK was born April 19, 1912 and was a very special and great Christian lady. She passed away May 10, 2003 at the age of 91 years and 3 days. Her body was laid to rest in the Coalgate Cemetery next to her husband, Jesse Lemons. They both were faithful and charter members of the Legal Church of Christ. It was my honor at Sister Lemons request to officiate at her funeral. What an example this great sister left for us to follow. She will be missed. Her seat is now empty.—Ed Bullard

RUEBUSH—Ruby Etta Ruebush was born Oct. 2, 1911 near Long Lane, MO and departed this life May 27, 2003 in Springfield, MO at the age of 91 years. On May 29, 1929 she was married to Willard Ruebush, in the home of her uncle, Homer L. King, near Phillipsburg, MO. To this union two daughters were born. Her husband and one daughter preceded

her in death. She is survived by her daughter Berniece Carr, and a brother Kenneth Triplett, as well as a number of grandchildren, other relatives and a host of friends. Ruby was a delight to know. She had been a Christian all of her adult life. She and her husband Willard donated the land upon which the Lee's Summit church building was built. In her declining years her faith remained strong and she attended church services at Mission Hills here in Springfield as long as she was able. She will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by all who knew and loved her. This writer conducted the service.—Ronny Wade

CORRECTION—We apologize for the error on the obituary of Albert Gene Compton. It read Gene Albert Gore and this was incorrect. Thank you.—DLK



Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net, June 8—Sally and I enjoyed being at Jamesville, MO April 13-20. We had a wonderful ingathering of preaching brethren and others from the area for which we were most grateful. It was our good pleasure next to be with the church at Napoleon, AL May 4-11. En route we visited with Lynwood Smith, Sam Smith and family and others in the Brookhaven, MS area where we found Lynwood much improved over his condition last January. A tornado knocked out the power one night at Napoleon, but it did not diminish the enthusiasm and interest in the meeting. We enjoyed the hospitality of the brethren and the wonderful singing at Jamesville and Napoleon, also. We just closed at short meeting at Columbia, MO, May 28-June 1. I was greatly impressed with the growth in that congregation, due in a great measure to the efforts of Reggie Kinser, no doubt. I look forward to being home until November after being in and out in meetings since January. I thank God that we still have brethren who are faithful and true to the book.

Richard DeGough, 1907 Tully Rd., Hughson, CA 95326, E-Mail: RLDegough2@aol.com—I enjoyed preaching in Missouri the last of March and two weeks in April. The meetings in Niangua and Buffalo were encouraging to me and I hope they were encouraging to brethren as well as edifying. We appreciated the invitation to preach and the wonderful hospitality and association we received from all the brethren. We also preached in Springfield (south side) on Sunday night. We stayed in the homes of Ronnie and Carolyn Alexander, Ronnie and Alfreda Wade, Jimmy and Wilma Branch, all of them dear friends who treated us

as family. Frank and Dee Sanderson opened their home to all the brethren after services more than once for us to associate and visit. Their kindness is a good example for Christians to follow. We visited Paul and Wilma, and preached at Stoney Point church on Wednesday night. It was a joy to be with Paul again. They both are and have always been dear to Glenda and me. The association with fellow preachers who gave their support was wonderful. Brad Shockley, Ron Alexander, Ronnie Wade, Clovis Cook, Clyde Lampkins, Smith Bibens, Billy Dickinson, Johnny Elmore, Paul Nichols and perhaps more. In our area we enjoyed the preaching of Wayne McKamie in Stockton, Duane Permenter in Oakdale, David Stands in Bakersfield with more meetings to come. Our meeting with Brett Hickey in Turlock (annual Memorial Day meeting) was great. Brett preached with conviction and power on timely subjects that build us up. Straight forward sound doctrine that everyone appreciated. We had crowds at the end close to four hundred. The young people and adults from other states were numerous. Cullen Smith came to help and what a help he is. My heart thrills to see such young preachers as Brett and Cullen along with many more that hold the banner of truth high. They live it, they preach it. The church has a bright future with such men. I look forward to the 4th meeting in Lebanon. Both Sulphur and Lebanon have good sound men conducting the meetings. I look forward to preaching in Fremont, Atwater, Sanger, and here at home. God bless the brotherhood and all the work being done for his cause.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, June 14—We are presently in a gospel meeting in West Monroe, LA. Crowds have been very good with some outside interest. Area congregations have cooperated very well indeed and their nightly attendance has been a great encouragement. Several gospel preachers have attended nearly every service and their backing has been appreciated. My special thanks to Dwayne and Jana Snow for their kind hospitality extended to me while I have been here. Lord willing, we will return home tomorrow afternoon and look forward to beginning the Lebanon, MO 4th of July meeting on the 27th. We look forward to seeing you all there. We need your prayers as always.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42503, (606) 678-4347, E-Mail: douglas@alltel.net, June 8, 2003—I'm currently in Greenville, SC. with Roger and Sherry Knight, two of the kindest people I know. I've recently been to Chestnut Ridge, KY and Beattyville, KY. One young couple obeyed the gospel in Beattyville. The Church has had a great deal of trouble and heartache over the last two years but I hope their future brightens. My meetings in July will be at Pearlhaven, MS and Muskogee, OK. I then will be in Orange, CA in August. We look forward to having Jerry Dickinson in July at Blue Springs. The church at Blue Springs continues to faithfully support me. I really have not known more faithful brethren anywhere. They have been very good to me over the last five years and I occasionally like to publicly acknowledge their role in my life. I could not contribute my services without them. I pledge my continued efforts to the Lord's

cause and my service to the church. We pray God's blessings to be with you.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, June 1—I just closed a good meeting at Earlytown, AL. We had good crowds and interest. Kevin Presley and family were able to attend nearly every service and their presence was a tremendous asset. Other visiting preachers included Daniel Smith and J.W. Kornegay. Phyllis and I are leaving Friday for a meeting at Ash Camp, WV. My schedule for the next few months includes: Miami, OK (July 13-20), Moore, OK (July 25-Aug. 3), Paris, TX (Sept. 5-14), Healdton, OK (Sept. 21-28), Lee's Summit, MO (Oct. 4-12), Cable Ridge, MO (Oct. 19-26), Kansas City, KS (36th & Everett Oct. 29-Nov. 2), Oakdale, CA (Nov. 7-16), Joplin, MO (Nov. 19-23), and Davis, OK (Dec. 5-7). We request your prayers.

Jonathan Bunner, Apartado Postal #18-01-241, Ambato, Ecuador, South America, Telephone: 593-342-0096—On May 16th brother Vicente Villafuerte and sister Fanny Lopez got married. That was a joyful time for all of us in the congregation. This was the first church wedding many of the members had ever attended. I think that I was as nervous as the bride and groom because this was my first wedding ceremony to preach. Thankfully brother Juan Rodriquez sent me material in Spanish to help me out with the marriage ceremony. Everything went smooth and the ceremony was about twenty minutes long since Vicente and Fanny asked me to be brief. There are two pictures from the wedding on the home-page iglesiadecristolatina.com. To see the pictures click on *boda*. Brother Vicente has been in the church for several years and was converted from the cups last January. Sister Fanny was baptized in January. Both are wonderful people and we pray the best for them. Vicente has developed into a good teacher and leader of the congregation in Ambato. In fact, he and his wife now help brothers Chiliquinga, Villacis, and me with some of the weekly Bible studies. I am thankful that the brethren here in Ambato work together as a team. We have finished remodeling our room at our worship place. Since March we have been trying to improve the appearance little by little. We tore down a wall to make one big room, and now we have more space. Recently I painted the entire room one color. The walls were all different colors and dark. I bought a clear sky blue paint and it has improved the meeting place tremendously. A few days ago brother Hernando Motta arrived from Peru. He tells me that the work is going well in that country. He is very excited about the work in Lima and other parts of Peru. He plans to be in Quito most of June since he has been more than two months away from his family. He says there are many things here in Ecuador that he needs to do before he can go back to Peru. While he is here we are going to update the home-page with more studies, pictures and announcements. I may put an English section on the home-page in the future. We have already put pictures from Ambato on the page. The address is iglesiadecristolatina.com. For those of you that send me e-mail I am now using the home-page e-mail. My address is as follows jonathanbunner@iglesiadecristolatina.com. If you want to send something to brother Hernando Motta

his address is *Mottamigo@iglesiadecristolatina.com*. Brother Motta does not speak English, but he does understand written English. About half of the month of May I had some health problems. Thankfully I feel much better now. I started with an infection in my throat and a high fever that lasted a week. Later I had severe chest pains and stomach pains. The doctor is almost certain those pains were reactions to the medication for my throat. At first she had told me I had symptoms of a stomach ulcer, but now it does not look like that was my problem. The medication seems to be the cause for those pains. To be sure I am staying on a diet for another week. Brother Segundo Villacis also has been ill, but is better now. Please pray for us.

Concerning The Philippine Trip

Virgilio O. Danao Sr.—Greetings to all the faithful brethren everywhere! The preaching itinerary in the Philippines of Bro. Don L. King, covering the period from January 3 to 20, 2003, once again, bolstered the Lord's work there. He was accompanied by Bro. Duane Permenter, who, like him, is a knowledgeable preacher with the teaching of the Scriptures. Once again, I am grateful for having the opportunity to work as interpreter and guide with two capable and respected evangelists in the brotherhood. I continue to salute Bro. King and Bro. Permenter for their dedication to the work, particularly their love for mission works. Despite the short period of days scheduled in their itinerary, they tried to visit as many congregations as they could possibly go, in the provinces of Isabela, Quirino, Cagayan, Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan, Tarlac and in five cities Manila, Santiago, Laoag, Baguio and Urdaneta; and many who heard them preached were challenged to surrender themselves to the saving power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and were baptized for the remission of their sins. The total baptism made in different places is 87. On January 10th, we had a study with several digressive church of Christ preachers, led by George Purugganan Sr. and Amor Salem. They said they have works in the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya, Isabela, Quirino and Ifugao. We discussed issues concerning the Lord's Supper, teaching the word, and other vital subjects. The study concluded by their (all of them) making public their acceptance and belief of the subjects we discussed, and a word of prayer for forgiveness of sins in their behalf was said. During the one day study held in Matulong, a quite far place from Santiago City, on January 16th some of them attended. We pray that these brethren will continue to be firm and stable in the faith. Generally, the Lord's work in the Philippines is faring well, though there were some problems encountered, which are but natural, it seems, to any mission field, wherever it maybe; but the brethren were able to go through them successfully. Bro. King and Bro. Permenter left for home to the U.S. on January 20th. Motivated by the e-mail correspondences Bro. King has with Bro. Elarde and Bro. Guindulman, both digressive preachers in General Santos (Gensan) City in Mindanao, Bro. Conrado Libertino, who preaches in Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte in Mindanao, and I made a schedule to personally go and visit Bro. King's contact there. Because I received text message from a family in Dipolog City requesting that Bro. Eduardo Danao would come with us, thus, he was invited to come also.

We arrived in Gensan City on January 24th. Immediately, we made efforts to locate, and were able to contact, Bro. Elarde. We were accompanied by a brother—who lives in Gensan city and works in the hotel where we checked in—of the wife of Junmar Danao, one of the sons of Leonardo Danao, a brother of ours (Eduardo and Virgilio) in the flesh. In the evening, in our hotel room, we studied with Bro. Elarde. The following morning, he came back with Bro. Guindulman. Also, Bro. Libertino arrived from Dipolog City (his meeting us in Gensan scheduled on January 22nd was delayed because of the accident he had the previous Sunday afternoon). After breakfast, riding on Bro. Guindulman's tricycle, we all went to Polomolok, about 18 kilometers north-west of Gensan, where Bro. Nestor Naldo lives and preaches. While Bro. Elarde and Bro. Guindulman returned to Gensan, we, with Bro. Naldo, went to T'boli, about four hours travel in fully loaded "shuttle van." We met Bro. Bulauan who works in T'boli. There, we also met Bro. Kayang and other preaching brethren from neighboring congregations. Immediately, we started to study with them the "issues," up late in the night. (While we were studying, suddenly there were commotions outside at the road along the house where we were in, and then two gun shots were fired disturbing the calmness of the dark night. However, the brethren assured us that the place is peaceful.) We were asked vital questions—dealing with the Communion, teaching the word, woman not permitted to speak in public worship, etc.—and we patiently explained to them our answers one by one. We were asked whether we also do what other American evangelists are doing who go and hold gospel meetings there—that the said American evangelists feed and pay for the travel expenses of those who attend the meeting, resulting in many conversions and baptisms, and a phrase was coined, **"Go, feed, preach, baptize and feed."** (I am reminded of the Jews who continued to seek Jesus after He fed them and **"were filled"** (John 6:24-26). They expected us to do the same. But we explained to them that what we are doing in Luzon is that, a gospel meeting or study is financed by the members of the sponsoring local Church, and most often assisted by the voluntary personal contributions from individual brethren coming from other places. Another problem they brought out was that there is no available fund to buy "grape juice" for the Lord's Supper. We explained that the contributions collected during Sunday worship services can be used for that purpose. In an area where a preacher is receiving financial supports from the U.S. brethren, if he gives what is expected of him, this is not at all a problem. "Richer congregations" are encouraged to extend financial assistance to "poorer local churches" to be able to meet these urgent needs. The following morning, we attended the Sunday worship service in T'boli, and witnessed the use of one loaf and one cup in the Communion. I was requested to preach. Six responded to the invitation, and were immediately baptized in a nearby creek after the service. We left T'boli in the afternoon, and our preaching brethren accompanied us up to Gensan City. We commend the sincerity of Bro. Naldo, Bro. Kayang, Bro. Bulauan and others whom we contacted who are working in this part of South Cotabato in Mindanao, because despite the scarcity of their daily physical and material needs, they still have time to preach

God's word. In my estimation, General Santos City and Dipolog City in Mindanao are safe places for our American brethren to visit. In the evening, Bro. Elarde and Bro. Guindulman, with their wives, came and we studied further the "issues," in our hotel room. Also, they asked many pertinent questions related to the subjects we discussed. We explained to them the importance of converting their wives and members of their families to be able to start a strong work in their respective places. For how could they preach effectively if they could not even convert their wives and children? They made known their belief and acceptance to the Biblical teachings on the Communion, teaching the word, etc., and we prayed, in their behalf, for forgiveness of past sins for worshipping not in accordance with God's will. We left Mindanao on January 27th, with our hearts filled with gratefulness and joy, for, at least, even in "this troubled place," there are sincere and honest hearts who are ready to accept and believe the truth, and are willing to disseminate it to others despite their poverty. On January 28th, we left Manila for Palawan. Our objective was to personally contact Bro. Teddy Beltran who, some years ago, wrote to Bro. James Mason, an elder of the Church in Stockton, CA, who also forwarded his letter to me. We sent reading materials to help him in his quest for truth. Then, Bro. Mason forwarded Bro. Beltran's name to Bro. A. Garcia since he is in the Philippines, who also has correspondences with him. After the incident in Dos Palmas, a resort in Palawan, where several people were taken hostages, including the Burhams, by the Abu Sayyaf, according to Bro. Beltran, Bro. Garcia stopped writing him. However, before I left for the Philippines last January, I received a letter from Bro. Beltran. So, we included his place in our itinerary. We arrived in his place from the airport, at about 1:30 P.M., after about four hours trip in a fully packed "shuttle van," on road which some parts are very rough and dusty. Since I sent telegram to inform Bro. Beltran in advance of our visit, there were already brethren waiting for us. Immediately, we began studying the "issues" with them, up late into the night, with a short break when we ate our supper. Many questions were asked, and again we patiently answered them in the light of the teaching of the Bible. The following morning, we rode Bro. Beltran's jeep and visited several congregations in the town of Bataraza. In Bulalacao, I lectured and answered questions for about three hours. At the close of the study, I asked each one present if he believes and accepts the teaching of the Bible on the "issues" we discussed, and is ready to implement them in their respective congregations, and eight of them responded and made public their stand with us. Immediately a prayer in their behalf was said. We also conducted lectures in Bonobono, a neighboring congregation. A lady who was a member of the Assemblies of God in the area, said that if we can answer her questions regarding "speaking in tongues" and baptism of the Holy Spirit, she is willing to be baptized. Because I was still tired from the previous lecture I conducted, I requested Bro. Libertino to preach, and he lectured on the Church. Following his lecture, I explained what the Bible teaches concerning "speaking in tongues" and baptism of the Holy Spirit. After the study, immediately the sister was baptized in a nearby irrigation canal. Throughout the day, Bro. Beltran and the rest of the preaching brethren there

accompanied us, as we visited congregations, conducting studies. In the evening, we have another study, and two made confession of faith. We went to the seashore to baptize them, but the sea was rough, and the night was very dark. So, we decided to baptize them the following morning, and one was added to make a total of three baptisms there. That same morning, Bro. Beltran dropped us at Brookes Point to get our ride for Puerto Princesa airport. But while on the way, we made several stops to visit some leaders of the digressive church of Christ who also voiced out their acceptance that our teaching on the Lord's Supper is biblical. Bro. Beltran said that with his age of 63 years, his obsession is to spend the remaining days of his life serving God in the true Church. According to him and the preachers who made public their stand with us, there are 13 digressive congregations in their area ready to make change from using multiple mini cups to one cup in the communion. We pray that God bless the newly started mission work in Palawan, that those brethren now involved in the work there continue to be firm and faithful to the truth. We arrived in Manila about 1:00 P.M. on February 1 st. from Palawan. We (I requested Bro. Libertino to come with me) spent the night about 10 hours trip by bus to Roxas, Isabela, arriving there few hours before the start of the Sunday worship service. I was requested to preach. Monday morning, we attended the funeral of the late Bro. Romeo Calamasa, who was an elder of the Roxas Church. In the afternoon, we attended a meeting of preachers in the province of Isabela held in Roxas. Tuesday afternoon, I also have meeting with the leaders of the Roxas congregation. The following day, we prepared for the night trip back to Manila, for my flight Thursday afternoon, February 6th, back here to Hawaii. Our itinerary was very hectic and tight, but we were able to make, and attend to, it, through God's blessings and help. We would like to make it clear that just as we have been doing since the work started in the Philippines, we did not promise any financial support, nor benevolence from the U.S. brethren, to the preaching brethren in South Cotabato and Palawan who made public their stand with us. But we encouraged them to continue faithfully following the truth revealed in the Scriptures that they learned, believed and accepted, and to continue sharing this to others, while entrusting completely, and only, to God, Who knows even the secrets of the hearts, and Who is able to sustain and provide, all their physical and material needs everyday. However, the newly started works in these places still need continued spiritual guidance that they maybe grounded in the truth, and become strong in the faith. Indeed, Mindanao and Palawan in the Philippines are still "fertile lands to sow seed of salvation." May we all pray earnestly for the continued growth of the Lord's work in the Philippines and other places.

I Give God Thanks

I thank God when I'm happy.
 I thank God when I'm sad;
 I thank God for the good times,
 I thank God for the bad;
 God has a divine love for all of us;
 and it is God's cosmic love we can always trust.
 God's mercies are new everyday;
 so I stand firm to my commitment to the Christian way.

—Romaine Blanchard

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THE BACK PAGE...

NO TEARS IN HEAVEN

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Gospel music lost a great friend on February 8, 2003, when Robert S. Arnold died at the age of 98. Arnold was a Gospel music publisher, editor, teacher, and composer. He wrote hundreds of songs including the 1939 classic, "No Tears In Heaven."

I first met Arnold several years ago during a meeting in Abilene, Texas. The South Park congregation is small in number, but I have learned to love those good brethren and they kept calling me back for meetings about every year over a period of ten or fifteen years. I conducted an eight-day meeting in May of 1994. Crowds were pretty small the first half of the meeting, but on Thursday night things started to pick up as we had several visitors from surrounding congregations and from the community.

Among the visitors I had never seen before was a small elderly man with a head-full of white hair. He had a hearing aid in each ear, was wearing a print shirt buttoned up to the top button, and he had on a pair of casual slacks. He sat down on the second row from the front right behind me.

When the song service began, the elderly man began to sing with one of the most beautiful, clear, tenor voices I have ever heard. I could tell by the way he enunciated his words and breathed that he knew what he was doing. I must confess I was a little distracted by his voice and the precision of his singing mechanics. Later, one of the Brethren led a song with an alto lead and the old gentleman switched from tenor and sang the alto lead! Not in falsetto, but in full voice! I still get goose bumps when I recall the experience.

After I preached and services were dismissed, I introduced myself to him and learned he was Robert S. Arnold. We went to the Golden Corral, ate dinner together, and visited for a couple of hours. I found him to be gracious, witty, the possessor of a wonderful sense of humor, and a brilliance for the mechanics of vocal music. He told me he was eighty-nine years old. Amazing.

You could hum a tune to him and he could write the music notation down on the staff as quickly as his hand could move. It was like watching a secretary taking dictation of a letter by shorthand.

As a publisher he was constantly faced with people bringing him songs (as is Lynwood Smith) in hopes of getting them published in one of his books. On one occasion, a woman with a Charismatic-religious background handed him a song and gushed, "Would you publish this? The Lord gave it to me!" He said he took one look at it and thought to himself, "I can see why He wanted to get rid of it! This is awful!"

We struck up a friendship and we kept in touch by phone and by mail. When I was in Abilene for meetings, he would drive up from his farm near Coleman and spend Sunday afternoons with me. We would usually end up getting a quartet together and spend part of the afternoon singing-always including "No Tears In Heaven," with Mr. Arnold singing the alto part.

Arnold was highly esteemed in the world of Gospel music. He was honored on a nationally syndicated television program for his many contributions to this field, and was a sought-after guest lecturer at colleges and universities. He taught a lot of singers their first lessons about the rudiments of music, including many of our brethren, and celebrities such as Duane Allen, lead singer of Country Music's *Oak Ridge Boys*. I was surprised to learn that he taught J.E. (Elbert) and Rene Phillips shaped notes, and Elbert in turn taught my three older sisters shaped notes when the Phillips family lived in Ada. My sisters remain among the best sight-readers of shaped notes I know.

Lynwood told me that Arnold was always asked to sing a solo at the annual National Convention, usually singing "No Tears In Heaven," or "Just A Rose Will Do." Lynwood, in a voice breaking with emotion, continued, "The old gentleman always received a standing ovation."

In spite of all the recognition and acclaim he received, Arnold remained a humble man living a simple lifestyle. He lived on his farm alone (his wife died in 1988) and worked about twenty-five head of cattle until near the time of his death.

One thing that Arnold and the late Dorsey Yarbrough, a fellow songwriter and teacher, lamented over the past several years is that people do not seem interested in learning the rudiments of music anymore, especially shaped notes. Consequently, they worried that the ability to sing shaped notes is becoming a lost art. It is encouraging, therefore, to see a renewed interest in learning to sing shaped notes among the youngsters in our brotherhood, thanks in part to the revival of Yarbrough's school of singing by Phillip Prince and Kevin Presley.—1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net

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. LXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, AUGUST 2003

NO. 8

ART THOU HE THAT TROUBLETH ISRAEL?

By KEVIN W. PRESLEY

The title of this writing is the famous quotation of Ahab when he encountered Elijah after three years of horrible drought in Israel (1 Kings 18:17). The prophet had warned that the judgment of God was to befall the land in this way and many did not believe him. The fiery Elijah seemed as a lone voice crying out against Ahab and the wickedness of his rule. The reaction his prophetic declarations received was no different than what many have received when they, throughout the years, have cried out against sin in its varied forms. This is especially true when sin and error is so predominately popular and the voice of God is overwhelmingly shunned.

After telling the king that no rain would fall upon the land for the space of three years, God sent Elijah into hiding at the brook of Cherith near the Jordan River. There the Lord provided sustenance for him until the drought caused the little brook to dry up. He was sent to the house of the famous widow woman for provision and care until the end of the third year when God sent him out to meet Ahab.

During those hard and difficult years, the warning of Elijah must have reverberated in the ears of Ahab as he endured the sting of God's punishment. However, instead of repenting of his wickedness, he blamed Elijah for the troubles the land had been experiencing. When he met the prophet he immediately asked, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" The prophet was quick on his feet and snapped back at the stiff-necked king, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim" (1 Kings 18:18). What a timely conversation! How appropriate in this day of religious division and turmoil. How needful the words of Elijah are in the face of the ecumenical attempts that men are making to bring about unity in spite of diversity. In the mind of Ahab, the problem lay with the naysaying prophet that had the audacity to expose and condemn sin. But did Elijah cause the sky to withhold rain? Did he petition God to bring evil upon the land? Is there any indication that the prophet desired to see Israel suffer? No; he was simply conveying the message that God

had given him to convey.

Such is the duty of every gospel preacher and teacher. His exhortation is automatically circumscribed by the teachings of scripture. He is charged to "Preach the word" (2 Tim 4:2). Paul was an example to the faithful preacher as he said to the Ephesian elders, "I kept back nothing profitable unto you" and "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:20, 28). Whether people perceive his preaching as "positive" or "negative," the preacher is obligated to instruct his hearers in righteousness. If his motives are pure and his sermon is scriptural, then his preaching comes with God's sanction, regardless of whether the audience likes it or not. However, when modern teachers and preachers cling to the old paths and denounce unscriptural change and innovation, they are often divisively labeled as "trouble-makers, antis or pseudo-Pharisees." Something is amiss when faithful preachers are censured or even ostracized by their own brethren when they preach the same gospel truth that the church has heard for generations. Is this happening in some places? Regrettably, on increasing occasion, the answer is yes.

We are in an unstable time of change and evolution of thought within the church. It does no good to paint things differently than what they are. We should admit the problem and deal with it. Some are yearning for a new hermeneutic (method of Bible interpretation). They wish to see the church become more adapted and more palatable to the modern world. They would remove some of the barriers that have long stood as lines of demarcation between the Lord's people and those of the world. And when these changes are proposed or slowly integrated into their preaching and practice, some who retain a conscience against these things are expected to quietly go on their way and say little or nothing. It is inferred that to speak out and warn of the dangers of such trends is equal to bringing division to the Lord's body. Now admittedly, one can possess the truth and be guilty of preaching from an impure motive or be guilty of not using wisdom in his application of it. However, his (even

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IS GAMBLING REALLY SO BAD?

By DON L. KING

For several years this question, or a similar one, has been asked of us more frequently than it should have been. We have heard members of the church casually mention that they sometimes gamble "recreationally." If one should be so bold as to ask what that means, he is told that there is no real harm in playing twenty dollars for purely recreational sport. "It's not like we're really gambling," one said. "We just play the slot machines for the fun of it." "It's no different than spending twenty dollars on any other game!" This kind of remark is made too often for us not to realize it is going on from time to time.

Most Have Good Intentions

There can be little doubt that the most of our brethren intend to do what is right and, hopefully, believe they are. The majority would not go against their conscience to do something they really believe is wrong. Surely not! Somehow, a few well-intentioned folks have deluded themselves into thinking they are permitted to engage in some things always understood to be wrong because "we are only having a little fun." What we must realize is that many forms of sinful activity are, apparently, "fun." The Bible speaks of the "pleasures of sin." Just because it is an enjoyable activity is obviously not proof of God's permission. Who would deny the pleasures of fornication, adultery, drunkenness, dancing and any other form of lasciviousness? Of course, it is enjoyable but only the biblically illiterate would try to argue for them as being permissible. No, there can be no doubt brethren, gambling is still wrong and Christians need to stay away from it in every form.

This is an evil that is rapidly spreading into nearly all areas today. Virtually every state has some form of legalized gambling and it generates huge amounts of money. We recently read that in 1994, nearly half a billion dollars was wagered legally. That amount was over twice the amount wagered in 1989. In just five short years the amount more than doubled! If those figures held true, by the turn of the century Americans had wagered about a billion dollars. Think of that! We personally recall seeing a sign hanging over the entrance of a major casino many years ago which read:- "Warning, it is a fact that the odds are 1000 to 1 in our favor. Please, don't gamble more than you can afford to lose." We recently read of another casino bragging that it had returned 71 million dollars to their slot machine customers in one month. That sounds generous until one learns that the casino had won 355 million that month. Would you pay 71 million out if you could make 355 million? There is

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Why is it unheard of, in the Church today, for anyone to take the Lord's advice as given in Mt. 18:15-17? Assuming a situation where there is truly an innocent party, is it more noble of the innocent party to simply "take wrong" and "suffer himself to be defrauded?" Is it selfish for the innocent party to risk church trouble in pursuit of justice/reconciliation as per Mt. 18:15-17? If so why did Jesus teach as he did?

Answer: The verses under consideration read "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector." It should be pointed out first of all that the Lord is dealing with personal matters in these verses. "If your brother sins against you." That is personal, and is vastly different from a situation where an individual is guilty of teaching false doctrine or advocating that which is wrong. Some contend that it is wrong for anyone to publicly denounce false teaching and false teachers without first going to them in private. This verse simply does not teach that. Others contend that we should never, in the exposure of that which is wrong, call anyone's name or refer to them personally. Paul was surely unaware of such a rule. Can anyone believe that he personally contacted the incestuous man in 1 Cor. 5 before he wrote the instructions contained in that chapter? Did Paul violate these verses in Mt. 18 when he warned Timothy of Nymenaeus and Philetus because of the errors they were propagating regarding the resurrection? It is a gross misapprehension of Mt. 18:15-17 to offer it as a rule or procedure in dealing with cases of false teaching and doctrine. Burton Coffman has written a very good commentary, generally speaking, but badly misses the point on these verses, in the opinion of this writer.

In verse 15 Jesus says that if a brother "sins" or commits "trespass" against another brother, the offended brother is to visit the one guilty of the trespass in order to bring about his repentance. It is extremely important to notice that the offended brother is not to "tell others about the offense," "not to pout or feel sorry for himself and do nothing" but he is to "go" to the offending party and "tell him of his sin." A failure to do this and only this often generates problems that make it very difficult to deal with a situation that could have easily been solved had those involved followed the Lord's instructions. At this level, if the offending brother repents, one has "gained" or saved the brother. If, however, he refuses

to repent, then the offended brother is to take one or two more brethren with him. It is hoped that with the presence of these additional brethren the offender will be convinced to repent and turn from his sin. However, if this also fails, then the matter is to be brought before the church. Surely one interested in doing right will listen to the church and turn from his sin. But if not, then the man is to be rejected and treated as an outcast i.e. a publican and sinner.

(1) Why is this procedure unheard of in the church today? I'm not sure I can answer this question, but will venture a few thoughts. First of all, many botch the process by broadcasting the problem everywhere before they ever go to a brother. In fact in some situations the offender often hears about the problem from a third party instead of from the offended party. Secondly, some, instead of carrying through with a scriptural procedure, would much rather "lick their wounds" seeking sympathy from others. The real tragedy of either of these excuses is that a sinning brother could be lost unless a scriptural procedure is implemented. If, indeed, there are those who refuse to follow the teaching of Christ in these passages, they do so to the detriment of the church and the sinning brother. (2) Is it more noble for the innocent party to take wrong and suffer himself to be defrauded? First of all it must be remembered that someone has sinned. And unless the sinning brother is told of his sin and some action taken to bring him to repentance, he could be lost. This teaching of our Lord is not to be taken lightly or passed off as unnecessarily. In 1 Cor. 6:7 the scripture says "Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?" (NKJV) The KJV says "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take an unscriptural procedure to resolve their problems. They were going to law against one another before pagan judges. That was wrong. It would be better for the church generally and for them individually to "suffer wrong" or "be defrauded" than to do what they were doing. However verse one says "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" "Going before the saints" would be tantamount to following the instructions of Mt. 18:15-17, a procedure, divinely given, which they had overlooked. (3) Should it be considered wrong the innocent party to risk church trouble in pursuit of justice/reconciliation per Mt. 18:17? If following the scriptural teaching in this matter would cause church trouble, something is terribly wrong in that congregation. Why would any church refuse to follow a plan advanced by the Lord himself? It is the view of this writer that more problems are caused today by a failure to follow this plan, then could ever produced by following it. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rffwade@getatlas.com)

THE FOUNDATION OF THE OPA

By GREG GAY

Recently Richard Bunner and George Battey have engaged in a great project of making scarce materials available to the brotherhood on CD's. All leaders, teachers, and preachers would do well to contact them to get on their list to receive the CD's as they are ready. Their first release is of previous issues of the *OPA* going all the way back to the first issue of January 1, 1932. Since I had not seen the early issues as soon as I got my CD's I went back to look at the first issue. The following section caught my interest:

POLICY OF THIS PAPER

1. To judge no man's loyalty to his God by his loyalty to the paper.
2. To "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3). And thus complete the restoration started by the Campbells and others a century ago.
3. To oppose every departure from the word of God in faith and practice; avoiding at the same time undue stress on any one sin, to the exclusion of others. We expect to wage a war of uncompromising hostility against every sin both in and out of the church.
4. To make the paper an open forum, insofar as the issues being discussed are considered vital to the welfare of the church and the salvation of the soul.
5. To give the readers a balanced periodical, thus making it beneficial to both saint and sinner.
6. To manifest the spirit of Christ in dealing with all issues and controversies, thus avoiding personal thrusts and abusive language. We ask all our writers to say nothing in the columns of the paper that they would be ashamed or afraid to say in the day of Judgment.
7. To make field reports a special feature. Therefore, we insist that all preachers and leaders of the loyal congregations send in reports and announcements regularly; thereby encouraging others in the work.
8. Finally, to be true to the charge that God has given us; to glorify Him in all that we do or say; to urge upon all a closer walk with God; realizing that we have never dying souls to save and to fit them for Mansions in the sky.

Signed :

H. C. Harper
Homer A. Gay
J. D. Phillips
Homer L. King

For over 71 years now the *Old Paths Advocate* has remained true to those policy statements with very few exceptions. Aren't the words of the third policy amazing? "We expect to wage a war of uncompromising hostility against every sin both in and out of the church." In this day of cries from within and without to never say anything that might be considered hard or negative these words sound strange don't they? The statement in the sixth policy

gives balance: "To manifest the spirit of Christ in dealing with all issues and controversies, thus avoiding personal thrusts and abusive language."

Consider what was happening in the brotherhood in 1932. Many were spreading false doctrines regarding multiple communion vessels, bible classes and other innovations of the day. Some preachers were active in instituting these innovations wherever they could from congregation to congregation. Other preachers, like the ones who started the *OPA*, were active in resisting innovations and urging all to stand for the truth. Congregations and families were being torn apart as some took their stand for the truth and others chose to fall into digression. Buildings were being taken and faithful brethren forced out as the Lord's table was set incorrectly and Bible classes started. The founders of the *OPA* knew they were in the midst of a war for the survival of the church among their readers.

What of today? So long as the earth stands that same war will still rage. The issues may vary some from generation to generation and our buildings are not so boldly seized today but the church in any area is always just a generation away from misunderstanding and leaving behind the truths of God's word. New issues arise from time to time and old issues in one form or another predictably come back again and again. We shouldn't be surprised when one of these ancient departures from the truth reappears in another form. Instead we should be surprised when well meaning brethren would have us to believe they won't come back and that there is no reason to keep preaching and writing about them.

The *Old Paths Advocate* stands as ready to address issues and controversies today as when it started in 1932. Dear reader, please don't be discouraged by that. Instead, be encouraged that brethren are willing to speak out when they believe the camp of the saints is being attacked. In some cases we as readers may decide we do not agree with some part or all of the side of the issue an author takes. We may not always agree with how mildly or how harshly the issue is addressed. But, we certainly will be informed. I believe that is what a brotherhood paper is supposed to do.—1820 Casterbridge, Dr., Roseville, CA 95747
papagreg@aol.com

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANMENTS OF MEN (PART V)

By BARNEY OWENS

Why do men teach for doctrine things contrary to the teaching of the New Testament? Usually it is the outgrowth of practice. Situations arise that become father to the thought. From the thought springs the practice. Then justification is sought. Ultimately the doctrine is proclaimed to be acceptable to God. Such is not the case as our Lord assured us it is vain worship. "But in vain do they worship me, *teaching*

for doctrine the commandments of men."

It is hoped that the things mentioned in previous articles as well as those in this installment will be considered carefully by you. In fact, we hope you will take your Bible in hand and pursue each subject further, as there is not sufficient space to look at all the angles of each.

Women Preachers

It is common to see women preaching on the television, hear them on the radio or pass a meeting-house and see a woman named as the preacher. I personally have known of two funerals to be preached by women (pastors). Some women are even credited with the founding of denominations, as Ellen G. White (Seventh Day Adventists), and Mary Baker Eddy (Christian Scientists).

It is not so astonishing that some women would discard the religious position God has stipulated. Eve was the first to do it, but it is rather amazing that so many would be taken in by them. The headship established by God is stated in 1 Cor. 11:3 by Paul the Apostle: *"But I would have you 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"* Simple enough isn't it? The order is:

GOD
CHRIST
MAN
WOMAN

Accordingly, God selects the man to be the preacher or teacher when people gather to listen to the word of God. Three chapters later in 1 Corinthians the writer went on to say,

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church. (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

The admonition is to keep silence which all can understand. In fact, Paul says this is a commandment. What if something is said to arouse a question? Then at home she is to seek an answer. Are there exception to this? We do know that often a rule is stated, then an exception may be allowed under certain circumstances or situations. We read over in 1 Timothy 2:11-12,

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.

The exception is "suffered" or allowed. Remember when Jesus came to John who was immersing in the Jordan River? John forbade Jesus to be baptized, because those he baptized had to confess their sins, this being the fruit of repentance. As we are aware, Jesus had not sinned therefore, did not repent and could not confess something He has not done, (obviously a confession would have itself been a sin—a lie). Jesus explained that His baptism was different

and was only to fulfill God's will (at such time John would recognize Him as the one he heralded). Jesus told John, *"Suffer it to be so now."* We are then told, *"Then he suffered him."* (Mt. 3:15). Clearly, we "suffer" the exception. Jesus' baptism was an exception to the rule.

As to the subject at hand, Paul says, *"I suffer not a woman to teach—no exceptions.* What about a woman teaching a mixed assembly of men, women, boys and girls? No, I allow it not. Well, what about a special group of men only—no exceptions. Or, what if some women were separated from others—no exceptions. Is she permitted to teach some boys—no exceptions. Surely some girls in a class by themselves—no exceptions.

All the Apostles selected by Jesus were men, although there were many disciples who followed Him that were women. All the preachers in the book of Acts were men, elders in the churches who are to instruct have such qualifications that only men can fulfill, namely *"the husband of one wife,"* (1 Tim. 3, Tit. 1). In addition, Paul gave specific instruction as to who is to preach or teach.

And the things 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).

Some might say these were just localized situations and, while women were forbidden in certain areas to preach or teach, this does not hold true today. Others say that Paul was just a woman hater and this is not the will of Christ. One who will make such statements has very little knowledge of Paul or the teaching of Jesus. By inspiration the Apostles preached and recorded the will of Jesus (Jn. 14:16 & 16:13). Further, *"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I (Paul) write unto you are the commandments of the Lord"* (1 Cor 14:37-GO BACK TO VS. 34-35 AND READ).

Women who preach or teach and those who support them or fellowship them, and those who provide special places of classification for women to preach or teach, even to the dividing of the body of Christ, or, those who support and fellowship those who do, are *not following the commandments of the Lord.* Such people displease our Savior and are worshipping Him in vain because they are *teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.*

It Is Not Necessary That Women Have Long Hair

At the risk of being accused of "jumping on women," this widespread teaching has need to be dealt with. The scripture does have somewhat to say about the matter of men and women's hair. I would ask you to read the first sixteen verses of 1 Corinthians eleven. This will allow you to see the context and absorb the reasoning of the Apostle, as the conclusion is reached at verse fifteen.

Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in

all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you...but if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is giving her for a covering. (1 Cor. 11:2 & 15).

In verse two of this passage we can see the ordinances given are to be kept. Therefore, the matter of long hair on women is to be obeyed as an ordinance of the Lord. The *American Standard Version* says "hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you." Immediately we are put in a valley of decision. Are we going to accept the traditions of men or that of the Apostle? To those who believe in the authority of the scriptures there is no question as to whether women are to have long hair. Long hair on women is given by apostolic ordinance or tradition.

The only question to be settled is; what constitutes long hair. There are various *commandments that are taught for doctrine by men* on this subject. I presume that you have little interest in these. At the same time, we all wish to know what long hair is in the eye of God.

Since there is some disagreement on this matter, let us define an important term in this matter. The phrase have long hair is a translation of the Greek word *komao*. It is defined as follows:

1. **JOHN HENRY THAYER**, Page 354: "to let the hair grow, have long hair."

2. **LIDDELL & SCOTT**, Unabridged, Page 827: "To let the hair grow long, wear long hair." Their definition is illustrated: "In early times the Greeks in general wore their hair long...At Athens it was so worn by youths up to the 18th year, when they offered their locks to some deity. Before these lads cut their hair it was long."

These show *long hair* is hair that is allowed to grow. Observation alone tells us that hair grows from the head (the skull). Noticing people who dye their hair, but have not done so recently, at the roots the original color returns. Therefore, the hair continuously grows. This is not under our control, we cannot "let it grow or hinder its growth at the root. However, we can allow it to grow at the other end, or we can hinder its growth by cutting or otherwise removing the hair. We sometimes say, "I am letting my hair grow." From this, consulting Paul, women are not to remove the ends of their hair but allow it to grow so that they will have long hair.

God's Definition

While the above definitions are correct and helpful, if God declares what *long hair* is, then the matter is settled. We have ample teaching in God's word to clarify exactly what God accepts as long hair. To begin, Paul in 1 Corinthians 11, speaks of hair as being *shaven* (past tense of shave), *shorn* (past tense of shear) and *long*. Therefore, a person can shave, shear, or allow the hair to grow long.

In the Old Testament, we have some things written for our learning. Ezekiel gave the requirements for the Levites who had charge of the sanctuary, Ezek.

44:20. "Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long, they shall only poll their heads." The word *poll* means to clip, to shear the hair.

A Comparison

Ezekiel 44:20

Shave
Poll
Grow Long

1 Corinthians 11:6 & 15

Shave
Shorn
Long Hair

Long hair is hair that is allowed to grow. It is not shaven. It is not polled, clipped, cut or shorn. Further, Moses in giving one of the qualifications for a Nazarite during the vow of his separation no razor was to come upon his head. He was to let the locks of the hair of his head grow. Samson was a Nazarite. We know what happened when Delilah removed his hair. The Bible also says of him, "the hair of his head began to grow again." (Jud. 16). It is interesting to note the instrument which is used in beauty shops to shear the hair to this day is a razor. Long hair is hair that no razor comes upon.

It is popular today for women to cut their hair. Likewise is it in the scheme of things for men to teach such practice is acceptable to God. However, those who do so are *teaching for doctrine the commandments of men*. Women must let their hair grow.—8782 Meadowview, W. Chester, OH 45009

ART THOU HE THAT TROUBLETH ISRAEL?

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bold) defense of the truth does not make him divisive. It is actually divisive when people are willing to force opinionated change upon those who refuse to accept it. This is true whether they do so overtly or through subtle psychological demonization of those who hold to their convictions. In short, trouble arises not when people hold fast to their conscientious convictions, but when agents of change foist their new ideas and concepts upon others. The answer to such disunity is not to seek to silence preachers who warn brethren of the danger of error, but to confront the false teacher and his teaching. The answer is not to bury our heads in the sand and think all is well when it is not but rather to be aware of those things that threaten the welfare and peace of the church and deal with those things specifically.

In his infamous quotation contained in *Forty Years On The Firing Line*, G.C. Brewer declared that he was the first proponent in the churches of Christ of the individual communion cup arrangement. He noted that he was met with stiff opposition from brethren whose understanding of the scripture prevented them from accepting that innovation in good conscience. However, he continued to forge ahead in his quest to change the Lord's Supper. A major division took place throughout the brotherhood, congregation by congregation. To my knowledge, Brewer never affirmed that communing with one container was unscriptural. Using more than one was simply a matter

of preference and "expediency" for him and his sympathizers. The church could have remained at peace over this issue but did not because men prized their own agenda over the welfare and stability of the church. Bro. Brewer as well as those who continue to sustain his digressive practice will answer to God in judgment, not only for their violation of Christ's pattern, but for their efforts to divide the body of Christ.

This sinful attitude and course of action is not confined to the communion. To willfully depart from the teaching of Christ is to sever unity, because our unity is to be founded upon Christ and his teaching. If people leave the platform of truth then peace will be disrupted as long as some remain with the truth (1 John 1:7-9, 2 John 9). Remember that Elijah said that Israel was troubled by Ahab's obstinate rebellion to God. This principle can also apply to the improper use of our liberties, whether they are legitimate or simply perceived as such. Anytime brethren insist on things that they claim are their liberty, to the point of pushing them on those who cannot conscientiously concur and participate, they are behaving in a divisive fashion. Paul declared, "All things are lawful, but not all is expedient" (1 Cor. 10:23). There may be tendencies and practices that are permissible but unnecessary. People can live righteous lives without practicing or embracing those things. If something is a hindrance to people and would cause them to sin (because of violation of conscience) if they participated or sanctioned it, than why advocate that thing and cause turmoil and dissension in the Lord's body?

Surely, our desire is for brethren to "dwell together in unity" for this is good and pleasant (Psa 133:1). Surely we love one another and the church for which Christ died enough to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). We ALL (on the left and the right) need to examine our attitudes and our practices to see if they are first and foremost scriptural; if so, are they are conducive to peace in the church? I concur with those who have expressed grief and concern over tension, as it exists in the church today. As we look in the mirror of **OUR** hearts and of **HIS** word, shouldn't we all ask; "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"—106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303.

EDITORIAL

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no other business with such low overhead and high profits. There is only one reason gambling has such huge returns. It is greed, pure and simple on the part of the pitiful losers. Every one of them hoped to be a big winner and go home a rich person. However, such odds as we mentioned above means that for every winner there were about 1000 losers. None of us would invest in a financial scheme if we knew the odds were 1000 to 1 against us. We would then see it

for the fool's game that it actually is.

"No Passage Prohibits Gambling"

The defense is often given that no Bible passage actually prohibits the activity. It is true that no passage actually states "Thou shalt not gamble." However, any thoughtful Bible student who honestly applies biblical principles can not fail to see the wrong in it. Notice very briefly a few reasons why gambling is wrong. We will not be able to give a comprehensive list but will notice only two or three things. First, it violates all of the principles of stewardship. Christians are to be wise and faithful stewards according to Jesus in Luke 12:35-42. Also, Paul wrote, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." (1 Corinthians 4:2) Peter said, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)

A steward was a man who was placed in charge of another's possessions or property. He was much like a superintendent on a job site today. The steward doesn't own the property or money but he is responsible for its safe keeping, etc. The Lord has given us all our blessings we enjoy and benefit from. Our jobs, homes, automobiles, health and money are blessings we are given while on this earth. Any steward who is faithful (trustworthy) would never risk his employer's money in any scheme where the chances are 1000 to 1 that he will lose the money. How long would you tolerate a man who has been given the charge of your money (your steward) if he invests in such a foolhardy thing as gambling? None of us would tolerate that for a single minute. So, Christians cannot be gamblers and remain good stewards. It just cannot be done. If this were the only thing wrong with gambling, it would conclusively prove it sinful. It also violates the golden rule found in Matthew 7:12. If we treat others as we would like to be treated (the essence of the golden rule) we could not with a clear conscience take another's money when he has to suffer the loss of our taking it through gambling.

It appears that gambling is also a form of covetousness. This sin was condemned in the Old Testament (Exodus 20:7) and repeated in the New Testament in Romans 7:7. To covet means to simply desire earnestly the wealth or possessions of others. Someone says, "What does that have to do with gambling?" Simply this: if you take the desire for unearned wealth out of gambling, it will die overnight. You see, there would be no hope or chance of "big winnings" to lust after or covet. Even the so-called "recreational" gamblers would lose interest. We have long said that gambling is successful because it feeds off of a basic human fault called greed. Remove the chance of fulfilling the greed for gain out of it and the casinos will be bankrupt and empty.

We have heard people say they just enjoy pulling the handles on the slot machines.

However, they have no affinity for pulling the handles on other kinds of machines. They have no trouble passing a machine that dispenses candy or snacks with available handles to pull. That is strange isn't it?

We Must Be Concerned About Our Influence

Jesus taught that we must be concerned about our influence when he gave the analogy of our being the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a candle on a candlestick, etc. in Matthew 5:13-16. He pointed out that salt, if it has lost its ability to bring about change (savor) is worthless. Hence, a church member who has no influence is like worthless or ruined salt. A member who has no influence is as worthless to the Cause of Christ as a light that is hidden or gone out. Jesus said we must let our light shine so that men "may see" our good works and because of us, "glorify" our Father in Heaven.

Whether or not some are willing to admit it, the world still associates gambling with sin. They don't believe a Christian has any right to be a gambler. When they see you gamble they are not impressed with your Christianity at all. Church members who gamble DO hurt the church by their bad influence.

More next month, Lord willing. Think on these things.—1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Subscribe For A Friend At Half Price!

We made this announcement at the Lebanon meeting and many of you seemed to appreciate and take advantage of it. Until further notice, all of you who will subscribe, or renew your subscription to *Old Paths Advocate* for the usual price of \$10 per year can subscribe for a friend for half price. In other words, you can send us your name and the name of a friend who does not take the paper and we will send subscriptions to the both of you for \$15. That is quite a bargain and we hope every subscriber will send us their renewal and another name for \$15. If all will do this, many can read *OPA* for almost nothing and the subscription list will double overnight. Brethren, will you do it? A gift subscription for only \$5 is an opportunity we hope none will pass by. Please, let us hear from you this month.—DLK

21st Annual Tennessee Labor Day Meeting

The 21st Annual Tennessee Labor Day Meeting will be hosted by the Chapel Grove Church of Christ, Lawrence County TN and conducted by Wayne Fussell. Visiting teachers and preachers will also be heard at each service. Dates are August 27-31. For accommodations and other information contact Steve Patton 931-829-2485 or Ed Daniel 931-964-3458, Email: e_daniel@bellsouth.net.

New Directory Announcement

I'm now taking orders for the new directory: *Where the Saints Assemble for 2003-2004*. All advance orders have been shipped and many were sold at the Lebanon and Sulphur meetings. If your congregation did not order any in advance or pick up a supply at Lebanon or Sulphur let

me hear from you with an order! Directories are \$3.00 each plus the fee for book rate postage. I'll send an invoice with the shipment. Order from: Greg Gay, 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747 or via the Internet to papagreg@aol.com

Texas Labor Day Meeting

The 2003 Texas Labor Day Meeting will be hosted this year by the Fossil Creek Church of Christ on August 29-Sept. 1. The theme of the meeting will be "Guarding The Faith." Speakers and subjects are as follows: Friday, August 29 (7:00 PM) Cullen Smith "Guarding The Faith By Guarding Our Young People From Wordliness and Sinful Influences," and Johnny Elmore "Guarding the Faith By Guarding The Scientific Accuracy of the Scripture." Saturday, August 30 (6:00 PM) Kevin Presley "Guarding The Faith By Guarding The Inspiration Of The Scriptures," and Lynwood Smith "Guarding The Faith" (Theme Sermon). Sunday Evening, August 31 (6:00 PM) Bruce Roebuck "Guarding The Faith Against Denominational And Sectarian Influences," and Ronny Wade "Guarding The Faith By Guarding The Christian Home." Monday, September 1 (10:00 AM) Jerry Dickinson "Guarding the Faith From Unscriptural Changes" and Wayne McKamie "Guarding The Faith from Internal Strife and Division. All services are conducted at the Irving Arts Center in Irving, Texas. For more information call Keith Minter at 817-431-0511 or Randy Vantrell at 817-540-2308.

OUR DEPARTED

SHIPLEY—Brother Luther Shipley, Sr. was born June 12, 1913 and departed this life on June 26, 2003. It is with a certain sadness that we chronicle the passing of Brother Shipley. He was a member of a generation of thrift, self-reliant, rugged individuals that survived two world wars and the great depression. I don't believe there will be any more like this generation. Brother Shipley is survived by four sons, John, Joe, Jasper, and Luther Jr. Also three daughters, Martha Arms, Carolyn Coberly, and Suzanne Musgrove along with a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Brother Shipley was a long time faithful member of the church in Wynnewood, OK. I personally will miss the steady influence and encouragement of Brother Shipley. Thanks to Brother Johnny Elmore for leading the congregational singing. I rejoice in the fact that we "sorrow not as others who have no hope."—Joe Hisle



Douglas T Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42503, (606) 678-4347, douglast@alltel.net, July 11, 2003—I am happy to report that the year has been busy and kept in hand. I've been to Grassy Fork, TN since my last report and the Lebanon meeting in MO. Both trips were very enjoyable. In TN, I was privileged to stay with

Wilson and Kathy Messer. They welcomed and cared for me while there. They are very enjoyable to be with and stay positive about the Lord's work. My next trip will be to Orange, CA August 3-10. As always we pray God's blessings to be with all of his children.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, July 8—Since my last report Phyllis and I were with the Ash Camp, WV congregation for a good meeting. The meeting resulted in the baptism of Eddie MacDougal and his wife Krissy. We have known Eddie for several years and we rejoiced with his family and the Ash Camp brethren at his and Krissy's conversion. We had a great meeting here at home with Wayne McKamie recently. We begin a meeting at Miami, OK this coming Lord's Day, and from there we go to Moore, OK beginning the last Friday in July. God bless you brethren and please pray for us.

Jimmie C. Smith, 5100 Rail Rd, Harrison, AR 72601, cjsmith@alltel.net.—Since last reporting we enjoyed a good meeting at Nashville, TN where we made our abode with Kenny and Karen Prince. The congregation has grown in every way since I was last there, were very unified and looking forward to the coming of Brett Hickey. Ed Daniel was a help in the meeting. Rick Martin held our April meeting and I'm sure everyone who heard him will recommend him without reservations. He and Jane warmed our hearts, and Rick is a fresh talent to our area and deserves wider circulation. I enjoyed a weekend meeting at Ratcliff City, OK and the presence of preaching brethren; Johnny Elmore, Brandon Stephens and Cullen Smith. We will miss the Bruce Roebucks as they are moving from our area. Our work schedules have kept us from associating as we would like, but we always corresponded as the need arose. I recently closed a meeting at Columbus, GA where they are few in number but big on hospitality, enjoying the support of sister congregations and preaching brethren, Alton Bailey, Kevin Presley, Don Jackson, Rick Martin, Daniel Smith and Gene Grant. We enjoyed attending three days of the Lebanon meeting and are packing for a meeting at Strong, AR. May our Lord bless the faithful.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview, W. Chester, OH 45069—In March I had the privilege to help in a meeting at Paris, TX. I cannot count the times I have been among these brethren and sisters. Every minute was enjoyable. It was a pleasure to be with William St. John who works with the church. In April, I was with the church in Jonesboro, GA. Interest ran high in the old time gospel. George Battey works with the church. This was the first time I have spent any time with George. I found him sincere in all things. It was good to have Gene Grant and Rick Martin. In both these meetings brethren came from far and near to help us. Here at home we have just closed our yearly spring meeting. Smith Bibens preached to us. We enjoyed his being with us. Of late, I have also heard

brethren Richard Reed, Kevin Fox, and Ronny Wade. My upcoming schedule is June 7-15 Valliant, OK; July 13-20 Sentinel, OK; and Aug. 1-10 New Salem, MS. If you are near these, please make plans to come and be with us. Your prayers are desired always.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, July 10—My work at Jamesville has gotten off to a good start. They are a friendly, loving group of Christians, and I feel that there is potential for growth. Our regular attendance on Sunday morning is around 35, but with visitors it pushes up into the 40's. Last Sunday we had 51 present—pretty much a full house. I want to thank the congregations at Niangua and Ozark for helping in my support. When there is a fifth Sunday in a month, I am scheduled to preach at Niangua. Also, Smith Bibens, Brad Shockley, and I are beginning to lay plans for coordinating some efforts together. We want to knock on doors in the cities of Ozark, Buffalo, and Nixa, offering people the chance to go through a series of studies. It is our intention to use the CD's (six volumes) produced by David Risener. We are going to offer this excellent teaching tool in a way that is similar to a Bible correspondence course. Please pray that the Lord will bless our efforts for good! I am to leave in a few days for a meeting at McAlester, OK. It has been a long time since I have been with them. I also have a meeting at Mountain Home, AR, Nov. 14-16.

Greg Gay, 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA, papagreg@aol.com, July 10, 2003—I was in a meeting at Tyler, Texas June 22-29. It has been several years since I was there so it was good to see everyone again. I stayed with Earl and Jean Roe who extended every kindness to me. I was there just a few weeks after Brett Hickey and family moved to Nashville after working at Tyler for three years. And I learned that Randy Ballard & family are soon to move to Houston to work with a congregation there. Even with those losses there is a good nucleus of capable people to carry on. From Tyler I went to the Lebanon 4th of July meeting. What a great treat as always! Don King and Ron Alexander did a good job conducting the meeting, as expected. The Lebanon meeting is a great way to get to see many dear friends from around the country and also to see and hear many of our preachers. At home our work continues at 64th. St., Sacramento. We have recently been encouraged by a couple of restorations.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, July 7—Our meeting with Cullen Smith was good. He did an excellent job of preaching, without fear or favor. The results were two baptisms and five confessions and restorations. Our meeting at Little Rock, AR was a real joy. We had attendance both from members and non-members. We had visitors from a number of different congregations, which added to the meeting. It was our pleasure to be with these brethren and to see the closeness of the members and the zeal

manifested. We attended the annual Lebanon meeting. The preaching was "top notch" this year and the singing was outstanding. The crowds were large and attentive. The services were well arranged by Don King and Ron Alexander who were in charge. My next meeting will be at Mountain Grove, MO, July 19-27. The Lord willing, we are to be at Cleburne, TX August 6-10. May the Lord bless all our efforts for good.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, July 9—We have just returned home from the Lebanon 4th of July meeting. It was our pleasure to assist Ron Alexander in holding it this year. He was a great fellow to work with and the job was a pleasant experience for me all the way through. The Lees Summit brethren were easy to work with as were the preachers, song leaders and everyone who attended this year. I don't know that a count was ever made of the number in attendance but the crowds were large. We were forced to utilize the larger facility the last three nights and it seems the one we outgrew could seat something over eight hundred. So far as I know, things were smooth and a fine spirit prevailed throughout. Our special thanks to the young people who conducted themselves in such splendid fashion both at the services and in the city of Lebanon. Lord willing, we are to begin a meeting with the church at Marietta, GA this coming Saturday evening and we pray the Lord for a great meeting. Don't forget us when you pray.

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797, Telefax No. (808) 680-0249; June 25, 2003—Greetings to all the faithful brethren everywhere! It has been quite sometime that I have not been able to share with you a report regarding the Lord's work here in Hawaii through the *OPA*. I am glad to inform that the church here continues to be at peace. For the past months, we have been blessed because almost every Sunday, there were brethren from the mainland U.S. who worshipped with us. They bolstered the morale, so to speak, of the small church here, and their presence continues to advertise in the community that we are not alone, but have brethren from the mainland. I continue to invite brethren everywhere when they intend to spend some days vacation to come and visit Hawaii, "the Paradise in the middle of the Pacific Ocean." Also, we are blessed because of the arrival of Bro. Edimar Daguio in Waipahu from the Philippines to join his wife who lives permanently here and is a faithful member of the church; and one, Bro. Bienvenido Tabua, was baptized, last month. Bro. Daguio has some experience in the Lord's works (leading congregational singing, prayers, etc.) in the Philippines. Since he arrived here he has been participating in the activities of the church. He is an effective companion in Bible studies. We continue to encourage and help him prepare for a wider participation in the Lord's work in coming days. I give outlines and teach him, on how to prepare and

deliver a sermon, and how to pray in public to help prepare himself. I continue to work with our weekly radio program, which has been instrumental in contacting prospects. Because most of the members of the church here are "senior citizens" and veterans of WWII, who do not wish to die here, we are focusing our efforts on those who live here permanently. I have been sickly in the past, but I thank God that through His blessings, I am now feeling well. We urge you please mention us, particularly the Lord's work here in Hawaii in your prayers. God bless!

James W. Kornegay, Sr., 1543 Sid Mitchell Rd., Youngsville, NC 27596—It has been a long time since I reported to the *OPA*, but I enjoy the paper very much. We enjoyed the New Year's Meeting at Dothan, AL. Jan. 3 & 4 we were privileged to attend and hear Bro. Ronny Wade give powerful sermons at Oyster Bay. On Jan. 5, I preached for Slocumb, AL and Jan. 12 at Oyster Bay. Bro. Mark Detherage and family are making their home with the Crowfordville congregation and are an asset to the Church and community. Jan. 15 I spoke for Jacksonville, FL and held a short meeting for Hernando Jan. 17, 18 and 19. It was good to see them meeting in their new building and growing. We had three confessions. Jan. 25 and 26, I preached for Temple, GA and Feb. 2 was back at home. We have several ill at home and request your prayers for all the sick. We have a few young families that have moved to our area to worship and we are so thankful for them. We baptized one here in Raleigh about 2 months ago and we are so thankful. May 3 and 4 I was with the faithful at Roanoke, VA. We have some old soldiers unable to attend due to illness, but Brother Gillispie continues to teach for them. I will be 83 on June 21. I thank God every day for my health. June 24-June 28 we look forward to our gospel meeting with Bro. Paul Walker. Lord willing, I will be in Witts Springs, AR for a meeting June 4-8; and Pottsville, AR July 18, 19 and 20. May we all work harder for our Lord because the harvest is ripe, but the laborers are few.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, July 10, 2003—Recently, it has been my pleasure to be with the churches at Fieldstone, MO and Conway, LA for meetings. While at Fieldstone, I enjoyed the gracious hospitality of Don and Dianne Pruitt. We had a great visit together and the fruit of Don's labor in that area is evident. The church was zealous and cooperative and a joy to preach for. Several area preachers supported the meeting for which I am always thankful. At Conway, it was good to be with Cecil Smith and family. Cecil is working hard to build up the church there and he doubled his efforts to prepare for the meeting. We appreciate the hospitality of his family and of the entire congregation. The area churches supported us well and we enjoyed some good crowds. Jeff Hughes and Jay Culbertson brought their families all the way from Opp, AL for the final weekend of the meeting (a 9 hour drive) for which we were most grateful. The

Lebanon meeting was a blessing to us this year. It is always refreshing to hear the good preaching and singing and renew acquaintances with so many. Presently, things are well at home. We are currently in a meeting with Greg Gay, who is doing a fine job. I have some promising home studies in progress as a result of our television program that has now entered its sixth year. Lord willing, I will be in the following places soon: McGregor, TX, July 28-Aug 3; Wichita Falls, TX, Aug 10-17; Blue Springs, KY, Sept 21-28; Garrett's Creek, WV; Oct 5-12; Nashville, TN, Nov 12-16. Come be with us if you can!

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, July 14-In June, we were privileged to be with the church in La Grange, GA. Our crowds were excellent, and we had visitors from various places in the South. The churches near the LaGrange area cooperated, helping us out at nearly every service. Seven made confessions. The Lebanon meeting this year was exceptional in attendance as well as the sermons presented by the preachers. It was indeed a spiritual feast. We just closed a meeting at Claxton near Competition, MO. Good crowds prevailed throughout. Two came from digression taking their stand for truth. Two have been baptized here at Mission Hills recently, and the work continues to progress. Lord willing we will be in Lawrenceburg, TN (Springer Ln.) July 20-27; Farmerville, LA July 30-Aug. 3, San Angelo, TX Aug. 10-17, Ft. Worth, TX for the Labor Day meeting Aug. 29-Sept. 1 and Hartwell, AR Sept. 3-7. What a privilege it is to serve the Lord and work among the finest people on earth.

Brandon Stephens, 16236 260th St., Blanchard, OK 73010, brandonandkelly@hotmail.com, July 11-I had the privilege of attending the 4th of July meetings at Sulphur, OK and Lebanon, MO this year, and I thoroughly enjoyed both meetings. It's hard to believe that we've already gotten this far into 2003, but time does fly when you stay busy. So far this year we've been in Houston, TX, Corsicana, TX, Spring Valley, WV, and Duncanville, TX. I greatly appreciate the brothers and sisters from these areas for their hospitality and encouragement. I'm also thankful for the many opportunities to work for the church at Washington. This spring we had a meeting with Don McCord, and we were thankful for the work and encouragement that he gave both inside and outside of the assembly. As with most congregations, the Washington congregation has faced some challenges, and I commend everyone here for the way that they are working together. We've got a group of ladies who have a great desire to be involved in the Lord's church, yet they are extremely cautious to keep their work within the bounds of God's authority. Instead of focusing on what women can't do, they are utilizing the many opportunities that they have in the private sphere to grow and cause growth within this congregation. I commend them for their desire to work according to the Bible pattern. It's also encouraging to see the number of men who are active

in the congregation. Within our assemblies, men are using talents (teaching, leading prayers, etc.) that they've never used before. Lately, the teachers have been striving to become more active. At this point, all of our congregational teachers are prepared to teach on Sunday and Wednesday nights. This might seem like a small thing to many congregations, but this is a great improvement for us. I'm thankful for their desire to continue to become more active and effective in their teaching. I'm also working with the congregation at Galey, OK. They have asked me to run leads for them and work with their congregational teachers. Their desire to work and grow has also been a tremendous encouragement to me. This month, the Galey Church of Christ is anticipating a gospel meeting with Cullen Smith, and I look forward to working with him. Our next meeting will be at Golden, OK, July 19-27. Please pray for us in our work. May God bless the Brotherhood.

Brett Hickey, 208 Crosshaven Ct., Antioch, TN 37013, brett-louisehickey@juno.com, (615) 501-9246, July 11-Our family is excited to be worshipping with the Brookside congregation in Nashville. As much as we thrill with the two baptisms and confession of fault since we have arrived here, even more inspiring is the momentum of enthusiasm for the Lord's work permeating the congregation. These additions are largely the fruit of this enthusiasm. Some very busy brethren have committed not only their heart, but a large chunk of time to the Lord's work. A couple dozen are involved in studies from house to house and a good number are anxious to become better equipped at spreading the gospel themselves. We enjoyed the fourth of July meeting at Lebanon. It was great to return to California for the Memorial Day meeting in Turlock--a special meeting hosted by a special congregation. Working with seasoned preacher of the gospel, Richard DeGough, was a great pleasure. About a dozen from Turlock and other area brethren helped by going door-to-door. We rest in the assurance that His word will not return unto him void. David Edwards hosted our Young Speakers' meeting in Tyler. He and the other young men did a great job. How encouraging to sit in on serious discussions among young men who desire to be a part of a scriptural eldership. We got just what we expected from our March meeting with Duane Permenter. No doubt the church is the better for it. So good to be back with the McGregor brethren before our move. Our first visit to Indiana was with the Bedford congregation. The brethren were warm and receptive to the gospel and our family. We covet further Bible discussions with Walter Hunter, Floyd Harris, Jr. and Greg Jordan. Glad also to see fellow laborer Anthony Brockett. We go next to Gadsden, AL, and this fall on to Atwater, CA, October 10-19 and Brazil, IN (Harrison/Blaine), November 2-9. We are pleased to bear my brother-in-law, Frank Brancato of Bakersfield, CA, express his intentions to enter the preaching field. We know he will be a credit to such an honorable profession. Keep praying for laborers!

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THE BACK PAGE...

SOULS ON ICE

By CARL M. JOHNSON

When legendary baseball player Ted Williams died last year, his son John Henry Williams sent his father's body to Scottsdale, Arizona to the Alcor Life Extension Foundation to be frozen in a container of liquid nitrogen at minus 196 degrees Centigrade. Williams is one of more than 100 people (including Walt Disney and Peter Sellers) who have been frozen since 1967, while about 1,000 others (including Muhammad Ali and Gore Vidal) have made financial and legal arrangements to be frozen in case of terminal illness or fatal injury. For \$58,000 you can have your brain frozen—a neuro-suspension—or for \$125,000 you can have your entire body frozen in hopes that in the future medical science will find a way to reverse death and regenerate the body.

While I am mildly amused at the Ted Williams-on-ice story, I am more concerned about a recent report of 400,000 human embryos frozen in liquid nitrogen in about 430 clinics throughout the United States (Christianity Today July 2003, 17). These embryos came into being as a result of in-vitro fertilization (producing an embryo outside the womb), which since the birth of the first "test tube baby" Louise Brown in 1978 has become one of the most common forms of scientifically assisted conception. Since 1978 thousands of test-tube babies have been conceived in labs, planted into the mothers' wombs, and born into the world.

As far as I can tell, there are no major biblical principles violated in the Louise Brown case. It involved one man and one woman who were married (Genesis 2:18, 24), giving life to their own biological child (Genesis 4:1; 1 Timothy 5:14). No individuals other than this couple were involved, with the exception of the doctors who helped them overcome their own biological failings.

A very serious problem with in-vitro fertilization, however, has to do with left over embryos. Most clinics won't transfer more than a few embryos at a time into a woman's womb to avoid a risky multiple pregnancy, so couples often end up with a dozen embryos or more left over.

When a zygote (embryo) is conceived, it has a total of 46 chromosomes—the complete genetic blueprint for that person for its entire life. Since a person's complete genetic code (color of hair, complexion, color of eyes, body type, personality tendencies, etc.) is set at conception, it follows that life begins at conception as well. Since life begins at conception, these leftover embryos are living human beings. Think of it, 400,000 nascent human beings on ice in the USA today! That is the equivalent of the entire population of Oklahoma City. What do you do with them?

A survey of the 430 clinics revealed that 11,000 are set aside for scientific research, 9,000 are designated for infertile couples, and another 9,000 will be thawed and destroyed.

The fact embryos are destroyed as a result of use in research, medical treatments, or just flushed down the drain is absolutely unacceptable. This practice is tantamount to abortion. As one spokesman said, "Human beings are never disposable, whether [in the form of] an embryo, a baby, or a 90-year-old woman."

Scientists today have the capability of cloning embryos and using the stem cells contained in them to treat diseases such as diabetes, paralysis, heart disease and Alzheimer's. In his State of the Union address, however, President Bush called for a ban on all such procedures.

Suppose, however, the time comes when the procedure is legalized in the USA (which is probably only a matter of time), and a doctor tells you he can cure your aged father's Alzheimer's disease, your daughter's severe diabetes, or your own Parkinson's disease by using cells from an embryo? Do you think you might be able to rationalize destroying an embryonic soul for your own good or the good of a loved one?

The scenarios I have presented are not the creative musings of a science fiction novel, but rather they describe the world we live in today. Within our lifetime developments in technology have brought staggering changes to the way people can be conceived, born, healed, or die. Prospects for the future are as mind boggling as what has already happened.

Although scripture does not address directly the topics mentioned above, it sets forth enough principles about birth, life, human sexuality, and death, that it is possible to evaluate contemporary practices in light of biblical teaching. It is imperative that we educate ourselves about these issues, and diligently study the word of God to find the principles that apply to them. Otherwise, as in the case of abortion, we may find out too late that some moral issue contrary to scripture has not only won the day, but has even been enacted as the law of the land.—1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net

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. LXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, SEPTEMBER 2003

NO. 9

THE HEADSHIPS

By DON McCORD

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16, discusses fully the headships as they pertain to the church of all time; headships, yes, plural number, not singular, God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman. Thus, there are three headships, God's, Christ's, and man's. Understanding the awesomeness of the headships should prompt us to see the importance of the covering as nothing else does. Paul says with finality, "I would have you know" (verse 2). As we look around, it appears evident that many men and women disbelieve this. Paul, in this remarkable discussion of such a magnificent theme, proves that a truth can be proven in few words, yes, in a few verses. A truth to be proven does not have to be subjected to a long drawn out discussion, page after page. This is one of the beauties of truth, its thrust is telling and succinct, whether in script or in sermon. Paul is not discussing customs and traditions as men see them. In these verses, he discusses inspired truth about a most important issue, a binding truth for the duration.

In verse 4, he addresses men of all time with this solemn warning; every man who teaches or prays with his physical head covered dishonors his spiritual head, Jesus Christ. This is a most serious infraction!

The woman, according to verse 5, on the other hand, in teaching or praying with her physical head uncovered, dishonors her spiritual head, the man. His head is Christ, so the woman in dishonoring her immediate head, the man, implicates herself with the man's spiritual head, the Christ. What a serious matter!

In verse 6, if the woman is not covered, that is, with her long hair that is given her for a covering (verse 15), let her be shorn. Paul, by inspiration in few words, teaches a truth in a way that may be overlooked. He decisively proves that a woman dare not cut her hair in any way, for any reason - cutting, clipping, trimming are all forbidden by antithetic parallelism. This plainly answers, "How long is long?" Professor D. R. Dungan, in his most excellent book on *Hermeneutics*, says on page 337, "Antithetic Parallelism is that in which lines and sentences are made to oppose each other. Truth is often made to

appear by the law of antithesis." Verse 6 is a perfect example of this. On page 346, he elaborates by quoting Webster as to antithesis, "An opposition of words or sentiments occurring in the same sentence; contrast--".

"Shorn" is the past participle of "shear," which according to Webster means, "to remove by cutting or clipping--to cut or clip the hair." W. E. Vine corroborates, "to have one's hair cut off, be shorn." Paul's conclusion in verse 6 is, if it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, which is logically inferred, let her be covered by her long hair, that is, not shorn--clipped or cut in anyway. By the rule of antithesis, exemplified here, I sincerely, humbly repeat, her hair cannot be cut, even clipped.

In verses 7-12, man's and woman's unique relationship back to the creation is further reason why the woman is to be covered, and the man uncovered--man is the image of God, woman is the image of man, the woman is of the man, and created for him; they are not without each other in the Lord, the woman is of the man, and the man is by the woman. What a precious relationship!

In verse 10, Paul expresses a wonderful truth involving the woman. This scribe does not profess to know all that is involved here. We do know more than we do not know here. This truth "because of the angels" is never said to or of the man. This sets the woman apart, Every sister should take heart because of this inspired reason to be covered. Whatever its meaning; such was never said to, or of, your father, your husband, your son, or any other man. As in many other places in the Book, the woman is special here!

The answers to the questions in verses 13 and 14 are self-evident. In view of Paul's flawless reasoning from beginning to end, it is not proper for a woman to prey uncovered; and it is a shame for a man to let his hair grow long; the nature of things so teaches.

The "custom" mentioned in verse 16 in no way negates what Paul teaches in the verses preceding. The custom that we do not have nor do the churches of God, is the custom of the man praying covered and the woman praying uncovered. There is no valid

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Editorial

IS GAMBLING REALLY SO BAD? PART 2

By DON L. KING

This topic, continued from last month, is an important one because some church members have convinced themselves there is no harm in "recreational gambling." We must remember that just because we may do something recreationally does not mean it is permitted by the Scriptures. One might choose to visit a brothel recreationally but it would still be fornication, and sinful. The examples could go on and on. A Christian must be certain that he is not doing the wrong thing. Paul said: "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." (1 Thessalonians 5:21) Does this not indicate that a careful evaluation should be done before asserting something is permissible?

Provide Things Honest

If there is anything in this world that is important, it must be that a Christian show himself to be honest in all dealings. In Romans 12:17 the apostle said, "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men." For as long as we can remember, this passage has been believed to place gambling in a bad light and well it should. When one gambles with another and wins, he is taking another's property or money without paying for it. Anyway you want to look at the matter, this fact remains. If you win money in a casino, or poker game at home, etc., you take another's money with no honest work involved. When we were boys we often played marbles. Normally, the winner took the loser's marbles. The game used to be called "keepsies" by the children. However, we were never allowed to keep the marbles when we won the game because we had not earned them by honest work. We had not paid for them and so returned them after the game. Why were parents so strict? Because Christians were scrupulously honest and would not allow their children to gamble. For some reason, the old time scruples and morals which were normally taught by all Christian parents are being allowed to simply disappear. Things are questioned today that we never questioned before. No one ever had to sit us down and tell us we ought not to dance, drink, allow the women to take public roles in teaching the Bible anywhere, be involved in politics or vote, use profanity, be involved in immorality, dress immodestly, swim in mixed company, read about or watch sinful activities, choose our close friends from worldly people or gamble. We just knew those things were wrong and stayed away from them. The really sad thing about all of this is that the world, in general,

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: If children sin against their parents by sassing, dishonoring, falsely accusing, slandering and defaming them, what must the children do to make it right with God?

Answer: It is hard for me to imagine children who claim to be Christians doing such things. The Scriptures are plain regarding the honor and respect due parents by their children. Paul declares in Eph. 6:1-2 that children are to obey their parents, in the Lord "for this right." It always has and always will be right. It can never be right for children to falsely accuse, slander and defame their parents. To sass or talk back to them in a disrespectful manner is forbidden. "Honor thy father and mother..." are not hollow words. This is a command of God. Parents are to be respected. The promise given here "that thy days may be long upon the earth" should not be taken lightly. Children who fail to honor and obey godly Christian parents may not live as long as will their submissive and obedient counterparts. Such is the teaching here. There are obviously some parents who fall short of what God requires of them. Some have gone so far as to misuse, abuse, and treat their children horribly. Even in such cases, however, godly children will be careful not to misbehave or treat these parents in a way so as to bring shame upon Christ or His church. One of the sins characteristic of those who "do not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Romans 1:30) is "disobedient to parents." Solomon tells us that "A wise son heareth his father's instruction" Prov. 13:1. The importance of a scriptural family structure is outlined in the following quote from James Willis in his book *The Ten Commandments*: "The salvation of society is in the family and the reconstruction of family virtues, parental authority, and filial obedience. The family is the nucleus of all society. You can have no prosperous state unless the family is healthy. You can have no effective church unless the family is sound ... The family is the organic cell from which all human societies are constructed." Children who learn and practice obedience at home, will do so at school and in society as well. Those who do not learn obedience at home become troublemakers at school and usually end up having trouble with civil authorities. Those children who have been disrespectful of their parents by either dishonoring, slandering, or defaming them must repent of these sins by asking the forgiveness of both God and their parents. This is not a matter God will allow to "just slide by" without correction.

Question: Can you conceive of a set of circumstances under which it would be all right for a child to treat his/her godly parents poorly or with disrespect?

Answer: No, I cannot. Children who are still at home, who become rebellious, who deny and

disregard parental authority are duty bound to submit to their parents and do not have the option of disrespecting them. In the case of older married children, there may be situations where well meaning parents step across the line by unduly interfering with the lives of their children, at which point it may be necessary for the children to talk with their parents about the situation. But this should be done with respect and love. We have all seen situations where otherwise good people become too involved in the affairs of others. Such can become a prescription for disaster. However, there are scriptural guidelines that help us deal with such matters. Behaving in a manner uncharacteristic of God's children never solves the problem, only complicates it.—P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN (PART VI)

By BARNEY OWENS

In the beginning God gave man "*dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth*" (Gen. 1:27). Among created things, none were superior to man. His authority was without bounds and extensive. God reserved certain restraints for men unto Himself. Commandments could be issued from man for inferior creatures, however, the Almighty was subject to none of these.

Soon man abused his domain by stepping into the realm of God by altering God's commandment regarding the eating of forbidden fruit. Sin came as a result of this abuse of authority. While Adam and Eve could and did substitute their will for the commandment of God, it proved futile. The ancient lesson has profited little to modern men.

Religious practices stipulated by God are still altered by those who recognize Jesus as the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, and in a word "Lord of lords." His words need to be emblazoned in our hearts presently as much as ever: "*in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*" (Mt. 15:9).

The series is continued as we look at some modern practices in which men engage to worship the Lord, comparing them with the doctrine of Christ.

The Number Of Loaves Does Not matter In The Lord's Supper

AND AS THEY WERE EATING, JESUS TOOK BREAD, AND BLESSED IT, AND BRAKE IT, AND GAVE IT TO THE DISCIPLES, AND SAID, TAKE, EAT; THIS IS MY BODY. (Mt. 26:26).

The account is also given by Mark, Luke, and Paul (Mk. 14:23, Lk. 22: 19, 1 Cor. 11:23). What did Jesus take? *The American Standard Version* in the margin for each of the above passages gives it "a loaf." Clearly that is what Jesus took, a single loaf, which represented the Lord's body. Jesus did not have many

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PAGES FROM THE PAST

*(The following article by brother Waters was written in 1958 and published in the May issue of the **Old Paths Advocate**. Though some 45 years have passed, its message is as vital now as then. The subject discussed is one of ever present interest. Please read and study its contents carefully. Observing what it teaches, will prevent many problems that otherwise hinder scriptural evangelism.)*

HOW SHALL WE SUPPORT OUR DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN EVANGELISM?

By J. Ervin Waters

By Centralization of Funds and Power?

In the November, 1957, *Old Paths Advocate* there was published an article by me on "The One Man Missionary Society." I was extremely gratified by the hearty "amen" to it appearing in the December *OPA* and the further expression of opposition to a missionary society whether one man or six man or a hundred man missionary society. May I suggest, brethren, that if and when a **missionary society** appears among us it will not be called a **missionary society**. It will be like brethren having Sunday School while denying they have it and calling it something else. It will be like brethren having the denominational and digressive "pastor system" while denying that they have it and calling it something else.

I emphatically and unhesitatingly deny that **anything unscriptural** ever grew out of **something scriptural**. This would be in opposition to a universal law of nature applied by Jesus to the spirit world. "**Everything** shall bring forth of **its kind**;" "By their fruits ye shall **know them**;" "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?" Error does not grow out of truth; wrong does not grow out of right; and the unscriptural does not grow out of the scriptural. If this were possible, the only analogy in nature would be something to which we are unanimously opposed, the evolution of species. But evolution falls flat because it can demonstrate not one mutation in nature whereby one species became another species.

The **unscriptural papacy** did not grow out of a **scriptural eldership**. The **papacy** grew out of the **centralization of power** in the hands of **one man**, a metropolitan bishop in a congregation, and the **development of that centralization** in a provincial or diocesan bishop, one man, exercising power over several congregations, frequently following the lines of a political province. This reached its consummate development in the **universal bishop** at Rome, who originally was a metropolitan bishop who became eventually a diocesan bishop. Centralization of power in one man locally led to the centralization of power universally. 'Tis the spawn of Satan, not of a scriptural eldership, and it **came forth from the pit**.

The Catholic Church did not grow out of the church

of our Lord. It grew out of the **centralization of power in one man apostacy**. There is no difference in the nature of the one man congregational rule and the one man universal rule. The larger has the nature of the smaller. The difference is in **size and degree** not in nature.

I have never been an alarmist. I tend to optimism rather than pessimism and to positivism rather than negativism. But when I see a "wolf" I intend to holler "wolf" if it is necessary to warn brethren of approaching danger. When I see something unscriptural, I intend to cry out even if my voice becomes the "voice of one crying in the wilderness."

The Lord provided for an eldership composed of several men to rule in a congregation. We have a choice to make. Will we choose the eldership or the one man rule and take the road which led to the papacy?

The Lord provided for a congregational treasury under the control of the congregation and its eldership. A certain amount of power always goes with money. That is why a generation ago Wall Street could exercise such power politically and financially. Money was centralized there. We have a choice to make. Will we choose the congregational treasury with its direct method of support by sending directly to the evangelist it chooses to support, the family whose need it decides to relieve, or the destitute sister congregation in an emergency where its elders may distribute to its members during that emergency? Or will we choose the centralized fund system, the super-congregational treasury with a permanent or semipermanent existence, to be administered by one man with authority never delegated to him by either the Lord or the church, or the centralized treasury to be administered by a group of men? The Lord has provided for no universal function of the church as a universal institution. The universal church functions through the medium of congregational organization. When you go beyond this with a treasury, there will be necessitated a council or conference of delegated empowered by their respective congregations to speak for them, which council will have to make decisions effecting the use of the central treasury. Here is denominationalism and digression, brethren. As one member who is also a school teacher remarked recently in the business meeting of his home congregation when they were considering the problem; "I left denominationalism to get away from such. I will not return to it."

I am for the work in Africa, Belgium, or anywhere else the gospel needs to be preached. My first personal choice for the work in Africa is Paul Nichols. The experience he has accumulated and the prestige he has with African brethren would be hard to outweigh. My second choice is Don McCord.

I personally pledge myself to help raise whatever funds are necessary to sustain either or both in the work, and to get them there and back, providing the

scriptural direct means or method of support is employed. Let the congregations send to whichever man they choose directly and let him take care of his own funds.

Let the names of African preachers who are active and need support be supplied us. I know congregations and brethren right now who are wanting to support one or more directly.

We want to develop no "bishop of Nyasaland," be he white or black. We do want to help whatever evangelists, white or black, who need support in Africa. We want to help whatever destitute congregation there is.

Or By Direct Method of Support?

I have proposed the above method and I have scriptures for it. Paul wrote the congregation at Philippi, "For even in Thessalonica, ye sent once and again unto my necessity" (Phil. 4:16). "But I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God" (Phil. 4:18). The congregational gift had not lost its identity in a super-congregational fund. Paul knew how much he had received from this congregation. What African evangelist lately could identify his support as being from a certain congregation and know how much was from that congregation? The identity of the donor and gift is lost in centralization. And what congregation has chosen the African evangelist it desired to support or the African congregation it desired to help in its need? The right to make this decision belongs to the congregation and its elders. It is lost in centralization.

Who will argue that a plan which is not the subject of New Testament command, statement, or example is as scriptural as one which is set forth by clear example in the scriptures? The direct method of support for evangelism is the only plan to be found in the scriptures.

We are supposed to reason from the known to the unknown. What plan do we "know" was used in the first century? No presumption or guessing.

Some will leave evangelism and run to benevolent work in an emergency in attempted sustenance of a permanent evangelistic fund in being. But if we stay with only what we "know" and can "read" by way of scriptural example, we find this. "Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 11:29-30). The Antioch church sent to the elders where the needy were. Barnabas and Paul acted as their messengers. Here there was no centralization. This stays entirely with the congregational system.

With all of the sincerity I possess and the best objective thinking of which I am capable, I plead with brethren to keep free of any centralization entanglement for evangelistic work for Africa, Belgium, or elsewhere. Send directly to the white

evangelists going to Africa. Secure the names of African evangelists, establish direct contact, and send to them. If a preacher is going to Belgium, send to him. If the congregation there in Belgium needs assistance, determine the need by direct contact and not hearsay and send to that congregation. Letters I have read from Belgium indicate that there is little financial need at this time.

The brethren using classes and cups are dividing all over the nation on the centralization issue. But even their centralization advocates are in favor of centralizing the funds under one eldership and not one man.

May God give us the wisdom with which to avoid the pitfalls of digression.—OPA

THE HEADSHIPS

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basis for contention. *The New American Standard* puts it this way, "But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God."

Conclusively, allow me to quote the footnote at verses 4-6 in *The New International Version*: "Every man who prays or prophesies with long hair dishonors his head. And every woman who prays or prophesies with no covering (of hair) on her head dishonors her head--she is just like one of the 'shorn women.' If a woman has no covering, let her be for now with short hair, but since it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair shorn or shaved, she should grow it again."—Box 1773, Covina, CA 91722

EDITORIAL

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still associates many of those things with sin. They don't expect to see Church of Christ people involved, and when they do they are disappointed and turned off by our "religion." Why would one from the world choose to obey the gospel if those who claim to be Christians live just about the same as he does? There is no reason to make a change! It is not shameful for the denominational people to have larger church buildings, make more money, and drive bigger cars than we do but it is terrible if they live better lives!

Gambling Breeds Other Sins

As Jesus spoke to the multitude in Matthew 7, he pointed out that we can know people by their fruits, or lives. (Verse 16, etc.) He showed that a good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit. In other words, if a thing is good it is not going to be the cause of sin and corruption. When we look at the gambling practice, the fruit is certainly bad. For some reason, certain people become addicted to gambling. They become habitual gamblers and cannot control their habit. An organization called "Gamblers Anonymous" has been formed to help people break away from gambling. This, in itself, proves that many have the problem. My mother in law used to tell of a lady with whom

she visited who had to sell the a family home in Reno, Nevada and move away because her husband had lost everything they owned except the house and she knew it would soon be lost also. How sad to think of a couple who spent their lives getting ready for old age only to find that when it came, they were completely broke because of a husband's gambling addiction. Just as drug addicts resort to theft or prostitution in order to support their habits, so do addicted gamblers. The police force in Reno, Nevada estimates that over 75% of all embezzlement cases are related to gambling! Gamblers are encouraged to drink because the more intoxicated they become the more they are likely to lose. Many casinos even serve alcoholic drinks free to those who are losing large sums of money. We ask again, brethren, "How can this thing be right?" The answer is: it cannot be.

Gambling Is Considered Legitimate Because of Those Who Promote It

Just consider who promotes gambling today. Many denominational churches sponsor *Bingo* games. We know why, don't we? Gambling on Bingo games is profitable for the organization sponsoring it. They raise big money with Bingo. Most schools hold *raffles*, etc. which is just another form of gambling and we have become used to that. Our government has legalized the *State Lottery* nearly everywhere. In spite of the fact that the odds are often forty million to one against winning (or even more) people flock to the lottery in hopes of winning the "big one." By the way folks, the Lottery **IS GAMBLING**. There is no question about it. It's wrong just as every other form of gambling is wrong and church members should be ashamed to dabble in it. It is successful today for the same reason any other form of gambling is successful. It feeds off of human greed. The majority of people who buy lottery tickets are so poor they may have to buy the tickets with their welfare or unemployment checks. Rather than put the meager funds to a good use, they gamble them away.

Paul said, "For the grace that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." (Titus 2:11, 12) This puts the ball in our court, so to speak, doesn't it? Notice the terms he used: "*Soberly, Righteously, Godly in this present world.*" In which of these three categories would you place gambling? That's right; it fits in none of them!

Only the highest moral principles will do for the child of God. Our standards must be high. We must oppose gambling whether it is large or small, public or private, recreational or otherwise and whatever we do, we must never participate ourselves. Think on these things.—1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN (PART VI)

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bodies, which were offered in sacrifice, nor does He have many spiritual bodies. One Lord, One Church, One Bread. "*The bread which we brake, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body for we are all partakers of that one bread*" (Emp. mine, BO).

For those who listen to God and practice what He asks when simply stated, there is no quibble about what is said or what is to be done. A loaf representing the slain body of Christ is to be taken and thanks for it is offered. Each disciple breaks and eats as minds are refreshed regarding the great sacrifice. When the loaf starts around, the first disciple breaking can see the clear representation of the one body of Christ as he looks upon the one loaf The last disciple who partakes can see the clear representation of the one body of Christ as he looks upon the one loaf. From beginning to end, every disciple assembled has the same picture. While we are all members and all break and partake, the body is always one—the loaf is always one.

This picture is perverted when disciples gather and there are many loaves being passed about. Not only is the language of Jesus disregarded, the picture of the one body of Christ of which all are to partake and the one body of Christ that all are members of, is distorted. There is no picture; there is no representation. How can we preach against many churches claiming to be a part of the one body when we advocate and practice such a thing on the Lord's Day?

If this is not enough proof, let us consult some scholarship to discover the meaning of the term used.

1. *Acts Of The Apostles With Notes* by Alexander Campbell. Translation of Acts 20:7 "we came together for the breaking a loaf." Commenting on the Greek word *Artos* he wrote: "*Artos* occurs some ninety times in the N. T. In the common version it is always translated *loaves* in the plural number; but in the singular number, one case excepted, always *bread*. In the case excepted there was sort of necessity for translating it *loaf*, because a whole ship's company had but one loaf. In that case to have translated it one *bread*, would have been wholly inappropriate. Such laxity is peculiarly faulty, in a case, where Paul argues the unity of the church from the fact that in its assemblies they had but "*one loaf*," of which all partook. In this case, the argument makes *loaf*, and not bread, indispensable. See chapter 2:42."

2. *New Testament Commentaries* published by the Gospel Advocate Co. Nashville, TN. Mark by C. E. W. Dorris, 14:22. "**And as they were eating, he took bread,**--Or "a loaf" (footnote), one of the thin flat loaves of the country, made without leaven of any kind. "A loaf" does not mean two or more loaves, but one. The loaf, which was one, points to the body of

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Christ. Jesus had one body he offered for the sins of the world and the one loaf represents that one body. Two loaves on the Lord's table are out of place and have no divine sanction. One loaf is safe, two are doubtful, to say the least. It is always safe to be on the safe side."

The arguments presented by these men cannot be refuted. We have a choice much like Joshua issued to the people before his death, "*if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve...as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.*" (Josh. 24:15). To follow the will of Christ and to **teach for doctrine the commandments of the Lord**, we must worship where there is one loaf broken and eaten by each disciple. To practice the use of more than one loaf is to **teach for doctrine the commandments of men**.

I have been asked, "Where I worship more than one loaf is used. What should I do?" The answer is **very** simple, stop the practice (2 Cor. 6:17), find a congregation that worships according to the teaching of Christ and the apostles, confess your sin of false worship (1 Jn. 1:9, Js. 5:16,19-20), and begin to worship in the right way. Remember worship must be in spirit and **in truth**.

"*Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth*" (Jn. 17:17). It is never right nor good to worship contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

There Is No Need For Each Disciple To Actually Break the Bread

In addition to the teaching of God's Word in regard to breaking bread, there are two doctrines that are taught which we need to call your attention to.

1. When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, He took bread, gave thanks, and "broke" it in two or more pieces. This was sort of a "ceremonial" breaking for everyone at the table. After this was done, each one partaking was to eat for himself, whether he broke off another piece or ate without breaking is of no consequence. However, the loaf is to be in one piece prior to the giving of thanks. After thanks, it is then broken.

2. The Lord's Supper consists only in eating and drinking; therefore "breaking bread" is but an expression that refers to their eating. The Lord's Supper may be served and eaten when the bread, prior to the giving of thanks, is divided into bite size pieces.

What the Lord Did

It is astounding that the Holy Spirit so often anticipated the teaching for doctrine the commandments of men and answered them in advance. Whether these were taught in the church at Corinth, or Paul stated them to ward off or at least to off-set false teaching I do not know. The fact remains that he revealed the falsity of both the above ideas.

The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: This Do In Remembrance Of Me.

(1 Cor. 11:23-24)

Emphasis was given in this passage to the expression, "**this do**," meaning to do what I have done. Had Jesus taken the loaf and broken it in two at or near the middle (as some contend) it would have been impossible for the disciples to "do what He had done." Likewise, had Jesus taken the loaf and broken it into several pieces, it was not possible for them to "do what he did." However, Jesus by taking the loaf, breaking off a piece and eating, each disciple could duplicate what He "had done."

The truth is that Jesus did neither of the things listed above, (#1 & 2). Instead He took the loaf, gave thanks, brake off a piece from the loaf, and ate it. This the disciples did after the Lord.

In speaking to a brother on one occasion, he said, "**this do does not mean we are to do what Jesus did.**" If **this do** does not mean that we are to do what Jesus did, what can it possibly mean? Does it mean that we are to do something other than what Jesus did? The truth comes out further in another passage.

The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. (1 Cor. 10:16-17).

The *partakers* of the one loaf in this passage are the same ones who are the *breakers*. One person does not *partake* for everyone; therefore, one person does not *break* for everyone. Also, we need to point out that one disciple does not *partake* two or more times, which means that one disciple does not *break* two or more times. We should remember as well, when the loaf comes to us, if there had been a piece of the loaf inadvertently broken off and is lying there, we must not just pick it up and eat it. We are to *break* and then *partake*. There are two things "*break and partake*," of the loaf.

An Objection: "Did Christ Eat That Which Represented His Own Body?"

The point made by those who wish the loaf to be "ceremonially" broken by one man for the entire congregation is: "Jesus would not eat the bread, which is His body." This reasoning (?) is faulty if we would only read a little further in the accounts of the Lord's Supper. Mark tells us that Jesus said concerning the element within the cup. "*Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*" (Mk. 14:25). If Jesus had not drunk of the fruit of the vine, He would not have said "I will drink no more until..." The fruit of the vine represented His blood, "*this is my blood*" verse 25, therefore it is not incredible that He would eat the bread as well which, as we have seen, the Lord did eat.

Furthermore, Jesus who did not have a place to rest His head possessed this bread only in the sense He commanded it to be eaten. David declared, "*Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread hath lifted up his heel against me.*" (Ps.

41:9). This is a prophecy of the treachery of Judas. Jesus so applied the passage in John 13:18. It is important we notice the Lord's statement in this regard, as He gave us the situation in which it was fulfilled. From John 13 "*that the scripture may be fulfilled. He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.*" David looking to Jesus called it "*my bread.*" Jesus said of the bread "*this is my body.*" Therefore, when He instituted the Lord's Supper it was **His bread**. Then Jesus said that Judas "*eateth bread with me.*" To eat the bread with Jesus can mean nothing less than Jesus ate the bread.

Those who contend that breaking is for something other than partaking are **teaching for doctrine a commandment of men.**—8782 Meadowview, W. Chester, OH 45069

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bakersfield, CA

The congregation at 2215 Planz Rd., Bakersfield, CA will now have their Sunday evening services at 5:00 PM.

Old Paths Advocate On CD!

Recently, Brethren George Battey and Richard Bunner have worked together to put the **Old Paths Advocate** on CD disks. They currently have two disks containing **OPA** from 1932-1971 (which is searchable) and plan to have the next installment out by Labor Day. This is a great source of material from writers all across the brotherhood for nearly 72 years. **Old Paths Advocate** is the third oldest paper among the churches of Christ. Only **Firm Foundation** and **Gospel Advocate** are older. Every church member should have this at hand. Please contact Richard Bunner at r.bunner@insightbb.com or phone (859) 266-8608. He will be able to answer all questions as to price, availability, etc.—DLK

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For the time being, at least, you can send a subscription or renewal for yourself at the regular price of \$10 per year and give a gift subscription for a friend who does not currently take the paper for only \$5. In other words, for only \$15 you can renew your subscription and subscribe for a friend whom you feel will benefit from reading the paper also. That is quite a bargain indeed. If every subscriber would do this, many who do not take the paper can begin reading it and the subscription list would double overnight. Brethren, will you do it? Please, sit down right now and send us your renewal and the name of a friend for only \$15. In these perilous days where good scriptural reading is so scarce, where could you better spend \$15 than for the oldest paper among us? We want to remind also that anyone sending 10 or more subscriptions will receive theirs free for a year. Why not announce the paper at your next service?

Directory Updates

The new 2003-2004 directory is available at \$3.00 each plus postage. Send all orders and updates to: Greg Gay, 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747

Congregations:

Gadsden, AL - delete Bro. Hurst, passed away. Add: G. Pat Adkison, 406 4th Ave., Glencoe, AL 35906, 256-492-1138

Palmer, AK, Palmer Church of Christ, P.O. Box 4277, 2140 S. Killarney, Palmer, AK 99645. In the home of Bro. Larry Golden, 10:30 AM, 907-745-2180 call for directions.

Tucson, AZ - Los Altos Ave Church of Christ change Sun. PM time to 6:30 PM

Auburn, CA - change Sun. PM time to 2:30 PM

Berthoud, CO - correct Eugene Mahalek address: 347 Buchanan Ave, Firestone, CO 80520. Add: Mark Whittaker, 305 Cobble Dr., Windsor, CO 80550, 970-686-0869, whitt_mark@yahoo.com

Knoxville, GA - correct Loyd Lambright to Lloyd Lambright. Correct Gene Grant & Lloyd Lambright's area code to 478

Chicago, IL - delete Frank J. Yontz

Indianapolis, IN - new building beginning Sept. 7. 7045 Rockville Rd., Indianapolis, IN, one mile west of Highway 465 at exit 13B

Brazil, IN - Harrison & Blaine St. Change Tony Barnett's address: P.O. Box 191, Harmony, IN 47853. Add Lance Stallcop email: lance@claynet.com

Anderson, MO - correct Nelson Nichols address: 2645 Moss Church Rd. Add email: cnnichols@olemac.net. Add Brad Nichols, 1133 McMillan Rd., Anderson, MO 64831, 417-775-2302

Seneca, MO - Stateline Church of Christ, correct P.O. Box to 946, delete Kenneth Middick & Howard Arwood, add: Gary Green, 2101 K Highway, Box 1, Seneca, MO 64865, 417-776-3323, Rod Dunkin, Box 946, Seneca, MO 64865, 417-776-2830, Darryl Reynolds, 2107 Iron Gates, Joplin, MO 64804, 417-781-3954

Hazelhurst, MS - correct directions: Exit off I-55 South at Exit 18 on Hwy 28 West. Correct Booker T. Price address: 4157 Tyson Rd, Wesson, MS 39191

Ardmore, OK - add Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW Ardmore, OK 73401, 580-226-0340, bookman@brightok.net

Holdenville, OK - delete Jerry Shuster, add: Nolen Beck, 8326 E 140 Rd, Box 12A, Calvin, OK, 74531, 405-645-2235, add Jim Thetford, 7779 E. County Rd., Holdenville, OK 74848, 405-379-7328

LeContes Mills, PA - change Raymond Stiner phone: 814-263-4378

Austin, TX - correct name Church of Christ on Bluebonnet Ln., correct address to 1508 Bluebonnet Ln. Add Tues. 7:30 PM

Deer Park, TX - change George Sears address: 1709 Asbury Ln, Deer Park, TX 77536, 281-542-6669, isears226@msn.com

Houston, TX - Northeast Church of Christ, correct Douglas Young address 15143 Kaler Rd. add email: douglasjyoung@aol.com

McGregor, TX - change Kenneth Elliott's address to 1213 Windstone Dr., Waco, TX 76712, 254-722-3466, 254-744-8816

Preachers

Kevin Fox - new address: 4702 Dentcrest Dr. #B, Midland, TX 79707, 432-262-6543

John Pruitt - 2703 E. Mechanic, P.O. Box 356 Harrisonville, MO 64701, 816-380-5564, randapruitt@aol.com

Bruce Roebuck - is moving. New email bruceroebuck@yahoo.com

Seneca, MO

Stateline Church of Christ in Seneca, MO new P.O. Box is now 946. The new contacts are: *Gary Green*, 2101 "K" Highway Box 1 Seneca, MO 64865 (417-776-3323) *Rod Dunkin*, Box 946 Seneca, MO 64865 (417-776-2830) *Darryl Reynolds*, 2107 Iron Gates Joplin, MO 64804 (417-781-3954)

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

MOORE - KOLANEK—On May 24, before many family and friends at the North Fairbanks Church of Christ in Houston TX Robert Moore and Ashley Kolanek were united in Holy Matrimony. Robert is the son of Leo (deceased) and Becky Moore. Most may know him more as the grandson of Charles and Dorothy Cabinass of Houston TX. Charles passed away earlier this year. Ashley is the daughter of Paul and Diane Kolanek of Houston TX. The couple plans to live in Houston TX and attend the North Fairbanks Congregation. Robert has finished College and Ashley is working on her degree. We expect them to be a blessing to the cause of Christ and wish them well in their new journey of marriage. It was a joyous occasion and I was honored to officiate. May God bless Robert and Ashley.—Randal Baker

OUR DEPARTED

TETER—Glenna Marie Teter was born July 2, 1922 to the late John and Annie Schumann at Healdton, OK and departed this life on May 13, 2003 at Ardmore, OK. She was married to Ralph Teter on January 18, 1942 at Wichita Falls, TX. Survivors include her husband, Ralph, of the home, a daughter, Evelyn Brittain of Ardmore, and a grandson, David Wayne Brittain of Damascus, AR. Marie was a long-time member of the church in Ardmore and one who could be counted on to be at her post of duty, not withstanding her many health problems toward the end. She is greatly missed in the congregation. Funeral services were conducted on May 16, 2003

from Harvey-Douglas Chapel, where a large audience bespoke the esteem in which she was held. We say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." The writer spoke and Cullen Smith led congregational singing.—Johnny Elmore

WHITE—Floyd Lavell White, was born in Hartville, Mo. April 25, 1917, departed this life July 6, 2003 in Lebanon, Mo. being eighty-six years of age, a member of the Claxton Church of Christ for many years. He was united in marriage to Lillian Humphreys, and to this union four children were born, all of which survive. Floyd served in the United States Army for several years. After leaving the service with an honorable discharge, he returned to the farm in Wright County, where he became involved in beef and dairy farming. This writer knew Floyd for approximately sixty-five years. He became a dedicated Christian and continued that way until his demise. He could pray the sweetest prayer, as if he was looking the Lord in his face. An extremely large crowd assembled at the little Claxton church house where he met, and his parents before him, for worship all of his life. He is survived by his wife of sixty-five years; all four of his children, two sisters, Ruth Emmerson, of Lebanon, Mo. and Betty Johnson of Council Bluffs, Iowa. This writer conducted the service assisted by Ronny Wade, and Delbert Boman. The singing was done by Church of Christ singers.—Clovis T. Cook



Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, Aug. 5—My meeting at McAlester, OK ended with the restoration of an elderly brother who had been out of duty for several years. He had also worshiped in digression in times past but he decided that it was time to make things right in his life. To God be the glory! Having been twenty years since holding a meeting in McAlester, it was wonderful to renew old friendships and to establish some new ones. Randy Tidmore is laboring with them now. I appreciate Randy for his evangelistic zeal, and I believe the congregation will profit from his work and influence. Although Randy and I have known each other for many years, this was our first opportunity to visit and discuss the Scriptures in an in-depth way. I long for more opportunities to associate with Randy in the future. James Orten and Miles King also added to the enjoyment of the meeting by their attendance. I want to thank the brethren at McAlester for their hospitality and financial support, being especially indebted to Bill Verner for providing me with a vehicle during the week! My final two meetings of the year are: Sept. 24-28 at Collins, MS and Nov. 14-16 at Mountain Home, AR.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, August 19—The meeting in Lawrenceburg, TN was very enjoyable. Crowds were good and cooperation from surrounding congregations very helpful. From here we went to Farmerville, LA. The brethren had prepared for a great meeting, and we had it. Large crowds greeted us each night with over ninety outsiders, who had never been in the building, attending during the course of the meeting. I was privileged to stay with my good friend and brother of over 40 years, Glen Post. We had a great time together. One brother took his stand with the church from the Sunday School church, during the meeting. Our next was in San Angelo, TX. This church worked hard for the meeting and it showed. Around thirty outsiders attended during the meeting. One was baptized and we hope our efforts will result in others taking their stand with the church before long. Lord willing we go next to Ft. Worth (Fossil Creek) for the annual Texas Labor Day Meeting, then to Hartwell, AR Sept. 3-7, Killbuck, OH Sept. 24-28 and Fossil Creek (Ft. Worth, TX) Oct. 11-19. May the Lord bless all who work for Him.

George Purugganan Sr., Philippines—Christian greetings! We just arrived from Baguio where we talked with Bro. Fernando Alvaro regarding Biblical patterns re-new testament church. It was an enlightening one and we extended an invitation to come and visit us in the southern Isabela area and the formal turn over of the church building and members of a denominational group "church of the Holy spirit" here at Santiago City. Their founder Hanchong Ong a former graduate of Philippine Bible college where I too graduated and one time national president of the Union Espiritista was converted as a result of almost six months of rigid Bible studies. Hoping that we can enlighten their members at Cordon Dabela where more than one hundred members live, he is willing to open their main building with a floor area of 1505 meters for us to use. We just conducted a gospel meeting last week at Sinsayon where Bro. Amor Salem and Orvin Arago labors. A number of more than 30 attended. We are scheduling another one when Bro Fernando will come. We are planning to establish a temporary house of worship at Villa Bantug. Bro. Fernando donated ten GI sheets. Please, pray with us that our work this year will be successful to the brethren there and may the good Lord shower more blessings.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct, Somerset, KY 42503, (606) 678-4347 douglas@alltel.net, August 5, 2003—The summer is quickly going by. At this writing I am in Orange, CA. I've become reacquainted with old friends and have been thrilled to see them, some I haven't seen in quite a while. I'm, as I expect to, making my home with Alvin and Virginia Smith. They are always very hospitable and I always enjoy their company. Bro. John Strain is accompanying me during this meeting and has been along for the better part of the summer now. He's working toward learning to preach and teach the gospel and is working very hard at it I might add. I'm proud to know men like him who aspire to something as great and noble as preaching the gospel. To me, there is no greater honor than to do the Lord's work. He's taking the task very seriously as he should. I expect to be home the better part of August and September as we are

anxiously awaiting the arrival of son number two, if the Lord is willing. The church at Blue Springs, KY is expecting bro. Kevin Presley in September. We always look forward to his preaching and this is no exception. Our meetings in October are planned for Flemington, PA; Holyoke, CO; and Ardmore, OK. If you're available, we would love to have you. We pray God's blessings on the faithful.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net, August 1—We were privileged to attend some of the meetings at Sulphur, OK and Lebanon, MO. Since then, we have been close to home. We heard Jerry Dickinson at Ratliff City recently. By the time you read this, we will have had Reggie Kinser in a meeting here August 20-24. Our next meeting here will be with Doug Hawkins October 22-26, climaxing with the 4th Sunday singing. Make your plans to attend. Sally is making a good recovery from surgery. She expresses sincere thanks to so many dear friends over the brotherhood for cards, phone calls, flowers, visits, food, and other thoughtful gifts. She will begin a six-week follow-up series of treatments that is expected to result in a complete recovery.

Bruce Roebuck, 1666 E. 2060 Rd., Hugo OK, 74743, bruceroebuck@yahoo.com, 580-345-2594, Aug. 8—August the 1st we began working with the church in Paris, TX Please make note of the new address, phone number, and email address. For the past six (6) years we have labored with the church in Mountain Home, AR. The work there was rewarding and challenging. While there we saw a number converted and leadership continue to expand and grow. The church there will always have a special place in our hearts and we pray the Lord will continue to bless them. We felt a pressing need to be closer to my parents and the church in Paris asked us to work with them, for which we are indebted. Paris is the "old home church" for me. In 1992 they ordained and sent me out to preach. I look forward to working with them and especially fellow preacher William St. John, who is largely responsible for my desire to preach. In meetings this year we have been in Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas. We found brethren contending for the faith with steadfast resolve and selfless devotion. We are looking forward to the Texas Labor Day Meeting, then to Bakersfield CA (Brundage Ln.) September 7-14, Napoleon AL Nov. 5 -9, and close the year in Dothan for the Alabama New Year's Meeting. Remember us when you pray.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, E-Mail trucrayer@aol.com, August 5—The work here with the Olivehurst, CA congregation continues to do well. We have been blessed by a number of young men speaking for us who desire to become gospel preachers. Greg Cardosa, Keith Hall, John Modgling, and Sammy DeWitt are studying diligently to improve their knowledge and speaking ability. It was a pleasure to work with the Aurora, MO congregation in a meeting in June. It was a special delight to work again with Roy Lee Criswell and his wife Zella and to stay in their home. Joann and I worked with them in Malawi some 35 years ago and learned to love and appreciate them. They certainly are dedicated to the Lord's work. The meeting

was blessed by a number of gospel preachers attending it along with a host of brothers and sisters in Christ from different parts of Missouri and Arkansas. We also enjoyed attending the Fourth of July meeting in Lebanon and appreciate the great work the Lee's Summit congregation has done with that meeting over the years. On the way back home we met with the Broomfield, CO congregation and preached for them. I have also participated in a monthly study at the Lodi, CA congregation along with Alan Bonifay, Greg Gay, and a number of young preachers.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, August 12—We enjoyed being with the church at Marietta, GA since last report where Bradley Prince was baptized during the meeting. Crowds were excellent with brethren driving from near and far to help out. Several preachers also came by including Kevin Presley, Daniel Smith, Dennis Smith, George Battey, Gene Grant and perhaps others whom I have forgotten to mention. Rick Martin lives at Marietta and does a great deal of good. He is a fine preacher in his own right and all would do well to call him for meetings. You won't be disappointed. We made our home with Rick and Jane and their sons, Matt and Ben. We were comfortable and treated royally. We look forward to returning in a few years. We are to hold a short meeting with the Yuba City, CA church this coming weekend and then the California Labor Day meeting at Manteca August 27-31. We pray for good in these places and look forward to seeing many friends and brethren. Just a note of caution here: If you are receiving mail or calls for financial support from preachers in the Philippines, it would be wise to check with either myself or Bro Danao before sending. We are sorry to report that there seems to be some who are actually with the digressive church asking our brethren for support. "Beware" seems to be good advice. Pray for the work.

Cullen L. Smith, 4217 McNiel Ave., W. F., TX 76308, (940) 689-9314, Aug 22—It has been a busy summer. I began the summer in KC at the 79th and Kansas congregation where Paul Nichols lives and works. We had excellent outside interest and the members worked to bring their friends. Thanks to gospel preachers Tony Denton, Mike Criswell, and David Griffin for attending. Paul has an excellent work there and I commend he and the brethren for their efforts as 2 were baptized and 5 made confessions. I appreciate Paul and Wilma's "basement home for preachers." From there I began the following Monday night in Bedford, IN and we baptized 1. It was great to spend time with Walter Hunter as he lives and works there and thanks to Floyd Harris Jr, Anthony Brockett, Greg Jordan, and John Strain for their attendance. I was glad to be able to attend both 4th of July meetings and look forward to working with Bro. David Stands next year at Sulphur. From there I went to Gailey, OK and we had outstanding crowds with one confession and one restoration. I appreciate Joe Hisle, Brandon Stephens, and Clarence Kessenger for their attendance, and the cooperation of sister congregations who encouraged us greatly. From there I was in Imperial NE for a 5 day meeting. They have weathered the loss of brother Jeff Parker but they have some very good solid

leadership there. I made my home with Roy D. and Peg Parker and I appreciate their hospitality. I especially want to thank brother Mike Middick for driving all the way from Canyon City to be there. Kevin Presley just closed our summer meeting and he did an outstanding job as always. We gained some excellent leads from the meeting and we commend him for his efforts. We were thankful that he could bring Bethany and Lauren with him. I look forward to TX Labor Day and the rest of my schedule for the year. I'll be at 21st. St. in OKC (Sept. 12-14) Ratliff City, OK (Sept. 17-21) Athens, TX (Oct. 10-12) Amarillo, TX (Oct. 24-26) Washington, OK (Nov. 14-16). May God bless the brotherhood.

Brett Hickey, 208 Crosshaven Ct., Antioch, TN 37013, brett-louisehickey@juno.com, (615) 501-9246, August 4—Since reporting last month, we placed a quarter page ad in the Nashville paper which has a circulation of 461,000 to stir up curiosity and interest on the Scriptural observance of the Lord's Supper. Several brethren helped develop something we could all be comfortable with. We wrote the ad like an article interviewing the Brookside brethren. We entitled the article, Brookside Church of Christ Laments Changes in the Lord's Supper. We received letters from four people, calls from eleven people and electronic mail from ten people. Twelve of these requested written materials and/or the CD with Ronny Wade's sermons on Worship put out by David Risener. We had a few studies by phone and are having studies with those who have contacted us. One has visited services and others have asked for directions. Five of the respondents have engaged in repeated discussions with us - a couple over 10 exchanges I appreciate the willingness and ability of some of the brethren here to help with these studies. We baptized a gifted, knowledgeable man in his 30's. He was impressed that we had the Lord's Supper every Sunday. He was stunned when he noticed just one cup and one loaf on the Lord's table. He remarked later, "I was used to the little wafers and cups, but you guys observed the Lord's Supper just like Jesus did." Later he added that he was impressed by the humility of the leadership. He said he was used to all the overdone emphasis on pompous titles and offices. He mused after our second study, "How close are you guys to the Bible?" We expect his wife to obey the gospel and are optimistic about his brother that is attending studies. We have several studies with members within the congregation. Louise's unsurpassed hospitality has enabled us to grow close to the brethren here in short order. Enthusiasm for the work is high even though we were hit hard with the news that Allison Harris had cancer. Please remember the Harris family in prayer. We were built up by the meeting here with Bruce Roebuck as well as preaching in the area by Ronny Wade, Jerry Dickinson and Allen Bailey. Our meeting at Gadsden was special. It had been 15 years since my last visit there. The Jackson's from Georgia and the Risinger's from Louisiana helped make the meeting. Kevin Presley, Daniel Smith and brethren from Birmingham and Piedmont were also good to support our efforts. We look forward to the Labor Day meeting at Chapel Grove this month. We go next to Atwater, CA, October 10-19 and Brazil, IN (Harrison/Blayne), November 29. Love the brotherhood!

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**THE BACK
PAGE...****MISTER PRACTICAL***By CARL M. JOHNSON*

Walter Scott, a descendent of the same Scottish clan as novelist and poet Sir Walter Scott, was one of the most influential members of the nineteenth century American Restoration Movement. He was the youngest of the "Restoration Foursome," which includes Alexander and Thomas Campbell and Barton W. Stone. Scott is credited with discovering the proper order of the conditions of salvation and applying them to evangelism in a practical way.

Scott was born in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, October 31, 1796. His parents were devout Presbyterians who hoped that upon Scott's graduation from the University in Edinburgh, he would enter the ministry. At the suggestion of an uncle, however, Scott immigrated to New York in 1818 where he became a Latin Tutor in a classical academy.

Catching the fever to "go west," Scott walked from New York to Pittsburgh (a 300-mile trip he would make on foot more than once in his life) where he found similar employment in a religious academy conducted by George Forrester. It was Forrester who convinced Scott to take the Bible as his sole authority in religion. Scott undertook a serious study of baptism in the Greek NT, was immersed (as opposed to being sprinkled or poured upon), and became involved with the little religious group Forrester had gathered.

Scott first met Alexander Campbell in the winter of 1821-1822. After discussing their religious views they were surprised and encouraged to find they possessed similar convictions. Both had been educated for the Presbyterian ministry, both had consciously forsaken the Westminster Confession of Faith in favor of a strictly Biblical approach to faith, and both were deeply disturbed by the deplorable state of religion. Scott and Campbell bonded closely and began cooperating in an effort to restore New Testament Christianity in America.

Scott and Campbell possessed qualities that complimented each other perfectly. Campbell tended to generalize particulars, while Scott preferred to analyze details. Campbell was always even-keeled and self-possessed, while Scott was given to mood swings involving great periods of depression. As an orator Campbell never fell below the expectations of his audience, but Scott frequently did. There were times, however, when Scott soared to heights of eloquence Campbell never equaled. On one such occasion Campbell was sitting in Scott's audience and was stirred to such ecstasy by Scott's preaching that in the midst of the sermon the normally placid Campbell shouted, "Glory to God in the highest!"

Scott was a skillful musician and singer, and unlike Campbell he worried obsessively about his voice. While he loved milk, he quit drinking it at one point because he thought it was causing him voice problems. When a sister offered him a glass of milk, he replied, "No thank you, sister. There is no music in a cow."

The commonly accepted view of conversion during this period was that it began with a miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit upon the sinner's heart. Scott contended, however, that faith is the first step in conversion not the miraculous operation of the Spirit. He argued that a rational examination of evidence leads the sinner to conclude Jesus Christ is the Son of God, as confessed by Peter in Matthew 16:16. Scott styled Peter's confession as "The Golden Oracle," and proclaimed it as the hub of the Bible. He added that after the sinner comes to believe in Jesus, he is commanded to repent and be baptized.

Ever the practical one, Scott developed in his first year of evangelism what was to become widely known as the "five-finger exercise." One day he encountered a group of small children who were leaving a school and told them, "Children, hold up your left hands. Now, beginning with your thumb, repeat what I say to you: Faith, repentance, baptism, remission of sins, and gift of the Holy Spirit. That takes up all your fingers." After repeating these associations several times, he told the children to go tell their parents "I will preach the gospel tonight at the school house, as you have it on the five fingers of your hands."

In New Lisbon, Ohio, November 18, 1827, in Scott's first sermon as an Evangelist he emphasized the good confession of Peter and noted that those who accepted this truth as preached by the apostles were commanded to repent and be baptized for remission of sins. Scott invited all who believed to respond in the same manner. At that point William Amend, a highly respected Presbyterian, startled both the crowd and preacher by pushing his way to the front and declaring, "I wish to be baptized for the remission of sins." That occasion marked the first time the gospel invitation—which we routinely extend at the end of our sermons today—was extended and responded to on American soil. God blessed America that day and we thank God for Walter Scott.—1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net

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. LXXVII

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NO. 10

SERVANTS FOR JESUS SAKE

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

When a person obeys the gospel of Christ the Bible pictures him as a **"servant of righteousness."** In Romans 6:17, 18 the apostle Paul says, "...God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Every convert made by the gospel becomes a **servant for Jesus sake**. Our Lord taught the apostles, when they were vying for importance in the kingdom, that to be great in His service was to be a servant (Matt. 20:26, 27).

There are different positions of service in the church, and every one of them is a volunteer place. God compels no one to serve Him who is unwilling to do so.

And even though one is a volunteer, he must qualify himself by the Lord's standard in order to serve in whatever special capacity he chooses.

When one obeys the gospel, he chooses to do so; he makes the choice to live a Christian life. After that he may then choose to become a special kind of servant for Jesus sake. He may choose to study and become a **congregational teacher**. On the other hand he may choose to become an **evangelist** or **preacher of the gospel**. Or he may aspire to become an **elder** in a congregation, or a **deacon**, and because he understands the stringent qualifications which God demands, begins to develop his talents and his reputation as a Christian in order to serve in one of these capacities. Women may also choose volunteer service and thus become "servants of the church." The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Rome, "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a **servant of the church** which is at Cenchrea" (Romans 16:1).

The apostles were chosen by the Lord and sent to preach the gospel. They could accept or reject the position the Lord gave them. Judas chose to reject it and betrayed the Lord. When Jesus was tried by Pilate, the apostle Peter chose to identify with the enemies of Christ, but came to himself, repented, and chose to serve our Lord.

In the early history of the church at Jerusalem special

servants were selected and put to work. They could choose to accept their assignment or reject it, but they had to have qualifications to serve - "honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." They were **selected by the church and appointed by the apostles**. They were not required to be teachers or preachers. Bible scholars concede that this was the work of deacons and they served under the authority of the apostles.

Later, **elders were appointed in the churches** (Acts 11:30; Acts 14:23). These men had to have the desire, and the choice was theirs to serve in this special capacity (1 Tim. 3:1). Each was to be an **"overseer" in a particular congregation**. They were to be shepherds of a **"flock" of Christians**. One of the qualifications required of them was to be "apt to teach." They were not required to be preachers, but they had to be knowledgeable enough to "feed the flock" and "watch for their souls" (Heb. 13:17), and skilful enough to "convince the gainsayers" (Tit. 1:9-11).

The particular field of labor for an elder is a local congregation. His authority does not extend beyond that church. If he moves, he leaves his special position. **If he serves as an elder in another congregation he must be chosen by that church.**

Two of the special servants at Jerusalem **left serving tables**. Steven chose to be a preacher, taught the people at Jerusalem and was stoned to death (Acts 7). Philip left serving tables, moved from Jerusalem to Caesarea and was known as "Philip the evangelist" (Acts 21:8).

The whole world is the field of evangelism (Mk. 16:15; Matt. 28:19), **while the work of an elder is limited to one congregation** (Acts 20:28, 1 Pet. 5:3). One man does the **"work of an evangelist"** (2 Tim. 4:5). Another holds "the office of a bishop" which is a **"good work"** (1 Tim. 3:1). Bishops or elders are to "feed the flock" over which "the Holy Ghost hath made you (them) overseers" (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3). An evangelist is commissioned to take the gospel to the "whole world," while an elder is obligated to one congregation.

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Editorial

WHAT'S NEXT

By DON L. KING

Television is taking some bold steps this year, according to our local newspaper. On the front page of the section called *Bay Area Living* in the Fremont, CA *Argus*, a long article details what the new programs are to be like this fall. In short, we are told that most of them are going to be more "sexy" than ever before. The first short paragraph says, "That steam coming from your TV set this fall isn't a malfunction. It's the sizzle from the sexiest season in broadcast history."

The executives feel America is ready for it and they intend to send it out. They hope by using more sleaze on the new programs they can bring interest back from the cable companies. There follows a vivid description of just what will be seen on the new shows which is embarrassing to read and we will not copy it here.

However, this brings us to the point of our short article. What are brethren going to do? No doubt some will watch it and be the worse for it. Most will tune the channel to something decent and a few may decide to get rid of their television sets, at least for the present. We would love to hear from our readers regarding this matter, but it brings to mind an interesting point.

There is certainly nothing wrong with throwing the TV set out the door, if that's what is best for you. After all, many of the new programs promise to glorify some things we sincerely believe to be wrong and Christians should not view them. In fact, we would sin in so doing. James, in Acts 15:20, warned the Gentile brethren to "abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." In other words, we are to abstain or stay away from fornication or anything leading to it. In fact, Paul told the Corinthian brethren to "Flee fornication..." (1 Corinthians 6-18). Other passages could be quoted but these two are enough to convince us that anything leading to that sin is to be avoided at all costs. So, if you feel getting rid of the TV is the best solution, that's fine.

However, what of the other inventions which are also being used to lead men and women astray today? Would anyone deny the dangers available on the Internet via our computers? We recently heard that the Internet has huge numbers of pornographic web sites. There is just no denying the addictive nature of pornography for some people. It is also theorized this terrible evil may be responsible for many abductions of women and even murders. Young people who have had unsupervised access to the Internet have been

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: What is the Bible pattern for churches sending help to other churches whose members are in need.

Answer: One such example of a church (Antioch), contributing to the needs of "brethren in Judea" is recorded in Acts 11:27-30.

The help was in response to a famine. The money was raised by the disciples (church) in Antioch when "every man according to his ability" gave into a common fund. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 later supplied specific instructions and authorization for the method of raising such a fund in a congregation. Paul and Barnabas were chosen as messengers to take the fund to the "brethren which dwelt in Judea." The money was delivered into the hands of the "elders" among the "brethren in Judea." Since there were a number of churches or congregations in Judea (1 Thess. 214; Galatians 1:22) we conclude that the funds were delivered into the hands of the elders in each church, who then made distribution among the needy saints of that church.

Another example is provided when the congregations of Galata, Macedonia, and Achaia contributed to the needs of the poor saints in Jerusalem. (Romans 15:25-28; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8 and 9) We do not know what precipitated this need, but we do know that the need was so great that the congregation in Jerusalem was unable to take care of it. Hence the help of other churches was needed. Gentile churches were called upon to help in Romans 15:25-27. Paul instructs the churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia regarding the need in 1 Cor. 16:1-4 and 2 Cor. 8 and 9. Those in Macedonia were willing above and beyond their ability to help in this matter 2 Cor. 8:1-5. Each church raised its own funds by the individual members making a contribution, on the first day of the week, as each had prospered 1 Cor. 16:1-2. Each church acting independently, chose its own messenger to whom it entrusted its contribution that it might be taken to Jerusalem 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:19, 23. Since we have no information to the contrary, we conclude that when these messengers arrived in Jerusalem they delivered the funds to the elders, as Paul and Barnabas had previously done, and the elders made distribution to the needy saints. From these two examples, a number of very important facts emerge:

1. Each church gave their contribution to their own selected agent or messenger and he became responsible to them and the Lord for faithfully delivering it to the Jerusalem church. There is no hint that these separate contributions lost their identity in a pooled or combined fund. The receiving church could identify the gift as coming from a certain church and the amount sent by that church. Neither was not lost in some centralized fund. Such a fund simply

does not fit the pattern.

2. No church sent its money through another church. There was no "sponsoring church" arrangement, where a church received funds and then forwarded the those funds to the church in need.

3. Since churches who participated in sending help, contributed directly to the church in need, that the need might be supplied, they avoided centralization of funds and power.

4. We today should not adopt what they avoided.

Brethren this pattern needs to be followed just like any other. There is a pattern for the mode of baptism. That pattern involves immersion Acts 8:35-39; Romans 6:3-4. The fact that someone wants to be baptized on the desert doesn't give me the right substitute sprinkling or pouring. I am duty bound to honor the pattern and find sufficient water in which to immerse the individual. There is a pattern for the Lord's Supper 1 Cor. 11:23-26. I am duty bound to honor this pattern also. The fact that someone does not want to drink after someone else does not give me the right to break the pattern and use a plurality of drinking vessels. The same is true in sending funds to other churches who have needy saints or in supporting evangelistic efforts. There may be difficulties in honoring the Bible pattern but those difficulties do not justify breaking the pattern revealed by the Holy Spirit. (*Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com*)

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN (PART VII)

By BARNEY OWENS

Some fail to consider the importance of our subject because there is no recognition of authority. We find ourselves in a world where authority is discarded and various groups wish it lifted for them. Marches are held, speeches are made and articles written to set authority aside. Religionists must bear a large portion of the responsibility for the prevalent climate. Long have preachers and religious teachers promoted a relaxing of authority, therefore, we should not be surprised that their hearers have put the principle into action on other fronts.

Just this past week I heard a preacher advertise: "Come to worship with us, we are not about a religion, we're about Christ." What does such a statement mean? It means that as long as you think of Christ as the atonement for sin, what you believe or do is of little or no consequence. Such is not only unscriptural, it demonstrates the ignorance of the one making the statement.

Jesus knew one could not please God without submitting to the proper authority. When He arrived on the scene in a fleshly body, men were following the traditions (commandments) of other men to the

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PAGES FROM THE PAST

*(The following article by brother J.D. Phillips first appeared in the May 1, 1929 number of **The Truth** published by H.C. Harper. Doug was a young man in the prime of his preaching career. He would become a prolific writer and debater. This article pinpoints a problem that is still with us today. Language precedes practice. Often we become as we speak, which is one reason pure speech is so important. Please read carefully these words of wisdom.)*

PURE LANGUAGE RESTORED

By Jas. D. Phillips

In our effort to complete the restoration of Primitive Christianity, the work so nobly and successfully begun by the Campbells and others of a century ago, we must not overlook the fact that our language is becoming very corrupt, and needs to be improved. Bro. Alexander Campbell, the main leader in the movement to restore the ancient order of things in religion, said, in 1851:

"As the Lord promised by Zephaniah (3:10), that in order to union amongst his people, he would give them **"a pure language, that they might all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent,"** so every effort at evangelical reformation must, to heal divisions and to prevent debate among Christians—aim at a "pure language," the language of Canaan, and avoid that of Ashdod,—calling Bible things by Bible words."—**Campbell on Baptism**, page 20.

Concerning the language of Ashdod, which types the corrupt language of the Catholic and Protestant and Digressive Christian churches, I quote the following from **"Pioneer Sermons and Addresses,"** published by F. L. Rowe:

"The corrupt language of Ashdod has fearfully invaded the pulpit and the press of the living world. It is well illustrated by Nehemiah, chapter 12, in his history of the Jewish captivity. One passage will suffice: 'In those days also, I saw Jews who had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab. And their children **spoke half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in Jewish language;** but, according to the language each people.' 'And,' says Nehemiah the reformer, 'I contended with them and reviled them.'

"Babylon the Great is the anti-type of old Babyon. And most Protestants that have come out of her still speak, and preach, and teach in a mixed and confused dialect.

"No one of Elder Campbell's contemporaries known to me more earnestly contended and labored than he for **"a pure speech,"** a Scriptural dialect, or the calling of Bible **themes** by Bible names. 'The restoration of a pure speech' was with him a cardinal theme, and a petition in many a prayer."

Bro. Campbell said, in explaining what he meant by a "restoration of a pure speech:"

"—instead of the modern ecclesiastic and sectarian terminology, or technical style, we adopt BIBLE NAMES FOR BIBLE THINGS. For example: Instead of 'sacraments,' we prefer **ordinances**; for 'the Eucharist,' **the Lord's Supper**; for 'covenant of works,' **the law**; for 'covenant of grace,' **the gospel**; for 'Testament,' **Institution** or **Covenant**; for 'Trinity,' **Godhead**; for 'the first, second and third person,' **the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**; for 'Eternal Son,' **the Son of God**; for 'original sin,' the fall or the offence; for 'Christian Sabbath,' **Lord's day** or **First day**; for effectual calling, **calling** or **obedience**; for "merits of Christ," **righteousness** or **sacrifice of Christ**; or general atonement, **ransom for all**; for 'free grace,' **grace**; for 'free will,' **will**, & C. & C." — **Campbell on Baptism**, page 20.

To this I will add, that instead of saying, "Get religion," we should say, **"obey the gospel**; for "join the church," **added to the church!** "under the blood," **purchased by the blood of Christ**; for "our church," **the church of God or of Christ**.

There are some things practiced among us, which are not "Bible things" and hence, they cannot be called by "Bible names." For example: "Sunday School" or "Bible School" or "Bible Study" or "Bible Classes." There is one institution that is called by all these names. It is a separate organization from the church, and hence can't be called **the church**. "The Pastor" is a name for an unscriptural preacher. Elders (not preachers) were called pastors in the days of the Apostles, hence no preacher was called "the pastor" in Apostolic times. "The (Preacher) Pastor" is not a "Bible thing," hence cannot be called by a "Bible name." "The cup" used on the Lord's table is called "a cup . . . the cup," etc. "Cups" is not a "Bible thing," hence cannot be called by a "Bible name." All these things are as foreign to the "pure language" of the Bible as whales are to Arizona desert. What are we going to do with them? They are not "Bible things" and hence cannot be called by "Bible names." By all means, give them up! Do away with these things and instead of saying, "Sunday School," say **church**; for cups, **the cup**. Put the "Pastor" in the evangelistic field, where he belongs; and cease calling him 'the Pastor,' but call him an **evangelist**.

Again, Bro. Campbell says: "The confusion of religious speech now existing is analogous to the confusion of speech at Babel, and the confounding or mixing the pure language of Canaan with the language of Ashdod during the captivity our creeds, sermons, and scholastic terms, mingled with some Scriptural terms, terminating in an almost general ignorance of the sacred writings, is illustrative of the analogy between us and the captive Jews while in Babylon."

Let us come out of this confusion, and give up the corrupt language of Babylon and Ashdod and return to the pure language of Canaan. Paul says, "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." And

he also says, "Use pure speech which cannot be condemned." It is high time that all who "love Zion and seek the peace and happiness of Jerusalem" were doing this.

"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust, O Jerusalem; arise, loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."—Isa. 52:1. "Up, and be doing, and the Lord will be with us." Come out of Babylon, my people," saith the Lord.

MAN'S ROLE IN THE HOME & CHURCH (PART 1)

By GREG GAY

Have you noticed in today's entertainment men are mostly considered inept and ignorant creatures that are to be tolerated as barely necessary but largely ignored? That is the opposite of what entertainment used to portray. In the past there was a time when entertainment tended to put women in a bad light. Actually, neither extreme properly illustrates God's desire for appropriate male/female interaction or the proper fulfillment of our roles in the home and in the church.

God gives both men and women assignments of great responsibility in the home and in the church. Often in our eagerness to teach to overcome false teaching regarding the woman's role we end up neglecting to teach scriptural principles about the man's role. With this article I hope to begin a study of the man's role in the home and church.

Whatever God assigns men in their role must be carefully heeded. Paul wrote our brethren at Rome about Israel's mistake of creating their own standard of righteousness. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:1-3).

Any area where we create our own righteousness becomes proof of rebellion against God. To avoid that rebellion we are careful in doctrine to "speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent." We should really want that same statement to be true in fulfilling our roles in our homes as well.

It should not surprise us that the religious world in general has a distorted view of the man's role in the home and in the church just as they have a distorted view of the woman's role. After all, this is the same religious world that has distorted every doctrinal truth of the word of God without exception. Sadly, like

Israel of old wanting a king we are always in danger of looking around and desiring to follow such departures. Such curiosity is often accompanied with great feeling but little substance so we must always be on guard lest any be led away by such a "wind of doctrine" (Eph 4:14).

To begin, for God's men to be great leaders at home and in the church they must be willing to be submissive. The concept of submission is essential for all Christians. James writes, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

Submission is especially important for those who are in positions of leadership. Individuals in positions of leadership with an accompanying degree of authority will be tempted to abuse their position by taking advantage of others and thinking of themselves more highly than they ought.

Jesus addressed this with his Apostles. "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 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 20:25-28).

"Servant leadership" is a phrase that has been coined to summarize what God wants of leaders in the church. By emphasizing service before leadership hopefully leaders are helped to avoid being "lords over God's heritage" (1 Peter 5:3).

Within the church all are to be submissive to those who are in positions of leadership. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account that they may do it with joy, and not with grief for that is unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17).

And, all of us are to display a submission to our assigned roles. I believe that is the meaning of the following passage: "...Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).

That means a man will voluntarily be submissive to his role and a woman to hers. Also, a man will be submissive to what God has assigned women, and women will be submissive to what God has assigned men. This prevents a man from assigning his role to a woman and a woman from assigning her role to a man. This also prevents it from being OK for either to choose to take over what is assigned to the other.

The first official pronouncement of man's role is seen in the statement of punishment God gave to Adam and Eve after the fall in the garden. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth

children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life (Gen. 3:16-17).

Notice that the woman was informed that the husband "shall rule over thee." This means God assigned the man the primary role of leadership in the home. That does not diminish the woman's role at all, but it does mean the man has the largest slice of the pie of responsibility for the home. I believe God intended man to assume that role even before the fall. In the New Testament when Paul gives reasons why women are to be silent in worship and also to not usurp authority over a man he says, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Tim 2:13).

By virtue of the order of creation and by God's command the man is to be the primary leader in the home. He is to voluntarily assume that role in obedience to God. And, in order for him to properly take that role his wife must voluntarily let him be in his assigned role. Just because God commands men to lead does not mean we will be particularly good at our assignment. In fact, we may even be very inept, at least at first, but that does not change the assignment.

More to come, Lord willing.—1820 Casterbridge Dr, Roseville, CA 95747

SERVANTS FOR JESUS SAKE

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These are two different positions in the church. One person does not hold both at the same time, and just "change hats" when it is convenient or profitable to do so. (Who would hire a traveling salesman to be a shepherd of his flock if he really cared for the sheep?) And both of these classes of servants may be supported by the church to do their work (1 Cor. 9:3-14, 1 Tim. 5:17, 18). If a preacher gives up evangelizing to be ordained an elder, and he is willing to spend full time doing that work, his support can continue in that special capacity just as in the former position.

There are scriptures which are generic and they apply to all Christians, and there are scriptures which apply to special positions or classes of servants. As an example, such scriptures as Rom. 12:1; Rom. 12:11; Gal. 6:9; 1 Pet. 3:15; 1 Pet. 4:11; Heb. 10:25 are generic and apply to all. Other scriptures are specific and apply to various offices or classes of service. For one to properly and scripturally serve the Lord, he must "rightly divide the word of truth" and be directed by God who has given us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3).

May the Lord help all to discharge our duties as "servants for Jesus sake."—14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012

EDITORIAL

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lured into sin. This is a simple fact.

Our Minds Can Be Ruined In Many Ways

Who can deny the harm that can be done by reading impure books and magazines? Is it not possible to poison one's mind and be tempted into many sins by such things? What about music? Some of the music on radio and recorded on CDs and tapes is also lurid and unfit for Christians to have or hear.

The answer to all the above questions is an obvious "yes." What then, are we to do? How shall we react to this evil influence? Not long before the crucifixion, Jesus lifted up his eyes to Heaven and prayed a wonderful prayer. John 17 gives us the text of it. He was concerned about the disciples having to remain in a wicked world after He went back to the Father in Heaven. He prayed for their welfare and safe-keeping. In verses 14 and 15 He said: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." He went on to say, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (Verses 16 and 17)

John wrote, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John 5:18 and 19) These passages, and others, appear to show that we live in a world where evil exists, yet we are not partakers of it.

Obviously, a Christian must not be involved in those sins we noticed before. However, we must exist and earn a living, etc., in a wicked world. We are surrounded by things which would lead us to destruction if allowed to do so. How then, do we deal with it? We simply do not allow ourselves to dabble or experiment with things that are wrong. We must have enough self discipline to avoid them. We are in the world but we must not be of the world. We must learn to control such inventions as television and if we cannot, then we must get rid of them. If we can watch decent things (news, sports, documentaries, etc.) there is no harm done but if we can't discipline ourselves and refrain from that which is wrong, then we simply deny ourselves the possession. The same is true with computers, radios, tapes, CDs, modem music, etc. Admittedly, there is much evil in the world. However, there is also a great deal of good we can do with modern inventions. We learn from good books and are greatly benefited. The Internet provides much good also. Some good sermon material is available and a world of research that is certainly helpful. We preach the saving Gospel of Christ via television, radio and all of the

to use. We must make sensible decisions in all such matters and be ready to say "no."

Think on these things.—1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE

THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN (PART VII)

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degrading of the commandments of God, therefore; their authority was no higher than this earth.

The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven Or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, if we say, from heaven; he will say unto us, why did ye not believe him? (Mt. 21:25)

Such is the dilemma of men today, who have rejected the Word of God and have no authority for their actions from God. The scope of men who are echoes of these people is abroad in the land. And, those looking to these for leadership are likewise on the broad road that surely leads to destruction. We shall continue noticing another of the doctrines that are founded and therefore stand on the authority of men.

Aliens Should Pray The "Sinner's Prayer" To Be Saved

From pulpit and press, in religious gatherings and hospital rooms multitudes and individuals are exhorted to give their heart to Jesus appealing for salvation through prayer. The passage usually referred to is the occasion of the Pharisee and the Publican who (in the parable) went up into the Temple to pray Luke 18. Before proceeding further, I direct your attention to this passage to glean a few facts.

First, of all, we are told plainly the purpose of this parable. "*And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others;*" (Lk. 18:9). The parable then was not taught to exhort "alien sinners" to pray for salvation or anything else. It's purpose was to remind these Jews who trusted in themselves that God was their Savior. And, there is the implication that the Gentiles were going to have the Gospel preached unto them in a short time. God, who provided for Israel having selected and provided for them, would have the inclination to despise the rejected people. The man who places trust in God is accepted, not the man who trusts in himself.

Let me say just here, the man who seeks salvation through a means apart from God's plan is the man who is trusting in himself. There is no proof nor consolation to those wishing to find salvation through prayer in this passage.

Secondly, these men (the Pharisee and the Publican) were both Jews. They had gone up to the Temple in sacred devotion to God. One of these (the Publican) realized that he was sinful before his Maker, while the other (the Pharisee), actually worshipped himself. No alien is under consideration by the Lord.

Thirdly, the conclusion of the parable is stated by Jesus: "*everyone that exalteth himself shall be*

abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," (Lk. 18:14). This admonition is for servants of God. We cannot think ourselves better than anyone else. Look around, the tendency is apparent even today. There are some Christians who exalt themselves even to the point of "being proud of their humility." Those who teach others to pray for salvation, or seek salvation by praying themselves, are bowing to the authority of men rather than God. They are exalting themselves rather than accepting God's means of removing sin, through obedience to the Gospel. With these God is not pleased (2 Thes. 1:7-10).

The conclusion is irresistible: the parable has nothing to do with "alien sinners," praying for salvation or for anything else.

What Is Said And What Is Not Said

Reading through the book of Acts, which is the portion of God's word that gives to us the account of men and women being converted, our interest is kindled regarding "*the sinner's prayer.*" There are two things that are apparent. These are what is said about the "*sinner's prayer*" and what is not said about such "*a prayer.*"

In reading these accounts including the conversion of Jews, thousands influenced by a single sermon in Act chapters 2-7, the Samaritans in chapter 8 and the Ethiopian in the same chapter. Saul of Tarsus in chapter 9, the first Gentile Cornelius chapter ten, many Gentiles through chapter 16, and then the Jailer at Phillipi and Lydia in chapter 16, not a one of them were told to "*pray the sinner's prayer.*" Please do not regard that statement lightly. NOT A ONE-NOT A SINGLE ONE was told what preachers and the religious press are telling people to do to be saved. There is not a statement to support this doctrine, not a command to back it up, not an example of anyone ever praying such a prayer. While there is a movement among so-called "Evangelical Christians" to honor the Bible as the infallible Word of God, there is little respect for the Word. If such respect for the Word existed, then when the Bible fails to endorse that teaching it would be abandoned. What the Bible does not say respecting salvation must be left unsaid by fallible men.

Again, reading through the book of Acts the things men were told to do jumps from the pages. Believers accept and obey these, knowing salvation will be granted to those who obey them. Christ is *the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.*" (Heb 5:9).

1. Acts chapter two the cry came asking what to do. It was answered with "*repent and be baptized ... for the remission of sin*" (v. 38).

2. Chapter three the command was "*repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out*" (v 19).

3. Chapter eight we are told "*when they believed Phillip preaching... they were baptized*" (v 12).

4. Later of the nobleman *"they went down both into the water... and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water... the eunuch... went on his way rejoicing"* (v 3 8-39).

5. The Lord told Saul of Tarsus (in chapter nine) *"go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do"* (v 6). One came to him in the city and demanded, *"arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"* (22:16).

6. The first Gentiles were spoken to by Peter in chapter ten *"and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord"* (v 48).

7. Lydia's conversion is recorded in chapter sixteen, *"whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken... and... she was baptized"* (v 14-15).

8. The response of the Jailer to the preaching is recounted in the same chapter *"and he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized"* (v 33).

9. The Corinthians bowed to the Lord in chapter eighteen *"many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized"* (v 8).

10. The people of Ephesus who had incorrectly done what they *"thought"* was the will of God, quickly responded to the truth, *"when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord"* (19:5).

Here are presented statements, commands and examples of *"alien sinners"* turning to the Lord. While not one of these were asked to *"pray the sinner's prayer,"* what they were asked to do they did, and by obedience they received what God offered them, namely, remission of sins, their sins were blotted out, their sins were washed away, and they rejoiced in the grace of God.

How different is the doctrine which must be taught by the will of Jesus Christ and the doctrines which are taught by the commandments of men. The so-called *"sinners prayer"* is commanded by man and is therefore vain.

What Would An Alien Sinner Pray For?

Let us suppose that an *"alien sinner"* wished to pray, exactly what would he ask God to grant him which has not already been provided? If God has already provided salvation with the conditions stated to receive it, and one fails to meet those conditions, is it not mockery to ask Him to grant it in another way? When God gives the condition, if I want salvation another way, will I be saved anyway?

To impress this upon our minds, if a man interested in salvation should pray, *"Lord be merciful to me a sinner,"* does this not indicate that God has not been merciful up to this point? The fact of the matter is that God has been merciful to all men. It is by mercy that men are saved according to Titus 3:5. In addition, when we lacked strength to save ourselves, Christ was sent to die for us as sinners, Romans 5:6-8. Beside that, sinners are the only ones in need of mercy. If we were righteous, there would have been no reason to

extend salvation. Does a saved man need salvation? Each day the world stands is testimony to God's mercy as He wishes all men to be saved (2 Pet. 3:9). All things considered, the so-called *"sinner's prayer"* is a slam on God.

Comparing Teaching For Doctrine The Commandments Of Christ: And Teaching For Doctrine The Commandments Of Men

This should make it clear that the *"sinner's prayer"* is not that which Christ commanded to be taught by His followers. Scriptural statements are placed beside what men demand.

Jesus affirmed, *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."* (Mk 16:16) Men affirm, *"He that believeth and prays the sinner's prayer shall be saved."*

Peter commanded, *"Repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins."* (Acts 2:38) Men command, *"Repent and pray the sinner's prayer for the remission of sins."*

Ananias demanded, *"Be baptized and wash away thy sins."* (Acts 22:16) Men demand, *"Pray the sinner's prayer and wash away thy sins."*

Paul said, *"As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* (Gal. 3:27) Men say, *"As many as pray the sinner's prayer have put on Christ."*

There is a clear difference in the words of inspiration and those advocated by men in pulpit and press. **Telling men to pray the sinner's prayer is teaching for doctrine the commandment of men.** The Lord declared that such teaching is *"vain"* (Mt. 15:9).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Future For OPA

The next year or so we look forward to increasing the subscription list for the paper. We hope to do this in several ways. Some have agreed to donate personal funds each month so that the paper may be sent to those who perhaps do not get *OPA*. We are now gathering names and some have already been entered into our files. Also, we are continuing the *"subscribe for a friend at half price"* deal which a number of you seem to appreciate. You may subscribe for yourself at the regular \$10 per year rate and submit the name of a friend or brother for only \$5. If every subscriber would make a conscious effort to do this the list would double within one month. Please, sit down as you read this and send your renewal along with one for a friend. Send us \$15 for the both of you. Also, we continue to be thankful for the donations, from time to time, to send the paper to the poor brethren in foreign lands. This would be a great expense for the paper to bear alone. With your help, it is easily done. Too, we continue to strive for excellence in the materials we provide for your reading pleasure. A wider variety of writers will be seen in the future. If you have topics you would like to see addressed in *OPA*, feel free to write us and ask. If you have a criticism, by all means, feel free to let us know about it. If possible,

we will make changes to better suit the needs of brethren. The paper goes all over the world now. Please, help us send it to even more the next twelve months.—DLK

Please Notice

We have received word from Alfred Newberry that all of the tracts he has written in years gone by are now out of print. He cannot supply more at this time. Please keep this in mind.—DLK

65th Wedding Anniversary

Earl and Flora Helvey will have been married 65 years Sept. 17, 2003. Flora's health has deteriorated with Alzheimer's and she has been in a care facility for the last several years. Earl is still able to attend worship regularly even though he has had some health concerns as of late. Words of encouragement and congratulations can be sent to Earl & Flora at 5310 64th St., Sacramento, CA 95820.—Greg Gay

Old Paths Advocate On CD!

Recently, Brethren George Battey and Richard Bunner have worked together to put the Old Paths Advocate on CD disks. The entire project is completely finished (by the time you read this). Seventy years of the *OPA* and four years of *The Truth* (the paper preceding the *OPA*) are all on three CDs - searchable and fully indexed! This is a great source of material from writers all across the brotherhood. *Old Paths Advocate* is the third oldest paper among the churches of Christ. *Only Firm Foundation* and *Gospel Advocate* are older. Every church member should have this at hand. The price for the entire set is **\$80 + \$3 for postage and handling**. Also available on six CDs are the following excellent hard to find, and out-of-print books: Meyer's Commentary; Bengel's Gnomon; Commentary on Acts (Hackett); Wine (Fruit of the Vine); Wine (Temperance Bible Commentary); Wine (Bible Laws of Fermentation); Wine (Divine Law As To); Christ and His Kingdom (Whiteside & Nichol); Church of Christ (Sommer); Clean Church (Ketcherside); Colleges (Ketcherside); First Principles and Perfection (Lamar); Gospel Restored (Scott); Grounds of Division (DeGroot); Hector Among The Doctors (Sommer); Immortality of the Soul (Mattison); Kingdom of the Messiah (Ketcherside); Messiahship or Great Demonstration (Scott); Missouri Christian Lectures (1883-1891); Old Path Pulpit (Allen); Pioneer Sermons; Plain Sermons (Sommer); Rachel Reasoner (Sommer); Radio Talks (No. 14 Ketcherside); Reason and Revelation (Milligan); Remedial System (Christopher); Resurrection of the Dead (Mattison); Royal Priesthood (Ketcherside); Simple Trusting Faith (Ketcherside); Walks About Jerusalem (Errett); Writings of Benjamin Franklin; Wilkes-Ditzler Debate (infant baptism, baptism, sprinkling); Wallace-Ketcherside Debate (located preacher, colleges); Wallace Ketcherside Debate St. Louis (located preacher, colleges); Miller-Sommer Debate (triune immersion, footwashing, holy kiss); Smith-Hunt Debate (instrumental music); Stark-Warlick Debate (instrumental music); Showalter-Clark Debate (instrumental music); Debate on Bible Classes (Buchanan,

Hayhurst, Johnson, Bonneau); Warlick-Phillips Debate (Bible classes); Tallman-Watson Debate (Bible classes); Whitten-Lanier Debate (Bible classes); Sommer-Armstrong Debate (religio-secular schools); fung-Chism Debate (spiritualism); Russell-White Debate ("Jehovah's Witnesses"); Pritchett-Sweeney Debate (baptism); Moody-Harding Debate (baptism, operation of Holy Spirit); Stigers-Kellems Debate (individual communion cups); Mansfield-Hart Debate (classes); Loft-Smith Debate (Baptist name); King-Hobbs Debate (endless punishment); Ketcherside-Porter Debate (orphan homes, colleges); Hunt-Inman Debate (instrumental music); Franklin-Thompson Debate (baptism); Franklin-Merrill Debate (Oustification); Colley-Ketcherside Debate (located preacher); Boswell-Hardeman Debate (instrumental music); Dalton-Burnette Debate (salvation); Connelly-Field Debate (state of the dead); Carlton-Moore Debate (destiny of man); Carpenter-Hughes Debate (destiny of the wicked); Cowan-Sommer Debate (warfare, sect-baptism); Braden-Kelly Debate (Mormonism); Enright-Ray Debate (Catholicism); Braden-Hughey Debate (baptism, creeds); The Apostolic Way (1916-1934). The price for this set is only **\$30 + \$3 for postage and handling**. These books are fully indexed and you can find exactly where you want to go in just seconds. Please contact George Battey at gbattey@bigzoo.net or phone 770-946-4532.



Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net, September 8—We enjoyed having Reggie Kinser in a meeting with us here at Ardmore August 20-24. Good crowds prevailed during the meeting with visitors from numerous area congregations and with preaching brethren Bob Johnson, Melvin Blalock, Cullen Smith, and Brandon Stephens attending at least once. We also enjoyed attending the Texas Labor Day meeting conducted by the Fossil Creek congregation in Fort Worth. We look forward to having Doug Hawkins with us October 22-26, climaxing with the 4th Sunday singing here at Ardmore. Sally is almost halfway through her treatment and we appreciate all the cards, calls, and prayers in her behalf

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, Sept. 2—Our meeting in Miami, OK closed with one man being baptized into Christ. We had an excellent meeting with consistently good crowds. The meeting at Moore closed with no visible results, but we had excellent crowds at this meeting too, and I believe some good was done. Lord willing, we begin a ten-day meeting Friday night at Paris, TX, from there we are scheduled at Healdton, OK (Sept. 21-28), Lee's Summit, MO (Oct. 4-12), Cable Ridge, MO (Oct.

19-26), Kansas City, KS 36th & Everett (Oct. 29-Nov. 2), Oakdale, CA (Nov. 7-16), Joplin, MO (Nov. 19-23), and Davis, OK (Dec. 5-7).

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, Sept. 15—The Texas Labor Day meeting was very enjoyable for me. Our largest crowd was 770, according to the people who were in charge of the building. Brethren came from several states. The theme of the meeting was "Guarding The Faith." Several preachers participated and all delivered edifying and thought provoking sermons. It was good to see old friends of years gone by and meet new ones. Next we were at Hartwell near Huntsville, AR for a good meeting which resulted in two baptisms. I have worked with these brethren for nearly forty years, and find them to be true to the Book and always interested in spreading the gospel. The Lord willing we go next to Killbuck, OH Sept. 24-28; Fossil Creek in Ft. Worth, TX Oct. 11-19 and Broken Arrow, OK Nov. 14-16. This year is swiftly winding down. May all our work glorify the Lord who loved us and purchased us with his precious blood.

Allen Bailey, 1633 Trinity View, Irving, TX 75060, allenbailey@thechurch.com—Please note my new email address. I will still receive mail from our published email address but this is my active email address. Today is Labor Day and the Texas Labor Day meeting ended. The crowds were not as big this year as the last year or two but still we had good crowds. The Texas Labor Day meeting has become an event in this part of the country. It is typically the largest gathering of Christians in this state during the year. My thoughts were with the Tennessee Labor Day meeting with the absence of Dwight Patton. Dwight was such an inspiration to the congregation and to the Labor Day Meeting. He has gone on to receive his reward however, he left a legacy. We continue to think of all of you in Tennessee. The Irving congregation continues to press on. In the past several months we have had several baptisms, confessions, and restorations. The word of God is still powerful. One brother was restored who had been away for about 10 years. Two of the friends that Luke, my son, graduated with were baptized also. Oh! The energy and love for the truth that is manifest by all who willingly obey it. In a blink of an eye we will be looking at the Preachers Study and New Year Meeting. These brotherhood meetings can be so uplifting when the attitudes and dispositions are Christlike. We have been kept busy with meetings this year. It has been a pleasure to be all across the country. Kansas, Florida, California, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and other places. May God's name be glorified by all of our collective efforts.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Sept. 11—It was a joy to be with the congregation at Mountain Grove, MO for a meeting, July 19-27. We had visitors from eleven congregations. One night the building was filled almost to capacity. Ed Ball deserves special mention for having driven a total of about 500 miles to attend two services. I don't remember how many meetings I have held there through the years, but we

always enjoy being with these good brethren. The Lord willing, I am to return for another effort in 2007. Aug. 6-10, I looked forward to the meeting at Cleburne, TX for two reasons. First, it was an opportunity to be with the congregation for the first time to preach the gospel, and second, because it was where my father, Carl Nichols, was born in a covered wagon in 1893. Cleburne is where Melvin Blalock lives and works with the church he helped establish about eighteen years ago. He has done a good work and his family is well respected in that congregation. The church is close-knit and the members are friendly and hospitable. We had visitors from a number of congregations as well as some outsiders. It was good to see old friends and to make new acquaintances. Aug. 29, I spoke at the Labor Day meeting at Neosho, MO. May the Lord bless all our righteous efforts.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069—I am reminded of the words of the prophet, "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." The summer has been so short and there is yet so much to do. My schedule for fall will be Valliant, OK Sept. 19-21, and Harrodsburg, IN Oct. 1-5. Our meeting here at Sharonville will be Oct. 18-26 with Brother Wayne McKamie preaching. Pray for us.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, Sept. 13, e-mail old_paths@juno.com—We recently held an enjoyable, and we hope profitable, meeting at the Yuba City, CA congregation where we were happy to baptize a young lady into Christ. Crowds were excellent and nearby congregations were good to help. Several preachers including Bennie Cryer attended one or more services. It was also a pleasure to be asked to hold the California Labor Day meeting for Manteca where five young people were baptized, some by their fathers. To God goes the glory. Crowds were large with brethren driving from near and far to attend. We appreciated the hospitality of Melvin and Lynette Lee who allowed us to make their home ours and also the fine spirit shown by all. We had planned to be in Springfield, MO (North side congregation) this week but due to a misunderstanding of the dates that meeting has been postponed until October 26 -November 2. Lord willing, we are to be in Covina, CA for a week beginning November 9. Please come and be with us if you can. One was baptized here at home last Lord's Day by her grandfather and we begin, Lord willing, tomorrow morning with Joe Hisle for our meeting. We look forward to hearing good preaching. The church here has just begun airing Ronny Wade's TV tapes on PAX television, Lord's Day's from 10:00 to 10:30 A.M. We anticipate much good from that. Pray for us in the work. Preachers, don't forget to send us your reports and articles.

Reggie Kinser, 501 Peabody Rd., Columbia, MO 65202, (573) 874-3535 rkinser@msn.com, Sept. 2, 2003—Our work here at Columbia continues to bear fruit. Since last reporting two more have obeyed the gospel. Mike Mitchell and Christina Cottle recently sought out our congregation as a result of the television program. This makes a total of three souls who have come to the

Lord in response to the program this year. For this we give God the glory. This summer we have enjoyed meetings with Johnny Elmore and Jimmie Smith, both of whom did an excellent job in proclaiming the gospel. Tani and I were thrilled to have these men of God in our home. Recently, I have been privileged to speak at Buffalo, MO, Bedford, IN, Denison TX, and Marion IA. Our meeting at Marion was especially enjoyable as we made our stay with Matt and Jennifer Enos. We feel blessed above measure for the opportunity to have experienced the hospitality of the Marion brethren. May God bless them in the work. We also just concluded a meeting at Ardmore, OK where Johnny and Sally Elmore make their home. It was great to be able to spend some time with this dedicated, godly couple. Through the years, no sister has encouraged me more in the preaching of the gospel than Sally Elmore. This meeting was no exception, for even though she was recovering from surgery she was present at every service. Please continue to remember Sally and Johnny in your prayers. The meeting at Ardmore was well attended by area congregations, especially the congregation of Washington, OK which gave the meeting a great boost by turning out in force. A special note of appreciation is due gospel preachers: Melvin Blalock, Bob Johnson, Cullen Smith and Brandon Stevens who drove some distance to support the meeting. We concluded the month of August by speaking at the Labor Day Meeting in Neosho, MO, where we enjoyed a brief stay at the home of Roger and Sue Owens whom we love and appreciate so very much. God bless the brotherhood.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42501, (806) 676-4347, douglas@alltel.net, September 3, 2003—At this writing we are bleary eyed and sleep deprived (at least Lori is). Our new son is here and we are happy to report that his lungs are fully functional. He weighed in at 7 1/2 pounds and measured 19 1/2 inches. His mother calls him Braden Trent. I've not thought yet what to call him. We are thrilled and thank the good Lord that at this time all is well. Lord willing, my schedule will resume the first of October. I plan to be in PA and OK in the month of October. The eastern Labor day meeting in Lexington was well worth attending the night I was there. We were encouraged to hear the fine preaching, especially Bro. Barney Owens' sermon. His preaching always seems to strengthen my resolve to declare the whole counsel of God. I admire him greatly as a preacher of the gospel. Realizing it will be history at this reading, I'll mention again that we look forward to having Bro. Kevin Presley at Blue Springs beginning September 21. We pray God's blessings to be with all the faithful.

Greg Gay, 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747, papagreg@aol.com, 916-771-2376, August 28, 2003—I was in a meeting at Dothan, AL July 9-13, my first time there. I enjoyed visiting with the families there and spending time with Kevin Presley who is doing a great work and Daniel Smith who is there for the summer. The congregation has had a great start in their few years. I appreciate Don Jackson visiting the meeting from Georgia and the many others who came from congregations near and far. I stayed with Charles &

Donna Marsh and appreciate their hospitality. I heard from them their youngest son Craig was recently baptized which is great news! August 3-10 I was in Lebanon, MO. A special treat during the meeting was being able to stay with my stepfather and mother, Bill and Maxine Gum. The meeting was well attended and brethren were very hospitable. Visiting preachers included Ron Alexander, Delbert Doman, Billy Dickinson, Brad Shockley, and Ronny Wade. I was raised at nearby Lee's Summit and Lebanon was a congregation we always visited during their meetings starting when I was just a little boy. The first Sunday of the meeting I preached from an outline my grandfather used in the late 50's when he preached the first sermon in what was then their new building. For many years the Lebanon congregation has been a strong backer of spreading the gospel and only heaven will reveal the results of their labors. Back home I helped moderate the annual study at Fair Oaks, CA August 21-23 along with Ryan Connor. This year's theme was The Family. Presentations were good and attendance proved the topic to be timely. Our work continues with the 64th St., Sacramento congregation.

Jonahthan Bunner, Apartado Postal #18-01-241, Ambato, Ecuador, South America, 593-342-0096, webpage: iglesiasdecristolatina.com—I am happy to report that July has been one of the most encouraging months since my move here. Every Sunday morning we have had visitors from the community come to the worship services. One of the factors has been brother Segundo Villacis and his influence with the local radio stations. He and I have visited 5 radio stations in the past few weeks. Since brother Villacis has good friends that work at several radio stations we have been able to get some free air time. This is a great tool to reach the lost. So far it has worked because there have been more visitors on Sunday morning. Another reason we have had more visitors is because I was on TV a couple of weeks ago. More good news! Brother Chiliquinga has been visiting a brother from the cups church that has been out of duty for more than a year. We pray that we can restore this brother and his family. One Sunday morning brother Washington and his family came to services. Now we are studying with them on Saturday evenings. The study is with Washington's extended family. His mother, brothers, and their wives are all present. All together there are ten adults and two children at the study. Seven of the adults are members of the Assembly of God organization. I am showing them the Jule Miller film study. So far, we have seen the first two films and everyone seems to be in agreement. I am sure that is going to change, but we are not ashamed of the Truth. Each month I write about how the brethren here have helped me with Bible studies. Finally, I want to thank those of you who have been praying for our son Abraham, who is 13 months old. He has been ill because of the volcanic ash that is in the air. This past week he finally was able to breathe normally and has his voice back. We were really worried about him. We still have to be very careful because the three volcanoes in the Ambato area are still active. Thank you again for your prayers.

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THE BACK PAGE...

SPRINTING TOWARD SODOM

By CARL M. JOHNSON

In his 1996 book *Slouching Towards Gomorrah*, Robert Bork contends our culture is inexorably moving in slow increments toward the same immoral condition that characterized Sodom and Gomorrah. In view of recent events involving the homosexual elements in our culture, however, it seems we are no longer "slouching" toward that same moral abyss, but rather we are now in full sprint.

Among the institutions that have the greatest influence in shaping the attitudes of our culture are the entertainment industry, major newspapers, major universities, and our court system. All of these institutions are strongly coercing us to embrace the pro-homosexual agenda today. For example, editorials in most major newspapers in the USA praised the actions of the U. S. Supreme Court that recently decriminalized sodomy and the Episcopal Church that appointed as a Bishop a homosexual who left his wife and two children for another man. Massachusetts is considering making same-sex marriages legal, and for the first time in its seventy-year history, *Bride* magazine is publishing in its September/October issue the proper etiquette for same-sex marriages. Homosexual characters have been staples on television sitcoms for several years, and now TV has added "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," and "Boy Meets Boy." Major League ballparks and theme parks (e.g. Disneyland/Disney World) commonly promote "Gay Community Night," and "Gay Pride" parades are commonplace in larger cities. These are just a few examples of the prohomosexual developments to which we are regularly exposed.

Typical of the campuses of major universities is what happened to Cornell professor Dr. Jim Aist. He posted flyers on campus offering "Help to Homosexuals." The flyers offered free to students and faculty—carefully researched scientific information about the cause of homosexuality and guidance for homosexuals who wished to leave that lifestyle. As a consequence, Aist was accused of sexual harassment, discrimination, and abuse of power. Students staged a six-hour sit-in in protest against him, and his own chairman and dean pursued charges against him. He endured the scrutiny of ten investigations in two years, while the press paraded accusations against him.

What happened to Dr. Aist is typical of what our culture power brokers do to anyone who publicly refuses to endorse the pro-homosexual agenda. If you disagree with them you are immediately labeled and condemned as a "homophobe," and as one filled with "hate." To adapt a phrase from Congreve, "Hell hath no fury" like militant homosexuals whose lifestyle is unendorsed." Ask the Boy Scouts of America.

Scripture is replete with examples of how difficult it is for God's people to live in the midst of an ungodly culture and not be affected by it. This difficulty is well illustrated by a story in George Barna's, *The Frog in the Kettle*. Barna says you can place a frog in a kettle of boiling water and it will jump out quickly. But, if you place a frog in a kettle of room-temperature water and slowly increase the temperature until the water is boiling, the frog will stay in the water until it boils to death, not perceiving the gradual increase in temperature. Similarly, because of our gradual pro-homosexual indoctrination over the last decade, you should not be surprised if you discover some of your closest daily associates look at the gay movement with sympathy.

God's word, however, warns us that homosexuality is perversion, a "work of the flesh" and those who do such things "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9). Under the Law of Moses, homosexuality is described as an "abomination" punishable by death (Leviticus 18:22). Militant homosexuality was the defining sin of Sodom and Gomorrah (where do you think the term "sodomy" came from?), and God called it "exceedingly wicked" and "very grievous" (Genesis 13:13; 18:20). God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of the enormity of their sin and made them an example to all who would choose to live an ungodly life thereafter (2 Peter 2:6, Jude 7).

If there is any consolation to be found in the shocking acceleration of our culture's pace toward Sodom, it is the hope that it will awaken an otherwise unsuspecting people to the moral rot taking place about them and motivate them to return to God. In view of that possibility we must be prepared to share the gospel with all who are in sin, including those who are living in the morass of homosexuality. The Apostle Paul reveals that some of the Corinthians were guilty of that lifestyle, but he concludes that when they turned from it in obedience to the gospel, they were "washed...sanctified...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).—1400 Northcrest, Ada, OK 74820

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. 11

DOES THE PASSOVER PROVIDE A DIVINE PATTERN FOR INDIVIDUAL CUPS?

By BENNIE T. CRYER

Ever since a congregation of the churches of Christ first used multiple cups in its observance of the Lord's supper a divine pattern has been sought for their use. The search has been in vain for the divine pattern specifies in various ways that Jesus intended for his sacred feast to be observed using only one cup for each congregation. However, some in the beginning of this new century have decided they have found the pattern for the use of more than a cup in a congregation's observance of the supper in the Jewish Passover. Since Jesus instituted his supper as he observed the Passover it is evidently thought by some that each participant in the Passover had his own cup to drink out of, and therefore, today, the Lord's supper can be observed with individual cups. Or another approach is that in the Passover celebration there were four cups used in special ways and times and the Lord took one of these cups and its contents were divided into the disciple's individual cups and then the communion institution took place with each disciple drinking out of his own individual cup at the proper time. Thus, in a fanciful way, some have thought that this establishes the divine pattern for individual cups in the communion. I hope I am not misrepresenting this doctrine in the statements above.

Now, as I examine this doctrine, I see an amazing thing. From Jewish literature they have read (They did not read it in the Bible because cups and a drink element for the Passover is not recorded in the Scriptures.) the word "cups" and they immediately know that more than one cup was used. They, therefore, know of a certainty that if a Jewish household observed the Passover in agreement with that literature it could use more than one cup. Why? Is it not because they can read the word "cups?" That is the pattern recorded in Jewish literature. This is an amazing thing because when they read in the New Testament that in the institution of the Lord's supper Jesus took "the cup" and gave "it" to the disciples and they all drank of "it," (Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:23) they still see a pattern for individual cups. Those who try to uphold the practice of individual cups in the Lord's supper say that "cup" does not mean cup here. It means the "contents" of the cup. "The cup" is not important

they say. It's the "contents" that are meaningful. Therefore they teach that we can use individual cups even though the Bible says Jesus took "the cup." Isn't that an amazing deduction? Just look at it. In Jewish historical literature where it records the observance of the Passover the word "cups" is used. Therefore, they conclude, each participant had his own cup and, in addition, there were four other special cups. But, when Jesus took "the cup" in the biblical institution records this also teaches we can use individual cups. In other words, the presence or absence of the letter "s" does not make any difference to them. They will have their multiple cups with the "s" in Jewish literature or without the "s" in the Bible. My erring brethren, you cannot have it both ways and claim scriptural authority for the use of more than one cup in the communion service. What would you expect me to do if you could turn to Matthew 26:27 and read to me that Jesus took "the cups?"

Scripturally Dividing The Cup

Luke 22:17-18: *And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.* This is not all that was said of the cup used in the institution because more is revealed in verse 20. Luke does not record all events in the actual order in which they occurred. This is similar, so far as order is concerned, to 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. Luke 22:17 does not teach, as one man attempted to convince me, that Jesus gave a cup of the fruit of the vine to the disciples in verse 17 and they were instructed to divide it by pouring its contents into their own individual cups. Then in verse 20 they were further instructed to partake of it out of their own cups. It is true that you can divide a cup by distributing its contents. This is necessary according to 1 Corinthians 11:26 where, in his instructions to the church in Corinth, Paul wrote, *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.* Obviously Paul is teaching that the way to divide the cup is fulfilled by the verb drink. That this is his intent is seen in verse 28. *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of*

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Editorial

GUARDING THE FAITH AGAINST UNSCRIPTURAL CHANGES

By JERRY DICKINSON

The Book of Judges records one of the darkest chapters in the history of Israel. It was a time of chaos, lawlessness, rebellion, and violence. The reason for this sordid state of affairs is given in Judges 2:10. "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the work which he had done for Israel." There are two things specifically stated about this new generation. **1. They knew not the Lord.** Surely this does not mean that they did not know who the Lord was. Surely Joshua and his generation had told them about the Lord they served. Undoubtedly, when we are told they knew not the Lord this means they were not committed to the Lord. They rejected his authority and sovereignty over them, and hence we read that they began to serve Baal and other gods. **2. They knew not the things which God had done for Israel.** Again, surely this cannot mean that they had not heard of all the wonders wrought by the Lord in delivering Israel from bondage and bringing them into the land of promise. What it does mean is that this new generation did not appreciate what God had done for the former generation. They minimized it. They devalued what the former generation had gone through. Because they minimized what God had done for their fathers they turned away from the traditions, customs, and practices of the previous generation.

What was the result? Chaos, lawlessness, rebellion, violence, and sin. Make it up as you go along. There is nothing wrong. There is nothing right. "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." What happened in Israel so long ago has been repeated again and again. In fact, the chaos and lawlessness we see in our world today is because a new generation has arisen that knows not the Lord, nor yet what the Lord meant to former generations. But this is true not only in the world at large, but even in religious circles – yea, even in churches of Christ!

I was seventeen years old when my family and I left the digressive churches of Christ. By digressive churches I mean, for lack of a better descriptive term, churches of Christ that use individual cups and have Sunday school classes with women teachers. I am fifty-three years old so it has been thirty-six years since we took our stand for the truth. Forty years is sometimes considered a generation, therefore a generation has passed since I was a boy growing up in the digressive churches. By way of illustration I want to share my reflections on what has happened among them in one generation.

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Although we believe in the scripturalness of "one cup," and that one cup represents the New Testament, where is our example for blessing (or even mentioning) anything but two elements when we wait at the table?

Answer: Observing the Lord's Supper or communion of the body and blood of the Lord consists of eating the bread, which is a representation of the body of Christ, and drinking the fruit of the vine which is a representation of His blood. Jesus took bread and blessed (or gave thanks for it) and said "take eat this is my body." "And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Mt. 26:26-27. In 1 Corinthians 10:16 Paul writes "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ." Paul mentions the "cup of blessing" and the "bread which we break." One can never go wrong saying exactly what Paul said here, or what Jesus said in the Matthew passage. But what about the practice of some who say "we thank thee for this cup which represents the New Testament, and the fruit of the vine which represents thy blood?" Is this scriptural? In Luke 22:20 and 1 Cor. 11:25 the Scriptures teach that "this cup, is the New Testament in my blood," or "the New Testament ratified by my blood." The cup that represents the new testament is not an empty cup. Christ did not take an empty cup. That being so, whatever He or Paul said about the cup was said about a cup that contained the fruit of the vine. Regarding this Thayer says on p.15 "This cup, containing wine, an emblem of blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood an emblem of the new testament." So it is a cup containing wine that is an emblem of the new testament and not an empty cup. That being the case, I feel it is misleading for someone to say "we thank thee for this cup which represents the New Testament and this fruit of the vine which represents thy blood." The cup by itself represents nothing. What then should the person say who serves at the table? He should say what the bible says and nothing more. Problems arise when we say things for which there is no scriptural justification. Often the one serving at the table thanks the Lord for everything but that for which thanks is to be offered. Others, fail to "give thanks" at all. Those who serve in this capacity need to realize the seriousness of what is being done as well as what is being said, and take care to "speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where it is silent."

Question: If a man has adultery in his family, should he preach?

Answer: The answer to the above question depends upon the individual's response to the situation. If, for example, the man's wife is guilty of adultery and he continues to live with her or condone her behavior, then

no he should not preach or do anything else in a leadership role. In fact, he should be dealt with accordingly. If he has not caused her to commit adultery and renounces her behavior, refusing to live with her and, if necessary moves to divorce her according to Mt. 19:9, then I think he could participate in the services and even teach. If another family member such as child, parent, or some other is guilty of adultery, the individual must renounce such behavior and not condone it in anyway. None of us are in a position to control completely what adult family members do. We must, however, denounce wrong and deal with it in an appropriate manner. The fact that someone in our family does wrong does not mean that we caused it or that we condone it. The Scriptures teach that we are not accountable for the actions of others when they sin. Ezek. 18:20 "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." Each congregation has the right to determine upon whom they will call. Being a member of the church does not in itself necessarily grant one the right to be "called upon" for public participation in church services. There may be any number of reasons why one should not be used for that activity. Such decisions must be made by the leadership of the congregation in keeping with what they feel is best for the church. (*Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808 or rfwade@getatlas.com*)

PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

By DOUG HAWKINS

At this writing, Oklahoma leads Alabama 13 to 3 at the half. It's the second week of college football. During this break in the game, the fans pull in support of their team, the bands perform on the field, the sports announcers analyze the first half, and the coaches review the things their team did fight and the things they did wrong. Observing what's happening on television, it looks like this game is the most important thing in the world, and I'm sure at this time nothing matters to 99.9% of the people connected with it except for its outcome. Don't think, now, that I'm not happy about how the game's going or that I'm about to turn it off. As a native of Oklahoma, what do you expect? The problem that most people never see is that their life is full of such cares and pleasures and they give no thought that the "world is passing away and the lust thereof, but he that does the will of God shall abide forever." (1 John 2:17) Most people don't realize that the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep his commandments, (Ecc. 12:13) Consequently, they live every day thinking of ways to earn more money, prepare for future financial needs like college, a bigger house etc, or where to take their next family vacation. Their life consists almost entirely of

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PAGES FROM THE PAST

*(The following article from the pen of brother King first appeared in the May 1, 1930 issue of **The Truth** published by H.C. Harper. At the time he was a young man of 38. Two years later he would accept the mantle of publisher and the name of the paper would be changed to **Old Paths Advocate**. This article was written to stem the tide of "drifting from the ancient landmarks" which has ever been a problem for God's people.)*

THE DANGER OF DIGRESSON

By Homer L. King

A retrospective view will show the danger of departing from the "Old Paths," and should cause us to cling all the closer to the word of God in all that we teach or do. Some do not seem to realize the danger of a single departure from the Bible way of serving God. Many reason that just one departure is a "very small matter and not worth mentioning;" not realizing that just one sin, no matter how small and seemingly insignificant, is enough to cause one to be lost. Just one unforgiven sin is enough to cause us to be banished forever from the glory of God. Listen, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (Jas. 2:10). Beware of just one departure from the Bible way!

It was just one departure that marked the beginning of the downfall of the early church, and gave rise to the papacy; thus the dark ages and bloody persecutions of the true followers of the Lord. But its influence did not stop with the development of the "Mother of Harlots." All the protestant denominations in Christendom have risen as a result of that first departure. For it stands to reason that if there had never been a first" departure, there could never have been the second, third, etc.

Take a look at the so-called Christian Church of today. It was just one departure (organizing the Missionary Society) that marked the beginning of the downfall of a goodly number of the Church of Christ, and the beginning of another apostate church. Not content with one departure, others quickly followed; viz., instrumental music, aids, the pastor system, suppers, shows, etc., until now it just about leads all others in departures. Some of the leaders in this church have begun to become alarmed at the rapid speed they are traveling, and are now trying to call a halt, but do not seem to be having much success.

A look at the Linwood Christian Church, of Kansas City, and its pastor, Doctor Burris Jenkins, ought to be enough to cause all who are tempted to take one step in departing from the Bible way, to pause, and think twice before they venture the first step. In a recent issue of the "*Springfield Daily News*," we are informed that the membership of this church is 3900, the largest Protestant denomination in Kansas City. It is further stated that some of the leaders in other Christian churches are protesting against the actions of the said pastor and his congregation. In reply the pastor is quoted as saying; "Actually, the action comes from those who take the

fundamental position; who want to maintain rigidly the doctrine of baptism by immersion only and the like. In order to be a church for all, we decided as long as 12 years ago we should not be sticklers about baptism. They may come by immersion, sprinkling or without either." But this was traveling a little too rapidly for some of the leaders. But I note again from the same articles: "Doctor Jenkins has been active for many years in church and civic affairs. He has sponsored boxing & held classes at his church in the art of fisticuffs under the direction of the Rev. Earl A. Blackman, his assistant, known as the 'fighting parson'." But what next? I noticed sometime ago in the same periodical where lessons in modern dancing were being given in the basement of his church, showing pictures of those taking the lessons, dressed (?) in abbreviated bathing suits. All this in the name of Christianity? How does it look? Only recently I heard the Doctor delivering one of his so called sermons over the radio, in which he stated that he could see no reason why Protestants, Catholics, Jews, et al should not meet together to worship. A little too fast for some of his brethren, but they are following, nevertheless. He informs them that he and his church represent the progressive wing of the Christian Church.

I warn you, brother, that one step in sin leads to another.
-Homer L. King

MAN'S ROLE IN THE HOME & CHURCH (PART 2)

By GREG GAY

At a very early age we begin speculating about what we will be when we grow up. The old nursery rhyme Rub-a-dub-dub includes the words "butcher, baker, candlestick maker," a phrase that is commonly cited when a discussion of possible careers is begun.

The first work ever given to man was that of a gardener. "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Gen. 2:15). Even in paradise there was work to do. Adam was assigned work of pruning and tending the plants in the garden. At first Adam and Eve's life and work focused on the generosity of God. They had far more food than they would ever need at their disposal. All they had to do was reach out and they could eat of the delights of the garden.

Adam's work changed after the fall. Instead of being allowed to simply pick produce from God's bounty he was condemned to scratch at the dirt from which he was created to maintain his sustenance. "Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken" (Gen. 3:23).

Because of sin his task was to be difficult: "... cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen.

3:17-19).

Thus introduced, work became necessary for survival upon the earth.

The word of God extols work as good and necessary: "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat" (Pro. 13:4). "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing" (Pro. 20:4).

Paul writes our brethren in Thessalonica that the church was not to feed those who refused to work: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" (2 Thess. 3:10-12).

God actually connects working for our own needs and paying our own way with proper behavior for Christians among worldly people. "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing" (1 Thess. 4:11-12). *The Revised Standard Version* translates verse 12: "so that you may command the respect of outsiders, and be dependent on nobody." *The New American Standard Version* translates the same verse: "so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need."

In the contextual setting of family members helping widows Paul writes: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8).

Strong's defines the word provide: "to consider in advance, i.e. look out for beforehand." The man, as primary leader in the home, is to look ahead and plan how to use his God given abilities to provide for the financial needs of his immediate family and also other relatives if necessary.

That means a young man's choice in a career must be made very carefully with God and any future family in mind. If he wants to be able to contribute generously to the church and provide well for his family he will want to start early considering carefully his own abilities and what he can do with those abilities given whatever opportunities may be available to him. He will need to decide whether or not to pursue higher education. Whether the higher education is learning a trade or earning a degree, or even multiple degrees, the purpose must always be for God's glory rather than his own status.

A Christian's attitude toward money is not the focus of this article but remember it is the "love" of money that is the root of all kinds of evil, not money in and of itself. We can pursue money for proper ends but we must not let the pursuit consume us and rob us of our values.

Paul warns about those who pursue wealth as though it were a god: "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt

minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:5-10).

Whether a man chooses to work in an office, or factory, or farm and whether he dresses every day in a suit, or uniform, or overalls and whether he is a supervisor, or a worker, or owns his own business, he must always exemplify godliness to the world.

No job in the world is completely free of temptation but some jobs are certainly safer spiritually than others. Christians must avoid jobs that violate scripture because of the nature of the industry or because of the nature of what people in that field are required to do. Certainly jobs that might require killing of fellow humans are inappropriate for God's children as are jobs involving such industries as liquor, illegal drugs, porn, abortion, and etc., etc.

Many jobs are not wrong in and of themselves but they can be used in a wrong manner. While an excellent work ethic is important for Christians a job that is so demanding that a person is continually tempted to miss worship is not a wise career choice. Most jobs require extra effort when getting started and from time to time but a job that takes a man away from his family from early till late week after week is a job that robs the family of correct communication. By his example he teaches the incorrect lesson that the money or status he is earning is more important to him than his family.

Christians should be the best workers and have the best attitude of anyone where they work. After all, working at a job is part of our service to God. Servants are told to "... obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Col. 3:22-23). -1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747

DOES THE PASSOVER PROVIDE A DIVINE PATTERN FOR INDIVIDUAL CUPS?

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that bread, and drink of that cup. Each communicant is to *drink of that cup*. It does not say that each congregation is to drink of those cups. In Mark 14:23 the clear statement is made, *and they all drank of it*. This is the New Testament pattern and not a pattern from Jewish history, customs, and traditions. Trying to find the pattern in such places, instead of the New Testament, is indicative of a truth we have known for a long while. You have to go to some other book than the Bible to find a pattern for individual cups.

EDITORIAL

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When I was a boy there were some in the digressive churches of Christ who believed it was wrong for a woman to cut her hair. In fact, the wife of the preacher who baptized my brother Billy and I had never cut her hair. She believed that she should let her hair grow and it was wrong to cut it. There were others (certainly a minority) who believed likewise. I never, however, recall hearing anyone preach on the subject when I was a boy. There was no teaching on it that I am aware of and now another generation has arisen, and you would be hard pressed to find any who follow Paul's instructions about a woman's head covering in digressive churches today.

Let me cite another example. When I was a boy there were some in the digressive churches who believed that a Christian should not serve in the military and go to war. In fact, my dad was teaching a Sunday school class of teenagers one Sunday morning that it was wrong for a Christian to serve in the military and at the same time an elder of that church was teaching the adult class that it was permissible. As an aside, that shows one reason Sunday school is unscriptural. Here were two men teaching diametrically opposed doctrines under the same roof at the same time! That cannot happen if we follow Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians 14. At any rate, there were some who believed a Christian should not participate in war, but may I state again that I never heard any teaching on the subject (except from my dad, that is). Hence, another generation has arisen and today you may find a few, but not many that believe what the Bible teaches about a Christian and war.

May I give one more example? When I was a boy growing up in the digressive churches of Christ there were those who believed that a Christian must dress modestly. I must say, as a matter of fact, that I did hear some preaching on this subject! Looking back, I think some of the best preaching I have ever heard on the subject of modest apparel I heard as a boy in the digressive churches of Christ. But, little by little in many churches, less and less was taught on this subject, and more and more was tolerated. What is the result? Well, a couple of years ago I was in McAlester and Bill Verner and I decided to visit a service of a cups and classes church. I expected, of course, to see women come into the church building in pants, but I frankly confess that I did not expect them to come in shorts and cutoffs. The building began to fill up with women, and men, in cutoffs and shorts. Another generation has arisen. My brothers and sisters in Christ, what happened in ancient Israel and what has happen among other religious groups can happen to us. In fact, I fear it is happening already! We of this generation have the daunting challenge of trying to ensure that the coming generation knows the Lord and the work he has done for the church.

If we are to meet the challenge of guarding the faith against unscriptural changes there are two things which are absolutely essential.

1. DOCTRINAL PREACHING. If the faith is to be

guarded for the next generation then there is going to have to be some old fashioned Bible preaching on doctrinal themes. I might point out just here that the title of this article is, **GUARDING THE FAITH AGAINST UNSCRIPTURAL CHANGES**, but there are many who would argue that there is no such thing as an unscriptural change. The Bible, many assert, does not give us a pattern for the organization, work, or worship of the church. There is no such thing as an unscriptural practice. Anything goes as long as you are sincerely doing it for the Lord! Lamentably, there are even some in the church of Christ who maintain that there is no pattern. An unscriptural practice - what's that? We have got to stress the following scriptures to the next generation.

"Furthermore then we beseech you brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so you would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." (1 Thess. 4:1, 2) Paul did not give suggestions - he gave commandments! "Therefore brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions, which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thess. 2:15). Yes, we do have some traditions to keep and Paul says we can read about them in his epistles. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3:6).

In 1 Cor. 11:2 Paul writes, "Now I praise you brethren that ye remember me in all things and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you." We have ordinances to keep? Yes! Note the recurring theme in all of Paul's writing. We have been given or delivered commandments, traditions, and ordinances that we are to keep and guard. By the way, when Paul praises the Corinthians for remembering him in all things he is not praising them for just remembering what a good man he (Paul) was. He is not saying, "I am glad you remember who I am." No, he is commending them for remembering his apostolic office. Remember, he says, that I am an inspired apostle and the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. In fact, those are his precise words in 1 Cor. 14:37, 38. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

The New Testament writings, then, reveal sacred traditions, ordinances, and commandments regarding the work, organization, and worship of the church, as well as instructions to help us live our daily lives for Christ. We must guard the faith as delivered, not only for our own benefit, but for the sake of the generation following.

2. OUR HISTORY. Secondly, it is absolutely essential that we do our best to ensure that the coming generation appreciates what former generations have endured and stood for that the faith might be their heritage. The generation that came after Joshua minimized and

devalued what the former generation had gone through, and hence turned away from the traditions and faith of that generation. If we forget and minimize the sacrifices and efforts of previous generations to preserve New Testament Christianity, we are going to drift as did Israel of old. We need to tell and retell our children the history of innovations in the Lord's church. They need to understand why we oppose instrumental music, individual cups, Sunday school with women teachers, etc. We need, as already noted, doctrinal teaching on these subjects. But, our children also need to be told how previous generations stood by their convictions and their conscience when these innovations were being forced into churches across the country. Faithful brethren left digressive churches and met in homes, rented buildings, old storage buildings, or wherever else they could, rather than give up what they could read in the New Testament. Unless we pass on to the coming generation our history we are destined to hear these words repeated, "And also all that generation was gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord nor yet the works he had done for Israel."

May God give us the vision to realize that we are in a great struggle for the hearts and minds of the next generation. May God give us the courage and wisdom and strength to always be at our post of duty. Let us be valiant soldiers, courageously defending the walls of Zion and consistently guarding the faith for the next generation.—13803 Crosshaven, Houston, TX 77015

PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

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these kinds of things, and little or no time is given in preparation of eternity. People forget the seriousness of eternity, but it's life and death. ETERNAL LIFE AND ETERNAL DEATH. In time when the earth and all its works are burned up (2 Pet. 3:9), nothing else will matter. NOTHING!!! Practically speaking, wouldn't we be better served to take Jesus' warning to heart? He said, 'Watch therefore for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.' (Mt. 25:13)—3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42501

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2003 Alabama New Years Meeting

The Hartford Highway Church of Christ would like to invite all to attend the Alabama New Years Meeting this December 27-31 in Dothan, AL. This meeting will be under the direction of Bro. Ronny Wade with visiting evangelists being asked to preach. Services on Saturday (27th) will be at 7:00 PM and on Sunday (28th) at 10:00 AM in the church building on Hartford Highway in Dothan. Beginning on Sunday night (28th) and going thru Wednesday (31st) services will be at 10 AM and 7 PM daily and will be conducted at the Cultural Arts

Center on South Andrews St., nine blocks south of downtown Dothan. The final gathering will be at 11:00 on New Years Eve when we will sing the old songs of the church from memory to usher in a new year. The meeting has grown from year to year and the preaching and singing is always outstanding. We hope you will make plans to be with us this year. The host hotel is Comfort Inn and their number is (334) 793-9090. There are also rooms available at the Best Western. Their number is (334) 793-4376. Be sure to ask for our special rates by identifying yourself with the "Alabama New Years Meeting/Church of Christ." For more information, contact Kevin Presley at (334) 678-8999 or kpresley@sw.rr.com. Also, you may contact Charles Marsh at (334) 692-5756. We hope to see you there!

The Progress Of OPA

We are in the process of adding about 600 names and addresses to the subscription list for the paper. The *Old Paths Advocate* goes into many countries around the world and will now, we hope, go into at least one home of every congregation in America. If you get the paper, please speak to your brethren and friends about us sending it to them also. If you will renew for yourself you can also subscribe for a friend for only \$5. Send us \$15 for the both of you or \$10 for yourself and \$5 each for as many friends as you wish. The printed page is a wonderful way to keep in touch with the brotherhood as well as learn from the able pens of brotherhood writers. It's good for all to know where the preachers are working, what the results are, as well as the welfare of brethren all around the brotherhood. Can you help today?—DLK

Grand Street Church Of Christ Relocating

The Amarillo, Texas congregation of the Church of Christ is moving to the Southwest area of Amarillo. Our new address will be 5116 South Western. From I-40 in Amarillo, go south on I-27, take the Western Street exit and go North about 2 blocks; it is on the left, North of 84 lumber in the strip mall. Lord Willing, our first service in the new building will be September 3, 2003. Our service times and other directory information have not changed. 10:00 AM and 4:30 PM on Sundays, 7:30 PM on Wednesdays.

Thank You Note

To the Brotherhood, Many thanks to all who came supporting this years 2003 Missouri Labor Day Meeting in Neosho Missouri. What a great success and blessing it was to hear powerful and forward preaching at every service. The young men just did exceptionally well and what new talent coming to encourage the church in the future. The meeting this year seemed to send a message to the church and world, i.e., the Lord's people are here to stay and we aim to stand our ground. The women just did an outstanding job of preparing and serving stacks and food for all that came to hear the words of truth. The church at Neosho loves to host this meeting and

love to see all our brothers and sisters come to be with us. The rattle of armor was sounded and the trumpet of victory shouting out during every service. The redeemed of the Lord indeed said so during this great time of worship and service to our King. Thanks to all of you and may God richly bless you.—*West Hwy. 60 Congregation of the Church of Christ, Neosho, MO*

Statement Of Ownership

We are required by law to publish each year a statement of ownership of *Old Paths Advocate*. The paper is owned by Don L. King, who also serves as Publisher. It is a private endeavor, not a work of the church, hence not intended to be supported or subsidized by church treasuries, but by the paid subscriptions of our readers.

Change

The congregation at 3414 Independence Ave., Kansas City, MO is no longer meeting and has combined with the 73rd and Prospect group.—Mike Criswell and Gary Garcia.

New Preacher

The Capitol Hill congregation in Oklahoma City, OK is exploring the possibility of bringing in a preacher for a work lasting 3-5 years. If you are interested, please contact us. Don Hullet at 405-745-6849 or drhullet@cox.net or Steve Martin at 405-790-0228.

Oklahoma New Years Meeting 2003

The dates for this years meeting will be December 26-31. The meeting this year will be hosted by the Twenty-First Street Congregation, Oklahoma City, OK. The meeting will be held in the auditorium of Christian Heritage Academy located at 2800 South Sunnyslane Road (Del City). Morning services will be at 10:00 AM beginning December 27. Evening services will be at 7:30 PM beginning December 26. A list of motels will be mailed to many congregations. If you desire additional information on the meeting place call Cliff Arney (405-685-5437) Duane Cutter (405-745-2581) or Monty Cox (405-685-5854). **Note:** Directions to 2800 South Sunnyslane Road; From Interstate 35—Take Interstate 40 east approximately 3 miles to Sunnysland Road, then south 18 blocks (approximately 1-1/2 miles). From Interstate 35—Take Interstate 240 east approximately 3 miles—then north 46 blocks (approximately 4 miles).

OUR DEPARTED

McCOMBS—Oliver B. McCombs passed away Feb. 1, 2003. He was born July 11, 1921 and he obeyed the gospel June 21, 1940. He was a faithful member of the Love Joy Church of Christ in Commodore, PA and will be greatly missed.

JACKSON—Della J. Jackson was born June 16, 1916 in Vivian, OK and departed this life on September 20,

2003 at the age of 87 years. She was a long time member of the church that meets at Niangua, MO. She was preceded in death by her husband James (Shorty) Jackson who passed away in May, 2000. She is survived by six children: two daughters; Helen Sheeman of Greenville, TX and Maureen Harris of San Angelo, TX; four sons, F. D. (Smokey) Jackson of Marshfield, MO, Jimmy Jackson of Mesa, AZ, Joe Jackson of Marshfield, MO, and Kerry Jackson of El Paso, TX. The past several years Della had to come to church in a wheelchair because of a stroke. About two years ago she had to have a leg removed because of diabetes. She fretted about not being able to come to church any longer. She has been and will be missed at Niangua and by many others as well. Della was good Christian lady. It was my privilege to offer words of encouragement.—Ron Alexander

EMMERSON—Ruth Pearl Emmerson, daughter of Johnny and Ethel White, was born on Jan. 11, 1910 in Wright County, MO and departed this life on September 6, 2003 in Lebanon, MO at the age of 93 years. On March 5, 1926, Ruth was united in marriage to Argus Emmerson. To this union one daughter was born. Ruth obeyed the gospel at the age of 18 and had lived a Christian life for 75 years. She and Argus were members of the Claxton Church of Christ until they moved to Lebanon in 1985. She attended the Hayes Street Church in Lebanon, MO until her death. Ruth was preceded in death by her parents and her husband, Argus. She is survived by her daughter Dottie Lindsay, three granddaughters, 5 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. Ruth's home was always hospitable. Many preachers and their families have enjoyed wonderful meals at her table. Ruth will be missed by all who knew her. It was my privilege to speak words of encouragement.—Ron Alexander

BOSSERT—Alta Aloe Bossert was born Dec. 10, 1937 in Alta Vista, KS to Louis and Lucy Jones. Alta departed this life July 19, 2003 in Kansas City, MO. Alta was married to David Eugene Bossert on April 6, 1962 and to this union 4 sons were born. She was preceded in death by her parents and her husband. She is survived by her four sons; Randy, Aaron, Kirk and Don; one daughter-in-law and one grandchild; five brothers; Harley Jones, Hiram Jones, Byron Jones, Joe Jones and Leland Jones. Alta was baptized in 1949. She was a long time member of the North Brighton Church of Christ in Kansas City, MO, where two of her brothers, Byron and Joe are leaders. Alta had suffered with cancer for the past two years. She will be greatly missed by the church and by all who knew her. The writer spoke words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

THURMAN—Larry Thurman was born June 20, 1939 and departed this life on June 14, 2003 at his home in Exeter, MO. He was married to Phyllis Turney on June 23, 1962 at Neosho, MO. To this union two children were born. Larry was preceded in death by parents, four

siblings and one granddaughter. He is survived by his wife, Phyllis; one son, Bradley Thurman and his wife Linda; one daughter, Kimberly Ramsay; four grandchildren; four brothers and three sisters. Larry and Phyllis were married when Carolyn and I lived in Neosho and have been long time friends. We had not seen one another for a number of years and were glad to renew our friendship during the months of Larry's illness. We are glad he was back in church at his passing. Bro. Roy Lee Criswell assisted the writer offering words of comfort.—Ron Alexander

MEENTS—Franklin Meents was born March 8, 1905 near Lebanon, MO and departed this life on April 30, 2003 in Richland Care Center in Richland, MO at the age of 98 years. On March 11, 1939 he and Zula Maxine Massie were united in Marriage. To this union three children were born. Frank was preceded in death by his parents, one brother, two sisters and a granddaughter, Adrienne Lynn Windes. He survived by his wife, Maxine; two daughters, JoAnn Massey and husband Floyd, of Lebanon and Beverly Windes and her husband, George of Richland, MO; a son, Howard Meents of Lebanon, MO; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; a brother, Ralph Meents of Phillipsburg, MO; two sisters, Vesta Carr, of Mesa, AZ and Vernys Kelsey of Rogers, AR. Frank was baptized in 1939 and was a devoted member of the Hayes Street Church of Christ in Lebanon. Frank loved church, encouraged many in his life with his smile and his presence at church. He always insisted that his family would be at church, which continues in their lives to this day. His family have sung and still sing at many funerals. Frank will be missed by all that knew him. The writer offered words of encouragement.—Ron Alexander

WRIGHT—Thomas "Tom" Wright, a member of the congregation at Amarillo, TX was born January 15, 1929 in Menard Co. Texas. He passed away Aug. 12, 2003 at Brownfield TX at the age of 74. He was a charter member of the congregation in Amarillo, very active in the church and helped to build the building that has been used for about the past 35 years. Tom was a quite, unassuming Christian ready always to help those in need. Had he lived two more days he would have been married 48 years to his wife Betty who survives him. He is also survived by one son, and daughter, a sister and brother, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, and the church.—Bob Orear.

McGRAW—Brother Bill McGraw departed this life August 14, 2003 following a long hard battle with lung cancer. Bill had come to the church only a year before knowing well his need to obey the Lord. For the few short months we knew Bill he was a great encouragement to all. A brief memorial service was held in his memory being conducted by members of the church that had known him and come to love him. A goodly number were present to sing and pray with us during this time.

Brother Richard Frizzell read a copy of the obituary and I managed to say a few words to those family members that chose to be with us. Perhaps the greatest message of his life was found in the comfort that he came to Christ while time and opportunity were still within his grasp. May we all find comfort in departing this world knowing the Lord.—Roger L. Owens.



Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, Oct. 2—We had a good meeting at Paris, TX with some visitors from the community at nearly every service. The church seems to be doing well. There is a good mixture of ages in the congregation and some very good leaders. William St. John's positive influence can be seen all over that area. Bruce Roebuck was with us one night before flying to California for meetings, and I know the Paris brethren are thrilled to have Bruce back home. I just closed a meeting at Healdton, OK. The brethren worked very hard inviting people from the community to come to the meeting and a few actually did come out. It is disappointing, however, when you work so hard and invite so many of your friends and neighbors and only a few show up. Nevertheless, we enjoyed the meeting and we were thankful for the opportunity to be with Phyllis' mother and family some. I begin a meeting Saturday night at Lee's Summit, MO, and from there to Cable Ridge, MO (Oct. 19-26), Kansas City, KS (36th & Everett) (Oct. 29-Nov. 2), Oakdale, CA (Nov. 7-16), Joplin, MO (Nov. 19-23), and Davis, OK (Dec. 5-7). May God bless us all as we serve Him.

Brett Hickey, 208 Crosshaven Ct., Antioch, TN 37013, brett-louisehickey@juno.com, (615) 501-9246, September 10—The work moves forward in Nashville. We are still following up on leads from our newspaper article. One of these brethren says that the one cup position "makes sense," but he has yet to develop convictions against his present practice. Eight couples have been going through studies to strengthen our marriages. This has helped Louise and I grow closer, faster to a large segment of the congregation. Much of our teaching recently has been on the work and qualifications of the elders and deacons. Four men in their 30's and one in his 40's have expressed the desire to develop as leaders so they can one day be elders or deacons. We have a very broad and capable leadership core, but our relative youth will mean years before we have a plurality of qualified elders or deacons. These men are zealous about building on their strengths and making improvements where needed. We are formulating short-term goals to work together on.

Presently, we are emphasizing the local shepherding responsibilities so critical to a healthy flock. We enjoyed the Tennessee Labor Day meeting at Chapel Grove and look forward to the New Years meeting in Dothan, AL. We anticipate great meetings here with Reginald Blount October 3-5 and Kevin Presley November 12-16. Lord willing, we will be with the brethren at Atwater, CA and Brazil, IN (Harrison/Blayne), October 10-19 and November 2-9, respectively. Come see us!

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA, 94550, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, Oct 15—We have enjoyed a short time at home since last report. Lord willing, we begin in Springfield, MO on the 26th of this month and continue through November 2, then to Covina, CA November 9-16. We look forward to being at both congregations and hope for good to be accomplished in some way. In January of 2004 the annual trip to the Philippines is scheduled. Lord willing, Richard DeGough will travel with me for his second trip there. I look forward to being with him in that work. It is reported to me that several of you are receiving requests for support from the Philippines especially from the Mindanao Island. While we are excited about the good reports we are hearing, we have not yet had the opportunity to verify all of them, or some of the men who have asked to be supported. We hope to know more after the trip in January. At this point, our advice is to be careful that you know the man to whom you are sending support. It has happened in the past that some who are still in the digressive church have written us asking for support. Caution must be observed. Pray for us.

P. Duane Permenter, P.O. Box 37073, Lusaka, 10101, Zambia, Africa, Oct 1—Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ from Zambia to all the brethren who read the *OPA*. Laurie and I are doing great and enjoying the work very much. It was an honor to recently take a couple of translators of the Tonga language and meet brother and sister Bill Davis in Binga, Zimbabwe. Lake Kariba was built many years ago and divided the Tonga people in Zimbabwe and Zambia so that they have family on both sides of the lake. Brother Bill Davis needed some help translating so we went to assist in this meeting. The brethren organized well for we had around 400 in attendance and 39 obeyed the gospel during this weekend effort. It was about 500 miles each way for us to travel to this place but it was certainly a pleasure. The eight congregations around Lusaka are doing very well at the moment. The church at Kaunda Square is getting ready for a big meeting the end of October with brethren coming from all around the country. You may email me, duane@dnlpermenter.com or phone me at 011-260-290-215. May God bless all the faithful is my continued prayer.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Oct. 1—We attended the Labor Day meeting at Neosho, MO where

we heard some good preaching and had good fellowship. I was given the opportunity to speak the first night, Aug. 29th, along with others. Last Lord's day we closed a good meeting at Stony Point, Kansas City, Kansas. The speakers were young men from various places in the brotherhood. We had good teaching, excellent singing, and Christian fellowship. Seven states were represented. Three young men from Mountain Home, AR drove five hours each way to attend one service. Such faith, and such encouragement to us all! I believe we had the largest crowds for our fall meeting we have ever had. Our thanks to all the young people from so many different congregations who helped make the meeting a success. The Lord willing, Wilma and I leave for California this Saturday for ten days. We look forward to it.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303 (334) 678-8999, September 7, 2003—The summer of 2003 was a busy time for my family and me. We recently returned from several weeks of preaching in Texas. It was a delight to be with the church at McGregor for a meeting. This congregation has a host of young people who are interested in spiritual things, ensuring a wonderful future for the Lord's work in that place. I especially enjoyed the opportunity to visit with Wayne and Jean McKamie who reside at McGregor. The church was very gracious and hospitable. Next, we were with the Crestview church in Wichita Falls. This was my third meeting with the brethren there and it was the most enjoyable yet. The brethren roll out the red carpet for the preacher. They are one of the most encouraging groups that I know. We made our home with Charles and Jan Goodgion, who always extend every kindness. Cullen Smith is now working with the church at Wichita Falls and is doing a great job. A number of leads were generated from his efforts to prepare for the meeting. It was good and helpful to have Bro. Daniel Smith with us for both of these meetings. In fact, Daniel has lived with us in Alabama for the summer and is making preparations to preach. He does a fine job and would serve your congregation well if you called him for a meeting or a singing school. The work at home continues to go well. Recently, Craig Marsh obeyed the gospel. He is the youngest son of Charles and Donna Marsh. All three of their boys are taking part in the services of the church and we are very proud of them and thankful for their interest in the church. Last but not least, we enjoyed the Texas Labor Day meeting. The Fossil Creek church did a fine job of putting the meeting together. The preaching was very timely and well done. The theme was "Guarding the Faith" - something we should all be attentive to given the unstable and perilous times in which we are now living. May God bless the brotherhood.—*This was not included in the last month OPA. My apologies.—DLK*

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, October 13, 2003—Within the past month, it has been my pleasure to be with the

churches in Blue Springs, KY and Garrett's Creek (Wayne), WVa. As usual, I had a good meeting and visit with the brethren at Blue Springs. The crowds were great and we were able to preach to several community visitors throughout the week. Zade McClure continues to be a trusted and influential leader in that area. It was also a blessing to spend time with a good friend - Doug Hawkins. He has a busy preaching schedule this year and so it was really fortunate for us to have him there for the week. At Wayne, I enjoyed the association of Wyn Baker. Wyn is such a stable and solid man in the faith and it is always encouraging to visit with him. All of the area churches were represented and rendered valuable assistance to us. Two sisters were restored during the meeting, which was cause for rejoicing. Lord willing, my next and last meeting of the year will be at Nashville, TN (Nov 12-16). The work is doing well here. Recently, Gerald and Martha Hatcher were restored to duty after several years away. We are excited about their return and hope that they can pave the way for others in their family to come back to the fold. Lord willing, our New Year's Meeting will be December 27-31. We anticipate the largest crowd yet with great singing and preaching. Ronny Wade will be in charge this year. Look for details in the announcement section of this journal. May the Lord bless his people.

Roger L. Owens, 16768 Heron Drive, Neosho, MO, 417-455-2497, 204 W. 18th St., Cassville, MO 65625, 417-847-6629, E-Mail: rwens700@yahoo.com—We have begun a new and exciting work at Cassville, MO in August of this year. The church is small but no way are they short on zeal and desire to grow. We have plans to spread the gospel over 25 small communities within a twenty-five mile radius next year. We hope to conduct at least two meetings in the area ourselves and also bring in other talent to help manage the worship services as needed. We do not plan to depend upon having or needing to pull other preachers in on a continued basis to speak as we believe that we should and will develop our own talents. The church at Neosho has stood behind me for this effort and continues to assist in many ways. The three area congregations as well have been helpful in our support and we are thankful for them. The church in Cassville will grow and prosper because we are seeking to do God's will. We would ask that if you plan to be in this area, consider us and come support our efforts when in town. I have a small paper that soon will be published for local distribution. We have a local correspondence program and currently there are about 6 or 8 involved. I hope to conduct a series on preaching for the Master this winter. Also we will attempt to have a singing school for all that would like to learn more about our kind of music and singing. The talent in this area is rich and wonderful in many ways, but not rare among the people of God. We have some of the very best young singers, teachers and leaders anywhere. I want to tell you that we have plenty of young women that are godly and desire to live pure chaste lives. The

church in southwest Missouri has a great storehouse of blessings to use and with which to praise the Lord. I look forward to the coming days ahead knowing that God has already so richly blessed us. Brethren, please continue to pray for us and for the work in this area. We are still lacking support to cover our expenses on monthly basis so we would appreciate any help that you may be able to send.

Ron Alexander, 117 Hillsboro, Marshfield, MO 65706, September 29—Fall is here and time has slipped away once again. It has been quite awhile since I've sent in a report so please forgive me. Another busy year begins to slow down for the winter. We've enjoyed meetings in West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas this year and look forward to our meeting at Hill Top, KY the first two Sundays of November. It's always good to see and work with brethren that we have known over the years. It was especially good to see brethren where we had not been for more than 10 years, such as, Bridgeport, TX, 11th Street in Tulsa and North Brighton in Kansas City. Death had taken its toll and reminds us of the urgency of our mission. Death has taken its toll in our area as well. Church leaders and Christian women whose influence will certainly be missed. Two of whom I want to mention because they were special to us. In the mid 90's, I was in a meeting at Claxton and Nadine Stone and her mother Irma Craine has started attending services. Nadine had been mine and Carolyn's classmate when we were in high school. Irma (in her 90's) at the time, said it was so good to be going to church where they worship like she did when she was a child. In December, Nadine was killed in an auto accident and about 6 weeks later her mother died of natural causes at the age of 99. In deed, our mission is urgent. I enjoyed the 4th of July meeting at Lebanon. Don was great to work with and the cooperation of preachers, song leaders and everyone we asked to help was excellent. Remember us when you pray. Also, please note the change in our e-mail address.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42501, (606) 678-4347, October 2, 2003—I've been home through the month of September. We've had several gospel meetings in the area and several more ready to start. I'm ready to start the last leg of my schedule. By the time this is seen in print, I'll have one meeting remaining and it should be in progress, Lord willing. In the month of November I'll be in Lebanon, MO (Nov. 2-9). Bro. Kevin Presley did an outstanding job at Blue Springs. The congregation was greatly enthused by his preaching. The meeting personally refreshed and encouraged me and I'm grateful to have had the time with him. He's one of my dearest friends in the world. He's dearly loved in this part of the country, as in many other parts too. I'm amazed how wayward souls can sit under the powerful influence of God's word and spurn it. May we all keep the faith and continue to do the work.

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THE BACK PAGE...

A GOOD INVESTMENT

By CARL M. JOHNSON

A couple of years ago while I was browsing in a used book store in Texas I stumbled upon an old leatherbound hymnal by Isaac Watts entitled *The Psalms of David, Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, published in 1787. I wrestled with myself about purchasing the historic hymnal and decided it was too expensive for me. Later that night after Phyllis and I got home, I received a phone call from Lynwood Smith and I told him about the hymnal. Lynwood gasped and exclaimed, "You bought it, didn't you?" I explained to him that I thought it was a little too expensive, but Lynwood protested, "Carl, Isaac Watts is the 'father of English hymnody!' Whatever you pay for the book is not an expense, it is an *investment*!"

Isaac Watts was born in Southampton, England in 1674, and the oldest of nine children. He was educated by his father who was a preacher for the Dissenters and a man of such strong convictions he was jailed twice for refusing to follow the Church of England. Isaac was an extremely intelligent child, learned to read Latin, Hebrew and Greek and graduated from a "Nonconformist Academy" at the age of twenty. Upon graduating from the Academy, Watts became a minister for a "Church of Christ in London."

Though he had a beautiful soul, apparently Watts was not much to look at. He was frail and often sickly. His head seemed too large for his five-foot-tall body and his small, piercing eyes and hooked nose did not enhance his appearance any. A lady once fell in love with Isaac by reading his beautiful poetry. She wrote him and arranged to meet him, but when she saw him she was repulsed by his appearance. Watts fell in love with her and asked her to marry him, but her reply was, "Mr. Watts, I only wish I could admire the casket (jewelry box) as much as I admire the jewel." Watts never married, but the two people remained friends for over thirty years.

From the earliest age Watts showed a prodigious ability to speak in rhyming verse. On one occasion during family devotions, little Isaac started laughing out loud and when questioned about his actions, he explained he had just observed a mouse crawling up the bell tower rope and he had put the account into verse:

"A mouse for want of better stairs, Ran up a rope to say his prayers."

Watts spoke so easily in rhyming verse that it was as though he had difficulty carrying on a normal conversation without rhyming the phrases. At one point Watts' father became so annoyed with Isaac's practice that he instructed him to stop or get a whipping. When Isaac persisted with the rhyming, his father started to whip him and little Isaac cried out:

"O father, do some pity take, And I will no more verses make."

In the aftermath of the great Reformation churches earnestly desired to remain faithful to their battle cry of "sola scriptura" ("by scripture alone") in every detail of faith and life including their view of music. Most churches believed the Bible provided sufficient revelation even in the area of song. John Calvin in particular insisted that church music should consist of nothing more and nothing less than the Psalms of David. The Psalms, therefore, were set to poetic "metre" (arranging the number of syllables per line to give the cadence of poetry), and for the first several years after the Reformation they were sung (chanted) exclusively in most church services.

One day Watts complained to his father that he found the dissonant sounds of the dry metric Psalms very boring. His father challenged him not to complain, but rather produce something himself worth singing. Watts accepted the challenge and after graduating from the university, he returned home and began writing hymns. The bulk of his great work was done in the next two years, and eventually he produced upwards of 600 hymns including, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Am I a Soldier of the Cross," and "Joy to the World." It was also during that same period that he completed his most hailed accomplishment of rewriting the Psalms of David in rhyming English verse.

Though Watts' work was considered unorthodox at first it soon began to be accepted and became the perfect supplement to the lively preaching of the "Great Awakening," and the Restoration Movement. Other English composers began to follow Watts' lead and the new era of English hymnody was born.

After speaking with Lynwood on the phone I drove the 250-mile round-trip to the used bookstore and purchased Watts' hymnal. Incredibly, while I was there I also stumbled across an 1836 leatherbound hymnal by Lowell Mason ("Father of American Church Music") and an 1860 hymnal published by Alexander Campbell. I bought all three of them. I figured it was a good investment.—1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820

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. LXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI, DECEMBER 2003

NO. 12

TRUSTING GOD IN THE FLAMES

By RICK MARTIN

Many times in this life we are called upon to face temptations and trials. Some people live under the mistaken impression that once they trust Christ and obey him in baptism that all their problems will disappear. We know that God gives us His grace, wisdom and life to deal with our troubles, but the scriptures never make any promises that we can avoid or escape trouble. The Bible warns us that the believer will face even greater difficulties in certain areas than he did before he was baptized. The idea that the Christian can somehow live a utopian existence above conflict is impractical.

The Scriptures are a great source of comfort to us. **John 11:1 through John 11:31** Now a certain *man* was sick, *named Lazarus*, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. ²(It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) ³Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. I like the way Mary is identified here. She is identified as a woman who wiped Jesus feet with her hair. Unfortunately many sisters could not honor Jesus that way today.

The home of these two women was a place where Jesus and his disciples had received hospitality. The fact that they sent for Jesus as soon as Lazarus became ill is evidence of their faith in His power. Many of us can certainly understand their position, because there have been times when troubles and pains have come into our lives and we have sent for Jesus through prayer. We know and are sure that He can handle our troubles and ease our pain, just as Mary and Martha knew that He could help.

Notice what happens in this narrative: **John 11:4 through John 11:6** 'When Jesus heard *that*, he said, **This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.** ⁵Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 'When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. From a human standpoint these verses make little sense. Why didn't Jesus just relieve

their suffering immediately? This is what makes this story so great because the troubles we face make no sense from our viewpoint. Most of the time when there is a trouble or pain in our life that is causing us distress there is a time between the point we ask for help and the point at which something is done. In the case of Martha and Mary, Jesus stayed two days longer, but the delay must have seemed like an eternity. They knew about how long it would take Jesus to make the trip to Bethany. They waited, and as the hours dragged on, they watched as their beloved brother Lazarus grows weaker and weaker. Finally the time came when they thought Jesus should arrive. No doubt Martha and Mary took turns sitting with Lazarus and comforting him in his time of sickness. One of them would probably go out to the road to see if Jesus was coming. As the hours passed and there was no sign of Jesus, perhaps their hopes burned a little lower. If these two sisters were like a lot of people they might have said, "*Why doesn't He come?*," "*where could he be?*," "*maybe He never got our message,*" "*maybe he left without sending back word,*" "*after all we've done for Him it's the least He could do for us.*"

Lazarus died. Perhaps one of the sisters went in to check on him and found that he had passed away. More than likely they were both at his bedside comforting him when he breathed that last breath. Whatever the situation these two sisters felt that hollow, helpless feeling that accompanies the death of someone you love. It was over now. Lazarus was gone. Soon their thoughts turned to Jesus and perhaps they thought, "*Why didn't He come?*" "*how could He know what we were going through and yet stay away?*"

Perhaps there have been times when we have asked these questions when we are facing a crisis in our lives. We find the story of Lazarus and his sisters very helpful. Jesus knew exactly what was going on. He knew what Martha and Mary were experiencing. He knew that His friend's condition was worsening and He knew the very moment that Lazarus died. There was a purpose behind the suffering of these two sisters

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Editorial

QUESTIONS ABOUT GAMBLING

By DON L. KING

A few months ago we wrote two editorials about gambling. These appeared in two successive issues. In mid September we received a letter from a good brother who mentioned that when he had taught about gambling he had received some interesting questions which he passed along to us. The questions are often brought up in conversations and we thought it would be prudent to say a few words about them. #1 Isn't life a gamble? Do we gamble with our lives every time we leave the house, etc.? #2 Is it a sin for Christians to invest in the stock market? Do we not risk our money by doing so, etc.?

Risk = Gambling?

It is important to understand the basic difference between risk and gambling. Literally every thing we do involves some risk. It is not just the risk that one must be concerned about. When we plant a garden we "risk" the seed we plant that some way it may not germinate and sprout. Hundreds of additional examples might be cited, but the point is obvious. Of course, God expects His people to use reason or prudence before doing anything and if the risk is unreasonable, say no. However, some risks are simply unavoidable. Life involves risks one cannot avoid. We must go about our business of earning a living, taking care of our families, working at our jobs etc., all of which carry a certain amount of unavoidable, and therefore acceptable, risks. We are commanded to provide for our own, work with our hands, etc. so this is Biblical proof that reasonable risk is acceptable and permitted. Does it follow that unreasonable risks are also allowed? Would it also be right in God's sight for a Christian to frivolously risk his life in foolish or outrageously dangerous pursuits? Of course not. We are expected to use judgment every single day.

The Market

What about the stock market? It is likely that if the question is put another way, it will be easier to see the truth of the matter. Suppose a brother begins a company that does quite well. His business flourishes and he decides to expand it. However, he needs capital in order to make it happen. He could go to the bank and borrow the money or he can raise the cash by allowing others to invest, and thus share, in his company. Suppose he approaches you with the offer to allow you to buy into his company. For a specified amount, you will be a part owner in the company and will share in the profits, have a voice in its affairs and, if such an option is desired, receive regular payments in the form of dividends on your investment. It is all perfectly honorable, honest, and above board. Of course, it goes without saying that some risk is involved. You will now share in the various and sundry risks the same as the owner does.

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: What is the "feast" referred to in 1 Corinthians 5:8? It is the Lord's supper? Also, in verse eleven, when Paul says "with such an one no not to eat," is that a specific reference to the communion?

Answer: The first passage in question reads "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The verse is obviously metaphorical. The command to purge out the old leaven, is a reference to purging out sin i.e. the incestuous man. The feast under consideration could not refer to the Passover, for Christians were released from the law and were under no obligation to keep it. The word "feast" means literally "to celebrate a festival" and in this verse refers to the Christian life in general, and is not a specific reference to the Lord's supper. Barnes comments "Let us engage in the service of God by putting away evil." Metz: "Keeping the feast suggests the continuous life of a Christian, a day-by-day walking in holiness, strength and joy." Zerr says "The feast may be said to include all of the activities of the life that Christians are to live under Christ; it is all a rich feast." Mike Willis succinctly observes "The Christian life is compared to the celebration of the seven-day Feast of unleavened Bread. It does not last for a mere seven days but for a lifetime. Therefore, the Christian life should be one thoroughly purged of the leaven of evil even as the house was purged of leaven before the Feast of the Passover." The phrase "Not with old leaven" is probably a reference to the fellowship of the licentious man of the text. There is, however, a broader application which teaches that we should, as God's people, put all evil out of our lives. When we obey the gospel, we crucify the "old man" and a "new man" comes forth from the waters of baptism (Romans 6:3-4). As new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:15), we are to "keep the feast" by living a life of purity and holiness. Which is suggested by the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

The second question is about the eating in verse eleven, which reads: "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 a one no not to eat." It is the view of this writer that the Lord's supper could not be under consideration for the following reasons: (1) It would be difficult, if not impossible, to keep an unfaithful brother from eating the Lord's supper. Some are so adamant in their rebellion that, unless physical force is used, they will partake of the communion anyway. Surely Paul did not recommend the use of force to keep from eating with such a person. (2) The association and eating forbidden with the man from whom fellowship has been withdrawn, is permitted with men of the world, who may be guilty of the same sins. In other words, whatever Paul forbids our doing with a disciplined brother, he allows us to do with a

man of the world. In this passage he forbids "keeping company" and "eating" with a sinning brother, but allows us to "keep company" and "eat with," at least on occasion, men of the world. Else we must "needs go out of the world" (1 Cor. 15:11). Hence, if eating in this passage refers to the Lord's supper, then Paul is permitting us to eat the Lord's supper with a man of the world, but forbidding us to do so with a brother from whom fellowship has been withdrawn. Surely this is not what he had in mind. The context makes it clear that all social activities are included. We are to have no association in anything or in anyway that would indicate that we condone the person under consideration. This is a command and not optional. It is as definite and binding as any other "thou shalt not." If the discipline is to have the desired effect, the church must be consistent in its refusal to have fellowship with the individual involved. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

By DOUG HAWKINS

The changing weather makes my hands dry. The other day I put ointment on the cracking skin of my index finger and placed a band-aid over it. It has made me think how cuts and bruises affect our physical bodies. An injury if serious enough can debilitate us. Cutting ourselves with a knife while slicing a tomato or cutting ourselves by mishandling a piece of paper, twisting our ankle, bumping our knees, smashing our thumb or finger is all common enough. We deal with these things as a natural part of life. Whenever we are cut and bruised emotionally, though, how do we deal with that? I've observed in myself and I've also seen in others what happens when we are criticized, insulted, or feel overlooked. Instead of treating these wounds, we often internalize them and make them worse. We don't speak, or if we do it's hurtful or hateful. We don't associate. We begin to replay the words or deed over and over in our mind, until it burdens our heart. That's miserable isn't it? Instead of putting ointment and band-aid on the wound so it can heal, we start to press on it like a sore tooth or pick at it like a scab. We tell everybody who will listen about our misery and the great injustice that's been done against us. We think of ways to get even. We involve everybody we can. That's trouble in the making isn't it - for us and everybody around us. Well, practically speaking, wouldn't it be wiser to look for a cure and a solution rather than harm ourselves as well as the people around us? No wonder Solomon said, "Don't take to heart everything people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you, for you know that even you have cursed others." (Ecc. 7:21, 22) Isn't it ironic how quick and free we are to criticize others, but are irate and so offended when others dare criticize us? Solomon also said, "A man's discretion defers

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PAGES FROM THE PAST

(E. H. Miller was not a "middle of the roader." No one ever wondered where he stood. In the late fifties when disagreement arose over the proper way to support mission work, he was a leader in the fight for scriptural procedures in that area. His articles were straight forward and to the point. This article was written around 1958 or '59 and was part of a little booklet he published. The truth contained in it, is still pertinent to our time.)

MISSION WORK, HERE AND EVERYWHERE

By E. H. Miller

There is a lot of talk nowadays about mission work, here and in other places.

The Sunday School brethren are divided over the "Herald of Truth" mission work. Yea, they are in a mighty battle. That division of the church has been divided again; they have had several public debates on the question (some of them have even been put in print). I agree with those who are fighting all the congregations sending their donations to the Abilene, Texas congregation, and letting that congregation pay for their nation wide radio broadcast, pay the preachers that preach thereon, and send out tracts and other helps to the listeners who send in for such. The Abilene congregation is thus spending over one hundred thousand dollars a year.

We have no Bible authority for several congregations to send money to one congregation, or to any man or group of men to pay or give to a preacher doing missionwork. Yet, we have a Bible example for several congregations paying a preacher to preach elsewhere. Paul said in 2 Cor. 11:8, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service." So other churches paid Paul while he was at Corinth; but they didn't send the pay to another congregation, man or group of men to send to Paul. Paul said in 2 Cor. 11:9, "That which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied:" So it was sent direct to Paul.

In Acts 11:27-30 we find a congregation in need, and another congregation sending help: but they didn't send the help to some one else to send for them. They "sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Paul." Yes, the help was sent direct to the elders of the congregation in need.

Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, did not tell them to send him money to send to Jerusalem, but said, "Whosoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your LIBERALITY (margin, "GIFT") unto Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me." (1 Cor. 16:1-4).

Writing to the church at Rome, Paul tells of the churches in Macedonia and Achaia sending help by him to Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25-28). They didn't send him help to send to Jerusalem, but gave him help to take to Jerusalem. So we have Bible for giving help to some one to take to those in need; but not for sending to some one else to send to some one else in need. (Let

us do Bible things the Bible way).

While Paul was in Thessalonica he needed support; and the church at Philippi was willing to help in this mission work. Notice in Phil. 4:16, Paul says, "Ye sent once and again unto my necessity." Did they send to some one else to send to Paul? There is nothing like that in all the Bible. Paul says in verse 18, "I received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you." (Epaphroditus had been sent to Philippi by Paul, (Phil. 2:25).

We need preachers in Africa and other countries as well. We also need them in the states; for several states are without a faithful congregation (some without a digressive as far as I know). But "how shall they preach except they be sent" (supported)? Yes, the Bible teaches the preachers should be supported (Rom. 10:13-15, 1 Cor. 9:9-11, Gal. 6:6, 1 Cor. 9:12, 2 Cor. 11:7, 2 Cor. 12:15, 2 Cor. 11:8-9 and 1 Cor. 9:14). Those Scriptures prove it is alright for the ones being preached to support the preacher if possible; and for other congregations to send support direct to the preacher who is preaching where he doesn't receive support. But we have no Bible for sending money to a foreign missionary society, a group of men, or one man to send to one or more preachers who are in such work. There is Bible for sending by others to others; but there is no Bible for sending to others to send to others.

We have preachers who need to preach, and want to preach; and we have many places in the states and abroad where the gospel has not been preached. If all congregations that are able, would give what they could for this work, many more souls could be saved. Let us find preachers who are willing to do mission work; put one in each state where we can that doesn't have a faithful congregation (and in foreign fields as well); then support those men by sending direct to them, as we have Bible example.

If we could get preachers in this work that would put their heart into the work, there would be many more reports in the *OPA* of souls being saved in such mission work, than is being reported by the preachers now. Those preachers could report what support they receive from each place in the *OPA*, and if they were not receiving enough, I feel sure others would start taking part in this great effort. The people would give more on each Lord's Day when they saw the church was putting forth an effort to save the lost in these places that know not the way.

Brethren, let's put forth a greater effort to put a faithful congregation in every state, and in every country as well; but let us stay with our old motto, "Do Bible things the Bible way." Let us send forth more preachers, and send the preachers support. But let us not make the mistake the Christian Church did, get men in between the supported and supporter! I feel sure they didn't intend to start a Foreign Missionary Society at first, but they got some middle men between the giver and receiver and that is what they wound up with.

ROLE OF MAN - PROTECTOR

By GREG GAY

In the Garden of Eden the attack upon Adam and Eve's home started with a simple question from Satan to Eve: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden" (Gen. 3: 1)? In this and the exchange that followed Satan, the father of lies, tempted Eve and she "fell into transgression" (1 TIM 2:14 NKJV).

Once she succumbed to sin she became to Adam what the serpent had been to her: Satan's ambassador of evil, a tool of temptation.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Gen. 3:6).

Where was Adam when Satan was introducing chaos into his orderly home? It is easiest to think of him as being far away not knowing what was going on. But, when the Bible says Adam was "With her" (Gen. 3:6) that causes us to rethink that idea. Instead of Eve facing Satan all alone with Adam nowhere in sight the scene may well have been Eve facing Satan with Adam nearby but doing nothing to protect his home.

When Paul told Timothy about the woman's role he reminds all "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Tim. 2:13-14). The birth order of man first and then woman is evidently significant to God. Eve, as younger, and as the wife, had a responsibility to turn to Adam during the time of temptation. Adam, as older, as Eve's source, and as her husband had a responsibility to help with any possible problems.

When God formally announced Adam's position in the home as the one to "rule over" Eve (Gen. 3:16) he proclaims what had evidently already been intended as protection against temptation.

Eve should have turned to Adam for help. Adam should have protected her by turning to God. Neither did, and sin entered the world. Both did the opposite of what God desired them to do in their roles.

Today, anytime we step out of the role God has assigned us as men and women it can be said that sin enters our lives.

All of us individually have an equal obligation to resist evil. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7).

But, the man has an additional responsibility to guard his home against Satan's wiles. Husbands are commanded to "love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). In His self-sacrifice Christ demonstrated the greatest protection possible for us, making it possible for us to be able to overcome sin.

The man is to protect his family to make it as easy

as possible for them to resist Satan. Job is a good example in this because he offered sacrifices to God continually on behalf of his children just in case they had sinned.

"And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually" (Job 1:5).

Men, are you active in prayer for your children? Are you a good example before them in every possible way? Do you show them daily how much God means to you with your time, your attention to God's word, your eagerness to worship, and in your devotion to your children's mother?

In the New Testament Peter commands husbands: "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7).

This passage emphasizes the attitude men are to have toward women. Men are to always presume the need to protect and serve their wife.

Men, would your wife say that you honor her? Is she honored by the respect and courtesy you display toward her at all times? Do you honor her by protecting her from spiritual dangers to the best of your ability?

We find a good example of a man protecting his family in Jacob in the Old Testament. Previously he had been a bad example when he deceived his father and his brother and as a result was separated from them for many years. In the meantime he married and had many children. When it came time for Jacob to see his brother again he was afraid for his life and the lives of those in his family. In Genesis 32 and 33 we have the story of their meeting.

"And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindmost. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept" (Genesis 33:1-4).

When Jacob "passed over before them" it means he went in front of his family to stand between them and any danger that might come.

That is the place of the man in the family. He is to always be in front, between his family and any danger. This does not mean he is to arm himself with carnal weapons and patrol his property. This means he arms himself with God's armor which includes "the sword

of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). By learning and using its principles he will be equipped to recognize possible threats to his family's spiritual welfare.

The concept of protecting one's family can have some very practical applications. He can be active in what his children are learning in school by reviewing their books and assignments and by going to his children's school to meet the teachers and get acquainted with them. He can be strong enough to say "no" to his children's requests to spend time with questionable friends going to questionable places. Then, he can be involved enough to help provide alternative places to go that encourage better association. He can be involved in how his children dress making sure standards of modesty are maintained. He can pay more attention to his wife than he does his hobbies thus removing temptation for both to stray. You see, there are many ways a man can protect his home.

Lot failed to protect his family (Gen. 19). It seems he sat at the gate of the city while his wife and children were indoctrinated into the culture of Sodom. While they themselves did not partake of the same sins as those around them they were so influenced by that evil society that his daughters were willing to marry men who laughed at a warning from God. And, his wife proved to be unwilling to face the world outside that culture. Where was Lot? Perhaps he spent too much time being admired at the city gate and not enough time protecting his family in that evil place or moving them to a safer place.

Any man who fails to protect his family becomes like Adam was in the garden: nearby, yet removed, not wanting to be responsible. Men, God holds us responsible!

Men, don't avoid your family's difficulties. That is walking in the footsteps of Adam. If sin is invading your home step forward and speak God's principles into the chaos to bring God's order back into your home. Then, you will be representing Jesus Christ as a loving, sacrificing, protecting leader.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).
-1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747

TRUSTING GOD IN THE FLAMES

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and the death of their brother. It was so God and the Son could be glorified. We are sure that Jesus can feel our pain. He wept over Lazarus and he feels for us in our hour of need. The question we need to consider is what is our response to troubles and trials we must face? Sometimes troubles can cause people to doubt and give up and leave. Many times people get mad at God because of troubles in their lives. Knowing that Jesus can carry us through the pains and heartaches should strengthen us spiritually. Dealing with troubles is like preparing for surgery.

By putting our faith in what our doctor has said, we believe we will be better off if we have the surgery, but it will not make it any less painful. By submitting to the hand of the surgeon, we are saying that our ultimate goal is good health, even at the cost of pain.

Are we persevering? Are we enduring or are we resisting? Are we mad because we have had to endure some troubles? We need to trust Jesus. If we resist our sorrows will only be magnified, for there is nothing worse than a life filled with troubles from which nothing good ever comes. We need to make sure our trials strengthen us and not defeat us.

The apostle Paul was a man who trusted Jesus. In Paul we have a man who suffered extensively on every level, yet he remains faithful. What does this great man have to say about troubles and trials? How did he keep on picking himself up over and over again when most men would have given up? The answer to almost all of these questions can be found in 2 Cor. 12:7-10. Of all the hardships and abuse Paul suffered his "thorn in the flesh" was the one that bothered him most. No one is sure what he is referring to. Speculation is useless. Perhaps he faced a problem similar to the one you and I have. Paul asked three times that this thorn be removed, but it was not. Paul was told by God that His grace would be sufficient to sustain him in times of troubles and trials. The experience of Paul should serve as an encouragement for us. If God's grace was sufficient for a man who left his family, his home and his friends to plant churches in hostile environments; for a man who was shipwrecked, imprisoned, stoned and left for dead, we should be confident that His grace is sufficient for any thing we may encounter. Paul knew what it was like to live with trouble. He knew the frustration of realizing that relief would never come, because he asked three times and the thorn was not removed. He did not grow bitter and complain; he did not doubt the goodness of God. He depended daily upon His grace.

It has often been said that a person really doesn't know who his friends are until the bottom drops out. To a certain extent we may never come to know the true love of God and Jesus until they have carried us through some trouble or trial. When they bring us through some distress our faith in them increases. Sometimes in life, events do not always work out the way we want them to. When this happens some are quick to doubt and say that Jesus was not there in their hour of need. Some become angry and turn away and they write God and Jesus off as being unfaithful.

When things get bad in our lives we would do well to follow the philosophy of the three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. First, they said **"if we are thrown into the flames the God we serve is able to save us from your hand, O, King."** God and Jesus are able. Regardless of the problem they can come to the rescue. No matter how chaotic life becomes they are able to deliver. Second, these 3

Hebrew children display their level of faith. In Dan. 3:18, they tell the king, ***“even if He doesn’t deliver us we will not bow.”*** What faith these young men had. They had just told the king that ***“God is able”*** to deliver and now they say even if He doesn’t we will not bow. That’s important because we have never been promised a lack of suffering and pain. Painful circumstances may not change. We may want them to change, but they may not. We have been promised that we will have what we need to survive. We need not expect God and Jesus to keep us from distress. They want to sustain us through them. They want to make our load lighter. The pains and distresses of life will be much more bearable when we reach the point of trusting God in the flames.—300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

Are you allowed to make this investment? Of course you are. You are expected to use reason and judgment but we are all allowed to be in business, are we not? When one invests in the public stock market, that is exactly what takes place. Some stocks pay dividends on a quarterly basis while others repay the investors through a growth process. At a later time, the wise investor has the option of selling his share in the company for a tidy profit or leaving the investment for an anticipated greater profit. There is absolutely nothing wrong in such business actions. A look at the teaching of Jesus will easily prove this true. In Matthew 25:14-30 Jesus spoke the parable of the talents. He spoke in glowing terms of the two men who had been given talents (an amount of money). One received five and another two according to their abilities. Both doubled the amounts! By some means, perhaps and probably through investing, they INCREASED the money with which they had been entrusted. Was this wrong? Obviously not. Did it involve some risks? Very likely it did, however, both men were praised and rewarded for their prudent actions. What did Jesus say to the man who had received only one talent (a smaller amount of money)? This fellow had been afraid and thus buried the money for safe keeping. He was condemned in no uncertain terms. In fact, look carefully at what the Lord told him in verse 27. Jesus said, “Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.” To have given the money to the exchangers (men who would invest it and then repay it at a later time with interest) would have allowed this man to have shown at least a small improvement on the money. This, the Lord said, was what he should have done at the very least. Suffice it to say that it is honorable and right in the sight of God for us to do likewise.

Stock Market Very Different From Gambling

When one gambles his money and wins, which is

rare, he wins what others have lost. This is taking advantage of the hardships of others. We are commanded to provide things honest in the sight of all men. (Romans 12:17) How can it be honest to take what someone has lost? The answer is that it simply cannot be. When one invests in an honest business venture and gains, he has profited not by others losses but by their profits. He has invested in a company listed on the public stock exchange. That company grew and made profits which he is honestly entitled to share in. If not, why not?

We see then, the difference in gambling, which involves dishonest gains, and risks taken in business ventures. Yes, gambling involves risks. The risks are huge, often several million to one. Only a fool would see such practices as an investment because no sane investor would take such unreasonable risks. The chances of winning are astronomical.

However, even when one wins he has won what others have lost which is neither right nor honest.

Think on these things.—DLK

PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

continued from page 3

his anger and it’s to his glory to pass over a transgression.” (Pr. 19:11) You know what to do when you are cut and bruised physically. Do you know what to do when you are cut and bruised emotionally?

Announcements

Please Take Note

Beginning with the January issue, we are going to exercise more editorial liberties with field reports and especially with obituaries. We hope the writers will take care to delete names, etc. from such reports which are not likely to be known to anyone outside the families about which the notice is submitted. If you will do this, we will not have to do it. We are very aware that when a family member passes away, everyone who is mentioned is important and we do not wish to deny that. However, the readers may not have any knowledge of those people and will be unlikely to benefit. We do plan to delete such things as we see necessary. We appreciate your patience and cooperation. When you send your field reports, we realize there may be times when the report will be longer than others due to various circumstances. However, we reserve the right to edit them when unnecessary length is present. Please keep this in mind and edit them yourselves so it will not be necessary for us to do so. We much prefer that you do your own editing. A note, if you will report regularly it is easy to keep the report brief. We plan to have some special issues as time goes along. Our hopes and expectations are that some of our editors will be compiling those issues. Here is where you can help. *If you have suggestions for topics to be treated in a special issue send them to us.* We don’t promise that every

suggestion will be used but we will gladly do what we can to make the paper more useful to everyone. The paper is growing and going into more homes and lands than perhaps ever before. Please help us keep the growth alive by sending your renewals promptly and offering to send in for others where you live and worship. Don't forget that for the time being, you can renew for yourself at the regular price of \$10 per year and send a subscription for a friend who does not take the paper for only \$5 extra. If everyone will make the commitment to do that this month, the list will double overnight. Will you do it? Please consider it and thank you in advance.—DLK

Impressions From a Zambia Visit

I (Don Kelly) recently spent 17 days with Duane and Laurie Permenter in Zambia learning about this great work for our Lord and sharing information about Drip Irrigation farming. Drip Irrigation farming is a very practical method of growing vegetables during the 6 month dry season as it requires only 15 gallons of water per day per 100 feet of vegetables. My experiences with the Zambian Christians touched me deeply. **These people love The Word of God!** Here are some examples. Two men filling Duane Permenter's generator with fuel saw Bibles in his trailer and asked if they could buy some. Duane sold them for 5,000 Kwacha each (approx \$1 USA). Bibles are mostly sold, seldom given away, to emphasize the value of this great book and to discourage reselling for a profit. The recipients are each treated individually in this decision. The money from these sales is put back into the work. Two other men came before we left the gas station and wanted Bibles. We could not sell any more else we would not have enough for the gospel meeting at Siamikobo. Young men at every gospel meeting in Zambia desperately want Bibles, especially NKJV English. **Individual sacrifices are made daily.** 20 plus people walked for 2 days to attend a gospel meeting at Mpulungu last September. Lishiko services last Saturday started at 10am and ran til 4:30am Sunday morning! Brother WM Gambwe then walked 1.5 hours to attend services at his home congregation at Kafue, and then returned by car to the Lishiko meeting with no sleep. Yes, these Christians love The Word of God! **Many more Bibles are needed in Zambia:** in English, Tonga, Chewa & Bemba languages. How can anyone learn The Word of God without a Bible? These God fearing people can not afford the full price of a Bible. They must sacrifice to pay even one dollar. The cost for English NKJV Hardcover Bibles (easiest for Zambians to understand) landed in Zambia from the USA is approximately \$5.00 each compared to about \$8.00 if purchased in Zambia. The local language Bibles cost \$3.00-7.00 each and they are best purchased in Zambia or Malawi. **Many more Songbooks are needed in Zambia.** Duane Fancher in Irving, TX; Judy Boone in Placerville, CA; and

Duane Permenter are working together on printing of a Tonga songbook and they will soon meet this need. The Zambians want to learn English better by singing English songs. If you have old English songbooks you would like to give to Zambia Christians, please call Don Kelly for help in shipping them via "M-Bags." Chewa & Bemba language songbooks are needed at a price of \$1.00 to \$2.00 each, purchased in Malawi or Zambia. **Drip Irrigation help is needed in Zambia.** Thirty-one "Single Family Drip Irrigation Survival Kits" have been installed in Zambia and the recipients trained in their use. They were also trained in Composting & Crop Rotation. Additionally, Bill and Daisy Davis came to Lusaka for the annual Kaunda Square gospel meeting. While in Lusaka Bill and Daisy were also trained on drip irrigation and they took 6 kits back to Zimbabwe for testing there. The early responses in these training sessions have been nothing short of exuberant. Duty Simango of Lusaka said, "Why have you waited so long to bring this to Zambia?" Zambia has 6 months of too much rain, then 6 months of almost no rain. Since April of this year there was no rain in Lusaka until 1/4 inch on October 18th. During the dry season, a \$10.00 drip irrigation kit (includes a locally purchased plastic bucket and vegetable seeds) can provide the means for growing 100 feet of vegetable rows using only 15 gallons of water per day. This can give the opportunity to eat during the dry season when the wet season crop fails or falls short. You can help the Zambians help themselves. **Summary of needs in Zambia:** \$11,000 for Bibles and Songbooks. Please send this money to Edwin Morris (see below) with the checks made out to Duane Permenter and noted for Bibles or songbooks. Edwin will get the money to Duane so he can purchase the non-English Bibles in Zambia or Malawi. English Bibles will be purchased in the USA and shipped to Zambia. **\$20,000 for Drip Irrigation kits.** We are asking individuals, rather than congregations, to support this need. Please send this money to Don Kelly (see below) with checks made out to Watermatics. The kits will be ordered in early February (as many as we have money to buy) so they will be available in Zambia in April at the start of the dry season. One to four kits will be provided to each needy Christian family based on their needs and our ability to supply. A financial report will be provided to all who contribute to this effort. **There are many more ways you can help the great works in these countries.** Please email our Brothers & Sisters working there and volunteer to help them as much as possible. They are doing great works under **very difficult physical situations** and they need our encouragement and support. **Do what you can do!** Contact info: **Edwin Morris**, 405-751-4253, edwin.morris@sbcglobal.net, 601 NW 141 Street, Edmond, OK 73013; **Duane Permenter**, 011-260-290-215, duane@dnlpermenter.com; **Bill Davis**, 011-

263-474-1180, bhdavis@mweb.co.zw; **Roger & Judy Boone**, 530-295-0910, boone@internet49.com **Watermatics**, www.chapinlivingwaters.org, 315-788-0891,

A Note Of Thanks

During recent illnesses, extensive tests and a number of surgeries, I have simply been overwhelmed with so many calls, cards, emails, prayers and well wishes that I could never respond to each with the gratefulness I feel. Many thanks to everyone for your many kindnesses to me. I ask your continued prayers.—Wayne Robinson, Olney, Texas Congregation

2003 Alabama New Years Meeting

The Hartford Highway Church of Christ would like to invite all to attend the Alabama New Years Meeting this December 27-31 in Dothan, AL. This meeting will be under the direction of Bro. Ronny Wade with visiting evangelists being asked to preach. Services on Saturday (December 27th) will be at 7:00 PM and on Sunday (28th) at 10:00 AM in the church building on Hartford Highway in Dothan. Beginning on Sunday night (28th and going thru Wednesday 31st) services will be at 10 AM and 7 PM daily and will be conducted at the Cultural Arts Center on South St. Andrews St., nine blocks south of downtown Dothan. The final gathering will be at 11:00 on New Years Eve when we will sing the old songs of the church from memory to usher in a new year. The meeting has grown from year to year and the preaching and singing is always outstanding. We hope you will make plans to be with us this year. The host hotel is Comfort Inn and their number is (334) 793-9090. There are also rooms available at the Best Western. Their number is (334) 793-4376. Be sure to ask for our special rates by identifying yourself with the "Alabama New Years Meeting/Church of Christ." For more information, contact Kevin Presley at (334) 678-8999 or kpresleyksw.rr.com. Also, you may contact Charles Marsh at (334) 692-5756. We hope to see you there!

In Humble Defense Of Four Brethren

It is this writer's humble conviction that someone needs to make this long overdue defense. These brethren, for months, every month, have been under attack on the printed pages that comes to brethren all over the brotherhood. These attacks, in my humble opinion, are unjustified and serve no good end. The recipients of these attacks are Brethren Jerry Harris, Doug Edwards, Charles Davis and Bobby Trent, and sometimes their families. Recently, it was my honor to conduct a meeting at Norman, Oklahoma, where these men are honorable members. I stand in their, and the congregations defense voluntarily; they have not requested this of me; I make the defense out of a sense of duty.—Don McCord, Box 1773, Covina, CA 91722.

Kentucky New Year Meeting

The Walnut Grove congregation will host the annual Kentucky New Year meeting December 28-31. Alton Bailey will be in charge. Service times are Sunday 10 and 7:30, Monday and Tuesday 7:30. The Wednesday service will be at 7:00 with multiple speakers, and reconvene at 11:00 p.m. for the final service. For information call 606-379-6490 or 606-274-4167.

Our Departed

NEWTON—Brother Emery Newton passed away October 14, 2003 at the age of 86 years. He was a member of the 18th Street congregation in Huntington, WV. The pain and sorrow of his death could have been overwhelming had it not been for the fact that he had prepared for this day. Emery was a kind, gentle-hearted Christian man whose influence will affect the lives of all that knew him for years to come. He was the husband of the late Orpha Carey Newton. Together they built a Christian home where love and respect for God and the Church were of ultimate importance. They were blessed with two children, Patty Maynard of the Spring Valley Congregation and Irvin Newton of the 18th Street congregation both in Huntington, WV. He was also blessed with 3 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren and a host of Christian friends. On October 18, 2003 a large crowd of friends and family gathered at the 18th Street meeting house to pay tribute to this good man, whose influence came not in what he said, but what he did. Brother Bob Hayes and this writer conducted the service.—David Smith

VANDEKERHOVE—Fred Vandekerkhove of Nixa, MO, age 78, passed away September 16, 2003 in his home after a long struggle with heart disease and diabetes. He was born March 20, 1925 to John and Maggie Vandekerkhove. He was preceded in death by his parents, 3 sisters, 1 brother and his first wife Marcellyn. Survivors include his wife, Maxine, a brother, 7 children, 13 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends. After World War II, Fred and his brother started Vander Brothers Construction Company running heavy equipment in Illinois. He moved to Republic, MO in 1966 and started his electric company business. Fred met Maxine in 1977 and they were married the same year. He was a faithful member of the Lord's church, making his home at the Jamesville congregation for many years. He was an inspiration to us all, at times attending services when it was a struggle to attend. Fred will be fondly remembered by all who knew him, but it is his brethren at Jamesville who keenly miss his presence and counsel in the affairs of the church. Fred has gone on to be with the Lord, but his godly influence is still with us! As Fred requested several years ago, Jimmie

Smith conducted the service. Ron Alexander assisted him and I said a few words at the cemetery.—Billy D. Dickinson.

Field Reports

Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Tupelo, OK 74572, November 11, 2003—We are still keeping our regular appointments. Each Lord's Day we teach at Denison. We also have a regular radio program on Sundays at 8:30 A.M. at 1110 on AM radio. We have had this program for over thirty years now. For the past thirty years we have gone to Sulphur, OK each 5th Sunday where a great 4th of July meeting is held each year. Brother Bob Shepherd was one of their leaders for many years and sadly, he passed away November 3. The church there will miss him so very much. Bob was not a person who would quickly make a decision. He would wait until all sides could be considered before doing so. I appreciated him for that quality so very much. In the 46 years I have been a member of the church there have been great changes made in leadership. As I think of the next 46 I wonder who will be there to lead? Then, in looking at some of our young people I believe the church will be in good hands.

Matt Trent, 1372 E. D St., Oakdale, CA 95361, mtrent3@aol.com, Nov. 3—I have just enjoyed attending the preacher's study hosted by the congregation in Richmond, Indiana. The brethren there did a tremendous job hosting the study. I have also enjoyed preaching recently at Manteca, Ceres, Sanger, Yuba City, and here at Oakdale. Our work here has now entered the sixth year. During that time the congregation has grown beyond what I could have imagined. At the time of this report we are preparing for our meeting with Carl Johnson, November 7-16. May God bless all those working for good.

Brett Hickey, 208 Crosshaven Ct., Antioch, TN 37013, (615) 501-9246, brettlouisehickey@juno.com November 10—Over the past few months, cancer and other serious illnesses among the young and old have been a distraction, but their faith and courage under pressure is making us closer and stronger. Our weekend meeting with Reggie Blount was productive and uplifting. Our 5 day meeting with Kevin Presley starts this week. The congregation at Atwater went all out for our meeting bringing 17 outsiders one of which obeyed the gospel after a follow-up Bible study. Several brethren helped advertise the meeting door to door. The congregation has grown spiritually since we last worked together four years ago. Brethren from eight congregations supported the meeting, with brethren from Modesto and Turlock at almost every service. Henry and Abby Fichtelmaier and Carl Jiles family. It was great to be at Turlock again and get to spend time with Richard DeGough. Our first trip to

Brazil, IN led to a number of new friendships. Paul and Sharon Stallcop opened their home and gave us all we needed and more. I was glad to finally get better acquainted with Greg Jordan and appreciate him and his work. Anthony Brockett and family were good to lend their support to the meeting. Several congregations supported the meeting, but the Pleasant Grove congregation turned out in force. Lord willing, we look forward to being with some of you at the Alabama New Years' meeting in Dothan.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, November 14—We just closed an enjoyable meeting with the North Side congregation in Springfield, MO. This is where Brother Irvin Barnes has lived and worked for a number of years. We enjoyed visiting and being with him. We made our home with his son, Tony, and good wife, Dawn. They couldn't have been better to us. In fact, the congregation as a whole was very hospitable in every way. Several preachers attended one or more services and we were glad Ronny Wade could be there all week. It was also good to see Smith Bibens, Clovis Cook, Ron Alexander, Brad Shockley, Doug Hawkins and Roy Lee Criswell along with others, perhaps, I have forgotten. We pray that good was accomplished. We are presently in a meeting with the Covina, CA congregation where Brother Don McCord, gospel preacher and one time editor and publisher of this journal has lived and worked for many years. We have enjoyed being together, as always. Don married Pat and me over 41 years ago so our friendship goes back a long way. We have enjoyed some visitors from the community attending as well as brethren from other congregations. Last night Richard DeGough, who, Lord willing, will go to the Philippines with us on our 24th trip this January, was present along with his wife, Glenda, and Darrell and Gail Brewer from Bakersfield. We expect others this week end as the meeting closes. We look forward to being at home for several weeks now before making the trip to the Philippines. Preachers, don't forget to send your reports and articles.

C. A. Smith, 810 NW 6th. St. Andrews, Texas 79714—October 3-5, I had the privilege of preaching in a short meeting for the brethren that meet at 3rd and Atlanta in Davis, Oklahoma. We stayed with D.J. and Rheba Byrd, my wife, Iva Jo's brother, with whom we had a wonderful time, reminiscing about things that pertained to family and the church. D. J. and Rheba are dear to us and they are an intricate part of the body of Christ in Davis, so our stay with them was indeed a pleasurable time. The meeting was well attended. In fact, brother Gerald Goodson, one of the leaders there, said that in his twenty plus years at Davis, more people attended the meeting than had at any other time. One night there were eight congregations represented, plus, there was some outside interest as well. The brothers and sisters there love to hear the gospel. They were so attentive in the

services, and loved to talk about things that pertain to God's Word and the church of our Lord. Of course, being from Oklahoma, we were happy to see a number of our beloved brethren who attended from here and there. The last night of the meeting, one young man, who had been out of duty for some time, brother Tim Nichols, caused the saints to rejoice, when he made things right with God and tearfully proclaimed that he wanted to do whatever he could for the Lord and the church. May God bless him and his wife with a long and fruitful life in the service of the Lord. We had the opportunity to visit with my wife's sister, Opal and her husband Elmer, as well as with my sister Olive Belle, while in the state of Oklahoma. Last evening, here in Andrews, we had a sister, who had been out of duty, come forward, repenting of her transgressions, confessing that she had fallen short of her Lord's requirements, we prayed with her and for her, and there was great joy because of her return to the fold. She had formerly worshipped with the church here, some thirty years ago, along with her family, Andy and Doris Perkins, and decided she wanted to return to Andrews to live and devote her days to living for God. Her name is now Carloyn Ooley. We are certainly glad to have her be a part of the family of God, and believe that she will influence other family members to faithfulness. On Wednesday evenings we are studying "The Life of Christ," which will entail a year or more to try to cover the life of our Lord in as much a chronological order as we can. All of us have found this study to be exciting and fulfilling. May God richly bless the faithful everywhere is our prayer and we solicit the prayers of all as we work together with God and with one another to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will hear it, receive it, and obey it. Brother Kevin Fox now works with the church in Midland, Texas and we look forward to being with him, visiting and studying together from time to time.

Jonathan Bunner, Apartado Postal #18-01-241, Ambato, Ecuador, South America, Telephone: 593-3242-0096, webpage: iglesiadecristolatina.com—Several months ago we began a Bible study with a man and his two teenage children. We have been studying with all three Luis, Paul, and Veronica. A major shock to all of us was that Paul committed suicide in the middle of September. As you can imagine Luis is devastated and blames himself for not being a better father. Paul was 16 years old. Thankfully brother Villacis and I continue to study with Luis and Veronica. The studies are not the same because we have to encourage both of them more now than before. Please remember Luis and Veronica in your prayers they really need our support right now. Just a quick note. I recently learned that Ambato leads all of Latin-America in suicides. It is unbelievable an average of three a day. Brother Villacis told me that and Marycruz also saw it on the news. Last month I wrote about Rodrigo Agoti and his family who are listeners of the radio program. Rodrigo continues to attend Sunday services. He has six children all together—most are

grown and married. One of his sons name is Franklin. Two weeks ago brother Villacis, Rodrigo, and I started a study with Franklin and his wife. They were having some marriage problems and wanted some counseling. Afterwards they told us to come back the next week, so we did and they say things are getting better for them. We told them things get even better when one reads and studies the Word of God. Another new Bible study is in Plasticacho which is a small community outside of Ambato. In Plasticacho there are ten adults and six children that attend the study. Of the ten adults eight are not Christians. If we can convert some of these people we could start another congregation in Plasticacho. This study is a sacrifice for brother Chiliquinga and me because we have problems getting home afterwards. There is bus and taxi service to Plasticacho, but the study is at 7pm because that is the hour when everyone can attend. At 9pm there is no bus or taxi and we walk a mile and a half in the complete darkness. Sometimes when we get to the Pan-American highway we can find a minibus; other times we have to walk another two miles to Ambato. Both of us feel that this study is worth the sacrifice. Last month I told you about brother Villacis's health problems. Thankfully he is doing well. He is going to a naturalist which has helped him feel much better. The treatment is expensive, but if he continues this treatment he will not need surgery like the doctors first thought. Please continue to pray for brother Villacis. Thank You!

Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com, Nov. 17—The latter part of September we were privileged to be with the saints at Killbuck, OH. While there we enjoyed the hospitality of the Perry Baker home. Our crowds were encouraging and we trust that good was accomplished. From here we went to Ft. Worth, TX (Fossil Creek) for an enjoyable meeting Oct. 11-19. Churches in the area cooperated which helped make the meeting successful. Preaching brethren Joe Norton, Cullen Smith, Gerald Hill, and Melvin Blalock encouraged us with their presence one or more times. We had the privilege of seeing many of our old friends who live in that area. Among them Bobby Studer who currently suffers from a type of blood cancer. Though weak and wheelchair bound he made it to the services the last Sunday. Bobby and I grew up together, and it makes me very sad to see him in such a weak condition. I pray for his recovery. This last weekend we were at Broken Arrow, OK for a good meeting. These brethren use our TV series and are to be commended for their zeal in spreading the gospel. Jack Cutter, with whom I have worked for years lives and works here. It was a great privilege to see and be with him once again. We were glad to have Bro. James Orten present for two services. James labors with the Eleventh St. congregation in Tulsa. Currently we are at home and look forward to working in this area for the next three or four months. Please remember us and the work of the Lord in this area in your prayers.

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THE BACK PAGE...

THEY SAID IT

By CARL M. JOHNSON

The quotations below may not be found in Bartlett's book of *Familiar Quotations*, but they do give us a glimpse of some of the issues the church faced in the past couple of centuries and the personalities who faced them.

"Where the Scriptures speak we speak, where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." **Thomas Campbell** coined this well-known phrase in 1809 to describe the American Restoration Movement's efforts to de-emphasize the conflicting creeds of men and base religious unity solely upon the teaching of the Bible.

"When he preached in a church, many had to be disappointed, for there was no church that would begin to hold all the applicants. In order to accommodate all, he preached in the open air in the public square, and that was the first time in my life that I realized what a mighty population this planet contains when you get them all together." **Mark Twain** made this observation in his memoirs to describe Alexander Campbell's visit to preach in Hannibal, Missouri, Twain's hometown.

"From a full induction of the laws...as reported in the writings of Moses and of the Apostles. We conclude that the relation of master and slave is no where condemned in the Holy Scriptures as morally wrong; and that, in certain cases, and under certain regulations, it is even now altogether lawful and right." **Alexander Campbell** wrote these words in an 1845 issue of the *Millennial Harbinger*. Campbell condemned the institution of slavery as it existed in the USA on many occasions and along with his friend Henry Clay he used his influence to try to bring about emancipation. But when extremists began to twist the Scriptures into denying the lawfulness of the relation of master and servant Campbell felt compelled to oppose their errors.

"There is not an excuse in existence for forcing this new element into the worship and imposing it on those who cannot conscientiously worship with it. There is not a man anywhere who can claim authority for the new element, nor one whose conscience demands it." **Elder Benjamin Franklin** spoke these words in vigorously opposing the use of musical instruments in worship in 1869 (Earl West, *Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. 2, p. 86).

"If he were to prove me to be a liar and a horse thief that would be no proof whatever of the scripturalness of his pet and he knows it." These colorful words from **Dr. G. A. Trott** were directed at a "Brother Warlick" whom Trott had been trying to coax into a written debate. Instead of answering Dr. Trott's challenge to produce Bible authority for Warlick's use of Bible classes and women teachers, Warlick attacked Dr. Trott's character. He accused Dr. Trott of being dishonest, claiming Trott owed him ten dollars while Dr. Trott claimed the debt had been paid (*The Apostolic Way*, March 1, 1929).

"I think I was the first preacher to advocate the use of the individual communion cup and the first church in the state of Tennessee that adopted it was the church for which I was preaching, the Central Church of Christ at Chattanooga, Tennessee. I was fought both privately and publicly and several brethren took me to task in the religious papers and called me digressive." **G. C. Brewer** makes this claim in his 1948 book *Forty Years on the Firing Line* (p. XII).

"Isn't he a sugar stick!" **Si Collins** a pioneer preacher in Kentucky and an ardent admirer of Moses E. Lard's powerful preaching shouted this observation to his friend William Azbill in the midst of one of Lard's masterful sermons. Collins' legacy continues today as I have heard preachers refer to their best sermon as a "candy stick."

"Up to thirty sermons Lard can beat anybody, after that, up to two hundred and fifty, I can beat him." **William Hopson** made this reply to someone who asked if he or Lard were the greater preacher Hopson had the early advantage of a good education, being proficient in Latin before Lard could write his name.

"Brawley was clearly called and sent; but for what purpose Heaven never informed the world, and the world never found out. He never bored an audience except when he made a speech, nor delighted one except when he kept silent. His face was a thing to be detested and shunned by women enceinte (pregnant); and when drolls went in quest of gesture Brawley supplied the model." **Moses Lard** gives this description of a character he met during his first evangelistic meeting (*Quarterly*, Vol. 1, p. 211). As Matt Trent says, "Our field reports do not pack the same punch today."

"Yeah, it's a good one isn't it?" **T. B. Larimore** made this reply to his incredulous wife who asked T. B. if he realized the sermon he just preached in an evening service of a gospel meeting was the same sermon he preached the night before.—1400 Northcrest Dr. Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net