

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

ANOTHER HORSE THAT WAS RED

By DON McCORD

Nearly 2,000 year ago, John, at the behest of the living creatures, around the throne in heaven, saw wonderful things as the Lamb, the Christ, opened the seven seals of the Revelation. The seals are parallel to each other extending from the beginning of the Age in which we live, continuing to its close. It is this writers humble conviction, all things considered, that this is the only logical, scriptural conclusion in understanding this impressive ongoing scenario. The events of the present, beginning September 11th, and continuing, have no special significance in prophecy, other then being a part of the whole picture, beginning to unfold hundreds of years ago, still unfolding, and will continue unfolding until the end of the age, That carnal wars with all their carnage, bloodshed, sorrow, human suffering continue should be no surprise to Christians, those who know the Book.

The four riders on the four horses of different significant colors seen at the opening of the first four seals (Revelation 6:1-8), *are still riding, and will ride until the end of time.* The first Rider on the white horse has to be the Christ; He is still going 'forth conquering and to conquer.' That Christ is the subject of the first seal is impressive! The weapons in His conquering are not carnal; the sword He bears is *never* in His hand, *never* at His side but *always* in His mouth (Rev. 1:16). How significant! That He will return to engage in some carnal conflict with anyone is repugnant to reason, and utterly disrespectful to the Son of God, the Prince of Peace. Nowhere in the Book is such a conflict ever hinted. He is pictured again in Rev. 19:11-16, riding on the same white horse, His armies following on "white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean," "the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (v. 8). What a commentary on Christians, the church, now and always. Christ and His saints, His people have been historically at war against terrorism, not carnal, but *spiritual terrorism*, all false religion universal, all false doctrine, including denominationalism, sectarianism, cultism, digression, division, as perpetrated by 'MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH' (Rev. 17:5). Such may not be generally recognized as terrorism, but that it is. There

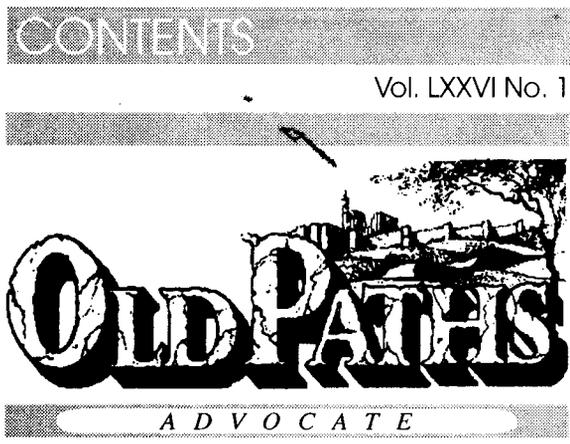
is no wonder in many, many places the church is virtually unknown, in too many places it is impossible to plant the church; the church is snubbed, ignored, held in utter disdain, as is the truth she sustains. The world is full of spiritual terrorism, has been from the beginning of the age and will be until its triumphant end. The survival of the Kingdom of God on earth has always been a struggle, and will ever be. Shame on those who contribute to such, yes, spiritual terrorism, of which the world is full, all in the name of religion, false religion. Much of terrorism is religiously motivated, the terrorism of September 11 included. What a lesson in proof that men can be religiously wrong, though perhaps sincere and even fanatically conscientious. This truth God's men have been preaching since the age began; still the world generally does not listen.

Again, parallel to the first seal are the second, third and fourth. The second, the red horse and rider, we refer to at some length momentarily. The third, the black horse and rider, suggesting economic inequity, upheaval and the suffering caused thereby, very much evident in our time, as well as post and future. The fourth, the pale horse and rider named Death with Hades following; this rider, too, riding the pale horse since the beginning of the age to its end, robbing the human family of those they love; Death, the Grim Reaper, robbing, reaping as long as the age shall last.

More now about the red horse and its rider, yes, there was "Another horse that was (is) red"—extensive power for evil and devastation is given to this rider, "to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword." The rider on this horse, red signifying war, bloodshed, is still riding as are the other three, and will be until the end. The events of September 11 and events pursuant are clear evidence of this.

In times like these, what can Christians do? Christians occupy a most unique position. They above all others sustain a relationship with God the Father, Christ the Son, the Holy Spirit, the angels that all others can only covet. Christians, members of the church, subjects of the Kingdom of heaven, have, that direct line with the Source of supplies that others

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Editorial

“DO WE NEED TO BE REMINDED”

By DON L. KING

As we begin the New Year we think of all the accomplishments of the one just gone. Some great strides forward were made in 2001 and we thank God for them. The Gospel of Christ was taken into new fields; many obeyed the truth and look forward to eternity in Heaven. New congregations were established in various places and others have been strengthened. Just think of the untold miles traveled by so many of God's people in safety! It was a good year, for the most part.

However, some matters need a bit of attention. We would like to mention one or two. We who are older are likely to forget that the battles won in times past must be fought all over again unless the younger brethren are well aware of the dangers.

Many years ago, our brethren fought digression in every way possible. Preachers warned against the errors of the day in sermons and in private. Even in everyday conversations on the “front porch” Bible doctrine was a frequent topic. Debates were the order of the day and the truth was upheld over and over again. It was unusual to go through a gospel meeting and not hear why it was wrong to use more than one cup in the Lord's Supper. Sunday school or Bible classes were soundly thrashed as well. Instrumental music was shown to be wrong because it was another “kind” of music. Vocal music is specified and any other kind is wrong, etc. In other words, people were constantly taught the reason they needed to be members of the Church of Christ. Our preaching could convert a sinner within the span of a gospel meeting, and often did just that. Some of us recall the days when there were people lined up waiting to be baptized after a sermon. Too, it wasn't uncommon for people to be converted from the use of the various innovations.

The silence of the Scriptures was well understood by our brethren then. It was often shown that when the Scriptures specify anything it also excludes everything else within that class. We “nailed the lid down” that when the scriptures specify one cup in Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and 1 Corinthians 11, the use of more than one was excluded though it is never specifically forbidden. It doesn't have to be because the scriptures are “prescriptive” rather than “proscriptive.” In other words, like a woman's recipe for a nut pie, the recipe or “prescriptive instructions” mention ONLY what is to be used in the making of the pie. The recipe doesn't have to forbid a dill pickle and black pepper (that would be proscriptive) because they are automatically EXCLUDED by simply naming what is to be used. Isn't that simple and easy?

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: When a person who has been withdrawn from by a congregation, makes an appearance at another congregation, who has gathered for worship, is that person to be refused admittance to the assembly? In connection with such a situation, please discuss the idea of closed communion. (OH)

Answer: In First Corinthians 5, Paul makes clear the relationship that should exist between a sinning individual and the congregation of which he is a member. To tolerate such a one causes the church to run the risk of being further harmed by his evil influence. Hence, they are commanded to "purge out" the old leaven, and are reminded that a "little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump." It seems that the church accepted the instruction of the Apostle and took disciplinary measures against the identified fornicator. Once that action was made known, everyone realized that the "sinning brother" was no longer accepted by the church, both he and his behavior were rejected. They were not to company with him, not even eat with him. Should they see him or be with him they were to reprove and admonish him to repent. They were not to have any association with him that would in any way give anyone the idea that they condoned his lifestyle or ungodly behavior. When any brother or sister has committed sins that justify corrective measures by the church, and when such measures are scripturally carried out, every other congregation should honor and respect that action. Does this action include barring the man from the assembly? I cannot say that it does, nor can I say that such a course of action is in the best interest of the church generally. While one from whom fellowship has been scripturally withdrawn is not to be received back into fellowship until he repents, to physically refuse him admittance to the building is without scriptural precedent. He already knows how the church feels about him, based on their previous actions. For the church to over react, because he shows up at a service by causing a scene or by forcefully trying to remove him, would only compound the problem rather than solve it. When a congregation starts screening those who will be allowed into the assembly, they begin a journey down a road fraught with all kinds of dangers. Closed communion is especially popular among the Baptist denomination. It has been defined, by them, as the "restriction by a church of participation in the Lord's supper to its own members." The Scriptures teach that the communion of the body and blood of the Lord is to be observed by congregations of the church on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Proper procedure is outlined in 1 Cor. 11:23-29. The communion is not for non-members. The person serving at the table should explain this so as not to encourage anyone and everyone regardless of their situation to partake. But, suppose a visitor partakes anyway? What should be done? Perhaps more

pointedly what can be done? Suppose some member partakes who has been on a drunk the night before that no one knows about? Or suppose that some individual from whom fellowship has been withdrawn comes into the assembly and when the emblems are passed he partakes? Does this affect my communion? Is everyone in the assembly now wrong because someone has communed that should not have? Are we to have someone interrogate everyone before they partake to make sure they are all right?

Surely not. There is a vast difference in someone partaking of the Lord's supper with our sanction and fellowship, and someone doing so on his or her own. After all brethren, we are not running a police force.

Question: There is a preacher in our area who, on numerous occasions, has taken erring members and out of duty members confessions of wrong doing over the telephone and then at a later time announces it at church. Is this practice scriptural?

Answer: The Scriptures teach that when we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous 1 John 2:1, Also in 1 John 1:9 we are told that if "we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The idea that the only way one can confess sins or receive forgiveness for sins is to come forward at a church service and make a confession for those sins, is not founded in scripture. While it may be appropriate, at times, to do that, it is not mandatory. If one sins and is aware of the need for repentance, to make them wait until the next church service to confess that sin and have prayer is not only dangerous, it is without scriptural precedent. The sooner one can take care of such matters, the better. For these reasons, I cannot say that what the querist describes is unscriptural. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com)

GROWING IN CHRIST

By JAMES ORTEN

Spiritual growth is not an option for Christians; it is a necessity. To the Corinthians, Paul said, "And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ" (1 Cor. 3: 1). He continued by saying he had fed them with milk, anticipating that they would grow to be able to accept the meat of God's Word; but they had not grown. He further indicated that their lack of growth was the source of the troubles in the church in that city. Jesus loved children (Matt. 19:14); but He did not like adults who acted like children (Luke 7:31).

The necessity of spiritual growth notwithstanding, I think we are unclear on what it is. In talking with preachers and church leaders, I find great difficulty in defining it. In fact, of several with whom I have discussed the matter, not one could give a simple, straight-forward definition. I am not complaining against them; I could not do it when I started this

study, and even now can not do it well. But our lack of clarity is proof of our need to study the subject. If we do not know exactly where we want to go, how will we ever get there? The following lines are presented as initial steps in what I expect to be a journey. I invite you to join me in walking the way, and may God enlighten us as we go.

Three Propositions

In lieu of a simple definition, which I do not have, I present three propositions which are intended to help us think clearly about spirituality. Perhaps they also will help us measure ourselves as we grow. First, **When things of the spirit become as real to me as things of the flesh, then I can say I have grown spiritually.** For most of the world, heaven is like a distant dream, and hell like a nightmare that will disappear when we awake. For Paul heaven was an ever-present reality. He could not have said, I have "a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better" (Philippians 1:23), had heaven been only a vague hope. Nor would he have gladly "suffered the loss of all earthly things," things which others coveted, "and counted them as rubbish" if heaven were not a certainty (Philippians 3:8).

If my body hurts, I am immediately aware of its needs, and I take them seriously. For example, when I feel that familiar gnawing in the stomach that signals hunger, I start looking for food. If none is at hand, I begin planning how I can get it. What about the needs of my spirit? Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6). Do we even recognize the signals that indicate our spirits are hungry for the milk and meat of God's word?

Some years ago I read a study of neglected children. Those infants and toddlers had been fed on such erratic schedules that they had never connected eating with the resolution of hunger pains. Thus when they got hungry they cried, got agitated, ran around, but they often did not eat even when food was placed in front of them. I think that story is a picture of our times. The world, and sadly some in the church, are searching for something that satisfies. They fill their lives with material things, frenzied activities, and relationships of all types, not knowing that these "husks" can never fill the hole made by an empty spirit.

Second, **When I make the decisions of my life with the spirit in mind as much as the flesh, then I have grown spiritually.** When I apply for a job, I am certain to ask about salary, health insurance, retirement plans, vacation days, and on and on. But am I just as quick to ask questions relating to the welfare of my spirit, i.e. will this environment allow my spirit to flourish, are there likely to be snares here that will cause me to sin, and will I be comfortable being open about my faith in Christ?

When I make decisions to spend large sums of money, do I consider the impact on my soul? If I buy

this automobile, will it be more difficult for me to give what I know I should to the Lord? Will this boat tempt me to use it on Lord's Days instead of going to worship? If I move to this luxurious home, will I be more or less likely to show hospitality to other Christians? Then for unmarried Christians there is perhaps the most No important question of all. Is the source of my attraction to this person as a potential spouse based on physical features or spiritual ones? Paul said, "that each one of you know how to pick a wife for himself in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the heathen who know not God" (I Thess. 4:4-5, RSV). One way to determine the source of the attraction is to ask, what produces the common activities of our courtship, the spirit or the flesh?

Third, **When I understand the principles of the spirit as well as those of the flesh, then I can say I have grown spiritually.** The great principles of the gospel can not be fully, perhaps even substantially, understood until we begin to grow in the spirit. "The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor, 2:14).

Here is an example of Paul's statement. "Whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39). Men have struggled over that statement for years. "That is not even according to human nature," they say, "because there is an instinct for self-preservation." They are right; it is not according to human nature. It was not meant to be; but it is according to spiritual nature. A man full of human pride will not willingly take an insult or an injury he could avoid. But that action is fully in accord with the nature of Christ, who willingly gave up His throne in heaven, made himself of no reputation, was smitten on the cheek and every other part of his body, and then crucified for us. If I can allow an angry man to hit me again and thereby demonstrate for him how to rise above the lusts of the flesh, it is small potatoes compared to what Jesus did for me.

When I have eaten the flesh of the Son of God and drunk his blood (John 6:53)—when I have taken the Lord into my heart so completely that he has become a part of me, like the bread I eat becomes a part of my physical body—then it will be "natural" for me to think and behave like Him. Then I can truly say I have grown spiritually.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT?

By GREG GAY

Have you heard the statement about "Majoring in minors?" That refers to someone who makes such a big deal out of things that are relatively unimportant they end up forgetting what is truly important. Can't we all get so caught up in little things we forget what is important?

The Jews were guilty of this. One time Jesus condemned them for making sure they tithed out of

their garden herbs but forgot "weightier matters" of the law. (To tithe means to give a 10th of something to God.) The herbs Jesus mentioned were common herbs used to flavor food and for medicine.

Here is what Jesus said in his scathing rebuke: Matt 23:23 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For 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."

Look at what they had forgotten: Judgment (justice), mercy, and faith (faithfulness). These are big topics aren't they? We might think, how could the Jews forget those? Yet, they did.

Notice, Jesus said they were "not to leave the other undone." They were right in what they did. They were correct in their concern about the garden herbs, they just forgot the other stuff they were supposed to do that was even more important.

What about us today? We can do the same thing if we are not very careful. Consider a man who loves his family and wants to provide well for them. So he works hard on his job to become successful but in the process spends so little time with his family he is practically a stranger in his own home. What has he done? Omitted the "Weightier matters." Of course it is right to provide for a home but as Jesus himself said, "Matt 16:26 "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" or his own family in the case of our example.

I've known of people who stayed home from worship to prepare food for a potluck or a meal for the preacher. What have they done? They've omitted the "weightier matters." Of course it is fine to practice hospitality but remember Mary was praised for listening to the words of Jesus while Martha was gently corrected for being so concerned about what to feed Jesus she forgot to listen to what he had to say.

So, what should be important to us? Every time we have choices to make we have to decide. May I suggest we learn to always ask: How can we "seek first the kingdom of God" and what would Jesus do in a similar situation? And then do it.

NO RESISTANCE, NO EXISTENCE

By CECIL SMITH

Across the river, in the edge of the forest, near the big scrub, once stood a frame meeting house. A number of years ago it was a gathering place for the saints to worship. The songs of Zion, which once echoed through the forest, are heard no more. The prayers of the saints no longer ascend to the throne of God. The walls of the little building no longer ring with the preacher's voice as he proclaims the message of salvation. There is nothing but silence that ascends - deathly silence on the first day of the week - the church in the edge of the forest is dead!

Here is the story of this church, as told by members many years ago with some of the names being withheld or changed. "We once had a good little church here. When brother Dave preached all the sectarians from miles around would come to hear him; they all loved him. Brother John was a good preacher also. When he preached the Baptist preacher would come over to be with us. Sometimes on a Sunday night brother John would go over and hear the Baptist preacher; you see they were such good friends. I think it was good for them to get along so well."

"Evil days befell the church; brother John died." As one said; "One prominent family moved away; that sure hurt us, Nearly all of the young people moved away, and the ones that didn't are not interested in the church. One of my brothers moved to town. Brother Sam joined the Baptist church. That was bad, but he thought so much of brother Lampp, their preacher, in fact, all of us love him. He has helped conduct funerals of several of the members of the old church, and we attend his revivals."

Another one said: "Sometimes we would go visiting, being poor and hard working folks, naturally we had to go on Sundays, and of course, we couldn't be at church. Sometimes the women were sick; you know how women folks are, so we couldn't go. There is one thing I did which I am proud of; I had the deed recorded; nobody can take the church house away from us. A lot of people wouldn't have thought of that. Since we are not using the house anymore, we are letting the Woodmen of the World use it for the up-keep. It would be a shame to let it ruin."

"Since we no longer meet here, we go to town for worship when we are able," says one brother. Another one said: "We don't always have the money to buy gas, so we can't go every Sunday. We have to go for groceries and to see the doctor, so we can't afford to go all the time, but we go when we can. I hunt a little; I always have; it takes money to buy shells." This brother believed in being a good neighbor, if there was a funeral he was there, especially if "brother" Lampp was to have a part in it.

This is the sad tale of a church that went the way of all the earth and no longer is in existence. We all should understand why, it was always sickly and had never built up any type of resistance to sin, conformity, nor apathy. No church, no matter how large, could have long survived the disease that killed this church. At the time the story was first related the building was being used as a lodge hall, the women folk were not as well as they once were, the visiting was on schedule, the hunting was unabated and "brother" Lampp was still conducting funerals.

Such a story as this should strike a chord in the heart of every faithful Christian. The story is certainly not one of a kind for many church houses have closed for much the same reasons, If one decides to take a ride down some of the back roads of our country, it doesn't take long before an abandoned old building

can be spotted off in the woods, the meadows or rising above the fog where people once came together in the name of religion. Many times these groups of people chose the path of least resistance, which led to their nonexistence. The same can easily be true of the congregation of which we are a part. Whenever we get to the point that the church looks no different than the denominational world or the world in general, there is no reason left for our existence. I encourage the good readers of this article to consider some of the things which are leading many churches of the restoration movement into digression and back into the apostasy from which we came.

The Path of No Authority

The path of no authority has no respect for the silence of the Scriptures. Many have chosen to take this path for varied and sundry reasons. This is a trail of tears for no other path has caused as much heartache and division within the Lord's House. Those who are taking this path will invariably cry foul when certain things are opposed which have no backing in scripture. Usually their arguments follow a distinct line. They often cry; "You can't find in the Bible where it says I can't do this" or "Give me book, chapter and verse against this practice." The problem with such reasoning is the Christian religion is a religion of authority. Contrary to popular belief, it is not a religion based upon a "Thou Shalt Not." There are many things within the Scriptures we all know to be wrong based upon the absence of authority for them. Take, for instance, the Lord's Supper. The Bible doesn't have to tell us what not to use in commemoration of the Lord's death. In instituting His Supper, Jesus told us exactly what was to be used and this eliminated all other items. The same is true concerning which day of the week we are to partake of the Lord's Supper. It is also true of our singing. We have authority to sing and no authority to play man made instruments of music. We do not have to prove that such is condemned out-rightly in the Scriptures. The fact that we have no authority for an item proves that such is unacceptable before God who gave us all things that pertain unto life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

A good practice in deciding whether or not something is acceptable before God is to ask oneself a few questions. Is such a part of the tradition received from the apostles? Is such a plant of God? Is such a good work? Is such according to Truth? Is such contained within the whole counsel of God? Is such "of faith?" If I participate in such am I speaking as the Oracles of God? Does such pertain unto life and godliness? The conclusion to such questions concerning matters for which we have no authority is rather obvious. If it is not found within the word of God, then it is not a part of the tradition of the apostles (2 Thess. 3:6), It is not a plant of God (Mt. 15:13), It is not a good work (2 Tim. 3:17), it is not according to Truth (John 17:17), It is not a part of the whole

counsel of God (Acts 20:27), it is not of faith (Rom. 10:17), it is not a part of the Oracles of God (I Pet. 4:11), and it does not pertain unto life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). No wonder Paul plainly commanded the Thessalonians in 1 Thess. 5:21 to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

The basic doctrine that separates us from the rest of the world is our respect for the silence of the Scriptures. In many circles we are losing this respect and thus losing one of the main reasons for our existence separate and apart from our religious neighbors. In the short time I have been striving to preach, I have had numerous individuals within the body of Christ approach me who have no respect for the silence of the Scriptures. One particular individual flatly stated that the silence of the Scriptures means nothing. Another, a young preacher, used the same arguments I have heard used by those who advocate digression. Even as Jacob Creath, Jr. once opposed Alexander Campbell for his support of conventions or societies, it is high time the faithful rally to fight this great enemy that threatens our existence! Creath, as quoted from *Memoirs of Jacob Creath, Jr.* written by Donan, stated "You say our Savior and the apostles did not denounce conventions, as such. Did they denounce Popery or corrupt Protestantism, as such? Did they denounce infant baptism, or creed making, or auricular confessions, as such? It is for you to show where they authorized conventions." I wonder, in light of some of the things in which many of our brethren are participating in, how they would meet the argument given by Creath? But even more so, I wonder how long congregations will continue to exist when they refuse to resist those things that are not contained with the word of God? How long will it take for such a group to completely go off into digression or apostatize from truth? Much like the church mentioned above, many are headed in the direction of no resistance and eventually will have no existence as the peculiar people of God.

The Path of Conformity

Another path, which leads us farther and farther from our reason to exist is the path or trail of conformity. This is the plea to be like the denominations and the world. Many individuals, who were raised to be very strong Christians, have left the old paths in search of popularity for their children's sake. Their godly parents did not allow them to participate in the things of the world. Now that they have children, they remember how hard it was to be different and they cringe at the thought of their children having to suffer on account of their "religion." Though many are ready and willing to embark upon this trail of tears, the book that tells us of heaven still demands for us to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and

acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2). I wonder what parents are thinking who want their children to be popular and accepted by the world with its low standards. It is my understanding that the world is the domain of Satan. Do we want our children to be popular and accepted by Satan? Surely we can see there is no good in allowing our children to live worldly lives. Conformity leads us away from God for God's ways are different from the ways of men! It is very sad to see so many of our young people becoming involved in things of the world. I wonder in some circles, how much more conformed young "Christians" can become for they are already encouraged to act like the world, go with the world, do the things of the world, look like the world, dress like the world (if not worse), and talk like the world. The path of conformity will lead our young people away from the Lord and His Ways. If they begin to see themselves as being just like the world, they have no reason to hold to the claim of being Christians, peculiar people set-aside for service to God. The path of no resistance to the world and its charms will lead us to a place where there is no reason for our existence.

The Path of Least Resistance

The last path that leads to certain ruin, is the path of least resistance, especially in regard to religious error. This path was chosen by the people who once met in the little building at the edge of the forest. They chose to get along with their religious neighbors rather than stand for the truth. Whenever a congregation gets to the point that it believes those around it are heading in the same direction, the congregation no longer has a legitimate reason to exist. I have been approached by members of the Lord's Church who no longer want to hear sermons concerning the "one church" because such is labeled offensive. Yet, many of these individuals want to see the church growing in number. What they don't seem to realize is if we don't have the truth concerning the one church, if it is possible to make it to heaven without the church, what point is there in trying to convert others to the church? On the other hand, if we have the truth concerning the church, we have reason to go and tell others about this great body and the salvation that can be obtained therein. The reason we are not growing in many places is because we have compromised our preaching so much so that we no longer have anything to offer. Like the church previously mentioned, members are not able to see that denominationalism, sectarianism and worldliness is wrong.

There is also another category to consider under this heading. There are those who have lain aside certain doctrines in the name of growth. Often this is done with pleasurable results, if we lay aside many of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, we are able to grow in number or on the surface. We may even become a standard of measurement for the rest of the brotherhood due to our "growth." The problem is,

even though we have a fancy building, a large membership and many activities, if we have left the Lord we only have a name of being alive for in reality we are dead. This is exactly what the inspired writer said unto the church at Sardis; "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." Such a congregation may still sing loudly the songs of Zion and may still utter great prayers, but if the Lord has removed His candlestick, their voices ascend no higher than the ceiling!

As the body of Christ we are commanded to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered (Jude 3). In order for us to continue to exist with God in our midst, we must resist the devices of Satan. We must resist the desire to leave the teachings of the Bible for things the Bible doesn't authorize. We must resist the desire to conform to the world. We must resist false doctrine, false worship and false organizations. Brethren remember, we are in a fight and the battleground is often ugly. If we fail to stand up and be counted there may come a day when a story similar to the one of the church in the edge of the forest is told concerning the congregation where we gather to worship. "The songs of Zion are heard no more. The prayers of the saints no longer ascend to the throne of God. Its walls no longer ring with the preacher's voice. There is nothing but silence that ascends - deathly silence on the first day of the week - the church of which we were a part is dead!"

ANOTHER HORSE THAT WAS RED

continued from page 1

cannot have that direct line is prayer. Paul wrote to the church of Christ at Ephesus nearly 2,000 years ago these words of hope and challenge—"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think--." This all depends on something; he continues, "according to the power that worketh in us." There is power that works in God's children in times like these that cannot in others; power that comes by dedication, worshipping, living right; incessant, faithful praying. Christians can do as Paul admonished Timothy, something precious that others cannot do, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority (1Tim. 2:1-2). Christians as no others can make Psalm 46 their song, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

Conclusively, life in some ways may never be the same since September 11, but there are things September 11 will never, can never change. They are still the same. The truth is still just that, absolute truth, truth that does not change with time, with place, with

circumstances. The church still stands strong, unmoved, immovable, the only soul-saving institution on the earth. God is still sovereign, His Son is still King of kings, the gospel is still the power of God unto salvation. Worshipping in spirit and in truth is still an obligation, as well as an honor and blessing. Yes, in an ever changing world, there are things that never change!

EDITORIAL

continued from page 2

The Bible would be an immense book if it forbade every thing that God doesn't want. His infinite wisdom saw that it was much better to just specify what He wanted. Make no mistake about it, brethren, the silence of the Scriptures is an awesome thing.

We once understood the reason women were not to teach in public. There are principles found in God's Word that need to be kept in mind. It is our understanding that where a woman may teach, she may teach anyone. Where she may not, she may teach no one. We know that a woman taught a man in a private setting as is shown in Acts 18:24-26. Priscilla, along with her husband, taught the mighty Apollos from Alexandria "...the way of God more perfectly." She and her husband did not cause a public disturbance to do so, that is usually the wrong thing to do under any circumstance. The record says "...they took him unto them." (Acts 18:26)

The foregoing shows that Paul was consistent in forbidding the woman to "teach" in 1 Timothy 2:11,12; 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35. This obviously refers to public teaching since she is told to "teach" good things in a private setting (Titus 2:3-5, etc) In 1 Timothy 2:11,12 Paul wrote: **"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."** This passage is often abused and misunderstood. Paul did not say she was not merely to teach "over" the man. He forbade her to "teach." (Deliver a public didactic discourse such as a sermon might be) and also she is forbidden to "usurp authority" or domineer over the man. There are two things Paul forbids there, you see? She is not allowed to do either one of them.

In an effort to provide a situation where the woman may teach, some have developed an arrangement for teaching called the class system. Before the worship service begins on Lord's day, they advertise "Bible classes" at perhaps 9:00 A.M. Another service is advertised at a later hour. Those who attend this "class" are usually divided into several groups according to age, etc. and women then teach the classes. They are not allowed to teach at the service that takes place a bit later. If one asks why, 1 Timothy 2:11,12 and 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 are cited. However, they seem to overlook that the class is just as public as the service that follows! All one has to do to prove this to himself is just read the sign. The class is advertised right along with the service where

the Lord's supper is served. The church decides the time; the elders oversee the Bible subjects being taught, the assembly that came together for this service is divided into several groups, and women teach. Notice this: *both are public* because the public is invited to both. The Bible is taught at both places and the elders oversee both. The church provides the teacher, the time, the oversight and the place for both services. Women can teach at one but not at the other. They are opposed to dividing the assembly at one service but not at the other. Isn't that odd? Seems to us that 1 Corinthians 14:23 and also verse 26 shows the pattern being an undivided assembly if it is public.

We need to understand what makes anything public brethren. It is pretty simple, really. Notice carefully: *if the public is invited, it is public.* When it is advertised on a sign, announced at the public services or sent out to the public via newspaper or flyer, etc. it is public and when or if the Bible is taught it is to be men who do so. May we remind also, please, that there is not one single example of any public assembly being divided before the Word of God was taught. The example is always one undivided assembly while men, speaking one at a time, teach the will of the Lord.

These are simple principles that once were commonly understood, agreed upon, and regularly taught by the people of God. However, we may have allowed some of them to slip away. The younger members have not had the battles to fight and may not have the principles within their minds, as they should.

If these things are so, it is past time for all of us who preach and teach the gospel of Christ to begin preaching them again. Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tyler, Texas

Please make the necessary changes in your directories to show that Tyler congregation has changed their Lord's day evening services from 5:00 to 3:00 P.M.

Notice Regarding Reprinting & Reproduction

We received the following note from Alfred Newberry: "I do not wish for the booklets, tracts, articles and slide studies I have authored to be reproduced in whole or in part either in hard copy or electronic format. The following list includes most but not all of the works I have authored. The Divine Pattern Advocate; The Passover, Supper and Crucifixion; How to Become a NT Christian and Establish a Church of Christ in Your Community: Five Steps-How to Become a NT Christian; Christmas; Visualized Bible Studies (deals with instrumental music, classes and individual cups); The Seed Principle; Footwashing-Worship or Hospitality?" Alfred L. Newberry

To Publish Your Articles, Etc. During January

Please send all materials intended for publication during the month of January to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10911, Springfield, MO 65808. In February, resume sending to me as always. We apologize for any inconvenience. DLK

Wanted: Old Issues Of OPA

I'm collecting back-issues of the *Old Paths Advocate* for the purpose of binding them and adding them to my personal library. I have most of the issues from the 1970s, 80s, 90s, and 2000s, and I have some issues from each decade prior to those years beginning with 1933. If you have any old issues especially from the 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s (I have all issues from 1962, '65, '66 and '69), and wouldn't mind parting with them, please contact me or send them to me, and I'll reimburse you for the papers and postage. Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr, Ada, OK 74820, (580) 332-1739, carlmj@cableone.net

Preachers, Please Read

As we begin the New Year, may we kindly ask all of our preachers to try to send a field report at least every other month? The brethren enjoy reading of your work. It is an encouragement to them. We would also like to request that all of you consider sending an article to the paper at least four times each year. Try to have the materials typed and double spaced. A field report should usually not be more than one half page of double spaced material. That isn't much to ask. Articles should be about three to four pages of double spaced material. You can send them to us by e-mail: old_paths@juno.com. Also try to mention the paper from time to time in your meetings, etc. In days gone by, this was a common practice by most of our preachers. Would you try to help? Remember that ANYONE sending us 10 or more subscriptions will get theirs free for one year. With your help, we could go into more places and Countries than ever before. What an easy way for your materials to be read in all of the foreign fields as well as here in the USA. Let us hear from you soon! DLK

Special Announcement

The congregation in Frisco, Texas is interested in talking to any young brother who has the desire to commit his life in service to the Lord as a gospel preacher, and learn to do the work of an evangelist. He must have at least graduated from high school, and have the backing and some financial assistance from his local church. If interested, please contact: Bob Johnson, at 972-335-1005 or 972-741-1163. Leave name and phone number if no answer.

New Congregation

McDONOUGH, GEORGIA (South Atlanta Area) Meeting Each Lord's Day in Conference Room of Sleep Inn Motel, 945 Hwy. 155 South, McDonough,

GA 30253. Go 1-75 @Exit 216, Go West One Block on Left - Tel:770/898-0804. Times of Worship - Sundays: 10:30 a.m. & 4:00 p.m. You may contact: Mark Grant, 340 Countryside Dr., McDonough, GA 30252 - Tel: 770/898-7161; Don Snow, 1022 Ola Dale Dr., McDonough, GA 30252 - Tel: 678/432-6374; Mark Hurd - Tel: 770/473-6561; Dwayne Snow - Tel: 678/432-7999; Jerry Fling - Tel: 770/957-8913; Robert Kirk - Tel: 678/583-1872. WEB PAGE: www.churchofchristonline.com

Directory Information

The South Walnut Church of Christ in Cleburne, TX will be changing the time of their services on Sunday afternoon from 4:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M. This will become effective January 6, 2002. Our zip code has also changed from 76031 to 76033. All other information will remain the same in the directory.

OUR DEPARTED

CAMPBELL—Sister Ruth Ezell Campbell was born in Palo Pinto Co., TX, Aug. 10., 1908; departed this life at the home of a daughter, Nelda Smith, at La Mesa, CA, October 21, 2001. She was married to Jimmy Campbell in 1930; he preceded her in death in 1959; she had been an example of noble widowhood for 42 years. For more than 50 years this writer has known the Campbell family, in joy and in sorrow. Years before our meeting, Ruth Campbell had become a member of the church. It was such an honor to be able to relate this to those gathered at the funeral of this deserving lady. Two children besides Nelda survive her, Charles of Henderson, TX, and Jaleah Brynn, Son Luis Obispo, CA; there are 12 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren. It was indeed an honor to conduct the funeral of this dear lady/Oct. 25, 2001 at Fairhaven Cemetery, Santa Ana, CA, where she is buried by Jimmy, her husband, to await the glorious resurrection.—Don McCord

SNODGRASS—Sister Martha Myrl Snodgrass was born in Texas, Nov. 22, 1909 to John E. Spradley, Sr., and Lula Ponton Spradley. She departed this life Mar. 30, 2001 in Claremont, CA. She had been a pillar in the church for many years at Covina, CA. What an honor it was to have known her! She was married in Texas to G.I. Snodgrass in 1927. To this union 4 children were born, all of whom survive, O. R. Snodgrass, Edna Hartin, Dorothy (Ray) Fincher, Fay (Norm) Hough, and a daughter-in-law, Josie Snodgrass. There are also 6 brothers; all Spradleys, surviving: Elmer, Theron, Ed Ray, Kenneth, J. B. and John, Jr. One brother, Gillis, and one sister Doris Fancher preceded her in death, as did her parents and husband, and 2 grandchildren. There are 11 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren, and 14 great-great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews

and cousins. All the brothers living came so far, with the exception of Theron, who was too ill to come. That is remarkable; what a strong bond exists in this family! It was my honor to say words of hope, comfort, and tribute for this, my dear sister in Christ, April 3, 2001, at graveside Pomona (CA) cemetery.—Don McCord

HENSLEY—Theodore Roosevelt, was born on February 5, 1906 in Hickman County, Tennessee. He departed this life October 21, 2001 in the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee at the age of 95 years, 8 months, and 16 days. He was the son of the late Dacature Wayne and Francis Jane Lynch Hensley. He was preceded in death by his, beloved wife, Annie Rawdon Hensley. Theodore and Annie were married on January 27, 1929. Annie passed from this life on March 25, 1975. At her death, they had been married 46 years. To this union were born four children who are still living. Two sons: Kenneth and James Hensley; two daughters: Norma Jean Smith and Pat Comstock. Other survivors include a sister, Ethel Crowe, and a brother-in-law, Fred Orten, Five grandchildren and six great grandchildren also survive. At the time of his death, Theodore had been a faithful member of the Lord's Church for 65 years. I have known this family for many years and loved them all so much. They were what I call a "Church Family." Theodore attended the Springer Road Church of Christ of which he was faithful member. The service was beautiful with local Church members singing the songs of comfort. Paul Walker and I spoke words of comfort.—Johnny L. Fisher

COLLINS—Martha V. Collins began her journey here on May 25, 1907 in Magnalia, Arkansas and went home on October 31, 2001 from Clovis, California at the age of 94. Martha was baptized many years ago in Sulphur, Oklahoma and was a member of the church there until coming to California in 1947 where she met with us until just a few weeks before she left us. Martha and Ernest Collins were married in Sulphur in 1927 and had a Christian home together for 67 years until his death in 1993. Many times I was able to sit with preachers of the gospel at their table as their door was always open and all were welcome anytime. Martha was a fine example for others to follow as a wife, mother, and a giving friend to all. Two daughters, Ernestine Wibbing and Betty Ruth McGill Wibbing, also went on before her. Minnie Catherine Costa and two nieces, who she helped to raise, Beatress Lay of Clovis and Carol Franklin of San Jose, Ca., survive her, Martha was very proud of her children and grandchildren and many great grandchildren. Jim Dougherty spoke words of comfort and admonition and Clinton Cozby led the singing at the grave site on a beautiful day...she is missed.—Alvin Costa

CALDWELL—Inez (Hilbum) Caldwell was born August 11, 1914 in Lehigh, OK and passed away November 8, 2001 in Coalgate, OK. She was afflicted with an extended illness and the infirmities of old age. She married Luther Caldwell on August 3, 1962 in Sherman, TX who preceded her in death. She is survived by two daughters, Carolyn Griswold of Lehigh and Vicky Thomas of Tulsa and other family members. Luther and Inez were members of the Legal Church of Christ. My family and I have visited in their home on a number of Sunday afternoons. Inez will be missed by family and the church. The writer attempted to speak of the past, comfort and warning.—Vaden Morgan

RICHARDSON—Sister Grace Richardson was born April 12, 1905 and departed this life October 11, 2001 being at the time of her departure ninety-six years, five months, and twenty-nine days of age. She was baptized into Christ on June 29, 1953 and for most of her Christian life was a member of the Lee Summit church near Lebanon, MO. Grace was a quiet, and sweet individual, a woman of dignity and honor. The last few years of her life were filled with pain and suffering, which she endured with quiet calm and resolution. She is survived by two daughters Edith Turner of Springfield and Jewell Smith of Piedmont, OK, also several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One of her grandsons David Smith delivered a beautiful and touching eulogy at the funeral service. Grace will be missed by those who knew and loved her. David Smith and this writer conducted the service.—Ronny F. Wade



Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820 carlmj@cableone.net, Dec. 11—Don Pruitt, Joe Hisle and I closed our annual anniversary meeting at Seminole last weekend, and we enjoyed the meeting very much. We were surprised to have Bill and Daisy Davis in attendance the first night, but its good to see them back home for awhile. We had the best crowds at this years meeting than we have had in a few years. Since my last report I also held a meeting at the Longwood congregation, near Orlando, Florida. This was my first visit to the Longwood congregation, and I enjoyed the brethren there immensely. They have a good range of age groups, good leadership and support, and some talented youngsters coming on. Dennis

Bumbalough is highly respected by his own congregation as a preacher of the gospel. I stayed with Keith and Mary Mullen and couldn't have been treated nicer. I'm currently working on a survey of the Gospel of Mark for the Preachers' Study in Arlington, Texas later this month, and Phyllis and I plan to attend some of the New Years Meeting in Tulsa. Please continue to mention us in your prayers, and may God's richest blessings be upon you.

A. Joshua Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, E-mail: josh1477@juno.com—Mariah and I still have plenty of follow-up to do with contacts that we have made from the Covina Farmer's Market, neighbors in our apartment complex and from homes near the Covina church building. I am still seeking for open college students, but they are focused on finals now, a couple have indicated a willingness to get together after they are over. It is sad that while some students appear to have some curiosity or interest in God's word, very few seem to be making it the number one priority in their lives (and the ones I've met who are have been tragically indoctrinated with false teachings). I am seeking to set up regular Bible studies with certain friends that I have made in the area, but it seems that it will take more time. Please pray that God will give the increase from these efforts to share the truth with people. Don McCord and I have been having studies on different biblical issues with some of the sisters on Wednesday nights before the evening service that have been informative and edifying. Don and I have also been having one-on-one Bible studies and discussions on ministry related matters that have been very helpful. This last Lord's Day I preached at the Hawthorne congregation and the brethren had invited several visitors that were present for the morning service - they are making a strong evangelistic effort which is very encouraging.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Dec. 8.—I was in meetings at Frisco, TX Nov. 9-13, and McGregor, TX, Nov. 14-18. We had some good crowds both places, and it was a joy to be with these brethren. It was my first time to be at Frisco. There we made our home with the preacher, Bob Johnson, and his good wife. Their hospitality is unsurpassed. At McGregor it was good to be associated with Wayne McKamie, who is well known throughout the brotherhood. We had many talks about spiritual matters. There were visitors at both meetings from far and wide. Many congregations were represented and several of our fellow preachers encouraged us by their presence and assistance in the services. Here we express our thanks to one and all. Nov. 21, I had the privilege of preaching at El Cajon, CA. This is where our daughter, Paulette, and her family attend services. While we were in the meeting at McGregor our good brother, William Oxner, passed away. Also, my sister-in-law, Delores Nichols, passed away the same day at Oklahoma City. Here at home at 79th and Kansas Ave. we have added one more teacher to our schedule. We are so happy for all of our brethren who are developing their talents and using them in the

Lord's service. The Lord bless us all in His service.

Alton B. Bailey, 410 Ginger Circle, LaGrange, GA 30240. (706) 882-1114. Dec. 8, 2001—All things continue well here in LaGrange. We have had three very good meetings this year in LaGrange. Bro. Cullen Smith was with us in February. Bro. Allen Bailey in June and Bro. Jimmy Smith in October. They all did an outstanding job preaching the gospel and edifying the church. My last few meetings in 2001 were in McGregor, TX July 22-29. It was wonderful staying in the home of Bro. Wayne and Jean McKamie. Bro. Tommy Boling from Greenville, S.C. was with me in this meeting. Aug. 9-12 we were with the church in Kenai, Al. It was a real treat being there also. Then to Valiant, Ok. Aug. 25-Sept. 2, the results were very favorable due the work of Bro. John Tidmore. He is doing an outstanding job leading the congregation. There was a number from sister congregations that came to assist in the meeting. Bro. and Sis. Glen Van Stavern from Springfield, Mo, came and stayed most of the meeting also Bro and Sis. Ed Bullard drove back and forth about every night. It was good to have Bro. William St John with us several nights. The spirit of the meeting was outstanding from the very first. Next we went to Radnor, W.Va. Oct. 21-28. It is always a treat being with these people. I feel they have a bright future because they have a number of young men who are learning to teach and lead singing. They are being trained under the influence of Bro. Wyn Baker. My wife, Florence, underwent surgery at the University Hospital in Atlanta, Ga. the first part of November. We were very thankful that it proved to be benign. She is doing much better now but still has to limit herself in activity. Lord willing I will go next to Bloomington, In. to hold their "New Year Meeting" Dec. 28-31. Since my last report to the *OPA* my brother, "Tommie Bailey," passed away, as to be expected, it was devastating to the family. He was a faithful member of the church here and was always present when the doors were open for service. Lord willing if Florence and I live until the 27th of January we will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. I am the youngest of five siblings, all my brothers and sisters have already celebrated their 50th anniversary. The new congregation in McDonough, Ga. is still going good. They are having visitors from time to time. Of recent date I have been privileged to bear Bro. Aaron Risnor in Jonesboro, Ga., Bro. Walter Hunter at Temple, Ga. And Bro. Doug Hawkins in Knoxville, Ga. Please remember us in your prayers for our health and travels as we endeavor to do His will.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, December 14—We recently spoke at both services for the Stockton congregation to a very nice crowd. It had been a while since we had been there and we enjoyed it. The church at home continues in peace for which we are thankful. It has been nice to be home for a while but the time has come to get on the road again. Lord willing, we are to leave for the Philippines Jan. 3 for about three weeks of work in encouraging the brethren there. Kevin Presley

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is to go also this year. I'm glad to have him and we anticipate a profitable trip. We try to visit as many congregations as time will permit preaching at least once at each place. In Roxas, where the work began in 1981, a full day study is planned where many of the preachers and brethren will come. These studies usually begin at 9:00 A.M. and close with an evening session. Almost without exception, the trips to the Philippines have involved the preaching of many sermons and traveling about two thousand miles by car during the three weeks or so we are there. The pace is admittedly intense but has always been profitable for the Cause of Christ. It has been several years since there were less than thirty baptisms and several times over one hundred have obeyed the gospel. As always, we ask your prayers for us as we go about the work. After our return, we are to be at Tallahassee, FL February 24-March 3. We look forward to seeing many of you there, Lord willing. *One final note: please send all materials intended for publication during the month of January to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808. In February resume sending to me.*

Virgilio O. Danao Sr., 94-371 Ikepono St., Waipahu, HI 98797; Telefax (808) 680-0249; Virgiliodanao@aol.com; December 5, 2001—In the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, greetings to all the faithful everywhere! On November 18th, the Church here was privileged to listen to the preaching of Bro. Don McCord in the morning and evening services. We were strengthened and edified by his direct to the "word of God" messages. We thanked and appreciated Bro. McCord for his patience and willingness to preach for us. He is a dynamic preacher of the Gospel. Bro. James and Sis. Loretta Mason and Bro. Jim and Sis. Vera Winchester, from Stockton (CA) Church and Lodi (CA) Church, respectively, were also present. Bro. Mason and the Stockton congregation have been involved with the Lord's work here since it was started in 1993. We thank them, particularly Bro. Mason, for their continued concern, love and generosity toward the work here; especially Bro. Mason's deep foresight for mission works. We are glad that he visited us to see the actual physical and spiritual condition of the work here. Also, Bro. Dan and Sis. Teresa Boatwright worshipped with us last Sunday. Generally, the Church here is going "smoothly well and fine." I continue to work with my radio program aired every Saturday afternoon at 4:30 to 5:00. I am now making preparation for the Philippine trip in January. During my absence, the leaders of the Church here will be "supplying the pulpit" every Sunday, by rotations. Bro. Don L. King will be accompanied by Bro. Kevin Presley in his regular preaching itinerary there in January. Despite the seeming

concentrated efforts by the "oppositions" to undermine the Lord's works here and in the Philippines, we pray and hope this year preaching itinerary of Bro. King will lead many souls back to God. In times like these, when the peace and order of the whole world seems to have been deteriorating, we earnestly solicit your prayers in our behalf.

Don McCord, Box 1773, Covina, CA—The year so swiftly passing found me preaching in meetings at the following places away from home: Irving, TX (the series on "The Revelation of Jesus Christ;" San Antonio, TX at Vance Jackson and Glendora Ave.; Lubbock, TX; Valliant, OK; Lawrenceburg, TN; Piedmont, AL; Cassville, MO; Mt. Home, MO; Jacksonville, FL. At Mt. Home, Mo, one night I was thrilled to see two carloads of young people come out of Springfield, and another carload from Jamesville, no short distance from either place; this is the home of Glenn Cope, one of the finest young men I know anywhere, whose 13-year-old brother, Matt, along with 2 other precious souls, was baptized into Christ. A congregation and home that produce for the Kingdom such young men as the Cope boys has to have something sweet and precious and right about them. Upon my retirement, from 47 years teaching in the public schools, my colleagues as one of their gifts gave Wanda and me a trip to Hawaii, the highlight of which was worshiping with the church at Waipahu, where it was my honor to preach twice. I look forward to the New Year's meeting at Broken Arrow, OK. Here at home, Josh Miller continues to grow and to be a source of encouragement; this year, too, others have preached for us, Larry Lay, Roger Boone, Paul Wilkerson and Cullen Smith. Our meetings this year were most capably conducted by Joe Hisle and Wayne McKamie; our 2002 meetings will be with Duane Permenter and Carl Johnson. The new year, Lord willing, will take me to Arlington, TX, Walnut Grove, KY; Cable Ridge, MO; New Hope, MS; Kenai, AK; McGregor, TX; Mt. Home, MO; Opp, AL; Jamesville, MO. My appreciation, humbly and unabatedly, continues for my brothers and sisters who still entrust me with preaching the gospel of Christ, making it possible for me to do what I love to do most in my life preaching the everlasting gospel; what an honor this is! At home, we abide in peace, and love, having lost some of our pillars to the Grim Reaper whom we will always miss. Lord bless His people everywhere.

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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. LXXVI

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NO. 2

GOD, ADAM, EVE AND MODERN WOMEN TEACHERS

By *BENNIE CRYER*

When I mention women teachers I am not writing about women teachers/preachers in denominational churches or even in what we commonly call digressive churches of Christ. I am writing about women teachers/preachers/speakers in our own ranks who, apparently, are organizing and engaging in seminar (for want of a better term) type gatherings from different congregations in the states. I am also writing about fathers, husbands, and church leaders who are allowing this to happen and sometimes even encouraging the practice. I believe we are to still stand on God's revelation about such matters and not let erosion, whether minor or major, take place. But what in the world does Adam and Eve have to do with this matter?

Adam And Eve

The desire for women to assume leadership roles in the church and men standing by and letting them all began with Adam and Eve. The apostle Paul recognized this in 1 Timothy 2:11-14 *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. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.* There are two things forbidden by God in these verses: 1. God forbids her to teach and, 2. He forbids her to usurp authority over the man. There is one positive statement God made in these verses. He said, *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.* Three reasons are given by God for these positive and negative statements: 1. God created Adam first. 2. Adam was not deceived by the teaching of Satan, and 3. The woman was deceived by this false teaching and, in this way, sinned because of the deception. It is also worth noting that the first reason God gave, i.e., *For Adam was first formed then Eve,* occurred before man's fall into sin. I write this because some believe that redemptive acts of Jesus undid everything that Adam and Eve lost for us, especially women, in that fall and therefore they may teach in the church today. Such reasoning claims to be based on God's statement in Galatians 3:28, *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ*

Jesus. There is one thing we know about this. Jesus' redemptive acts did not change the order of the creation of Adam and Eve so God's reasoning still stands. The woman is restricted in her learning, teaching, and power because Adam was created first.

The first study of God's word with a false teacher occurred in Genesis 3:1-6. Eve had a large role in this and in so doing became the leader of women today who permits unscriptural arrangements for studies of God's word that are not authorized by God. She evidently did not consult Adam, her spiritual head, about the matter although he seemed to be "with her" at that time. She misquoted God's word as far as we can determine adding the words *neither shall ye touch it.* Adam did not correct her. The woman believed an incorrect interpretation and obeyed the false doctrine. She took the lead in this study about spiritual matters and then gave the fruit to her husband and he ate of it. Men, women, and God's cause has suffered since that time.

Adam had a responsibility here but did not discharge it. Even though Eve took the leadership role in permitting the conversation with the great deceiver, Adam could have stepped forward and exerted his leadership. He did not do it and the result was disastrous. Spiritual disasters will occur today also unless strong men stand up, teach, and practice that it is wrong for women to assume leadership roles in organizing, conducting, and teaching spiritual things to God's people or the world. But what are brethren to use as their guidelines?

Guidelines Must Come From God's Word

We are limited to God's revelation about this matter and have always recognized that the Scriptures teach by statements, commands, necessary inferences, and examples. Do we no longer need these tools that we have used so well in defending God's word and establishing those things we practice? I think we do still need them and if we have forgotten how to use them then there is a great need to learn them again!

Dave Miller writing for the April 1994 issue of *The Spiritual Sword* on page 25 said, "As attitudes soften and Biblical conviction weakens, scripture is being reinterpreted to allow for expanded leadership roles

continued on page six

TEACHING: PUBLIC & PRIVATE

BY JAMES ORTEN

God planned to make His church the vehicle through which His wisdom would be made known to men. Paul acknowledged this part of the Divine purpose in Eph. 3:10. The church here does not refer exclusively to the assembled body but to the corporate body. It means that Christians in the performance of their individual and collective duties should provide a lost people with a saving knowledge of God. "Ye are the light of the world."

This work of making known God's wisdom may be separated into two broad areas. One is the declaration of God's wisdom in redemption to the unsaved. The other is the continual edification of the church. With the first in view Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." To fulfill the second Paul urged the Corinthian church, "Let all things be done unto edifying."

These divisions may be seen as areas of concentration or specialization, but they overlap and were never completely separate from each other. As an example, it was the evangelists' responsibility to preach the gospel to the unsaved, but we find them passing through and strengthening Christians. On the other hand, the teaching in the worship was primarily for edifying saints. Paul acknowledges, however, that unbelievers might be converted in such assemblies.²

Since teaching is such a central part of God's plan, it is not surprising that He has regulated the process. All Christians agree there are regulations concerning how teaching should be done. The writer believes those regulations are based on whether the teaching is done publicly or privately.

God has always made a distinction between these two forms of instruction. Referring to teaching the Scriptures Moses said, "and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and went thou liest down, and when thou risest up."³ This was obviously private teaching, in this case between a father and his children. But in the same book Moses commanded, "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates."⁴ The New Testament recognizes the same distinction. Paul said, "I have taught you publicly and from house to house."⁵ One translation states, "I have taught you in public and in private."

Some of the primary beneficiaries of private instruction will be children who are taught by their parents in the home. However, children are not the only ones instructed in such a manner. Paul entered homes and taught, and in Rome rented his own house and taught those who visited him there.⁶ In at least one case the preacher was taken into a private place and given instruction in the way of the Lord. When Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos preach they knew his knowledge was imperfect. They took him home

with them (Goodspeed) and taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly.⁷

To the writer's knowledge there are no restrictions on private teaching except those of Christian dignity and courtesy which apply to all behavior. Anyone may teach any other person at any time he is able in private. Husbands may teach their wives, or wives may teach their husbands.⁸ Parents teach their children, but it may be that children teach their parents in private. Paul said, "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father."⁹ This implies that children could entreat a father about right and wrong, an action which would be disrespectful in public but acceptable at home. A Christian woman may even teach an eloquent preacher as long as she takes him into her own home to do so as Priscilla did Apollos.

In contrast to the above, public teaching is regulated in several ways, a number of which are given in 1 Cor. the 14th chapter. Paul gave these regulations to correct abuses in the public assemblies of the church in Corinth. In that case Paul ordered, (1) the prophets must speak one at a time, (2) the gift of unknown tongues could be exercised only if someone present could interpret, and (3) women must keep silent in those assemblies.

The restrictions discussed here do not apply only to the Lord's Day worship, but to all public assemblies. Both the New Testament¹⁰ and religious historians imply frequent meetings of the early Christians in addition to the communion service assembly. Professor Kee says, "They were together daily in worship and missionary activity."¹¹ The rules for public assemblies given above apply to all such assemblies. At least one of those restrictions is often ignored.

Commenting on 1 Cor. 14:34 Dr. Macknight says, "The reasons mentioned by the apostle show, that the prohibition [against public teaching by women] was absolute and general."¹² He paraphrases verse 34 thusly. "Your women, on the pretense of being inspired have assumed the office of public teachers: But my command is, Let your women be silent in the churches; for it hath not been permitted to them by Christ to teach in public." This agrees perfectly with the instructions given in 1 Tim. 2:12. In his expanded translation Macknight gives this rendition.

"For I do not allow a woman to teach in public assemblies, nor in any manner to usurp authority over man; but I enjoin them in all public meetings to be silent."

Thayer lists two definitions for the Greek word here translated silent.¹³ The first is not verbal silence but a general life style which is quiet and unobtrusive. The second is verbal silence. The latter is the specific meaning in this reference. It may be noted, however, that the silence ordered in these particular circumstances grows out of the general life style which is obligatory upon Christian women.

According to Paul this prohibition against women

teaching in public is based on her secondary position in creation and her primary position in the original sin.¹⁴ The law of Moses recognized this passivity on the part of women and Paul reminded his readers of that fact with the phrase, "as also saith the law." He states that his injunction of silence is simply a continuation of the ancient principle. It would indeed have been out of character for a Jewish woman to appear in public as a teacher. God regulated Jewish society more than that of other nations. The shy, modest demeanor of Jewish women did not develop because Jewish men were domineering. It came about because God conveyed a clear expectation of such behavior!¹⁵ When the Corinthian women broke this tradition by teaching and asking questions in religious discussions, Paul informed them this custom was a part of the original plan and not subject to alteration. In his comments on 1 Cor. 14:35 Dr. Ellicott says, "They are not even to ask questions in public assemblies."¹⁶

Note that Paul passes from what the general disposition of a Christian woman should be (1 Tim. 2:9-10) into the prohibition of public teaching (1 Tim. 2:11-12). She should be modest in dress, not gaudy in grooming, shamefaced and sober in attitude and silent in public discussions. Unless modesty and sobriety are no longer applicable it is difficult to see when the ban on teaching in public was lifted.

Several suggestions are made to allow Christian women to do some form of public teaching. (1) She may teach non-members, (2) She may teach other Christian women, or (3) She may teach children. In the writer's opinion all of these propositions pose unresolvable conflicts. If a woman may teach non-members publicly there is no reason she cannot preside at gospel meetings or conduct her own gospel campaigns. If she teaches Christian women in public she is assuming the office of a public teacher which Paul expressly forbids. If a woman's teaching public classes of children is based on the fact that they are children, how will she decide when they become adults? I know of no standard for making this judgment in the word.

The real question is not who is taught by a Christian woman; but rather is the teaching private? There is biblical evidence that where a woman may teach at all, she may teach anyone at all. Priscilla taught Apollos. Believing wives were expected to teach their unbelieving husbands. Aged women were to teach young women, probably young married women, to be domestic.¹⁷ Collecting the evidence from these examples we find Christian women teaching a believing man, unbelieving men, believing women and, of course, children. It seems legitimate to conclude that a woman may teach anyone as long as the circumstances fit the privacy enjoined by the apostle.

In a modern world where differential treatment based on sex is considered wrong, the principles

discussed above may seem archaic. Perhaps they are. It does seem ironic that women may publicly teach children academics—earthly things—and may not publicly tell them of heavenly riches. But the changes which have occurred in western culture since the industrial revolution have not reversed the Divine order of creation. Neither have they changed the fact that the restrictions placed on feminine teachers are a part of the result of the original sin. Since those placed on men through Adam have not changed, we have no reason to suppose changing times have altered those placed on womanhood.

Where may a woman teach? Her proper sphere of work and influence is in the home. Dr. Macknight points out that even inspired women such as those in 1 Cor. 14 could fulfill their gift by teaching in private.¹⁸ If inspired women could do so, surely uninspired women can utilize their talents and please God in the same manner.

The task that remains is to define what is public and what is private, so that Christian women may teach with confidence where appropriate and refrain when it is not. The "ends" of this continuum are clear. A small group in a home is private—there Priscilla helped to teach Apollos.¹⁹ A church service or gospel meeting, at which everyone is welcome, is public. There the apostle said women must be silent. The difficulty lies between these two points.

The distinction between public and private can not be made on size of the group alone. Sometimes the number at a church service is very small, i.e. in snow storms, but such meetings are public because they are open to all. Conversely, Jesus taught his disciples "privately" things He did not wish to say to the multitude.²⁰ At times that included "the twelve and those who were with Him," an indefinite number but probably more than at many church services.

Nor can the distinction be made by arbitrary rules that informed Christians know are not biblically based. Occasionally, judgments must be made. Like all judgments that pertain to the Lord's work, these should be made prayerfully and with the intent and spirit of the Scriptures in mind.

Summary

The church has the sacred responsibility of making known the manifold wisdom of God. Christians accomplish this task through collective and individual efforts. Individually and in private any Christian may exercise his ability by instructing any willing subject. Public officiation is limited to faithful men. They are expected to conduct each assembly in an edifying manner, as "God is not the author of confusion."

(1) Acts 18:23 (2) 1 Cor. 14:23-24 (3) Deut. 6:7 (4) Deut. 31:12 (5) Acts 20:20 (6) Acts 28:30 (7) Acts 18:26 (8) 1 Cor. 7:16 (9) 1 Tim. 5:1 (10) Acts 2:46 (11) Kee, Howard and Franklin Young, *Understanding the New Testament*, p. 189. (12) Macknight, James. *Apostolic Epistles*, p. 196. (13) Thayer, Joseph Henry. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 281 (14) 1 Tim. 2:13-14 (15) Ellicott, Charles John. *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. VI 11, p. 188. (16) *ibid.* vol. VI 1, p. 344. (17) Tit. 2:4 (18) Macknight, *op. cit.*, p. 196. (19) Acts 18:26 (20) Luke 10:23.

THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE

By ~~BILLY D. DICKINSON~~

Repentance involves a process that is both painful and demanding. It is painful because repentance always demands a change, and the kind of change we are talking about does not come without effort and determination. Also, repentance is something that takes place inwardly (in the mind or heart of the spiritual man), but its occurrence will always have outward manifestations: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." (Matt. 3:8) The word "fruits" used by John here has reference to the visible expression of a change that has been wrought in a heart that has decided to renounce sin and live for God.

What are the fruits of repentance? How can I know when I have truly repented? What unmistakable signs can our fellow man and brethren see that will suggest to them that we have repented of certain sins? We will go to 2 Cor. 7 for the answer to those questions, but first some background needs to be provided. In his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul rebuked the congregation sharply for the many problems they had in their midst. One of the things they needed to correct was the deplorable situation described in 1 Cor. 5:1 where they had a man of their number who was living in an immoral situation. Yes, it is possible for a person to be "living in adultery!" Although some brethren object to the idea, Paul listed fornication with a number of sins in Col. 3:5, and then he wrote in verse 7: "in the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them." A person is living in fornication when he gives himself to the practice of that sin and it is something that he does on a regular basis. Well, Paul commanded the Corinthians to expel the wicked doer from their membership and to stop associating with him (1 Cor. 5:11-13).

It is to the Corinthians' credit that they accepted Paul's rebuke in the right way and they did what Paul demanded of them. As a result, the immoral man of 1 Cor. 5 repented and severed himself from that sinful relationship. Surely this is what Paul is referring to in 2 Cor. 2:7-8: "So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him." Now that the situation has been corrected and the man's life and soul have been salvaged, Paul says that it is time to show him forgiveness and to assure him that love was always the motivation behind the discipline that was necessary. Brethren, may it always be said that we are as eager to forgive the repentant as we are to discipline the errant in an unavoidable circumstance! Withdrawal of fellowship is not something we do lightly or happily, but occasionally it must be done for the saving of a soul and for the purity of the church. Notice the importance of Paul's statement in 2 Cor.

2:9: "For to this end also did I write, that I may know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things." In other words, what Paul commanded the church at Corinth to do in 1 Cor. 5 was clear and unmistakable, and whether they would obey it was a test of their loyalty and obedience to God.

With that background and explanation, 2 Cor. 7:8-11 provides us with a wealth of information in showing us both the process and the fruits of repentance: "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold the selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." It is important that we understand what Paul is saying in these verses.

Paul points out that his first epistle had made them "sorry after a godly manner," and it is "godly sorrow" that worketh repentance to salvation. Before a person will repent (have a change of heart), he must first be persuaded of wrong doing on his part and be so convicted of that fact that he becomes sorry for it. Yea, so sorry that he is willing to make a change! When the message of the gospel is presented as it should be, it will produce a "broken spirit" (Psa. 34:18) in the heart of an honest man who is grieved by his estrangement from God. It is godly sorrow that results in a change of mind that leads to a reformation of life.

We are ready to analyze verse 11. Take note of the several fruits of repentance that Paul saw in the lives of the Corinthians:

"CAREFULNESS"—This word can also be translated "earnest care." It is the same word rendered "diligence" in 2 Pet. 1:5. The idea is that they no longer looked upon their plight and disobedience with indifference, but repentance led them to an earnest care as to their course. When you stop to think about it, repentance and indifference are the very opposite of each other! People who truly repent have a different attitude, and it is not one that is apathetic toward wrong doing. Men who excuse their sinful behavior and will not take personal responsibility for their actions have not really repented. When you try to get a man to address a problem in his life and he takes the attitude, "What is the hurry? I'll get around to it one of these days."— That is evidence that the man needs to repent.

A CLEARING OF THEMSELVES—This means that

they showed great solicitude to free themselves, as far as could be done from blame, and they removed the evil from among them. We must understand that by aiding and abetting the immoral brother in their midst they had become partakers of his evil deeds. We can do that, not by necessarily doing the evil ourselves, but simply by giving solace to the wicked. [2 John 11 says that in bidding the false teacher God's speed we become a "partaker of his evil deeds."] However, the Corinthians had corrected the situation and cleared themselves of blame by taking the stand for righteousness that they had taken. Do you see the principle that Paul is applying here? When a person truly repents, he will do what he can to clear himself of wrong doing or any association with wrong doing! If he has practiced sin, he will confess it and condemn it. If he has taught false doctrine, he will give the doctrine up and let that be known without equivocation.

INDIGNATION—The Corinthians became indignant (upset) against the deed that had disgraced the church and that they had tolerated it for so long. This is a fruit of repentance. If you have ever committed a sin by giving in to a weakness, becoming angry with yourself and purposing in your heart to do better, then you can relate to how the church at Corinth felt. When people get angry with everybody else for the shape they are in and always want to pass the blame, somebody needs to repent. Guess who? **FEAR**—Surely this was godly fear that they experienced. When they read Paul's words of rebuke and realized the condition they were in, they feared. They understood that God was displeased with them and they dreaded the coming of Paul with a rod of correction (1 Cor. 4:21). Where people have no fear of God and they think that they can get away with rebellion, real repentance is never sought after as it should be.

VEHEMENT DESIRE—While they dreaded Paul's chastisements, they longed for his coming and the restoration it would bring them. **ZEAL**—They sought with earnestness to make up for their past indifference. **REVENGE**—“Avenging” is a better translation, for the idea is that they meted out the righteous judgment that was necessary to correct the sin that was in their midst.

Can we see those same “fruits” of repentance in our lives? Jesus said in Luke 13:3, I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”

GOD, ADAM, EVE AND MODERN WOMEN TEACHERS

continued from page 1

for women in worship.” Notice the things that are necessary to get an expanded leadership role for women: 1. Attitudes must soften. 2. Biblical conviction must weaken, and 3. Scripture must be reinterpreted. It seems these very things are happening in our brotherhood.

We know that God permits a woman to teach a man, woman, boy, or girl. We know also that God has

placed limitations on a woman who teaches that he has not placed on the men. Her role as a teacher is very different from that of a man. How can we use these tools to determine the differences in the woman's role as a teacher?

Statements, Commands, Necessary Inferences And Examples

In Acts 2:17-18 God reveals through Peter the fulfillment of a prophecy made by the Old Testament prophet, Joel. Among other things the fulfillment required that “your daughters shall prophesy...And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.” In this way it is necessarily inferred that some women would be expected to teach or prophesy in the kingdom of God. In Acts 21:8-9 we have the plain statement that Philip the evangelist “had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.” It is inferred that their prophesying occurred in an “at home” (1 Corinthians 14:35) capacity with men present, even an apostle of Christ. Women are commanded to teach in Titus 2:3-5 “The aged women” were to be “teachers of good things” and they were to teach and train “the young women.” Examples of women exercising their God given rights in this area are found in several places in the New Testament. In Acts 18:26 Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, took a male teacher, Apollos, “unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” In 2 Timothy 3:15 Timothy had known the scriptures since his childhood days. It is inferred in 2 Timothy 1:5 that this knowledge had come from the teaching of his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother Lois. Sisters, I would argue for your right to teach as outlined in the New Testament, but I would argue with you when you take the leadership in organizing, conducting, and teaching in arrangements that do not fit the pattern laid down in the above examples. Those holy women mentioned in the New Testament who taught seemed to understand their position in the kingdom and acted accordingly with “shamefacedness,” “modesty,” and “subjection.” They understood that whatever a woman did in either learning or teaching they must be in a situation where she is submissive to some scriptural authority, Genesis 2:21-24; 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:11-14; 1 Corinthians 11:1-15; and Revelation 2:20. Furthermore they understood that they should be in an “at home,” that is, a family situation in order to exercise their teaching function, Acts 18:26; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15, and Acts 21:8-9. They well understood that their teaching should not be done in a public assembly or any part thereof, 1 Timothy 2:11-14, and 1 Corinthians 11:1-15. They understood that their part in teaching should be individually initiated. The arrangement for them to teach was not initiated by the church, or someone else in the church but by them as an individual. Sisters, if you are practicing and participating in an arrangement for you to teach where you cannot read the pattern in the New

Testament you need to remove yourselves from that practice and refuse to participate in it. God bless you sisters who have already refused to participate in such things.

Brethren, if you think that God is not aware of your permission to let sisters engage in unscriptural arrangements for teaching maybe you should read Revelation 2:18-29. Now, I am not saying our sisters are teaching the same things that Jezebel did. I have more confidence in our sisters than that. The point I want us to glean from this scriptural example is found in the words "thou sufferest that woman." Other translations use the words "allow," "tolerate," and "permitting." The teaching is: You leaders at Thyatira are, allowing, tolerating, or permitting that woman who calls herself a prophetess to teach these things that are wrong. What you allow you are held responsible for. Jesus said in verse 23, "I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Claxton, MO

A change of contact needs to be made for the Claxton congregation meeting near Competition, MO. Brother Wendell Webb died tragically one Sunday morning recently during the worship service. Replace his name with: David Hillhouse, 33176 Alpine Ln., Falcon, MO 65470, (417) 668-5942.

Need Help

The brethren meeting in Hawthorne, CA are currently in need of help in supporting a preacher to work among them. Brother Eddie Johnson of Florence, SC has been working there for some time. Up to this point they have been able to provide his support themselves, but now need some help. You may communicate with them by contacting Russell Hall or Duane Washington their phone numbers respectively are 310-323-0082 and 310-329-6163.

Looking For Preacher

The Jamesville Church of Christ, located 6 miles south of Nixa, MO, on M Highway, (junction of M and U highways), is currently searching for a full time gospel preacher. Interested preachers must be mature in the faith and have strong evangelistic skills to assist with personal work. Jamesville is an old, well grounded, faithful congregation, with a great potential for growth. For more information, please contact the following: Warren Cooper: 417-725-452; Ron Middleton: 417-725-3448; Bob McEntire: 417-725-3907.

The Oklahoma Now Year's Meeting

The 2001-2002 New Year's meeting in Oklahoma was conducted by the Broken Arrow congregation under the leadership of its capable elders, Bro. Jack

Cutter and Bro. Joe Ferguson. It was this writer's honor to assist them, the deacons and other devoted, hard-working members. The theme was "Wells of Living Water." It was remarkable how the speakers built and expanded on the theme. The preaching, without exception, was strengthening and soul-saving; the praying was fervent and sustaining; and the singing was soul-thrilling—I have never heard better singing, nor have I ever seen more admirable young people assembled under one roof, Bro. Darren Smith commendably organized the young men for their night of preaching. Bro. Joe Ferguson, with the assistance of Bro. Carl Johnson and Sister Joy Nichols and others, compiled a history of the meeting. It was this writer's privilege to be there in 1974 at the inaugural at Sulphur, OK and to be one of the "eight boys who talked." Through the years, Bro. Lynwood Smith conducted 47, along with Brethren C. T. McCormack, Wayne McKamie, Johnny Elmore, and Miles King; others conducting are Billy Orten, Tommy Shaw, Larry Robertson, Paul Nichols, Terry Baze and this writer. Brother Tom Smith had a great influence on this meeting from its beginning, and for as long as he lived. This will never be forgotten. This year, Bro. Raymond Fox is to be commended for so skillfully organizing a "door-hanger campaign" to advertise the meeting. What an inspiration it was to see such a host of young people, and some of us not so young, working together for a worthy cause. Bro. Michael Fox is to be commended for his impressive graphics, as is Sister Debbie (Doug) Edwards for her outstanding lettering skills for the song book and the banner. The Smiths are to be commended, too, for the quality workmanship in printing the song book. At least 10 of our brothers and sisters are authors of the new songs so beautifully sung by hundreds throughout the meeting. "Let the Bible Speak," with Bro. Ronny Wade, was announced, advertised and listened to, a noble work of the Broken Arrow congregation and other congregations in Oklahoma and Arkansas. Among the states represented were Okla., Tex., Kans., Mo., Wash., Calif., Miss., Ark., Ohio, West Va., Mich., Colo., and La., and perhaps others. Among the preaching brethren attending were Brethren Ron Courter, James Orten, Morgan Stripling, Bill Ferguson, Josh Miller, Raymond Fox, Doug Edwards, Juan Rodriguez, Jerry Cutter, Wayne Fussell, Glen Osburn, Terry Baze, Carl Johnson, Don Pruitt, Duane Permenter, Elias Rodriguez, Julio J. Rodriguez, Manuel Molino, George Battey, Marcus Ayers, Bill Davis, Ron Alexander, Paul Wilkerson, Brian Burns, Jim Crouch, Bob Loudermilk, Jerry Dickinson, Taylor Joice, Billy Dickinson, Dennis Smith, Larry Combs, Dan Wissinger, Randal Baker, Stan Elmore, Dale Wellman, Edwin Morris, Jack Cutter, Jerry Harris, John Anderson. It was refreshing and encouraging to hear Bro. Elias Rodriguez report of the work in Cuba where 13 congregations are known to be worshipping right. It is my hope and

prayer that the New Year's meetings in Alabama, Florida, Missouri, California, and wherever they were held, were a blessing to all who attended. Lastly, as is always the case in such endeavors, the unselfish efforts of the host of "behind the scenes" brothers and sisters will never be forgotten; the meeting could not have been what it was without them and their hard work.—Don McCord

OUR DEPARTED

Fatalities in Nebraska

On Sunday, Dec. 16, 2001 Roger and Florence Parker left their home near Max, Nebraska to attend worship services at Imperial. They went by their son Jeff's home to pick up Jeff, his wife Sherri and their children Kristi Ka, age 12 and Jacob, age 8. Ten minutes into the trip, a trucker driving an 18 wheeler loaded with hogs ran a stop sign and hit the Parker's van broadside. Jeff and Kristi lost their life on impact. Roger and Jacob were air lifted to Denver. Sherri was admitted to a hospital at Imperial. Florence was treated for massive bruises, cuts and abrasions and released. Sherri was dismissed the next day and went immediately to Denver to be with Jacob. Roger remained in the hospital until Friday when he and Sherri returned to Benkelman to attend the funeral on Saturday. Over 500 people gathered in the gymnasium at Benkelman for the service. Kristi's coffin was draped with her Girl Scout sash, covered with award ribbons and pins. A telescope her parents had bought her stood in front of her coffin. Glen Osburn was seated in back of Jeff's coffin. I was seated in back of Kristi's. As I looked into the faces of the family seated on the gym floor and the friends, neighbors and associates who filled the bleachers, I was nearly overwhelmed by the grief and sadness written across the faces of this large body of people. What a tribute to Jeff and Kristi and to the entire Parker family, that so many would attend the funeral. In small groups with a spokesperson for each group all of Kristi's 7th grade class and 4-H club came to the speaker's stand and paid tribute to Kristi and her family. After each speech Sherri was handed a written copy of their remarks and one by one each went to Sherri's seat where she stood to hug each child. Accapella singing was provided by a children's show choir from Imperial. They sang 10 songs that were the favorites of both Jeff and Kristi, including We Shall See The King Some Day and There Is Sunshine In My Soul. Jeff was a natural born teacher. He had a broad winning smile. He was a joy to be with. When he was yet a teen at home with his parents he took me all around the ranch and taught me about everything from windmills to bull whips. Glen, in a calm but compelling way, urged the family to fill the emptiness caused by Jeff and Kristi's absence with love, thanksgiving, concern for others who need them,

and service to God, so there will be no room left for bitterness and cynicism. Burial was in a beautiful prairie cemetery at Benkelman. Following the service, a neighbor took Sherri, in his private plane back to Denver to be with Jacob. Doctors believe Jacob will reach full recovery with time. While their bodies heal, this family remains shaken in heart and soul. Please continue to remember them in your prayers always.—Irvin Barnes

PARKER—Jeffery Michael, born Oct. 12, 1964, at Benkelman, Nebraska, departed this life on December 16, 2001. Jeff obeyed the gospel on Oct. 5, 1976. He was a dedicated father and husband; a teacher and leader in the church at Imperial. Jeff loved farming, fishing and hunting. Jeff sought Christ's kingdom first, keeping a scriptural balance in family, church, occupation and recreation. Jeff is sorely missed by his wife Sherri, son Jacob, parents Roger and Florence, his brother Spencer and wife Peggy, and by his sister Teresa Heavin, her husband Mike and their 3 children.

PARKER—Kristi Ka, born April 11, 1989 at North Platte, Nebraska, the first child of Jeff and Sherri (Kilthau) Parker, departed this life on Dec. 16, 2001. Kristi loved farm life and all that went with it. She loved her schoolwork and was especially fascinated by astronomy. Kristi had her father's smile and her mother's cheerful disposition. Kristi expressed great care for those around her and was busy helping, always helping, whether at home, at school, or at her grandparents home. Kristi is sorely missed by her mother Sherri, her brother Jacob, her grandparents Roger and Florence Parker of Max, Nebraska, Jack and Irene Kihithau of Benkelman, her uncles and aunts and cousins on both sides of the family.

PAULEY—John Dellro Pauley was born February 6, 1934, in Monon, Indiana, and departed this life May 19, 2000 at the home in Belton, Missouri. On April 30, 1955, he was united in marriage to Margaret Claywell and to this union four children were born. He is survived by his faithful wife Margaret; two sons, John David Pauley and Mark Warren Pauley, both of Belton, Missouri; and two daughters, Mary Beth Akinson of Apple Valley, California, and Karen Michelle Stewart of Canyon County, California; one brother, Ted Pauley of Washington State; one sister, Debbie Hackett of Logansport, Indiana; 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. John obeyed the gospel in the spring of 1960 and was a long time member of the church in Covina, Ca. before moving to Missouri in June, 1997. Although in declining health, John was always at the services of the church in Harrisonville and loved to hear the gospel preached until his health prevented him from doing so. His family and the church was of utmost importance in his life and he shall long be remembered

for his beautifully worded prayers. The writer endeavored to speak words of comfort and encouragement to those present at the graveside.—John Pruitt

PAULEY—Mark Warren Pauley was born March 15, 1964, in Pomona, California, and departed this life August 1, 2000, in Kansas City, Mo., the result of an accident on the job. Mark had lived in Belton, MO since moving here from California in February, 1998, and was a member of the church in Harrisonville. Mark obeyed the gospel in 1987 at Covina, Ca. and was instrumental in leading his wife, Renee, to the Lord. Although Mark had been out of duty prior to his father's death, he had rededicated his life to Christ and came back to the church two months prior to his untimely death. Mark is survived by his wife, Renee Christina Pauley and daughter Kelsey Lynn Pauley of the home; mother, Margaret Pauley of Belton, Mo.; One brother, John David Pauley of Belton, Mo., two sisters, Mary Beth Akinson of Apply Valley, Ca., and Karen Stewart of Belton, Mo., and a number of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father, John D. Pauley, by two months. Mark was a person who showed his faith by his works (James 2:18). On the Sunday before his death, he told me of two co-workers who had asked him regarding his faith because they recognized he was different from most of the others with whom they worked. He was kind and always thinking of others and will be sorely missed by family and friends. The writer spoke words of comfort and warning to all present.—John Pruitt

TURNER—Worley L. Turner of Lebanon, MO, was born September 25, 1915 near Phillipsburg, MO, and passed away on November 9, 2001, in his home in Lebanon. Worley is survived by his wife of 62 years, Pansy, a son, Larry, two daughters, Judy Blakeley and Rita Layman, all of Lebanon; brothers, Henry, of the Springfield Mission Hills congregation, and Lloyd, Springfield; sisters, Eleanor Palmer, Lebanon & Josephine Gannon, Springfield. Worley was baptized into the church in 1949 and rededicated his profession of faith in 2000. He was a highly respected carpenter and worked in commercial and residential construction for 45 years which included work on the "Gateway Arch" in St. Louis. His quick smile and pleasant personality are now a part of his memory. This writer, assisted by Floyd Massey, attempted to speak words of comfort and warning to the large crowd that was present.—Dan Wissinger

SMITH—Sister Irene Smith, wife of Brother Garland Smith, departed this life on November 18, 2001 after a battle with cancer. She was born May 15, 1918 in Lincoln County Mississippi, where she resided at the time of her death. She obeyed the gospel in 1943 under the preaching of H. E. Robertson and

was a member of the New Salem church of Christ for the rest of her life. Irene was a hospitable and gracious host. I have been a guest in her home countless times. She and Garland and their family are like family to Alfreda and me. We have treasured their love and friendship for many years. We will fondly remember the times we were privileged to spend together. Irene is survived by her husband, three sons, one daughter, two brothers, three sisters and several great and great-grandchildren. The memorial service was conducted from the New Salem building with burial in the church cemetery. A large crowd of family and friends gathered to pay their respects to her memory. The floral offering was beautiful as was the gospel singing rendered by members of the congregation. Her grandson Kelmer delivered a beautiful and touching eulogy to her memory. The writer tried to speak words of comfort and warning.—Ronny F. Wade

POTTS—Sister Katie B. Potts was born in Clinton, OK, April 16, 1904; she passed from this life Sept. 15, 2001, at the home of her son, Billy J. Potts, in Spring Valley, CA. She was married to Bro. James Harrison Potts in 1924; he preceded her in death in 1971. She was a member of the church for 72 years, a long time member at El Cajon, CA. Besides Bill and his wife Bonnie she is survived by 4 grandchildren and 1 sister. In the last decade of her life, she read the Bible through at least 19 times. Her son paid her the compliment of all compliments, "Mother loved the church." The funeral was conducted at San Diego, CA, Sept. 21, 2001. Chris Allen led the beautiful congregational singing, Larry Lay led the prayer, preceded by appropriate words of tribute, Fred Lay led the dismissal. Burial was at Mt. Hope cemetery. It was this writer's honor to be asked to conduct the service.

MIZER—Glendon A. Mizer, of Lebanon, Mo. departed this life Dec. 24, 2001 at his home, after a prolonged illness. He was born Oct. 3, 1917. On May 2, 1954 he was married to Pauline King. To this union one son was born. He is survived by his wife Pauline, of the home: two sons David Mizer, of the home, Dr. G.L. Mizer and his wife Millie, of Denton, Tex. A brother-in-law, Harold King and his wife Mary Margaret, a sister-in-law Mary Northcutt, and her husband Howard, of Springfield, Mo. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Bernadine Cansler Mizer, in 1952 and also his parents. Glendon, obeyed the gospel many years ago, and was a faithful member of the Church of Christ, attending regularly as long as his health permitted. A large crowd attended the funeral services. The singing was done by the assembly. Howard Northcutt assisted this writer with the service. Glendon was of my best friends, and no one could ask for a better truer friend than he. In my opinion, he was one of the redeemed of the Lord,

that was not afraid to say so. I kept my promise to him, though being a few years his senior, not only was I able to do so, but my wife and I were there and saw him breathe his last breath. It was the second day in succession that we were present when one of the Lord's faithful children's demise came. Glendon, will be missed-his faithful commitment should inspire us all.—Clovis. T. Cook

OXNER—William Oxner was born July 8, 1918 in Timpson, Texas and died Nov. 17, 2001 in Waco, Texas. William is survived by his wife, Leslie Beth Oxner of Waco, Texas; two sons, William R. Oxner, Jr. of Waco, Texas and Leslie Wayne Oxner of Tucson, Arizona. William and Beth had one daughter who was born and died Nov. 13, 1956; one grandson of Ohio; five brothers and one sister, two of whom are still living in Waco, Texas. William was married to Leslie Beth Byford of Waco in 1946; Homer L. King conducted the wedding ceremony. William was baptized by James R. Stewart, Oct. of 1945. McGregor congregation has sustained a great loss. William was a man of great commitment. He was a man ready to every good work; his faithfulness was unquestioned. We shall miss him greatly. William was 83.—J. Wayne McKamie



Brian Burns, 6891 Goshen Road Goshen, Ohio 45122, (513) 722-0728, bsrbsb@juno.com—Being the second day of our new year I wanted to write about a few events of our past year of work. Time certainly has wings and she used them swiftly this past year. Here at the Dallasburg congregation (Goshen OH) we have stayed very busy. Even with our small number we have a good percentage of young people. They are very good examples in the community and keep an invitation to services before their peers. We had close to 20 college students come one night to a meeting because our young students invited them to attend. Even the younger members invite and talk to fellow students about bible subjects. Our young men are developing very well as young speakers. They have given short talks as a group as well as worked up to being the main speaker on a Wednesday night service. Due to the musical talents of other members they also are developing into fine song leaders. We have also used much of 2001 in studies on leaders and elders. After much study and talking to the congregation, certain men have been named and given a list of things that the congregation feels they need

to develop in. We will continue to study and work with this group and a review is planned in three years with yearly updates. We are excited over this maturing step in the church. We have also been very busy in an effort with correspondence courses. We have mailed out over thirty thousand cards inviting area residents to participate in this course. We have also had a contact in a local jail that has provided us with several leads as well. In April of 2001 brother Doug Edwards and I visited Hyderabad India. After a year of correspondence with a brother there we were able to meet and work with him for about 10 days. There are now three small congregations worshipping in the Hyderabad/Secunderabad area of India. Brother Lazarus Saganty is working very hard to carry the Gospel to the lost and the proper way of worship to the erring. We hope to return sometime in February. Please pray for this effort. In October I was able, for the fourth time, to participate in the study in Mexico with the preachers and leaders there. Brother Juanito Rodriguez is a tireless worker in the Latin American work. I have been associated with this brother since we were both boys and have grown very close to him for his love and dedication to the Lord. The study was very well attended and the brethren are always interested in learning more about the truth. Brothers Wayne McKamie and Bill Verner have visited and helped the brethren in Mexico for many years. They are held in the highest regard by the brethren and by the grace of God much good continues to be done in the work. Each year Wayne and Juanito organize the study with topics and speakers and brother Verner does many things behind the scenes that helps to make this work grow. We are thankful for all of these men. Please keep the work in Mexico and these brethren in your prayers. The New Years Meeting in Tulsa was a joy to attend this year. Thanks goes out to the elders and deacons for their work and to brother Don McCord for his unique way of contributing to every word that he is a part of. We have just started the year 2002 but while going over my schedule for this year it already seems to be flying by. Let us redeem the time brethren so that much will be done in the Lord's work this year.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mtn. Home AR, 72654, broebuck@mtnhhome.com—It's been some time since I last reported to the paper. The fall and winter has been productive for us here at home. Early in fall we surveyed the congregation to assess our weaknesses and strengths, the result has been a renewed excitement in working together see the cause prosper in our area. In addition we have had two restorations and one baptism. As well Tanya and I enjoyed meetings in Hartwell, AR and Sharonville, OH in September and October. We appreciate them as well as all the brethren we were able to work within 2001. The more I travel the more I appreciate congregational leaders and teachers whose dedication

and often unnoted work keeps a church alive. May God continue to bless us with spiritually mature men. The year ended for my family in Dothan, AL for the Alabama New Year's Meeting. Brethren from across the country made the meeting a great success. The preaching was sound and timely and personally I think the singing was the best I've ever heard. The revival of the Alabama meeting has been long desired and the brethren did a great job putting it all together. Our meetings for this spring are Washington, OK March 24-31 and Waterloo, IA May 8-12. We pray God will continue to bless his faithful.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, Jan. 14--We are looking forward to 2002 with great excitement! The old year ended and the new year began with souls being added to the Lord's church. On Dec. 30, Alex Grantton obeyed the Gospel. Alex is 25 years of age and after attending several of our services, and a couple of homes studies, he was baptized into Christ. Sara and Mandy Garrett are to be commended for bringing this young man to the services with them. On Jan. 4 two were baptized. One was Darci May, the daughter of Kent and Phyllis May, and the other was Alexis Robinson. Alexis is 20 years old and is a good friend of Supriya Barnes. Likewise, we commend Supriya for helping her friend find salvation. Irvin Barnes has been showing the film strips to several young people and that effort helped to bring about the conversions of Alex and Alexis. Also, a young couple who lives here in Springfield was baptized on Nov. 25 while visiting some relatives in Columbia, MO. Austin and Megan Ward are now worshipping with us and I am beginning to have some home studies with them. There is one more conversion I would like to mention: Paul Ortiz was baptized on Aug. 26. Paul is from Ecuador and he is a student at Southern Missouri State University. Paul lives with one of our members, Danny Crooks, and this was the avenue by which Paul was brought to Christ. Juan Rodriguez, Jr. is corresponding with some of Paul's family and if all of our plans come to fruition, Juan is going to Ecuador some time this year in hopes of establishing a faithful congregation. Please pray that the Lord will open doors to a great work in Ecuador! Finally, I am looking forward to holding meetings at Jonesboro, GA (March 23-31) and Deer Park, TX (April 24-28).

Dan Wissinger, 1287 SO. Berkshire, Springfield, MO 65809--As many of you know, 15 years ago there was no faithful congregation in the Lake of the Ozarks area. Now faithful saints meet regularly at Eldon, Brumley and Montreal. This shows what can be accomplished by desire, determination and applied effort by Christians who are dedicated to planting places of worship. Much of the credit for these 3 congregations goes to George and Beverly Windes. I

remember, years ago, many times George speaking of a desire to see congregations in the Brumley area. After they moved to that area, where George grew up, they rented a small building and started meeting at Eldon. They drove 45 miles and spent all day Sunday there. They did this for 8 years! Then through George and Beverly's efforts, along with several preachers and Ron Alexander's TV program, a congregation was established and a building built at Brumley. A strong congregation now meets there with good leadership and teaching. In 1999 George once again saw an opportunity to establish another congregation in Montreal, MO. An old house was purchased, with funds from Lebanon and Springfield's Mission Hills congregations, and converted into a very nice place. This was accomplished with the physical help of several brethren and liberal funds from Lebanon along with the influence of the TV programs. The Lebanon congregation, with their attitude for Evangelism, has played a vital role in all 3 congregations. In the last 2 years, 12 have been baptized and 5 restored to duty. A.C. and Glenda Brockman and Elmer and Jean Boggs have played a vital role in the Montreal effort with their physical work, management and leadership. They continue to drive from Lebanon to Montreal regularly. My part of the work in the Lake area began in 1998 and I presently work with these 3 congregations. I am thankful for the encouragement & support of individuals and congregations and especially Lebanon, Springfield and Fieldstone. I have to be away from home much of the time and I could not do this without Thelma's support. A great help in this area are the TV programs, Ronny Wade on Channel 3 out of Springfield, and Ron Alexander on Channel 13 from Jefferson City.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, January 6, 2002--I am writing from Manilla, Phillipines where I have begun a two and a half week journey with Bro. Don King and Bro. Virjilio Danao. We arrived safely this past Friday evening and have already begun to see good done. So far, we have conducted four services and 13 have obeyed the gospel. Don has been here many times and I look forward to learning from him and being of whatever assistance that I can. Lord willing, we return home on January 22. Before departing on this trip, I was thrilled to be attend a wonderful New Year's meeting at home. This was the first annual of such meetings to be held in Dothan. Our crowds neared 300 (which is good considering our area) and we had a number of respected and seasoned gospel preachers in attendance. Bro. Jimmie Smith did a great job in conducting the meeting and we thank him for all of the work he put into making it a success. The last service was filled with absolutely beautiful singing and was a very emotional time for us all. It was hopefully a catalyst to a great year of service in

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the Lord's work. The church in Dothan would like to thank all of the brethren who came from near and far and especially the preachers who came and did a top-notch job in their exhortation. Lord willing, Ronny Wade will conduct the meeting next year and we hope you will make your plans to come as we see the meeting grow. Upon returning home from the Philippine trip I look forward to short meetings in Robertsdale, AL (Feb 1-3) and West Point, GA (Feb 15-17). Our spring meeting in Dothan is to be held by Joe Hisle, March 17-24 and we are looking forward to that. Pray for us as we preach the gospel from place to place that good might be done and God's kingdom might increase.

Irvin Barnes, 3218 E. Farm Road 88, Springfield, MO 65803, Jan. 9, 2002—The fourth Sunday in December, the day following the funeral for Jeff and Kristi Parker, it was with great joy and great sadness that I was with the church at Imperial, Nebraska. I was thrilled to stand in this pulpit again as I had done so many times in the past. It was wonderful to see Roy Dean and Peggy Parker whose home has been my home many times. Also to see Dan and Mary Parker and their 2 sons. I was encouraged and elated beyond words to see the spiritual strength and determination by the families in this small church who had suffered so much in one week. Much to the astonishment of some family members who were not in the church Roger and Florence came and worshipped as best they could in spite of injured bodies and broken hearts. Regardless of the circumstances one cannot be around this congregation without being encouraged in the faith. Dan, Jeff's cousin, worked with Jeff every day on the farm, along with Jeff's brother Spencer. I was so pleased to see Dan, Dan's son and Spencer take an active and leading part in the services. It was good to have Nick and Sally Nichols and Mike and Teresa Heavin whose presence was a big help. The work of the church on the north side of Springfield, is going well. Best regards to all. We need your prayers.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069—Since last reporting through *Old Paths Advocate* we have enjoyed the preaching of Bruce Roebuck during our fall meeting here at Sharonville. My schedule for upon coming meetings is as follows. Feb. 15-17, Valliant, OK, March 29-April 7, Atwater, CA, May 12-19, Earlytown, AL. if you are nearby or passing through these areas during these times, please

stop and help us spread the truth. Pray for mine and me.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, January 15, 2002—The church in Olivehurst continues to grow and we enjoy working with the congregation. They believe in standing for a 'thus saith the Lord.' We held a weekend meeting with the brethren in Midland, TX, December 14-16. It was good to be with the congregation again and visiting with Alfred Baze and Art Oestman who are elders there. Of course it was a special treat to be with Duane Permenter and his family again. We stayed with Art and Nan while there. Their hospitality is well known. Louie and Lanore Costa came down from Ada, OK during this meeting and spent the weekend. It was good to be with them again. From there we went to the Red Oak, TX congregation and studied with them Wednesday through Sunday, December 19-23 on church government. They are anxious to scripturally organize the congregation with elders and deacons. They have been working on this for some time now. We were especially privileged to stay in the home of Gerald and Marjorie Hill. They treated us royally and we had some good studies with them. From there we attended the study at Arlington, TX. They did a fine job of hosting it this year. It was great for Joann and me to stay once more with Joe and Joann Norton. We spent much time with each other when we both lived in Zambia. Then we came back to California to attend the New Year's meeting at Lodi. It was especially enjoyable this year and the attendance was good. God bless all of you.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct, Somerset, KY, 606-678-4347, hawkins@kih.net—It's been a few months since I've written to the *OPA*. I don't recall exactly what I reported the last time and so if I miss something in the interim it's purely by accident. I've recently closed at Springfield, MO and Knoxville, GA. I enjoyed both meetings immensely and hope that good was accomplished. It was good to be associated with preaching brethren Irvin Barnes, Billy Dickenson, George Battey, and Alton Bailey. I'm currently in a meeting with the church at Lawrenceburg, TN. I'm enjoying the meeting and we're having good attendance. My meetings get started in March when I'll be at the church in Wayne, WV (March 3-10). May the Lord bless you in this new year!

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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LEBANON, MISSOURI, MARCH 2002

NO. 3

SUNDAY SCHOOL ISSUES: ASSEMBLE TO SEPARATE?

BY GREG GAY

The Bible does not approve the class system of teaching commonly called Bible School or Sunday School. In years gone by this is one of the issues that tore many congregations apart and to this day a division remains over the "Sunday School Issue." We are not in fellowship with those who have Sunday School because they have departed from the pattern of New Testament teaching.

Since Sunday School is not an issue we are constantly fighting today it is very easy to forget how it is wrong and why we care about it. Since what is not discussed and studied is easily forgotten, we are in danger of gradually ending up with the very system we don't believe. It is also possible to innocently and unknowingly participate in activities that are incorrect in the same way that Sunday School is incorrect. As a result, we end up being inconsistent in our application of what the Bible teaches. Of course we don't want that!

To understand why Sunday School is a departure from the Bible pattern and, therefore wrong, we need to look at several questions including: Is it appropriate for a congregation's assembly to be divided into groups for teaching? Does the Bible specify how the teaching is to be conducted? If the Bible does specify how the teaching is to be conducted are all other methods of teaching prohibited? Who can teach in a church assembly and how can that teaching be done? What is a woman's role in teaching? When and who can a woman teach? Does it make any difference if a gathering is private or public as to who teaches? How can we know when a gathering is public or private? This article starts a study of these issues.

Is it appropriate for a congregation to be divided into groups for teaching?

The phrase "come together" is a common Bible way for saying a group of people met. Notice these references: "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper" (1 Corinthians 11:20). "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad" (1 Corinthians 14:23)? "How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath

a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Furthermore, the KJV Bible uses the word "assembly" to describe a group that comes together. "Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together" (Acts 19:32). "For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment" (James 2:2). This is a reference to worship, which is not to be forsaken. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb 10:25).

The Bible also uses the phrases "came together" and "gathered together" to describe when Christians met: "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. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together" (Acts 20:7-8).

Digging Deeper

Translating words from the original Greek to English can result in the same or very similar English words being used to represent different Greek words. And, different English words can be used to represent the same, or very similar Greek words. This is common and shouldn't be seen as a problem. Just to make sure we are properly explaining the Scriptures let us look at some of the phrases we have used thus far and dig deeper into the meanings of the words.

"Come together" in I Cor. 11:20, 14:23, and 14:26 is *sunerchomai* (soon-er-khomahee). Vines describes the word: "to come together" and says it "is often translated by the verb 'to assemble.'"

"Assemble" in Acts 19:32 is a familiar Greek word for many. It is the word *ekklesia* (ekklay-see'-ah) and is translated "church" in many well known passages including: Matt. 16:18 "...Upon this rock I will build my church..." and Rom. 16:16 "...the Churches of Christ salute you." Thayer reports the word is "called

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Editorial

HAVE WE BEEN MISTAKEN ALL THESE YEARS?

By DON L. KING

For as long as we can recall, we have believed that Acts 20:20 deals with the only two kinds of teaching possible: public and private. In public debates as well as in sermons and private studies most of us have insisted that all teaching is either one or the other. There is no such thing as "semi private" or "semi public," we have said. Have we been mistaken all these years?

Acts 20:20 reads as follows: **"And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house."**

We have always believed the passage meant exactly what it said. Paul taught the people in a public capacity as well as in private at their homes. However, it has been suggested that perhaps Paul meant to say that he had taught the people in their synagogues and in the churches meeting in their homes. The *Expositor's Greek Testament* suggests that could be the case. Far is it from this writer to gainsay the scholars. However, it certainly appears that the context of the passage does not bear out that meaning.

The setting of the passage is as follows: Paul had called the elders of the church at Ephesus and asked them to meet him at Miletus. His purpose was to warn of the many troubles coming in the future. He told them trouble would come from within and without. He warned of the coming problems to take place even among the elders. He reminded them that some would arise from among themselves to cause trouble. History tells us that very thing happened and eventually caused the church to fall into apostasy. Paul told them he had worked tirelessly for three years both day and night to prepare them for the coming trouble. He reminded them of the tears he had shed in so doing. (Verse 31) His whole purpose in verse 20 appears to be that he had overlooked no possible avenue in his work in warning them. He did so publicly as well as in private. His mention of having done work both day and night (verse 31) would indicate that some of the warning was done in private as well as in public.

To be sure we were not mistaken, we looked up the words in the lexicons. **"Publicly"** according to *Thayers Greek English Lexicon* means: **"publicly in public places, in view of all."** The word "publicly" found in Acts 20:20 (in Greek) is translated "openly" in Acts 16:37 where Paul complained that they had been beaten "openly." (King James Version) Paul knew that beating them in a public fashion since they were Roman citizens had broken the law. It is again

continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: In what capacity may a woman teach? Please explain the restrictions placed on women in 1 Timothy 2:11-12? (CA)

Answer: There has been, for quite sometime now, a push on the part of some to give women more exposure in the church. Various groups among the churches of Christ have struggled to maintain what they consider to be valid restrictions placed on women and the public proclamation of the gospel. Unfortunately many of them have already lost the battle. Just today I received a religious journal in which one writer told about receiving a call from a preacher who said "Women are taking an increasingly, active, public role in the work of this church, and the elders say it is alright because they have told the women to do so, thus, they are not usurping authority but are acting under the elder's direction." Many among us would respond to that by saying "I told you so," or "I could have predicted that would happen since these churches have had women teaching in classes for years. It only logically follows that sooner or later women would want in the pulpit." Well it appears that it will be sooner than later. But what saith the scripture? Paul in 1 Tim. 2:11-2 wrote "Let the women learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence." In these verses the writer talks about a "learning process" and a "teaching process." Women are to be silent in both. They may neither ask or answer a question. Of the word "teach" in this verse Thayer says "to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses." A woman is out of place in the pulpit. In fact this passage keeps a woman out of the pulpit whether it be a literal one or a figurative one. That is one where she assumes the prerogative of standing before others and teaching them. That is not her role. Why? Because according to our writer Adam was first formed then Eve, and Eve was first in the transgression. Those who claim that these verses in 1 Timothy apply only to an assembly of the church, miss the mark. If such were true then women could teach or preach over radio, television, or on the street corner. If not why not? What scripture would forbid it? It might surprise you that some among us already believe that a woman can do these things. What scripture would forbid a woman going downtown and standing on a street corner and proclaiming the gospel to all who would listen, if not this very passage? The street corner is not a church assembly, nor is the radio or television. Where then may a woman teach and under what circumstances? In Acts 18:26 we have the account of Aquila and his wife Priscilla taking Apollos unto themselves and teaching him the way of the Lord more perfectly. Note carefully that they "took him unto themselves." In a private and informal

manner they individually instructed this man. They did not advertise, announce, or broadcast the study. Hence in circumstances similar to this a woman may teach. She may teach her children 2 Tim. 1:5 and 3:15. In Titus 2:3-4 older women are charged with admonishing (training) younger women. In none of these passages do we find any hint of women organizing brotherhood wide "women's studies" where women come together and are taught by other women. Women who organize such are entirely out of their role and women who attend and teach are likewise out of their role. Both are in violation of 1 Timothy 2:11-12. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com)

IS THE MAJORITY RULE SCRIPTURAL?

By CLOVIS T. COOK

1) E. A. Elam, wrote a tract on the subject (published by the Gospel Advocate Company 1953). I tried to obtain this tract, but obviously, it is out of print. However, the Scriptures are not out of print and our appeal will be to the Scriptures. In the political arena it is a legal process. But in the church is it a scriptural process to use in establishing church policy, or making decisions that concerns the whole church? This is the part of the question we want to address.

Example

2) In Acts 15, there is an example, that seems to me would serve us well. It was a matter that arose in Antioch, three hundred miles north of Jerusalem. A dispute, which Paul being an apostle, no doubt, could have ruled on, but he and the brethren chose to refer the situation to the other apostles and elders, at Jerusalem, for the sake of peace and unity. The whole church at Jerusalem was involved in the peace making process, for "then it pleased the whole church" V.22. The dispute was not settled by a majority vote. Though the dispute arose in Antioch, "Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question" (Acts 15:22). The church at Antioch, sent them to obtain from other credible leaders a ruling on the matter. It is sometimes wise to seek qualified guides and representative men among us to assist and guide us in disagreements. There were three classes of leading men in the church at Jerusalem. Apostles, Elders, and Chief-men. (The latter were prophets and preachers V.32). What better example, can you find than one that pleases the whole church?

Majority

3) It means, "Quantity more than half" -Web. It only takes fifty-one percent to constitute a majority. Can fifty-one percent, "lord it over God's heritage" (2 Pet. 5:3)? Are the forty-nine percent a part of God's heritage? Moses in Old Testament times did not advise such a rule. Listen! "And I charged your judges

at that time: Hear the disputes between your brothers and judge fairly, whether the case is between brother Israelites or between one of them and an Alien. Do not show partiality in judging: hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of any man, for judgment belongs to God" (Deut. 1:9-17) N.I.V. Not a majority vote!

Moses's father-in-law was Jethro. In Ex. 4:13, about 1530 B.C. Jethro came to Moses, with his wife and two sons. He saw what a tremendous burden that had fallen upon Moses, in judging all the people that had been placed under his care. Jethro, suggested a plan, which Moses accepted, which led to the instructions in Deut. 1:9-17. A more ethical, practical, and impartial rule, is not likely to be found. In Rom. 15:4, Paul states: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning Have we learned anything about how to make decisions and settle disagreements? Adam Clarke said, the wise men that Moses selected, "Be uncorrupt and incorruptible, for the judgment is God's, you minister in the place of God, act like Him."

Follow The Rules

4) Does the majority rule allow us to follow these instructions?

a: All speak the same thing, same mind, and same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10)?

b. All walk by the same rule (Phil. 3:16)?

c. All speak as the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4: 11)?

d. All believe in one God, one faith, one body, one hope, one calling, one baptism (Eph. 4:4-6)?

e. All keep the unity of the spirit, in the bonds of peace (Eph. 4:3)?

"What? Came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only?" (1 Cor. 14:36). In some denominations, the chance of a person becoming a member of it depends on the majority vote. The Church of Christ teaches that when one obeys the gospel, the Lord "adds him to the Church" (Acts 2:47). If you cannot vote a person into the Church, how can you vote him out? How can you oppose one and defend the other? The Scriptures teach no such practice!

5) Does every male member have the right to vote regardless of age, aptitude, or how long that person may have been a member? If every male member does not have the right to vote in making decisions or settling issues, then where is the scripture that gives anyone the right?

6) Are congregations that try to obtain one hundred percent agreement in decision making, scriptural? Is it unscriptural to do this? If a preacher teaches against the majority rule, is he a false teacher? Is obtaining one hundred percent agreement in the work and worship of the church a good and safe rule? If so, why not all walk by this rule (Phil. 3:16)? Do the Scriptures teach more than one rule? Absolutely not!

Opinions

7) Opinions take precedence over faith in the

practice of the majority rule. If a coalition is formed to constitute a majority rule, the Church could be saddled with an innovation, or some unscriptural practice with no way to correct it if the majority voted or ruled to continue it. Alexander Campbell, in *Christian System*, said: "We choose to speak of Bible things by Bible words, because we are always suspicious that if the word is not in the Bible, the idea which it represents is not there. There is nothing more essential to the union of the disciples of Christ than the purity of speech". "Then will I purify the lips of the people, that all of them may call on the name of the Lord and serve Him shoulder to shoulder" (Zep. 3:9). "The words of the Lord are pure words" (Psa. 12:6). "Every word of the Lord is pure" (flawless N.I.V.) (Pov. 30:5).

Roy L. Cogdill (*In Walking By Faith*) said, "God never told us to do anything, but not tell us how to do it." You must strive for unity. God never told us to do anything that we cannot do.

Fact And Truth

8) Fact and truth are coexistent. For a thing to be a fact, it must be true or reality. A person can over charge (called in legal terms overloaded) another, which if they cannot be proven, they are not fact, truth, or reality. It is one thing to charge or accuse, it is another to prove. One may accuse another without one centiliter or iota of truth. One may find it much more difficult to prove charges and accusations when he has over charged, or "over loaded" the accused. The more charges you level against a person, the more difficult it is to prove. The majority vote or rule does not establish an issue to be right or wrong.

Conclusion: If there are congregations that use this method among our persuasion, (since this writer does not claim infallibility), please study this matter, and do not rush into judgment without the facts.

THE COMMON CUP AND THE CUP OF THE LORD

By DON McCORD

At times in secular newspapers, a columnist will write about "the common cup." Recently this happened in my local newspaper; the article having originated in *The Dallas Morning News*. The introductory paragraph reads this way, "The Bible says that, at the Last Supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and passed it to His disciples. "Take and drink." He said." The columnist does not say what translations she is quoting. This is essentially what Christ said, regardless of the translations being used.

The article continues with some observations and irresponsible conclusions. A 49-year-old teacher died on New Year's Day; 2 days prior she had drunk from a cup she shared with others, and it was assumed she caught the fatal disease that way and died. One 75-year-old, because of fear of getting sick from drinking

from a common cup, was advised by her son to "lay off" for a month, which she did. Someone said, "If I have a cold or whatever, and I drink from the cup, there is a possibility that the germ is going to be passed." Another was quoted as saying more sensibly, "The blood of Christ only conveys blessings -- not the flu, cancer or AIDS." A 55-year-old woman sanely observed, "Think about all the centuries of diseases, and all of the people who've taken communion, and how no one has ever gotten sick." Some preacher, so-called, said, "People in my congregation would not want to drink after one another. Putting your lips and mouth on the same cup as everybody else--that would be horrific--" Not one shred of scientific evidence is quoted to prove such irresponsible conclusions as you have just read. A danger of catching something may lie in using just any common cup, but not the Lord's cup. The cup of the Lord is *not* just any common cup.

Not every common cup in any and every religious assembly is the cup of the Lord. To assume so is to unscripturally assume. This article is *not* in defense of every common cup in every religious assembly. I hasten to say, however, that this article is in defense of the common cup that is **the Lord's cup**. I will be defending His cup as long as I live. What, then, is the difference? What is it that makes a common cup the cup of the Lord, and another common cup not the cup of the Lord? How can we know for sure? Without being presumptuous, this writer is confident that we can know for sure. There is nothing magical, or out of the ordinary in determining this.

The only place I know to go for the answer to a scriptural question is to the Bible itself. We cannot go wrong there. The logical place to start is with Christ Himself, *when and where* He first used His cup. We are content to let His voice be the voice of the divine authority. I must kindly remind you right here though that it was not just anytime and anywhere that we find Him first using His cup. Not just anybody and everybody was there. Those present had to qualify. Who were those present? His disciples, you know as well as I, were the only ones present. Discipleship was the qualifying element. Only disciples drank of the Lord's cup, not just any common cup. There is verified plainly in the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and Paul.

Not everybody is a disciple of Christ. This is not being unscripturally exclusive of judgmental. Not everyone who says or thinks he or she is a disciple is one. W.E. Vine in *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, says of disciple: "one who follows one's teaching;" "a disciple was not only a pupil, but an adherent; hence they are spoken of as initiators of their teacher." To be a disciple of Christ then, one must be a learner, a follower, an imitator of Christ. Yes, only disciples were present when Christ first used the cup of the Lord. This made it more than just a common cup by Christ's authority. In an assembly of

those not disciples the cup is only a common cup, nothing more.

Yes, wherever you find the cup of the Lord, only disciples, Christians, members of the church, are qualified partakers. In Acts 20:7, the disciples "came together to break bread;" that is, they came together to commune, break the loaf and drink the cup of the Lord--here "break bread" is a part mentioned, including the whole. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). Disciples and Christians are one and the same. As such, they are members of the church. Henry Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament says of the church and Christians, in defining the term from which we get "church," "an assembly of Christians gathering for worship." We cannot separate the Lord's cup from the church, from Christians, from disciples. The common cup in any religious assembly not the church, made up of Christians, or disciples is not the cup of the Lord. In First Corinthians, the church had come together in one place (11:18; 14:23, 26) to worship, and within the setting of the church, we find the Lord's cup described as "the cup of blessing--the communion of the blood of Christ" (10:16), and the Lord saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood (11:25). Yes, a common cup outside the church that wears and bears His name is not the cup of the Lord; it is just another common cup. Lest I not be clearly, kindly understood, within assemblies of the denominations, the sects, the cults, a common cup is just that, a common cup, not the cup of the Lord. That kind of a common cup I cannot, I will not vouch for as not spreading disease; contrariwise, the cup of the Lord, as long as I live, I will unreservedly, fearlessly vouch for it as not spreading disease of any kind. Fear not! After all, it, though a common cup out of which the whole assembly drinks, is the Lord's, and that makes all the difference.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ISSUES: ASSEMBLE TO SEPARATE?

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out or forth; properly, a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place; an assembly." Thayer also refers to ekklesia being used to describe several settings including: "an assembly of the people convened at the public place of council for the purpose of deliberating: Acts 19:39; any gathering or throng of men assembled by chance or tumultuously: Acts 19:32,41; and in the Christian sense, to describe an assembly of Christians gathered for worship, 1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19,34,35."

"Assembly," sunagoge (soon-ag-o-gay'), in James 2:2 can be translated synagogue but here "the word is distinctly applied to a Christian assembly or place of worship" according to *Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*. Since the word synagogue is usually associated with Jewish assemblies under the Law we can appreciate the translators using the word's action, "to assemble," to translate the word.

Strong defines "assembling" in Heb. 10:25 in the phrase "not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together" as: "episunagoge (ep-ee-soon-ag-o-gay); a complete collection; especially a Christian meeting (for worship): KJV - assembling (gathering) together."

Robertson's definition of the word "together" used in Acts 20:7 in the phrase "when the disciples came together to break bread" is: "sunago (soon-ag'-o); to gather together, a formal meeting of the disciples." The same word is in Acts 20:8 in the phrase "where they were gathered together." Strong adds the description "to collect" or "convene."

From the verses we have cited and from digging deeper I hope these conclusions are clear: The New Testament clearly reveals the early church met for worship on the first day of the week. When they met they stayed together and observed the items of worship at the same time.

When the Church assembles must the gathered group stay gathered?

This is an important question to consider for several reasons. If a congregation can assemble and then separate into groups to conduct spiritual activities of their own choosing then many things would appear permissible including:

Sunday School - where all are invited to assemble only to be divided into separate classes.

Other language worship - dividing the congregation into separate language groups for worship at the same time in a separate room

Children's Church - separating the children out of the group for their own worship service.

Children's Nursery - where children are cared for apart from all others (Just as an aside: our cry rooms do not constitute a separation of the assembly because their main purpose is to prevent the noise of a continually crying baby from disrupting the worship of all. They are not a place of entertainment because the parent with their child still has the solemn obligation of worship while attempting to get their child quieted so they can go back to their seat.).

Furthermore if a congregation can assemble to have separate activities it could also appear to mean we could mix items of worship such as: singing songs during communion and contribution or starting the cup while the loaf is being passed or starting the contribution while the cup is being passed.

Also if part of the congregation can observe one item of worship while others observe another it is a very short step to allowing individual Christians to pick and choose which part of the worship they want to observe and when. Imagine the chaos if some attend only the singing, and others only the Lord's Supper with people coming and going as they please. We may believe this is a strange way to think but there are digressive congregations who have multiple offerings of communion on Lord's day at their morning and evening services plus they deliver communion to the

homes of the sick and shut-in. Sadly, even among us there are those who think nothing of regularly arriving so late they miss the singing or of leaving after communion to get an early start on some afternoon activity. And, I still hear of some from time to time who take a loaf and a bottle of grape juice with them on vacation to worship as an extension of their home congregation.

The Bible presents strong, irrefutable evidence that all of the above practices are wrong. The pattern of the early church revealed in the New Testament indicates Christians assembled with a local congregation and when the church assembled for worship everyone present was expected to do everything together.

The worship of Corinth.

When Paul wrote our brethren at Corinth one of the problems he addressed was division within the congregation. This theme starts in the first chapter: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you" (1 Cor 1:10-11).

Division manifested itself in many areas in the congregation including their worship. When Paul addressed what had been reported to him in their worship he could have very easily authorized the separation of an assembled crowd, but he did not. What Paul did not authorize is most interesting.

In the first part of 1 Cor. 14 Paul enters into a discussion of the differences between the miraculous ability to speak a language and the miraculous ability to prophesy. Both gifts would have been tremendous, yet there was a time and a place for those gifts to be used. This is before the days of the written Bible so God's truths were revealed through this special gift of prophecy.

"For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue" (1 Cor 14:2-4, 19).

Remember, many at Corinth had spiritual gifts. Everyone who had a gift thought they were supposed to use their gift, especially during worship, even if others were attempting to use their gifts at the same time. Paul describes what they were doing:

I Cor 14:23, 26

23 If therefore the whole church be come together

into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

26 How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

Attending their service would have a stranger declaring them "mad" because of their inability to understand the many different languages being spoken at the same time. Plus, anyone with other spiritual gifts thought they should speak up at the same time. This would have been very chaotic as everyone was vying to be heard. What was Paul's solution? It would have been very simple for Paul to have said - separate. If someone has a psalm just go off into a corner or into another room and those who want may learn the new song. If someone has a doctrine just go off into a corner or into another room and those who want may listen. If a few in the group share knowledge of a language let them go off into a corner or into another room to use that language. But that is not the solution Paul gives. Read his solution below with my comments in parentheses, ()'s after each verse:

I Cor 14:23-31

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? (The congregation assembles then those who know other languages all start to speak at the same time and total confusion results. A visitor will think ill of the proceedings.)

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: (But, if the gift of prophesy is used and spoken in an understood language then an unbeliever or ignorant person can learn from all that is taught.)

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. (The listener understanding what is spoken can allow the word of God to touch his heart and can become a worshipper of God.)

26 How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. (What you are doing is insisting on exercising your gifts while ignoring others who are doing the same. This is tearing you apart. Instead seek to build each other up.)

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. (Don't speak very long before you are interpreted. Speak a few sentences and then wait to be interpreted.)

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to

God. (Those who speak in an uncommon language should only speak if someone is there to interpret what they are saying. Otherwise, they must remain silent.)
29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. (Let two or three of those with the gift of prophecy speak and let everyone else with that gift listen carefully to make sure what is being said is from God.)

30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. (If God reveals something to another person the first speaker must stop and yield the floor to the more recent revelation.)

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. (One speaker at a time to everyone lets everyone learn and be encouraged.)

Remember, our original question was: Is it appropriate for a congregation's assembly to be divided into groups for teaching? That, in essence, is what was happening at Corinth as they were competing, no doubt at the top of their lungs to be heard. Paul stopped that immediately!

Also in the reading in I Cor. 14 we have the answer to the question: Does the Bible specify how the teaching is to be conducted when the church assembles? It certainly does, by one at a time speaking to all (verse 31).

Where does Sunday School fit in this pattern? It doesn't. It has no place, period. It can't be part of the assembly, because its very nature violates the meaning of assembling. It is a separation. It can't be considered part of the teaching in worship, because teaching in worship is to be conducted by one to all who are gathered.

The only possible defense one might give for the practice of Sunday School is as an expedient to teaching but it fails to meet the requirements of a scriptural expedient.

An expedient is simply an aid. So long as an aid does not violate any known command, example, or necessary inference it can be permissible. An example of an expedient in worship is the use of songbooks. A songbook is allowed only because it does not violate nor interfere with what the Bible specifies regarding singing. However if an aid violates what the Bible has authorized then it is not an aid, it is not an expedient, it is a departure from God's pattern. Such is the case with introducing instruments of music into worship. That violates the pattern of vocal music by introducing another kind of music.

Similarly, Sunday School violates the pattern of teaching by introducing another kind of teaching. It is nowhere commanded. There are no examples of it and nothing infers its necessity. Therefore we can only conclude Sunday School is a departure from God's pattern and it is wrong.

EDITORIAL

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translated "publicly" in Acts 18:28 to show that Apollos convinced the Jews in a public manner that Jesus was the Christ, etc. So that word means just what we always thought it meant.

Next, we looked up "house to house." Mr. Thayer tells us this refers to "private houses." We all realize that the term "house" may be used to refer to various things.

The context helps us understand the meaning. For instance, in Matthew 10:6 the Bible speaks of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." There, it is obvious the nation of Israel is denoted rather than their dwelling places. In Matthew 12:4 the Scripture tells of the "house of God." There, it is obvious the temple is meant from the context. A similar meaning is found in Mark 11:17. Again, the context determines our understanding. However, in Luke 1:23 the Bible reads: "And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house." The person under consideration is Zacharias. Do we think of the nation of Israel here when we read the word "house?" No, neither do we understand that he went to the temple. Why? Because the context demands that we understand only that he went home. He went to his house.

Now, let us look at Acts 20:20 again. What does the context indicate? "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." It seems obvious that Paul is contrasting a public approach with a private one. Yes, we are aware that the brethren often met in their private homes but is that what is being taught here? Not at all! The truth is that Paul may well have taught the church in assemblies in homes. However, that would have been a public meeting and there would be no reason to use the phrase "publicly and from house to house." When the church assembles in a private home, the public is invited. There is then a sanctified place and a sanctified time for the church to come together in that home. During that time, it is the meeting place for the church. The women must be silent. If that were in Paul's mind he would just have used the term "publicly." This is an obvious contrast intended to convey that Paul taught both publicly and privately.

In recent times, we have been dismayed, worried and shocked at the news we have heard. Some women seem to be totally unsatisfied with the great work they are given by God. Efforts have been made to create a situation where women can get up before a crowd and teach as men do. Sisters you have a wonderful work to do. No one can do what you must. No one can teach your children, as you must. They will remember all their lives the things they learn from you. The older sisters are commanded to be "...teachers of good things; That they may teach 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, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Titus 2:4, 5)

Women are not permitted to do this in a public capacity. (I Timothy 2,11,12; 1 Corinthians 14:34,35) Therefore, all teaching by the sisters must be in a private or house to house setting. Just why such efforts are made to create a situation wherein women may teach or preach before an audience is beyond this writer. That is the very thing Paul forbade women to do in I Timothy 2:11,12. Such happenings will bring nothing but bad times for the church. Let us plead with you dear sisters: be content to fulfill your work given you by God. May the Lord bless us all with a desire to be exactly what Heaven desires of us. I have neither one penny, nor one minute of my time for any spiritual effort other than that authorized in the Scriptures whether in the church or at home. There is no "in-between." We are firmly convinced that all teaching must fall into one of two categories: **public** or **private**. We have not been mistaken all of these years after all. Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your February OPA Was Late

Several have inquired as to why their paper was late for February. We have just learned that the printers completed the printing as usual, perhaps a bit later than normal, but then laid the paper aside and neglected to mail it. They have apologized and we sincerely hope it will not happen again. Our apologies for any inconvenience to our readers. DLK

Some Are Not Getting Their Paper

Some of you have written to ask why your paper has not been coming. In some cases, we have found that the subscription was expired. In a very few cases we have found no record of the subscription at all. However, the most of the problems seem to be with the Postal service. Usually when we check on a subscription we have it on file as it should be and the printers do also, but still no paper is being received. We know this problem is vexing but there is little we can do about it because the possibilities seem endless with the mail service. However, if you or someone you know are not getting the paper, as you should, please tell us so we can do what we can. We will do all within our power to help you if you will let us know. Thank you. DLK

To The Brotherhood At Large

As many of you know, on December 26th I was admitted to Cox Hospital in Springfield, Missouri where I had heart surgery with four by-passes. I am recovering nicely at this time. I would like to express my most sincere appreciation to all my brothers and sisters in Christ for all the telephone calls, cards, visits

and especially for all the prayers that were offered on my behalf. This all meant so much to me. I certainly believe prayer played a great part in my recovery. It is wonderful to be a member of the Lord's church and be affiliated with so many wonderful Christians who serve the Lord. It is my prayer that God will richly bless each one of you. Please continue to remember me in your prayers.—Roy Lee Criswell

Grapejuice For Africa

Some of the congregations in Malawi, Africa are in need of grapejuice. If you would be willing to help in bearing some of the expense for this work, please contact Brother Virgil Hogland at 870-741-6936 or you may write him at 1915 Nandina, Apt. 7, Harrison, AR 72601

Directory Listing

HARLINGEN, (Cameron County) In the home of Randy Little, 2701 Becky Lane, Sunday 10:30 AM, 4:00 PM. Randy Little, 2701 Becky Lane, Harlingen, TX 78550, Phone (956) 364-0085.

Wanted: Old Issues Of OPA

I'm collecting back issues of the *Old Paths Advocate* for the purpose of binding them and adding them to my personal library. I have most of the issues from the 1970s, 80s, 90s, and 2000s, and I have some issues from each decade prior to those years beginning with 1933. If You have any old issues especially from the 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s (I have all issues from 1962, '65, '66 and '69), and wouldn't mind parting with them, please contact me or send them to me, and I'll reimburse you for the papers and postage. Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr, Ada, OK 74820, (580) 332-1739, carlmj@cableone.net

Preachers, Please Read

As we get into the New Year, may we kindly ask all of our preachers to try to send a field report at least every other month? The brethren enjoy reading of your work. It is an encouragement to them. We would also like to request that all of you consider sending an article to the paper at least four times each year. Try to have the materials typed and double spaced. A field report should usually not be more than one half page of double spaced material. That isn't much to ask. Articles should be about three to four pages of double spaced material. You can send them to us by e-mail: old_path@juno.com. Also try to mention the paper from time to time in your meetings, etc. In days gone by, this was a common practice by most of our preachers. Would you try to help? Remember that ANYONE sending us 10 or more subscriptions will get theirs free for one year. With your help, we could go into more places and Countries than ever before. What an easy way for your materials to be read in all of the foreign fields as well as here in the USA. Let us hear from you soon! DLK

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

LITTLEFIELD-IRB—It was my pleasure to officiate at the wedding of Josh Littlefield and Michele Irb, December 1st, 2002 at the Wintersmith Park Lodge here in Ada. Josh and Michele exchanged vows of life-long love and loyalty before a standing room only crowd. The newlyweds are members of the church here at home and I considered it an honor to be asked to officiate the wedding. May God bless them richly.—Carl M. Johnson

USSERY-SIFFORD—Stacy Sifford and Kevin Ussery were united in holy wedlock on Saturday, December 15, 2002, in a beautiful setting in Bonner Springs, KS. Stacy and Kevin are members of the 36th & Everett congregation in Kansas City, KS. A large crowd of family and friends gathered to watch the couple exchange the sweetest and most sacred human vows. I have known Kevin several years and I've known Stacy all her life, so I felt privileged when they asked me to conduct the ceremony. May God bless them and help them to keep the vows they have made each other and to God.—Carl M. Johnson



Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rf Wade@getatlas.com, Feb. 11—The past several weeks we have been working with the church here at home running down leads from our TV program. We are also getting several responses from our web-site on the WWW the address is letthebiblespeak.com. The Lord willing we will be at Hillcrest near Brookhaven, MS Feb. 17-20 and Jackson, MS Feb. 22-24, then to Piedmont, AL March 3-10, Pleasant Grove near Brazil, IN March 17-24 and OK City, 21st. St. April 5-14. We look forward to working with the brethren in all these places. May the Lord continue to bless all those who faithfully serve Him.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, Feb. 9—We were in Healdton, OK the third weekend of January for a three-day meeting. We had visitors from numerous congregations in Oklahoma and northern Texas, and a few visitors from the community. Johnny Elmore conducted a three-day study on elders and deacons here at home the first weekend of January. We had an

excellent study and believe it is a positive step in the direction of ordaining elders and deacons here at home. My meetings schedule for the next few months includes: Sulphur, OK (Feb. 22-24), Sanger, CA (Mar. 10-17), Ceres, CA (Mar. 18-24), Bridgeport, TX (Apr. 25-28), Farmerville, LA (May 22-26), Killbuck, OH, Red Oak, Texas (July 14-21), Huntington, WV (July 26-Aug. 4), and Bunner Ridge, WV (Aug. 5-11). I'll include the rest of my schedule as I get the definite dates confirmed.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, February 12, e-mail old_paths@juno.com. It took about two weeks to get my sleep habits back to American time after returning home from the Philippines but all is normal now. We have enjoyed preaching several times at home and one Lord's Day at Sanger, CA recently to good crowds. We will go next to Oyster Bay, FL, Lord willing, then to Nashville, TN. Preachers, we need your field reports and articles every month. We also appreciate when you mention the paper as you go from place to place. Please don't neglect the opportunity to teach the word of God in such a great medium as the printed page. Let us hear from you soon.

Gerald Barrett, 22150 Old Well Road, P.O. Box 1596, Tehachapi, CA 93561—Our work here progresses slowly, however, it progresses. We have had continued support from the surrounding congregations for which we are thankful. Brundage Lane, our sister congregation in Bakersfield, continues to support the work here financially for which we are indebted and so very thankful for. Jim and Lucille Downum (of Brundage Ln., Bakersfield) and Dave and Joann Payne and their daughter Penny (of Planz Rd., Bakersfield) continue to support the work here by meeting with us once a month. Also, Jim and his grandson Ryan Terwilliger have committed to teach for us on a monthly basis. We have had several preaching brethren preach for us since our last report. Brother Lavern Lum and Brian Elliott were able to bring the congregations some very good lessons. Even though we have had no growth by additions to the body of Christ here we have been built up spiritually. Allen (Glen) and Melissa Herrin continue to be a great asset to the work here. For a young couple they show great zeal in the Lord's work. We have started to write articles for the local paper of which we hope to generate some leads. Josh Miller (of Covina) will be holding us a weekend meeting in April. We continue to ask the brotherhood to pray for this work so that souls may be won in this community to our Lord. May God bless the work everywhere.

A. Joshua Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, E-mail: josh@1477@juno.com—Phil and Rachel (the couple I met from the Covina Farmer's Market, whom I wrote about in the last report) came to the Covina church again when I gave a lesson on the fruit of the Spirit, and we visited together and had another Bible study after the service. They may come again this next Lord's Day.

We were pleased that our neighbor Angie also came to the service that day, and hope to study more with her as well. Mariah and I have also been studying with a lady named Guillermina, whom we met when door knocking for the Wayne McKamie meeting last year. She speaks very little English but the Lord has helped us with our Spanish and we have been able to have Bible studies in her own language, out of the Reina-Valera Bible (the Spanish equivalent of the King James version). The young people have been getting together on Friday nights in Temecula, where Matt Steffen and his fellow students that he baptized live. We have had Bible studies about the nature of God and the establishment of the Lord's church in Acts 2, which seem to have been edifying for all present, especially the new Christians. I am continuing to work with Andy Alarcon (baptized in April of 2001) to help him grow in Christ. By God's grace he has really grown in his Christian walk, and has been glorifying God in the midst of ongoing hardships in his life. Andy is a real encouragement to me. I had another uplifting first Sunday with the Hawthorne congregation, which has already grown since my last visit, as some of the people they were reaching out to have put on Christ in baptism

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, Jan. 7—We recently baptized another man here at 79th and Kansas Ave, Kansas city, KS. He had been coming to service with his wife for some time, and finally decided to obey the gospel. We are so happy to have him a part of the congregation. We have had some sickness in the church here this winter, in spite of the fact that we have had a very mild winter until recently. Last week things changed. We had the worst ice storm in the history of Kansas City. Over 300,000 people were without power. Many of the members had power and telephone outages which lasted from a matter of hours to several days. Some people are still without electricity. Repair crews have come in from nine different states to help restore power. The storm damage has amounted to millions of dollars. The congregation is doing well. We have some excellent teaching and the singing is outstanding, thanks to many talented men. The Lord bless all the faithful everywhere.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, Jan. 14—We are looking forward to 2002 with great excitement! The old year ended and the new year began with souls being added to the Lord's church. On Dec. 30, Alex Grantton obeyed the Gospel. Alex is 25 years of age and after attending several of our services, and a couple of homes studies, he was baptized into Christ. Sara and Mandy Garrett are to be commended for bringing this young man to the services with them. On Jan. 4 two were baptized. One was Darci May, the daughter of Kent and Phyllis May, and the other was Alexis Robinson. Alexis is 20 years old and is a good friend of Supriya Barnes. Likewise, we commend Supriya for helping her friend

find salvation. Irvin Barnes has been showing the film strips to several young people and that effort helped to bring about the conversions of Alex and Alexis. Also, a young couple who lives here in Springfield was baptized on Nov. 25 while visiting some relatives in Columbia, MO. Austin and Megan Ward are now worshipping with us and I am beginning to have some home studies with them. There is one more conversion I would like to mention: Paul Ortiz was baptized on Aug. 26. Paul is from Ecuador and he is a student at Southern Missouri State University. Paul lives with one of our members, Danny Crooks, and this was the avenue by which Paul was brought to Christ. Juan Rodriguez, JR. is corresponding with some of Paul's family and if all of our plans come to fruition, Juan is going to Ecuador some time this year in hopes of establishing a faithful congregation. Please pray that the Lord will open doors to a great work in Ecuador! Finally, I am looking forward to holding meetings at Jonesboro, GA (March 23-31) and Deer Park, TX (April 24-28).

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, February 10, 2002—The new year has already been off to a busy start. On January 2, I left home for a 2 1/2 week journey to the Philippines with Bro. Don King. The trip was a wonderful experience for me as a preacher and a person. The brethren in the Philippines are some of the sweetest and most dedicated people I have had the pleasure of being with. Bro. Don, along with others from here in the U.S., and Bro. Virgilio O. Danao Sr., have done a great work among these people. Bro. Danao is widely respected throughout the land for his knowledge, ability, and leadership. He is a very capable preacher and I was strengthened by being with him. It didn't take very many days of our journey to see why the gospel has spread so quickly there. The brethren are committed to the cause and are willing to spend and be spent to see that congregations are established and nourished. We traveled nearly 2,300 miles while there, preaching at as many as five services a day. 64 people obeyed the gospel and we left with full confidence that the church will continue to grow and prosper. My thanks to Don for allowing me the opportunity to accompany him this year. I learned a great deal from him. He is to be commended for his many years of hard work and loyalty to the cause there. We arrived at home safe and sound on January 22. With current world events such as they are, being able to make such a trip safely gives you an even greater appreciation for the care and keeping of the Almighty. Since returning to the States I have been with the brethren at Robertsedale, AL for a short meeting. This has become an annual event that we look forward to each winter. The church always seems to get a boost from the meeting and we hope that good was done this year as well. Lord willing, I am to be with the church in West Point, GA next weekend. The churches at Dothan and Earlytown continue to do well. We have had our share of sickness to deal with in the past several months.

There are many elderly people in the area on whom time is taking its toll. However, they continue to serve the Lord as best they can. The year began on a bright note for the church in Dothan. A young man was restored to the church after being away for several years and his wife took her stand with us, having worshipped in the past with the Sunday School people. We have been working with them individually and feel they will be an asset to the congregation. I should be able to spend some much needed time here at home before "hitting the trail" for this year's meetings. It won't be long though! Lord willing, I am scheduled to be in the following places this Spring: West Point, GA, Feb 15-17; Jacksonville, FL, March 27-31; Jamesville, MO, April 10-14; Mountain Home, AR, April 15-21; Spring Valley, WV, May 5-12; West Chester, OH, May 20-26; and Pansey, AL, May 29-June 2. We would love to see you somewhere along the line this year. Keep us in your prayers.

Cullen Smith, January 24, My new address is 4217 McNeil St., Wichita Falls, TX 76308, (904) 337-1222—The work here with the Crestview congregation is beginning very well. Wichita Falls has a great potential for the future and our goal is to work hard to spread the seed of the kingdom. One woman was baptized into Christ and is worshipping faithfully in Hawaii. Her husband is stationed there with the military. Two more have made confessions as well and we have several visitors at many services. Since last writing, in October, was in a weekend meeting in Ratliff City, OK. Several good leaders are present there and carry on the work. I appreciated Johnny and Sally and their family for attending. They are a great source of encouragement and Johnny works hard in that area of the country to support the work. I was at home in Harrison AR for Ronny Wade's meeting and he did his usual great job. From there I was in Turlock, CA. Brother Richard DeGough lives and works there and does a great job. Many of Richard's children and family worship there and they are fine examples of good Christian homes. It was my pleasure to stay with Brother Glane and Sister Bonnie Harris who are dear friends and workers in the congregation at Turlock. The young men at Turlock are doing their part developing their talent and living the Christian life. It was good to see the evidence of their parents and the Church's teaching. Next I was in Manteca. The crowds were good throughout the meeting with several visitors, many preachers, and neighboring congregations supporting that effort. They are in a very nice, new, and larger building and if you know anything about Manteca, you know they needed one. They made wise use of the Lord's money donating much of their own time and energy to an affordable, comfortable place for God's people to work and worship and I appreciate them all because they "first gave themselves." I enjoyed my stay with Melvin and Lynette Lee. They are strong influences for good in that congregation and I'm glad that Sister Lynette came through her heart surgery with

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flying colors. We believe the Lord answered our prayers in her behalf. Recently I was in San Angelo and Nashville Tennessee where things are progressing very well in those places with good brethren filling their roles. May God bless the brotherhood.

Roger L. Owens, Neosho, MO, West Hwy. 60 congregations.—The year 2001 was a great turning point for the brethren in Neosho. Our meetings were great, no they were exceptional in every way. The year ended with our annual New Year meeting where the preaching was second to none. We are blessed with no less than nine teachers here at Neosho that are very capable of properly edifying the church. We have conducted on an ongoing study with the brethren on leadership at all levels of the Christian Life yielding excellent attendance, positive success, and tremendous enthusiasm. We have no less than 4 ten day meetings scheduled, a young men's meeting in Dec., and our New Year meeting to close out 2002. The one thing we have found throughout the year is simply this, meetings do not cost the Church financially, but to not have them is most costly to the body of Christ. Recently I have conducted several funeral services for both members and non members of the Church. Our numbers are good, but we realize the fields are white unto harvest. Brethren we cannot afford to allow another summer to pass and not save the lost, nor strengthen the flock. I was so pleased to be at the Heartland congregation in Wichita, for the young men's talks. What a treat to hear as so many young men stand and speak out for the Lord. I can tell you that this preacher was thrilled and greatly blessed by the efforts of this growing and energetic congregation. I must tell you about the young men's talks at Neosho in December of 2001. These young men spoke with authority, responsibility and preparedness. As a preacher of the gospel I was moved to tears as I listened and thought about the might of these young men speaking for the master. Please pray for us as we never cease our request for all that are His.

Virgilio O. Danao, Sr., 94-371 Ikepona St., Waipahu, HI 96797, email: Virgiliodanao@aol.com, February 11, 2002—Greeting to all the faithful everywhere! Bro. Kevin Presley from Dothan, Alabama accompanied Bro. Don L. King in his preaching itinerary every January in the Philippines this year, 2002. I was their translator and guide. They arrived there January 4th and departed back to the U.S. on January 22. I arrived there on December 28th and joined them in Manila on January 5th. The itinerary covered places where we have congregations;

such as, in the provinces of Tarlac, Pagnasinan, Ilocos Norte, Cagayan, Isabela and Quirino and four cities: Manila, Baguio, Laoag, Santiago. On January 17th, we held a one day study-four lectures were conducted in the morning and afternoon sessions; and one in the evening; all followed by open forums-where basic teachings; such as, A Woman Letting Her Hair Grow, Carnal Warfare, Autonomy Of The Local Church, etc. were discussed. 64 baptisms were recorded, conducted in different places we visited. I was requested to preach in Roxas on December 30 and on January 27th, and two were baptized-one each Sunday, respectively. As Don King has been extending to the Lord's work here since 1981, when the work was started there. Though this was Bro. Presley's first trip to the Philippines he was able to easily adjust himself to the situation. His deep knowledge of the word of God and forceful age of 28, he is a very capable evangelist. In the days ahead, when "old soldiers of the cross," who are presently busy in the "battlefields," pass and enter into the gate of Heaven to receive their rewards from the King of kings, and to live with Him forever in His heavenly Kingdom, God expects much from "younger soldiers" like Bro. Presley to carry on the "good fight" I both salute Bro. King and Bro. Presley as true co-laborers in His "vineyard." To my knowledge, generally, the Lord's work in the Philippines is alive, except that some were troubled by the no-exception brethren there, who, perhaps without the knowledge of the no-exception brethren in the mainland U.S., are offering financial assistance so as to win (to buy?) The faithful brethren to affiliate (?) with them, for, according to them, "money is not at all a problem in their group," (no-exception). I arrived back here on February 7, physically well and healthy, for which I am grateful to God. When I was in the Philippines, I had a "general medical physical check-up" (ECG, ultrasound for my kidneys and prostate, X-ray for my lungs, blood test, etc.) at the hospital where my son is working, and I am glad that generally the result is normal and good. The Church here is at peace and well. During my absence, the leaders led the Sunday worship services of the Church, and during some Sundays, there were brethren from the mainland US. who worshipped with them, some of whom were requested to preach. I commend the leadership for their willingness to do whatever they could for the Church. We hope to improve their leading congregational singing, and looking forward for a more exerted efforts for evangelism, this year. Please mention us, especially the Lord's work here in Hawaii in your prayers.

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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LEBANON, MISSOURI, APRIL 2002

NO. 4

WOMEN'S SEMINAR/RETREAT

BY ALAN BONIFAY

Today the church is living in a dangerous time. Back in the '30s and '40s and '50s great men of God were waging battle after battle in order to restore and maintain the New Testament pattern for worship. In the early decades of the twentieth century false teachers had crept into the church unawares and from her own ranks men arose who corrupted the doctrine of the ancient faith. They changed the Lord's supper from the original pattern of one cup and one loaf per congregation to the use of individual cups and multiple loaves. They also divided the church into classes for the teaching of God's word. As a result of these corruptions the brotherhood was rent in two.

Men such as Homer King, Homer Gay, Ervin Waters, and E. H. Miller fought valiantly and brilliantly for the cause of Christ in debate after debate, forging out of the fires of digression the brotherhood we enjoy today. In later generations these men were succeeded by faithful brethren including Ronny Wade, Lynwood Smith, Bennie Cryer, and Paul Nichols who sounded out the same clarion calls to the truth on these issues. In those years the arguments on these issues which had so horribly rent the body of Christ were in the hearts and minds of most brethren. Brethren were well versed and articulate with respect to these issues. However, those days have passed us by for the most part.

The division between us and the digressive churches of Christ has long since crystallized; there is little movement in either direction. We have become settled about how to observe the communion and how to conduct the teaching of the congregation. With the passing of time these issues have become somewhat "old-hat." No one among us has any desire to change how we conduct our worship. Consequently we do not hear these issues taught from our pulpits very often, and as a result many brethren have become forgetful of the scriptural arguments that sustain our positions on these subjects. Whenever that happens to a fellowship, trouble is not far around the corner. It is not that anyone wants to directly attack the truth on these subjects. Rather, the longings of some to be like the "nations" around them lead them to introduce practices that have the same principal errors in them that are wrong with the Bible class method of

teaching. About twenty years ago one of our older preachers told me that the next great battle we would have to fight would be over women teachers in the church. I found that hard to believe at the time, but out of respect for his wisdom I filed it away. And behold the battle is upon us.

Word is circulating among our people that several sisters in the church have begun to organize a retreat or seminar for women in the church. The word is that they plan to assemble for several days at a lodge reserved for the occasion and discuss issues relating to how women can better serve the cause of Christ. Forty women from across the country, each of whom may invite one woman friend to attend with them, have been invited to attend this lectureship. It is even said that they have secured the services of a speaker from some other religious fellowship to address them on matters relating to the issues revealed in Titus 2:3-5. While we readily acknowledge that the motivations behind such a project are most likely well-intentioned, that does not change the fact that such a project is unscriptural and sinful. If you have been wondering what has occasioned the recent spate of articles in this paper relative to this topic this planned retreat is the reason. In my own efforts to avert this disaster from harming the church I have gone directly to the leaders of the congregations where the purported organizers worship. I have told them of what appears to be afoot in an effort to allow the leaders of these churches to intervene with these women and their husbands. I am, as I write, also trying to contact the principal organizer's husband relative to these matters. However, since these efforts have thus far been unsuccessful in stopping the project and the date of the seminar approaches we believe it is essential to warn brothers and sisters in Christ about this danger. Preachers and leaders who stand for the truth are not going to sit idly by and allow innovation and digression and division to enter our ranks. Powerful forces of opposition are marshalling to point out this grave danger and to preserve the faithful from the same divisive forces that struck the church in the early days of the last century.

But you rightly inquire, "Just exactly what is wrong

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Editorial

WHAT ABOUT CHURCH DISCIPLINE?

By DON L. KING

No one enjoys discipline whether it is being received or given. All of us would prefer that it never be called for. It is upsetting to parents when a child must be punished for misbehaving. The incident may cause a momentary lapse of comfort within the home but in the long term, bring about greater peace and harmony.

In the spiritual realm, however, it is much more traumatic than a petulant child who must be mildly punished for mischief. In the church, one may find those who do not favor discipline for any reason at all. In their view it is so disturbing that it should simply not be used at all.

We recall an incident a number of years ago. A certain brother had sinned against another and refused to make any attempt to right the wrong. The offended brother had personally visited with him several times alone and with others to no avail. Finally, in keeping with the instructions of Jesus in Matthew 18, the matter was taken before the local church. Amazingly, several remarked that this should not have been done. They were so unaccustomed to the use of scriptural discipline that they believed it wrong. The truth was that the offended brother had followed the instructions of Jesus to the letter.

The incident had been one of a personal nature and that was exactly how the Lord wanted it handled, as per Matthew 18.

In I Corinthians 5:9-13 Paul showed plainly that members of the church are not to keep company with fornicators who are also members of the church. In addition, he included in the list church members who are covetous, idolaters, railers, drunkards and extortioners (see verse 11). In verse 12 he showed that while we do not deal with those without, or non-members, who may do such things, we certainly are to discipline or "judge" those who are "within" the church. In fact, he said to "put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (verse 13) In the same verse Paul explained that God would take care of those non-members who committed such sins. That is, they will be punished at the last day.

To what extent must we practice discipline upon those who are guilty within the church? The apostle wrote: "...with such an one no not to eat." (verse 11) Can it be possible that he is telling us we are not to eat the Lord's Supper with those members? In our view the context will not allow such an interpretation. *The examination regarding the Lord's Supper is the personal responsibility of each communicant. It is a personal examination each one must do within himself. In 1 Corinthians 11:28 Paul wrote: "But let*

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Anyone who becomes a United States citizen is required to take an oath part of which reads "that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the armed forces of the United States when required by law;" is it right for a faithful Christian to take such an oath in order to become a U.S. citizen? (HI)

Answer: The above quotation represents only part of the oath necessary for U. S. citizenship. The complete section to which the querist refers reads: "that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by law..." In the book given me by the local library there is an asterisk placed before the "bearing of arms" and "perform noncombatant service." The foot note reads "In some cases, the INS will allow these clauses to be omitted." Which leaves the third choice "I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by law" which is exactly what many Christians have done for years who are conscientious objectors to war. Anyone becoming a U.S. citizen who is a Christian should ask that the first two items be omitted, and agree to serve in some type of civilian work, if such becomes necessary. I do not believe it would be right for a Christian to agree to bear arms or serve in noncombatant service. Either would compromise his or her duty as a Christian. In such situations one would be in a position to participate in carnal combat which is wrong John 19:36, 2 Cor. 10:3-4 etc, and one would be deprived of assembling on Lord's day, which is a command Heb. 10:25, Mt. 6:33. The point to remember is that the law does not require that one agree to fight or serve in a non-combatant capacity in order to become a U.S. citizen.

Question: In 1 Corinthians 11:29 Paul says that "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eats and drinks damnation to himself?" How does one eat or drink damnation to himself? (CA)

Answer: The New King James Version reads "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." "Unworthy" in this verse is an adverb of manner indicating "how" one does a thing, and does not describe the relative worth of the worshipper. Hence those who admonish everyone to examine themselves to see if they are "worthy" to partake, miss the meaning of the verse. The way one eats and drinks in an unworthy manner is "not discerning the Lord's body." That is they partake in an unthinking or flippant manner. Their mind is not where it should be. When one so eats and drinks he/she brings

judgment or damnation upon themselves. The consequences of so eating, are both serious and eternal. One can be condemned for partaking of the Lord's supper in the wrong way and for the wrong reason; that is the meaning.

Question: When a congregation is in regular Bible study and a visitor comes in, should the teacher continue his lesson or change the lesson to the gospel plan of salvation?

Answer: When Christians gather on the Lord's day, the teaching service is designed for the edification of the church (1 Corinthians 14). In verses 23-25 Paul points out that if everyone spoke in "tongues" and an unbeliever came in he would think they were mad. However, if there were prophesy, the unbeliever may be convinced and convicted, thereby admitting that God was among them. The indication is that even in the assembly of the saints where the edification of the body is foremost, the unbeliever can still be converted. To say that one should change his lesson because an outsider comes in, would depend on the situation. Any teacher is at liberty to teach what he pleases so long as it is scriptural. It seems to me that it would be wise for the speaker to select a lesson or sermon that would best fit the audience. I have often wondered why a speaker preaches on first principles when there are no outsiders present, or why one would preach to the church when the house is filled with non-Christians. Wisdom and judgment need to be exercised. Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com

CAN A CHRISTIAN "HAVE NO SIN?"

By GEORGE BATTEY

The Scriptures record, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn. 1:8). How are Christians to understand this passage? Was John Calvin correct when he argued men are so depraved they can never really be free from sin?

The Calvinist would argue that man, as long as he is in the flesh, can never really become free from sin - not totally free. Thus was born the concept that the righteous life of Christ is "transferred" to a Christian. To make their case sound scriptural, Calvinists use the word "impute" (a word found in the Scriptures), but they redefine the word to mean "transfer" (something the word never meant). The idea, then, is this: When God looks down upon a Christian, the righteous life of Christ covers that Christian like an umbrella. To illustrate, imagine standing on the top of a very tall skyscraper. You look over the edge and from above you see people below walking around with umbrellas. Actually, you cannot see the people at all because the umbrellas cover them up. You actually see only the umbrellas, but you know of

course people are underneath. In a similar way the Calvinist argues the righteous life and deeds of Christ covers the Christian. With the Christian underneath this "umbrella," and with God looking down from above, He no longer sees the sinful man who is actually there. All He actually sees is the righteous life and deeds of Christ which covers the Christian. Underneath the "umbrella" the Christian is actually still what he always was - still in the flesh, still sinful, still weak, still wretched, still depraved. According to the theory, however, God cannot see the wretched, sickening, sinful man, because all this sinful mess, though still present, is covered up by the righteous life of Christ which has been "transferred" to the Christian. If this is an accurate picture of a Christian, no wonder John wrote, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." (For a more detailed analysis of this theory, read chapter 9 of *The Christian And Sin*, Faith & Facts Press, 1993, edited by Keith Sharp, John A. Welch, and Wayne Greeson.)

The James Burton Coffman Commentary takes a similar approach to the above theory. Coffman (a member of the church of Christ) is careful in his wording. He admits that "it is absolutely impossible to transfer righteousness from one person to another (comments under Romans 5:19, p. 211). However, after making this admission, he reveals that he is only playing a game with the reader. Coffman lulls the reader to sleep. After denying the possibility of "transferring" one person's righteousness to another, he then turns around and teaches this very doctrine under the guise of different wording. He writes, "*The sinner dies to himself, effaces himself utterly, dies to sin, puts off the old man, and enters Christ, thus having a new identity 'in Christ,' with the consequence that the perfect faith and obedience of Christ, called Christ's righteousness, are thereupon his, actually his; for, in a very real sense, he is Christ*" (Romans, pp. 211-212 - emphasis his). Have we misunderstood Coffman? Hardly. He belabors the point. *Hear him again, "a descendant of Adam, through perfect union with and identification with Christ, can receive the benefits of Christ's righteousness (the righteousness of God) as his own, not while retaining his identity as a sinner, but upon the condition of his dying to himself, clothing himself with Christ, even taking his name and being faithful to that new identity 'in Christ' The righteousness which God, by such a device, 'imputes' to men is no mystical or magical by-product of sinners' faith, but is a bona fide honest-to-goodness righteousness that was lived and wrought by Jesus Christ upon this earth, and all who receive it shall not be able to do so within the perimeter of their own identity, but only through their identity and union with Christ."* (comments under Romans 3:25-26, p. 144 - emphasis his). Coffman teaches the same doctrine of the "transference" of Christ's righteousness as the

Calvinist, but he uses different wording to avoid being labeled a Calvinist. Rather than having the righteousness of Christ move over to cover the sinner, Coffman has the sinner move over and get under Christ. The result is the same either way. What is the difference between an umbrella walking over to cover a man or the man walking over to get under an umbrella. Either way, the man is eventually covered.

There are several problems with the above description of a Christian and the doctrine of the "imputation of Christ's righteousness." **First**, the Scriptures teach that when men - yes, even depraved men - obey the gospel, they are "set free from sin" (Rom. 6:17-18). Repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus is "for the remission of sins" - the "removal" of sins (Acts 2:38). Baptism "washes away sins" (Acts 22:16). Any doctrine which teaches sins are not actually removed - just covered up by the "umbrella" of Christ's righteousness - is totally false. Obedience to the gospel removes sin. Calvinism (Coffman) would picture God as sweeping man's sins under a rug (umbrella). The Bible pictures God as "removing" sin completely from the life of one who obeys (Eph. 1:7). **Second**, the umbrella concept pictures a sinful, fleshly man living under an umbrella who continues to possess sins and continues to commit sins, but the Heavenly Father cannot see any of these sins because the "umbrella" blocks His view. In other words, the Calvinistic doctrine of "imputed righteousness" is the foundation of "once saved, always saved." In contrast, the Scriptures give abundant warnings that Christians can sin and will be held accountable for those sins if they are not removed by the blood of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; 1 Cor. 10:12). The blood of Christ continues to cleanse a Christian from sins (1 Jn 1:7), but only if the Christian continues to confess and forsake those sins (1 Jn. 1:9; 2:1; Prov. 28:13). God's vision is not blocked at all. He sees clearly all that men do (Heb. 4:13) "*whether good or bad*" (Prov. 5:21; 15:3; Ecc. 12:14; 2 Cor. 5:10). **Third**, the New Testament passages which use the word "impute" are picturing God with a ledger book writing down to each man's account ("imputing") the things which each man himself is doing. Abraham's own faith was written down to his own account (Rom. 4:23). Likewise, each Christian's own faith will be written down in each one's own account (Rom. 4:24). Calvinism (Coffman) would have the word "impute" ("write down") to mean "transfer." Calvinism has Adam's sin (his unrighteous life) "transferred" to all men. The Bible does not teach this. Calvinism has the righteous life of Christ "transferred" to Christians. "Impute," however, does not mean to transfer from one person's account to another person's account. Each man's account is kept separate. Each man must give account for what he himself has done (2 Cor. 5:10). **Fourth**, this doctrine makes the "righteous life of Christ" become the saving power from sin rather than the *death* of Christ (i.e. blood). While it is true

that the Lord lived a sinless *life* and, while it is also true that He could not have been an appropriate sacrifice without being sinless, the fact remains that it is not His sinless life that saves from sin, but His *death*. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). If the sinless life of Christ could have saved man and covered his sins, there would have been no need for the Lord to die on the cross. He prayed in the garden, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me" (Mt. 26:39). Calvinism inadvertently teaches, "it is possible for the cup to pass away. The Lord's righteous life can save a sinner and it is not necessary for Him to die so cruelly on the cross." Dear reader, this is false doctrine. It takes the shed blood of Christ to purchase salvation. If the Lord had lived sinlessly and then had been "translated" into heaven like Enoch or Elijah, we would all have been hopelessly lost. You see, the righteous life of Christ, though important, did not purchase man's salvation. "This is My blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt. 26:28). "By one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). It is the "blood of the covenant" which "sanctifies" (Heb. 10:29). "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 Jn. 1:7).

Since sins are removed completely when one is baptized (Acts 2:38), can the "new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17) arise from the waters of baptism and truthfully say, "I have no sin"? Of course he can say this - even though 1 Jn. 1:8 says, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." But suppose the "new creature" sins again? The scriptures say, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:9). When a Christian, then, confesses his sins and asks God to forgive him, may he arise from prayer and truthfully say, "I have no sin"? Of course he can - even though 1 Jn. 1:8 says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

How, then, are we to understand 1 Jn. 1:8? If a newly baptized convert and a repenting, confessing Christian may both truthfully say, "I have no sin," how can 1 Jn. 1:8 teach, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves"? The solution to this dilemma is found in verse 6: "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth." In other words, the man being described in verse 8 (the one deceiving himself and the one who does not have the truth in him) is the man who: (1) says he has fellowship with God, but (2) at the same time is "walking in darkness."

John was not teaching the Calvinistic doctrine that man is so depraved he can never in this life be rid of his sins. Nor was John teaching that men must sin. In fact, he plainly said, "These things I write to you, so that you may not sin" (1 Jn. 2:1). Men were created with a free will. When a man sins, he sins because he

chooses to do so not because he had no choice ("had to"). Men "will sin," but they do not "have to" sin. To say men "must sin" is to deny both free will and 1 Jn. 2:1. To say that men "will sin" is admitting that men choose, of their own free will, to sin. This is what makes sin so despicable and wretched. When a man sins, he did not "have to" sin, but of his own free will he chose to sin.

In contrast to the one "walking in darkness" yet claiming to have fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:6), we are told, "Whoever abides in Him does not sin" (1 Jn. 3:6) and "Whoever has been born of God does not sin...and he cannot sin" (1 Jn. 3:9). Does this mean it is impossible for a Christian to sin? Do Christians ever reach such a "state of perfection" that they will never sin again? Do Christians ever reach such a plateau that they no longer have to "buffet their bodies and bring them under subjection, lest they themselves become castaways" (1 Cor. 9:27 - KJV)? Do Christians ever reach a level that they no longer have to "take heed lest they fall" (1 Cor. 10:12)? Absolutely not. The verses in 1 Jn. 3 are written in the present tense and denote continuous action. The point being emphasized is that a Christian cannot **continue** committing sin. "Cannot" in 1 Jn. 3:9 is not to be confused with "impossibly." It describes "moral restraint." To illustrate, a Christian might tell his neighbor, "I'm sorry, but I *cannot* accept your offer to drink." The Christian did not mean it was impossible to accept the offer. Instead, he means, "I have certain moral values and these values compel me to resist your offer." In the same way, 1 Jn. 3:9 is saying a Christian "cannot continue committing sin" because he has moral values which compel him to exercise his own willpower and resist temptation. Sin in a Christian's life is to be like an intruder, but sin in a sinner's life is a permanent resident. This is the line of demarcation between a Christian and a sinner (1 Jn. 3:10).

In conclusion, there are at least four major points to keep in mind. **First**, no man "has to" sin. Man was made with free will and may, at any given moment, choose to resist temptation. **Second**, man will sin. The history of man clearly demonstrates that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). To argue that men "will sin" is entirely different than saying man "has to" sin. **Third**, to be in fellowship with God and His people, one must continue to "walk in the light" (1 Jn. 1:7; 3:4-10). Those who say, "I know Him" and yet continue to "walk in darkness" are "lying" to others and "deceiving" themselves (1 Jn. 1:6,8). Those in manmade denominations and those who worship in error (digressives) are not in fellowship with God, nor with God's people (2 Jn. 9-11). They are in need of "conversion" (Ja. 5:19,20), but until they are converted, they are "in darkness" because of decisions which they themselves have freely made. **Fourth**, when men obey the gospel and receive forgiveness

of sins, they may truthfully say, I have no sin," without "lying" to others and "deceiving" themselves. First Jn. 1:8 is speaking about one who continues to "walk in darkness" and yet claims to be in fellowship with God and His people. "*This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth, And says, I have done no wickedness*" (Prov. 30:20). There are many people like this adulterous woman and these people are the ones under consideration in 1 Jn. 1:8 - they are deceiving only themselves.

A TRIP TO THE PHILIPPINES

By DON L. KING

In early January, Brother Kevin Presley and I made a trip to the Philippines to spend some time among the brethren there preaching the gospel. One of the purposes in going is to help the brethren by encouraging them in every way we can. They receive us joyfully and want to know when we can return. In fact, they once asked if we could visit twice each year. We always find that we are encouraged as much as anyone is. The work is at peace for the most part though the digressive and no-exception factions have troubled them at times. One learns to expect trouble and difficulty from every direction in the Lord's work.

We drove around the brotherhood and visited as many congregations as time would permit. We took turn about preaching as often as four or five services at times. We put about two thousand miles on a rental car so we stayed pretty busy, to say the least.

We found the brethren happy and active generally speaking. We enjoyed being in Roxas for a full day's study with the preachers. They asked us to speak about Teaching the Word, Divorce and Remarriage, The Covering for Women (hair), and Carnal Warfare, Politics, Voting, etc. Roxas is where the work began in 1981 with a single congregation of about 30 members in the early times. The first year the brethren established seventeen more congregations if memory serves me correctly. Now, we would estimate approximately 70 congregations more or less with a new work having begun on the Island of Mindanao a few years ago. That area promises to be fruitful as well. Brother Conrado, Libertino is working there and has stimulated a lot of interest.

We are also studying with several preachers from Mindanao by e-mail and believe good is being accomplished.

Mindanao has, unfortunately, been the location of choice for a large group of terrorists with alleged ties to those in Afghanistan we have all heard so much about since September 11. Large populations of Muslims live there. The brethren did not feel it to be safe for us to visit there, however, Brother Libertino and his wife came to be with us for a few days on the Island of Luzon. That is not to say that Luzon is without problems also but we felt safe as we made our way from place to place and were without

exception warmly greeted by everyone we met.

Brother Danao was with us and acted as guide and translator most of the time though others also translated as the occasion called for. This was the 22nd trip for me and

Brother Danao has always been with us, though at times others also joined. We share a room, a car, and hours of conversation about the Bible and work as we go along. It was a pleasure to have Kevin Presley with us. He left the USA with a bad cold and felt badly for a time but carried his end of the load admirably and the brethren enjoyed his preaching everywhere we were able to visit.

It would be impossible to visit every place on any given trip so we normally encourage the brethren to go together for a service during weekdays when their distance is not too great from each other. In this way, we get to see more of the brethren during the trip. This year, 64 were baptized if we counted correctly and we came home encouraged by the dedication we saw among the people. They are very poor and life is hard for many of them. This makes their hope of Heaven all the more precious to them. They can hardly wait to go. Even on weekdays we often had crowds in excess of 50 and many were busy in the fields or at a job. We wondered how many we would have in America during the day for a service. We could learn from these brethren, no doubt.

We send our profound thanks to all that helped us in the work. Lodi, CA congregation has paid for the car rental for several years now. Blue Springs, KY helped with Kevin's needs along with Earlytown, AL and perhaps others. The brethren at Fremont covered all my needs as they have since 1981. Fremont also must send support to various preachers in the Philippines when others choose not to for one reason or another. The work would have been very difficult to do without their constant backing through the years and they have done so without complaint. They are caring and generous and we thank the Lord for such brethren.

WOMEN'S SEMINAR/RETREAT

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with such a gathering of women to discuss issues relative to their service in the church?" Let us turn to the Scriptures and see.

What Saith the Scriptures?

In order to understand the teaching of God's word on this subject several passages of scripture need to be considered and their connections with one another understood.

I Corinthians 14:33b-35

This passage teaches that women are not permitted to speak in any assembly of the saints that is gathered for the purpose of offering up worship to God (see verses 23 and 26). The law of Moses taught the same thing; therefore, it cannot be successfully argued that this was a cultural restriction placed only on the

Corinthian church. This was, and is, a universal principle underscoring the woman's role of submission. Women are instructed to consult their husbands at home if they would learn anything, because it is a shameful thing for women to speak in the church assembled for worship. In verse 37 Paul reminds his readers that these are not casual suggestions but the "commandments of the Lord". This instruction prevails whether the church meets for worship in a public place and invites the public or in a home under private or secret circumstances.

I Timothy 2:11-12

It is suggested by many commentaries and subheadings in Bibles that this passage is limited to the assemblies of the church for worship. However, that notion is wrong. There is nothing in the context, near or remote, that would even hint at such a position. This view is popular because it fits the agenda of evangelical feminists and because it is more convenient for those who are not intent on following the Bible pattern.

This passage is the overarching passage in the New Testament regarding women teachers. It teaches clearly that there are two activities forbidden to Christian women: first, she may not teach the word of God; second, she may not have authority over men. The KJV idea of usurping or unwarrantedly seizing authority is not present in the Greek. The idea is that women may not be in authority -period. If this passage were all that the New Testament said relative to women teaching the word of God, then Christian women could not teach the Scriptures to anyone, at any time, under any circumstances - period. However, we know that this is not all that is said of women teaching the Scriptures. There are several passages which qualify this one. However, we must be careful to remain within the limited parameters of the qualifying passages or we make this principal passage of none effect.

Titus 2:3-5 qualifies I Timothy 2:11-12 by indicating that it is the responsibility of older women in the body of Christ to teach the younger women how to conduct themselves in their domestic relationships. This is clearly a command which must be obeyed. I would like to point out relative to the issue at hand that no one is saying that older women should not teach younger women; they must. However, we need more information to tell us where and when an older woman should do this work.

2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15 also qualifies I Timothy 2:11-12. Clearly, Timothy's mother and grandmother were instrumental in his early instructions concerning the word of God. However, neither in this passage nor the previous one are we given any instructions about how or in what circumstances the instruction was to be given.

Acts 18:24-28; 21:8-9 also qualify I Timothy 2:11-12. These two passages provide the only two instances in the New Testament church in which

women taught the word of God to anyone. For that reason, and also because they are qualifiers to the passage in I Timothy 2, these verses are examples. All biblical examples are binding and normative. An example explains, clarifies, or illustrates a background rule. The background rules in focus here are I Timothy 2:11-12 and Titus 2:3-5. What is illustrated is that as long as the teaching is individually initiated (as opposed to being under the authority of a local church), when a woman is under the authority of her husband or father she may—from a role of submission—teach the word of God to a small group of people in a private (that is—"house to house") setting. In such a situation a woman may teach anyone. However, in no situation may she be in authority over men.

Application to the Proposed Seminar

As you can see from these verses of scripture the proposed seminar is not scriptural. The group that is to gather at the lodge in Oklahoma is individually initiated but it is not under the authority of any home. The teaching situation envisioned here is unknown to the Bible. It is neither under the authority of a home nor under the authority of a local congregation. Those are the only teaching situations described in the New Testament church. A teacher at this seminar/retreat will not be teaching from a role of submission; she will not be teaching as a woman among equals but as one recognized authoritative teacher instructing a class of recognized students. The teacher, or teachers, will not be teaching a small group of women in a private or house-to-house situation. I Timothy 2:11-12 forbids a Christian woman from either figuratively or literally ascending a pulpit.

It is not wrong for the older women to teach the younger women in their congregation. It is wrong for women to preach. I know many dedicated and diligent Christian women who labor hard for the cause of Christ in their proper sphere. They study their Bibles; they teach their children the principles of the Christian religion; they visit the sick and the elderly and the shut-ins; they support and even instruct their husbands from a role of submissive helpship; they teach the younger women of their congregation their domestic responsibilities; they instruct their neighbors about the hope that lies within them. No one is opposed to such behavior. In fact, we greatly respect and appreciate it and the Bible commands it. These works do not appear to be what the organizers of this seminar/lectureship/retreat are interested in. It appears that they are interested in preaching and that is wrong. Such a seminar is contrary to the word of God and sinful.

It is my prayer and that of my colleagues that Christian women all over our brotherhood will take note of this and avoid being connected with such a work. Because someone does not intend to be in the wrong does not therefore place them in the right. Remember that in order for a Christian woman to

teach the Scriptures in a manner acceptable to God she must do so according to the only two binding examples we have (Acts 18:24-28; 21:8-9). These four things must be in place:

1. The teaching must be individually initiated.
2. The teaching must be conducted under the authority of her husband or father.
3. The teaching must be conducted from a role of submission.
4. The teaching must be done in a group small enough to be in a "house-to house" situation.

Otherwise Paul said a woman may not teach. And furthermore she may not have authority over a man.

EDITORIAL

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a man examine himself, and so eat of that bread and drink of that cup." (Emphasis mine DLK) Therefore, if you are taking the communion in an unworthy manner, it is not my responsibility to censure you or even necessarily be aware of the problem. After all, what could one do to stop it? Shall we physically restrain the allegedly sinful person from taking the Lord's Supper? If so, what about those of whom we have no knowledge? Shall we ask each communicant if he is a member of the church (if we do not personally know him) or if he is able to take the communion in a worthy manner before allowing him to continue? That might be what the Pharisees would have done but it would be shameful for us to do that, would it not? You and I must look within ourselves and so eat of that bread and drink of that cup. I do not have a biblical right or responsibility to make the examination for you nor you for me. I am responsible for myself and you are responsible for yourself To what, then, does the apostle refer? *It has to be a common meal.* The subject of the Lord's Supper is not under consideration in I Corinthians 5. The context (or subject) is our keeping company or socially associating with those who persist in living a sinful life as mentioned in those verses.

We are to stop our association with them socially. It naturally follows that we would also stop eating common or social meals together. We just naturally tend to eat with those with whom we have a social relationship. The eating of a meal together in any society implies friendship and fondness. If a member of the church lives in a manner described in I Corinthians 5:9-13 we cease to treat him as we once did. We no longer keep company, or associate socially with them as our friends, and we also stop the social practice of enjoying common meals together.

It has been conjectured that perhaps this discipline applies only to the sinful member who persists in attending the worship services. In other words, if they stop attending we may freely associate with them again. In this way we may "show them our love and concern." Can this be correct? No, because verse 13 makes no sense if that be the case. The passage reads

in part: "...therefore put away from yourselves that wicked person." What is the obvious reason for such disciplinary measures? Would it not be for the benefit of those who are striving to live right as well as for the sense of loss it causes the sinful member to feel? Paul wrote: "*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*" (1 Corinthians 15:33) It is also translated "*...evil companionship corrupts virtuous habits.*" In other words, those with whom we associate socially affect us. Over a period of time we may slowly become as they are. One's speech, dress and behavior may change toward that which is wrong and unbecoming of a Christian. Only a foolish person would deny that. Therefore, it is quite logical for the Spirit to move Paul to write that we need to put the wicked person away from us. In that way, those who are innocent of their sins may be spared the temptation to slowly change toward the wrong way. It isn't sensible at all to suppose that just because the sinful person discontinues their appearance at the worship services, we may now resume a social relationship again. How foolish that would be! The discipline obviously is to continue until such time as the wicked person repents and returns to an upright and spiritual condition. The offender must be caused to keenly feel the distance between themselves and their loved ones within the fellowship of the church. What loss can the sinful member experience when his brethren continue their social relationship as always?

There is no loss and there is no discipline in such cases because the Word of Almighty God has been ignored and trampled underfoot. There is too much association with those who have begun living a sinful life. It would seem that some see no harm in continuing a social relationship with church members who are plainly included in the list found in I Corinthians 5:9-13. We need to keep in mind that when all the justifying, gainsaying, ignoring and reasoning is finished, the Bible still says, "with such an one no not to eat."

We need to take this seriously because Paul said: "*If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*" (1 Corinthians 14:37) That being the case, it is certain that the Lord will take seriously the ignoring of his commandments on the final day. Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A History Of The Oklahoma New Year Meeting

Joe Ferguson of the Broken Arrow congregation, host congregation of the 2001-2002 Oklahoma New Year's Meeting, has published a book chronicling the meeting's fifty-five year history. This book, written by M. Lynwood Smith and Carl M. Johnson, contains

a history of the beginning of the meeting, a capsule description of each of the fifty-five meetings, and documentation of some of the things that have made this meeting the great New Year's tradition it is. The book was compiled with a lot of pictures and graphs by Joy Nichols of the Broken Arrow congregation. The price of the book including postage is \$6.00. Order from: Rylan Nichols, 7730 E. Independence, Tulsa, OK 74115. (918) 835-8888. pmsun@yahoo-com

OUR DEPARTED

WEBB—Wendell Clint Webb, son of Porter Clinton and Mayme May Jones Webb, was born January 10, 1935 and departed this life December 23, 2001 during the morning worship service at the Claxton Church of Christ, in Wright County, Missouri, at the age of sixty-six years, eleven months, and thirteen days. On November 23, 1957, he was united in marriage to Rebecca E. Casey, and to this union one daughter and one son were born. He was preceded in death by his parents. Wendell is survived by his wife, Rebecca, of the home; a daughter, Patricia Bradford, and her husband, Jim, of Antioch, CA; a son, J. C. Webb, of O'Fallon, IL; six granddaughters, Linda and Sara Webb, and Christina, Tiffany, Jennifer, and Stephanie Bradford; a sister, Greta Webb, of Falcon, MO; as well as a host of friends and relatives. Wendell was a dairy farmer most of his adult life as he and Rebecca lovingly raised their family. Wendell and his father before him had been leaders at Claxton for more than half a century. The Webb families have been a very positive influence for the church and special friends of many preachers over the years. One person later said he had never heard a negative word said about Wendell. Bro. Clovis Cook assisted with the funeral service and a nephew read a very touching poem written by a neighbor girl. Wendell will be missed at church and in the community.—Ron Alexander

DOHERTY—Carl Thomas Doherty, son of Freddie E. and Beulah Lee Reaves Doherty, was born April 18, 1930, in Dunkin County, MO, and departed this life November 10, 2001, at Marshfield, MO, at the age of 71 years, and 7 months. Carl was united in marriage to Bonnie Jean Dunigan, October 1, 1955. To this union, three children were born, Donna Fay, Freddie Ray and David Lee. Carl was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife, Bonnie of the home; his daughter, Donna Johnson and her husband Stan, of Lake Ozark, MO; two sons, Freddie and his wife Stacy, of Mansfield, MO; David and his wife Keri, of Hartville, MO; seven grandchildren; Dered, Dara and Devin Johnson; Alyssa, Gabrielle, Jordan and Cole Doherty. Carl had been a member of the church at Niangua, Mo for most of the last twenty five years. Carl had been an educator for most of his adult life, retiring as superintendent

of the Niangua school system after seventeen years of service. Carl was a good friend and a great help at church. We miss his willingness to do whatever was asked, especially, his beautifully worded prayers. Bro. Kurt Richardson assisted with the service.—Ron Alexander

LANKFORD—Lavon Lankford of Pendleton, Oregon died October 5, 2001 at St. Anthony hospital. Lavon was born Feb. 10, 1915 at Porterville, California she lived to the age of 86 years. Her death came unexpectedly although she had suffered a mild heart attack the day before. Lavon was greatly limited by her many health problems, but never seem to lose her courage to do for others. The nearest congregation was well over 100 miles away and so often she was unable to attend regular worship services. She told me that she read her Bible daily, often several times each day she loved the word of life. Four years have flown away since I preached her husband's funeral, Dutch Lankford, there in Pendleton. Her funeral was held at the Bishop Funeral Home in Pendleton, Oregon on Thursday Oct. 11, 2001. Lavon was a person well known for her endless deeds in the community where she lived, Pilot Rock, Oregon. The swell of people and family was beyond belief as I prepared myself to carry out the task ahead. I lead the song service in congregational singing and conducting the service throughout. I will assure it was difficult to hold back the tears as I attempted to say what one should in time like this. I believe we were able to bring comfort and closure to those that came on this day of remembrance and sad farewell. The community pulled together along with family to make sure every thing was taken care of; I know I was treated like a king. Lavon always treated me like one of her own children—not as a nephew. I will miss her smile and dedication to the needs of those around her as long as I have life within my body. One thing is for sure we can say, she went about doing good to all she knew, or had opportunity to meet and serve. I was especially grateful to have this opportunity to speak words for this special person in my life and the life of others.—Roger L. Owens

JOHNSON—Agnes Florene Johnson departed this life Jan. 11, 2002 following a short illness in the home of her son, Irwin Johnson. Agnes had been living with Irwin and Sandra for almost one year following a fall in her home last year in Huntsville, Arkansas. It has been a real joy to have known this beautiful woman of the kingdom. Agnes was never one to complain and she dearly loved the church, but especially good gospel preaching. A great host of family and friends gathered at the funeral home along with many who traveled the forty miles to the cemetery upon the high place called Boston. As I reflected upon the life of this flower of great beauty it was obvious that she had touched the lives of so

many every where she had gone. The community in Huntsville turned out to support the family, and many from Neosho, MO area as well. It was very supportive to me to see the gospel preachers that came to lend there support to the service. Agnes was carried to her final resting place by the hands of loving grandchildren who brushed away the hot tears of aching hearts. The singing was so sweet and the songs so well selected for the occasion. This writer prays that he was able to bring comfort from the book and say words that perhaps will help to heal the pains, as a mothers tender touch was removed from her children's reach. No pain so great, nor heart so drawn in agony as the one that must touch the tender cheek of a departed mother. Indeed so precious the memories that shall flood the minds of we that must continue the fight for Christ, as night falls upon the grave of yet another child called home. The master was her shepherd in life and he shall carry across the chilling waters of Jordan's rolling tide to rest upon the shores of eternity's peaceful day. Please pray for this family and for me—Roger L. Owens

BARNETT—Lee Ella Barnett was born July 3, 1921 in Maud, Oklahoma and passed away in McAlester, Oklahoma February 8, 2002 at the age of 80. I first met Lee Ella 30 years ago when I worked with the church in McAlester. She was the bookkeeper for Big V Feeds owned by Bill Verner and a stalwart member of the church. The thing that impressed me then, and to the day of her death, was the fact that she always looked and conducted herself like a Christian and a lady. She was always impeccably dressed, her long hair was always neat and beautiful, and she comported herself with dignity and modesty. She lost her hair because of the chemotherapy she was undergoing and the last time I visited with her she apologized because her hair was short and said she hoped the Lord understood. Of course, I told her the Lord knew she had not cut her hair and he understood why it was short. It bothered her too that she could not come to church while she was so sick. The church was her priority and she will be greatly missed in McAlester. In fact, the church in McAlester began in the home of her parents when she was but a girl. Her parents, brother and sister Williams, along with brother and sister Helterbrand worshipped in a little country church just west of McAlester. The church used one cup and did not have Sunday School. Some people moved into the community, however, and started going to church there and soon convinced almost everyone to put in cups and Sunday School. The Williams and the Helterbrands explained that they could not conscientiously go along with these additions and they were told, in so many words, they could just go elsewhere. They did. They moved into McAlester and thus began the work of the church in McAlester, Oklahoma. Gary Cannon and I sought to speak words worthy of the life of this good sister and

encourage and warn those present to follow her example of love and duty.—Jerry Dickinson

WHIGHAM—Bro. Roland L. Whigham departed this life on Feb. 10, 2002 at the age of 79. His funeral was at the Lowery church building where he had been a faithful member for many years. He was buried in the Lowery cemetery. He is survived by his wife, Evelyn; three daughters, Patti Whigham, Linda Russell and Melody Hawthorne and one son, Dean Whigham; 5 sisters and 2 brothers; 4 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. Roland was a long-time leader and worker in the church at Lowery and will be missed by his family and many friends and brethren who knew him well in this South Alabama area, Florida, Georgia and other places. The writer will not soon forget Bro. Roland Whigham and his family who asked me to come and give scripture, prayers and words of comfort at a time like this.—Miles King



Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, March 12—We closed an enjoyable meeting with the congregation at Oyster Bay, FL on the 10th. The congregation is small but was well represented at the services. We appreciated the help from the Atlanta, GA and Jacksonville, FL areas. Not only was it good to see them again but the crowd increase was nice as well. We were thankful for the hospitality shown us by the Robert Kornegay family. We were made to feel welcome and comfortable in their home. We pray that good was done. Lord willing, we are to begin tomorrow evening and continue through Lord's day at Nashville, TN. One final note, I returned home to put the paper out and my computer was down. It took a bit of doing to get the material some of you had sent in. We hope the short delay will not affect the mailing of the paper. Pray for us.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42503, (606) 678-4347, hawkins@kih.net, March 9, 2002—At present we are nearing the end of a meeting at Wayne, WV. I have a lot of fond memories of this congregation. It was one of the very first places I visited when I began venturing away from the nest at Ada. Thanks to the help of my dear friend Joe Hisle, I was introduced to these brethren quite some time ago. Some old faces are not here anymore which changes things some, but many are. We've had pretty good crowds the last few services and the help of a number of area preachers. Brethren David Smith, Ryan Conner, and of course Wynn Baker who makes his home at Wayne have been at the meeting. Its been a treat to be with all of them. They've

added so much to the meeting. Wynn is very faithful in his duties and the Lord's service. He commands my respect and admiration for his stand on the truth and has for many years. I've made my home with Frank and Sandy Marshall during the meeting. I'm not a stranger to this home or to their hospitality. No one is more conscientious in living for the Lord. I'm planning Lord willing to be with the churches at Grassy Forks, TN Apr. 6-10 (Sat - Wed) and Ada, OK Apr. 21-28. We are looking forward to Brandon Stephens being with us at Blue Springs, starting Apr. 28. Our prayer is for God's blessings to be with you.

Joe Hisle; Rt. 4 Box 188, Ada, OK 74820—Greetings to all the brethren everywhere. I have enjoyed being at home for the winter but with spring thaw comes meeting season. Following is a portion of my schedule for 2002: Davis, OK, Mar. 6-10; Dothan, AL, Mar. 17-24; Hillcrest, MS, Mar. 27-31; Odom, MO, May 1-5; Stockton, CA, May 12-19; Floral, AL, June 9-16; Lubbock, TX, June 23-30. If you are near any of these areas I would appreciate your support. In Jan. we had Bro. Johnny Elmore hold a weekend meeting on the requirements of elders. Johnny did his usual excellent job. It was good to hear Johnny again. Please remember me and my family in your prayers.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, March 11, 2002—We held an enjoyable meeting for the church at West Point, GA in February. The crowds were excellent and we had some to come from the community for the first time. The brethren seemed to be encouraged and we were as well. This is where my wife's family live and worship and so it was a pleasure to spend time with them. Our meeting is scheduled to begin here in Dothan this coming Sunday. Joe Hisle is to do the preaching and we are anxious for a good meeting. Lord willing, I will begin a meeting in Jacksonville, FL on the Wednesday following our meeting here and that will really mark the beginning of a busy schedule for the year. We hope to see many of you along the way. Recently, it has been my privilege to hear Phillip Prince and Brendon Wallace in meetings nearby. They both preached good sermons. Fred Harris preached for us at Dothan this past Lord's Day and did a fine job. Things are going well with the work here. We continue to receive calls and letters from our television broadcast and have had several visitors frequent the area churches as of late. Continue to pray for us and all of those who preach the truth.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, March 6—We have had a strange winter in the midwest, with temperatures like a yo-yo. Recently we had the worst ice storm in the history of Kansas City and we are still cleaning up. Several of the members had electrical and phone outages. One morning this week the temperature dropped to four degrees below zero and today it is

supposed to be in the sixties. Last Lord's day for worship we had the largest crowd we have had since we have lived here (except during a meeting). In the past few weeks the singing has improved and is better than ever. We have several good song leaders, which is an encouragement to us all. This week the congregation is sending \$4,000 to feed the poor saints in Africa. Here at Stony Point, we look forward to our meeting in June with Richard DeGough of Hughson, CA. For this year I have booked all the meetings that I plan to hold, and am now booking for the future. I appreciate all who have asked me to hold their meetings and look forward to being with you. May the Lord bless all our righteous efforts for Him.

A. Joshua Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, E-mail: josh1477@juno.com—Sadly, the last day of the Covina Farmer's Market was December 6 (until it hopefully resumes in the spring). However, we still have a fair number of farmer's market contacts to follow up with. We are continuing to build a friendship with Phil, whom we met at the Covina Farmers Market, and his wife Rachel, who both came to church a while back when I was preaching. They are wonderful people. We have gotten to have one Bible study with them and are scheduled to get together again on January 13, Lord willing. When I was preaching at Hawthorne on December 2 we met a lady named Santa who was invited by Russell Hall. Mariah was talking with her and she expressed a desire to be taught the Bible one on one, and said that the "pastor" of the denominational group she had been attending before didn't have time for that. We have had a couple of studies so far and she has been demonstrating a teachable attitude towards God's word. Santa and her husband have health and financial problems that have been making it hard to keep meeting together on a weekly basis, so we would appreciate prayers on their behalf. I was honored to preach at the Tulsa New Years Meeting on the evening of December 28, and Mariah and I got to meet many nice brothers and sisters from that region of the country. The preaching by many gifted brethren was edifying and the worship was uplifting. On December 30 I was privileged to preach at the Northwest 21st Street congregation in Oklahoma City that is contributing towards our support, and Mariah and I had a very nice visit with the kind brothers and sisters who meet there. This last Lord's Day I preached at the Hawthorne congregation and the Lord blessed us with a good crowd, the auditorium was nearly full. I invited a couple of preacher friends that I got to know when I attended a preaching school from 1996-1997, and they both came to the Sunday service, and my friend Edwin brought his wife. They live near the building and seemed to like the congregation, and also seem willing to study God's word with the brethren there. There were other visitors present that the members had invited. The Hawthorne congregation is fired up and willing to work, which is

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very encouraging.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com, March 15—The meetings in MS (Hillcrest and Jackson) went well. Two were baptized and one returned to the church. We enjoyed our stay in both places. Scott Smith is to be commended in Jackson for his patient endurance in carrying on the work there. Next we were in Piedmont, AL. It is always good to be among these folks. We had visitors from several congregations in AL and GA. Our stay with Charles and Martha Hurst was especially gratifying. Having known Charles for years, is a blessing that grows with time. He is a tireless worker for the Lord. This church is strong and well grounded. They will not be moved by the changing winds that currently blow in so many places. Next, Lord willing, we go to Pleasant Grove near Brazil, IN and then to Ok. City (21st) April 5-14. In May we are scheduled to be in Turlock, CA for the annual Memorial Day meeting May 19-26. We look forward to these engagements and pray the Lord's blessings will be upon them.

Brett Hickey 823 W 5th St., Tyler, TX 75701; (903) 533-9782; brettickey@juno.com, February 20—Since reporting in October we have held meetings in Amarillo, TX, Columbia, MO and Corsicana, TX We thrilled to see a number convicted by the power of the gospel. The enthusiasm, devotion and gracious hospitality at each of these congregations sent us on our way rejoicing. We are honored to count so many among these brethren as good friends. It had been almost fifteen years since I had spent any time with the brethren at Amarillo. We hated that we could not stay longer. The Lord has greatly blessed the evangelistic efforts of Reggie Kinser and the brethren at Columbia. We expect to hear even bigger things now that Reggie is spearheading a TV program in the area. We were thankful to be reunited with brethren who traveled from other congregations in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Indiana. Thanks largely to the faith and determination of Jimmy Vannoy there is a vibrant congregation in Corsicana, TX where there was no faithful church some twenty years ago. Not only are they active in local evangelism, but Jimmy and the brethren also play an important role in the work in Mexico and Russia. We admire those who remain steadfast under tribulation. The Alabama New Year's meeting was inspiring. From there we preached three times at Nashville. I was impressed by the plans and the potential of the brethren there. We enjoyed the

warmth and energy of the Stephens home. Our upcoming travels are as follows: Hoyte (Cameron, TX), March 8-17; Duncanville, TX, March 29-31; Capitol Hill (Oklahoma City), April 28; Modesto, CA, May 31-June 9 and Amarillo, TX, June 26-30. Locally, we were bolstered by our meeting with Ron Courter. It was a pleasure to get better acquainted with him and Barbara. We are now busy studying with a number of members and non-members. Most of the non-member studies were generated by our booth at the fair last fall. We hope a number of these respond to invitation to our meeting with Reginald Blount February 27-March 3. Randy and Kathy Ballard are big help in giving of their time to conduct private studies with outsiders and brethren. Randy's sermons are always very edifying. Louise and I are overwhelmed at how much Earl and Jean Roe do quietly behind the scenes; from opening their homes to giving rides to nonmembers to baby-sitting to working with leads in the community and much more. May the brotherhood be blessed with more like them.

James Hickey, 805 Sandy Trail, Allen, TX 75002—This month marks the 7th year of our Short-Wave international radio broadcast, *New Testament Christianity*, over WWCR in Nashville. On Fridays we are on 15.685 MHZ in Spanish at 4:30 p.m. Saturdays I preach in English at 10:00 a.m. on 15.685 MHZ, and on Sundays I preach in English at 1:30 p.m. on 12.160 MHZ over WWCR. I am grateful to the Church at Council Hill, OK for their faithful support for the broadcasts. The station has 100,000 watts of power, but is rated at 2.5 million watts due to how it is skipped off the Ionosphere. Today I received a card from a man from Mechanicville, New York requesting our Bible course and our Spanish New Testament. Last week I got a letter from Ontario, Canada, and a couple of weeks ago I received a letter from Winona, Missouri, both asked for our Bible Study course. A few months ago two people from different cities in Canada wrote me. I understand that there is a new Church in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico as a result of a contact from an interested listener. We regularly hear from listeners on the West coast of Africa, especially from Nigeria. If you are interested in supporting my broadcast, or if you would like to start you own broadcast, write me and I can get the information that you need. While few people in the U.S. have their own SW radio, there is one billion receivers worldwide. In addition to the radio broadcast I preach at Allen, Duncanville, and Denison, TX. April 7th I will preach at Valliant, OK with a number of preachers and teachers.

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. 5

A FORGOTTEN ISSUE?

By KEVIN W. PRESLEY

History will repeatedly show that man has great difficulty in abiding in the truth for a long period of time. Innovation may be fought and put down. It may then lie dormant for a while, but all it takes is a little period of spiritual slumber for it to resurrect and once again rear its head. It may slightly take on another form or nomenclature, but make no mistake; the great adversary has waited for an opportune time to foist it upon the church yet again. A little season of ignorance or unawareness is all that is necessary and error will make another attempt to slip in the back door. The same fruit-bearing seeds of digression will find fertile soil in which to nestle.

The past century was one of testing and battle for the defendants of truth. Our great preachers of yesteryear took up the restoration plea and traversed this country preaching against and debating the proponents of innovation. They successfully fought the use of individual cups on the Lord's Table, instrumental music, missionary societies, Sunday schools, etc. However, the past few years have seen a subsiding in such an unrelenting attack on "the issues." Thinking the battle was won, some took things for granted and moved on to other areas of concern. While other things did and do need to be addressed, we turned our focus to other matters. The result: we have possibly produced a generation uneducated in the nuts and bolts of why we oppose innovation. Everyone knows we oppose instrumental music, individual cups, and Sunday school but this writer wonders how many people really know why. If something does not change the results will be a repeat of what happened in years past when people gullibly accepted those innovations and hard stands had to be taken and the restoration movement was divided.

It is not enough for people to know that we oppose innovation. They need to know the principles of Bible authority and how they apply to unscriptural practices. If not, sin will lie at the door, presenting itself in a different disguise and people will be deceived by it. With that said, we should wonder how many people really understand the issue of Bible classes and women teachers because it is presenting itself to us again. If our people do not understand the

tenets upon which Sunday school must be opposed they will be prone to accept and practice it if called by a different name or practiced in some mild variation. However, if something is unscriptural, it is unscriptural no matter how you dress it up.

Why We Oppose Sunday School And Women Teachers

We shall now consider sundry principles that govern the teaching of the Bible. God not only wills that his word be taught but he also wills how it is to be done.

(1) *Two types of teaching.*

The apostle Paul points to two situations in which he taught the word of God in Acts 20:20. "I have taught you publicly and from house to house." The word publicly is an adverb that means the obvious. He taught them in an open or public setting. This would involve (inclusively not exclusively) the assembly of the church. Paul taught the brethren when the church met for worship (Acts 20:7). He taught in the synagogues (Acts 9:20, 13:16). He went wherever the opportunity to defend the truth presented itself. He also taught them from house to house. Strong says that the implication is that he taught families in their homes. Which, of course, would describe the act of teaching privately. Thus there are only two types of teaching, public and private.

(2) *Women are allowed to teach privately but NEVER publicly.*

The New Testament is plain about the role of the woman in a public setting where the Bible is being taught or discussed. She is to "keep SILENT" (1 Cor 14:34). She is to "learn in SILENCE with all subjection. For I SUFFER NOT A WOMAN TO TEACH, nor to usurp authority over the man, BUT TO BE IN SILENCE" (1 Tim 2:11-12). Digressive preachers have vainly sought to pervert this passage to say that a woman is forbidden only from "teaching over the man." However, the prohibitions against teaching and usurping authority are separate regulations. They are separated by the disjunctive conjunction "nor." Therefore, the prepositional phrase "over the man" modifies the action it directly follows "nor to usurp authority." In short, there is NEVER a situation where a woman is authorized by holy writ

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Editorial

PAGES FROM THE PAST

By DON L. KING

Some time ago, I purchased an old book containing the writings of an old preacher whose name was J. W. Jackson. The Jackson Publishing Company published the book in 1902 in Austin, Texas. This brother was born in 1840 in Louisiana and educated in Mississippi. I read one of his short articles, published where I do not know, but was interested in how contemporary some of his points were. It made me recall the words of Solomon that there is nothing new under the sun. Read it below, if you will. *DLK*

VOX POPULI VOX DEI

By J. W. Jackson

The plain English of this popular maxim is: "The voice of the people is the voice of God." That is, "the voice of the people" is clothed with the majesty and authority of God, hence must be obeyed. Politicians seeking office generally steer their course by the light of this maxim. The demands of the people right or wrong must be advocated in order that official station be secured and maintained. Anyone can see at a glance that the maxim is false, and those who guide their course by it sacrifice true manhood upon the altar of popular favor.

Some years ago when the State voted on the question of prohibition, I heard a speech from one of the most prominent men in the State. He declared that the proposed prohibitory law was unconstitutional, and that the option law then in force was a violation of the constitution. When he said this, a gentleman in the audience who knew that the local option law had been passed while the speaker was governor, said: "Governor, if you knew the local option law was unconstitutional, why did you sign it?" The Governor's face turned red, but he replied: I signed it, sir, because the people demanded it." All the argument and eloquence of that speaker were killed by that little episode. "The people demanded it," and he yielded to the demand though he knew it was contrary to the constitution, which he had sworn to uphold. This is not an isolated case. The people have the ballot box, and the politicians know that they must please the people in order to get their votes.

It is not argued here that the people are *always* wrong in what they demand, nor is it asserted that all men who run for office would sacrifice principle in order to cater to popular demand. It is the principle contained in the motto, and the workings of it that we desire to call attention to. God has spoken to man, and His word comes to us not only in love, but also with power. "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29. God is wiser than man, hence fully

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: At a recent meeting, some young people said they could see nothing wrong with using more than one cup in the communion so long as it was blessed in one cup to begin with. Is this right? (OK)

Answer: No, it is not right, and their statement is cause for concern for several reasons. First of all, it is evident that someone has failed to properly teach these young people the truth on the Communion service. Either family, local church leaders, or preachers may have assumed that young people just naturally "inherit" what we believe the Bible to teach. This indicates that is not the case. Secondly, it is alarming that such ideas can be advanced and promoted without being contradicted and shown for what they are at the time. And thirdly, it should be a wake up call for all of us that the only way we will continue to successfully oppose such things as individual cups, Sunday school classes, women teachers and things of this nature is through eternal vigilance and continued teaching. These unscriptural practices are still a threat to the church and those who do not realize it, will discover it all too soon. It is wrong to use more than one cup both before or after thanks is given for the following reasons: (1) Jesus took one cup Mt. 26:27; Mark 14:23 "Then he took the cup..." Some translations say "He took a cup." (2) He gave thanks for one cup "Then he took the cup, and when he had given thanks..." Mark 14:23. (3) He then "gave it to them" that is he gave it to the disciples Mark 14:23; Matthew 26:27. What he took, and that for which he gave thanks, he then handed or gave to the disciples. He did not divide or pour the fruit of the vine into two or more cups. Neither can we and follow His example. (4) He commanded the disciples to "drink from it, all of you" Mt. 26:27. The disciples understood what he meant and Mark records "they all drank from it" verse 23. Some translations say "they all drank out of it." They did not pour the fruit of the vine into two or more cups; they drank from the cup Jesus took and gave to them. Nor can we, and be scriptural. It is just as unscriptural to use more than one cup after thanks is given as it would be to use more than one cup before thanks is given. Jesus refers to the cup containing fruit of the vine as the "new testament in my blood" Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25. Thayer says of this phrase on page 15 of his lexicon "This cup containing wine, an emblem of blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood, an emblem of the new testament." The cup containing wine is an emblem of the new testament. Cups containing wine represent nothing. They are a violation of the pattern. A congregation that drinks out of individual cups violates the pattern. The pattern delivered by Paul to Corinth was "He took the cup." The congregation was admonished to "drink this cup." Note they were not told to "drink these cups."

Brethren it is time to arise and teach the truth on these issues. We cannot suppose that our children or young people understand or believe the truth unless we teach and continually emphasize what the Bible teaches. All around us we see gradual but ever persistent movement on the part of some away from the plain teaching of the Scriptures on such issues as the communion, women teachers, women studies, some of which are nothing but an attempt place women in leadership roles that are forbidden by the Bible, and a general eroding of Bible based preaching. It is past time to awake out of sleep. Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808.

"SUNDAY SCHOOL ISSUES, WOMEN'S ROLE ISSUES: SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES"

By GREG GAY

In a previous article we discussed whether or not a church assembly might divide for teaching. We proved the Scriptures do not authorize any division in the assembled church making man-made organizations like Sunday School a departure from God's word. In this article we turn our attention to other questions including: Who can teach the assembled church? And, why are a woman's activities limited in the church?

In 1 Cor. 14 Paul stopped the chaos that had developed in their worship by commanding them to speak one at a time to all: "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted" (1 Cor 14:31).

Lest anyone disagree with what Paul said he reminded them they were capable of controlling themselves even if they had spiritual gifts: "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (1 Cor. 14:32).

But, there is further prohibition in the same chapter addressed specifically to women: "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 win learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

Remember, the contextual setting of this passage is the confusion in the worship at Corinth caused by their misuse of spiritual gifts. In the verses quoted above Paul contrasts what could be done "in the church" with what could be done "at home." We will return to this concept later.

Part of Paul's admonition was to stop women from speaking out loud during worship. These women may have been the wives of men who possessed spiritual gifts. They also may have been women who possessed their own spiritual gifts. After all, spiritual gifts were not limited to men.

Joel prophesied: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28-29).

Peter quotes this prophecy as being fulfilled in Acts 2:17-18. There the apostles received spiritual gifts themselves plus the ability to impart these gifts to others (Acts 8:14-17). After Pentecost the apostles gave both men and women miraculous spiritual gifts. That women were included is proven by what is said regarding Philip's daughters. "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" (Acts 21:8-9).

Paul stops women from speaking out in the assembly at Corinth regardless of which women were speaking. His response to what they were doing was a command of silence addressed to all women.

Why must women be silent?

This prohibition goes all the way back to the time in the garden of Eden when Eve acted on her own authority in the temptation by Satan instead of honoring Adam who was created first. God told Eve: "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" (Gen 3:16).

This scene is what Paul is referring to when he says: 'for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law' (1 Cor. 14:34). For a woman to be under obedience she must allow her husband to rule over her.

When Paul writes Timothy that women are to be silent he further explains why this is necessary: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Tim 2:13).

From the beginning God intended for Eve to look to Adam for answers to any problems in their home. When she failed to look to Adam for help during the temptation God demanded of her what should have happened naturally and voluntarily, that she yield leadership to her husband. That demand is still in effect! Paul's prohibition against women speaking in the church has its roots in the Garden of Eden. It is not just confined to Corinth, but to all of God's women everywhere for all time.

Looking closer at 1 Cor.14:33-34 supports this: Verse 33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Verse 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." Lenski comments: "The clause: "As in all the churches of the saints," is by most of the ancients

...connected with the preceding sentence, but nearly all modern exegetes connect it with the following sentence...So we construe: "As (the practice is) in all the assemblies of the saints, let the women keep silence in the assemblies," those in which you come together for your public worship" (Page 614).

In other words, all the congregations had the common practice of women being silent. The chaos of Corinth was not allowed anywhere. What Paul told Corinth to do was what every congregation practiced.

Now that we have looked at why women are to be silent let's go back to our passages in 1 Cor. 14 that prohibit a woman from speaking and determine when women must be silent.

When must women be silent?

In 1 Cor. 14:34-35 we see women are commanded to be silent "in the churches" and that it is forbidden for women to speak "in the church." "What does "in the church" mean in this passage?

We might presume the prohibition "in the church" refers to a building, a place of worship. If that were true we would need to say any time a woman enters a place of worship she must be silent and not speak whether or not worship is being conducted when she is there. She could not greet anyone upon entering the place of worship, she could not say anything during the worship, and she could not visit inside the place of worship after the worship is over. This cannot be correct because brethren met for worship in their homes (1 Cor. 16:19) and there are no prohibitions against women being able to speak in their homes. In fact, Paul told them to speak in their homes rather than in the church (1 Cor. 14:35).

Or, we could presume "in the church" refers to being a member of the church. That interpretation demands a woman be voluntarily mute from the moment of her baptism into Christ for the rest of her life. This presumption is likewise false because women who were members of the church had clearly not taken a vow of silence just because they were members of the church (Acts 18:26).

Since neither of these two practices can be seen in the New Testament we obviously need to dig deeper into these phrases in order to understand what is being prohibited. But, before we do let us understand wherever God wants a woman to be silent a Godly woman will gladly honor His word.

What does silence in the church mean in 1 Cor. 14?

In 1 Cor. 14 Paul is regulating their activities during worship. Therefore we must conclude the prohibition specifically applies when the whole church is gathered together in one place for the purpose of worship (1 Cor. 11:20, 14:34). This does not mean there aren't further prohibitions but it does mean there is a specific prohibition against women speaking during worship.

Men have the responsibility of being the speakers during all portions of worship where speaking is

required. Women may not and must not participate audibly in any speaking portion of the assembly. That means during worship they must never speak out loud period. This means they must not lead a prayer, give a sermon, make an announcement, ask a question, answer a question, read scriptures out loud (even if men are reading out loud at the same time), say "amen" during the sermon, or in any way appear to be ascending the pulpit of the Lord's church during the worship. Why? Because God commands women must be silent during this special time.

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown writing on 1 Cor. 14: 34 comment: "For women to speak in public would be an act of independence, as if they were not subject to their husbands."

Can women sing?

Obviously the command for silence raises a question about whether or not a woman can participate in the singing portion of the worship. If singing is to be regulated like teaching then the same verses we have examined in 1 Cor. 14 that apply to teaching the assembled church would likewise apply to our singing during worship. That would mean singing in worship would be one man at a time, singing a solo while all listen. That is not the case. Women can (and need to) participate in singing because there is a biblical difference between teaching and singing. Singing is to be done by all. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). It can appear that singing is teaching because of the punctuation of the verse. Another translation, has: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (NIV). Singing is a time of participation by all.

More prohibitions:

Paul also addresses women's silence when he writes Timothy: "I will therefore that men pray every where, Ming up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In Eke manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (1 Tim 2:8-15).

While portions of this reading are similar to what we have discovered in 1 Cor. 14 there are some important differences. These passages are not just referring to worship but to a manner of life for Godly

men and women. We are to always be people of prayer, holiness, modesty, and good works. These are concepts that demand proper decorum as befits Christians in every situation in life.

And, we are introduced to the specific prohibition: that a woman must "not usurp authority over the man." To usurp authority means to exercise authority. Where God wants a man to be in charge no woman is blessed in taking his place. She is to voluntarily let men lead. This does not mean that men will always do a good job in that role, but that is the role they are given. Men voluntarily lead and women voluntarily let them lead.

Where does this apply? For Christians it applies in every relationship at home and in the Lord's church. **Outward signs of submission for men and women**

God introduces us to an outward symbol that is intended to acknowledge his order for the relationships we are to have in the church and in our homes through the Apostle Paul. That order is given in the following passage: "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" (1 Cor 11:3).

Later in the chapter Paul writes this somewhat confusing verse: "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels" (1 Cor 11: 10). This verse is a lot clearer when we read that where the KJV has the word "power" other translations use the word "authority." One translation reads: "Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels" (1 Cor 11: 10 NASV).

There is to be an outward symbol of authority on a woman's head because of the angels. That means the outward symbol encourages angels. What is that outward symbol? It is her hair. Paul writes to men and women: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God" (1 Cor 11:14-16).

A man who is submissive to God and acknowledges his assigned place will be willing to lead at home and in the church. He will speak in the church as he has talent and as the need arises. He will display the outward symbol of God's authority in his life by having hair that is not long. That means his hair is deliberately and obviously shortened.

A woman who is submissive to God and acknowledges her assigned place will be willing to let men lead at home and in the church. She will be silent in the worship and will display the outward symbol of God's authority in her life by having hair that is long. That means her hair is deliberately and obviously left alone to grow as it will.

And, just as Paul said other churches were not allowed chaos in their worship he also reminds the

Corinthian brethren there was no other custom anywhere. All of God's children had these same outward symbols and all were expected to conform.

From the heart!

The Apostle Peter gives us the attitude we are to have toward God's requirements and toward each other in our roles in our homes. "Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered" (1 Peter 3:2-7 NKJV).

May God richly bless us all as we work to honor Him with our lives!

A FORGOTTEN ISSUE?

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to teach spiritual matters in a public gathering, "church service" or not! Paul's restriction on teaching is obviously meant in the public sense if it is to harmonize with the remainder of passages regarding women and teaching.

Nobody denies that a woman has the privilege of expressing her faith to others in appropriate situations. In Titus 2:3-4, the aged women are instructed to teach or train the younger women. Acts 18:26 relays how Aquila and his wife Priscilla heard Apolos preach error and they later "took him unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." 1 Cor 11:5 teaches that a woman may prophesy (or impart instruction) but none of these examples place her teaching in a public forum. When the church assembles for teaching, if she is left in doubt or confusion or simply has an inquiry about spiritual matters, she is plainly instructed to reserve her question for her husband at home or in a private setting (1 Cor 14:35).

We have repeatedly and accurately affirmed that where a woman may teach she may teach anyone; men, women, or children. This is in a private or informal setting. Where she is forbidden from teaching, she may teach no one! This includes any public gathering or forum. This is so very plain. That is, until people want to practice something unscriptural and then try wresting the Scriptures to allow their practice. You may call it a "women's retreat or seminar," a "women's Bible study," or a "Bible Bowl," but in any public setting the woman who imparts instruction in spiritual matters is out of her place and is guilty of sin. Any church that

participates in such unlawful activity has defied the teaching of Paul and has become guilty of digressing from the divine pattern for teaching.

(3) When the church is gathered for the purpose of teaching, assembly rules apply.

Paul categorically states the requirements for such a gathering in 1 Cor 14. Teaching is to be done in one place or unit (vs 23, 26, 31). Teaching is to be done by men only. Women are not permitted to speak (vs 34). Men are to speak one at a time (vs 30-31). What is said must be understood by those gathered (vs 27-29). All must be done decently and in order (vs 40).

Surely we can tell the difference between a public gathering of the church and a private gathering of individuals. The habitual worship of the church is publicly advertised, arranged, and conducted. The time is established and members are made aware, exhorted to attend, and the community is also invited. If the brethren call the church together to discuss some subject such as the eldership, marriage, or child rearing, such gatherings are typically announced and people are invited to attend. The rules of 1 Cor 14 apply in all of these and like situations.

On the other hand, if I pick up the phone and call one or more brethren to come to my home and study the Bible or I casually meet a brother and discuss some spiritual matter with him, we are doing so privately. My home is a private gathering place. I, not the corporate church, do the inviting. And I oversee the activity. In such a scenario, we are not bound by the rules of a "church assembly." Women, for example would be at liberty to speak or ask questions. There is a difference between public and private activities and we need to be careful to guard that distinction.

(4) "As long as it is not a worship service..."

Some contend that the prohibition of 1 Tim 2:12 and the rules regulating an assembly in 1 Cor 14 apply merely to the "worship assembly" and would not include things such as a "Bible class," "Bible bowl," lectureship, seminar, etc. What do they mean by "worship assembly?" Must there be singing, praying, teaching, giving, and communion? If so, then what would prevent a woman from conducting a gospel meeting, so long as she did not teach on Sunday morning when the communion was observed? If singing, teaching, and praying are what it takes to constitute a "worship assembly" could the church call a gathering together and let a woman teach as long as no songs were sung? Do we just determine what is a "worship assembly" by whether or not we choose to call it a "worship assembly?" If we call it something else, are we free to cast 1 Cor 14 aside and do as we please? The fact is, the words "worship assembly" do not appear in Paul's writing. Obviously, such a gathering would fall under the consideration of Paul's teaching. However, what Paul describes is not limited to the "Sunday service." He is regulating a public gathering of the church for the purpose of edification.

This is a fundamental reason Bible classes violate the New Testament. Our digressive brethren fail miserably when they try to contend that their Bible classes are private functions and not public. They are public assemblies of the church that are not conducted according to the rules governing church assemblies.

We Will Continue To Fight Innovation

These arguments are not new. They have been issued time and again in debate and sermon. However, we are concerned, yea alarmed, that these principles are being laid aside. At the very least, it is apparent that some are forgetting or have never really learned why we oppose "Sunday School and women teachers." We know of no congregation that is practicing anything that they call "Sunday School." We have discovered that a few churches either through ignorance or sadly rebellion are flirting with practices that are inconsistent with their stated stand against Bible classes. Brethren, I personally know of no one who opposes a group of young men and women getting together in private and playing "Bible Trivia." Why is it necessary though to do such in a public setting and compromise our stand against Sunday school and women teachers? I know of no one who opposes women discussing spiritual matters when they are together in private or teaching young women at home. Why has it become necessary though to follow in the footsteps of the Sunday school churches and host women's seminars and retreats and allow women to have a formal, organized, public forum in which to teach? All would agree that perhaps it is fine for parents to be together and talk about raising children. Why though do we find it necessary to make it a work of the corporate church, announce such in our assemblies, and turn it into a pseudo Sunday school class? Are we not trying to "beat the devil around the bush" and thus allow him to trouble the church with innovation one way or another? Every congregation has the responsibility to teach its members, but no congregation is at liberty to engage in methods of assembling or teaching that violate the teaching of the very thing they are claiming to teach (the Bible).

I will say this: church leaders and preachers need to thoroughly refresh themselves in the scriptural arguments condemning such digressions and begin instructing their congregations accordingly. We need to realize that some are beginning to drift and practice things that are in direct contradiction to what we have preached to these many years. This writer, along with many others, has no intention of abandoning our historic stand against these matters. We will continue to fight and condemn trends that lead to departures from the word of God whether they arise from within or without. May God help us to "ask for the old paths and walk therein" and "prove all things, holding fast to that which is good!"

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competent to devise and give such laws as will benefit and bless the subjects. God is also more powerful than man, hence will be able to reward the obedient and punish the disobedient. God makes no mistakes, and all His laws are laden with truth. It is not true, then, that "the voice of the people is the voice of God."

But as said above of politicians, it may also be said of Christians, that many of them obey "the voice of the people" as though God was speaking to them.

Preachers are going among the churches organizing Ladies Aid, Endeavor, and Missionary societies. They know that the constitution of the Church given by the God of Heaven does not authorize such things, but "the dear people" will have them, and the political preacher caters to their wants.

Others seek every opportunity to introduce an organ or other instrument into the worship of the Church. They know they are violating the law of Christ by so doing, but "the dear people" must have something to "draw" and "entertain," and the weak preacher yields to the demands.

Again we find Christians living as the world around them. They go to balls, parties, theaters and such like, and spend a large part of their means in fashionable dressing. Such Christians are sacrificing their soul's salvation upon the altar of the world. They are afraid to show themselves as Christians. They go to church, but the world goes there too, and the world demands a certain amount of fashion, pleasure, and entertainment, and these weak Christians give it their service. How long, brethren and sisters, are you going to permit the toils of the world to bind you? You cannot serve two masters. The voice of God speaks clearly and loudly to you. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." And Jesus says, "Ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you."

But once more: the principle of this motto is seen in the attempt to rule and regulate the affairs of a church by a "majority vote." Here is a direct antagonism, the "voice of the people," against the "voice of God." God has spoken to us and has given to us a perfect code of laws. Man has no right to add to, subtract from, or alter in any manner these laws. As a subject he has simply to obey them. For the execution of all things pertaining to man's service, full directions are given, and nothing remains for man to do but to execute the laws as directed. Where, then, comes in "the voice of the people?" Where is the place for majority and minority vote? It can be found only among those who are catering to the worldly principle contained in the motto at the head of this article. In following it they are not serving God, but opposing Him! They are seeking to introduce democracy into "the Kingdom of Heaven."

Let us take God's word and obey it. All of God's appointments are clothed with divine wisdom and power. No matter how feeble and inappropriate they

may appear to us, God gave them, and if we use them as He has directed, we will succeed here, and better still, succeed hereafter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Meeting At Sulphur

The annual Fourth of July meeting at Sulphur, Oklahoma is scheduled for June 26-July 4, 2002. This will be the 55th such meeting in an unbroken series since 1947. We hope to have the new songbook, *Clarion Call*, available during the meeting and preachers ready to ring out the old Jerusalem gospel. Brother Brandon Stephens and I have been selected by the Sulphur congregation to conduct the meeting. We look forward to this event and invite all who can to help us make it a great success.—Johnny Elmore

Jacksonville, FL

Southeastern Memorial Day Meeting

Wayne Fussell will conduct the meeting this year May 22-26, 2002, Wed.-Fri., 7:30 PM, Sat., 10:30 AM and 6:00 PM. Lord's Day services will be 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM. If any questions, please call (904) 733-4035.

Please Read

We would like to have it announced in the paper that the church at Pleasant Hill, Missouri has moved and is now meeting at, 1509 N. 7 Highway, Pleasant Hill, MO 64080. The times are the same. 10:30 Sunday morning and 5:00 Sunday evening. They can call me at 816 540-5675 for directions or information.—Clayton McDavitt

New Songbook

Brother M. Lynwood Smith has informed me that the new songbook, *Clarion Call*, is expected to be ready by May 1st, and he is ready to take orders. Send payment of \$3.00 per book, plus the amount of postage on the box, when received. Prompt payment is expected, please. His address: M. Lynwood Smith, 2789 Loyd Star Lane NW, Wesson, MS 39191. Or, telephone (606) 833-2560.—Johnny Elmore

OUR DEPARTED

BAUGHMAN, Elizabeth was a member of the Church in Denison, TX and passed way on March 26, 2002. She was born April 21, 1914 in Arcadia, KS. She married Royal Broner in 1932. Six children were born to this union. She is survived by two children, Ralph Broner and Elsaie Hollis. She was preceded in death by three husbands and four children. Elizabeth attended worship services in Miami, OK before moving to Durant, OK. Graveside services were in the Coleman OK cemetery. The writer attempted to speak words of comfort and warning.—

Vaden Morgan

ARNEY—Martha Moozeria Arney was born at Broddus, TX March 28, 1911 and departed this life February 21, 2002. She was married February 11, 1930 to Charley Arney, who preceded her in death. Survivors include one son, Clifford Arney, and two daughters, Mamie Farnham and Charlsie Coventon, all of Oklahoma City, OK; one step-daughter, Zola Hutson, of Grass Valley, CA, and one step-son, Jess Arney, of Oceana, CA, eight grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. Sister Arney was a faithful member of the church meeting at 8th & Oak in Ada for many years, and later of the church at NW 21st in Oklahoma City. She spent her last years with her granddaughter Beverly and her husband, Darrell Crawford, where she was much adored by the children. It was my good pleasure to baptize this beloved lady into Christ during the time I lived in Ada, OK many years ago. I was asked to speak at services from Smith-Phillips Chapel in Ada February 23, 2002. Carl Johnson assisted, Joe Hisle led prayers, area members sang, and a large crowd gathered to show respects.—Johnny Elmore



Jerry Dickinson, Houston, TX—I enjoyed a wonderful meeting in Kansas City (85th & Euclid) March 13-17. I stayed with Mike and Beth Criswell. They are both an asset to the church there, highly regarded by the brethren, and conscientious about the Lord's work. Mike is one of our more knowledgeable preachers and I appreciate his dedication to the Cause. I am also impressed with the leadership of the church at 85th, a church which is notable because of their ongoing interest and leadership in supporting the gospel not only at home, but in foreign fields as well. My schedule for the next few months is as follows: March 29-31, Birmingham, AL; May 3-5, Iuka, AR; June 2-7, Bedford, IN; June 9-16, Jasper, TN; June 23-30, McAlester, OK; July 7-14, Harrison, AR; July 21-28, Temple, GA. Let us not grow weary in preaching and practicing the tried and true doctrines that have been passed on to us at a terrific cost. And to those who say we need to change things we say, as did those who went before us, "Give us the scripture!"

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, April 8—Our work continues here in Ardmore. We enjoyed having Lynwood Smith with us Jan. 25-27, embracing the fourth Sunday singing. My first effort away from

home this year was a study of the eldership at Ada, OK Jan. 4-6. I spoke one night at Frisco, TX Feb. 16, and once at the yearly study at Miami, OK March 16. I recently heard Carl Johnson at Sulphur, Joe Hisle at Davis, and Melvin Blalock at Ratliff City. This year, I expect to be at Paris, TX May 1-5, Fossil Creek in Ft. Worth, TX June 7-9, Sulphur, OK, June 26-July 4, St. Albans, WV June 17-23, San Angelo, TX July 14-21, Neosho, MO August 18-25, Duncanville, TX September 27-29, and sometime in October at Davis, OK. Remember us and help us in these efforts.

Greg Gay, April 10, 2002—Our usual work continues with the 64th St. congregation in Sacramento. In the last few months we have also traveled to various places. In January and February we attended several of the Saturday night winter studies at Placerville, CA. I presented the book of Habakkuk at one session. The first of February I had a weekend meeting at Sanger, CA where we stayed with long-time dear friends Don and Lyndell Rowland. James Orten had just left from working with them for a few weeks from house to house helping the congregation with goals for the future. What a great idea! In March I went to Red Oak, Texas to preach and to conduct a singing school. The singing instruction was well attended. One night we had fifteen men who were willing to stand up and practice pitching and directing a song. I enjoyed getting to visit with Gerald Hill who lives near and works with that good congregation. Plus, I got to see and hold my great-nephew, Hudson Little, the new son of Danny and Betsy Little. The first weekend in April I was at Clovis, CA for a weekend meeting. There we enjoyed staying with Bill and Barbara Anderson and getting to know them better. Since July of last year we have also been working with Yuba City, CA on a one-year commitment with a monthly preaching appointment and studies. The first six months we studied public presentation skills and Elder and Deacon qualifications. They just ordained two fine men as deacons: Jeff Cryer and Mark Herota. The last six months of our commitment we are dealing with family role issues in private studies on the one Sunday a month we are there.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS, 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, April 2.—The work at 79th and Kansas Ave, Kansas City is going well. The Lord continues to bless our efforts for good. From time to time we have had new additions through conversion and also we have new members moving into the area and meeting with us. We are thrilled to have them. When they prove to be faithful we like to put them to work using their talents for the Lord. Our local teachers study and give edifying lessons and help to build us up in the faith and knowledge of the Lord. There is not one of them who makes appointments with other congregations in order to use the church as a second income. We also have our private studies in order to grow in knowledge of the scriptures. We look forward

to our meeting in June with Richard DeGough of California doing the preaching. We would love to have all who can to make plans to come and enjoy the meeting with us. The meeting is June 2-9. We send our greetings to all the faithful.

Brett Hickey 823 W. 5th St. Tyler, TX 75701, (903) 533-9782; brett.hickey@juno.com; April 5th—Since reporting last month, we had a great meeting with Reginald Blount of Clayton, NJ. Brother Blount's sermons were timely; his speaking ability unsurpassed. He offered helpful ideas as we knocked doors of our leads. The Tyler brethren responded to his sermons. Several studies were initiated from the meeting. Cullen Smith will hold Tyler's Young Speakers' meeting May 17-19th with several gifted young men speaking. Our meeting at Hoyte was a thrill. Alton, Leland and Harold Baker took a week vacation to help Cecil Smith and me knock doors. We knocked nearly all of the 2200 doors in Cameron city limits. We generated numerous studies - one of which obeyed the gospel and afterwards attended all but one of the services. This mother of three also studied with us every morning after she was baptized. I was glad to share the pulpit with Cecil. Miles King and Charles Williams spent five days with us offering invaluable assistance. Everyone pitched in to do all they could to make the meeting a success. Our collective efforts were rewarded with 17 outsiders—many of which returned. We look forward to speaking on Hoyte's radio program. Our meetings with the steadfast, sober-minded brethren at Corsicana and Duncanville were as uplifting as expected. We are excited about our summer schedule: Capitol Hill (Oklahoma City), May 5th; Modesto, CA, May 31-June 9; Amarillo, June 26-30; Hoyte July 27-August 4.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffletree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, April 9, 2002—We returned last week from a meeting at Jacksonville, FL where we enjoyed being with friends and brethren. The meeting went well with some outside visitors present. Phillip Prince is doing a good work with this congregation and we enjoyed being with him and his family. Yesterday, I was at home for services. Mike Wilson spoke for us yesterday morning and one was restored to duty. Joe Hisle was recently with us at Dothan. He held a fine meeting and his preaching was timely and edifying. Joe was one of the very first preachers to encourage me to preach the gospel and has done a great deal to assist me in that effort over the years. It was a pleasure to be associated with him once again. We had outside visitors at every service, which encouraged us. I must admit, however, that I was a bit distracted from the meeting because of a big event in Bethany's life and mine. Our daughter, Lauren Ashtyn was born on March 20 (Wednesday of the meeting) weighing in at a very healthy 8lbs. and 15oz. Mother and daughter are doing just fine and we have appreciated your thoughts and prayers. Lord willing, we depart for Jamesville, Mo, and then Mountain Home, AR today.

In May we go to Spring Valley, W (May 5-12) and West Chester, OH (May 20-26). May the Lords blessing rest upon you all.

Jimmie C. Smith, 5100 Rail Rd, Harrison, AR 72601, April 9th, cjsmfth@alltel.net—The Alabama New Year meeting exceeded our earlier expectations. Eighteen preachers and five young men contributed greatly, were very cooperative and sound in doctrine. The singing was awesome. The town has all the facilities necessary to accomodate such a meeting. Kevin is a class act to work with. Last month I was privileged to labor with the Fossil Creek congregation in Ft. Worth in a meeting where they have qualified elders and deacons. A congregation that is very much alive, working, growing, and developing their manhood (they have more young talent coming on than any place I know), and I believe that they can sing any song in the book and sing it well. There were nights when chairs were needed. We had numerous visitors from sister congregations in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. I stand amazed that there are preachers who won't drive across town to support a gospel meeting when I drive 50+ miles night after night on crooked roads to attend the area congregations meetings. It is no wonder that many brethren are so lacksidaisical in their support and love of the brotherhood. I was told that this is the "norm" in the metroplex area, and I say what a shame for any area. We made our home with Kip and Cynthia. Enroute we visited Cullen and old friends in Wichita Falls, and I believe Crestview was the best represented congregation at the meeting in Ft. Worth. It was a joy to see brethren from the area that I had not seen for many years. The day that we left for Texas, I preached sister Ruby Bell's funeral. She had a stroke on Friday and died during the night Saturday night. She was very quiet and unassuming, but had led many of her family to the truth. She believed that 'Right was Right' and 'Wrong was Wrong.' Some have started back attending since her death. We hope to hear Kevin preach in our area next week, and having Jerry Dickinson with us beginning July 7th. May God bless the faithful.

Rick Martin, 3400 Shaw Rd., Marietta, GA 30066, mmartin@bellsouth.net—Since my last field report I have had the privilege to hold a meeting at the New Salem congregation in Brookhaven MS. The meeting was well attended. It was good to spend some time with Lynwood. Lynwood was by here a few weeks ago to take his new songbook to the printer. I believe he is expecting it to be finished by the last of April or first of May. He does a great service to the brotherhood by publishing songbooks. We need to keep our singing vibrant and new books enable this. I have just concluded a short meeting with the congregation in Hamilton, OH. We had good crowds. This is where Bill Ferguson works and it was good to be associated with him. I was glad to see Barney Owens and appreciate him attending the meeting. I was traveling with Barney when I met my

wife, so needless to say Barney is special to us. Tony Melton is working with the congregation at West Chester and I appreciate him attending the meeting. We had visitors from the local congregations and from West Virginia, Indiana, and Kentucky. Special thanks go to Neil and Kelli Williams for allowing us to stay in their home. They were very gracious. I have preached in several places around this area, Napoleon AL, Opp AL, Temple GA, and West Point GA. I am looking forward to being in Fremont CA the first of April. Meetings are starting up in our area. I recently heard Ronny Wade and am looking forward to hearing Billy Dickinson and Jerry Dickinson who will soon be in our area. Please continue to pray for the work.

C.A. Smith, 810 N.W. 6th St., Andrews, TX 79714—The congregation here in Andrews, Texas is serving the Lord according to His Divine Will and rejoicing in the fact that we are called to serve Him "at such a time as this." It is so encouraging to labor among those who love the Lord and are willing to spend and be spent in His service. Though few in number, we do everything that we can do that is scriptural, to make known the manifold wisdom of God and encourage those who desire to "come to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." For almost two years now we have, in conjunction with the congregations in Midland and Odessa, Texas, been spreading the good news of the gospel, by presenting to the interested public the program "Let The Bible Speak," with brother Ronny Wade doing the preaching. Though folk are not responding in the way that we would like for them to, they are responding, and every response is encouraging. All of you, pray for our efforts to preach the gospel and expand the kingdom of Christ, will you? We love the Lord and we love our brothers and sisters in Christ, believing with all of our hearts, that if we work together with God, that our labors will not be in vain. God Bless You All!

Don L. King, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA, 94539, April 8—The meeting with the Brookside congregation at Nashville, TN closed with no visible results but, as we always say, we pray good was done. The brethren there are always attentive and interested and any preacher enjoys an audience such as that. We appreciated brethren coming from various congregations and it was especially nice to have Brother Johnny Fisher from the Chapel Grove congregation with us for the last Lord's day. We appreciated the hospitality of Tracy and Julie Stephens. It could not have been better. In fact, the whole congregation went out of their way to be hospitable. Lord willing, we begin in Lowery, AL on the 14th continuing through the 21st. We look forward to being with them and pray for a good meeting. This past Saturday and Sunday, the Fremont -congregation was happy to have Brother Rick Martin preach for us. He preached without fear or favor and presented his

sermons in an interesting manner. We hope to have him back in the future, Lord willing. He and his wife, Jane have been friends of ours for many years and we are enjoying a good visit with them. Preachers, don't forget to send your field reports and articles, please. We would also request that you mention the paper where you go and send in subscriptions for the brethren. It's a good work that all of us can share in. Too, we appreciate those brethren in local congregations who announce the paper periodically and send in subscriptions now and again.

Joshua Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA 91740, e-mail: josh1477@juno.com—My father-in-law George passed away on March 29, so the first four days of April were primarily spent making the necessary arrangements and preparing to preach his funeral. The Lord worked everything out; George's sister sent us a check to cover burial expenses, and the Covina church and certain members also gave financial gifts instead of flowers. The Catlett family allowed us to use their vehicle to transport George's coffin to the cemetery (about four hours away) which significantly reduced the expenses. The generosity and thoughtfulness of the brethren is always heartwarming. The fact that George was baptized before his death made all the difference to Mariah and me, and I had the opportunity to preach about that at his funeral, which had some non-Christians in attendance. We have been able to have a regular Bible study with Phil and Rachel, the couple that I wrote about in the March field report. We were able to study with Guillermina (also mentioned in the last report) about becoming a disciple of Jesus. She has not been available the last couple of times that we were scheduled to meet, we don't know if she's struggling with making that commitment to Christ, so please lift her up in your prayers. Mariah has also been studying the Bible with Bernadette, the niece of Andy Alarcon, who has been a good influence on her and bringing her to church. The Friday night studies are continuing; we recently completed an in depth study on the nature of the New Testament church and the importance of being a part of it. A courageous 15-year-old sister named Cassie (whom Matt Steffen baptized) needs our prayers. She has taken to heart what we have studied about putting God's kingdom first and has been coming to partake of the Lord's Supper in spite of her non-Christian parents' opposition, but the situation has been very difficult for her. I enjoyed preaching at the Porterville congregation in March and the Hawthorne congregation this last Lord's day. Although this comes several months late I wanted to express what an honor it was to preach at the Tulsa New Years meeting. Mariah and I had never been to one before and were very edified and encouraged. We also enjoyed our visit with the Northwest 21 st Street congregation in Oklahoma City where I was honored to preach on December 30; they were most generous and hospitable.

Dario Estavillo, Philipines, March 31—We are doing

well and now ready prepared to attend the fellowship in Roxas, Isabela, In Ilocos Norte, we hired a bus with 65 sitting capacity and I don't know if it is enough for our accommodation. If not, we have other jeepneys to use. I am ready to present my lecture regarding politics and government. I terribly missed the lecture of bro. Kevin last January but nevertheless, I have researched enough for the benefit of those who will attend. The work also continues as the church is in peace. I, brother Maluga with three young people, brothers Joel Guillermo, Wilson Gaoaten, Jr and Alwin Aglamma has been from Eva, Calanasan, Apayao last Saturday. We were there last Thursday and Friday. The place has a good climate and probably cooler than Baguio City and is not polluted by smoke of different cars. The road to the place is as usual very hard and risky but the place is ripe to reap. We have Bible studies twice during the night where brother Maluga and I taught the words of God. We have less than twenty in attendance but is an ideal attendance for a place where it is not thickly populated. Brother Nelson Agresor and his wife, an elementary school teacher, happily accommodated us. We use her classroom in teaching the Bible. Though we have no baptism, they requested that we will go there regularly. They wanted to have a permanent preacher. I know this will be possible and upon our return, having a congregation in the area is not impossible. I had one restoration the month of March. There are also interesting Bible Studies in Boyon, Bacarra. We have such a healthy discussions with these people because they are members of Seventh Day Adventists and Pentecostal Group. It is very interesting work and hopefully, we will succeed in bringing the truth to these friends. God Bless.

James W. Kornegay Sr, 1543 Sid Mitchell Rd., Youngsville, N.C.—It has been a long time since I reported to the paper, I was privileged to attend the New Year's meeting at Crawfordville, FL, Oyster Bay congregation. It was a great meeting, Bro. Glen Ballard and Bro. Aaron Risner were in charge. They did a very good job, the building was full and we had some very good speakers which I enjoyed very much. We had 12 states represented. The congregation there is to be commended for their zeal and efforts to promote the cause of Christ. A young couple, a man and his wife, were added to the Lord's church. The year ended and new year began with singing and prayer. May God ever bless their efforts in the Lord's work. I have just returned home from Florida, meeting with the church at Dunnellon, where they have for eight years met in the home of Bro. Ron and Maxine Hays. The meeting was to start January 9th, but the new building was not ready, so we put off the meeting until February 10th. The first service Sunday morning we had 64 present and was glad to have visitors from Jacksonville, Ft. Myers, Longwood, FL, Ohio, W. VA, and MO for the dedication of the building Sunday the 10th at 5PM. We had a very good meeting with 3 baptisms and 6 confessions. The

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young men are doing a good job. From Ocala, FL take Rt. 200 toward Hernando go until you get to Rt. 491 take 491 about 2 miles, the church is on the left side. We would like to thank Bro. Ronny Wade, Alton Bailey and others who did so much in helping get financial support for land and building. To all churches and everyone that helped in anyway we appreciate it so much. The wife and I made our stay during the meeting with Bro. James and Sis. Hollie Mentz of Hernando. We thank them very much for their hospitality.

Saganty Lazarus, India, April 12—Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through our brethren, Brian Burns and Doug Edwards, the gospel, which is the aroma and power of God to save the lost, has been sounded greatly in different areas. Twenty-one souls were saved from the wrath of God by obeying the gospel and baptism for the remission of sins. The Lord blessed different congregations here with twenty-one new babies. The Lord added seven souls in Secunderabad church of Christ. By His grace, different congregations in India were strengthened through Bible studies, gospel meetings, house visits, answers to the wonderful questions from the Indian brethren, prayers, fellowships, exhortations, warnings from the Scriptures, corrections in worship services in different places, and knowing the needs of the congregations, preachers, and brethren, etc. We are very much thankful to the members at Goshen church of Christ for sending our beloved brethren to India. We had wonderful Bible studies in Secunderabad and Narasaraopet areas where many members were strengthened and restored. In gospel meetings, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ saved twenty-one souls in villages like Secunderabad, Narasaraopet, Vinukonda, and Parigiticharla areas. Many brethren in different areas asked questions from the Bible; our brethren answered patiently from the Bible itself. Many sisters in different areas came forward and shared their joy in the Lord because our brethren gave wonderful lessons from the Bible. We have recorded in audiotapes our brethren's messages so that afterwards we could hear again and again the wonderful lessons. The power of the gospel worked in a village called Vinukonda where our brother Brian Burns preached about "Jesus Christ Is Greater Than..." and the Lord has worked through this gospel and thirteen souls were saved and baptized at 11:00 P.M. In Secunderabadby, the grace of our God and Lord saved four Hindus through baptisms. This is the area right now where the church faces frequent threats for gathering in Hindu houses. We gave them baptism in night times because we have great problems in giving baptism in Hindu areas during day times. The Lord has listened to our fervent prayers and hard work and is blessing the Lord's church here amidst persecutions. We are thank-

ful for your prayers also. This time we had traveled to remote places and shared the gospel to many. Some came forward to take baptisms to be saved, but because of problems from their husbands, they were hindered to take baptisms. I hope the Lord will bless these souls also in the future as we teach them again and again. We have also visited Vipparla, where all people are illiterate and tribal people, and shared the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We met an old preacher in this area and encouraged this brother. Our brethren visited Hindu families to show that we all love them also. In some areas, we do not have power but still we continued our preaching. I hope the brethren enjoyed Indian food and saw historical places of India on the way to gospel meetings. Our brethren worshipped in two congregations in Secunderabad, Machabolarum and Chinnakamela, and understand the need for a church house in Machabolarum congregation, where the brethren were sitting outside the house, and after the brethren left the congregation at Machabolarum, I am now receiving threats for conducting prayers, gospel services, and worship services in my house through American brethren. So I explained the need for a church house for our congregation and I showed brethren four places where we can buy land for the church house and the cost of the lands. These four Hindu landlords are ready to sell them even for Christians for a church house. We believe that the church house will help us to be free from the threats and problems in gathering church houses from the house owners and Hindu husbands and avoid the problems of giving baptism in midnights. Our brethren have observed all these problems. We all have a great hope that the saints at Goshen church of Christ will stretch out their loving hands for the church house in Secunderabad congregation for the glory of God so that we can happily come together with no fear on our minds and worship at one place rather than moving in different houses and having problems in baptisms and constant threats. May the Lord help us to do all things for His glory. But we all decided to stand firm until our last breath. It is my privilege to give this report to the church at Goshen. We are all grateful and thankful to send our brethren to India. We can't count the benefits that we received from the brethren in terms of number. I am happy and I rejoice to work with our brethren in different places. I forgot my sleep and food while I was with the brethren for the Lord's church work in different places where many souls are lost because of vain worship. We all together shared the light of the gospel in these areas. Thanks for your help and cassette player. Please continue your prayers and encouragement for my work. Please continue your concern and compassion for poor churches here. We all love and pray for you. We see God's love in you on this earth.

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. LXXVI

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NO. 6

REFLECTIONS

By JERRY DICKINSON

"It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart." (Ecclesiastes 7:2) What a paradox! Solomon says it is better to go to a funeral than to a party! How can that be true? His explanation is that a funeral causes reflection. When we go to a party we enjoy the moment and do not reflect on either the past or the future. We just enjoy the present festivities. Ah, but at a funeral we pause to reflect on both the past and the future. We know, as he says, that death is the end of all men, and we lay it to heart. We think about our own mortality and reflect on our past and present life in view of death, judgment and eternity. It is indeed, then, better for our spiritual well being to go to a funeral than to a party.

I recently traveled to McAlester, Oklahoma to preach the funeral of sister Lee Ella Barnett and going to the house of mourning has certainly caused me to reflect back on the life of this good sister and my association with her and the church in McAlester. I thought it might be of value to share some of my reflections, especially with the younger readers of this journal. We need to be reminded of those who have gone before us and the stand others have taken, against great odds, in order that the church and the truth would not perish from the earth. I met Lee Ella thirty years ago when I moved to work with the church in McAlester. The church had begun in her parent's house when she was but a girl. Her parents, brother and sister Williams, along with brother and sister Helterbrand, worshipped at a church of Christ just west of McAlester near the little town of Stuart. This church used one cup in the communion and did not have Sunday School classes or women teachers.

Several families moved to the area and began to worship at the little church and it was not long before these newcomers convinced almost everyone that they should put in individual cups and Sunday School. The Williams and the Helterbrands told the brethren that they could not conscientiously accept these changes and additions. "Why change what we can all read plainly in the Bible?" was their question. They made it clear they could not go along with these unscriptural changes. They were then told, in so many

words, that they could just leave and go elsewhere because the cups and classes were going in. They did leave. They began to meet in the home of the Williams in McAlester. Later they purchased a small building on the corner of B and Grand and eventually built the building at C and Tyler, where the church meets to this day.

I have heard this same story repeated, with different names and places, again and again by a generation swiftly passing away. We of this generation need to reflect on these stories and pass them on to the generation coming behind us. All across this country the same thing happened over and over. Good brethren who could not conscientiously go along with changes to the divine pattern were told to get out. These brethren stood fast for their convictions and met in homes, rented storehouses, and dilapidated old buildings rather than go along with the crowd. Thank God for the Williams and Helterbrands in McAlester and countless other brethren who like they stood with unwavering courage for a thus saith the Lord! Do we have the same courage and conviction today? When I see and hear some of the changes brethren are proposing and embracing, even among us, I fear for the church and the future. Have we forgotten these old brethren and the heritage they have bequeathed us? It is time to reflect and remember, lest we let these truths and examples slip from our grasp.

And another thing! These old brethren stayed as far away as they could from the line. Do you know what line I am talking about? There is a line, sometimes a thin and not so easily defined line, that separates truth from error in worship, in modesty, in social activities, fellowship, etc. Some are always trying to see how close to the line they can get. The problem is when you operate close to the line, sooner or later you are going to step over the line. I fear some in our brotherhood have stepped over the line already. Why not stay a safe distance from the line. Why not just stick, not only to what we know the Bible clearly and unequivocally says about worship, modesty, women teachers, fellowship, etc. but on ground we all know is safe and secure. There is a danger in changing things just for change sake. And even more,

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Editorial

DISAPPOINTMENTS

By DON L. KING

In 2 John 8, 9, the record says: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." These words written in the long ago have startling application to us today. John uses the plural "yourselves" indicating that this was not written to a single individual but likely a congregation of Christians whom John, perhaps, personally knew. As with us today, some walk in truth and sincerity while a few are eventually proven to be deceivers. The many intervening years haven't changed the way humans conduct themselves. There are always disappointments as we make our way along.

In verse 9 John warns the group of those who are not content to remain within the safety of the "doctrine of Christ." (The teaching of Christ and His apostles) He flatly states that when such is the case the person has neither the Father nor the Son. In other words, such a man or woman does not enjoy the blessing or sanction of Heaven. It seems there are always false thinkers and teachers. They often see themselves as being far advanced in the area of knowledge. As we reflect over the years, it seems there have been several times when we have encountered brethren who considered themselves as advanced thinkers. One brother once remarked, "when you have advanced to the state to which I have arrived, you will see my point." In other words, we just hadn't grown sufficiently in knowledge to be aware of the great truths he had found. By the way, some of those "great truths" were that we should fellowship everyone who believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Never mind that they worshipped in some unscriptural way, used instrumental music, individual cups in the Lord's supper, Bible classes or even that they were members of some denomination!

The apostles denied the pretensions of such fellows. 2 John 8 and 9 plainly show that anyone who has advanced to the point that they are beyond the New Testament's plain teaching has advanced right out of Christianity! I recently read the statement that "our aim should be not to be advanced, but to abide in the doctrine of Christ." How true! The apostles were guided into "all truth" (John 16:13). This was certainly the case as John wrote the brethren and those "advanced thinkers" who advance the ideas that women can be involved in leading roles in the church, need to think again about I Corinthians 14:34, 35 and

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Please explain the difference between a cult, sect, and denomination. (IN)

Answer: A **cult** is far more difficult to define than many realize. Webster says that a cult is "a system of religious worship; devoted attachment to a person or principle etc." In his classic work *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, Ernst Troeltsch classifies religious groups in terms of church, sect, and cult. He says a cult is a "mystical or spiritual form of religion that appeals to intellectuals and the educated classes." On the other hand some view a "cult" as "groups that are considered heretical." The classic work representing this view is the book, *The Chaos of Cults* by Jan van Baalen. He classifies Christian Science, Mormonism, and Jehovah's Witnesses as all being cults. Many books on cults have in recent years concentrated on the allegedly fraudulent claims of the cults, the immoralities of their leaders, and the ways in which their followers are deceived. Brainwashing is a common accusation leveled at some cults. In these organizations mind control has led people, often in mass concert, to do strange things including even suicide. Often a cult will have a charismatic leader who is able to influence those under "his spell" and lead them at will. While most cults share these common characteristics, we should, in fairness, point out that every organization labeled a cult, is not necessarily one.

Sect: from the Greek "*hairesis*" meaning "a choosing" is translated sect throughout Acts except in Acts 24:14 where it is translated "heresy" in the A.V. According to Vine "it properly denotes a predilection either for a particular truth, or for a perversion of one, generally with the expectation of personal advantage; hence, a division and the formation of a party or sect in contrast to the uniting power of the truth." The Latin word *secta* means a party, school, faction. The term is often applied to groups that break away from existing religious bodies. As can be seen from Acts 24:14 early Christians were accused of being a sect. From the viewpoint of Jewish leaders these people had broken away from Judaism, thereby constituting a renegade group, or a sect. "Christianity was never a sect, is not a sect today; and Paul did not here refer to it as a sect" (H. Leo Boles). Walter Elwell in his book *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* says "Sociologists of religion have appropriated the term "sect" as a label for a specific type of religious movement...a sect is a formally organized religious body that arises in protest against and competition with the pervasive religion of a society." He goes on to say that the sect "demands a high degree of participation and a suitable display of individual loyalty and spiritual commitment." Most sociology textbooks point out that the life span of a sect is usually short, and that

many sects actually will eventually lose their sectarian character and acquire the status of a denomination.

Denomination: To denominate means to name or call. Denomination means "the act of naming, also a class or kind as of coins, having a specific name or value. A religious sect" Webster. Elwell says that "denominations are associations of congregations, though sometimes it might be said that congregations are localized subdivisions of denominations that have a common heritage." We generally think of denominations as religious groups, consisting of congregations, throughout the world such as Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal etc. etc. Elwell makes a very interesting comment when he says "Even though denominations within Protestantism have come to be the largest expression of organized Christianity beyond the level of the congregation, there has never been much theological reflection on denominationalism. A look at theology textbooks or church creeds confirms this. Probably the simplest explanation for this omission is that the Bible in no way envisages the organization of the church into denominations." Whether the writer realized it or not, he just gave the reason denominationalism is wrong. The Bible never intended that the church be divided. Nor that its members wear different names. Paul in 1 Cor. 1:10-12 condemned the church in Corinth for this very thing. Denominationalism or division was wrong then; it is now.

The difficulty in separating and distinguishing between a denomination, a sect, and a cult, is the fact that a denomination can also be and usually is a sect. It could also be a cult. The Church that Jesus built, on the other hand, can never be either. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808)

MISTAKES IN RELIGION

By RYAN J. CONNOR

In Matthew 22:23-33, Jesus encounters a religious group called the Sadducees. A number of religious groups existed at the time of Jesus' earthly ministry. At least five separate groups existed within the Jewish religion alone. The New Testament mentions four of these: the Pharisees; the Sadducees; the Herodians; and the Zealots. The Pharisees and Sadducees play a large role in the events of the New Testament, especially in the four gospels and the book of Acts.

The Sadducees come to Jesus with a question. The design of the question is obvious to the reader, as it was obvious to Jesus. It was a test. In another place, the Bible says, "Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven" (Matthew 16:1). Immediately after the discussion Jesus has with the Sadducees, the Bible says in Matthew 22:34-36, "But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them,

a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' 'Neither the Pharisees nor the Sadducees sincerely desire or even expect an answer to their questions. They come to Jesus only to test Him.

Apparently, the Sadducees know something about the teachings of Jesus. They know that He is preaching the gospel of the kingdom of heaven (See Matthew 4:17, 23). They know that He teaches the resurrection of the dead. So, they come to Him with a question concerning the resurrection of the dead. They intend to baffle Jesus, and so humiliate and discredit Him publicly. Nevertheless, it is the Sadducees who are silenced, and Jesus' teaching astonishes and amazes the multitudes.

Matthew points out the religious mistake which the Sadducees had made. He writes, "The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him..." (Matthew 22:23). They did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Therefore, they come to Jesus confident that He will be unable to answer their question. According to Acts 23:8, we understand that the Sadducees denied the existence of spirits and angels as well as the resurrection of the dead. Jesus responds to the Sadducees' failed ambush by exposing the two causes of their "mistaken" religious ideas: (1) they did not know the Scriptures; and (2) they did not know the power of God (Matthew 22:29).

To this day, these two factors are largely responsible for the multiplicity of mistakes in religion. On the one hand, take away the knowledge of the Scriptures and human beings walk blindly, groping in the dark. The prophet Jeremiah says, "O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). The Psalmist says of God's word, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path...the entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple" (Psalm 119:105; 130). On the other hand, take away a proper understanding of the power of God and man will forever limit God's promises to the measure of his own small ideas.

We may learn much from this teaching of Jesus. Religious ideas abound in our world today. We have far excelled the Greeks who begged to hear the Apostle Paul speak in Athens. Luke says, "For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21). The condition of the religious world today, by and large, fits this description. Interest in religion is on the rise. Visit the mega-book store in your area, and you will find bookshelf after bookshelf heavy laden with books on every religion in the world, from Judaism, Islam and Christianity to Eastern religions, the various "New Age" religions and even witch-craft. According to the Association of American Publishers, "the sales of books in the Bible, religion, and spirituality category shot up 59 percent between 1992 and 1994."

In our modern world, religion is on the market and people are shopping. The supply has simply risen to meet the demand.

It is not only in the realm of religious books and materials, but the number of religious institutions is on the rise as well. In 1990, the ninth edition of the *Handbook of Denominations in America* was published by Abingdon Press. It contains information on more than 220 religious denominations. Since its publication, denominations have continued to multiply rapidly. While Christianity is the religion professed by an overwhelming majority of Americans, a diverse range of beliefs, teachings and practices may be found within that group. This is a non-issue to many Americans who profess Christ. But to others it is a clear problem. Opponents to Christianity often point out the fact that it is difficult to find two Christians who agree on even the most basic tenets of the faith. We ought not avoid the issue, nor gloss over the divisions between those who profess Christ. Jesus prayed for unity and oneness among His disciples, but sadly division and confusion is the accepted standard of many who profess Christianity today.

As Jesus prays for His disciples in the garden, He says, "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:20-21). Jesus prays for the unity of His disciples. The basis of this unity is faith in the word of the Apostles. This word is available to us in the collected writings of the New Testament. Therefore, unity is possible only if we leave aside human opinions and traditions to follow the New Testament as our only standard of faith and practice. No creed, no confession of faith, no tradition will produce the unity for which Jesus prayed!

The apostle Paul writes, "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). Why is it, then, that various beliefs, teachings and practices exist among those who profess Christ? The prophet of God asks the question of the day, "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Unless we are prepared to accept relativism and reject the objective truth of God's word, then we must recognize that the teachings of Jesus and the apostles contained in the New Testament Scriptures have but one meaning. And until we unite upon the foundation of the New Testament Scriptures, we will not have true unity—the oneness for which Jesus prayed!

We must conclude that religious division is evidence of mistakes in religion. If we are all united upon the objective truth of the Scriptures, then religious division among those who profess Christ should not

exist. But such division does exist! Therefore, mistakes in religion have been made. As with the Sadducees, a failure to know the Scriptures and to know the power of God is largely responsible for the multiplicity of mistakes in religion today.

Not knowing the Scriptures is always involved in religious mistakes. The Sadducees claimed to know the Scriptures, and in a sense they did. Many of them were priests and scribes, who had a remarkable knowledge of the Scriptures. They could quote from memory long passages from the law and the prophets of the Old Testament. In Matthew 22, the Sadducees refer Jesus to the law of Moses. Their question specifically deals with a passage found in the book of Deuteronomy 25:5-10. So, it is not that the Sadducees are unfamiliar with the Scriptures. Nevertheless, they had somehow missed or ignored the Scriptures that emphatically affirm the resurrection of the dead and a future state. For example, in the book of Daniel 12:2, the Scripture says, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt." Modern religious groups who accept the Bible, but reject the resurrection of the dead and the existence of spirits have essentially made the same mistake that the Sadducees made.

The New Testament teaching on the subject is clear. In Acts 24:15, the Apostle Paul says, "...there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." In Acts 26:28, the rhetorical question is raised, "Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?" Anyone who professes Christ but denies the resurrection of the dead is religiously mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures.

The Sadducees approached the Scriptures with the preconceived idea that there is no resurrection of the dead. Therefore, they did not truly understand the Scriptures. Many times today, it is not unfamiliarity with the Scriptures, but a lack of understanding which creates religious mistakes. In his book, *How to Understand the Bible*, W. R. Palmer lists five factors which contribute to our misunderstanding of the Bible.

(1) **Preconceived opinion.** Often the mind is made up before the Bible facts are seen. This is the reason the Sadducees misunderstood the Scriptures. (2) **Wishful thinking.** We may desire so strongly that something be true that we come to believe it is true. For this reason, we rationalize our way through the Scriptures in search of only that which we hope to find. Not surprisingly, someone who goes to the Bible in order to find support for his belief often finds it. We may prove anything by using the Scriptures in this way. (3) **Generalization.** This is the fallacy of drawing sweeping conclusions from specific events or situations. You may have heard someone say, "Every time I wash my car it rains," or "The church is full of hypocrites," or "Preachers' kids always turn

out bad." These are all over-generalizations-sweeping conclusions based upon specific events. Sometimes, we misunderstand the Scriptures in the same way. We take a few isolated passages and make sweeping conclusions which are over-simplified and overgeneralized. We may use our generalization of one verse of Scripture to interpret the entire Bible. It is easy to see how misunderstanding may result from this method. (4) **Appeals to human authority.** This is the fallacy of adding weight to our interpretation of the Scriptures by appealing to what some great man, or some great human institution teaches. To some, it does not matter what the Bible says, if their preacher does not say it, then they will not believe it. Some religious groups seem to rely more on their creed book, or rules of order, than the holy word of God. (5) **Appeals to the popular.** This is the exceedingly strong motive better known as "going along with the crowd." Everybody is doing it, so it must be right. It is extremely difficult to resist popular opinion. We mistakenly assume that the majority cannot be wrong. Sadly, the majority has often been wrong. In Genesis 7:9, we read that God told a man named Noah to build a boat. He got on that boat in the minority, but when he got off that boat he was in the majority. The fact is, might does not make right! We must be willing to accept the truth of the Scriptures regardless of popular opinion.

All five of these factors are actually more specific phases of the general human weakness of prejudice. Prejudice, or the common spirit of bias and partiality to which all human beings are subject, more or less, is the basic reason for misunderstanding God's word. Many things create prejudice, and no one is completely free of prejudice. Nevertheless, a student of the Bible should possess a pure desire to arrive at the full truth of Scripture without having a single preference or opinion and without being disturbed by any feeling of affection or dislike. That is a tall order, but it is not impossible. The Apostle Paul writes, "...by revelation He [Christ] made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Ephesians 3:3-4). Again, the Apostle writes, "...do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17). Clearly, we may, and we must, understand what we read in the word of God.

Ignorance of the Scriptures is a recipe for disaster. The prophet Hosea cried out, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). In the spirit of professionalism and specialization, we may allow others to do the learning and understanding for us. Yet, it is simply not possible to know God's word without personally studying and understanding it for ourselves. Preachers, teachers, and church leaders may help us to know God's word, but they cannot know it for us. The Apostle Peter commands, "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge" (2 Peter

1:5).

The second reason Jesus offers for the religious mistake of the Sadducees is that *they did not know the power of God*. Even today, denying the power of God is often the cause of mistakes in religion. According to Acts 26:8, it seemed incredible to the Sadducees that God could raise the dead. This is similar to the common antisupernaturalism of our modern world. "I'll believe it when I see it," is the motto of our age. Ironically, the power of God is everywhere evident in the universe. And yet, people refuse to acknowledge the power of God in their lives.

The power of God is what saves us from our sins, according to Romans 1:16. The power of God is what will raise us from the dead, according to Romans 8:11. The power of God is what keeps and protects us until we receive the reward of a heavenly inheritance, according to I Peter 1:5. Without a knowledge of God's power, how can we know salvation and the hope of eternal life in heaven? Sadly, we today are sometimes not much different from the Sadducees. We want religion, a set of beliefs and values, a moral compass, but leave all that God stuff out. The Apostle Paul charged the people of his day, "For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom" (I Corinthians 1:22). The Jews of Paul's day said, "I'll believe it when I see it." The Greeks said, "I'll believe it when it fits my philosophy of life."

The Apostle Paul was a well educated and highly sophisticated world traveler. Nevertheless, he relied on the strength of the Lord. In Philippians 4:13, Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Once we realize that God is able to accomplish His word, then we may approach the Scriptures with faith, trusting the word of God as a faithful and true guide.

¹Cimino, Richard and Don Lattin. *Shopping for faith: American religion in the new millennium*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers. 1998. p. 4.

THE DANGERS OF PROSPERITY

By JIMMY VANNOY

Almost no one will admit that they are rich, but most Americans are rich compared to the rest of the world. We never have to be concerned about our basic needs: food, clothing and shelter, and we have so many luxuries that we have come to think of as necessities. Having traveled extensively in Russia and Mexico, I have learned what true poverty is, and most Americans are rich by comparison.

The nation of Israel was rich and prosperous during the days in which Amos wrote (about 750 BC), but just a few years later, in 722 BC, they were conquered by Assyria. Their cities were destroyed, and many of the people were killed. The Assyrians completely destroyed the nation and culture of Israel, and God allowed this to happen because their riches had caused

them to lose concern for pleasing Him. The people of Israel who were not killed by the invasion were sent to live in regions far from their homeland, and other people were moved into Israel. The Samaritans of the time when Jesus was on the earth were the descendants of these people.

It was the role of Amos to warn the people of the impending disaster, but they were not listening. The main reason they were complacent and without concern is because they were rich and lived in comfort and luxury. Amos wrote of their life style. "Who lie on beds of ivory, stretch out on your couches, eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall. Who sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments...who drink wine from bowls, and anoint yourselves with the best ointment." (Amos 6:4-6) They were so much like most Americans today, content and complacent in their lives of luxury and unwilling to hear the word of God and repent of their sins. Amos warned Israel, "Woe to you who are at ease in Zion." (Amos 6: 1) They were at ease in their comfortable lives, just like Americans today, refusing to consider the changes they needed to make to please God, thus opening themselves to punishment from Him on this earth and for eternity.

Being rich is an impediment to salvation that most people do not overcome. Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Matt. 19:23, 24) Whether Jesus was talking about a camel going through the actual eye of a needle or about a narrow gate beside larger gates in walled cities of that day for walking traffic called the "needle's eye", the idea is that it is very difficult for a rich man to be saved. The occasion that prompted this statement of Jesus was when a rich young ruler rejected the invitation of Jesus to give away his possessions and follow Him. "But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich." (Luke 18:23)

There are many reasons why it is difficult for the rich to be saved. The young ruler was lost because his possessions meant more to him than following Jesus. The more we have, the more attached we become to things of this world, and the more our priorities tend to turn away from the things of God. Jesus said, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matt. 6:19, 20) People with treasures on earth tend to focus on the things of this earth, bringing on themselves problems in this life and the loss of their eternal souls.

Just as Israel would not listen to the warnings of Amos because they were "at ease in Zion," so today most people refuse to consent to studying the Bible with one who asks them to do so because they are content and have no intention of changing their lives

to conform to the word of God.

Being prosperous presents temptations that many Christians will not be able to survive spiritually. Even if they continue to attend church regularly, their way of life becomes dictated by their riches. They do not spend time for the Lord because their time is spent making money and using the things their money buys. Most Christian in America could not be said to be putting God first in their lives (Matt. 6:33) and presenting their bodies as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1) simply because their riches take up their time, giving them little time to utilize for the Lord. We Americans have leisure time we could use for the Lord, but so many Christians are spending this time enjoying the benefits of their prosperity and not devoting their time to service to others. (Galatians 5:13) Many Christians in America will be lost eternally because of the complacency which comes with prosperity. Christians must realize the degree of devotion and sacrifice required to please God and that living the typical life of middle class prosperity will not be sufficient for the salvation of our souls. The souls of many Christians will be lost because of the dangers of being rich.

We need to take the advice of the Apostle Paul: "Command those who are rich in this world not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy." (I Timothy 6:17) The Psalmist said, "If riches increase, do not set your heart on them." (Psa. 62:10) When we are prosperous, it is easy to begin to think that it is because of our own resourcefulness and ingenuity. We begin to trust in our riches and in our ability to make money instead of trusting in God Who provides us all things, including our ability to earn money. One reason being rich is so dangerous to the soul is that Christians tend to lose the proper focus of their faith, trusting in themselves rather than in God to provide. We must learn to trust God both for our salvation and the physical needs of this life. Since God's grace is given to us on the basis of our faith (Eph. 2:8), loss of faith could mean the loss of our souls.

It is important to realize the danger of being rich, as we Americans are rich. It is not a sin to be rich, but we need to be aware of the pitfalls that can result from prosperity, potentially bringing us suffering in this life, as well as eternal condemnation.

"THE SIMPLE TRUTH ABOUT GAMBLING"

By CECIL SMITH

The article entitled: *What the Gambling Industry Won't Tell You, You're not Just Losing. You're Being Taken* ran in the *Readers Digest*. I was amazed at one of the first statements made in this article. The writer stated of the game of Keno that the odds of hitting it rich or hitting the "ten spot" are nine million

to one. Dying from a dog bite is 60 times more likely. "Despite those odds," he added, "a \$2 bet usually pays off at only \$50,000 to \$200,000." If I understand these odds, this means that for every eighteen million dollars spent some \$50,000 to \$200,000 dollars are paid out, leaving the casino with seventeen million, eight hundred thousand dollars. Any way you look at this, only the casino stands to win. George Washington once described this avarice, "the brother of iniquity, and the father of mischief."

While the word "gamble" is not found within God's Word, there are many biblical principles that teach us that gambling is wrong. There are those who rise up from time to time and argue for their right to gamble by saying, "Well, you can't show me in the Bible where it says, Thou shall not gamble." We could very well argue, "Well, you can't show me in the Bible where it says, Thou shalt not be a slave owner." The point is, the principles of New Testament Christianity will always abolish slavery. In fact, in practically every country where the doctrine of Christ has been preached, slavery has eventually been abolished. Paul stated, "Let each esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3). Certainly this principle, when followed, will cause anyone who holds slaves to free them. The very next verse states, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (2:4). Paul very clearly let it be known that we are not to be selfish people, we are to look out for those around us. In fact he goes on to add "Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ." To my knowledge, no one has ever accused Jesus of being a slave owner or of physically forcing people to do his will. Instead, we see a Savior who was so unselfish and so loving that he died upon the cross for you and me while we were still in our sins. The point is, the principles of these verses will not only abolish slavery, they will also abolish gambling when they are implemented into our lives. They will turn each of us into willing servants of those around us, who look not after our own interests but the interests of others.

As we can see from the statistics of the above quoted article, gambling also is a violation of good stewardship. Jesus expects us to be good stewards of the blessings he has bestowed upon us. I wonder how many people you have known who were killed by a dog bite. I know of those who have been bitten by dogs, but very seldom do we hear of anyone dying from such. Yet, this is 60 times more likely to occur than hitting it rich while playing the game of Keno. I'm sure the same is true across the board when it comes to gambling as study after study has shown. If participating in such is good stewardship, then pray, tell me what would constitute poor stewardship? If throwing two or three dollars into the state lottery occasionally is a proper use of the money the Lord has blessed us with, then throwing ten or more into the local dump should prove to be even more

rewarding! Our duty in life is to be like Christ. Can we even begin to imagine him gambling, and encouraging his followers to do the same? Gambling is certainly not good stewardship, and thus it is a violation of God's Holy Will. That, my friends, is "the simple truth about gambling." – *From The Christian Informer.*

REFLECTIONS

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I worry about some who change things to be more "spiritual." The sure way to be "spiritual" is to do Bible things in Bible ways, a lesson we learned from our elders a long time ago.

I have also reflected on the fact that our older brethren, like Lee Ella Barnett, worried about the church and their own influence on others. Sister Lee Ella did not cut her hair. She had beautiful uncut hair that she always had meticulously groomed. She was always dressed modestly and several, at the funeral, said the same thing about her. "She always looked like a lady!" The last time I visited with her she had lost most of her hair due to chemotherapy. She apologized because her hair was gone and said she knew the Lord understood but it still bothered her. I assured her, of course, that the Lord did indeed understand, but at least, I thought to myself, it bothers her. Some cut off their hair with nary a worry or tinge of conscience. Again, she told everyone who came to see her before she died that she was sorry she could not be at church. She was so sick but she still wanted to be at church. When she was well she was there every service, bar none. I pray the Lord will raise up replacements on earth for these old stalwart saints who are swiftly passing away from our view.

Maybe, I reflected at last, the reason so often many are not as convicted and devoted as these old saints is because we have not faced the tests they faced. We have taken our heritage for granted. We have forgotten the price and the hardships others paid so we could worship in our comfortable buildings. Maybe the reason we think we must alter the work and worship of the church so we can feel more "spiritual" is because we have had it too easy. Ease and lethargy are certainly the enemies of spirituality. We need to do some serious reflecting! Are we really convicted about the Bible pattern for the communion, the role of women in the public work of the church, and maintaining personal and doctrinal purity? Do we have a conscience against anything? Would we be willing to stand all alone for what we hold to be the truth? As this older generation continues to pass from this earthly sphere it becomes the task and duty of we, the living, to pick up the mantle and carry on

the fight. We must hold the line! We do not want to let the Lord down, that is for sure, but we also want to make sure we live up to the heritage of conviction and courage bequeathed to us by those gone before. My dear brethren, let us stop and reflect.

EDITORIAL

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I Timothy 2:11,12, etc. The Bible still reads the same as when the apostles wrote. Anyone who fancies that he, or she, is able to discover more wonderful things about the teaching, communion, music in the church, fellowship, etc., than those eternal truths revealed in the New Testament are very much mistaken. 2 John 8, 9 proves that authority in the Christian religion is limited to the things revealed in the New Testament. If everyone agreed with this, much of what is practiced in religion today would be summarily thrown out. Brethren, we had better wake up and realize that not only are we drifting but also we have, in fact, drifted. We must realize that first comes the false teacher advocating what he cannot read. If he, or she, is not disciplined it will not be long before their false doctrine becomes accepted in some quarters. Division will inevitably follow at some point.

Advanced thinkers have decided that women can be much more involved in teaching the Bible than we have ever read in the Scriptures. This has caused a great deal of trouble and unrest among watchful brethren who are concerned for the future, and well we should be. This matter is, perhaps, the most significant problem we have encountered in several decades. How significant is it? Enough so that the body of Christ could once again be torn asunder by ugly division unless brethren everywhere rise up and fight this new liberal trend on every hand. It is past time for all of us to be preaching the doctrine of Christ regarding the teaching and other things as well. As long as God's people are uninformed and ignorant, we are especially vulnerable.

We realize that much has been written in this journal about women teachers in recent months. Thank God for that! The July issue is planned to be a special issue entirely devoted to the various aspects of the subject. We are printing a much larger number so that these can be available to all of you. May we suggest that our readers consider subscribing for friends who need this teaching? Every congregation could benefit from having a goodly number of the special issue available in the tract racks, etc. If we all put our "shoulders to the wheel" so to speak, maybe we can deal Satan defeat in this. Let us hear from you soon.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Special July Issue

We plan to publish a special issue for the July paper. The topic will be regarding women teachers. A number of capable preachers have agreed to write on several topics. You have noticed several articles in the *Old Paths Advocate* recently on women teachers. There is great interest about this matter. Your special issue July paper will come in the mail as always. However, we have had several thousand extra copies printed so they can be placed in tract racks, etc. in church buildings. We hope to have these available by the time the 4th of July meetings take place. Single copies will be 75 cents each or \$45.00 per hundred. This subject is of vital importance and they will sell fast so plan to take them home with you from the meeting. DLK

Lebanon 4th Of July Meeting

Lord willing, the 2002 Lebanon 4th of July Meeting will be held June 26th thru the evening of July 3rd. Services will be at 7:30 PM on Wednesday the 26th and Thursday the 27th at the Lebanon church building. Friday, June 28th services will be held at the Cowan Civic Center at 10:00 each morning and 7:30 each evening. Kevin Presley and Greg Gay will conduct this year's meeting. As usual, the Lee's Summit brethren are hosting the meeting and are looking forward to big crowds and a great meeting.

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 God is superior to all other obligations. (Acts 5:29; Matthew 22:37)

2. My God in the Bible forbids that I engage in carnal warfare in the following references: "Put up thy sword," "Tor all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matthew 26:52) Jesus "My Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36) "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal." (2 Corinthians 10:3, 4) "Love your enemies." (Matthew 5:44); "Turn the other cheek." (Matthew 5:39) "Recompense to no man evil for evil." (Romans 12:17)

3. To enter any military branch or service, combatant or non combatant, I would be compelled to "swear" or take an oath which the Bible forbids. Jesus said, "Swear not at all" (Matthew 5:34)

4. To enter any branch of the military I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden. Paul wrote: "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers." (2 Corinthians 6:14)

5. To be in any branch of the military service in any way I would have to be a part of the organization and would, therefore, have fellowship in the service, but

such is forbidden. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Ephesians 5:11)

6. To serve in the military service in any way would deprive me of obeying the command to assemble on the Lord's day for worship in the Bible way, 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 serve in the military service in any branch and for these reasons I authorize my name to be published in support of the above principles.

1. **Lauren Nichols**, 10424 Exter Ave., Yukon, OK 73099

2. **Derek Nichols**, 10424 Exter Ave., Yukon, OK 73099

3. **Andrea Christine Cox**, 713 Bodega Bay Dr., Keller, TX 76248

4. **Melissa Jayne Cox**, 713 Bodega Bay Dr., Keller, TX 76248

5. **Eric Matthew Cox**, 713 Bodega Bay Dr., Keller, TX 76248

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7. **Stephen Harris**, 3838 Butterfield Rd., San Angelo, TX 76904

8. **Jeff Harris**, 3838 Butterfield Rd., San Angelo, TX 76904

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19. **Melissa L. Young**, 11550 Hwy 32, Lebanon, MO 65536

20. **Breanna Storm**, 734 N. Oak Grove Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-2368

21. **Joey Woodard**, California

22. **Steven Winchester**, California

OUR DEPARTED

GUINN—Patricia Olevia Guinn was born August 16, 1935 to Lloyd and Ardilla Prince. She died March 24, 2002 at the age of 66 at a local Ada hospital. She

is survived by: her husband George; son Floyd; daughters Etta Cavazos, Roxine Littlefield, and Carol Wainscott; sisters Dorothy Adams, Wilma Jordan, and Zoria Dougherty; brothers Ernest Prince, David Prince, Richard Prince and James Prince. I had known Olevia for many years and was honored that she requested I conduct her funeral services. She battled painful illness for many years, but was a source of inspiration and spiritual stability for her family. A large crowd gathered to pay their respects at the funeral service and singing was provided by members from the Ada and OKC area congregations.—Carl M. Johnson

SELBY—Aline Selby was a member of the Stony Point Church of Christ in Kansas City, KS. She was born at Ash Flat, Arkansas April 14, 1918 and lived in the Kansas City area for 45 years before her passing March 26, 2002. Aline was baptized by Chester King in 1974. She was preceded in death by her husband, Jay Selby in 1989. Surviving her passing are three sons, Tom Selby of Lenexa, KS, Lee Selby of Gladstone, MO, Terry Selby of Idaho Springs, CO., and two daughters, Betty Wilson of Grandview, MO and Wanda Shankle of Carrolton, MO. On one of our last visits with her in the nursing home she said, “I hope I can go to church one more time,” but her wish was not fulfilled because of failing health. Aline loved the church and enjoyed being with other Christians. It was my honor to officiate in the memorial service for this good woman.—Paul O. Nichols

STEWART—Lawrence O. Stewart was born February 7, 1957 and departed this life December 14, 2001 after a short battle with cancer. Larry was man whose faith and attitude impacted everyone he met. Without saying a word, his expressive eyes and smile were a tribute to the love of Christ. After moving to Missouri from California, Larry was a member of the congregation at 85th and Euclid in Kansas City. Upon his arrival, everyone instantly fell in love with him. While his death saddened us, his faith sustained us. Until the very end, Larry reminded us he was ready to meet his Lord. Perhaps what I will remember most is the final hours before Larry’s death as he sat with an “out of duty member” and in his usual kind and quiet manner reminded this “soul” that he needed to return to Jesus. While Larry never taught a sermon, never led a public prayer, or never took an active public leadership role, he nevertheless took an interest in those who had strayed from the church. Larry leaves behind his wife, Karen Stewart; two sons, Lawrence Jr. and Anthony Stewart; and a host of relatives and friends who survive experience an unspeakable void. However, we at the 85th and Euclid congregation give praise to God for this man and the battle he won over cancer. During his illness, the congregation became even closer to one another and to the Lord. James certainly had it right when he said,

“The trying of our faith worketh patience.” It was the privilege of this writer to assist in the service of our dear brother.—Mike Criswell

MORROW—Robert Wayne Morrow, “Bob” passed away on Lord’s day, March 3, 2002 in Modesto California. His passing was unexpected, sudden, and very sad to the family and brethren. He leaves behind his Christian wife Billye Agnew Morrow; two sons, Derron and Lance, both of Escalon; one daughter, Candy Cutter of Crescent, Oklahoma, nine grandchildren, brethren and friends. Bob was born in Los Angeles, California March 28, 1934 to Floyd and Vida Morrow. He was raised in a Christian home that believed and lived by the Bible. If you were acquainted with his mother Vida, you can understand the dedication he was taught concerning salvation, the Church, and godly living. Bob obeyed the gospel early in life and as a child attended services at the congregation in Montebella, Ca. Later the family were members of the congregation in east Los Angeles meeting at Siskiyou St. The history of these two congregations is well known, and from their foresight and love of the cause of Christ the gospel was sent out to the State of California and elsewhere. Bob married Billye in the late fifties. They remained faithful to each other until death parted them, being married for over forty years. Bob and Billye were members of the congregation in Covina for many years, then, moved to Manteca, Escalon, where Billye still lives. Bob taught school in Manteca High until his retirement. When we established the church in Turlock, Bob was with us from the first day. For twenty-one years we met together, worked together, associated together, remaining close as brethren all the years. At his retirement Bob was meeting with the Manteca congregation. He was a regular at the Sulphur, OK meeting, and I am sure he will be missed. Their home was hospitable, gracious, loving and kind. When you visited Bob and Billye, you “were at home.” Bob leaves his only sister Sue. She is the last one living of the Morrow family. Our love and sympathy extend to her, Billye his wife, the children and grandchildren, the brethren in Manteca. Bob is missed very much. He was my kind friend since we were children. I was privileged to conduct the memorial service along with Glane Harris, Ivan Costa who led the beautiful singing, in the Burwood cemetery, Escalon. Brother Don McCord, long time friend and gospel preacher was not able to come to have a part in the service. May God bless the family with peace and comfort in days to come. We will meet again on the other side where eternal life awaits us all that love his appearing.—Richard De Gough

PHELPS—J.T. Phelps was born in Reading, OH December 23, 1926. He died at the Rockcastle Hospital in Mt. Vernon, KY Lord’s Day April 28, 2002. He was the son of George and Martha (Kirby)

Phelps. J.T. was retired from the Jefferson-Smurfit Co. working there as a fork-lift operator. He was a veteran of WWII. He later enlisted in the army of Christ and served as a good soldier, being a member of the congregation meeting at Blue Springs, KY. J.T. leaves behind his much loved and devoted wife Jonett (McClure). One son; Gregory and wife Tammy, Three daughters; Gloria Robbins and husband Donnie, Gail Jones and husband Mike, Gilda Sowder and husband James. There are five brothers: Earl, Robert E., Edward, Conley, and Denver, and one sister, Doris Palmer. In addition, there are 14 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Preceding him in death are his parents and 2 sisters, Arlene Bean and Mildred Childress. J.T. was a Bible reading and Bible loving man. There was absolutely no foolishness when it came to scriptural teaching. Since 1991 he had recording the times he read through the NT which numbered 85. He loved good preaching and singing. Through the years he has been a great encouragement to preachers of the gospel, and to me especially. Looking back, I shudder to think of my life without his part in it. A standing room only crowd from various states and communities (including several preachers) gathered to pay respects to this good man. Singing was by members of the Blue Springs congregation. I tried to speak words of comfort and warning to family and friends.—Barney Owens



Ed Bullard, Rt. 1, Box 26, Tupelo, OK 74572—We have just closed a meeting at Legal, OK with several speakers doing the preaching; Buck Thetford, Gene Hopkins, Eddie Bullard, Ed Bullard, Larry Combs, Buddy Dismuke and James Prince with visitors at every service. We had three digressive families come from Kiowa, OK and many others from the area. Sometimes when some of our preachers make their field reports, they comment that they had no visible results. Ezekiel 3:17, 21 tells us if we warn the lost without results, we have still saved ourselves; therefore, we believe we have had results at every service. Our speakers all did a great job teaching the gospel with love and simplicity. We had visible results because the truth was taught. Each night after the services, we all gathered at the home of A.F. and Aloma Dell Curtis for visits and fellowship. Just two years ago, I baptized these two after we finished a meeting like this one with various speakers each service. The hospitality was superb. What an asset these two have become to the Church at Legal.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Ln., W. Chester, OH 45069—Recently it was my pleasure to be with the congregation meeting in Atwater, CA. Interest was very

good, with a few outsiders attending. The spirits of the church were excellent. I owe a debt of gratitude to Richard and Glenda DeGough for allowing me to reside with them and seeing that I had transportation to and from each service. Our spring meeting here was with Ron Courter. Due to recent illness we feared he might not be able to come, but near the time to begin, he made the decision to venture it. He was not up to full strength, yet able to conduct each service with zeal. Barbara's nursing kept him as strong as possible. Meetings are: May 11-19 with Golden, OK, June 9-16 Huntsville, AR, July 13-21 Mt. Grove, MO, Aug 11 -18 Earlytown, AL.

Joshua Miller, P.O. Box 764, Glendora, CA, 91740, e-mail: josh1477@juno.com—In regards to items mentioned in the last submitted report, Mariah and I are continuing to study with Phil and Rachel, and Mariah is continuing to study with Bernadette who has been regularly attending worship services with her uncle Andy. The heinous scandal of widespread pedophilia among Catholic priests has opened some doors for discussion about New Testament Christianity versus the doctrines of men. I have devised a new survey related to that issue that has met with some openness at Mt. SAC college, as a fair number of Catholics have experienced some disillusionment and are questioning their faith. My hope and prayer is that the contacts made through this survey will result in fruitful Bible studies and attendance at the Covina church. Recently a young Catholic lady named Rose that I studied with at Citrus college came to our morning service which was encouraging. The Covina and Glendora Farmer's Markets have reopened and Mariah and I are planning to resume our outreach there by late May or the first week of June. I held my first gospel meeting at Tehachapi during the last weekend of April. While I was disappointed that none of the people we invited through door knocking came, I was glad that we had one Mormon visitor and a man from the digressive church of Christ. We enjoyed our visit with the Tehachapi church and admire the effort they are making to reach out to their community.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, May 3—We have had sickness in the congregation, with several taking tests for one thing and another. However, we have not had so much flu sickness as is common here in the cold weather season. One of our older members passed away recently. Sister Aline Selby was a part of this congregation since 1974. We have a number of young people, men and women, who are faithful and strong and are a good example in their church attendance. The men take part in the services in any way they are asked to participate. This gives us hope for the church in the future. Three of our members are getting married this year. All are marrying Christians. We look forward to our meeting in June with Richard DeGough of Hughson, CA. The Lord willing, I will be in meetings at Sentinal, OK, July 14-21; Valliant, OK, Aug. 11-18; Washington, OK, Sept. 15-22; Lawrenceburg, TN (Frank St.), Oct. 25-27. May the Lord bless all our righteous efforts.

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Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42503, (606) 678-4347, May 12, 2002—The month of April found us in Grassy Forks, TN and Ada, OK. I thoroughly enjoyed both meetings. In TN, I stayed with Wilson and Kathy Messer. As expected, they made me feel right at home (except when Wilson started talking about going to visit those snake handlers in them there hills of TN.) At that point, I felt maybe I had worn out my welcome. It was so good to see old friends in Ada. Having made my home there for so long, it was good to be back. It makes you remember with great fondness. I do have so many loved ones there. Bro. Johnny Elmore and Richard Frizzell supported our meeting and it was an honor to have both of them. I'm currently starting a meeting at Fremont, CA. We're off to a good start and looking forward to a good meeting. Bro. Brandon Stephens did an exceptional job preaching for us at home during his meeting in April. We highly recommend him in the Lord's work. His lovely wife, Kelly, is a great help and support to him. I wish them both great success in their work. Between all that I also was able to hear Don McCord and George Battey in our area. Both preached great sermons. In June, I'll be with the church at Capitol Hill, OK (June 21-30). In July I'll be at Henryetta, OK (July 14-21) and Muskogee, OK (July 24-28). May God bless you in his service.

Bruce Roebuck, P.O. Box 209, Mountain Home, AR, 72654, broebuck@mtnhome.com, May 9—The "meeting season" is in full swing and we are enjoying conducting and attending the meetings. In March I conducted a meeting in Washington, OK. The meeting produced good crowds and we enjoyed seeing old friends again. While there I stayed in the home of Brandon and Kelly Stephens. Since my family was not able to go on the trip I especially appreciate the efforts they went to make me feel right at home. Brandon is a faithful preacher and we love him for his works sake. April 15-21 we enjoyed a good meeting at home with Kevin Presley. The preaching was timely, attendance was good, and the meeting closed with two confessions. A special treat for us was to help break in the new baby. In addition we've had Joe Hisle and Jerry Dickinson in the area doing some fine preaching. Last night we began a meeting in Waterloo, LA. The house was full and we expect a good meeting the rest of the week. The remainder of our schedule looks like this: West Monroe, LA June 9-16, Dothan AL July 10-14, Ratliff City OK July 30-Aug. 4, Springfield MO (Mission Hills) Aug. 11-18, Iuka AR Sept. 13-15, Jacksonville FL Sept. 25-29. May the Lord bless and keep us in his care.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail old_paths@juno.com, May 13—We closed

a very enjoyable meeting at the Napoleon, AL congregation yesterday. For many years they have had a homecoming meeting on the first two Sundays in May. Brother Lynwood Smith held it for over forty years and is, naturally, held in the highest esteem by the brethren there. Folks come from many places to remember the old days and worship together once more. This year the attendance was, as usual, great. By the last Lord's day the building was completely full. After a wonderful lunch prepared by sisters who went all out, we had a good singing using the new song book which had been received only days before. It had been 26 years since I had preached there and it was good to go back. We recall having gone there as a boy when my father held meetings and singing schools for them. It was refreshing to see a number of young people there. We made our home with Ronnie and Brenda Prince and were treated in a very hospitable manner. We appreciate the hospitality of all those with whom we were able to visit and have meals. We arrived home safe and look forward to attending our meeting, this week, with Doug Hawkins at Fremont and then the Memorial Day meeting at Turlock, CA with Ronny Wade. Our next will be at Midland, TX in June just before the 4th of July meetings. Lord bless the church.

Richard L. Frizzell Sr., Rt. 5 Box 376, ADA, OK. 74820, April 28, 2002—It has been some time since my last report to *OPA*. I am still working in the Lord's vineyard. Since my last report one has been baptized into Christ. And one has been restored. Both of these men were 80 plus years old, may God richly bless them. I have preached one or more times in TX, OK, AR, TN, & OH. It was good to stay one night with Bro. & Sis Morris Reynolds, Dover, AR. Then to White Bluff, TN, where I stayed with Bro & Sis M.R. Kimbro. Then I was able to attend one night of Bro. George Battey's meeting at Bowling Green, KY. It was good to visit with him. Then to Linnville, OH where I just closed a seven day meeting last Lord's day April 21st. The meeting was good, we had some Baptist people come to the meeting, also digressive brethren came and some local non-members came. We did not have a very good turn out from local churches in the area. Brethren, where there are 4 or 5 congregations close together, no two of these should have their meetings at the same time. Churches need to work together so their meeting do not interfere with each other. I go next to Wynnewood, OK, Jacksboro, TX, Lubbock, TX, Tucson, AR, Covina, CA, Yuba City, CA, Auburn, CA, and Clovis, CA. I look forward to preaching the gospel in all of these places and the 4th of July meeting in OK and then to Alaska the month of August. God bless the brotherhood. Please pray for me.

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. 7

MAY WOMEN TEACH IN PUBLIC?

BY JOHNNY ELMORE

The clarity of Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 14:34-36 has convinced many people that women must not speak in the church (assembly), but some of these same people are not convinced that women are forbidden to speak publicly. What about it? May women teach in a public capacity, so long as it is not a church service or a service called by the church? If so, may women teach on the radio, on television, or a street corner somewhere before hundreds of people? I maintain that when a woman teaches publicly, she violates the Scriptures by usurping the authority God gave to men. The apostle Paul wrote: “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” (1 Timothy 2:11,12). Women are not allowed to teach publicly. The word “teach” is from the Greek word “*didasko*,” defined by Thayer “to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses.” Women are not allowed to usurp authority over the man. Women are to be in silence. So says the apostle Paul. Those who want to limit 1 Timothy 2:11,12 to church services have no scripture to keep women from teaching on the air or the street corner.

Some want 1 Timothy 2:12 to mean, “I suffer not a woman to teach over the man,” and they, accordingly, allow women to teach publicly in classrooms, but do not allow her to “teach over the man,” whatever that means. But that is not what Paul says in 1 Timothy 2:12! The apostle says, “But I suffer not (I permit not, ASV), a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” The word, “nor,” is from “*oude*” in the original Greek and Thayer describes it as a negative disjunctive conjunction and states that it “places side by side things that are equal and mutually exclude each other” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 461). Everett Ferguson, professor emeritus of Bible at Abilene Christian University, admitted in the September, 2001 issue of *The Christian Chronicle*: “Where the full construction with *alla* (‘but’) occurs, both of the first two items are negated and the following positive statement carries the weight of the meaning. An example is Galatians 1:1-apostleship came neither ‘from man’ nor ‘through man’ but through Christ and God. According to this parallel, the command in 1 Timothy 2:12 is for women not to be in positions of teaching or domination of a man but to be quiet learners” (p. 32).

Usurping Authority

What does it mean to “usurp authority”? *Strong’s Greek Dictionary of the New Testament* defines it “to act of oneself” (p. 17). *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* states: “Later it came to denote one who acts on his own authority; hence, to exercise

authority, dominion” (p. 90). Some might argue that husbands, elders, young boys or other women granted them the authority, but since it puts the woman in an authority role, a role God has reserved for men, it usurps authority from God’s viewpoint. A reading of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 should convince us that God placed leadership and authority in the hands of men. All of the apostles Jesus chose were men, and later all of those chosen to be evangelists and teachers were men. All of the elders and deacons were men. There are no examples of women teaching or praying in public. God clearly placed men rather than women in leadership roles.

What Is Public Teaching?

Many churches feel that it is private teaching when women do their teaching in classrooms. However, when the church calls a group together, that group constitutes a “called” church assembly; therefore, Bible classes are “called” assemblies of the church. They then advertise these classes and invite the public. Everyone in each age group is invited to attend. This is clearly public teaching.

The apostle Paul told the Ephesians that he had taught them “publicly, and from house to house” (Acts 20:20). Since Bible class teaching is not “house to house” teaching, it must be public teaching. Publicly means “in public places, in view of all,” according to Thayer (p. 132). If Bible class teaching were truly private, women would be allowed to teach men, as Priscilla did in Acts 18:26, but that is strictly forbidden by Bible class advocates. We ask, “Why?”

Private Teaching

There are others who feel that so long as the church does not arrange biblical instruction and only one particular age or mental group has been invited, it is private teaching. Suppose a woman takes it upon herself to rent a room and invite only women of a certain age to hear her biblical lectures—would that be private? Look at the example of Joseph and Mary when Joseph erroneously thought Mary guilty of immorality. Matthew records: “Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily” (Matthew 1:19). Would it have been a private affair if Joseph had invited all the women Mary’s age to attend the putting away? And look at the case of Herod and the wise men. Matthew records, “Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared” (Matthew 2:7). Question: Would it have been private if Herod had called all the men in their age bracket? Question: How many women could be invited to such “private teaching”? If eighty could be invited, could eight hundred be invited? If eight hundred could be invited, could

eight thousand be invited? And if it is truly private teaching, could a man sit in on it? To answer these questions is to see the folly of calling such "private" teaching.

Women Are To Teach

I am aware of the passage in Titus 2:3 in which aged women are instructed to be "teachers of good things." I am aware also that the phrase in the original text contains a form of the word "*didasko*." However, in verses 4 and 5, we see the nature of the "good things" that the aged women are to teach. The apostle says, "That they may teach 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, that the word of God be not blasphemed." The word "teach" in verse 4 is rendered in the Revised Version "to train." Both Vincent and Robertson say that the word means "to discipline." This type of teaching cannot be done in thirty minutes a week. It is the kind of teaching done by word, example, and influence from day to day. This command to teach is not fulfilled by a lecture in a classroom, but even if it were, it is something that is demanded of all aged women in a congregation and not just one aged woman.

Charles John Ellicott, in *The Layman's Handy Commentary*, brings out the sense of the phrase, "teachers of good things," when he comments: "This does not mean that these aged women should occupy the place of public instructresses, but that they should, by here and there speaking a kind warning word, and, better still, by the golden silence of a useful honoured life, teach their younger sisters lessons of truth and faith and love" (Titus, p. 19). About the kind of teaching anticipated, he says, "Such a reformation, not only in the discipline of the church, but also in the individual life and conversation, as St. Paul desired to see in Crete, would never be brought about by a sermon, or even by many sermons, however eloquent and earnest, from Titus. It would be a matter requiring long time and patience, and would, as observed above, rather follow as the result of patient individual effort and holy example" (p. 20). Also, in *Ellicott's Commentaries, Critical and Grammatical*, he quotes the venerable Beza as saying on "teachers of good things": "Not by public teaching, but as the context implies by its specifications, in domestic privacy" (p. 200).

Women may teach anyone privately, informally, or in an individual capacity. Where women are allowed to teach, they may teach other women (Titus 2:3,4), children (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15), or men (Acts 18:26), but where they are not allowed to teach, and that is publicly, they may teach no one. I have love and admiration for women who zealously serve God without stepping out of their God-given roles. May God bless them and may the church have more of them.

LET YOUR WOMEN KEEP SILENT

(1 CORINTHIANS 14:34-35)

By GEORGE BATTEY

The focus of this article is to examine three pertinent questions regarding 1 Corinthians 14:34-35: (1) Is this passage limited strictly to first century events involving miraculous gifts? In other words, when miraculous gifts ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-9), would these instructions become obsolete? (2) Are these instructions restricted to the wives of the prophets? (3) Is this passage purely cultural with no universal application?

The Miraculous Issue

First, let us consider the issue of miraculous gifts. Is 1

Corinthians 14:34-35 limited only to a time when miraculous powers were prevalent?

Miraculous powers were certainly present in the congregation at Corinth (see 12:1-11 for a list of nine supernatural gifts present in the congregation). The members at Corinth were each seeking to have the "*best gifts*" (12:31). Verse 31 can be translated either as an imperative mood (a command) or as an indicative mood (statement of fact), for both the imperative and indicative endings look identical. Only the context can determine which translation to use. If taken as an imperative, verse 31 would be a command to brethren, "*Earnestly desire the best gifts*," which would seem to be exactly what the Corinthians were already doing. Translating this as a command does not seem to make sense in a congregation which was already being torn asunder by brethren already doing exactly that - i.e. each seeking to have the very best. If taken as an indicative, verse 31 would simply be a statement, "*You are earnestly desiring the best gifts, but I show you a more excellent way*." This seems more plausible and fits the context better. Paul was merely stating what they were actually doing, "*Yet I show you a more excellent way*," - i.e. he would now explain how they ought to be acting.

The thirteenth chapter declares plainly that miraculous powers would end when the "perfect" comes (13:8-10). According to 13:8, the gifts of prophecies, tongues, and knowledge would cease. Incidentally, the "*knowledge*" mentioned is not "ordinary" knowledge, but miraculous knowledge (see 12:10) which was gained without study and forethought (see Mt. 10:19-20). So, with the coming of the "*perfect*," men would no longer be able to speak in languages they had never studied, nor preach without giving "forethought." The "*perfect*" thing that was on the horizon, which would replace miraculous gifts, was the "mirror" of verse 12. At that time, the New Testament scriptures were like a mirror (polished metal) which was not completed. As time went on, the mirror became more and more polished. Men began to see themselves and life as God saw things. The more the scriptures were revealed and written down, the clearer the image was becoming. By the close of the first century, the mirror of God's word was completed and men could, "*look into the perfect law of liberty*" (Ja. 1:25) and see themselves as heaven saw them (Ja. 1:23-25). The completion of the New Testament scriptures brought an end to the miraculous era. Miracles were no longer needed to reveal new truth for all truth had been delivered (2 Pet. 1:3-4; Jn. 16:13) "once for all time" (Jude 1:3). Neither were miracles needed to "confirm" the word (Mk. 16:20), because the confirming signs were written down in permanent form (Jn. 20:30-31).

Since the miraculous era ended with the completion of New Testament scripture, the question immediately becomes: Do the instructions of 1 Corinthians 14 apply throughout the entire Christian age - even after miracles cease? After all, chapter 14 discusses how to handle various situations with tongue speakers and prophets. If there are no miraculous tongue speakers nor prophets, then how could the instructions of this chapter continue?

The solution to this question is to understand that tongues (languages - see Acts 2:6-8, 11) are still spoken by men today, not miraculously, but naturally. The miracle in the first century was not that men were able to speak in tongues, for men have spoken in a tongue (singular) since the sixth day of creation (Gen. 2:19ff) and in tongues (plural) since the tower of Babel

(Gen. 11:9). The miracle lay in the fact that some men instantly spoke in tongues which were "new" to them (the speaker) (Mk. 16:17). Imagine someone instantly speaking perfect Russian without any prior study - a true miracle! The rules governing the use of tongues in 1 Cor. 14 would apply whether a man spoke in a tongue miraculously or naturally. If a Russian preacher attended an English speaking assembly of the church, there would have to be a translator present (14:27-28). The man (singular) would have to "speak two or three" phrases and pause for a translation to be made. If there was no translator, "let him" (singular) "keep silent." Note, this is not saying "two or three men should speak," as though multiple speakers were envisioned. Verses 27-28 envision a singular man speaking and he is speaking "two or three" (KJV - very accurate here) and this same singular man is keeping silent when no translator is present. The same rules necessary for preventing confusion when men spoke foreign languages miraculously would also be necessary for men speaking foreign languages naturally.

Again, prophesying is mentioned in chapter 14, but prophesying is equated with simply "teaching" in the scriptures. Notice the following passage, "*There were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you,*" (2 Pet. 2:1). It becomes obvious that a false "prophet" is the same as a false "teacher." Biblically speaking, "prophesying" is simply "teaching" the will of God to men whether by miraculous aid (see Mt. 10:19-20) or by natural means (2 Tim. 2:2; 4:2). If a miraculously endowed preacher had to follow certain rules when delivering a message (1 Cor. 14:29-31), then certainly a "natural man" (1 Cor. 2:14) with only his natural abilities would be bound by the same rules. By what line of reasoning could men think otherwise? How could it be successfully argued that men guided by direct influence of the Spirit must "speak one at a time" (1 Cor. 14:31), but uninspired men are free to speak all at the same time?

The rules of 1 Corinthians 14 apply to all assemblies conducted by the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 26 makes this clear enough, "*Whenever you come together... let all things be done for edification.*" The word "whenever" means exactly what it sounds like it means - "on every occasion." Verses 27-35 explain and amplify verse 26. In other words, "on every occasion" ("whenever") the church comes together, everything must be done in an edifying way. (a) translations must be given for any foreign languages spoken (vv27-28), (b) the teachers of the church must speak one person at a time (vv29-33), and (c) the women must remain silent for "they are not permitted to speak" (vv34-35). *The American Standard Version* clarifies the issue by showing the second half of verse 33 is actually connected with verse 34 and should read as follows, "*As in all the churches of the saints, let the women keep silence in the churches.*" *The New International Version* has, "*As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches.*"

Simply put, the passage is teaching that "on every occasion" a congregation of the Lord's church conducts an assembly, certain rules must be followed in order for edification to occur as the Lord intended. If these rules were necessary when men were guided directly from heaven, they certainly apply when men would be guided indirectly by the scriptures. Therefore, these are not instructions which apply only to the miraculous age.

The Wives Of The Prophets?

Now let us consider exactly who the women of 1 Cor. 14:34-35 are. It is argued by some that "your women" (14:34) refers to the "wives of the prophets." There is good reason for taking this position and perhaps extending it to include the wives of the tongue speakers as well. The verses just prior to verse 34 contain instructions for men who speak foreign languages and men who are the teachers of the congregation. "*Let your women keep silent*" would naturally (in context) mean the wives of the men just addressed. But the next logical question becomes, "Why?" Why is it that the wives of the tongue speakers and the wives of the prophets have to remain silent? The answer is given, "*Because it is shameful for women to speak in church*" (verse 35). That should be clear enough even for the most skeptical. The wives of the prophets must remain silent because it is shameful for any woman to speak in the assembly. The Holy Spirit could not have made this clearer than it already is.

First Century Culture?

Finally, what can be said about the culture in which this was all written? Can we assume that because women had not been "liberated" at that time these rules no longer apply? After all, this is the twenty-first century. Surely things have changed in regard to women speaking in church assemblies - have they not?

Three things should be noted. First, the apostle who wrote 1 Cor. 14:34-35 is the same apostle who wrote, "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. 3:28). It is obvious that Paul was not on a crusade to oppress anyone based on race, gender, or social position.

Second, neither Paul, nor His Lord bowed to cultural pressure of the day (see Gal. 2:5 and Mt. 15:1-12). Paul declared plainly, "*If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord*" (1 Cor. 14:37) - this comes immediately after the instructions for women to remain silent "on every occasion" the church assembles. For further emphasis he wrote, "*Even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed*" (Gal. 1:8). The Lord and His apostles declared the will of heaven, not the cultural standards of men.

Third, where will this type of reasoning end once it begins? If we are free to disregard one passage about women speaking in church assemblies (1 Cor. 14:34-35), shall we allow the same reasoning to be used in regard to baptism? Would we allow someone to argue that baptism was merely a first century custom and no longer applies in the twenty-first century? Or, to take it a step further, would we allow someone to argue that belief in Christ as the Son of God was merely a "fad" of the first century that no longer applies today? Like pulling the thread on a cuff, once the process begins, there is no end in sight till the entire garment is unraveled. Likewise, once men begin arguing passages no longer apply because they were merely "first century," there seems to be no end in sight as to which passage of scripture will suffer next.

The things Paul taught he taught, "*everywhere in every church*" (1 Cor. 4:17). He did not "speak out of both sides of his mouth" (cf. 2 Cor. 1:18). The instructions of 1 Cor. 14 apply even in today's "enlightened" age and we must teach these same truths to the next generation (Mt. 28:20; 2 Tim.

2:2).

Conclusion

It was the Creator's desire that men would lead in spiritual matters. In the home (Eph. 5:23-25) in the assemblies of the church, and in all other public assemblies besides church assemblies; men should take the lead while godly women would be silent learners (1 Tim. 2:11-12). These rules find their roots in the divine order of creation (1 Tim. 2:13-14; 1 Cor. 14:34), not in cultural norms of society - whether modern or ancient.

AS ALSO SAITH THE LAW

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

There are few subjects that evoke greater emotion and polarization in the church than the Apostle Paul's repeated commands that women be subordinate to men and silent in public assemblies of the church. One of the most controversial scriptures dealing with these subjects is 1 Corinthians 14:34, "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" (1 Corinthians 14:34).

Most theologians who contend women should be allowed to teach in a public capacity admit their case would be a lot easier to defend if this passage simply did not exist. The most difficult part of this verse to explain away is the last phrase, "as also saith the law." Paul says women are to "keep silence in the churches" and "be under obedience," and the reason has something to do with *the law*.

Several Bible critics object that the law (of Moses) says absolutely nothing about women being silent in the assembly and subordinate to men, therefore, Paul's statement cannot be valid—that it must be an interpolation added at a later date by a scribe. Commentator Gordon D. Fee makes this argument even though he concedes there is "no direct manuscript evidence" for his theory and that "these two verses (34-35) are found in all known manuscripts..." (*NICNT Commentary* 705-708). I agree with other commentators who say Fee's efforts "look suspiciously like attempts to liberate Paul in terms of modern agendas."

Dr. Joseph Klausner, professor at Hebrew University also takes issue with Paul's statement about the law. Klausner declares that while it's possible to conclude from the writings of Moses (Pentateuch) that a woman should be in subjection, "where in the Pentateuch is it written that women must 'keep silence in the churches?'" Klausner speculates that perhaps Paul was referring to the "Oral Law"—the traditions of the elders eventually written down at the end of the first century A.D. in the Mishna and included in the Talmud. The Talmud says, "A woman should not read in the Torah (law) out of respect for the congregation" (Megillah 23a); and, "A woman should not be brought in to read [Torah] publicly" (Hosephta, IV [III] 11) (*From Jesus to Paul* 568).

According to Dr. Alfred Edersheim, it is true that women were not allowed to read the scriptures publicly in the synagogue (*Sketches of Jewish Social Life* 146). In fact, women and men were separated in synagogue seating—men on one side and women on the other—with a low partition, five or six feet high, running between them. However, Paul's instructions in verse 34 do not refer to the Talmud's traditions concerning the synagogue.

Paul uses the word *law* as a synonym for the books of the

Old Testament Scriptures, and this use of the word is not as enigmatic as some scholars have suggested. Paul often refers to the law in his epistles, but in no instance does he use the word to refer to Jewish tradition. The full expression he uses here in verse 34, "saith the law," is found in only two other places in his writings—Romans 3:19 and 1 Corinthians 9:8—and in those two instances Paul is clearly referring to the law of Moses. More specifically, when you consider the wealth of quotations that precede the mention of the law in Romans 3, it becomes clear Paul is not referring just to the five books of Moses, but to the Old Testament Scriptures collectively.

Where in the Old Testament Scriptures do we find anything about women being in subjection to men and silent in the assembly? Paul amplifies upon this theme in 1 Timothy 2:11-14:

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Paul obviously grounds his doctrine concerning the relationships of men and women upon the Old Testament story of the Creation and Fall of Adam and Eve, in the first three chapters of Genesis. Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived by the serpent, "but the woman, being deceived was in the transgression." Thus the law—the Old Testament Scriptures found in Genesis—subjects woman to man by the very act of Creation, and again because of the Fall, when woman first ignored this subjection (Genesis 3:16).

Earlier in the Corinthian letter (11: 3-16) Paul borrows from this same Genesis material while instructing the Corinthians about headship and proper head coverings for men and women in the assembly. Paul says that man is the head (authority) of woman (verse 3). He explains further that the reason the woman is to submit to man and demonstrate that she is in submission by covering her head (her long hair) is because of the nature of the Creation. "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (verses 8-9).

As we move closer to the setting of our text, in 1 Corinthians 14:21 Paul refers to the law (although quoting principally from Isaiah 28:11) to govern the phenomenon of tongue speaking in a worship service.

Now, in our text in verse 34, this same apostle Paul who corrected unacceptable head-coverings on the basis of principles from Genesis, and corrected tongue-speakers with a theme from Isaiah, could with equal facility define the role of women teachers with a theme from Genesis.

Obviously, Genesis 1-3 does not explicitly mention the hair of men and women, nor do these chapters say anything specifically about women being silent in the assembly. Paul's expression, "as also saith the law" does not specifically refer to silence and speech, but it refers to the woman being "under obedience" (in subjection). It follows, however, that if a woman's head is not covered properly when she prays and prophesies, and if she speaks or teaches in a public capacity she has in some sense violated the realm of being in subjection to man.

Commentator R.C.H. Lenski says: Paul informs the Corinthians that what is recorded concerning woman in Genesis is not a temporary arrangement but a permanent one that endures as such for the Christian Church. Any act on the

part of woman which sets aside her subjection to man is in violation of "the Law," the will of God expressed in creation and stated in his Word. An act of such a nature would be the speaking of women in the public services either in tongue or prophecy. Ergo, "let the women be silent in the assemblies" (614).

Matthew Henry adds, "We have here the reason of this injunction: It is God's law and commandment that they should be under obedience. They are placed in subordination to the man, and it is a shame for them to do any thing that looks like an affectation of changing ranks, which speaking in public seemed to imply..." (583).

Because this law was established in the days of Adam and Eve it has impacted the relationships of men and women in every dispensation. Sarah lived in subjection to Abraham. She "obeyed him calling him lord:" (1 Peter 3:6). Women in the Mosaic dispensation were not allowed to serve as priests, nor as officials in the Tabernacle or the Temple, and they were not allowed to read the law publicly in the synagogue.

Some writers argue, however, that women in the Old Testament were given the role of prophetess, invalidating Paul's conclusions drawn from Genesis. Therefore, they argue women should be included in positions of leadership and teaching in the church today.

It is true women functioned as prophetesses in the OT. Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14-20), and Deborah (Judges 4:4-5) were all prophetesses. Feminists consider Deborah particularly significant because she functioned as a judge over Israel, which would include judging men, and she exercised authority over the man Barak, who was a commander of the Israelite troops.

While it is obvious these women functioned as prophets in the OT, a careful examination of them shows they exercised their gift of prophecy differently than the men prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other male prophets exercised a public ministry when they proclaimed the word of the Lord. Deborah's prophetic role, however, seems to be limited to private and individual instruction. Judges 4:5 says, "And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment." Note that Deborah did not go out and publicly proclaim the word of the Lord, but rather individuals came to her. Even when she speaks to Barak she calls him and speaks to him individually (Judges 4:6, 14).

Huldah did not publicly proclaim God's word either. Rather, she explained in private the word of the Lord when Josiah sent messengers to her. She exercised her prophetic ministry in a way that did not obstruct male headship.

Because those OT women who had the gift of prophecy did not exercise it in a public forum as male prophets did, the role of OT women prophets does not invalidate Paul's conclusions based upon the Genesis account.

Subsequently, Paul regulates women prophets in the first-century church in a way consistent with their OT counterparts. They were not allowed to teach or ask questions during the assembly. Furthermore, no women were chosen by our Lord to function as apostles, evangelists or pastors.

In the second century Tertullian of Carthage warns those who allow a teaching ministry for women in the church that they should not rely on spurious legends about Paul published by a presbyter in the province of Asia under the title of *Acts of Paul*. One of the legends in this work has Paul converting a

woman named Thekla, who at Paul's insistence, broke off her engagement and for a time, shared his apostolic ministry, experiencing a miraculous delivery from martyrdom. Tertullian writes:

But if the writings which wrongly go under Paul's name, claim Thekla's example as a license for women's teaching and baptizing, let them know that, in Asia, the presbyter who composed that writing...was removed from his office. For how credible would it seem, that he who has not permitted a woman even to learn with overboldness, should give a female the power of teaching and baptizing! "Let them be silent" he says, "and at home consult their own husbands" (*Ante-Nicene Fathers* Vol. III 677).

The Ante-Nicene Fathers are in solid agreement with Tertullian's above stated conviction through Chrysostom and the fourth century.

Earl West gives us the following description of the church's state of affairs in the early 1900s:

"The Woman Suffrage Movement excited considerable attention beginning in 1907. Christian women took a special interest in improving their status and some were decidedly sympathetic with the new thought. Women wrote articles to the Gospel Advocate often disagreeing with the Advocate's view of the place of women, and in such cases, the lot usually fell on F.W. Smith to carry on the war with the good ladies. Between 1907 and 1913 the Advocate carried numerous articles on the subject. James A. Harding and David Lipscomb solidly backed Smith, however, and Harding, in a touch of irony paraphrased 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 as follows:

As in all the churches of the saints, let the women speak out in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to be silent; but let them speak out in prayer, exhorting and teaching, *regardless of what saith the law*. And if they would learn anything, let them ask the brethren in the meetings of the church; for it is shameful for a woman to be silent in the church" (*The Search for the Ancient Order* Vol. III 8).

In today's postmodernism world, the church is under tremendous pressure again to ignore the teachings of the Apostle Paul about women's roles, and to allow women to participate with men in every phase of teaching. However, as long as it remains true that man was created first and that woman was deceived first in the Garden of Eden, the law of God predicated upon those two facts—that women should be submissive and silent in the public teaching forum—remains true also.

THE SCOPE OF 1 TIMOTHY 2:11-12

BY ALAN BONIFAY

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.

In this passage Paul teaches that the duty of Christian women is to learn in silence. Furthermore, he instructs them to willingly submit themselves to the authority of men. To state it negatively, he says that Christian women are not to teach. Neither are they to exercise authority over men. They are to be silent.

What is the scope of this passage? What situations are governed by these instructions? At first glance we immediately call to mind Paul's earlier words to the Corinthians:

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 women to speak in the church (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

Verse 33 declares that these instructions apply to all of the assemblies of the saints. It is crystal clear from both the immediate and remote contexts of 1 Corinthians 14 that Paul was discussing how the church was to assemble for worship.

Is the same true with reference to 1 Timothy 2? Does the passage in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 refer exclusively to the church assembled for worship? Many, if not most, commentators say that it does. Many Study Bibles and Bibles that are arranged in paragraph form with sub-headings agree (NIV, NKJV, TEV, and others). Notwithstanding such a collection of authorities, we believe that they are wrong. 1 Timothy 2:11-12 is broader in its scope than the passage in 1 Corinthians 14. It is the overarching passage in the New Testament regarding the obligations of Christian women relative to the teaching of God's word and the authority of men. The passage certainly includes the church assembled for worship, but it is not limited to Christian assemblies. Instead, these words govern all public situations. All five of the New Testament passages that indicate the prerogatives of Christian women in teaching God's word must be harmonized under this passage (Tit. 2:3-5; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15; Acts 18:26; 21:8-9).

The following seven arguments prove beyond question that the scope of 1 Timothy 2:11-12 extends to any and all public situations including, but not limited to, those in which the church has assembled for worship.

1. There is absolutely nothing in the text, the context, or the remote context that indicates that the assembling of the congregation for worship is specifically in view. There is not one shred of evidence for such a notion. It is amazing that some of the strongest advocates for contextual interpretation in the Lord's church are arguing that 1 Timothy 2:11-12 refers only to the church assembled for worship in spite of the fact that the context is absolutely silent with reference to the assembly. In fact, in all of 1 Timothy, the assembly is specifically in view in only two verses (1 Tim. 4:14; 5:19).

2. In 1 Timothy 2:8, Paul addresses men in distinction from women. The plural use of the term "men" points beyond the confines of individual homes and families. The prepositional phrase "in every place" indicates that Paul wants prayer to be as universal as its objects (v. 1). In other words, in all public situations and places Paul directs that prayers are to be led by men who are living holy lives unstained by anger and dissension. This instruction is inclusive of congregational assemblies but it goes beyond them to include all public situations in which prayer is to be offered up to God.

Sometimes the argument is advanced that the phrase "in every place" elsewhere in the Scriptures refers to *congregations* in every place and not to the world at large. This assertion is not valid. Interestingly, there is an economy placed on this phrase in the Greek New Testament. It occurs only three other times in addition to 1 Timothy 2:8. In 1 Corinthians 1:2 it is clearly a reference to churches "in every place." The same is true in 1 Thessalonians 1:8. However, in 2 Corinthians 2-14 the context (vv. 15-16) makes it clear that the reference is simply to Paul's preaching of the gospel in every locale. When he preached—whether in a congregation or on the Areopagus in Athens. Some received his message with gladness, for it had the aroma of "life unto life;" others

rejected the truth because to them it had the smell of "death unto death."

The words "in every place" were not some kind of secret code for "in every church." The only reason these words should be so interpreted in 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 1 Thessalonians 1:8 is because the immediate context demands it. That is not the case in 2 Corinthians 2:14. It is also not the case in 1 Timothy 2:8. In that verse it simply means "in every public place." It includes the assemblies of the saints, certainly, but it is not limited to that meaning—its reference extends to all public gatherings of whatever kind.

3. In verse 9, the apostle commands that Christian women should wear modest apparel and be characterized by discretion. It is irrational to conclude that Paul is only regulating the clothes women wear to the worship assemblies (1 Pet. 3:1-6). Obviously Christian women are to wear attire that is respectable, honorable, and becoming—attire that is decent, modest and governed by discretion—in all public situations.

4. In verse 10, Paul enjoins that women are to adorn themselves in a manner that is becoming of Christians who profess godliness with good works. It is contrary to reason that the apostle only has in mind the good works performed by women in the church services. The good works the writer has in mind are not only the obedient deeds of wearing modest attire in every public situation, but also, as the plural indicates, the wider spectrum of Christian obedience springing from faith in Christ Jesus (Tit. 2:14; Eph. 2:10; 1 Tim. 5:10).

5. In chapter 3, Paul lists the qualifications requisite for bishops and deacons. The exercise of authority that is to be related to the work of bishops extends far beyond the worship services into family and individual relationships. Most of the work done by a congregation's elders is done outside of the assembly in the wider domain of the congregational community.

6. In verse 15, Paul's concluding reference relative to Christian women urges them to be diligent and persistent "in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." He does not mean that Christian women will be saved if they continue in these virtues only in their assemblies. He is advising them to ensure their salvation by continuing in these virtues at all times.

7. Finally, the only passage ever cited to support the notion that Paul's remarks in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 are limited to the church assembled for worship is 1 Timothy 3:15. "In the household of God," however, points not exclusively to the assemblies of the church but to how Christians are to conduct themselves in the Christian community. This broader perspective is evident because it is immediately preceded by the verses detailing the qualifications and activities of elders and deacons, which, as we have already stated, are spelled out in terms of the Christian community and not just in terms of the worship services.

Therefore, Paul's instructions to women, like his preceding instructions to men, are related to the context of the Christian community in all of its endeavors. These instructions are inclusive of the church's worship assemblies but are not restricted to them. They apply in all public situations. Christian men must always live holy lives that avoid wrath and dispute, particularly in connection with prayer for others. In like manner, Christian women are always to live in accord with their profession of godliness, dressing modestly and discreetly,

and manifesting a proper relationship to men as regards the question of authority. Women are forbidden to teach God's word in all public situations. Instead, they are instructed to learn in silence with all subjection.

WOMEN TEACHERS IN BIBLE CLASSES

By *BILLY D. DICKINSON*

The following practices have something in common: Sprinkling water on infants for baptism, church choirs accompanied by instrumental music, and Bible classes with women teachers. What is the common denominator shared by all of those things? Besides being unscriptural innovations that have caused religious division, each of them involves an **ERROR WITHIN AN ERROR!** What do I mean by that? Think about it for a moment and the point becomes clear: Sprinkling water on a baby is not baptism in any scriptural sense of the term, but an infant is not a proper subject for baptism anyway. We cannot find authorization for instrumental music in the worship of the New Testament church, but neither can we read of church choirs in God's word. Likewise, women are out of their place teaching in called gatherings of the church, but then, Bible classes constitute an unscriptural arrangement of teaching for anyone!

It will be our purpose in this article to show why it is wrong for a woman to teach in a Bible class. However, it is first necessary to zero in on what the practice really involves. The truth is that class advocates are prone to misrepresent their practice, as they try to make it parallel to circumstances and situations that are not even parallel to each other. In fact, I do not hesitate to charge that they **MUST** misrepresent their practice, otherwise they will find themselves boxed into a corner at the outset. In spite of fallacious arguments made to the contrary, the following is true of Bible classes: (1) Classes are the church come together. They are not parallel to teaching done in a private, individual capacity. (2) Classes are called gatherings of the church. Members of a local congregation are called out of their private homes to come together to be taught by the church in those classes. (3) Classes are an addition, or a coordinate, to the one assembly. The practice actually involves an unscriptural kind of assembly because when the church comes together to teach, the Bible specifies that the arrangement to be used is an undivided assembly (Heb. 10:25, 1 Cor. 14-23, et al.).

In a vain attempt to obfuscate the real issue, I once had this question posed to me: "If we taught our classes in different homes without coming together, would you accept them?" Here is the reply I gave to his written question [As you read my response, please notice how their use of women teachers is an especially thorny issue for them]: "This question is nothing more than an attempt to evade the real issue by redefining your classes and trying to make them something they are not. The question is self-contradictory and misleading. It speaks of 'our classes' in different homes. But classes, as practiced by you brethren, are called simultaneous gatherings of the church that involves a 'coming together' of the church ... I know what you are trying to argue. You're trying to say that I'll allow it in the home, but I won't allow it in the classroom. But let's see if you can't see the difference: Would it be scriptural for a man in his home, in a private, individual setting, to teach three boys the Bible while eating a common meal with them? If yes, and this is parallel to your classes,

can we move the common meal into the classes? While teaching those boys, would it be all right for them in the home to take time out to play on a piano? If yes, and this is parallel to your classes, can we move the piano into your classes? Could a young Christian woman, in a private, individual setting, teach her boy friend what the Bible says about baptism? If yes, and this is parallel to your classes, could the elders of the church arrange for her to teach him in a class the next Sunday? Could it be that you can see that such is not parallel to your classes, and what you will allow in a home, in a private, individual setting, you will not necessarily allow in your classes! Instead of misrepresenting your classes by making them something they are not, you need to face the real issue. Why, the very question you posed indicates that you understand that your classes involves a 'coming together' of the church!"

It is my observation that class advocates feel the most vulnerable on this issue when they are forced to deal with the contradictory positions they take about where a woman may or may not teach. Class advocates have a hard time harmonizing all of the contradictory positions that they take. On the one hand, they make arguments that lead you to conclude that they believe classes are parallel to teaching in a private, individual capacity. On the other hand, while they admit that a woman can teach a man in private, they will not permit a woman to teach a man in a class! See how the aspect of women teachers comes back to haunt them. If a woman is out of place teaching a class of men (or even a class composed of one man), the unavoidable conclusion is that their classes are not teaching in a private, individual setting. Therefore, they must be public gatherings of the church—the church come together into a congregational capacity!

Women teachers in Bible classes is a violation of 1 Cor. 14:34-35: "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 any thing, let them ask their husbands at home for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." Some argue that Paul's restriction here was for only the prophets' wives. However, what Paul wrote applies in "all the churches of the saints" (Verse 33). Why were the prophets' wives told to keep silence? Why were they not permitted to speak in the assembly regarding edification? Here is the rule, or principle, which Paul gives: "**FOR IT IS SHAMEFUL FOR A WOMAN TO SPEAK IN THE CHURCH.**" (ASV) Notice that Paul gives a restriction that applies to any and all women! The fact that many class advocates feel compelled to misapply 1 Cor. 14:34-35 speaks volumes. It is surely a subtle admission that their classes are the church come together into a congregational capacity.

Women teachers in classes is a violation of 1 Tim. 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." Paul is refusing to allow a woman to be a teacher in a public capacity. "Teach" in this passage means "to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses" (*Thayer*, P. 144). Bagster defines it "to teach or speak in a public assembly" (*The Analytical Greek Lexicon*, P. 98). The context shows that Paul is saying that a woman is not to be a public proclaimer of the Gospel. Look at verse 8: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." "Men" is

from the Greek word *aner* and it refers to males only. [Vine says that *aner* "is never used of the female sex," P. 716]. Paul is saying that he wants males to do the praying in every place. Also, Paul emphasizes in verses 9-10 that a Christian woman's apparel should demonstrate who she is on the inside—humble, discreet, self controlled, and of a meek and quiet spirit. No where do the Scriptures, either by precept or example, lead us to the conclusion that a woman is to be a public herald of the truth. That includes the street corner, a television/radio program, or any other public arrangement.

Some misapply 1 Tim. 2:11-12 by arguing that Paul is saying that a woman can teach if she does not teach in a way that usurps authority over the man. But even if we give them the argument, they are still wrong in practice! The woman's sphere of activity is the private individual capacity. The role of publicly proclaiming the Gospel belongs to men, for only men are authorized to function in that area. When a woman jumps out of her sphere of activity and takes for herself a role that God intended for men, in that sense she is teaching in a way that usurps authority over the man. In Bible classes the following takes place: The local church has called people together, the public has been invited out, and all who came were accommodated. That takes it out of the private, individual capacity and places it within the public domain of the church! The class arrangement of teaching violates the rules, regulations, and principles in God's word that govern where a woman may teach.

DEACONESSES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH?

By BENNIE CRYER

The title of this article is a question. Did Paul or Peter find deaconesses in the Church of Christ in localities they visited? Did Jesus Christ build into the church the office of deaconesses? Very early in the secular history of the church this office is probably mentioned. *The office of deaconess became a regular feature of church organization as early as the first part of the second century. In A. D. 112, Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia, wrote a letter to the emperor Trajan of Rome, indicating that in his investigation of Christians he had tortured two Christian maidens who were called deaconesses. The office of deaconess in the Eastern Church continued down to the 12th century (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c) 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers).* This indicates that this office was not a regular feature of the church before that time. If must be noted, however, that in the reference above "deaconesses" is translated from a Latin word that is as ambiguous as the word that is translated "deacon" in the New Testament. So, it is not clear that the office of "deaconesses" existed in A.D. 112 since the word simply means minister or servant. The first clear cut reference to female deacons in history is quoted by Strauch in his book *The New Testament Deacon* and reads as follows: *The Didascalia teaches that women deacons are to visit Christian women who are ill, but live in pagan households where Christian men cannot visit. They also are to help the bishop in the baptism of women by anointing the women candidates with oil before baptism ... (178).* This is a quotation from a church manual dated A.D. 230. This reference, of course, is too late for it to teach there were women deacons in the New Testament church. In the restoration period Alexander

Campbell believed in having deaconesses in the church. Later on, his son-in-law, W. K. Pendleton actively taught the need for deaconesses in that movement. Others in the restoration movement also followed this practice. Many denominational churches have this office in their ministries. The question is: Does the New Testament pattern reveal the office of deaconesses? Must we scripturally select and ordain deaconesses in the Lord's church today? Our answer to this question must come from revelation in the New Testament and not from history.

Phoebe, Romans 16:1

I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea. This sister was a servant of the church. The RSV is one of the few translations that uses the word "deaconess" instead of "servant." Even the NASB and the NIV retain the word "servant" along with the KJV. The problem is that the word translated "deaconess" (RSV) in the above passage belongs to a class of nouns that can be either masculine or feminine. The spelling is the same and the context has to determine the gender. In this context it is feminine because it refers back to a woman. This noun is translated "servant," "minister," or "deacon." In the absence of any mention of the office of "deaconesses" the Authorized Version seems to use the correct translation when it renders the word as "servant." In verse 2 Paul explains that Phoebe had been a *succourer of many*. In other words, she had been a benefactor of many in the church including Paul himself. It is thought that she was a woman church member of some means and that she used her wealth to help those in need. She did not need to be an official of the church to do this. She was just an active church member. Every church member was a servant of the church in the New Testament including women. A number of women members are mentioned by Paul in this chapter along with Phoebe. In verse 3 Priscilla is mentioned along with her husband. He referred to them as his helpers or fellow workers. Mary, in verse 6 had bestowed much labor on us wrote Paul. Tryphena and Tryphosa in verse 12 labored in the Lord. Not much is said in detail about the work that these women did. Paul and the Holy Spirit recognized their work and honored them for their labors. They did these works as members of the church. There is no evidence that they did these works from some official position for which they had been selected and ordained. Phoebe and these other women were simply members of the church that worked hard for and with others. We have many women in the church today who follow their examples.

The Wives Of The Deacons

1 Timothy 3:11 tells us a little about the deacons' wives. *Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.* Some have concluded that, since the word translated wives in this verse may be translated "women" as well, this verse is teaching about a special order of women in the church called deaconesses. It is true that this is the word for women as well as wives. However, there are some strong reasons why the idea of these women being the wives of the deacons should be retained as is suggested by the KJV and the NIV. First, the deacons would be ministering in some way to all of the members of the church. Because of the seclusion of women in many of the cultures of that time the deacons would be unable to serve those women in an appropriate way. Neither would it be appropriate for them to go with just any woman in the church to assist such women that were in need.

However, it would be proper to go with their own wives into the homes of needy women to assist them. Although Paul was a bachelor, through common sense and, above all, revelation, he well understood the importance of a man, entering into a woman's dwelling place, taking along with him a proper female companion. What better companion could be found other than one's own wife. Not only that, but the wives of the deacons would be able to minister to many of the needy women where their husbands could not. In this way the wives of the deacons were a part of the diaconal service but did not have a separate and distinct diaconate of their own. They simply complimented the work and function of their husbands. A second reason for this word to refer to the wives of the deacons is the omission of any reference to their marital status. In other words, it does not say she must be the wife of one husband. This was required for the elders in verse 2 of this chapter, it was required of the deacons in verse 12, and it was required of the widows in deed in 1 Timothy 5:9. This qualification is nearly always mentioned by Paul in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus where positions of ministry and service are being considered. Omitting this requirement is easily understood if these women were the wives of the deacons. This subject is thoroughly discussed in *The Pastoral Epistles, A Commentary on the Greek Text* by George W. Knight III, published by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI.

Women workers in the church are easily found in New Testament history. We need women in the church today who pattern their work after the women the Holy Spirit honored by having Paul and other writers record their names and sometimes the work they did though the latter is never given in great detail. We must avoid manufactured offices and works that may be classed as innovations. We have so many women in the church to day that we can refer to as servants of the church, but let them never be referred to as "deaconesses." This title would be a departure from the New Testament.

WOMEN USURPING AUTHORITY

BY KEVIN W. PRESLEY

"For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (1 Timothy 2:13-14) Though unpopular, this statement of the apostle describes the order of creation and reason behind God's arrangement of authority within the home and the church. Because of what is said in the above verses, Paul plainly prohibits two practices on the part of the woman in verse 12. "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man." The first restriction pertains to teaching publicly and the second is even more comprehensive in its scope.

Repeatedly, the scriptures teach that a woman is to remain in subjection to her head, which is man. "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." (1 Timothy 2:11) "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man." (1 Corinthians 11:3) The Bible doesn't say that woman is inferior to man, but that she is subordinate to him. The creator has not placed women in an unimportant position, quite the contrary! However, he did assign distinct roles to the sexes. These roles are different but complimentary. The great work that God has placed upon the woman is honorable, praiseworthy, and essential to the success

of our society, our homes, and our churches. It must be remembered though, that her duties and responsibilities are to be carried out with respect to her subordination to man.

The past century has been an age of drastic evolution for the place of women in all walks of life. Some of these changes are commendable. They point to the need to pay to women the esteem and recognition that they justly deserve. However, the primary agenda of the "women's rights movement" is ungodly and rebellious to the core! Modern society has removed woman from her place in the home and the church and placed her in roles and situations where she doesn't belong. Worldly attitudes among God's people have caused serious deterioration in many keys areas. These attitudes and the changes they have brought about are sinful and detrimental to the scriptural design for God's institutions.

Roles Of Submission

The primary role of the woman in the home is that of wife and mother. She is to be in subjection to her husband. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body." (Eph 5:22-23) It should seem as unthinkable to us for a wife to dictate to her spouse and domineer in the home as for the church to behave so toward Christ. Sisters, remember that the church's relationship to the Savior is a model for the wife's love for and submission to her husband. The wife is not a slave or a hired servant. However, God created woman and made her a "help suitable" to the man. She is responsible for managing the domestic affairs of the family. She is commanded to carry out these responsibilities under the headship of her husband. A woman who disrespects her husband or disregards her role and place in the home is following in the footsteps of Jezebel and is guilty of an abomination in the sight of God.

God has likewise elevated the place of women in the church. In Christ, "there is neither male nor female." (Galatians 3:28) A woman enjoys the same access to God through Christ as her counterpart. She receives the same blessings as an heir of God as any man. And God has delegated a great amount of work to her in the cause of the kingdom. Her children are reared in the faith mostly at her knee. Her modest and godly example before others is irreplaceable. The saints are refreshed by her hospitality. She may even contribute her wisdom and knowledge to the work of the church through the right channels and in keeping with the proper spirit of modesty and submission. However, a leader in the church she is not to be! Every office or work described in the scripture that pertains to the government of Christ's kingdom belongs to qualified men. Women are not authorized to be preachers, elders, deacons, or leaders in the worship assembly. I have been made aware of churches where women arrange for gospel meetings or serve as treasurers. I have known of churches where women are first consulted before decisions are made concerning any number of spiritual matters. These things are shameful and ought not to be!

Once a man approached me during a meeting that I was holding to schedule me at his congregation. We had not been negotiating dates but for a moment when his wife overheard the conversation and interrupted. After rudely chastising her husband for proposing an inconvenient time for the meeting she then attempted to propose more suitable dates. Now if she had a legitimate concern about something that perhaps

her husband was overlooking, it would have been fine for her to talk to him in private or politely and discreetly remind him. However, to dress him down and then turn and take over the scheduling of a gospel preacher for that congregation was a blatant violation of Paul's prohibition against women usurping authority. I did not hold the meeting consequently. I have personally attended business meetings where brethren either consented to a proposal or remained quiet until the next meeting when everything suddenly changed. It was obvious that (as one sister in the deep south put it) a "petticoat elder" intervened upon his return home and changed his input into the decision. In such cases, not only should the woman be rebuked for her sin, but also the man had ought to be ashamed of himself for not taking the leadership in his home. If he is unable to do that, he has no business posing as a leader of the church.

Filling The Vacuum

In fairness to well meaning sisters, without seeking to justify unscriptural behavior, some are trying to fill a vacuum left by the absence of strong leadership on the part of men. Any righteous sister is as concerned about the welfare of the church and the souls of men as her husband or any other man for that matter. Women love the church as much as anyone else and it hurts many women to see their congregations go wanting for direction and guidance. While it is still not the woman's place to assume the leadership of that congregation, I am sympathetic with their feelings in such situations. The men who refuse to rise up and shoulder their responsibilities and take the church in the direction it should go are not worthy to be designated as leaders. They need a good sound Bible "thrashing" when the preacher comes to town every bit as much as the women who are usurping the authority God placed them under.

Signs Of Subjection

God not only wants the woman to be in subjection but to reflect such in her appearance and demeanor. Paul taught that the woman should be covered by letting her hair grow in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16. Her growing hair serves as a sign of her submission. Peter admonished women to dress with the meek and quiet spirit of the holy women of old who were in subjection to their own husbands. (1 Peter 3:5) Paul commanded likewise in 1 Timothy 2:9. These regulations are given for a practical purpose and that is to demonstrate subordination to authority. Long hair and a long dress are becoming of a godly woman. However, they do not give a woman the license to behave in an ungodly fashion. One preacher said that "a woman may have hair long enough to sit on and a dress that makes her look as though she just stepped off of a wagon train, but if her tongue is long to match, she is not saved." Let us keep the horse before the cart and remember what these outward ornaments are to demonstrate inwardly.

Women are an invaluable asset to the home and the cause of Christ. A godly wife, mother, and sister is "in the sight of God of great price." (1 Peter 3:4) God has a wonderful design that involves the woman as much as it does the man. If the roles God assigned are respected and joyfully carried out, problems are averted and things go as smoothly as the Lord in his wisdom planned. It is when God's arrangements are cast aside and replaced with man's (or woman's) that everything gets out of kilter and the plan of God in our homes and in our churches fails.

A WOMAN'S ROLE IN THE HOME

By JERRY DICKINSON

Thank God for Christian women! Our Godly women are the backbone of the church. I do not know where the church would be today except for women who, behind the scenes, prodded and prompted their men to stand up for the truth and keep fighting the good fight of the faith. I do believe that the church doors would have been closed in some places had it not been for many a noble and courageous woman who, in her proper role, was an inspirational force for the cause of Christ. Of course, a woman's first and primary role is in her home, and this article deals with the role of a woman in the home. I know of no better description of that role than in Paul's words to Titus.

"That they may teach 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, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Titus 2:4,5) Older women, Paul declares, are to teach the young women their proper role in the home. Thank God for older women who have the courage and wisdom to carry out this useful work! Note the seven things all young women need to be taught so they can fulfil their role in the home.

1. **Sober.** Some translations render this wise. I like that. Paul says a woman needs to be wise if she is going to guide her home and care for her husband and children. In the beautiful description of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 the writer exclaims that, "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." (Proverbs 31:26, 27) A wise woman demonstrates wisdom and prudence in all she says and does in her home. Because of her wisdom, "the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her..." (Proverbs 31:11) and her husband and her children are constantly seeking her advice and counsel. That's right! Husbands seek and treasure the advice and counsel of wise wives. Thank God for the wisdom of wives and mothers in our homes!

2. **Love husbands and children.** This is a command and denotes action. We think of love as an emotion but Paul here refers to love as active; something the woman does. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." To love Jesus means to do what he has commanded. The woman is to love her husband and her children; that is, she is to demonstrate her love by caring for them, meeting their needs, and working to insure the success of her husband and her children. It takes work! Sometimes wives, and husbands for that matter, claim they no longer love their mates. "I just don't feel the way I used to!" But love is more than what you feel, it is what you do. And, dear wife (or husband) you are **commanded** to love your spouse. Regardless of the way you feel, love your mate by meeting his (or her) needs and working hard to insure your mate feels safe, cared for, and secure in your home. The woman, moreover, is to love her children. This is more, I repeat, than emotional love. The woman is to demonstrate her love for her children by feeding them, clothing them, washing them, and spending time with them. "How does a child spell love?" one mother asked another. "L-o-v-e, I guess," was the answer. "No, a child spells love, T-I-M-E." Charles Wesley's mother, Susannah, had a set time for each

of her many children, a time when she and that child spent time together without the interference of anyone else. Charles Wesley's time was Thursday night, and years and years later, when he was in a period of great distress and in need of advice, he quipped, "Oh, for one more Thursday night with my mother!" God bless mothers who love their children by giving them the best gift of all—time.

3. **Discreet.** Some translations render this, serious or sensible. One rendering is, "to use sound judgement." A discreet, sensible woman of sound judgement is surely a blessing to her husband, her children, and her home. In Proverbs 31:16 she is described as a woman with a keen sense of judgement when it comes to the family budget. "She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard." In 1 Timothy 5:14 Paul says the woman is to, "guide the house." It takes a woman of sound judgement to implement the family budget and guide her household. Blessed is the family that has a discreet, sensible woman guiding the house!

4. **Chaste.** The word chaste in this passage means pure or pure minded. The wife and mother is the moral compass in the home. "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." (Proverbs 31:30) It is a poor and pitiful home indeed that does not have as an anchor a chaste woman that fears the Lord!

5. **Keepers at home.** This phrase is variously translated, "workers at home, home keepers, and house keepers." One rendering is, "home lovers." The idea is not that the woman can never leave the home at all. Paul is not saying that a woman can never work outside the home. He is saying that her primary and preeminent role is being a homekeeper and taking care of her home. I like Albert Barnes' comment on this verse. There is nothing wrong, he comments, with a woman going abroad, but she is not to be better known abroad than at home. There is nothing wrong, under some circumstances, with a woman working outside the home, but her primary role is to take care of her home. If outside work compromises that, then outside work is wrong. A woman is to be a worker at home. I should not need to point out that there is nothing wrong with the children and the husband helping out around the house - really, everyone in the home needs to do their part. Still, the woman's role is to be a homekeeper. I know of some women who are well known and famous for being great workers on the job outside the home, but their own homes are unkempt and their children are unfed. A woman should strive to be famous as a housewife and homekeeper before she seeks fame outside the home. It is a sad home where the woman of the home is not a home lover. "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." (Proverbs 31:27, 28)

6. **Good.** The woman is to be good-natured, kind, and kindhearted. There are no hands as gentle as a mother's hands. Who can wipe away bitter tears or soothe a fevered brow like mother? But she cares not only for her own, she looks to the needs of other hurting and needy souls as well. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." (Proverbs 31:20) "In her tongue is the law of kindness." (Proverbs 31:26) Blessed be the husband and the child who has a good, kindhearted wife and mother!

7. **Obedient to their own husbands.** The idea of obedience

is this passage is to be responsive to the leadership of the husband. The same word is used in Romans 8:7 where Paul says the carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God. The carnal mind is not obedient to the law of God because it cannot and will not respond to God and his authority. The role of leadership in the home is given to the man, and the woman is to respond to the man's leadership. This does not mean, of course, that the man is a dictator in the home and every time he cracks the whip the woman is to jump and obey. No. The husband is commanded to love his wife as he loves himself and as the Lord loves the church. (Ephesians 5:25, 28) The wife is to love her husband and follow his lead for the good of the family and the welfare of the home. One translation renders this phrase, "willing to adapt to their husbands." I guarantee that the wife who is willing to adapt her desires and ambitions to fit the needs of her spouse will be a success as a wife, a mother, and the guide of her house. This is the adaptable and responsively obedient woman described in Proverbs 31:10-12. "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." Let me end the article as I began it. Thank God for Christian women! Let us not forget to praise those virtuous women in our homes and in our churches!

LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR WOMEN?

By DON L. KING

In the long ago it was written in the Psalms, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalms 11:3) When God's children call His eternal truths into question, (by either their actions or words) it is a sad day. We have lived to see the time that such is the case. A few women seem to seek a more active role in the church than the Scriptures furnish.

God has authorized His Word to be taught in two places: the church and the home. Many years ago, when the Lord's people divided over the "Sunday school or Bible class arrangement," the excuse was given that if this unscriptural arrangement was not implemented the children would not be taught. So, because the home had supposedly failed to teach the Word of God, an unscriptural plan and organization was invented by human wisdom to do the job. That is the way the "Missionary Society" got its start. Because some believed the church has not done her duty in preaching the gospel to the lost, an unscriptural organization was formed by human wisdom to supplant the will of Almighty God. Now, human wisdom is again being heard among the people of God. Those who speak against it receive harsh words by some determined to have their own way. We have heard complaints that such matters should not be dealt with in the pages of the brotherhood paper such as *Old Paths Advocate*. We wonder how it should be done? Should it be ignored in hopes that it might all evaporate as in a bad dream and disappear soon? The Bible never tells us to ignore anything that threatens the unity of the Lord's church.

Paul plainly shows the Lord's way in 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 and 1 Timothy 2:11, 12. Women are to be silent when the church comes together (1 Corinthians 14: 34, 35) they are not allowed to speak as far as teaching is concerned. If they have questions, they are to ask those questions at home (in

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private) because "it is a shame for women to speak in the church." Was this just Paul talking? No, he said, "*If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*" (1 Corinthians 14:37)

Paul also wrote, "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." (1 Timothy 2:11, 12) Here, we understand Paul to say there are two things the woman must not do. (1) She must not *teach*, (deliver a didactic discourse such as a sermon, period) and (2) she must not usurp authority, (or domineer over) the man. Notice that Paul did not merge these prohibitions into just one. It is not that she may not *teach over* the man (Where a woman may teach, she may teach anyone) but she may not teach or deliver a didactic discourse period, nor domineer over the man. Two things she is not allowed to do whether or not the church may be assembled. This obviously goes beyond the public assembly of the church. Paul has just given instructions for the wearing of modest apparel (see verses 9, 10). Are we to think that she is forced to dress modestly only when she attends the services? Of course not, this is an all the time, everyday command whether at the serves of the church or wherever she may go. In explanation, Paul showed that it went back to the very beginning. In verses 13 and 14 he explains that Adam was first formed, then Eve and that Adam was not deceived by Satan but by the woman. It was the woman who was the deceiver of Adam. You may recall that God said to her, "...*thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*" (Genesis 3:16) As Paul wrote the Corinthian brethren regarding the covering women are to have, he began by establishing the divine headship found in verse 3. There, he shows that God is the *head* of Christ. Christ is the *head* of man, (that is, Christ has power to govern man) and man is the *head* of the woman. The word *head* in this verse indicates the power to rule or govern. Notice where divine authority places the woman. The man is paced in a position to govern her. In view of this Bible fact, does it seem reasonable that she could ever scripturally occupy a position of leadership, or a teaching role in the church? To ask the question is to show the absurdity of it. In Titus 2:4, 5 Paul gave some instructions concerning the teaching that aged women *could* do. He said: "*That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers of the home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*" It's interesting that in these two verses the apostle tells the older women not only *who* to teach but *what* to teach as well. The word "*teach*" in verse 4 is rendered "*train*" in both the Revised Standard Version and the American Standard Version to mention two. It means: "*to undergo discipline and instruction, etc.*" (*Webster's College Dictionary*) It would appear to be the type of training, teaching or discipline that could not be done thirty or forty-five minutes per week. It is the kind of teaching, training, which the older

women are to give younger women perhaps by being with them often on a day to day basis. So, Paul certainly did not furnish the older women with authority to convene a class of younger women each week to teach this.

In 1 Timothy 2:8 Paul wrote: "*I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.*" This is very interesting. The apostle used a word in the original Greek language that specifically designates the male of the species, a man, as opposed to the word for female in the next verse. The words are used in direct antithesis as to gender; and even if they were common, which they apparently are not, the use of them so correlated, forces the reader to realize that the first is a man and the second a woman. This certainly was no accident! The Holy Spirit plainly authorizes the man to be in the lead where the work and worship of the church are concerned. The women are in a submissive role rather than a leading role. It can hardly be seen as inconsequential that from the time of Eve until the church was formed the leaders were always men. Notice: In the Old Testament the leaders were always men. Chief Priests, elders, priests, etc. were all men. In the New Testament what do we find? Apostles were all men. Evangelists or preachers were all men. The New Testament teachers were all men. Elders, bishops, etc are to be men (husbands of one wife, etc.) Deacons are always to be men (also husbands of one wife). Was this accidental or coincidental? It cannot be an accident. In the ancient world, there was once a writer by the name of Epiphanius. It is said that he wrote a large and particular dissertation, or written work. In that work, he shows that no woman, from the foundation of the world, was ever ordained to offer any sacrifice under the New Testament or to perform any solemn service in the public work of the church. What's the point of mentioning this? The point is that just about everyone once understood the plain teaching of scripture.

We cannot see how such prohibitions against the women having any leading role in the church could be more explicit or universal. Divine and Holy writ proclaims they must keep silence. They are not allowed to speak of scriptural matters in public at all. They must not even so much as ask a question, but must wait and ask it privately at home. In public, they must learn in silence, with complete and entire submission. What more could the apostle have said? What would he have had to say for everyone to get the point that women are to take no leading role in the work and worship of the church? He could not have been more explicit.

Let's make a few things perfectly clear. May women exercise leadership roles in the church today? There is not one word of scripture that would permit that to happen. Therefore, for a woman to do so is for her to go beyond the scriptures. Could women take the lead in organizing congregational, inter-congregational, or brotherhood wide studies? No passage gives an example, command, statement or necessary inference for her to be so occupied.

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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GOD AND WITCHCRAFT

By *BENNIE CRYER*

Most of our older preachers who were interested in restoring primitive Christianity would quote often Isaiah 8:20 which reads, *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* With the increased interest in magical arts in the movies, television, books, and other media forms and entertainment it would be worthwhile for each child of God to memorize this passage and know the context it is found in. I think it would do away with much of the interest some Christians have in things of the occult. This passage is found in a chapter where Isaiah is instructed to prophesy against Syria and Israel. He also speaks about the distress of Judah. Verse 19 teaches about the prevalent sin of necromancy in which, along with other sins of witchcraft, they would presume to communicate with the dead in order to foretell future events. The answer to this practice was to be, *To the law and to the testimony...* of God. In other words, this practice was taking the place of the living God and his word in their hearts. Any form of witchcraft among the people of God today indicates that they are letting the occult take the place of God in their hearts. Viewing such things as innocent entertainment compounds the problem according to Romans 1:32 where Paul, writing about many sins of the heathen, not only condemns the heathen but also those who *have pleasure in them that do them.* This phrase teaches that you are approving and encouraging those that are practicing such things and are standing on their side.

Galatians 5:20 lists *witchcraft* as one of *the works of the flesh alongside idolatry, adultery, fornication* and many other sins. Of course, these sins do not seem so bad to most folks today. However, if we go *to the law and to the testimony,* God still considers these sins bad enough to say about those who participate in them, *that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God,* verse 21. In Revelation 18:23, in writing about how the apostate religion would deceive all nations of the earth, *sorceries* formed a part of this process. In this passage an interesting word is translated *sorceries.* The form used in the Greek is *pharmakeia.* The first meaning

of this word as given by *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon* is *the use and administering of drugs.* Thayer's third definition is *sorcery, magical arts.* *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* comments on this practice among those practicing this art: *In sorcery, the use of drugs, whether simple or potent, was generally accompanied by incantations and appeals to occult powers ... to impress the applicant with the mysterious resources and powers of the sorcerer.* No wonder John used this word to describe the effects of false doctrine from the apostate religion on all the nations of the earth. Their followers have been "drugged" by false teachings. This word is also used by Paul in Galatians to describe the work of the flesh called "witchcraft." No Christian should be involved in anyway with these Magical arts. A partial list of these may be found in Deuteronomy 18:10-12: *There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, 11. Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. 12. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.* So that we can better understand what God expects us to avoid here is a list of these sinful things and a brief definition of them:

Divination—The act or practice of trying to foretell the future by means of the magical arts.

Observer of times—A soothsayer, fortuneteller, or one who pretends to be able to tell the future. Originating horoscopes or following them would come under this definition.

Enchanter—One who whispers a magic spell or makes prognostications.

Witch—One who enchants and/or practices magic.

Charmer—One who fascinates another by magical spells. This also involves the use of magical charms.

Consulter with familiar spirits—One who attempts or claims to speak with the dead.

Wizard—One who is a knowing one in the occult world.

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Editorial

HOW BADLY DO WE WANT UNITY?

By DON L. KING

To ask the question is to answer it, for most of us. We do indeed want unity. Perhaps even when unity is lost in ugly division those responsible for "driving the wedge" did not intend to cause trouble, at the start. The problem may have had a beginning because someone just had a very strong desire for something and didn't stop to think that there could be a viable objection.

David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalms 133:1)

Could it be that some well meaning brother or sister just didn't realize "how good and how pleasant" unity really is because they had never experienced the sorrow, and abject loneliness of division? Certainly, unless one has experienced division he cannot realize its sorrow or the pleasure of unity. There is an old saying that "we don't miss the water till the well goes dry." We have all seen young men or women (and some not so young!) act foolishly in words and actions, never realizing the eternal harm they may bring to the Lord's church. Their lack of experience encourages them to forge ahead with some potentially divisive thing and no warning bell ever rings in their mind. How sad that is.

I recall my father saying that we must "be careful that our zeal, ambition, or desire to make a name does not ruin our knowledge and wisdom, nor our love for the Lord and His cause." **No matter how wonderful we may believe our idea is, if it threatens the peace and unity of the church, it must be abandoned for the overall good of the cause of Christ!** This applies to anything unless, of course, the Bible teaches otherwise. Paul wrote: "I therefore, the Prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:1-3)

The Scriptures are plain; we must manifest a meek and lowly spirit. We must be longsuffering and we must also forbear one another in love. What should be the attitude of any Christian who is informed that their present practice is likely to cause problems among the ranks of Christ? Should one persist because he or she believes the practice harmless? Of course not, to ask the question is to answer it. A meek and lowly brother or sister would immediately abandon the thing with apologies. Our purpose is to sow peace and unity rather than discord and division. Every Christian has the duty to teach, either by word or

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QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: May a person secure a divorce for something other than fornication, and marry another, then just make a confession for getting the divorce, and continue to live with the second party? (OK)

Answer: There are a number of issues involved in the above question. We shall notice them as follows: first of all the issue of what constitutes adultery. There are some today who teach that in Mt. 19:9 and 5:32 the adultery spoken of is not a sexual act, but merely "breaking wedlock." Based on this assumption, they claim that when a divorce is secured for purposes other than fornication the individual who gets the divorce is guilty of adultery because they broke wedlock. John L. Edwards, one of the proponents of this theory, says in his book *Marriage and Divorce* that "it is the act of destroying the marriage that is adultery, according to Jesus." Again "Adultery is committed if one divorces a faithful spouse (this action is adultery)." Another quote: "We conclude that adultery is the breaking of a covenant." As a result of this new twist, one can divorce and remarry for any reason, as many times as they please, merely make a confession, and continue to live with that particular mate. There are, however, serious flaws with this teaching. In Mt. 19:9 Jesus says "Whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery." In this verse Jesus makes both divorce and remarriage necessary in order to commit adultery. The Bible does not say the very thing necessary in order for this theory to fly. In fact the Bible says the very opposite. In Mt. 5:32 Jesus said "whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery." The man who marries this divorced woman had no part in the break up of the marriage, yet he commits adultery. If adultery is covenant breaking, what covenant has this man broken? The theory just won't work. Another thing wrong with this teaching is the fact that it contradicts what the Greek lexicons say about the meaning of the word translated adultery. Both J.H. Thayer and W. E. Vine, two outstanding lexicographers, define the word adultery in Mt. 19:9 and 5:32 to mean the sexual act. Thayer "to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife, to commit adultery with." While the word adultery may be used figuratively, there is no hint by either of these scholars that it is used figuratively in these passages. It is passing strange to me that some of our own brethren who for years have hung their hat on Thayer and Vine who both say that "cup" in Mt. 26:27 is literal, now want to deny them on the definition of adultery. What happens, then, when a man divorces his wife for reasons other than fornication and marries again. Jesus said they commit adultery. The adultery is committed when the second marriage takes place. If there are no illicit sexual relations, no second marriage, there is no adultery. The second issue that

is involved in this teaching is that of repentance. What constitutes repentance when adultery is committed? It seems to me that the answer is both simple and obvious i.e. the very same thing that must be done when any sin is committed. One must, with godly sorrow in his heart, resolve to cease the action that is sinful. Once the action is ceased, the fruit of repentance is evident. "Let him that stole, steal no more" Eph. 4:28. The thief must cease stealing if he is to be forgiven. The drunkard must stop getting drunk, the liar must stop lying, the homosexual must stop his homosexual activity, the heterosexual must stop his fornicating, and idol worshipper must cease worshipping idols. Those who claim that such a position makes "adultery" an unforgivable sin, miss the point. Adultery can be forgiven just like any other sin, but the one committing adultery must stop it. Merely making a confession won't get the job done. Making a confession is not repentance. Those who teach this false doctrine are on record as saying that one can divorce and remarry, for any reason, as many as one hundred times, and as long as they make a confession they can go right on living with spouse number one hundred. Who can believe it? The seriousness of this situation is seen when one considers that some sincere, but deluded, individuals are in marriage situations that will ultimately condemn them, if they do not repent. May God help us to take the right road, rather than the easy one. Souls hang in the balance. *Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808*

PROGRESSION OR RETROGRESSION?

By CECIL SMITH

Some of the greatest steps ever taken away from the simple truth and the will of Almighty God have occurred in the name of progression. Such so-called 'progression' is often no more than a retrogression into the sins of others. Retrogression is defined as "an act of going backward; a decline into an inferior state of development." In our service to God, we need to ask ourselves "are we truly progressing in the Lord's will and His service, or are we in an act of going backward, are we declining into an inferior state of development?" A good illustration of this is found in 2 Pet. 2:20-22. These individuals progressed for a while but eventually turned back to the world like a dog to his own vomit, or a sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. We have witnessed this many times as individuals have left the world and her denominations to embrace New Testament Christianity, only to find them later failing for the very sins they left, and all in the name of progress. By man's ideas and judgements, his steps may be progression, but by God's standard they are often retrogression. This thought is illustrated for us in the Old Testament account of the Jews as they clamored unto the Lord to give them a king.

“But We Will Have A King!!!”

As we consider the circumstances leading up to the decision of the Jews as found in 1 Samuel 8:1-5, we should be aware of what the situation looked like from a human perspective. Obviously, the Jews could reason, the present system is not working so we need a change. Imagine how well such reasoning would have worked to convince the people that a new method needed to be introduced. For years the Lord has ruled his people through Judges like Samuel. But now, with the passing of the era of Samuel, the sons of Samuel are appointed as Judges. The Bible says of these men “And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgement.” How would you feel to have such individuals in places of judgement over you? Such a situation called for action on the part of the people. The elders of Israel quickly gather themselves together and approach Samuel about this matter. Their words are recorded in 1 Samuel 8:5. “Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.” Upon first glance, it seems as if these people have really devised a great plan. They have looked at the nations round about and it seems as if they have a superior setup. After all, the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. What they saw was glitter and gloss and they wanted a king to be like these other nations not realizing their king would eventually be a greater burden than Samuel’s sons. They thought they were progressing when they were actually retrogressing into the type of kingdom from which God called Abraham many years ago. God’s words to them are phenomenal. “Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” He goes on to show the sad plight that will befall the Israelites for their choice in rejecting Him and His ways. In the name of progression these people rejected God by rejecting His plan and God took it personal. Sadly, these people are so sure of their plan that they continue to cry out “But we will have a king.”

“But We Will Be Secular!!!”

There is a great lesson in these words, which are written for our learning and admonition. Within the scriptures we are given a pattern for all that we are to do in our worship and service to God. God dictated how we are to go about living for him, worshipping him, and working in his vineyard. In passages such as 1 Cor. 11, 14, 16, etc. matters such as assembling, singing, teaching, praying, communion, headship, and contribution are discussed. In other passages, manners of life and conduct are designated and our behavior regulated. God wants us to recognize and serve Him by following his word, else we are guilty of rejecting Him. Like the Israelites of old, we often face the same tendency or desire to be like the nations round about us. This is often called secularization and is

considered as progression by many people. We have borrowed from the mentality of big business, at times without realizing it, and have sought to change the simple plan that God has given to govern his people. Like Burger King, some in the church have adopted the adage, “have it your way.” Others like the supermarket slogan “everything under one roof or Wal-Mart’s “we sell for less.” Many are selling the gospel for less thus avoiding such passages as Mt. 16:24 and Rom. 12:1-2 and offering everything under the sun in the name of growth. In the view of being progressive, many have secularized the church. Secular is defined as “of or belonging to the world and worldly things as distinguished from the church and religious affairs; not sacred or religious; temporal; worldly.” The New Testament has a word for secular as found in 1 Cor. 3:3 and Rom. 8:6. In these passages we are warned about the dangers of being carnal and carnally minded. Inspiration knew many years ago that many would later rise up and say “But We Will Be Secular.”

“No New Problems!!!”

I would love to be able to say this is not something for us to worry about, but such is not the case. We have things occurring, as evidenced in the recent pages of the *OPA*, that are literally shaking everything that God’s people stand for. These things are not new they’re just old problems resurfacing which need to be weeded out. Many are exalting themselves above the old paths and refusing to walk therein. Studies are being set up for ladies to teach in public capacities, which are reserved only for men according to the scriptures and every excuse imaginable is being used to justify such. Others have developed systems of gathering funds that include the pooling of money from various congregations into an extra-congregational fund be it for benevolence, business expenses, or mission work. We once fought long and hard against ‘institutionalism’ and condemned the pooling of funds from several congregations into a general fund. We argued that such a practice destroys congregational autonomy and also violates the pattern for churches to send their support directly to a certain work. But, these issues are again arising among us with a fresh approach to an old trail of digression. Others are organizing their respective congregations into societies, committees, or groups, for they seem to think the individual members are failing in their responsibilities. Much like the people of old, these individuals want a king and they will have what they are after regardless of the confusion, disunity, and division their actions might cause. In the name of progression, they are retrogressing into the sins of those gone before. In the 1840’s Alexander Campbell cried out against this matter of congregational societies in these words concerning the early church: “Their churches were not fractured into missionary societies, education societies; nor did they dream of organizing such in the world. The head of a believing

household was not in those days a president or manager of a board of foreign missions; his wife the president of some female education society; his eldest son, the recording secretary of some domestic Bible society, his eldest daughter, the corresponding secretary of a mite society; his servant maid, the vice-president of a rag society; and his little daughter, a tutoress of a Sunday-school. They knew nothing of the hobbies of modern times. In their church capacity alone they moved..." (emp. CES)

According to this quote, Campbell once held the societies and Sunday-schools as being one and the same, calling them "hobbies of modern times." Sunday-schools and societies were originally opposed as being 'sectarian' and 'without authority' and rightly so. Many brethren seem to have forgotten such arguments in light of 'new and modern methods' that are favored so heavily by them. In the name of progression, they are once again starting out on the trail of tears called digression. These things are not new. Satan has just dressed his old devices up with a new coat of paint.

"Brethren, Take Heed!!!"

Yes, times are hard for the old fashioned plan of God and for those trying to speak as the oracles of God and not go beyond that which is written. Many are no longer content with doing things God's way, they want a king and they want him now. We need men among us to arise and be prepared for the days of trial that lie ahead. Progression is only progression when the Lord approves. Otherwise it is retrogression. Moses Lard wrote of the spirit of innovation in these words:

"The spirit of innovation is a peculiar spirit. While coming in it is the meekest and gentlest of spirits; only it is marvelously firm and persistent. But when going out, no term but fiendish will describe it. It comes in humming the sweetest notes of Zion; it goes out amid the ruin a works, howling like an exorcised demon. At first it is supple as a willow twig; you can bend it, mold it, shape it to anything; only it will have its way. But when once it has fully got its way, then mark how it keeps it's footing. It now calls for reason, for argument, for Scripture, but no more has it an ear for reason, argument or Scripture than has the image of Baal. Argue with the spirit of innovation, indeed! I would as soon be caught cracking syllogisms over the head of the Man of Sin. Never. Rebuke it in the name of the Lord; if it go not out-expel it. This only will cure it."

There is another side to the words of brother Lard that we also need to consider. Not only should the innovations of man be treated in this manner, the innovators also need to be exposed and expelled.

The spirit of the innovator is also a peculiar spirit. While coming in he is meek and gentle yet firm and persistent. But when going out, no term but fiendish will describe him. He comes in humming the sweetest notes of Zion, when exposed he goes out amid the

ruin he works, howling like an exorcised demon that he is just being persecuted. At first he is supple as a willow twig and no one can believe he is an innovator. He is bendable, moldable, and can be shaped to fit anything. In this, he is much like an old chameleon lizard; only he will have his way. When called upon to defend his position, mark how he keeps his footing. He calls for reason, for argument, for Scripture, but no more has he an ear for reason, argument, or Scripture than has the image of Baal. Argue with an innovator, indeed! I would as soon be caught cracking syllogisms over the head of the Man of sin. Never! Rebuke him in the name of the Lord; and if he go not out on his own-expel him! This only will be the cure for "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Moses Lard went on to state: "He is a poor observer of men and things who does not see slowly growing up among us a class of men who can no longer be satisfied with the ancient gospel and the ancient order of things. These men must have changes; and silently they are preparing the mind of the brotherhood to receive changes. Be not deceived, brethren, the devil is not sleeping. If you refuse to see the danger till ruin is upon you, then it will be too late. The wise seaman catches the whiff of the distant storm and adjusts his ship at once. Let us profit by his example." We see today the truth of these words. Let us use them against all innovations and innovators that would lead us away from the truth by adopting things of the world and leaving God's plain and simple pathway. Brethren, Take Heed!

FIRST LOVE

BY BARNEY OWENS

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. (Rev. 2:4-5)

The church at Ephesus has as much written or spoken to it by inspiration as any other congregation. We are introduced to this church in the very beginning as Aquila with his wife Priscilla (tent makers) lived there and had their famous encounter with the great preacher Apollos (a preacher of error) whom they converted to the truth. Soon arrived the Apostle Paul who would lay the permanent foundation of the congregation by converting several to the Lord. Among these were twelve men. (Acts 18-19).

Paul visited the elders of the congregation delivering warnings and encouragement to them. It was a glad reunion but a sad separation when he left them. Paul also wrote an epistle to the church, as well as the letters to Timothy. It is thought by most that the Apostle John lived there in his declining years. And then, there was the visit by the Lord, as He walked among them in Revelation 2, from which our text

was taken.

Scarcely is there to be found a more impressive church. A glimpse in Revelation 2 excites those who stand for the purity of the doctrine of Christ (our Savior). How wonderfully they had stood for righteousness and firmly contested false doctrine and the teachers of error. It appears these people were not ready to take anything for granted. I ask you before proceeding to read verses 1, 2, 3, and 6 of Revelation 2. Are you not impressed with these brethren? Yet, there was something amiss with them. Our text points that out, as well as the remedy for their malady.

What they lost was to bring remorse and a turn about in their lives. Seldom do we hear of a congregation doing so many things that are good stung with blistering words as this church. All they had accomplished created a foundation for gloating in self-satisfaction. The "works they had done first" were to come to the forefront again. Affection for the Master and His Cause apparently has died or, to say the least, was in a stupor. Could they "remember" how it had been? Would that be enough to kindle the previous fire in their bosom? Was it possible for them to resurface the old road that had been traveled so little of late? One thing for sure, if they failed to take the Lord's advice, the lamp of the truth was going to be taken from them leaving them in total darkness, not a faint light, darkness-total darkness. Their work as a "candlestick" would not hold the "light of Christ," it would be their own light, and like the foolish virgins, no light.

First Love

First Love likely has reference to the love of a husband and wife when during courtship and the first part of their marriage. There is such affection for one another that ways of expressing their love is not only taken advantage of, but is sought out. Always they look for ways to please the other partner. Learning that a particular word or deed brings displeasure to the other, it is abandoned immediately without remorse. There is no thing, no event, and no person that can besmear the bond of desire and affection. It is so fondly embraced that father and mother are forsaken due to love's power. It might be described as perfect love.

Days come and months go by, the sought for touch of the hand, the sweet embraces are fewer, demands on each of them become stronger, thousands of spiteful words are uttered, hours of pouting and even some acts of revenge are sent on hasty arrows to pierce the other's heart, until one day they look up and wonder "what has happened to us?" They don't even like one another. Sometimes things are beyond repair; at least there is an unwillingness to attempt it. *The first love has been lost.*

Christ, Our First Love

The Gospel was first preached in our presence, revealing to us that "Christ died for our sins." (1 Cor.

15:3). We then realized that "*greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*" (Jn. 15:13). And, because of this exhibition of love, we did not allow it to go unrequited, "*we love him, because he first loved us.*" (1 Jn. 4:19). The cords of our heart being pulled, we wanted to share our life with Him, "*whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed*" (Rom 10:11). It is inconceivable that anyone could fail to give affection to the Lord considering what he has done for us, therefore, we turn our heart from the world to Him, "*or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*" (Rom. 2:4). Finally, we became His and He our very own, "*for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" (Gal. 3:27). We are yoked with Him in spiritual matrimony, "*married... to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God*" (Rom. 7:4).

Our glad hearts rejoice as we seek ways which are pleasing to Him. There is a constant searching of the scriptures to know and understand His will (Acts 17:11). The love we have for the Savior is easily detected by the most casual onlooker, "*if you love me, keep my commandments.*" (Jn. 14:15). He is **our first love**.

In all activities and everywhere we go we are heard "*singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord.*" (Eph. 5:19). This is but one way that we can render the "*fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*" (Heb 13:15). We talk often to Him, sharing our daily experiences. If there is a need we have, we know "*the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to our prayers,*" (1 Pet. 3:12). Our day would be insufficient without praying. "*Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" (1 Thes. 5:18-19). Sharing with others the blessings He has given us rebounds to our joy. This sharing is done by giving upon the first day of the week as we "*lay by in store, as God hath prospered*" us. (1 Cor. 16:2). Willingly sacrifices are made as we know" and "*God loveth a cheerful giver.*" (Acts 20:35, II Cor. 9:7) There is likewise joy when we meet with other believers to commune together in eating the Lord's Supper. Hearts are joined as one recalling the words of Paul, "*as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*" (I Cor. 11:26). Proclaiming to neighbors, friends, and anyone else who will listen the Lord's way, as did the disciples in the first century who "*went everywhere preaching the word.*" (Acts 8:4).

The Lord was the center and circumference of life because the commandment was always afresh, "*thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*" (Mt. 22:37). Attending worship on the Lord's Day was not enough, as the evening services of the church were welcomed,

and the wait from one series of protracted Gospel Meetings to another seemed far too long. There was “*delight in the law of the Lord and in his law there was meditation day and night.*” (Ps. 1:2).

The Waning Love

As is the case with some husbands and wives, so with those married to Christ; love rather than growing, declines. Affection either is stalemated or worse is turned toward another. The problem was true regarding God and Israel in olden times, “Israel’s attitude was “*I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.*” (Jer. 2:25). What is the cause of some Christians turning from their first love? Let’s look at a few of these.

1. **Love for this present world.** “*Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world and is departed unto Thessalonica.*” (II Tim. 4:10). Shall we give Demas all the credit we can, by suggesting that his love for *the present world* was not iniquity, rather it was a desire to live instead of remaining at Paul’s side, a place of sure persecution. The spirit of the man lives in some Christians today. Obviously, those who will not conform to the will of Christ in dress, manner of wearing the hair, type of speech and manner because of persecution, come under this canopy. Then the *lovers of the present world* are always so filled with it that there is no time left for the Lord. It may be little league, work, hunting, camping, fishing, boating, yard and gardening, shopping, being a sports fan, 4-H, scouting, television, playing on computers and a hundred other things that may or may not be sinful within themselves, but have captured the affections until they have become the **first love**. The comfort of the *present world* is so fulfilling that there is not looking for the Lord’s coming, as nothing could be better than this life.

2. **A heart that is not right with God.** Peter said to Simon, a Christian (Acts 8:12-13), “*Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*” (Acts 8:22-23). It is clear by reading the entire narrative that there was nothing wrong with Simon’s conversion; he was saved from his former sins. However, the important lesson for us to grasp is this: Christians can be tempted by their former manner of living to return. What happened to Simon is exactly what happens to some now. Peter described it as a “*dog turning to his own vomit, or a sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire,*” (II Pet 2:20-22). The deeds of the flesh *in which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them*” is exhortation that must be shouted from the housetop to many today (Col. 3:5-7). Sinful love replaces the **first love**.

3. **Indifference.** “*So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot; I will spue thee out of my mouth.*” (Rev. 3:16). This attitude affects some Christians from the beginning of their Christian

life. Some are not taken by it until some time later. Still others live fruitful lives for the Lord until late in life and then become indifferent to the Cause of Christ. *Indifference* is an attitude of not caring one way or another. It is seen in one who will not share in the work that must be done by the congregation. There is no interest in taking part in the services, nor sharing in the work in other ways. In some cases, a man is satisfied for his wife to be the spiritual leader in the home, or a woman has no concern about the spiritual development of her children. There just is not any concern or care about spiritual things. The **first love** is gone.

What Should Be Done?

In our text the Lord said to “*Repent and do the first works.*” Rekindle in the heart the affection for Christ, which existed at the time of conversion. In Luke chapter 15, Jesus taught the wonderful parable involving the young prodigal son who left his father’s house and allowed his affection to grow for other things, people, and places. Eventually he would up despicable, disgraced and despondent. The cherished remembrance of his father’s house revived his heart. Recalling that the servants there were better off than he was, although he was a son. He determined that he would go home and ask his father’s forgiveness and willing fill the place as a servant. He arose and went, doing as he planned.

Remember where you were when your love burned for the Lord and his Cause? Then repent (turn around) and arise to the Lord. Ask the forgiveness of God, return to the local congregation, confess your faults and ask for prayer by the faithful (Js. 5:16). This conversion will save your soul from death, and avoid sins that will yet be committed if you stay away from your **first love** (Js. 5:19-20). Practice the works in which you engaged when first converted to Christ (Eph. 2:8-10).

REFLECTIONS

continued from page 1

Necromancer—One who attempts to communicate with the dead. He has to do with black magic.

Consequences Of Sharing In Witchcraft

Leviticus 20:27 states, *A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.* King Saul enforced this rule against those that practiced witchcraft, I Samuel 28:3. He put them out of the land of Israel. However, because of his past wrongs God would not answer Saul *by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets,* v. 6. The army of the Philistines was pitched and ready to fight against Saul and his army. Saul desperately needed to know what to do. Instead of repenting of his wrong doings and in spite of his enforcing the commandment of God in Leviticus 20:27 he further compounds his bad relationship with God by requesting his servants to *Seek me a woman that hath*

a familiar spirit, v. 7. They found one for Saul at Endor. He went to her and demanded that she bring the prophet Samuel from the dead so he could consult with him. Though the woman did not normally have the power to bring back specific people from the dead God caused Samuel to appear from the dead to Saul. This of course frightened the witch, but the message Samuel delivered to Saul from the dead frightened the king even more. His army was to be defeated by the Philistines, the kingdom was to be delivered to David, and in the battle Saul, with his sons, would be killed and be with Samuel in death. This prophecy of Samuel was fulfilled and the reason why God required Saul's life is recorded in 1 Chronicles 10:13-14, *So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; And inquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.* So, for disobedience to God's word and seeking the counsel of the witch of Endor Saul lost his kingdom and was killed. Will it be any different for us today?

A Prophecy For The Kingdom Of Christ And Its Citizens

In a prophecy that was to be fulfilled in the kingdom of Christ, Malachi was caused to say in 3:5, *And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.* Sorcerers were to be condemned in the church of Christ. Those who dabble in the occult today, or consult them in any form as did King Saul, will not be stoned to death or driven out of the land. *They shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, Galatians 5:19-21. You might want to think of this at Halloween time when you dress that precious, innocent little child to appear as a witch. And, shouldn't you think on these things the next time you buy your child a book, or let them see a movie involving magic? After all magic is a part of the occult world and is not something the children of God should have a share in.

EDITORIAL

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actions, peace and unity rather than agitating and advocating discord and even division. May God help us all never to desire a following for any selfish purpose. Every preacher and church member must be striving to build up the people around Christ. He is the one who deserves the glory and recognition, no one else does. We all need to respect love and appreciate the judgment and advice of experienced leadership in the church rather than running roughshod over them. Paul said, *"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men,*

apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." (2 Timothy 2:24, 25) If we have some private agenda or cause and allow such to bring trouble to God's people, shame on us.

Without a doubt, the devil has gained another victory. Our religious enemies are always happy to know when we are troubled.

Brethren, let us plead that all work toward having the mind of Christ. Whatever you do, be certain that you do so with a mind to build up (edify) the church and unify it. Paul said, *"...Let all things be done unto edifying."* (1 Corinthians 14:26) It is past time to put away personal feelings. We are here to save souls and be pleasing to God. *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"* (Psalms 133:1) Please, think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Time Change

Whispering Hills Church of Christ Miami Oklahoma will change Sunday evening services to 3:00 pm on the 1st Sunday in August.—Derald Boman

The Role Of Women In The Home And In The Church

This is a new tract just printed and published by *Old Paths Advocate*. It contains 24 pages and 10 articles written by Johnny Elmore, George Battey, Carl Johnson, Alan Bonifay, Billy Dickinson, Bennie Cryer, Kevin Presley, Jerry Dickinson, Don King and Ronny Wade. This publication belongs in the tract rack of every faithful congregation. No church should be without it. Brethren please don't let this matter slip by you! It is of vital importance that everyone read and understand what the Bible teaches about this subject. We have published this booklet at some expense to the paper and hope it will be well received. The price is \$45.00 per hundred plus postage. Single copies in quantities less than 100 are 75 cents each. **Order from *Old Paths Advocate*, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, (e-mail old_paths@juno.com)**



Greg Gay, 7821 Saybrook Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621, papagreg@aol.com, July 8, 2002—We are just home from the Lebanon, MO meeting directed by the Lee's Summit congregation. The meeting was well attended by 100's from all over the country and

was a great spiritual feast. By the end of the meeting some 40 preachers had edified the assembled with about 10 hours of preaching. Lynwood Smith's new songbooks were a great boost to the meeting. I was honored to be asked to help conduct the meeting along with Kevin Presley, an excellent and very able partner. We asked Daniel Smith and Kevin Fox to conduct the service for young men's talks and they did a great job.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com, July 11—Since last reporting we have conducted meetings at the following places: Pleasant Grove, IN; Oklahoma City 21st, Turlock, CA and Harrodsburg, IN. These meetings were enjoyable and gave us an opportunity to see many of our old friends and meet new ones. At Turlock, we were privileged to stay with my good buddy Richard DeGough. This was the annual Memorial Day meeting and a great meeting it was. Crowds near the end reached four hundred, with preachers from all over the State present. The Lord willing we go next to Brookhaven, MS (Pearlhaven) July 14-21, West Point, GA July 24-28, McGregor, TX Aug. 18-25, Hartwell, AR Sept. 1-8, and Sept. 22-29 Blue Springs, KY. The work here in Springfield is progressing right along. There have been two baptisms lately and we hope for more in the near future. May the Lord bless his people everywhere.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview, W. Chester, OH 45069—The meetings at Golden, OK and Huntsville, AR are now history. It was a pleasure for me to be with both congregations again. Long time brethren, sisters, and friends contributed to my joy in both places. How wonderful it is to reflect on past "good times." A correction is in order. It is necessary to change the dates for the meeting at Earlytown, AL. The dates will be August 18-25. Please make a note and come help us. My "thanks" for the many cards, letters, and telephone calls in my recent bout with cancer. I am so grateful to Brother Ewell Byrd for his advice and assistance during treatment. Reflecting, I don't know what would have happened to me without him. Also to William and Denise St. John for their care and help supplying me a place to stay while regaining my strength. I am thankful that I never missed a single appointment, my schedule remains intact. Pray for me, please.

Jack A. Cutter, 12321 E. 14th, Tulsa, OK 74128, e-mail: jacknorita@integrity.com, April 30—This report is given to try and update you on some of the work going on in this area. We continue to sponsor Bro. Ronny Wade's TV program *Let The Bible Speak*. We are assisted by several congregations in N.E. Oklahoma. It is shown on Sunday mornings on Fox channel 5/23 at 6:30 from Tulsa. Several from the N.E. section of OK have written requesting copies of

sermons preached or to be enrolled in the correspondence course that is offered. Angus Acres Cong. in Broken Arrow handles the sending out of requests for lessons and sending/grading the study courses as they are received. The closest congregation located nearest to the address of those requesting material is sent the name and address of that person with related information. Since Bro. James Orten is now working with the 11th St. Cong., we try to make available to him the names with addresses closest to them. The Broken Arrow congregation has decided to "host" the Oklahoma New Years Meeting again this year. We have received permission to use the Union High School auditorium & cafeteria for the dates of Dec. 27-31st. (located on Mingo between 61st & 71st). The motel list will include most of the same motels given last year. (All this information and more will be made available later). In May, the Angus Acres congregation will have functioned with elders and deacons for one year. The work seems to be progressing smoothly in unity and cooperation throughout the metro Tulsa area.

Virgilio O. Danao, 94-371 Ikepono St., Waipahu, HI 96797; Telefax No. (808) 680-0249; VODanao@juno.com; July 9, 2002—Greetings from the Church here in Hawaii to all the faithful brethren everywhere. We are glad to inform you that the Church here continues to enjoy peace. We were blessed for the past Sundays of June because of the brethren from California, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Georgia, Colorado and Kansas who came and worshipped with us here in Waipahu. Their presence bolstered the spiritual morale, so to speak, of the brethren here. We also continue to have non-member visitors in the area. A couple who have been attending Sunday worship services in the past, but stopped coming because of our use of one cup in the observance of the Communion, started to come again. We are hoping that now, they will continue to attend our worship services and show interest, so proper follow-up studies be made. The leadership has been of great help in our efforts of making prospects for possible studies and in inviting others to attend our Sunday worship services. With them, I conducted studies with acquaintances in Whitmore (Wahiawa). It is very encouraging to witness brothers of senior age to work with me in distributing religious tracts and other reading materials in public places; such as, in "open markets." There is no baptism made, but spiritual growth is seen from the whole membership of the Church. Though sometimes it aches our hearts to hear statements, like: "We should have already been in your Church, if not because of your use of one cup in the Communion," and some efforts to undermine the work, we are not discouraged, for it is our joy to sow the seed—the word-of salvation to the lost and darkened world because of sin. I urge you please mention us, especially the Lord's work here,

in your prayers. God bless.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, July 15, e-mail: old_paths@junocom—We returned home last evening after an absence of about three weeks. The end of June we were with the congregation at Midland, Texas for a gospel meeting, which was well attended. A number of outsiders also came from time to time. Brother Duane Permenter works with the church there and has done a good work. He is respected and admired by them. It was good to be with him again after having made several trips together to the Philippines and yet another one is planned for January 2003. We made our home with Art and Nan Oestmann who went all out (as did the rest of the congregation) to make us feel welcome and comfortable. Duane and I enjoyed a brief visit with Joe Hisle who was in Lubbock at the same time. We pray good was accomplished in each effort. From Midland, we made our way to the Lebanon, MO 4th of July meeting for a few days and then on to Fairview, LA for a meeting. This was the second meeting we had held there and it was nice to go back. We certainly appreciated the hospitality shown by all. The neighboring congregations attended very well and quite a number of outsiders came also. Crowds were good, to say the least. We enjoyed visiting with Cecil Smith, Al Felder and Terry Baze during the week along with others. We are home until about the middle of August when we are to hold a meeting at Lees Summit, MO, Lord willing. Pray for us.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, June 4—Presently we are in a meeting at 79th and Kansas Ave., Kansas City, KS. with Brother Richard DeGough of Hughson, CA. To date there have been three confessions of faults. We hope for more results as the meeting progresses. It is scheduled to close June 9. So far we have had several visitors. We have done some things to improve the church property, e.g. new wall to wall carpet, new lights inside and out, new black board valance with lights and curtain, new siding, etc. We have solicited funds from no other church for these improvements. This congregation is self-supporting and helps financially other congregations and individuals as we have opportunity and we deem scriptural and appropriate. We have twice assisted the needy saints in Malawi in response to appeals for funds for the hungry. We appreciate the opportunity to work with such active and interested brethren. It is a real joy to be a part of a congregation which wants to be useful in the Lord's work, and brethren who are willing to spend and be spent for the cause of Christ. May the Lord bless all our righteous efforts and the faithful everywhere.

Richard L. Frizzell Sr., Rt. 5 Box 376, Ada, OK 74820, June 20, 2002—Recently it was my pleasure

to be with the congregations in Lubbock, TX., Tucson, AR., Covina, Yuba, City, Auburn, and Clovis, all in CA. it was also my pleasure to be at Amarillo, TX on my way home from CA. Here at home the church is at peace, and I am working with and visiting with different families in the church. One young lady was baptized last night June 19, at the Ada congregation. In the June issue of *O.P.A.* I made this statement about the turn out at my meeting in Linnville. OH. I said "We did not have a very good turn out from local churches in the area" This was a mistake. Some brethren drove for many miles to come to our meeting, all the area churches came to our meeting as much as was possible for them to do so. I suppose I was expecting too much. If anyone was hurt or disappointed, I am truly, sincerely sorry. And I ask your forgiveness. I was wrong to make that statement and I thank the brother who pointed this out to me. I did not mean to downcast the efforts of anyone, and I certainly did not mean any disrespect to my brothers and sisters. I appreciate all my brothers and sisters in the Lord in their efforts to support gospel meetings. I will continue to do all I can to build up the church and strengthen my brothers and sisters in the Lord. God bless the brotherhood. Please pray for me.

C. A. Smith, 810 N. W. 6th. St., Andrews, TX. 79714, casmith810@aol.com—We so enjoyed having Dwayne Permenter in Andrews to preach for us recently. It saddens us to know that he will be leaving Midland in a few months to go to Africa. He has done a good work there and is loved by the congregation. I know that they will miss him. We also enjoy having brother Al Baze with us, once a month. He has been coming over ever since the congregation began here in 1956. Also brother Mike Oeastman comes every fifth Sunday. Al and Mike are both excellent teachers. We wanted to announce in the *O.P.A.* our soon to be meeting with brother Daniel Smith, who desires to preach the gospel, and we want to do all we can to encourage him. The theme for our meeting will be: "HOW SHALL THE YOUNG SECURE THEIR HEARTS" We wanted to dedicate our meeting to our young folk, trusting that it will build in them a strong resistance against the follies of the day, and also impress upon the parents the need of their constant contact and counsel with their children. We shall not escape the judgment of God if we sit idle and see the souls of our young folk drift into the current of sin and ignominy. We are plainly taught regarding the responsibilities we have toward the youth among us, that we must not neglect them that their future and the future of the church depends upon the training that they receive from us today. The dates for this meeting is as follows: August 15-18. If you possibly can, come be with us. Greetings to all of the faithful. Pray for us and we will include all of you in our prayers. May God Bless His Loved and Own.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, July 9—We were able to attend two nights of the annual Sulphur meeting and enjoyed it immensely. We had large crowds, great preaching, beautiful singing, and cool, rainy weather both nights. I look forward to the meeting next year which Joe Hisle and Wayne McKamie are scheduled to conduct. Since my last report I've conducted several meetings. I was in Farmerville, LA in May for a short meeting just before Memorial Day. Terry Baze and the elders of the congregation worked extremely hard in inviting people to the meeting and consequently we had over 50 visitors from the community during this five-day meeting. In addition to the visitors from the community we had wonderful support from the surrounding congregations, including preachers Miles King, Chad Cranfield, Cecil Smith, Marcus Ayers, and Cleo Gatson. These were by far the largest crowds I've preached to in meetings this year, and yet the brethren there were disappointed because they said they didn't have as many people from the community as they had at Ronny Wade's meeting last year. I would be ecstatic, however, if we could get 50 visitors from the community at every meeting! After the last service of the meeting at Farmerville, I was thrilled that long-time friends Ken Mackey and Ray Alexander were ordained as elders of the Fairview congregation. From Farmerville we went to Killbuck, OH. Phyllis and my brother Benny and his wife Sondra were able to attend this meeting with me and we enjoyed it very much. We made our stay with Perry Baker's family and couldn't have been treated better. I was also in Covina, CA a couple of weeks ago. It is always a genuine pleasure to preach in Covina, and to have an opportunity to spend time with Don McCord. One day I drove to the school where Don retired from teaching last year and found a permanent plaque erected in his honor. The plaque reads: "Dedicated to Mr. Don McCord. A Gentleman, Scholar, Teacher and Friend. For his 47 years of teaching—June 14, 2001." It's refreshing to know brethren are esteemed in their own community. Lord willing, I begin a meeting in Red Oak, TX this Lord's Day. Please continue to pray for us, and may God bless us all.

Brett Hickey, 823 W. 5th St., Tyler, TX 75701, (903) 533-9782, brett-louisehickey@juno.com, July 9—We enjoyed our meeting at Modesto. Brethren from Ventura, Fortuna, Bakersfield, Fremont, Turlock, Atwater, Oakdale, Manteca, Stockton, Lodi and Ceres supported the meeting. Several area brethren helped knock doors in the area, generating several studies and a few outsiders to the meeting. Rod Wilson and George Vergara sacrificed five or six mornings to help Louise and me get the word out into the community. Wilson's were gracious hosts to our family and dozens of others. The Modesto congregation seems to be gaining momentum for future growth. On the way to

our meeting at Amarillo, we attended Lubbock's meeting with Joe Hisle. It was great to take in his powerful preaching and to be reacquainted with area brethren. The Amarillo brethren were warm and energetic. Everyone was hospitable, but Gina Knepp's graciousness was unsurpassed. We took in three services of solid gospel preaching at the 4th of July meeting in Lebanon. The emphasis on evangelism was—as always—appropriate. We look forward meetings at Hoyte, TX July 27 August 4 and Harrison, AR, Sept 25-29. We are excited about our radio program out of Cameron, TX. Larry Lay has our summer meeting in Tyler off to a great start with relevant sermons. So far Larry Lay, Glenn Ballard and three sons, Jonathan Edwards, Earl Roe and Ralph Sartain have helped Louise and me with door knocking. There has been a good response. This is our third and final year at Tyler, but the congregation focus and resolve is at its highest point of our stay here. Six have committed extra time to help set in order what is wanting in evangelism, benevolence and feeding the flock. None are qualified for the eldership, but strides are being made in that direction. We will be helping the nearby Athens congregation and scouting East Texas cities for future works. We will test the soil through the newspaper and follow-up in the most fertile areas with tent meetings. We have big plans at Tyler for the next 10 months, but we are also excited about our move to Nashville in June 2003. Pray for our efforts.

Richard DeGough, May 31—The Memorial Day meeting in Turlock just closed with Ronny Wade holding it. The preaching was excellent, the crowds good throughout with close to 400 attending the last weekend. The Church was strengthened because of the preaching. Ronny just preaches and lets the chips fall where they may. We thank him for it. There were two confessions in the meeting. We had Christians from several states, mostly young people. Their presence was appreciated and their conduct excellent. We look forward to a good meeting next year the Lord willing with Brett Hickey. The cooperation of brethren from all over the state was really appreciated - I'm sorry I had to miss the meeting in Fremont with Doug Hawkins, but attended one night in Stockton to hear Joe Hisle preach a good sermon. We are busy in the work with some studies with outside people that we hope will be fruitful soon. The church is at peace in Turlock, and the young men are growing in the faith. We had good lessons from young men coming from different congregations on Saturday morning service. We thank the gospel preachers who came and encouraged us. In the past months I have heard good gospel preaching from Ronny Alexander, Gayland Osborn, Joe Hisle, Cullen Smith, Barney Owens, Don King, and Ronny Wade. We are thankful that Larry McElroy has good health again, and continues to be a good teacher and leader in the church

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at Atwater. I appreciate the articles in the *O.P.A.* concerning women teachers. We have to remember if there is no command, example, or inference in the word of God, I would not involve myself in a teaching arrangement I cannot read. A woman's role is firmly established by the Lord, and so is the man's and we must respect it. It was a joy to have Ronny in my home, as well as Barney Owens during his meeting in Atwater. I leave for a months work in Kansas City, Ft Smith, and Brazil, Indiana. We look forward to being with the brethren in all these places. May the Lord bless the brotherhood with peace, unity, and love for the truth and each other.

Roger L. Owens, 16768 Heron DR., Neosho, MO. 64850; Greetings from the Church in Neosho unto the faithful in his name. The work here continues to prosper and grow in every way both within and without. Since my last writing we have received many into our number moving here from other areas. The Richard Frizell family came to us in June of this year bringing an abundance of talent and wisdom. Last year we received into our number the Carl Nichols family and what a treat to have them come worship with us. JR Gilstrap family, as well, have made their home congregation here and it is so wonderful to have them as part of the family of Christ here in Neosho. Brother Andrew Weaver came to us last May and it has been a blessing to see him grow and be a part of our congregation. We have experienced the restoration of some, and baptized others into Christ. The sad part of this report must tell you that some have left the faith having loved the world over truth. The work and duty of our congregation continues to grow and spread out into the community. We have a radio program that airs on Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. until 7:30 a.m. Each week we have our newspaper article *Issues and Answers* that seems to be received well in our community. I still have time to hold one or two more meetings this year should you desire to call me. I will be in Council Hill, OK. middle August. We have already enjoyed two wonderful meetings this year with more to come. Brother Reggie Kinser was in brilliant form and gave some of the best preaching ever. In May brother Wayne McKamie came with the thunder of heaven and the voice of truth as he spoke the words of life. I don't have to tell anyone that knows these two men what a powerhouse of preaching one will receive from them. Perhaps I forgot to mention the great and insightful message of Brother Allen Bonifay as he

delivered the great words covering the book of Ephesians. In late August we will receive Brother Johnny Elmore to speak our late summer meeting. This December we will be conducting the young men's talks in Neosho for information contact Lee Owens or Andrew Weaver. The congregation at Neosho loves gospel meetings and so we try to have three or four every year. Our fourth Sunday dinners are a real plus for our church family and seems all try to be a part of it. We are working toward the positioning of Elders and Deacons over the next five years so please pray for us as we labor for this goal. The congregation is united in our cause and worthy undertakings and what a blessing to move forward in harmony. One of our constant goals and labor is to pray for humility and mercy as we move forward in his Name. I must mention how much I enjoyed the fourth meeting in Lebanon. There were so many great sermons and such singing as only the angels have known before, but that is the way it is with the church of our Lord. We ask that if you plan to be in the area please call and let us know so we can provide for you a place of rest and comfort. Pray for us as we labor in his name, for soon he shall call us home to rest in the glory world.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA, July 15--The work with the Olivehurst congregation is still going forward. It is a pleasure to work with them and the cause here is growing. We have good, capable leadership and a few young men who are growing in the faith. Several Bible studies are conducted each week. The Lord willing, I will assist the brethren in Jonesboro, GA in a gospel meeting August 18-25. We are looking forward to being with George Battey and the members in that area. From there we are going to the Chapel Grove congregation in Tennessee to help them conduct the annual Labor Day meeting that is held there. The elders, deacons, and members plan this event well each year. The meeting place will be in a large tent on the same acreage the church building is on. This is an exciting time in that area and we hope you will come and share in this meeting with them and us. You will not be disappointed. These are hospitable brethren you can enjoy being with. They are doing a great work for the cause of Christ and we are looking forward to working with them in this effort. I have preached at Stockton, Escalon, and the north area church in Sacramento in recent months. God bless all of you and especially the cause of Christ.

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

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

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LEBANON, MISSOURI, SEPTEMBER 2002

NO. 9

CONFRONTING THE WINDS OF CHANGE

By RICK MARTIN

In Hebrews 8:5 Moses was instructed to make all things according to the pattern. Today many ridicule the idea of a pattern for the work of the people of God. They deny the existence of a pattern or call for changes to be made in the pattern. We must confront those who call for change and not allow them to move us from the pattern.

When someone speaks of a New Testament pattern, they are referring to a concept of a pattern that includes a belief and acknowledgment that the Scriptures are divinely inspired and that they apply to all generations. They have all authority. If one rejects this basic belief, then they are saying the Word of God is irrelevant and man is just left to drift.

The concept of a New Testament pattern includes the idea that the scriptures provide the guidelines to know the will of God and how to carry out that will in everyday life and worship. These guidelines tell us the boundaries for what is acceptable and what is not. It gives the specific requirements of what must be done and a sense of how these things are to be done to please God. Where a pattern can be identified and followed there is not need for guesswork and mistakes.

Patterns are valuable in almost every aspect of life. A lady in making a dress will follow a pattern. A child learning to write the alphabet will find a pattern very useful. Jesus left a pattern that Christians might "follow in his steps," I Peter 2:21. Patterns are very helpful. What is wanted and decided by one party can be carried out by all. This is the purpose of a pattern.

In the Old Testament, there are some verses that explicitly teach the concept of a pattern. The Lord began the idea of a pattern with Abel. The Lord clearly specified animal sacrifices and not vegetation. So began the pattern of animal and blood offerings and it was continued by Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Offerings with blood are essential in God's covenant with Israel. God gave Noah specific instructions on how to build the ark. Moses in building the tabernacle was given instructions by God. God gave Joshua exact instruction on how to take the city of Jericho. He also gave David a blueprint for the Temple. All of these examples show us that God wasn't content to merely request that these men do a certain thing. He

was not going to depend upon the accuracy or inaccuracy of their knowledge. He told them exactly what was to be done and how it was to be done. God has always given a pattern for his people to imitate. Had these men done any more or less than that God has set forth, or had they in anyway altered or substituted in the plan they would come under the condemnation implied in the warning from Hebrews 8:5. "Make all things according to the pattern."

In II Timothy 1:13 Paul says "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of men, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." Paul is giving Timothy a pattern or picture, or a sketch or diagram set forth in words which can be described as sound or valid. Timothy was to hold to and follow the pattern. Paul goes on in the next verse II Timothy 1:14 to say "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."

In I Timothy 3:14, 15 Paul in addressing Timothy says "these things write I unto you hoping to come unto thee shortly, but if I tarry long that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth." Paul was saying to Timothy "I am setting down in written form instructions to tell God's people how to behave when they are assembled together."

Because the scriptures are God's inspired and eternal word, our goal must be to follow the Bible as closely as we can. The directions or patterns that are given must not be looked upon as being out-dated or irrelevant, even though they may be unpopular with the world's way of thinking. They must not be changed or abandoned for ways that are more consistent with a modern, secular society.

We must be Bible Christians not cultural Christians. Some have allowed the culture of the time to sway and to determine how the Word will be interpreted. Many have seen how the world does things and like Israel of old they have a desire to be like the nations around them. People of the book must keep their eyes on the word with its inspired direction and pattern and honor and follow it to its precise details. Culture certainly has a way of influencing us and we need to

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Editorial

RAMBLINGS

By DON L. KING

In the 14th chapter of Acts is found an interesting chapter in the life of the apostle Paul. He and Barnabus had been in Antioch preaching the gospel but had been persecuted there in large part because of the efforts of some "devout women of honorable estate," (Acts 13:50). Shaking off the dust against them, the pair made their way to Iconium and preached in the synagogue of the Jews. As was often the case, many of the Jews and Greeks believed but those Jews who were "unbelieving" (Acts 14:2) caused trouble among the Gentiles. They remained there in spite of the opposition for a "long time" as Acts 14: 3 tells us before finally moving on to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. The Scripture says that there they preached the gospel (verse 7).

In this place so many things happened that a great tumult came about because of their preaching. Some trouble making Jews came there from Antioch who still carried a grudge. You know, there are some people who cannot rest until they have caused more trouble. Yes, and they are willing to travel to other places to get the job done! These Jews were full of hatred and malignity toward Paul and Barnabus. They had not been satisfied with the ousting of these preachers from Antioch. They literally wanted blood. The Jews who came from Antioch traveled 130 miles, at least, and those from Iconium about 40 miles to mistreat men who had not harmed them in any way, but they hated them without a cause. After they had strutted around the city making their accusations, the people finally stoned Paul and dragged his lifeless body from the city as they might have done a common criminal. They believed him dead, and he may have been. That might explain Paul's magnificent writing in 2 Corinthians 12 where he wrote of a man who experienced an out of body experience. Nearly every scholar believes he wrote of himself. However, Paul revived as the disciples stood around him and the very next day left for Derbe along with Barnabus. They then went along from place to place preaching the gospel and "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, 11 etc. (Acts 14:22) They also preached that entrance into the kingdom would be through much tribulation. No one could have preached that sermon quite like Paul! What a sobering discourse that must have been to hear. How we need such preached today! We live in a society where anything goes and even among church people, one finds the attitude that Christianity is supposed to always be fun and frivolity. Sad but true it is that some judge the success of a gospel meeting

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OUR DEPARTURE

By GREG GAY

As I write these words, Cassie & I are at the San Francisco airport ready for departure to Hawaii. We have spent considerable time, effort, and of course some money, for the trip to become a reality. We spent the day with our children and grandchildren then they drove us to the airport with good wishes for our journey. This is a special time for us.

Sometimes departures are anticipated with considerable dread. I have been worried about so many things with this trip. I worried there would be a lot of traffic on our way to the airport. Not so, traffic was quite light. Also, before leaving for the airport I called to see how long the lines were and how long we could anticipate waiting before we could board our plane. I was told our wait would be at least two hours to get through check-ins at the ticket counter and at the gate. When we arrived really, really early at the airport to our surprise and relief there was no wait. We walked right up to waiting helpers to check our luggage and to gain access to the gate area. I booked our tickets over the Internet months ago and selected two seats together. When I checked on our seat assignments via the internet recently those seat numbers did not show up. I called to confirm and was told everything was fine with our seat assignments, but I still had doubts. When we got our boarding cards, the seat assignments were fine.

All of the problems I anticipated up to this point in our departure were invalid. Should I have been so worried? Perhaps, perhaps not. It appears all the work we did up to the point of departure eliminated some if not all of the problems that were within our control.

Another departure.

"I'm not planning to go anywhere," you think? Think again. There is a departure we all are facing, the departure known as death. From the moment of our birth the clock of our life ticks toward it's final moment. Hopefully, that departure has been anticipated and planned for as carefully as eternity deserves.

Jesus warned: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul" (Mark 8:36)? We know it is possible to get so caught up in the busy happenings of this life we forget to prepare our soul for eternity.

Paul did not forget to plan for his departure. He said: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim 4:6-8).

Sadly, most people in this life will give a trip to Hawaii or the mountains, or desert, or anywhere, more time and attention than they ever give their soul's

eternal reward.

Let us be aware the moment of our departure is always at hand. May we prepare diligently for that departure by becoming Christians and working to be faithful every day we are blessed with this life. Then, let us be as ready as Paul to face the judgement and may our life have been so lived that we will reap the glorious reward of the righteous, a crown of righteousness!

Jesus is our travel guide for that final departure. He knows the way home. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:1-3).

EXPEDIENCY

By CLOVIS T. COOK

The doctrine of expediency has served some people well, while in some cases it has fostered error in practice. Webster defines the word "As conducive to advantage or interest, as opposed to right - a means to an end." The Apostle Paul said, "All things are lawful unto me but all things that are not expedient" (I Cor. 6:12) J.H. Thayer says, "For one's own profit, or advantage" P. 597. W.E. Vine, "To ones own profit or interest-mostly used impersonally" P. 62. Strong's "Be better for, be profitable, be to one's own advantage" Greek lexicon, P.68. Some authorities define it as, "To be profitable, or advantageous, without regard for principle."

A Thing Must Be Lawful Before It Can Expedient

Paul reasons that because a thing is lawful does not mean that it is expedient (Rom.14:3). God may approve of a man's effort., to exercise his other talents (gifts) while some others may not. It is possible to judge a person, whom God receives. The word shows if there is no precept, command, approved example, or necessary inference, then there is no authority for the practice...if unauthorized then the practice is wrong-Roy E. Cogdill, "Walking By Faith." For a thing to be expedient it cannot be specified thing is specified it leaves us no choice. A thing specified demand obedience! It is not something we may or may not do

For A Thing To Be Expedient It Must Edify

The word in the original means, "the act of building" and is used only figuratively in the New Testament-W.E. Vine. Can the leaders in a congregation edify and build up the church by claiming what they do in the work and worship of the church is right (some things at least) because it is expedient? Does being expedient work to the advantage or interest of the whole church, or just a few? I have seen this principle used among some of our brethren when I personally

knew, it did not please the whole church (Acts 15:22). How can expediency be advantageous to the whole church when the whole church is not apprised of the action? Alexander Campbell said, "The whole community (congregation) can act, and ought to act in receiving and excluding persons." He also said, "A scripturally ordained elder (leader or guide Adam Clarke) should take the whole church with them when leading or feeding the flock! Does he just lead and feed a few? Or the whole church? To judge a man on what we think is pure factual! Our thoughts are not God's thoughts (Isa. 55:8). God may receive him and others may reject him. I am talking about representative men in the church.

Campbell wrote: "The law of expediency, then, has no place in determining the articles of faith, acts of worship, nor acts of morality. All these require a thus saith the Lord, and the sacred writers have clearly defined and described them." This rule has been violated we clearly know. What will the answer be for those who have isolated this rule on the Judgment day?

I have been asked: "How does a congregation proceed in settling disagreements?" The Apostle Paul addressed this question in I Cor. 1:10 when he advised the Corinthians "to all speak the same thing, render the same judgement, be of the same mind" etc Fanning Yater Tant, A "war-horse debater" in his time, wrote the Foreword for "Walking By Faith" by Roy E. Cogdill. I heard him preach in my younger days. He said, "When controversy and differences are on every hand and when the peace of God's people is jeopardized, it is highly proper...that such churches may conduct earnest and careful studies of controverted points, sifting truth from error, striving constantly to bring forth the exact teaching of God's word on all matters of difference. The two fundamental concepts that Christians have always held (1) The absolute authority of the word and (2) the firm conviction that the word can be understood make it forever impossible that God's people should divide over any point of Bible teaching. For when any difference arises among them they immediately resort to the Bible with the query, 'What saith the scripture?' Then they continue their study until there is unity of understanding as to Bible teaching. Once that unity is reached, the matter is settled." Why in the name of common sense can't brethren accept this concept instead of rushing into judgement before hearing the facts? Why O why?

Expediency Creates Diversity

"Having then gifts differing..." (Rom. 12:6). "When he ascended upon high he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men..." (Eph. 4:8). According to sound reasoning, who has the right to defranchise a citizen from the kingdom of God and forbid him from using the gifts that were given to him? If no attempt has been made to prove he is in violation of the rules that govern his gifts and the proper use of them, (other

than personal feelings) on what grounds is he forbidden to exercise his gifts? Because there is more than one item of service to be rendered, consequently, it is needful to have diversity of gifts to exercise them. "Let us all walk by the same rule" (Phil. 3:16). One rule for all is the embodiment of one language such as they had in the beginning. (Gen. 11:1) Hence, to deny this means there is more than one rule. Such an interpretation borders on ambiguity. A citizen has citizens right, unless he has violated his rights and has proven himself to be unworthy. If a man has the qualifications to exercise more than one gift, who has the right to tell him which one he may use? Think on these things!

As to whether the gifts in Romans 12:6 refers exclusively to the extra-ordinary gifts in I Cor. 12:4-11 is beside the point. If they are ordinary or extra-ordinary, everyone who has a gift must have the right to exercise it. After the extra-ordinary gifts of I Cor. 12 ceased, the ordinary gifts, (natural talents) came into full use. "Now he that has a faculty of teaching and has undertaken that province, let him stick to it. It is a good gift. Let him use it and give his mind to it"-Matthew Henry. Unless he has failed in some who has the right to exclude him?

The word *apologia* in the original means, "a verbal defence." The word is used in several places such as: I Pet. 3:15, "give an answer." I Cor. 1:10 "mine answer." 2 Tim. 4:16, "At my first answer no man stood with me..." It corresponds with the word "clearing." W.E. Vine.

All the gifts in Eph. 4:8 (except the apostles and inspired prophets) could be exercised, and should be, after the super-natural gifts had passed away. (I Cor. 13:10)

To this function this writer was ordained as a preacher before the whole church in full assembly in the spring of 1934 having made my first public talk the second Lord's Day in July some 70 years ago. To my knowledge I have attended to this important gift, or function, according to the rules. I have made mistakes, but I have known how to correct them and to whom I should go. for forgiveness.

"To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him" (Dan. 9:9). I have responded to questions and answers on many occasions both public and private.

Thanks to the many brethren who have supported me for 70 years all over this land.

*I realize the time is near when I will
preach my last sermon and sing my last song.
And the exercise and use of my few talents will
all be gone.*

*But I'll never quit or give up the fight,
As long as my strength holds out.
For I'll walk by faith and not by sight,
As to this there is no doubt.*

-C.T. Cook

PEACEMAKERS OR TROUBLEMAKERS?

By PHILLIP G. PRINCE

It is indeed sad to see all of the differences that exist in the religious world. I dare say that it would be next to impossible for us to even stop and to consider, name and count all of the various divisions that exists in the religious world. But the saddest of all these differences are those that exist in the Lord's Church. Many of these divisions exist because of those who insist on adding innovations into the work and worship of the local congregation. However, it is equally true, and no less tragic, when those who worship alike, wear the same name, and preach the same doctrine, are not truly at peace among themselves.

We condemn others for the divisions which they have caused in worship and doctrine, yet tolerate, and sometimes even promote strife, discord and a lack of unity within our own ranks. In Rom. 12:18, the apostle Paul said; "if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." It is the responsibility of every child of God to work for and seek to achieve peace within the Church. God's people should long for and work together in an atmosphere where brotherly love and concern for others is the prevailing rule. Jesus said to his people in John 13:35; "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." That love, Jesus says, is a distinguishing factor between us and the world. That love, is the thing that sets us apart from the world. It is that love we should be known by, but are we? Can they see that in our lives by the way we act toward one another? Listen, when peace and love are not present, they must be sought after until they are found.

What is this peace that we are talking about?

What is this peace of which the apostle Paul speaks in I Thessalonians 5:13 when he said, "...and be at peace among yourselves." By definition, it comes from one Greek word that means to "cultivate or keep peace in harmony, to be at peace. to live with one another in peace." It's translated "peace" in the above passage. It's translated "one" in Acts 7:26. It is translated "rest" in verses 29-31. And in Acts 24:2, it is translated as "quietness" according to the apostle Paul, it is the responsibility of every one of us to work to obtain peace. We should work to cultivate an atmosphere and a spirit of being one. We need to have an atmosphere of rest and quietness and tranquillity and not an atmosphere where war, turbulence and violence prevail.

Lets face it: sometimes, within the body of Christ, its "flat out" an effort to keep peace. So why I should to go to all that trouble? That's a good question. In I Cor. 1:10 Paul says, "now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the

same mind and in the same judgment." Of all the things Paul had to deal with in Corinth, the very first thing that he took upon himself to solve was the divisions, lack of unity and the fact that they were not at peace. Paul said, "it is not going to happen. It can't work." The reason he dealt with it first was simply this: if they were divided they would be unable to deal with the issues that they were going to have to confront.

If they were not unified around the truth, the truth of God's word, they would not be able to deal with all the other problems that exist out in the world. So he directly stipulates "...there must be no divisions among you."

As children of God we have no choice but to learn to get along with fellow members of the body. In Eph. 4: 1-6 Paul states some undeniable facts of unity. They believed that, and we preach that. However, we submit that he is talking not as much about keeping congregational unity and oneness of the body within it as he is universally. Contextually he is sharing with us the fact, that as the Church today, we must be one. The question is, do we practice it? In I Cor. 12:12-27, the analysis is an obvious one, and one we can relate to as well. He says; "the spiritual body, the Church, is very similar to the physical body." He says that our physical bodies are made up of many different parts, with each part of the body having a job to do. And Paul says that the Church is like that. We're one body, but there are a lot of different members. We differ in function and ability, the way we look, and the way we are. But every one of us is necessary. He goes on to explain that even in the midst of difficulty, we're still one. And just like our physical bodies, we're to have that same care for all members. When our members are rejoicing, it is our responsibility to rejoice and be thrilled for them and with them, not be jealous of them, because they're part of us. It is a part of God's great plan that we have peace within the Church, and that we work together in the Church so we may all truly be one. If there is one thing that is condemned over and over again, it's division and not seeing the Bible alike.

There is a very common denominational theory today that says; "you go your way and I'll go mine. You believe what you want and I'll believe what I want, and we'll all meet in heaven." However, that theory is weak because division, not seeing the Bible alike, is absolutely condemned. There are many benefits for a congregation to be at peace. There is something about peace that is very attractive, that makes most of us long for it. Isn't it nice to be able to walk into an assembly and there be a feeling of unity and love? As you walk in the doors of such a congregation, you may walk up to a brother or sister in Christ, and expect to receive the right hand of fellowship. You might even receive a warm hug. There's always eye to eye contact, because, there's nothing to hide. This is a wonderful worshipping

atmosphere. As you sit among the pews you can worship as Christ intended for you to do. You never have to sit there and wonder what brother so and so is thinking behind your back. We can worship the Lord in the right spirit and bask in a wonderful worshipping atmosphere.

Surely we can see the truth in the words of the psalmist David in Ps. 133:1 where he said; "...behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" There is not a happier situation on the face of this earth, than when good brothers and sisters in Christ have real peace within the congregation; it's a good thing. It's a positive thing. It's something that all of us should want and be willing to work to obtain it. And listen, we can get so much more accomplished, when we're working together for the same cause, and for the same purpose.

When we are unified around the truth of God's word, we cannot and we will not be broken. We must stand fast with one spirit and one mind, working together for the good of spreading that good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul says in Phil. 3: 16: "... Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." He indicates to us in this passage that there is a rule that we need to go by. The fact that this rule must be followed by all of us would indicate that peace must be based on truth. We must be unified only by the truth. John 17:17 says; "sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Peace can never be bought at the expense of truth. The wise man Solomon said in Prov. 23:23 that we are to; "buy the truth, and sell it not..." You see, the truth is an incredible precious commodity. Listen, we don't want any misunderstanding here: the only way we can have fellowship brethren, is when it is based on truth. In John 1:6 John says in order for us to have fellowship with God, and consequently, one with another, we have to be walking in the light. In order for us to have unity, our unity must be based upon the truth.

Jesus time and again said that the reason he was sent to earth was not to do his own will but to do the will of him that had sent him. Jesus said that it was his desire that we, his people (the Church) be one as He and the Father are one so that the world may believe. Jesus says that they better be one, or they are not going to be successful. A lack of unity and peace is one of the devil's greatest tools. Satan has brought many a congregation down to her knees because of a lack of unity. If the cause of Christ is as important to us as it should be, we will make sure that it flourishes and abounds.

What causes divisions?

We have noticed the fact that we must be one, but let's face it, from time to time we have problems don't we? From time to time there are divisions and strife among us. We really wonder, what starts all of this? The apostle Paul puts it in a neat little nutshell in Phil. 2: 2-3. "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one

mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Paul says that we must do nothing through strife. Now a person who causes strife is an individual who "causes contention, factions and problems in our midst." "Vainglory" is groundless self esteem and empty pride." It is thinking of one's self more highly than he ought to. It's placing ourselves on a pedestal. It's our ideas, our desires, its what we want, and it's what's important to us. It's thinking too highly of ourselves. Paul says; "that's where it comes from!"

Most congregational problems can be traced to attitudes like this. When you look within the problems that congregations are having, almost every time, it is because somebody, or a group of somebody's, are just too proud and arrogant. Now it may be camouflaged in various ways, but when it all boils down, most of the time it because we are unwilling to submit ourselves.

If only we could learn to pull ourselves down from the pedestals that we tend to build for ourselves. If only we could learn to think of others and their needs as more important than our needs. If I actually think of your needs, of your wishes, your desires, your goals, your family and your loved ones as much as I do mine, most of the problems that come up from time to time, would not be a problem. If all of us would humble ourselves and not think of self, our stuff, our families, if only we would follow the pattern of the Lord himself, we would have the peace that comes as a result.

Brethren, it is the carnality in us that divides us. It is the strife that we have that divides us. It is the envy that exists among us that can divide us. Now the question is, are you a peacemaker, or are you a troublemaker? When things are happening, when the pot starts to simmer, when problems come up that can cause hurt, strife and divisions, where are you? Are you in the middle of it stirring it up? Or are you on the outside trying to calm it down?

Are you a peacemaker or are you a troublemaker? We should all have the attitude, as did Abraham when he said in Gen. 13:8; "...Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethren." Brethren, if we cannot get along with one another here in this life, what makes us think we may get along with each other in that life which is to come? The answer is, we won't, because one, or both of us won't be there!

CONFRONTING THE WINDS OF CHANGE

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be very careful that it does not pull us away from the pattern. As Christians our goal should be holiness and that means that we should desire to identify and follow New Testament patterns.

It is still God's will we seek to know and do and we prove our love for him when we follow his commands

(John 14:23) "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

The patterns and the teachings found in the New Testament are essential to identify and separate the Church of Christ from false religious groups. One of the things that we must be concerned about is our worship and is there a pattern that we must follow.

If it is easy to say what you do in worship is unimportant, just so long as you worship. This is certainly the attitude of the majority of people because man does anything and everything and calls it worship. Jesus teaches that what one does in worship is important and if one offers worship that is of human origin it is worthless. Matthew 15:9 "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

If worship is so important to our spiritual well-being, would God forget to leave us instructions about it proper observation today, when he was so specific about it in the two previous dispensations? God has not left us without a pattern concerning worship.

We have a pattern for our singing Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16. We should sing without the use of an instrument. Our objection to instruments in worship is not out of desire just to be different. It is because in churches led by men who were filled with the spirit, no instruments were used in worship. There is nothing to authorize their use.

We have a pattern for observing the Lord's Supper. It must be observed on every first day of the week because we have an example of a pattern Acts 20:7. We are also given a pattern of how we are to observe it. In the examples found in Matthew, Mark, Luke and I Corinthians, we see the Lord used one cup containing fruit of the vine and one loaf of unleavened bread. This is the pattern that must be followed.

We also have a pattern concerning the teaching. We observed that the teaching done in the Bible was always done in an undivided assembly. We have O.T. examples as well as N.T. example in I Corinthians 14. We are also told in this chapter that the teaching should be done by men because women are to be silent in the assemblies of the church.

We also have a pattern for contribution I Corinthians 16:1-2. These verses tell us when, who, what, how much and why. There is no command given for doing it on any day except the Lord's Day or for doing it in any other way.

We also have an example of disciples continuing in prayer, Acts 2:42. Prayer is a command of God and it is an important part of the Christian's life. It should be part of our worship.

What some want to pass off as worship today is nothing more than entertainment designed to appeal to the sense of men, who have more interest in satisfying their own appetites than they have in worshipping God. Denominations abound with all types of entertainment, clubs and organizations. As the Church

of Christ we cannot be influenced to use unscriptural activities in an attempt to build up a congregation.

From the beginning of time, God planned for men to be pattern-keepers, but from the beginning pattern rejectors began to appear. Man's pride over and over again has led him to spurn heaven's directions and to reject the pattern that has been given.

There are some issues of concern facing our brotherhood and hopefully and prayerfully God's word will prevail. In times past we have had parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and others on beyond who have stood firm and faced the challenges of innovations and change in the Lord's Church. They were locked out of their children's buildings and ridiculed by men who called for a departure from the New Testament pattern. Their heartaches, their difficulties, their pain and their tears must not be in vain. For we today must stand ready to face the challenges of change and innovations that lie ahead. And though the winds of "all things be done according to the pattern."

EDITORIAL

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by how much fun they had while it was in progress. Folks such as that need to see the bloodied, battered and disfigured corpses of some who went before us and who preached that entrance into the kingdom would be through much tribulation. No doubt a little tribulation would put an end to some of the ridiculous things we see and hear today. Likely, those brethren who stood around Paul's lifeless body after it had been dragged from the city would have been in no mood to misbehave or engage in frivolity. We don't suppose the brethren in Derbe got a group together for a ballgame or party after Paul and Barnabas arrived. The preaching of the gospel was serious business in those days. It might cost the preacher an eye, disfigurement, or even his life.

Finally, after arriving back in Antioch, they gathered the church together to tell them all about the journey they had been on. It is said that, "he who returns from a hard fought field, bearing good tidings, pants beneath the burden of his untold story." It would have been wonderful to hear them as they "...rehearsed all the things that God had done with them and how that He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles." (Acts 14:27) This before the assembled congregation!

The word "rehearsed" in verse 27 simply means to announce or tell, according to the lexicons. That was a service that had quite a long series of announcements. Apparently, no one complained or if so, we have no record of it. Today, announcements become a target for complaints and grumbling sometimes. As one travels about from place to place, he may hear no end of announcements. Weddings, gatherings for social enjoyment, announcements about those who are sick, what hospitals they are in, what the visiting hours are, gospel meetings at other

congregations and who the preachers are, where the all day dinner "on the ground" will be, who has charge of the church building, or "announcements" next month, etc. and many more. At the other end of the spectrum are those who will have no announcements at all until the assembly is dismissed. It always seemed to this writer that while we do not object to such a practice, we have the same assembly still gathered after the dismissal prayer. Seldom do we hear of complaints about such "announcements" but some are opposed to announcements about the subscription to a religious journal, or the sale of songbooks, etc. Some oppose the announcement of anything a person may have with him if it's for sale. The fact that it may be a non-profit item and of no earthly interest to anyone except church members is, apparently, not important. Naturally, every congregation must make its own decisions regarding such things, and we must all willingly abide by their judgment, but one wonders at the logic or lack of it. Enough rambling for now. Think on these things.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Do You Have The New Tract?

The tract "*The Role Of Women In The Home And In The Church*" was ready for sale about July 1. We had it available at the 4th of July meeting in Lebanon, MO and many purchased it there. Ronny Wade reports he has sold all but about 500 as of a few weeks ago. We understand that Brother Johnny Elmore has perhaps 1000 left from the Sulphur meeting. Every loyal congregation needs this tract; in fact, it ought to be in every home among our brethren. It appears that it will not be long until they are sold out. The price is \$45 per hundred plus postage. Single copies in quantities of less than 100 are 75 cents each plus postage. We understand postage is a bit less than \$5 to send 100. We do not plan to reprint it! If you want them it is time to order them today. Order from *Old Paths Advocate*, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, (e-mail:old_paths@juno.com)

Can You Help Expand The Circulation Of OPA?

If you are willing to help, there are several ways to do so. You can send gift subscriptions to those who perhaps cannot afford to subscribe or someone you think might benefit from reading the paper. You can announce the paper from time to time at your congregation and offer to send the subscriptions to us for them. We will reward you for that. Anyone who will send us 10 new subscriptions will receive a year's subscription free. Or you might wish to send a donation to help pay for the many brethren in foreign lands who receive the paper but cannot afford to pay for themselves. We do not remove a foreign subscription when it expires. We continue to send it from our own funds. We need brethren in every

congregation who will work for the paper in the above manner. Remember that there is no money ever paid to anyone associated with the paper. Many of us have worked very hard for many years with never a single penny for our labors. So much good has been accomplished in so many places around the world and America. *Old Paths Advocate* is now in its 70th year, having begun under the present name in January 1932. No paper is older among our brethren and we still believe it is worthy of your complete support. We need to increase the circulation. Will you help? May we hear from you right away? Thanks in advance! DLK

Note Of Thanks From The Spradleys

The family of Paula Spradley would like to thank the brotherhood for your outpouring of love and concern over these past trying and difficult months. The cards, flowers, phone calls, financial assistance, and prayers have simply been overwhelming. Whatever you have done to help lighten their load, if it was simply to remember them as you prayed, thank you! Please continue to think of Troy and the children and Lathan and Louise as you talk to our Father. We have a wonderful fellowship of believers and it makes you wonder how people can possibly fare without the love and support of such wonderful people. Thank you all. - KWP

Church Directory

Johnny L. Fisher, 184 Brace Rd., Summertown, TN 38483 has a new phone number - (931)829-2743; cell - (931)209-6288.

Note Change

Lexington, OK changing Sunday evening to 3 PM

Evangelist Wanted

The Church of Christ at Seneca, MO is looking for an experienced evangelist to work with the congregation. The congregation has a mixture of older and younger members striving to increase in knowledge and growth. Seneca is a small town in Southwest MO on the Oklahoma state line and is surrounded by several congregations within a small driving distance. For more information please contact Cale Greene at (417) 776-8937.

Can You Send Support To These Preachers?

There are 10 preachers in the Philippines who need support. Most receive \$150 per month. One or two receive \$100. The congregation at Fremont, CA is currently carrying this load alone and cannot continue much longer. If you will send to these men, please contact us in care of Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539 or e-mail us a old_paths@juno.com. We will be happy to supply you with their names and addresses so you may send support to them directly and they can report to you

directly. These men are doing a very worthy work. They are poor and deserve to be supported. May we hear from you soon, please? Thank you in advance, DLK

Birthday Celebration

On July 3, 2002 Sister Etha Cawthon celebrated her 94th birthday. This good Sister was baptized September 22, 1922 and has been a member of the same congregation (Lowery, Alabama) for 80 years. Though growing older, she still faithfully attends the services of the church. I first met Etha in 1952 when I went with Brother Homer A. Gay to conduct a meeting at Lowery and Earlytown. Through the years, it has been my privilege along with many other preachers to eat at her table and count her among my friends. Why not send her a card? Her address is Etha Cawthon 706 Plaza Dr. Enterprise, AL 36330—Ronny F. Wade

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

JAYNES-FORDHAM—Ethan Jaynes and Brooke Fordham were united in holy matrimony June 29th of this year before a large crowd of family and friends in Glencoe, Alabama. I was honored to officiate at this large, beautiful ceremony as Ethan and Brooke exchanged vows of life-long love and loyalty. We wish them God's richest blessings as they begin their new home.—Carl M. Johnson

WINDES-THOMAS—On the morning of June 21st 2002 near Camdenton, Mo., Brandon Windes and Ashley Thomas were united in marriage. The ceremony was conducted in a beautiful setting on a high observation platform overlooking the western part of the blue waters of The Lake of the Ozarks near the ruins of Ha Ha Tonka castle. Brandon Windes is the son of George and Beverly Windes of Richland, Mo. Ashley Thomas is the daughter of Bob Thomas of Springfield, Mo. And Rebecca Nutter of Lebanon, Mo. Many family members, friends, and brothers and sisters in Christ witnessed the exchange of vows by this young christian couple. The bride's mother sang a very appropriate song "Devoted to you." The couple are members of the Brumley, Mo. Congregation. We wish them a long and happy life together and their home will be a light in a land of darkness. It was my privilege to conduct the ceremony.—Dan Wissinger

COPE-MEENTS—In the beautiful evening of June 1, 2002, at the Mission Hills meeting house of the Lord's people, Springfield, MO, it was my honor to assist Glen Cope and Leanne Meents in exchange of their wedding vows. Glen is the son of Pam and O. D. Cope, Mt. Home, MO; Leanne is the daughter of Renee and Randy Meents, Greenfield, MO. One of the respected guests of honor was 95-year-old Bro.

Ralph Meents, Leanne's great grandfather, it was 50 years ago that Wanda, our baby and I stayed with him and precious Pearl during a meeting at Lee Summit. Leanne is a great-great-great grandchild of Alvin and Mary King, parents of Bro. Homer L. King. My esteem and respect for Glen and Leanne is unlimited. They are making their home near Crane, MO, meeting with the church at Mt. Home, where they are a great asset. Both Glen and Leanne are recent university graduates. Glen is farming and ranching; Leanne will teach school. I have confidence in this sweet, exemplary couple that the vows they made are "until death do us part." A large, respectful concourse of loved ones, brothers and sisters in Christ, neighbors and friends were present to witness the exchange of their lasting vows and to wish them only the best. I shall always be grateful that such a wonderful couple would ask me to stand with them and those they love on such an unforgettable occasion.—Don McCord

MASSEY-DOING—On the afternoon of August tenth, two thousand and two, Kenyon Massey and Tara Doing were united in marriage at the Hayes Street church building in Lebanon, MO. A standing room only crowd gathered to witness the exchange of their vows in a simple, yet very dignified and impressive ceremony. Kenyon and Tara, both Christians, are the children of Floyd and Joann Massey and Dave and Lela Doing. The acappella music was beautifully rendered and served as a compliment to the entire occasion. We wish for this good couple the very best that life can offer. The writer, who has known both Kenyon and Tara from childhood, was honored to officiate.—Ronny F. Wade



Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820 carlmj@cableone.net, July 30—We just closed a very good meeting at Red Oak, TX last week. We had consistently large crowds every service and had to get out the folding chairs a couple of nights. Every congregation in the Metroplex was represented during the meeting and every preacher who works in the Metroplex attended the meeting at least one night. I enjoyed the opportunity of working with Gerald Hill again. One man was restored during the meeting. I recently had the pleasure of baptizing a young couple in Davis, OK—Kevin and Kristie Martin. They have two little children and I know they are going to be a great asset to the Davis congregation. I am currently in a meeting in Bunner Ridge, WV and shall follow this meeting with one starting Monday night in

Huntington. B.F. Leonard first booked me into this area for meetings over twenty-five years ago, so I've known a lot of these folks a long time. Please continue to pray for our work and may God bless us all.

Jerry Dickinson—What an awesome summer I had, preaching for brethren who mind spiritual things and are focused on the good of the church. I preached at the following places: Bedford, IN (2 restorations); Jasper, TN (3 restorations and 2 baptisms); McAlester, OK (2 restorations and 4 baptisms); Harrison, AR; and Temple, GA. I enjoyed the fellowship of good brethren in each place, including preaching brethren Walter Hunter, Mark Deatherage, and Jimmie Smith. Juan Rodriguez came to Houston and gave us a report on the work in the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico. The church at Deer Park is supporting 5 preachers in this area and the work is expanding rapidly. I, and another brother from the church here, plan to visit the churches in that area sometime in November, Lord willing. As the work continues to grow there is a need to support more preachers. If your congregation would be interested in helping, contact me or one of the brethren here at Deer Park. My number in 713-455-4731 or email is misterjld@aol.com. This is a relatively new work in Mexico and the field is white unto harvest. We need to send more workers into the field and if you can help let us know.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct. Somerset, KY 42603, (606) 678-4347, hawkins@kih.net, August 1, 2002—I hope this report finds each reader doing as well as is possible by the grace of God. The months of May, June, and July have escaped the present and are now memories of the past. Since last reporting, I've enjoyed meetings in Fremont, CA; Capitol Hill, OK; Henryetta, OK and Muskogee, OK I've really enjoyed the hospitality in each place. It was a thrill to be with Don and Patsy King in May. They are great fun. The congregation at Fremont has a bright future with so many young families there. I'm thankful for them. I also enjoyed Richard and Elaine Butler as well as the church in Capitol Hill. The church there has been responsible for so many great things in the OKC area. Both meetings at Henryetta and Muskogee were enjoyable. I was glad to see old friends in each place as well as make new ones. The meeting in Muskogee closed with 2 baptisms for which we were all thankful. It was a delight to have John Strain, an aspiring preacher from Harrodsburg, IN with me for the meeting in Muskogee. Lord willing, he will also be with me at Strong, AR. While in Muskogee, we made our home with James Warren and couldn't have asked to be treated more hospitably. Our next venture will be to Missouri in Oct. to be with the church at Harrisonville. Also, we are looking forward to Ronny Wade's meeting here at Blue Springs the last week in September. Lord bless you all.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.com@juno.com, Aug. 2—On June 30 I had a near heart attack in the pulpit and nearly passed out. I became short of breath, but managed to finish the sermon and hung on until the communion was over. I was rushed by ambulance to emergency. At the hospital it was discovered I had fibrillation of the heart and a ninety five percent blocked artery. This was repaired with angioplasty and a stent and medication. Now I doing fine and continue to preach and hold my meetings. We leave tomorrow for our second meeting since the incident. We appreciate all the phone calls, e-mail and beautiful cards from fellow preachers and other brethren and sisters from all over the brotherhood. You have been very kind and encouraging. The Lord is not through with my services yet and I intend to continue to preach the Gospel as I have for the past 61 years. We begin a meeting at Valliant, OK this Lord's day. We appreciate your prayers.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65804, bddickinson@juno.com, Aug. 1—There is now a congregation in Ambato, Ecuador that worships according to the Bible pattern. Paul Ortiz, a native of Ecuador, is a student at Southwest Missouri State University. Paul lives with one of our members, Danny Crooks, and he obeyed the gospel in August of 2001. When some of Paul's family showed interest in knowing more about the Lord's church, we asked Juan Rodriguez, Jr. to correspond with them, and he did. Believing that we had received a modern day "Macedonian call" (Acts 16:9), we began to lay plans for a mission effort. The Northside congregation here in Springfield asked Paul and Danny to make the trip because Paul would provide contacts with family and friends, and Danny is fluent in the Spanish language. We had no doubt that Juan was the right preacher for the job, and we were convinced that Danny and Paul would aid him in the work. Due to evangelistic efforts by these men, three precious souls were baptized into Christ on July 13—Paul's mother, one of his sisters, and his 84-year-old grandmother. Juan also had contact with a cups church in the area, and there is a good possibility that a man from that congregation will take a stand for the truth. Please pray for this new work! Randy Tidmore has agreed to go the first part of August and will be with them the first two Sundays of that month. Then, Juan Rodriguez, Jr. will return on the third weekend of August. He plans to have a preacher from Mexico with him, Pablo Alvarez, who will work with the new congregation for an extended time. I am looking forward to holding meetings at Lebanon, MO (Aug. 23-25) and Paris, TX (Sept. 13-22).

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539, (e-mail: old_paths@juno.com) August 13—Since returning from Louisiana we have enjoyed

being at home for a few weeks. However, it is time to go again and we begin at Lees Summit, MO this coming Sunday, Lord willing. We lived there when I was a boy and it will be nice to see the old familiar places, and faces, again. Preachers, try to remember to send your field reports and articles as regularly as possible. We would love for every preacher to send a report from time to time. It only takes a few minutes and brethren everywhere benefit from it. Many tell us that the reports are the first thing they read. We always need articles from you brethren as well. Think about a topic that will strengthen the brotherhood and write about three or four pages, typed and double-spaced material. Much of our materials are now sent by e-mail to us. How much easier could it be? Pray for us in the work.

Brandon Stephens, Rt. 2 Box 99, Blanchard, OK 73010, brandonandkelly@hotmail.com—This has been a busy year for us. The work at Washington, OK, continues to go well, and we recently baptized a young woman from this area. In March we had a great meeting with Bro. Bruce Roebuck. As always, Bruce told us just what we needed to hear, and we are thankful for his strong preaching. April saw us go to Blue Springs, KY, where the first Lord's Day of the meeting we were saddened with the passing of J.T. Phelps. We heard nothing but good about this Brother in Christ, and our prayers continue to go out to all of his loved ones. The meeting went well (despite some rough weather that dropped baseball-sized hail one night during worship), and ended with three confessions of fault. In May the congregation at Washington had its annual Young Speakers Meeting. The crowds were good and the teaching was excellent. We were in Valliant, OK, in June. The hospitality of those folks is unmatched. Brother John Tidmore has provided that congregation with a house that sits next to the church building, and they had "get-togethers" every night. Attendance was good during the meeting, with several visitors from the community and the cups/classes church. From there we went to Sulphur, OK for the 64th Annual Camp Meeting. As always, we had some great teaching and beautiful singing. It was a pleasure for me to be able to host that meeting with Johnny Elmore. Kelly and I thoroughly enjoyed spending time with Johnny and Sally, and we appreciate them for their work's sake. My schedule is as follows: Norman, OK, Aug. 2-11; 21st Street in Oklahoma City, OK, Sept. 13-15; Bedford, IN, November 13-17. Please pray for us, and may God bless all in His service.

Joe Hisle, Rt. 4 Box 188, Ada, OK 745820: Greetings to the brethren everywhere. I am presently in a meeting in Orange, CA. The meeting is going really well, we have already had one baptism. The congregations in this area are a great help as well as the support of Bro. Don McCord. It has been a long

time since my last report so I will bring you up to date. It was my pleasure to be back with the brethren in Stockton, CA after a long absence. Crowds were excellent. The meeting closed with one baptism. From CA we traveled to Florala, AL for a pleasant reunion with the church there. The meeting was well supported by many of our old friends from congregations in the south AL area. Next we were at Lubbock, TX. Again the meeting was well supported and ended with one baptism. The 4th of July meeting at Sulphur was a real treat. Brothers Johnny Elmore and Brandon Stephens did an exceptional job directing the meeting. The weather cooperated, it was cool, preaching was excellent and the over all tone of the meeting was up lifting. Why don't you begin to make plans to attend the Sulphur meeting next year. If the Lord wills Bro. Wayne McKamie and I will be in charge of the meeting. We traveled from Sulphur to Miami, OK It was good to see the brethren in this area. We were supported by brethren in OK as well as MO. From Miami we traveled across the state to Moore, OK for another successful meeting. A young lady obeyed the gospel and a brother who had been away from the church for 13 years came back for which we thank God. I would like to extend a special note of thanks to all of my preaching brethren who have made special efforts to lend their support to these meetings, their help is very much appreciated. Following is my immediate schedule: Nashville, TN, Sept. 11-15; Wayne, WV, Sept. 22-29; Springfield, MO. (Northside), Oct. 5-13. Please remember me and my family when you pray.

Don McCord, Box 1773, Covina, CA—The Walnut Grove, KY meeting was a joy for me. I stayed in the home of Marvin and Joyce Cromer; I could not have been treated better by them and all the congregation. On the two Lord's Day evenings it was my privilege to hear Wyn Baker and George Battey, respectively, at Bandy. From there it was my privilege to be at Cable Ridge, MO where I made my home with Larry and Doris Thomas, their hospitality, too, is unsurpassed. What a difference an eldership makes in a meeting! The meeting at Arlington, TX was of lasting encouragement to me. My home was with John and Lou Spradley and J. B. and Louise Spradley, how could anyone be treated better? The preachers and other brothers and sisters in the Metroplex cooperated beyond my worthiness. Next, the meeting at New Hope, MS was a joy. Joel and Nita Smith's home was my home away from home. I could not have been treated better by them and the whole church. It was as always a privilege to visit in Bro. Lynwood Smith's home. I appreciated those attending from Hammond, and Monroe, LA; Tallahassee, FL; and in Mississippi, from Jackson, Jerusalem, New Salem, Pearlhaven, Hillcrest, and Jericho. Having 5 precious souls in their 90s attend at least once, was an unforgettable honor for me. They were Hallie Lea

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and Ivy Smith (New Salem); Earnest Montgomery (Hillcrest); Lexie Posey (Pearlhaven), and Josie Franklin (Jericho). The last Lord's Day evening it was my privilege to hear Kevin Presley at Hillcrest. I am just home from Kenai, AK. Dear faithful brothers and sisters assemble there in such isolation, the nearest congregations being hundreds of miles away. I could not have been treated better. It was a blessing to have brethren and sisters from TX, OK, and TN take time out from vacations to help us. Ed Daniel and his son, Caleb, Chapel Grove, TN, were of tremendous help. It's great to be home with Wanda, ours, and the church here. Meetings for the rest of the year, Lord willing, follow: Chicago, IL (Aug. 7-11); Opp, AL (Sept. 22-29); Jamesville, MO (Oct. 7-13); McGregor, TX (Oct. 19-27); Wichita, KS (Nov. 6-10); and Kennewick, WA, the annual meeting in the Northwest at Thanksgiving (Nov 27-Dec. 1) Our spring meeting here was with Bro. Carl Johnson; excellent preaching. Our fall meeting will be with Bro. Duane Permenter. Yesterday, Larry Lay here preached one of the finest sermons I have heard in a long time on "Edifying—Building The House," a masterpiece that needs to be preached everywhere. I kindly beseech the prayers of my brethren, a great need. I express sincerest gratitude to and for those congregations that still extend to me the honor of doing what I love to do above all else, preach the gospel of the everlasting kingdom.

Kevin W. Presley, 106 Whiffietree Way, Dothan, AL 36303, (334) 678-8999, August 12, 2002—It has been a very hectic spring and summer, but one productively spent in the Lord's work. I have been with the following churches since reporting in meetings; Jamesville, MO, Mountain Home, AR, Spring Valley, WV, West Chester, OH, Hillcrest, MS, Lee's Summit, MO, and Lawrenceburg, TN. I can say without exception that each meeting was well attended and an encouragement to me and I hope to them. I was able to visit with preachers who live and work in these areas such as Bruce Roebuck, Ryan Conner and Tony Melton and it was good to see the fruit of the labors. I am to begin a meeting tonight, Lord willing, in Columbus, GA and then we head to Bakersfield and Atwater, CA in September and October. The work here at home has suffered some setbacks lately but we continue in our work undaunted. The loss of Paula Spradley was a real blow to the church here. We have had at least three families move from the area in just the past two months and that has left quite a void.

However, good is still being accomplished. Our television program continues to reach out into our area with the good news and we still reap results from time to time. In fact, this past Lord's Day a couple from the Sunday School church took their stand with us here at Dothan. The church they left is battling a number of liberal trends from within itself and they predict that others will be leaving. We hope this provides us with a greater opportunity to reason with them concerning the scriptural worship of the church and perhaps they can be converted. Our other new converts continue to grow in their faith and this keeps us all encouraged. In July, Bruce Roebuck held us a fine meeting at Dothan. His preaching was strong and timely and we love him and his family for their work sake and also for their friendship to us. We look forward to Don Jackson being with us in November for a short meeting. Finally, we are already working to prepare for the Alabama New Years Meeting. The location of the larger services is yet to be announced with any certainty, but the meeting will be held December 27-31 here in Dothan. Ronny Wade will be in charge of the meeting. We had a thrilling and uplifting meeting this past year and hope that all who came will return and many more of you who can will come be with us this year. We will be sending out information in the coming weeks, Lord willing concerning motel information and directions to the meeting place. We look forward to seeing many of you still yet this year in meetings. The Lord bless you all!

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 10811, Springfield, MO 65808, rfwade@getatlas.com, August 16—The meeting at Pearlhaven church in Brookhaven, MS was enjoyable with good crowds at each service. One was baptized, one restored to duty and one confessed faults. We were next at West Point, GA. Brother Don Jackson lives and works here. A houseful of people greeted us each night. It was good to see so many from different congregations throughout that region. Our next meetings, Lord willing will be McGregor, TX Aug. 18-25, Hartwell, AR Sept. 1-8, Blue Springs, KY Sept 22-29 and Stockton, CA Oct. 12-20. We look forward to being at all these places, and pray God for good results. Shortly after leaving Mississippi we received the sad news of the passing of Janet Furr, wife of brother Mike Furr and daughter of Sam and Erma Lee Smith. We extend our sincere condolences to the entire family. The Lord bless them.

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. LXXVI

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NO. 10

HARD WORK AND DILIGENT PERSISTENCE

PREVENTING THE SLIDE TOWARD DENOMINATIONALISM

By RANDY CANTRELL

Author James DeForest Murch, in his book, *Christians Only: A History of the Restoration Movement*, observed the power of liberalism. Among other things, he credits the liberal movement to a new culture where inspiration of the scripture was questioned, where the gospel was insufficient for all the needs of man, where social concerns overshadowed spiritual concerns, where truth became relative, where "religious" colleges spawned intellectualism, where naive conservatives were outwitted and where a concerted effort was put forth to modernize the old paths.

Ronny Wade observed in his book, *The Sun Will Shine Again, Someday*, that those of us who scripturally oppose the modern Sunday-school and plurality of cups in the communion have gained ground due to hard work and diligent perseverance. He notes that we've done so in spite of ridicule and insult from those who claim we're backward, ignorant and out of step. Today's world produces more new knowledge than ever before. Perhaps that spurs on the desire by many in our brotherhood to abandon the old paths of God's Word. Perhaps they've become too smart to submit to God's law. Like the people of old who would erect a tower all the way to heaven, perhaps they believe they possess the power to direct their own steps and decide for themselves what is right. **Jeremiah 10:23** O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself—it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

The "liberal" label is objectionable to some, but it is fitting and appropriate. Liberal, in the sense that I use it here, refers to those who advocate practices beyond what is written in God's Holy Word. There are some defining characteristics that liberal brethren share. One, they portray themselves as advocates of brotherly love and tolerance (with all except those who combat them). Two, they do not believe in the all sufficiency of the gospel. They have adopted the belief of the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word of God. Three, increasingly they are impatient with God's law regarding women teachers and the woman's role in

the Church. Four, they are motivated to exceed the bounds of scripture by conducting workshops, seminars and other activities (sometimes under the guise of being a gospel meeting). They are fearless in organizing efforts outside the Church. Fifth, they claim a higher scholarship and knowledge. Sixth, they are putting forth a concerted effort to alter the culture of the "one-cup, no class" brotherhood (for lack of a better label). They see attractive qualities in the denominational world and are more influenced by that than by God's Word.

Conservative brethren, oddly enough, rarely if ever object to the label "conservative." Most wear that name proudly with the realization that many people throughout the past have fought hard and long to sustain the Truth of God's Word. Coupled with that realization is the burden to pass it on. They too share some characteristics. One, they believe in the Truth of the Scriptures and view God's Word as all-sufficient. They do believe that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian, but does so in and through the Word of God. Two, they believe fellowship is established by God, not men. Men merely execute the fellowship "laws" of God. Christians are limited in who they can fellowship because it is God who draws the line. Three, they oppose innovations including "church camps," Bible bowl games, societies/organizations (Christians Encouraging Christians), pulpit entertainment and skits and all other activities that cannot be supported by the Scriptures. They believe the Church is the pillar and ground of the Truth. (**1 Timothy 3:15**) But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.) Four, they are not nearly as concerted in their effort to thwart the liberal movement as the liberal movement is to thwart the conservative. Perhaps they are too worried about what others may think while many in the liberal ranks seem to be fearless.

The impact of the denominational world on the Lord's Church is easily recognized. It's found in the

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Editorial

AS I SEE IT

By DON L. KING

Some months ago it was brought to our attention that a new thing was afoot called "Christians Encouraging Christians" or "CEC." Since the little information which came into our hearing was scant and incomplete we have said but little about the matter. However, it was mentioned to us that the founding of this new organization was being compared to the **Old Paths Advocate** and hence we feel the need to say a few words. Some seventy years ago when this journal began wearing the present name, a brief column was printed in the January 1932 issue, the very first one. We reprint it below and hope all will read it carefully.

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 Campbell's 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: J. D. Phillips; Homer L. King; H.C. Harper; Homer A. Gay

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION

It would appear evident to all objective brethren, we believe, that the **OPA** is" definitely not an

continued on page six

THE QUERIST COLUMN

BY RONNY F WADE

Question: We have a family who has to miss church sometime, because the husband has to work. When they do, they have the communion at home before he goes to work or after he returns. Is this scriptural? (CA)

Is it a sin for a Christian to take his family on the vacation of a lifetime to a place where there is no faithful church and have communion in the motel room while they are there? (OK)

Answer: Both the above questions deal essentially with the same issue, hence I will deal with them as one. The Scriptures teach, I believe, that it would be wrong for those involved to have communion either at home or in a motel room for the following reasons: (1) The worship of the church is congregational in nature. Paul in 1 Cor. 14:23 speaks of the "whole church" coming together. In neither of the above situations has the "whole church" assembled. In 1 Cor. 10:16-17 Paul explains that one of the effects of the communion is to show the unity of the congregation. The "communion" of the body and blood of the Lord constitute a "joint participation" or a "sharing in common" by the congregation, in partaking of the bread and cup of the Lord. We accomplish that when the church has come together for worship. If we can observe the communion separate and apart from the assembled church, then it becomes an individual exercise, which is the exact opposite of the meaning of the word communion.

(2) The above situations constitute a violation of Hebrews 10:25. This verse teaches that we are not to "forsake the assembling of ourselves together..." The assembling together implies that the church has come together. "Assembling together" translates a word that means, according to Thayer "a gathering together in one place." When Christians forsake the gathering together of the church, and choose to meet in a motel room, at home, or in a vacation spot, they violate this passage.

(3) Someone might say "what about Mt. 18:20? Didn't Jesus teach that if two or three gathered in his name" he would be there? A careful study of the context of these verses reveal that Jesus is talking about prayer and not worship. No consideration is here given by the Master regarding the practice of a worshiping apart from the congregation because one is on a vacation or has to work. But, suppose that this verse does apply to the worship. Notice that Jesus said "in my name," i.e. "by my authority." The gathering must be "in his name or by his authority," in order for Him to be there. Nowhere does Jesus authorize an individual and his wife or family to have the communion in a motel room, or at home separate and apart from the congregational gathering.

Question. I believe that it is wrong for Christians to dance, but what about skating parties where young

Christians skate together? (MO)

Answer: First of all let me commend these parents for being concerned about the spiritual welfare of their children. I agree that dancing is wrong. There are many reasons, but for purposes of our discussion here, I will focus on one passage of scripture. In Gal. 5:19-21 Paul lists the works of the flesh. One of them mentioned is "lasciviousness." According to Webster the word means "wanton, lewd, lustful tending to produce lewd emotions." Synonyms of lasciviousness are licentious, lecherous, and salacious. An antonym of the word is "chaste." Dancing is wrong because it produces the very desires condemned by this word. There is a broad body of writing by doctors, educators, and child care professionals that testify to this fact. Does skating produce the same feelings and desires? Possibly, but from my observation usually not. There is nothing inherently wrong with skating itself should a boy and girl go through the same motions and movements, commonly associated with the modern dance, while on skates, there would be no difference in that and dancing. However, most of the skating parties that I have seen, there is no "couple" skating. Individuals skate around the floor, with no physical contact between the sexes. I personally see nothing wrong with that. In any event every parent should be involved in what their children are doing. Parents should be present at youth get-togethers, including skating parties to make sure that everything is carried on as it should be among young children and Christians. We need more parental involvement, more parental concern.

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

CAN A CHRISTIAN SERVE?

BY PAUL O. NICHOLS

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world..." (John 18:36). This is something all Christians should understand. Why is it so difficult for Christians to realize that we are in the world, but we are not of the world? Listen to Jesus shortly before He went to Calvary. He prayed to the Father in heaven, "I have given them [the apostles] 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. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14-16).

The apostle Paul shows us in Romans chapter 13 that civil authority is according to God's divine arrangement. It is given to govern the affairs of the world. It has neither part nor lot in the affairs of the church; it is carnal. Neither has the church any business meddling in the civil affairs of the world, for it is spiritual. The apostle Paul says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship

hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?

Civil government has the responsibility of making laws, and of enforcing law and order. And if person is in violation of the laws of the land, the government has the responsibility of punishing the evil doer. "If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:4). That is the job of civil government.

The church is the body of Christ, made up of people who are "sanctified, and called to be saints" (1 Cor. 1:2). Our responsibilities are spiritual, for we are now "servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). When members of the church, citizens of the kingdom of Christ, violate the divine laws of God which apply to Christians only, the church is required to deal with such matters. But if they are guilty of civil disobedience, they are subject to punishment by civil authority. "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons" (Col. 3:25).

In this day and time many Christians are receiving calls to sit on juries on cases which have nothing to do with spiritual matters. They are being asked to judge their fellow men and women in matters which have nothing to do with the church and things which are spiritual. Yes, juries are asked to judge a person guilty or not guilty. They may not be asked to pass the sentence, but they still do judge and cast their vote for either guilty or innocent. In 1 Corinthians chapter 5 the apostle Paul instructs the church to deal with a member who was guilty of sin, and assured them that he would be with them in spirit. And he pointed out to them and to us that we judge and deal with those who are in the church, but God judges them who are without. We have no business judging and disciplining non-members. Such is not the business of the church. Those who are guilty of violating civil law are to be judged by civil authority, not by Christians.

Members of the Lord's church should be some of the finest citizens in any country. The word of God teaches us to be subject to the higher powers. For they are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1).

And we are told, "Submitting yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." (1 Pet. 2:13) However, there is an exception to this rule. As Peter and the other apostles told the members of the Sanhedrian court of the Jews, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). When the laws of men conflict with the laws of God, we must choose to obey God, regardless of the consequences.

TO USURP AUTHORITY OVER

By EDWIN S. MORRIS

The Scriptures teach in 1 Tim. 2:12 "But I suffer not a woman to teach, to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." We believe that a woman may teach privately, informally or in an individual capacity. We have an example of a woman teaching children 2 Tim. 1:5: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice and I am persuaded that in thee also." 2 Tim. 3:15: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." We have an example of her teaching a man in Acts 18:26; "And he (Apollos) began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquilla and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." We have an example of her teaching women in Titus 2:3-5: The aged women are taught to teach and instruct the younger women. She is forbidden to teach publicly or in the church assembly. In 1 Cor. 14:34-35: "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."

Also 1 Tim. 2:11-12: God has placed the responsibility on the man to take the lead in the worship of the church and the affairs of the church. The apostles, evangelists, elders, teachers, deacons were all men. The question is: Can a woman or women take charge and do those things that God has given for men to do. Can they arrange, call together, assemble a group to have a study, seminar and forbid the man from attending? If a man knew about the gathering and came at the appointed time would they ask him to leave? *When this is done she does exactly what the Scriptures teach her not to do. "Usurp authority over the man."* What does "usurp authority over" mean? Thayer says: "to govern one, exercise dominion over one;" Strong says: "to act of oneself, i.e. (fig) dominate;" W. E. Vines puts it: "to exercise authority on one's own account to domineer over." *The Revised Standard Version* reads in 1 Tim. 2:11-12 "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent." Good sister, God has given you your place and what you are to do. You can do a great work and accomplish much by abiding by His teachings.

HARD WORK AND DILIGENT PERSISTENCE

continued from page 1

wording of public prayers in some worship services. For example, the denominations commonly use the phrase, "Lord we just..." (as in, "Lord we just love you so much. Lord we just pray for improved health. Lord we just this or that.") Too many of us have

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abandoned the pattern of prayer we read about in the Bible. We're speaking the language of Ashdod, not God.

Nehemiah 13:24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

Luke 11:1-4 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

We've seen men in our own ranks follow the denominational pattern of viewing God as our servant rather than realizing that we're His servants. Our prayers sometimes ring that message loud and clear.

The impact of denominationalism on our brotherhood is found in the willingness of some to embrace an expanded role of women in the Church. The recent articles written condemning the planned womens' seminar in Oklahoma speak directly to this fact. We have among us a group of women, supported by their husbands, determined to take on leadership roles in the work of the Church. Dissatisfied with God's plan, they want to do more (go beyond what is written or authorized by God). They are forming organizations (i.e. Christians Encouraging Christians), participating in church business meetings, impacting decisions of local congregations and publicly teaching the Word of God. They are not only usurping man's authority, but God's.

1 Corinthians 14:34 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.

1 Timothy 2:12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

The impact of denominationalism is found in the determination of some to mix recreation with Church. Camps are conducted from Oklahoma, to California. Recreation is the theme, but the Church is dragged into these affairs. This isn't anything new to the religious world. The denominations are more accomplished than we'll ever be in ways to attract young people. Prior to the advent of these activities among us (back in the 1970's or so), our brotherhood would not have tolerated such violations of God's Word. Today, the conservatives among us frown on it, condemn it privately, but otherwise normally say very little. Proof that both conservative and liberals are influenced by things other than the gospel. Conservatives are influenced by an undue concern for what folks might say if we openly condemn the

practices while liberals are influenced by the denominational world to bring as much into the Church as the rest of us will tolerate.

The impact of the denominational world on the Lord's Church is found in the concerted effort to push the indwelling of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word. They have determined that they will "preach it everywhere" they go. Dissatisfied with holding a private belief, they are determined to force this doctrine on others. Some have abandoned the faith altogether as a result of this view. Others have diminished the power the gospel because clearly there is more than the gospel available to us (according to their belief). The emotionalism of the religious world has crept in among us and the effort to take us further down that slope is strong.

Liberals seek to make comparisons between the conservatives and the Pharisees. This is strictly because their actions are condemned by conservatives seeking to preserve the old paths based on a "thus saith the Lord." It's also why the conservatives sometimes lack the courage to stand up for the Truth as loudly as they should. Unlike the Pharisees of old who relished in condemning others, conservatives in the Church are worried for the souls of men who would abandon the Truth. They are also concerned for the welfare of the local church and the brotherhood at large. Nothing is gained in division. Fear of division is an honorable motive, but failure to fight for Truth isn't the answer for unity. Instead the hope, the goal is unity in God's Word. You see, if the conservatives are quiet then the liberals gain ground. If the conservatives are loud then the liberals cry, "Phariseeism." It's a great tactic with years of proven success. The conservatives among us have stood silent for too long and it's not working! We continue to slide toward denominationalism.

Psalms 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

The source of unity is the faith (the gospel). Without that, there can be no unity. Without our collective adherence to the gospel there can be no unity. We each bear the burden to comply with the dictates of God.

Boldness and courage are needed.

Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

We need to pray for the same boldness so we may

work diligently to hold true to God's pattern. Brethren, we've taken a back seat for too long. We've remained silent for too long. We've tried to be compliant and accepting. It hasn't worked. It's taking us down the slippery slope of denominationalism. Even though our society puts a high price on tolerance, it's not our place to tolerate those things condemned by God. It's not our place to worry whether our stance for the Truth will be popular or not. It's our place to stand up and fight the foe that would take away the souls of men, even those who perpetrate actions outside the bounds of scripture.

Brethren, we have but two choices: (1) to become more like the world or (2) to remain unspotted from the world.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Our generation, like every generation before us, is entrusted with the Truth. We are responsible for maintaining the Truth. We're also entrusted with a new generation that needs to be taught the Truth. God deserves our boldness and courage to combat those who would lead us toward denominationalism. The Church deserves preservation. All souls deserve the opportunity for salvation.

Political correctness has stymied the courage of conservative brethren to stand against the liberal movement within our brotherhood. It has reduced the boldness needed to stem the tide toward digression. It's time to put aside the fears and worries of being considered hostile. The Truth and the Church are worth the fight. Besides, the liberals among us view us as hostile anyway.

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

As the years roll on, Lord willing another author will chronicle the brotherhood of our generation. I only hope they'll be able to write as Ronny wrote...that our generation gained ground against digression through hard work and diligent perseverance.

EDITORIAL

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organization. It is a periodical or journal, which means it, falls into the same category as tracts, newspaper articles, or any number of other forms of media. It is owned and published privately by individuals. It is not a work of the church nor is it intended to supplant the work of the church in any way, shape or form.

However, the organization "Christians Encouraging Christians" or "CEC" is another matter, "as I see it."

In Hebrews 10:24 the apostle wrote, "And let us consider one another to *provoke* unto love and good works. Phillips translation of this passage uses the word "encourage" which gives an accurate picture of what Paul had in mind. Much of the 10th chapter of Hebrews is an encouragement to the brethren in and around Jerusalem in many things. Among the things he urges is that every Christian, as a member of the church, provoke or "encourage" other Christians in all things that are right. There is certainly no scriptural ground there, or in any other passage, to form an organization separate and apart from the church complete with a board of directors, reportedly with a woman heading it all, so that Christians may be encouraged!

As Paul wrote the Roman letter he said, "If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them." (Romans 11:14) The word found in the original language that is translated "provoke" in the KJV means to "excite or stimulate." In other words, Paul wanted to encourage his fleshly brethren. How did he wish to do this? Did he envision an organization separate and apart from the church to encourage or provoke his brethren to do better? No, he did it as a member of the Lord's church. That way, you see, when he encouraged someone to live right the Lord and His glorious church received the honors rather than a human organization.

Heaven's institution for converting the world as well as encouraging Christians is the church of Jesus Christ. Let Zion, therefore, arise. Let Christians become wholly sanctified through the **truth**. Let them embrace the ancient gospel, and the ancient order of things. Let them act from the principles that these things impart to us. Let us always remember what Paul said in Ephesians 3:21. Speaking of God he wrote, "Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Of course we must encourage others! We have an individual duty to do just that. However, the church needs to have the glory. Virtually every innovation to come along has had its birth in the cry that "good is being accomplished." Those who founded the Missionary Societies boasted of the good they were doing. They were preaching in foreign lands, wasn't that wonderful? Who received the honor? Not the church and Paul commanded that "glory" be given to God in the church "throughout all ages." (Ephesians 3:21) We are not to do evil that good may come (Romans 3:8). We must be careful that what we organize does not violate some scriptural principle. Men, obviously well intentioned, through the years have devised many things they hoped would be a good work. The CEC, "as I see it," is one of those. Every church member needs to encourage others, make no mistake about it! However, the organization is the church rather than CEC.

We have not written these things to hurt or

discourage anyone. We take pen in hand only to "...provoke (encourage) unto love and good works." (Hebrews 10:24) Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your Help Is Still Needed!

Last month we asked for your help to expand the circulation of *OPA*. One brother sent us \$600 to help pay for foreign subscriptions, etc. Many thanks, brother! However, there is still a need. This month there are 73 foreign subscriptions to renew. The printers told us in the year 2000 that the average postage for a foreign subscription was \$1.40 per month. We all know postage has recently gone up again so this means that the cost of sending the average foreign subscription is more than \$16.80 per year. Multiply that figure by 73 (the number of foreign subs expired this month) and you have a total of \$1226.40 if postage had not increased! We will not remove any of them from the list and the paper will have to absorb the cost unless brethren are willing to help. You have always been great to help in the past. May we count on you again?

We always need to get the paper into more homes. Please try to renew your own subscription early and consider renewing for several years. Please, don't let your sub expire. We hope many of you will consider subscribing for a friend or brother who is not getting the paper now. If all would do this today, we could double the circulation overnight. We need church leaders of local congregations to announce the paper from time to time and send the subscriptions to us. Anyone who sends us 10 new subscriptions will get theirs free for one year. Preachers, please consider announcing the paper in your meetings at least one time each meeting and send the subscriptions to us. The paper is doing a great deal of good and deserves your efforts. It goes into several foreign lands and is read by many that could not have it if you didn't send it to them. If you choose to send donations from time to time to help in such an effort, please do so. Just tell us what the money is for and you have our word it will be used for that. Think what you might accomplish. A soul may learn the truth and obey the gospel because of your efforts. Please, let us hear from you today. Thanks in advance. DLK

In Search Of Personal Worker

The Fairbanks Church of Christ, located in northwest Houston, Texas, is seeking an experienced and enthusiastic personal worker and teacher. The congregation is looking for someone to help members spread the Gospel to the surrounding area, as well as to work internally to strengthen the congregation. Fairbanks Church Of Christ is an established congregation in a new location with new opportunities offering potential for growth. Interested persons

should contact Jay Messer at 291-469-5791.

2002 Preacher's Study

Northwest Twenty First Street Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, OK will host the 2002 Preacher's Study. Dates of the study are Dec. 23-26. The theme for this years study will be "New Testament Survey - Part 2" (The life and writings of Paul 35-58 AD). All interested persons are invited to attend. For additional information contact Cliff Arney (405-685-5437) or Duane Cutter (405-745-2581).

Statement Of Ownership

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Preacher Wanted

The Church in Denver, Colorado is looking for a preacher to work with them on a full time basis. They would like someone who is experienced in personal work. If interested contact: Larry Krook, 3200 5th Street, Boulder, Colorado 80304, (303) 449-0034.

You Can Still Order The New Tract

Though many of you have ordered the new tract "*The Role of Women in the Home and In the Church*" some are still available. If you will order them soon you can probably still get them. This matter has troubled the church in some places and we all need to know what the Bible teaches about the role of women in the church and in the home. We really believe every faithful congregation needs the booklet in their tract racks for the ready use of all that pass by. The price is still \$45 per hundred plus postage which is about \$5.00 we're told. Single copies in quantities less than a hundred are 75 cents each plus postage. Please be forewarned that we do not plan to reprint the booklet. If you want them, order them now. Order from *Old Paths Advocate*, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA 94539 or you may order by e-mail at old_paths@juno.com

New Congregation

Devine, Texas (Medina County)

In the home of members until building is completed. Contact Duane Rawlings; P.O. Box 83; (830) 665-6497 or Charles Finto; 1057 CR777; (830) 663-2646 for location of where services will be. Sunday 11:00 AM.

Oklahoma New Years Information

Besides the information provided in my field report, Union High School is located on 6636 S. Mongo Road., Tulsa. Services are scheduled as follows: 12-

27-02 Friday, 7:30 PM; Saturday (28) 10:00 AM & 7:30 PM; Sunday AM Services (29) Area Congregations & 7:30 PM (school); Monday (30) 10:00 AM & 7:30 PM and 11:00 PM singing. Additional information (motels, maps, etc.) go to www.gospel-tulsa.org or Jack Cutter: 918-437-6760 or jacknorita@integrity.org or Joe Ferguson 918-369-6631 or joeandsondra@juno.com. Make plans now - Everyone is welcome.—Jack A. Cutter.

OUR DEPARTED

BERRY—Jewel (Franklin) Berry departed this life Jan. 14, 2002 in Davis, CA at the age of 96. Jewel was born one of eight children Dec. 13, 1905 in Milam, Texas to William and Elizabeth Franklin. Jewel married George Dewey Berry Jan. 14, 1922. They raised two daughters, Lillie Mae Branscum and Thelma Lee Mytys. After moving from New Mexico in 1939, Jewel went to different congregations; and in 1960 started attending the congregation in Winters, CA. She attended regularly even when she got up in years and when she felt weak and ill. She was able to stay in her home with the aid of her daughters until her death. She read her Bible daily and loved people and the Church. She was preceded in death by her husband of 63 years of marriage in 1986, all but two sisters and one brother, and two grandchildren. Her funeral was held in Winters with a large crowd in attendance. She was a member of the North Area Sacramento, CA congregation at the time of her death. She will be greatly missed.

GOWEN—Maude Etta Gowen departed this life on June 28, 2002 at the age of 97 years. Maude obeyed the gospel in 1936 when Brother James Steward baptized her into Christ. She was born in Lauderdale Co., AL and passed away in Columbia, TN. Maude never married but helped to raise a large family. I knew Maude for many years and admired and loved her as a sister in Christ. She is survived by three sisters and several nieces and nephews. At death her spirit returned unto God who gave it, and her body rests in the Mitchell Cemetery in Anderson, AL—Johnny Fisher

CREECH—Brother Luke Creech was born on May 31, 1915 in the state of Alabama. He spent the majority of his life living in the Kinston, AL community and was a faithful and devout member of the church at Earlytown along with his wife. Bro. Creech succumbed to the effects of cancer and took his flight to the world beyond on Saturday, March 16, 2002. His wife Ruby preceded him in death in January 2000. His four children and their respective families survive him. Although Luke took on no public role in the assembly of the church he was a great asset. He was unashamed to tell others about

Christ and His church and loved to support the preaching of the gospel. He liked to hear it preached plain and straight. He was from “the old school” in every way you might imagine. He cared little for the luxuries of this world. His life was simple, humble and reverent toward God. He was a friend to us all and we will miss him. His body rests in the old Earlytown cemetery along with many other saints who await the resurrection of the just. This writer was honored to conduct the funeral service.

COLDIRION—Brother Alton Coldirion was born February 22, 1908 and died July 10, 2002 at the age of 94 at home in Sand Grove, Texas where he spent virtually his whole life. He is survived by his wife of 74 years Eunice, one daughter, Joyce Collins, and two sons, Bobby and J.R. Coldirion. He had 6 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and 6 great-great-grandchildren. He was buried in the Sand Grove Cemetery just a few yards from the Sand Grove Church of Christ. I have known Brother Alton for 32 years and for most of that time have preached at the Sand Grove church the second Sunday of each month. The first time I went to Sand Grove the church house was overflowing and the singing was some of the best I have heard anywhere. Through the years the old folks have died one by one and the younger folks have either moved away or dropped out of the church. Today there are just a few left and with the passing of Brother Coldirion the church will be hard pressed to keep on going. Brother Alton loved the church and in the last few years he and I talked at length about the future of the church. He also loved his family and he and Sister Eunice were a remarkable couple. They were married 74 years. Brother Alton told me once that every morning he made up his side of the bed and Sister Coldirion would make up her side, then they would eat breakfast together, after which they sat side by side in their recliners and read the Bible for 15 minutes. After that they started their daily work. I thought to myself. No wonder they have been married 74 years! I am going to miss him. The Lord promised old Simeon he would live to see the Messiah, and after he did he exclaimed, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” (Luke 2:29) Blessed be the man, like Brother Coldirion, who can depart in peace, knowing he has seen the salvation of the Lord.—Jerry Dickinson

VANNOY—James P. Vannoy of Bridgeport, Texas was born Nov. 20, 1927 in Ringgold, Texas, the son of James William Vannoy and Edweauna Wharton Vannoy. James passed away in Decatur, Texas on December 19, 2001 at the age of 74. The death of James came suddenly and was a great shock to all of us. James was a longtime resident of Bridgeport and was very well known to everyone in the entire area in that he worked for years as an agent for American

National Insurance. James was married to Willa June Teague on December 22, 1946 in Nocona, Texas. James and June were true yoke persons, working together in their professions and in the Lord's Church. Know only to God are the number of persons that they talked with, worked with in trying to bring them to Christ. James was one of the best personal workers that I ever worked with; he was absolutely untiring in such work. He was a preacher of the gospel and the church in Bridgeport bears his mark. June, his dear wife continues to do what she can for the Cause that they worked so hard to begin and sustain in that area. James is also survived by his son Jimmy and his wife Diane; his daughter Janet Powers and her husband Robert; and he leaves grandchildren Sarah, Julie, Penny and Michael; two great-grandchildren, Brooke and Lyndsey. James has one sister, LaVerne Barker. A great host gathered at Hawkins Funeral Home in Bridgeport to honor the memory of James Vannoy and many traveled the many miles to Ringgold Cemetery in Montague County. The Church has lost a great man and worker. Wayne Fussell and I conducted the service. -J. Wayne McKamie

COFIELD—John M. Cofield was born October 19, 1926 at Quanah, TX, and passed from this life May 21, 2002 at Altus, OK as the result of a collision of his pickup with an 18 wheeler truck. John was born and raised in a half dugout and grew up and worked on a ranch as a genuine cowboy. He loved his horses and knew them as few men do. He became a diesel mechanic and was very knowledgeable in that field. He was respected by the many people who knew him for his ability and honesty. He was married to Ethel Lee Hopkins of the Sentinel, OK, October 30, 1960. He and Ethel had one son, Brent Cofield. John had several close brushes with death, but was always spared until his fatal accident. He and Ethel were longtime members of the congregation at Sentinel, OK John leaves to mourn his passing his faithful and loving wife, Ethel, his son, Brent, a daughter-in-law, Eileen, three grandsons, Kent, Chad, and John Robert Cofield; three sisters-in-law, Maureen Freeman of Oklahoma, Veva and Dorthy Janes of Washington state; and two brothers-in-law, Dean Hopkins and Mike Hopkins of Oklahoma. The large attendance at the memorial service at Altus attested to the respect that both Christians and non members of the church had for John. The singing was beautifully rendered by fellow Christians. The burial was at Sentinel. Charles Pruitt and I were honored to have a part in the memorial service for this good man.—Paul O. Nichols



Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, Sept. 10—Phyllis and I attended two days of the Texas Labor Day meeting and we enjoyed it very much. As an Oklahoman it is hard for me to concede that anything in Texas is “the biggest,” but Sunday night’s crowd of nearly 800 people was the largest crowd I’ve ever seen at a Labor Day meeting. I’m scheduled to preach here at home both services Sunday and next week I am to begin a five-day meeting at the Stateline congregation near Seneca, MO. My schedule for the next couple of months also includes La Grange, GA (Oct. 5-13) and Fremont, CA (Oct. 27-Nov. 3). For about twenty years, Joe Hisle, Don Pruitt and I have conducted a weekend meeting in Seminole, OK; usually the first full weekend in December. This year, however, the Seminole congregation has decided to suspend the meeting because of some hard times the congregation is experiencing. Some members have been stricken with serious illnesses and others have moved to different parts of the state. Brother D.J. Byrd from the Davis, OK congregation called recently and said the Davis congregation would like to host that meeting as it would have been conducted in Seminole. Consequently, Joe, Don, and I are scheduled to conduct the weekend meeting in Davis, December 6-8. We are also looking forward to the annual Preachers’ Study in Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma New Year’s Meeting being conducted at Tulsa Union High School beginning December 27. The New Year’s meeting is being hosted again by the Broken Arrow congregation, and the elders of the congregation have asked me to conduct the services. For information about the meeting see the Internet at: www.gospel-tulsa.org

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42503, hawkins@kih.net, (606) 678 - 4347, September 10, 2002—In the month of August, I was privileged to conduct meetings in Strong, AR and Chestnut Ridge, KY. Both meetings were well attended and very enjoyable to be at. In Arkansas, I was happy to see the old friends I have in the Arkansas/Louisiana area. While there I made my home with John and Marvene Saunders, a place I have come to call home. It was also good to be with Deaton Norsworthy. The meeting in Chestnut Ridge went well. Bro. Ova Baker has done a tremendous job working with this church. I commend his work and

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his faithfulness to the cause of Christ. In October, I am planning to be with the church at Harrisonville, MO (Oct. 9-13). We would love to have you if you're nearby.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr., Fremont, CA, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, September 12, 2002 - We recently returned from a good meeting at Lees Summit, near Lebanon, MO. Several outsiders were in attendance through the week as well as many from surrounding congregations. A number of preaching brethren came most of the week, which was greatly appreciated. The building was pretty well filled some of the time. My boyhood was largely spent there and it was nice to go back. Dave and Lela Doing opened their home to me and I couldn't have been treated better. Hospitality is alive and well in that congregation. There were more places to go than time allowed. We look forward to returning in a couple of years. Since returning home, we have been able to preach on Lord's day at Yuba City, CA and are scheduled to be at Stockton next Sunday and the home church after that. Our next meeting, Lord willing, will be with the group at Fossil Creek in Fort Worth, TX Oct. 20-27. Please pray for us.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct., Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, September 3 - We had a very enjoyable meeting at Valliant, OK. We had some outside interest and several visitors from many congregations. People in that part of the brotherhood are to be commended. They will still drive great distances to support the preaching of the gospel. Preaching brethren, William St. John and Ralph Noack, were great to attend several services and were a big help to us. Glenn Van Stavern and his wife from Springfield, MO came and attended the whole meeting and were a source of encouragement. Gene and Bernice Hopkins, and Marlet Howard drove from Tulsa (about three and a half hours one way) to attend one service. I was asked to return in 2005. My next meetings will be at Washington, OK, Sept. 15-22; at Lawrenceburg, TN, Oct. 25-26. May the Lord bless all of our righteous efforts.

Jimmie C Smith, 5100 Rail Rd, Harrison, AR 72601, cjsmfth@alltel.net, Sept. 9 - Since last reporting we enjoyed laboring with the Aurora, MO congregation in a meeting that was well attended by sister congregations from a wide radius. We always enjoy laboring with Roy Lee Criswell and regretted that Zella had to make several trips during the week to Henrietta, OK because her mother was near death. Roy Lee hasn't regained his stamina from bypass surgery, but yet labored eleven hours in one day alone passing out handbills before the meeting began. We enjoyed the preaching, singing and renewed acquaintances at the Lebanon Meeting. Jerry

Dickinson began a week long meeting here on July 7th. His preaching is the kind that is solid, conservative, and draws a consistently good audience from within and without. We enjoy the help of Mtn. Home, Hartwell and Locust in our evangelistic endeavors. Next I went to Baton Rouge for a meeting where they are few in number but enjoy the preaching of Truth. We enjoyed the help of brethren from New Salem and Hillcrest who drove the 180 mile round trip several nights of the meeting. We sorrow with Billy Ray and Linda Hilton over the death of their eldest son, Bill Hilton shortly after our meeting closed. Bill was in attendance on Sunday of the meeting. Next we went to Napoleon, AL where we enjoyed the largest crowds I've ever witnessed in my meetings at Napoleon where a fine teenager obeyed the gospel. Several area preachers graced the meeting with their presence and LaGrange and West Point I thought were outstanding in their support. Marietta and Temple also attended well. Since returning home I assisted two teenage girls in their obedience to the gospel, having baptized their parents some twenty years ago. The Missouri Labor Day meeting at Columbia was very positive and Conservative. I heard several say that they hoped Columbia would host it again next year. Ronny Wade concluded a good meeting at Hartwell last night and Brett Hickey is to be here in Harrison in a couple weeks. Let the modernists and liberals know, like the Hebrew children and a song suggests—"We will not bow, we will not bend, we will not burn".

Cullen Smith, 4217 McNeil Ave., Wichita Falls, TX 76308, (940) 689-9314, August 28th - We just concluded a GREAT meeting with Brother Lynwood Smith! We had over 25 first time visitors from the community and it comes as no shock that the majority of people who attended the meeting were direct results of our members inviting their family and friends. There is no better preaching to be heard than the sermons we received during this meeting and we commend Lynwood for the tremendous job he did for us here. His sermons fit the audience and sent some visitors back home to "ask their preacher" and they came back almost every night of the meeting. Just before the meeting with Lynwood two souls were baptized into Christ here at Crestview and the meeting came at a great time also for our "**LET THE BIBLE SPEAK**" television broadcast with Ronny Wade. We appreciate Ronny for his organization and preaching and it has been a wonderful thing for us already with steady mail, several leads, and a good number of visitors to Lynwood's meeting. Since last time writing in, I was in Galey OK for a meeting with the brethren there. They are a good group with a wonderful spirit about them an great potential for the future with some young men who are up and coming in the leadership roles. I appreciate Ron and Darlene Smith's 'home away from home' hospitality while I was there and

thanks to the Church in Ada for supporting the meeting especially Tyler Watson who you can always depend on to support a gospel meeting if he is within driving distance. I look forward to being in Conway, LA Sept. 13-15 & Capital Hill, OK Oct. 4-6, Lexington, OK Oct. 9-13, Ardmore, OK, Oct. 23-27. May God bless the brotherhood of preachers as the winds of doctrine blow among our people.

Alton B. Bailey, 410 Ginger Circle, LaGrange, GA. 30240, E-mail Address: abbailey@mindspring.com—All things continue well here in LaGrange. We baptized another lady July 11th and still another sister moved to the LaGrange area recently. It always helps having two new names in the congregation. My meetings have all been most enjoyable this year. At this writing I am in a meeting in Hernando, FL. There was one restored to the faith last night. This congregation here has been referred to as “Dunnellon, FL” until their new building was completed. They begin meeting in the new building the first of this year. We surely encourage anyone passing this way to visit and worship with them. It has been sometime since I reported to the *OPA*. I will only make note back to the 4th of July meeting at Sulphur, OK. It was wonderful being with and visiting with people from across the country again. The teaching was all very good. I want to highly commend our young men that spoke. There were about 20 of them and everyone did an outstanding job. They knew what they were going to say and said it well. I was with the White Bluff, TN congregation July 21-28. There was one baptized and one restored to the faith. It was a real treat to be in the home of M.R. and Shirley Kimbro again. They are such strong and wonderful people. I preached four services in Greenville, SC in July and Aug. My next meetings will be at the following places; Lone Rock, AR Sept. 11-15; Walnut Grove, KY. Oct. 20-27; Tucson, AR the last part of November. Lord willing I plan to attend the Tennessee Labor Day meeting at the Chapel Grove congregation near Lawrenceburg, TN. God bless all the brotherhood. Please pray for us, our health, travels and work in the Lord.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, September 3, 2002—August 18-25 we were in a meeting with the Jonesboro, GA congregation. It was a pleasure to work with these brethren. They had advertised the meeting in different ways and we had visitors as a result of their work. Bro. George Battey is working with this congregation and it has been growing. We had good attendance. Members from other congregations in the area attended well and encouraged us very much. It was a pleasure to stay in the Battey home. Their hospitality was great as they made us feel right at home. They are an asset to the work there. The interest each family there has is a joy to see. We enjoyed the meeting very much. From

there we went to the Chapel Grove congregation in Tennessee for the annual Tennessee Labor Day meeting. Many of the members from Jonesboro, GA and the surrounding area came and attended this meeting as they do each year. The meeting was held in a tent measuring 100' by 40'. The church worked so hard to have everything ready and the meeting really went well. We had people present from at least 14 states and many speakers from the different areas participated. The singing was beautiful. The elders, deacons, preachers and other members of the Chapel Grove church saw to it that a high degree of spirituality prevailed and that the physical needs of the visitors were met. There was a tremendous attendance by young men and women whose parents brought them to the meeting. Sunday afternoon, the last service of the meeting, the young men spoke. This service was one of the many highlights of the meeting. It was my pleasure to work with the elders in hosting this meeting and also to work with Bro. Ed Daniels, one of the evangelists that Chapel Grove has ordained in organizing each service. It has also been our pleasure to have Doyle and Nancy Elliott from Bakersfield, CA traveling with us for these meetings. They have helped us very much. On this trip I also preached at the Broomfield, CO congregation and stopped by for one night of the meeting in Mozier, IL conducted by Bro. Duane Permenter. May the Lord bless all of you.

Jack A. Cutter, 12321 E. 14th, Tulsa, OK 74128, jacknorita@integrity.com, Sept. 6—This report will include my Field Report and some of the details concerning the Oklahoma New Year's Meeting. It is scheduled for December 27-31. It is to be held in at the Tulsa Union H.S. auditorium. The overseeing congregation is Broken Arrow. Bro. Carl Johnson is to be in charge of selecting speakers and managing this part of the services. Bro. Luke Post has been selected for arranging and selecting the younger speakers for the last night. (Specific details of the meeting will be given elsewhere in the *OPA*.) The work in this area continues to progress. We continue to sponsor (with the aid several other churches) Bro. Ronny Wade's T.V. program “*Let The Bible Speak.*” We are busy keeping up with those who write in desiring information or correspondence courses or copies of sermons preached, and visiting. There have been a few baptisms and restoration over the past several month, and the congregation is doing well. God bless all of the believers and please “pray for us.”

Reggie Kinser, 501 Peabody Road, Columbia, MO 65202, (573) 874-3535, rkinser@msn.com, September 11, 2002—Please note the change of address and phone number. The congregation at Columbia recently had the wonderful privilege of hosting the Missouri Labor Day Meeting. This was

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the first time our congregation had engaged in such an undertaking. I think everyone involved agrees that it was a huge success. Several brethren have commented to me that the preaching was some of the best they have ever heard. With this, I agree. The preachers who spoke at the meeting were men of *conviction*, and it showed in their preaching. Even the young speakers did a superb job in communicating their messages. Although no topics were assigned to any of the speakers, these men did not hold back in addressing the current problems that we face in our brotherhood. The error of issues like the Women's Retreat and the CEC society was cited and challenged by several speakers using the word of God. Indeed, we were *encouraged* by the preaching of the Gospel. We were also greatly blessed to have a number of brethren from area "cups" churches in attendance. Since the meeting, I have met twice with a "cups" preacher, who attended four of the six services. Last evening he told me that he had informed his brethren, from the pulpit, that the preaching at the Labor Day Meeting had convicted him that he had not lived up to his responsibility to preach the truth in the straightforward manner that he should have. He has made a vow to the Lord and to his congregation to do better. During our recent studies, this same preacher acknowledged the fact that the Lord used one bread and one cup in communion, and that we ought to do the same. Thank God for those who recognize the need to draw closer to His pattern and have a genuine desire to do so. Presently, we are continuing to study with these brethren on related issues as we endeavor to unite on a "thus saith the Lord." Obviously, the meeting had a great impact on the community, as well as our own congregation. It was a huge success... and as the days go by we continue to hear of more and more good that is coming from the powerful words that were spoken. We offer our sincere thanks to the brothers and sisters who supported the meeting from far and near, and we bid God's speed to the men who spoke in such a straightforward and loving manner. The hope and intent of the Rice Road congregation is to again be able to host the Missouri Labor Day Meeting in the very near future. Please pray for the work at Columbia as we continue to follow up leads from the meeting, as well as the TV program. May God bless his people!

Melvin Blalock, 214 Pearl St., Cleburne, TX 76031,

(817) 641-1668—It has been far too long since I have reported to the *OPA*. I enjoy getting the paper and reading the timely articles and the reports of fellow preachers. We have had a busy year in the Lord's work. We continue to labor between the Cleburne and Weatherford, Texas congregations. We have had some set backs, but we realize that Satan specializes in discouragement and hindrances. We are not discouraged, but optimistic about the Lord's work. We have been very busy with Bible correspondence courses in both areas. This has provided us with many leads. As a result of this effort, we are currently studying with some good prospects for conversion. The church at Cleburne enjoyed a great gospel meeting this summer under the preaching of Brother Bobby Cunningham of Shreveport, LA. Bobby is a man to be admired and appreciated for his devotion to the Lord and his church. We preach for the congregations at Cleburne and Weatherford on a regular basis. In addition to this, we preach one Sunday per month for the congregation at Duncanville, TX, and one Sunday afternoon per month for the congregation at Mineral Wells. We have had the privileged of preaching at other congregations as well. We enjoyed a short meeting at San Angelo, TX, earlier this year and another at Ratliff, OK. It was certainly a pleasure to be with all of these good brethren. In July, it was our privilege to worship with the brethren at Ft. Myers, FL, where they graciously invited me to preach for them. In August, we were blessed with the opportunity to preach one night of a gospel meeting at the Frisco, TX, congregation where Brother Bob Johnson works. They had different speakers during the meeting. It is always good to be with Bob. He and I do a lot of personal work together. My younger daughter, Sarah and I have just returned from the Labor Day meeting in Columbia, MO. It was wonderful to be with these good brethren. Brother Reggie Kinser who works with this congregation called and invited me to be one of the speakers in this great meeting. I was privileged to share the pulpit with Brother Richard Reed on Saturday night. We had a good crowd present and you could sense the enthusiasm of those assembled. It was wonderful to be with brethren I have known for many years and to meet a lot of good brethren for the first time. We were treated royally. Brethren, we are happy to be busy in the Lord's work. May God bless the faithful everywhere.

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

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NO. 11

CHANGING TIMES

By JOHNNY ELMORE

The old hymn that we love and have sung so much says, "Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me." If we have lived very long on earth, we have seen change. The person who does not adapt to change will have problems coping in our world today. Brother Bill Tate used to say that he was born in one world and living in another. Admittedly, it is quite an adjustment to go from traveling in a horse-drawn wagon to flying in a jet airplane, but some of us have experienced it.

I am old but not yet ancient and I have seen a lot of changes. I can remember when the poor folks (that was us) felt sorry for boys whose parents simply turned a bowl upside down on their heads and cut their hair around it; we called them "bowl" haircuts. Lately, I have seen boys who paid twelve or fifteen dollars for such a cut. I remember that my sisters would have been ashamed to wear the brogan shoes out in public that they wore while working in the field on the farm, but now such shoes on women are regarded as high fashion. I guess there is no accounting for taste.

Helpful Changes

Some changes are helpful. I am thankful we have automobiles that we can reasonably expect to get us to preaching appointments, and that when we get there we will have a warm or cool place, as the case may be, to assemble and worship. I remember times in winter when I preached in my overcoat because the meeting place was so cold. I am thankful that churches have the means to support gospel preaching better than when I was a young preacher. Some of the most remarkable changes have been in communication with the advent of radio, television, and the computer. It is unfortunate that man's wonderful inventions have not always been used for constructive purposes.

It is probably not the better part of wisdom to sit around and talk about how wonderful things were in the days before the changes in society we see around us. Solomon said, "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? For thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this" (Ecclesiastes 7: 10). It does seem that people were more receptive to the gospel in the '40s and '50s, but we tend to

forget about the hardships imposed by depression and war, just as the Israelites, who yearned for the fleshpots of Egypt, forgot the bondage and misery that accompanied those sensual pleasures.

Some changes were simply a matter of expedience. I am glad that churches have made the change to being "not slothful in business" (Romans 12:11). It is the right thing to do to have a set time to begin worship, and to know who will speak and lead the exercises of worship instead of never knowing when everyone would arrive and who would speak and lead. It is right to plan our work, and work our plan rather than simply drifting from Sunday to Sunday in an aimless way. These are changes from the practices of yesteryear, but there is a limit to change.

A Limit To Change

The Scriptures have not changed. Some poor souls are forever looking for a new translation that they think will give them license to do what they want to do, and some have paraphrased the Scriptures to do just that. They should know that the curse of God rests upon the person who would change the Scriptures (Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18, 19). We are not at liberty to make changes in "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 1:3).

God's Moral Standards Have Not Changed.

Men have legitimized the drinking of alcoholic beverages, but the Bible still condemns "banqueting" (1 Peter 4:3) that Bible scholars identify as "a drinking, carousing" (Thayer), and "drinking-bouts" (Caffin). Albert Barnes says, "It means properly *drinking; an act of drinking; then a drinking bout; drinking together.*"

Men have legitimized gambling. Horseracing, lotteries, and casinos are wide open in many places, but in every case, the gambling involved is a violation of several teachings of the Scriptures. Gambling is fed by the sin of covetousness, and those who engage in it trample upon the weak stumblers of our society if they win. Men have legitimized homosexuality against the plain teaching of Romans 1:26, 27 and many other passages. Homosexual priests and

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Editorial

THE REAL PICTURE

By DON L. KING

As all of our readers are surely aware, the *Old Paths Advocate* has been dealing with a number of matters in recent months that seemed to signal danger for the church. The response has been almost entirely positive. Brethren are sending subscriptions and others are renewing, in some cases, for multiple years. Still others have sent donations to help the paper keep the foreign subscriptions paid. Please, keep up the good work! Words cannot express how grateful we are for your wonderful caring attitude and help which is shown on an almost daily basis. The paper is seventy years old this year, having begun under the present name with the January 1932 issue. From the very beginning *OPA* was an issue-oriented periodical. The brotherhood was young and beset with various and sundry problems. Though there were other papers in publication in America then, when the innovations began to surface and objections from brethren were raised, many of them refused to print the objections because they had accepted the innovations.

That's why H.C. Harper began a paper called "*The Truth*" in about 1928. In that paper, which became *Old Paths Advocate* in 1932, all innovations were soundly exposed as unscriptural. It is refreshing to read the articles warning of the dangers threatening the church. In many cases, the very same dangers are still with us today. It seems that human nature changes very little with the passing of time.

Communication was difficult in the thirties and the paper provided a needed service. As the preachers went from place to place preaching the gospel of Christ, they became aware of dangerous ideas or practices. In addition to preaching about these matters, they would write articles for the paper so that others could benefit from their knowledge. They sent regular reports so that the brethren everywhere could be informed of their whereabouts and success. Recently, we have had reason to look through the files of the paper. The issues the brotherhood has faced are many and varied. From worldliness to digression and everything in between. Individual cups, Bible classes, instrumental music, women teachers, colleges supported by churches, the pastor system, etc. were topics often treated by the preachers. The brotherhood grew and because they were informed, became stronger. For a number of years there seemed to be a sort of lull in the assaults on the truth. However, Satan is never idle for very long and so the attacks began anew. There was a period of time when the "order of worship" issue became a topic in the paper. Some began to advocate that there was a scriptural order

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TEACHING FOR DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN

BY BARNEY OWENS

But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Mt. 15:9)

Doctrines in this passage refer to the requirements of religion. It means both the things that are to be believed as well as the things that must be practiced. When men take it on themselves to declare what is to be done in our worship and service to God, the practices are useless, regardless of what sacrifices or sufferings may be endured by the practitioner. Only God has the right to declare what is to be done in His service. Every willful addition to the commandments of God, every subtraction from the word of God, and every substitution for His commandments that require an act of worship only declares it to be vain worship, and is condemned by God.

This quotation as seen from verse eight is from Isaiah 23:13. As applied by the Lord, demonstrates that anyone who claims to worship God by intermingling his worship with things God has not commanded is regarded as evidence by God that his heart is not right. A heart that is not loyal and true to God is the same as those who openly disbelieve and are far from God. As we worship God we must be doing what He says, in the way He says, from a heart that is seeking to honor and obey Him. Otherwise, God is not pleased. We can never be cautious enough in worshipping Him. We *must* worship Him in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24).

God has given us enough explicit instruction to worship Him correctly or He is unable to do so. If He has given us explicit instruction, it is inferred that we have enough intelligence to follow His will, if we have enough intelligence to follow His will and will not follow it, then we are in rebellion.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry... (1 Sam. 15:23)

Is there a sin greater than idolatry? When one through self-gratification stubbornly rejects the commandments of God for the practice of the commandments of men, he might as well build a totem to a supposed god, as there is no difference in the condition of the heart.

Classic examples are the sons of Aaron. They approached the altar of God in worship but instead of offering with the fire appointed by the Lord, they "offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not." (Lev. 10: 1). Now if the Lord did not command this fire, by whose command was it offered? Let us look at some "strange fires" of modern days that are offered unto the Lord—commandments of men that render worship and service vain.

Peter Was The First Pope

This is taught by the Roman Catholic Church as a fact. Some without question believe it to be true. Like "evolution" it is nothing more than a theory without foundation. It is the wishful thought of some misguided men who have sought to pervert truth. If Peter was the first Pope, or for that matter, if any man served as a Pope during the Apostolic Age, it ought to be easily proven from the biblical account. The Bible knows nothing of a Pope, therefore it does not condemn the practice by using the word Pope, but it does say enough that we know Peter was not one.

There is no evidence that Peter was even in Rome. He wrote two epistles and never used the word Pope, nor mention being in Rome. He did exhort some brethren who were "elders," noting that he was also an elder, in other words, equal with them. In addition he said there is a "chief Shepherd" referring to Christ, not himself (1 Pet. 5:1 & 4). Paul wrote a letter (epistle) to the Romans and saluted 27 Christians, yet did not mention Peter. Later he was imprisoned at Rome. While incarcerated he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, II Timothy, and Philemon naming several people, but never said a word about Peter. A strange way to treat the one men call "His Holiness."

Since Peter was an elder or bishop, he must have met the qualifications. These are given to Timothy. The list begins "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2). Peter was a married man. Naturally his wife came with a mother, meaning Peter had a mother in law. "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever." (Mt. 8:14). Paul stated to the Corinthians that he had a right to have a wife the same as other brethren, other apostles and expressly named Peter (1 Cor. 9:5). If Peter was the first Pope, why are his successors forbidden to take a wife in marriage? The evidence is there. Peter was a married man and not qualified to be Pope.

Pope comes from *Papa* and is called "Holy Father." Jesus said "call no man father upon the earth: For one is your Father, which is in heaven." (Mt. 23:9). Question: Was Peter upon the earth? Are those claiming to be Pope today upon the earth? If so, they are in direct violation of Jesus' words if they demand to be called "father." We disobey the Savior if we call the Pope or any of his underlings "father." Peter thought of himself as other men, "as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, stand up; I myself also am a man." (Acts 10:25-26). That is far different from the conduct of the modern day Popes who want to be revered, bowed before, and kissed.

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John." (Acts 8:14). Have you ever heard of a Pope being sent anywhere?

The Pope, sitting in Rome over millions of deluded Roman Catholics and acknowledged by many willfully by Protestants, has arrogantly and presumptuously assumed a position that has nothing to back it up “*but commandments of men for doctrine.*” The Lord Jesus said “*it is vain worship.*” My hope is that those deluded by doctrines will begin to “search the scriptures” for the truth as revealed by God.

The first pope was Boniface III appointed by the Roman Emperor Phocas in the year 606. When Roman Catholics deny this, one point should settle the matter. For the first six centuries ecumenical councils were called by the emperors, not by a Pope. Why? Because the office of Pope did not exist. Peter had no successors.

In accord with the doctrine these men teach about Peter being the first Pope, they contend that Peter was the head of the church. The Bible flatly contradicts such nonsense. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church (Eph. 1:22-23, Col. 1:18) and as such has all authority (Mt. 28:18). It is true that the Lord delegated authority to the Apostles to stand in His place (Jn. 20:21-23, II Cor. 4:18-20). This authority was given to all of them, not just Peter. Besides this authority was not transferable to others (Acts 8:14-21). Peter was not the first Pope and was not the head of the Church. No man on in Rome or anywhere else, is the Head of the Church. To submit to the Pope is to allow oneself to be blindly led blind (Mt. 15:14). This is a plant planted by men and not by God and will be rooted up (Mt. 15:13).

Mary The Virgin Mother

Please understand there is no indication here that Jesus was not born of the Virgin Mary. To believe the Bible we accept this fact. Quoting from Isaiah 7:14, Matthew applies it to Mary. “*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.*” (Mt. 1:23). However, what is falsely taught and received by many is that Mary remained a virgin after the death of Christ and as “Holy Virgin” is now in heaven and men can plead with her to “pray for us sinners.” Therefore is our mediator at the mercy of God in our behalf.

First, may I say that this idea is a slam against all “mothers,” those now living as well as the dead. Being children through the natural process is according to the plan of God (1 Tim. 2:14). That is the place and work God has determined and willed for women, as Paul instructed they are to love their husbands and love their children, while being keepers at home (Titus 2:3-5).

We read from Matthew 1:24-25, “*Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and called his name Jesus.*” Two words are underlined in the passage because our attention has

need of focusing on them. First the word “*till.*” This word denotes and marks time. It shows two things. Number one, Joseph did not “know” Mary (sexually) until Jesus was born. Number two, after Jesus was born he did know Mary (sexually). As Joseph was instructed, without fear, took as his wife but refrained from what husbands and wives naturally do until Jesus, conceived of the Holy Ghost, was born—virgin born.

Second, the word “*firstborn.*” Jesus was born of Mary first, but the implication is that other sons were born to this union was all the Bible had to say on the matter. Fair minded people could not gainsay what is clear from this passage. But, that is not all the scripture has to say.

The same writer Matthew recorded, “*Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brothers James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all things?*” These were people that lived in the same area as Jesus. They knew His family — knew Him. They were amazed that He could enter the synagogue and teach the people (in other places he is described as unlettered and unlearned). The point is He had brothers and sisters, Joseph and Mary had other children. Mary was mother to several children, at least six beside Jesus.

About Mary praying in our behalf. There is a popular statement over several radio stations that goes something like this (I am quoting from memory): **Mother of God blessed art thou among women, blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus, pray for us sinners.** The Bible says “*there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus*” (1 Tim. 2:5). Just as surely as there is one God, there is only one mediator and that mediator is named Jesus Christ. Mary is not our mediator. John writes “*if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus the righteous.*” (1 Jn. 2:1). It is Jesus Christ who is our advocate — not Mary. Paul pointed out that the Lord Jesus the right hand of God (Col. 3:1), not a word about Mary.

It must be stressed that Mary was obviously a wonderful young woman to be selected to give birth to the Son of God. Her work was important in the scheme of redemption, however, to exalt her to a position of “*the mother of God*” is blasphemy. She was the mother of the physical Jesus—there was and is nothing about her that is divine. Jesus’ deity from His father in heaven. The principle is the same as with John the Baptist. His work was great and the position occupied was good, but to say he founded the church and that men ought to wear his name, or the name of what he did, is ridiculous and lowers what John was and did. Let us leave Mary where the word of God put her and be satisfied that. Like Paul let us “*bow our (my) knees unto the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.*” (Eph. 3:14-15).

When the doctrines taught have the authority of men only behind them, they are worthless. May we all determined we are going to believe and practice the doctrine of Christ revealed in Word of God (II Tim. 3:16-17). Then we "*shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God*" (Jn. 7:17).

UNTIL CHRIST BE FORMED IN YOU

BY GREG GAY

Paul wrote our brethren at Galatia: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Galatians 4:19).

From this verse we can see Paul doesn't think they are where they should be spiritually. He is going to go back to the beginning with them to work toward the goal of Christ being formed in them.

When we look to the first part of the letter of Galatians there is no doubt Paul was very concerned. They were going astray from what they had been taught and were in danger of losing their souls.

Gal 1:6-9:

⁶I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

⁷Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

⁸But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

⁹As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Paul was amazed that they were even considering an alternative to Christ. Because obviously there was not and is not a viable alternative. Paul makes it very plain that anyone who preaches something other than the truth of the gospel of Christ, whether man or angel, is condemned for doing so.

Paul compared what was happening to them as if someone had cast an evil spell on them. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you" (Gal 3: 1)?

On a personal note Paul reflects that all of his work with them may have been a waste of time if they were going to depend on Jewish ceremonies for salvation. "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal 4:11). He was fearful his labor to bring them to Christ would be lost.

To turn them around and start them in the right direction Paul reminds them they don't need to go back to the law of Moses to wait for the promise of God to be fulfilled. In Christ, in the church, they are the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. 'For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek,

there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:26-29).

And, to turn them around and start them in the right direction he was willing to work with them so that Christ could be formed in them. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you (Galatians 4:19).

How could Paul know that Christ was not formed in them? Because they were quick to abandon what the gospel taught. We would say of them today: "They don't get it."

Sadly, many of God's children today "don't get it." They too need Christ formed in them. His will, not our will, is what is to be easily seen in our lives.

Christ isn't where he should be in our Christian life if we continually struggle with the basics of being a Christian after years of being in the church. For example: when ablebodied people aren't eager to worship God, when they don't want to attend all the worship services of the church, when they don't look forward to being together as the family of God in worship I believe it can be said Christ isn't formed in them. I mean no disrespect toward our elderly or chronically ill members with this statement. Many of them would love to attend more, but they can't because of their health or because of driving restrictions.

What are we to do? Let's be willing to do what Paul did. He considered the members of the church there as his children because of his work among them. When they were in danger of apostasy he was willing to work with them again. He compared that process to the "travail in birth," painfully laboring with them in teaching them again the truths of the gospel of Christ so that Christ might be formed in them. So, let's get to work!

Where do we start? Let's start with ourselves. Let's be a good example in letting Christ be formed in us, in letting Christ's will be more important to us than our own will. Then, let's be an encourager to others that they might be the same!

What would it be like for every member of every congregation to cheerfully attend every worship service in the coming month? One word comes to mind: wonderful!

YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN TEACHING THE BIBLE

By C. A. SMITH

You have probably had someone tell you, "You don't believe in teaching the Bible," haven't you? More than likely, the ones making such a statement as this, are staunch supporters of the modern Sunday School. This accusation, however, is really very unfair and misleading. Of course, those who make statements

such as this are not really trying to be fair and truthful about the matter. Their only interest is in justifying a practice that they can not find command, example, or necessary inference for in the Bible. Seems awfully strange to me that they should make such statements, since they really do not know much, if anything about what we believe and practice. Would to God that they would just come and see if we believe in teaching the Bible! If they would, they would find that no one believes in teaching the Bible, and teaching it accurately more than we.

But, ask they, then why do you oppose the Sunday School, or Bible School as many prefer to call it? Then they begin to make fallacious arguments, in an attempt to support their unscriptural practice.

For example, they say that Matt. 28:19 says "to teach all nations," but does not say how. That is true. But it also says to baptize but does not say how. Just because it does not say how to baptize, do you suppose that they will accept all modes and designs? Will they make a spurious argument concerning baptism? Oh, no! Rather, they will go to Romans 6:4 to find the mode, and to Acts 2:38 for the design. Well, we go to 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 where we find "how to teach."

Then they declare that "1 Cor. 14 does not apply today; it applied to the church at Corinth alone." However this is another fallacious argument, for it is addressed to "all the churches of the saints." Then the same admonition was given to Timothy some time later (1 Tim. 2:11-12), which would have not been called for had the teaching applied to Corinth only.

On and on we could present their fallacious arguments, none of which, as they say, "will hold water." Too, we can go to many other scriptures that prove their contentions to be wrong relative to the church teaching God's Word. Any method of teaching that creates confusion is forbidden (1 Cor. 14:33). Only one may speak at a time (1 Cor. 14:31). Women are forbidden to teach publicly (1 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 14:33-35). Any arrangement of teaching that causes division is unscriptural (1 Cor. 10:32; 1 Cor. 1:10). Therefore the arrangement of dividing into classes to teach God's word is not authorized by the Word of God.

So, instead of our "not teaching the Bible," the opposite is true. It is they that do not believe in teaching the Bible. The teaching of any other arrangement than that which is authorized and consistent with divine truth is erroneous.

Why do we oppose such? Simply because we want to make our calling and "election sure" by doing things just like the Bible directs us to. In other words, we choose to do as Solomon commanded in (Eccl. 12:13) "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear god, and keep His commandment, for this is the whole duty of man."

My prayer is that we will ever stand and call for a "thus saith the Lord."

"IF I'M LYING, I'M DYING!"

By TONY MELTON

The line "If I'm lying, I'm dying" is sometimes used by teenagers to emphasize the truthfulness of something they have previously said. Some, also, say, "I cross my heart and hope to die [if I'm lying]." They use these oaths in order to convince others they are telling the truth.

Older folks have devised a more sophisticated way to try to prove they are not lying. They swear by putting their hand on top of a Bible. If people always told the truth, there would be no need for this. It is ludicrous to think that making oaths or swearing on the Bible will cause a dishonest person to tell the truth.

Jesus said, "But I say to you, do not swear at all ... But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes, and your 'No' be 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one" (Matthew 5:34,37). In other words, if we have to use some kind of oath to prove we are telling the truth, then it's a bad reflection on our integrity. If we must swear before people will believe us, then they must doubt our honesty in the first place.

Because of his or her honest character, a Christian should not have to say more than "no" or "yes." Unfortunately, lying has become an acceptable practice even among those who claim to be Christians. Because of this, people no longer even trust the words of a Christian. Some Christians view lying like the little girl who got the Scriptures mixed up and said, "A lie is an abomination unto the Lord and a very present help in time of trouble."

Many people do not really believe that lying is offensive to God. But, in reality, it is a serious offense! In fact, the Bible says that "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). The Bible also says that God hates lying (Proverbs 6:16,17). Lying is a sin, and it will cause one to lose his or her soul eternally.

CHANGING TIMES

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preachers purport to preach to congregations when they themselves are in violation of God's will every day. Isaiah said, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20 KJV)

God's Plan of Salvation Has Not Changed.

The plan of salvation that Jesus revealed to the apostles was to last "unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). That included belief in Jesus as the Son of God (John 8:24), repentance (Luke 13:3), confession (Matthew 10:32), and baptism for the remission (forgiveness) of sins (Acts 2:38). Some, like Martin Luther in his German translation of Romans 3:28, always wanted the Bible to say that

we are saved by faith only, so they added the word "only" to the Scriptures, but God's curse rests upon them. Remember that in every case of conversion in the Acts of the Apostles, there was baptism—the thing the world wants to change.

God's Plan for Worship Has Not Changed

Some wish to go to the Old Testament for instrumental music, incense, and "holy" water, but Jesus said that "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," and "they that worship him must worship him "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23, 24). That tells us that God no longer wants what "was," but what "now is." Some have seen people on television dancing in the aisles, all praying aloud at once, and applauding everything the preacher says, and have concluded that's the way it should be. Oh, no, Paul said that "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," and that all things are to "be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:33,40). True worship involves the acts of worship sanctified by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament: singing, teaching, communing, praying, and giving.

God's Order For Christian Homes Has Not Changed

The feminist agenda has convinced many women that they are within their rights in running for congress, heading up corporations, acting as presidents of colleges and universities, and in general, doing everything men do. We see policewomen, women truck drivers, heavy equipment operators, boxers, wrestlers—you name it! But the Bible still teaches that "the young women" are to "be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands" (Titus 2:5). Paul's instructions are that "the younger women marry, bear children, [and] guide the house" (1 Timothy 5:14). I sympathize with those women who would do these things but cannot because of circumstances over which they have no control, but it is in the home that the woman finds her greatest achievements. Women are misguided who feel that they have a commission to fulfill the role of men in preaching and teaching the gospel in public because they have a field of service at home that no one else can occupy. Let us not seek to change what God has ordained.

EDITORIAL

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that must be followed during a worship service. It was a dangerous time, no doubt about it, and several articles were written. That certainly took a toll. Then, along came "liberalism," where fellowship (tolerance) of almost every religion was advocated. For quite some time, much preaching and writing was done to combat that unscriptural threat. Sadly, several were lost to the Cause of Christ during that time. On and on the list could go.

However, in each of the cases we mentioned, some

were grateful for the writings against the practice while others were not.

Brethren, please be assured that what is written within the pages of the paper is always published with the prayer that good may come and no harm whatever. Our intent is never to be the "last word." The Scriptures must always be seen as the "last word."

Our purpose is only to warn, inform, provoke greater study of the Word of God, and dedicated Christian living, as well as to promote unity of brethren on a "thus saith the Lord."

We realize that in many locations where our brethren worship, some of the issues about which we have had articles are not issues at all. We thank God for that. In such places brethren just continue to worship and live the Christian life as they have always done. They may even have been unaware of the dangers. However, in others, dangers came to be known. For those brethren, we pray the materials have been helpful. Many have written lately telling us how they appreciate the *OPA* and the articles and field reports.

What we desire, of course, is a sound brotherhood united against Satan and his deceits. We are aware, however, that being "sound" involves more than just opposing. As one noted, writer said, "A man may oppose every departure from the truth and still be unsound, simply because he fails to come up to the standard of his duty." Paul wrote: "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine." (1 Timothy 1:8-10) Paul lists quite a number of sinners for whom the law was given but then adds, "...and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine." This indicates that every type of disobedience is contrary to sound doctrine, or teaching. As we all realize, we may be disobedient because we fail to do what is right. If we always oppose every departure, (and we should) but seldom do what we are commanded as we live the Christian life, it is like adding a column of zeros. The sum total is really still zero isn't it?

May the Lord help us to be obedient both in opposing sin as well as doing what is commanded. Think on these things, DLK

Additional Thoughts

By Ronny F. Wade

In addition to the above article by Don, I would like to add the following, for purposes of further clarification. The *Old Paths Advocate* has never been published with the idea of pleasing all its readers. It is unrealistic to think such would be possible. Nor is it the design of the paper to purposefully alienate

anyone. From time to time articles have and will continue to appear with which there is to be certain disagreement on the part of some, while others will find the same article to be in perfect harmony with their views. What one considers offensive, another does not. What one considers degrading or mean spirited, another considers "right on target." Often misunderstandings occur when we generalize.

Generalizations often miss the target intended by the writer and create misconceptions that could have been avoided by being more specific. I don't know of any two generalizations, for example, that miss the target more than "liberal" and "conservative." These "catch all" words are used to describe all types of people in all types of situations under all types of conditions and fail to accomplish what one originally intended. Everyone, for example, who believes the Holy Spirit personally indwells the Christian is not necessarily "liberal" anymore than everyone who believes the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian through a medium (Word of God) is necessarily "conservative." I personally know people who don't fit the descriptions in both camps. This is but one example of how both writers and readers can be mistaken and misunderstood. As I read past issues (1928-1936) of the *Old Paths Advocate*, I have often marveled at the candor used by many writers. At times they were so plain spoken that it hurt. Yet they were able to do so without alienating one another, without being spiteful or hurtful, and without sacrificing what they believed to be the truth and in the best interest of the church. Surely we can do the same, and may God help us in that endeavor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2002 Alabama New Years Meeting

We hope many of you plan on coming to the 2002 AL New Years Meeting to be held December 27-31 in Dothan, AL. The services will be in the Lions Hall Meeting Facility at the Intersection of Ross Clark Circle and Burdeshaw. We have sent flyers across the brotherhood with directions. Brother Ronny F. Wade will be in charge of conducting this years meeting with various evangelists preaching. Services will be on Friday, December 27 at 7:00 PM and Saturday morning, December 28 at the Hartford Highway Church of Christ building. Beginning on Saturday evening through the remainder of the meeting (with the exception of Lord's Day Morning) the meeting will be at the Lion's Hall at 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM with a final New Years eve singing beginning at 11:00 PM. We highly recommend the Comford Inn for accomodations. The number is (334) 793-9090 and if you identify yourself with the "AL New Years Meeting" you can receive a rate of \$59 for two double beds. The Best Western/Dothan Inn and Suites is also offering a rate of \$44 for two beds.

Their number is (334) 793-4376. For more information you may call Kevin Presley (334) 678-8999 or Charles Marsh (334) 692-5957 or email kpresley@sw.rr.com. We had a wonderful meeting this past year and are looking for the crowds to continue to grow. We hope you make plans to come.—The Hartford Highway Church of Christ.

Birthdays

Gertrude Arnett will celebrate her 100th birthday on January 28, 2003. She would enjoy cards and congratulations on this special day. They may be sent c/o of her daughter Lillian Deems, 613 Frisco, Monett, MO 65708.

Change Of Meeting Time

The congregation at Edmond, Oklahoma will be changing the time of their Sunday evening services to 3:00 PM effective November 3, 2002. Please make the necessary changes in your directories. Thank you.—Edmond Brethren

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

RAIRDON-HEFFREN On August 24, before many family and friends at the Leawood Church of Christ in Joplin, MO. Terry Rairdon and Laura Heffren were united in Holy Matrimony. Terry is the son of Candice Rairdon-Jackson of Tulsa OK and Laura is the daughter of Dan and Becky Heffren of Joplin, MO. The couple plan to live in the Tulsa OK area and attend the Broken Arrow Congregation. Both have finished school and are working at the present. 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 Terry and Laura.—Randal Baker

OUR DEPARTED

HAYS—Brother Richard Lee Hays of Hernando, Fla., was born Feb. 21, 1956 in Millersburg, Ohio, to Brother Samuel, and Sister Evelyn Hays from the Beatrice, W. VA, area. Bro. Hayes passed from this life Jan. 18, 2002, at Citrus County Hospital, Inverness, Fla., after a prolonged illness, at the early age of 45. He was preceded in death by his father Samuel Hays, and one brother Steve Hays. Bro. Richard Hays obeyed the Gospel in 1976. He was a member of The Church of Christ at Hernando, Fla. He is survived by his dear mother, Sister Evelyn Hays, Hernando, Fla., three brothers, Bro. Jerry D. Hays, Floral City, Fla., Bro. Larry G. Hays of Harrisville, W. Va., and Bro. Ronald K Hays of Dunnellon, Fla., four sisters, Sister Lois K. Smith of Hernando, Fla.,

Sister Patsy Dunlap of Ocala, Fla., Sister Judith Dunlap of Ocala, Fla., and Sister Barbara Wolf of Hernando, Fla., and a host of nephews and nieces. He will be missed by his family very much, and the congregation, and all that knew him. Services were at Hooper Funeral Home Jan. 23, 2002. Burial was at Oak Ridge Cemetery, Iverness, Fla. The writer was honored to speak words of warning and comfort to the bereaved.—James W. Kornegay Sr.

MURPHY—On August 20th, 2002, Sister Carmon Earcel Murphy passed from this life. She was born May 1, 1917 and was the wife of the late Tom Murphy, who preached the gospel in the Casey county area here in Kentucky.

SPRADLEY—On the evening of July 10, 2002 Paula Renae Spradley stepped through the veil of immortality after a brief battle with cancer. Paula turned 36 years of age just five days before her death. She was born July 5, 1966 in Dothan, AL and lived the majority of her life in this area. She obeyed the gospel during the late 1970's during a meeting at the Slocomb congregation. Paula and her family were original members of the Hartford Highway Church of Christ meeting in Dothan. We were all shocked to suddenly learn of her illness this past December. She had a rare and aggressive form of cancer that caused her to deteriorate quickly. After a major surgery in December and a few months of chemotherapy, doctors led us all to believe that Paula could recover and lead a healthy life. However, it was not to be. She was not only an example to all of us in how to live but also how to die. She leaves to grieve her passing a loving husband of 15 years, Troy; two children; Benjamin, 9 and Brooke, 3; her mother and father, Lathan and Louise Dean; a brother, Phillip Dean, and a host of other extended family. Paula was an inspiration to all who knew her. She was loved and respected by many throughout her community and the brotherhood. She was a caring and devoted wife and mother. Anyone who knew her recognized that she was a truly virtuous woman. Above all, Paula was a faithful and devout child of God. She was steadfast in attending worship, training her children, showing hospitality, and doing good unto others. The church here has sustained a tremendous loss and words cannot express the sense of loss and devastation felt this day by her family. But we look toward glory with an even fonder anticipation because we believe it is graced by the lovely spirit of one whom we knew and loved so well here below. The funeral service was conducted at the Byrd Funeral Home in Dothan, AL. The singers rendered a beautiful song service and this writer was honored to be asked to speak words of comfort and warning. Interment was at Sunset Memorial Cemetery just north of Dothan. Our sympathies and prayers go out to this sweet family that has touched many of our lives in a wonderful

way.—Kevin W. Presley

WRIGHT—Bro. T. George Wright was born Mar. 24, 1911 at Ada, OK. He died at home April 1, 2002 In Hood River, OR. Bro. George was a long time member and leader of the church at Odell. As a young man he moved his wife and children from California's Imperial Valley to the Northwest. At his passing, he was past 91 years, having lived a robust life almost to the end. Faye was the wife of his youth and his old age; at her passing ahead of him they had been married past 60 years; what an amazing example of longevity in this God-ordained institution! I saluted them at Bro. George's funeral; I salute them here on this impressive score. One adult son, George, preceded him in death. He leaves four devoted children, Norma, Mary, Shirley and Tom; beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One sister, in her 90s, Della Harper, Sacramento, CA also survives, as do nieces, nephews, brothers and sisters in Christ, and many friends. It was my honor to be called by the family to assist in this time of loss. I had stood with them nearly 50 years ago at Evergreen cemetery, El Centro, CA, at the funeral of their mother and grandmother, Sister Shirley Wright. One of the largest crowds I have seen at a funeral anywhere assembled on April 5, at Hood River, OR. to honor George and his family. Bro. Delmar Lee very capably led the congregational singing; two grandsons, James Williams, and Clinton Curtis, and a friend, Andy Streich, beautifully sang, "Go Rest High on That Mountain;" the funeral home graciously presented a video tribute of George's long life, Interment was at Idlewild Cemetery Hood River.—Don McCord

GARRETT—Word came recently of the passing of Bro. Vol Garrett of Caldwell, ID, formerly of Stockton, CA. This brought back sad and sweet memories in Christ. It was my privilege, well over 40 years ago in the 50s, to ordain an eldership at the church which was meeting at Netherton and Guernsey, Stockton, CA. The congregation had spent years making sure that the men, the ordination, and all pertaining were scriptural, and that the transition of never having an eldership, to having one for the first time, would be as smooth as possible. This was my most sincere desire also. The men ordained were Bro. Vol Garrett, Bro. Homer L. King, Bro. Roy Smalling and Bro. Everett Franklin. I believed then, and believe now, that these four men qualified for this lofty office. I revere their memory. My position on the procedure for ordination was then, and still is, that the congregation and the one presiding, ordain with "fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands." This was entirely new to us in those days in practice even though the Book taught it all the time. Most, if not all, had never seen such. Especially did "laying on of hands" bring objections. Once we saw that such a practice was not always for empowering with

extraordinary gifts, we generally come to terms with the practice. The practice in Acts 13 has to be for something other than empowerment; those "laying on hands" could not empower. My conviction was in those days (my conviction has not changed with the passing years), if "fasting, prayer, laying of hands" is not the binding procedure, what is wrong with it. The practice in Acts 13 has to be for something other than empowerment; those laying on hands could not empower. Relative to ordination procedure, Robert Milligan in *The Scheme of Redemption* says, "That this was done by the imposition of hands, with prayer and fasting, seems clear from the Scriptures". John McGarvey concurs in *A Treatise on Eldership* "Fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands, conducted with due solemnity and accompanied by appropriate admonitions and exhortations, constitute the Scriptural mode of induction into office." All four of these dear men ordained so long ago have gone to their reward. I am honored to have known them, and to have had a part of this chapter in their respective lives. I appreciated the congregation at Stockton in those days for entrusting me with this shared responsibility. The eldership is sustained by this congregation until this day. This speaks exceedingly well for "the generation following."—Don McCord

(Special Note: The two sisters whose obituaries follow have an interesting commonality. Both of them were baptized into Christ by Brother Homer L. King, and both of them in California in the year 1945. Sister Margaret Smith was baptized at Siskiyou St., Los Angeles, and Sister Jewell Alexander in the King's River, near Sanger. It was my honor to be asked by the respective families to officiate at their funerals.—Don McCord

SMITH—Sister Margaret Ann Smith, a special sister-in-law to me, was born Feb. 10, 1925, in Minot, N. D. She died at the family home near Monroe, Oregon, Aug. 27, after a most valiant struggle to live. She, with her family, moved from southern California to Corvallis, OR in 1962. Margaret worked for Oregon State University for 17 years. She was a member of the church meeting at Albany, OR. Her obedience to the gospel is chronicled in the special note above. Margaret was the devoted mother of a multitude. There are six sons, Melvin, Gary, and Benny of Corvallis, OR; Gerald, Eugene, OR; Bob, Bakersfield, CA and Alvin, Orange, CA. One son, Tommy, preceded her in death. There are 3 daughters, Charlotte Powell, Bakersfield, CA, Dorothea Smith, Corvallis, OR and Lottie Koontz, Monroe, OR. Two special step-sons also survive, Jaron and Abe Smith, Corvallis, OR. There are 17 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Two brothers and three sisters also survive. Surviving, too, are in-laws to whom Margaret was a dear lady. Margaret was married to A. G. Smith, Oct. 3, 1944 by Bro. Tom E. Smith at

the Bit Shop meeting place, north of Healdton, OK. The Bit Shop will bring back sweet memories to many older readers of this journal. The funeral was conducted Sept. 3, at Greenberry Grange, in the country near Corvallis, OR, an impressive building, over a century old, with a large concourse of family, friends, and members of the church in attendance. Ralph Osburn led the beautiful congregational singing. The children and grandchildren sang magnificently, selected songs of Zion, led by a son, Bob. Bro. Gayland Osburn led a most appropriate prayer. The writer officiated. Margaret was buried in Alpine Cemetery, a small town cemetery, not far from home to await the redemption of the body, the resurrection of the just. The six sons carried her to the grave. Her memory to us who knew her and loved her is a benediction.—Don McCord

ALEXANDER—Sister Jewell Trilba Turnbull Alexander, Sanger, CA was born in Topaz, MO Aug. 1, 1931 to George and Mildred Turnbull. She graduated from Sanger High School, attended Reedley College, and Fresno State University. She taught elementary school several years. She married J. C. Alexander, July 24, 1954, Bro. Ted Warwick officiated. J. C.'s position with Safeway Stores necessitated moves in California's Central Valley, giving the Alexanders the opportunity to worship at several congregations where they developed special friendships. Their home was always warm and welcoming, and was a central gathering place during meetings, and a home for visiting preachers, this writer being one of them through the years. Jewel was the owner of Sanger's Foster's Freeze for 20 years. She was a respected business woman, respected in the community as a Christian. Her favorite pastime was studying the Bible, and reading books inspired by it, of which she had an extensive collection. She was indeed a woman of the Book; she was still your friend even though she may have disagreed with you and you disagreed with her; truly, the kind of friend to have. This writer was honored to have such a friend down here. Jewell lost J. C. in 1981. She is survived by her daughters, Brenda Getz, and Valerie and husband Riande Vig; sons, Eric and wife Kathy; Dwight and wife Tammy; and the following 8 grandchildren, Becky, Stacy and Kyle Getz; Amie, Alex and Astreaa Vig; Johnathan and James Alexander. Two brothers, Homer and James and their families, also survive. The funeral was at Wallin's Funeral Home, Sanger, Sept. 6. A large crowd, some standing, attended; the procession to the cemetery seemed endless for a time. The singing was so capably directed by Bro. Rod Watson. At the graveside, "Jesus Gave It all For Me" was sung. Jewell had written the words and music of this beautiful song. Bearers were grandsons and close friends. Burial was in Sanger cemetery. The writer considered it an honor to be asked by the children to stand with them this sad hour.

God bless them abundantly!--Don McCord

CARAWAY--Cecil Thomas Caraway, 87, of the Verdi Community, was born January 15, 1915 in Fairview, Texas and passed away on April 22, 2002 in the Floresville Nursing Home. Cecil is survived by his wife of 57 years, Helen, three sons, Tommy, Lynn and Roger, one daughter, Gwendolyn Campbell, all of Verdi; one sister Elizabeth Hall of Lakeland, Florida, 13 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren. Cecil made a promise to his grandfather, Sam Finto, that when his grandfather passed on he would keep the Fairview Church of Christ congregation going. He keep this promise for over 50 years. Cecil was a founding member of Atascosa Farm Bureau and served as director for 35 years. He was awarded the 1999 Pioneer Award from the State of Texas. Cecil was president of the Verdi School Board when the school was closed. He served as director of Brite Cemetery Association where he was laid to rest. It was a honor to me to be asked to conduct the service. Murl Helwig led the prayers.--Ralph Noack

FINTO--Irene Finto, 61, of Barclay, was born August 30, 1940 in Milano, Texas and passed away on May 30, 2002 at her home. Irene is survived by her husband of 38 years, Sam Finto and one son, Kenneth Finto, both of Barclay. Sam Finto was also a grandson to the Sam Finto mentioned in the Caraway departed. Irene was not raised in the church but when she married Sam Finto she later was converted. She was very faithful in the church and loved by all. She attended the Milam Plaza Church of Christ in Cameron. She graduated from Roger High School in Texas. She was a wonderful homemaker taking care of her husband and son. They had hot meals, clothes were always clean and pressed and the Bible studied on a regular schedule. This is something that is becoming very rare. She was humble and not only her brothers and sisters in the church loved her, but all her neighbors as well. She will be missed. I was pleased to conduct her service with Brother Alden Crowe.--Ralph Noack



Brian Burns, 6891 Goshen Rd., Goshen, OH 45122, bsrbsb@juno.com, October 14--This year is coming to a close more rapidly than those already gone by and we know that they will only get faster. The work has been very busy at home as well as in travel. I

have been blessed with meetings with the congregations of Glen Ellyn IL, Field Stone MO, Ratliff City OK, Vance Jackson in San Antonio TX, and Manteca CA. Our brethren are the finest people in the world and they have proven it to me time and time again as I have worked with them. Brother Doug Edwards and I had another good trip to India in March of this year. The brethren there continue to work and grow in spite of opposition from the idolatrous religions of that part of the world. There are three faithful congregations in the Hyderabad/Secunderabad area as well as about fifteen villages that are presently worshipping correctly. The largest congregation in the city is presently working to build a permanent place to meet. There has been persecution from the Hindus in the area but they are showing the community that the church is strong and going to stay. They continue to express their thanks for the congregations that have assisted them financially in the purchase of property and getting started on the building. The first goals after the property is to dig a well, build a baptistery, and then a shelter to start using for worship. Please pray for this work in India brethren. I was also able to attend the annual Preachers Study in Saltillo Mexico this year also. Brethren Wayne McKamie, Bill Verner, Randy Tidmore, and Tony Melton were also there providing their unequalled work and help in the effort. Juan and Elias Rodrigues are always there providing their love and wisdom in the work as well. Brother Juan is invaluable with his ability to translate either direction between English and Spanish. The study was well attended by the Mexican brethren and I believe that it was profitable. Our work here in Goshen continues also. The community seems to be opening up to us more than in the past. We hope and pray for more opportunities to preach the truth to these in our community. Our young are growing and becoming more active and knowledgeable in the work. We do not have a large number but we are working and growing spiritually and hope for a harvest of souls as well. Please pray for us brethren and those all over the world.

Barney Owens, 8782 Meadowview Drive, W. Chester, OH 45069--The summer was a memorable one. I am now looking forward to the fall and winter. If you are near the following places, please make plans to come and assemble with us. Oct. 11-13 Mitchell, IN. Nov. 27-Dec. 1, Burkheart, MO. Between these we will have our annual fall meeting Oct. 19-27 here at home. Duane Permenter will be preaching the meeting for us. I appreciate all the calls and cards that continue to come. Your prayers are always desired.

Greg Gay, 6633 Viscount Way, Citrus Heights, CA 95621 (note new address-same phone #) papagreg@aol.com, October 6, 2002--Since returning

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home from summer travels I have resumed my usual work with 64th St. in Sacramento. In addition I have started a monthly preaching appointment at Placerville and am studying personal evangelism with some in private studies. In August Cassie and I traveled to Tula, Russia. It had been six years since I had been there. The brethren there are small in number yet fervent in spirit and eager to study the Bible. We are very blessed to have Boris Kalinin there who is a preacher and for us a translator and helper with transportation and shopping. We are not allowed to conduct gospel meetings because of the oppression of the local government so we arranged daily studies with the brethren and prospective members. Conditions are slowly improving in Tula but many people are still very poor. There were more automobiles on the streets than before and plenty of goods available for sale but we still can't drink the water without risk and the street outside the apartment where we stayed is still swept with a broom made of twigs.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA 94539, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com, October 11–The church here is looking forward to our meeting with Carl Johnson Oct. 27-Nov 3. We anticipate a profitable time and are praying for a great meeting. Lord willing, we will be in a meeting at Fossil Creek (Ft. Worth, TX) Oct 20-27. We are looking forward to a good meeting and pray the Lord will give the increase. That will be the last meeting in 2002 for us and we will begin looking forward to the Philippine trip during January 2003, Lord willing. We look forward to being with Duane Permenter again for the 2003 trip. We have made several journeys together and I have enjoyed them. Preachers, we always need your articles and field reports. Please, don't neglect this opportunity. We ask your prayers as always.

Brett Hickey, 823 W. 5th St. Tyler, TX 75701, (903) 533-9782; brett-louisehickey@juno.com, October 10–Locally, we are encouraged by a number of studies with brethren. Just as our list of good contacts was running low, our booth at the East Texas State Fair

enabled us to distribute hundreds of tracts, have numerous Bible discussions and have scores of people sign up for Bible studies. From our experience last year, we know that many will not pan out, but our goal is to have twenty studies, to have ten visit services and to have two be converted. Twelve from Tyler and six from Athens assisted in this eight day effort. We were thankful once again to enjoy the spirituality and hospitality at Hoyte. An unusual rainy season limited the brethren's ability to help canvas the community, but during the week, I spent five hours a day trying to keep up with Alton Baker going door-to-door. Our efforts were rewarded with a number of visitors attending. It is an honor to help with their radio program. Several from McGregor attended nearly every service. Our meeting at Harrison was a homecoming of sorts. Jimmie and Cindy - special friends - were a great source of encouragement to Louise and me at Mountain Home. Jimmie has played a major role in what has gone right in Mountain Home. So glad we could get to know some of the Harrison brethren better. We were thankful that lost souls were able to hear the gospel and gratified to see so many special people from Mt. Home and Hartwell. Other appointments include: Texas Labor Day meeting; Frisco, TX; Cleburne, TX; Athens, TX. We are thankful to have a number of sisters at Tyler serving humbly and happily, zealously and unselfishly. They are so busy with their great appointed work, I do not see how they could find the time or energy to do that which is unauthorized.

Douglas T. Hawkins, 3711 Castlewood Ct., Somerset, KY 42501, 606-678-4347, hawkins@kih.net, Oct. 7, 2002–We recently closed a meeting here at home with Bro. Ronny Wade. His sermons were very timely and he left us all encouraged. We've been here at home during the month of September. A number of meetings have been conducted here in our area and we've tried to attend them as much as possible. Lord willing, we will soon be in Holyoke, CO (Nov. 1-3); Lexington, OK (Nov. 4-10) and New Salem, MS (Nov. 27-Dec. 1).

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

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NO. 12

STANDING IN THE BREACH

By CARL M. JOHNSON

As a helicopter pilot during the Vietnam War it was the task of Hugh Thompson to fly reconnaissance missions (missions made to obtain military intelligence) ahead of ground troops and to follow their engagement with the enemy below him. On March 16, 1968 he flew over a small village and noticed skirmishes where he knew no enemy soldiers were located. When he circled back around and flew over again he saw ditches filled with the bodies of men, women and children, even though there had been no report of fighting in the area. As he proceeded he saw American soldiers chasing villagers who were trying to escape.

Without consulting anyone, without waiting for the support of any of his fellow soldiers, Thompson set his helicopter down between the fleeing villagers and the American soldiers who were chasing them. Thompson asked for the soldiers to help him with wounded villagers still lying in the ditches. A soldier said somberly, "I'll help put em out of their misery." Thompson heard machine gun fire and turned and saw the soldiers shooting into the ditches.

He then ran back to the helicopter and ordered his gunners to do something totally out of protocol. He told them to turn their weapons on the American soldiers and to kill any man who raised another weapon against the unarmed villagers. Thompson then rescued an infant who was drowning in the blood of the bodies around it.

The horrible massacre that occurred in the village of My Lai under the orders of Lt. William Calley made a lasting impression on the memories of many of us who lived during the days of the Vietnam War. People came to Calley's defense insisting that this is just what happens in wartime. Thompson, however, saw things that Americans just don't do—soldiers carving "C Company" on the bodies of Vietnamese villagers, and ears, noses, and hands cut off and taken as souvenirs. Consequently, Thompson felt compelled immediately to stand in the breach between innocent villagers and soldiers who had temporarily lost their bearings.

The expression "standing in the breach" is often used of soldiers in ancient times that would stand in a gap that had been made in the walls of a beleaguered city

to oppose the irruption of the enemy. The figure of a breach is frequently found in scripture to denote some destruction by God, such as the sermon God gave to Ezekiel to preach to the people of Israel:

²⁶ Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. ²⁷ Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. ²⁸ And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken. ²⁹ The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. ³⁰ And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none (Ezekiel 22:26-30).

The Babylonians made a breach in the wall of the city of Jerusalem and were about to pour through and destroy the city. God was orchestrating this judgment upon Israel because of the horribly wicked condition into which the people had fallen. The sins of the people had caused a breach between themselves and God. If someone would stand in the breach between God and Israel and bring the people faithfully back to God, then God would stand in the breach in the wall of the city to prevent its destruction.

The above examples illustrate a principle that is of urgent need in our perilous times. I have traveled this country from coast to coast several times this year fulfilling my preaching obligations and I have never seen more upheaval in our brotherhood. Highly emotional issues are being debated. Emotions are inflamed. Brethren are pointing fingers and casting aspersions. Polarization is occurring. Breaches have begun. Yet the Lord continues to call upon us to stand in the breach.

Obviously we are to "walk by faith" and "earnestly

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Editorial

TROUBLED ON EVERY SIDE

By DON L. KING

As the apostle Paul wrote the Corinthian brethren in what we know as the 2nd Corinthian letter, an interesting remark was made in chapter 4, verses 8 and 9. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." Another translation puts it: "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed."

Some suppose Paul here used the Grecian games as a figure in which to describe his feelings and problems as he went about to preach the gospel. Whether or not that is true, it is very obvious that he keenly felt as though he was troubled or hard pressed on every side and yet he did not see himself as crushed or overly damaged by his opposition. He freely acknowledged that he was enduring persecution but through it all he depended on the Almighty God of heaven to see him through. He never felt abandoned.

That was quite a blessing wasn't it? However, God Jehovah has always seen after His people. After Moses and Aaron were out of the picture in leading Israel, Joshua was selected to be the new leader. He was a great leader in his own right but he must have felt very keenly the immense pressure thrust upon him by suddenly becoming the new leader of Israel. God put any fears he may have had to rest, however. In Joshua 1:5 He said, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." If I had been Joshua, that would have meant the world to me. I could have faced anything with such a wonderful blessing promised.

A similar guarantee was given to Isaiah in the 54th chapter and verse 10. God said, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

In the New Testament, the apostle wrote: "Let your conversation (manner of life) be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Hebrews 13:5) This great blessing is seen in action as one reads the 12th chapter of 2 Corinthians. There Paul relates an incident which most of us believe was about himself. He tells of the man who was caught up to the third heaven or paradise. In other words, an "out of body experience" where he heard unspeakable words which he was not

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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS COMPLETE

By BENNIE T. CRYER

Colossians 2:10, *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.* This statement is a God given, Holy Spirit breathed, apostle written description of the Church of Christ in all of its parts. *Complete* means that the church God designed and Christ built was perfect and needed no adjuncts or auxiliary organizations to help, aid, or assist it in accomplishing the goals God brought it into the world for. Its description is found in the *perfect law of liberty*, James 1:25, where the writer admonishes us to *continue therein*. The reason for this admonition is the history of the human race is replete with examples of God giving men things that were designed for their benefit and glory to their giver and these recipients were not satisfied with God's gifts after a short while. The garden of Eden must have been perfect for the well being of Adam and Eve. God had seen His creation and declared it to be *very good*, Genesis 1:31. He was pleased with it, but by the end of Genesis 3 Adam and Eve had conducted themselves in such manner that God had to take them out of beautiful Eden. They were not satisfied with God's plan for very long. Their ejection of God's perfect plan for them brought sin with all of its consequences into the world.

The Perfect Or Complete Church

I Corinthians 12:18, *But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.* The *body*, in this verse, refers to the Church of Christ. Since God designed the church, just as He designed the human body, He knew how members of the church were to function or work. When He designed Adam's body He knew where to place the eyes and the ears and how they were to function or work. Just as His creation was *very good* then so it is with the design and creation of the church. He put each part or member in the church as it had pleased him. It was very good to Him. He was well pleased with it. The problem is, almost from its beginning, many have not been as pleased with the church as God was. They have sought to change its name, organization, terms of entrance, and the work it was designed to do. They have even been active in creating new organizations to help the church do its work, according to them, in a better way. They have done this with their missionary societies, their Sunday Schools, and lesser organizations all, not in the name of the Lord, but in the name of helping the Lord do His work in a more adequate way. They, by their actions, elevate their knowledge and wisdom above God's knowledge and wisdom. Anytime a person, be it man or woman, thinks he or she can improve divine arrangements have declared, by such actions, that they are wiser than God Himself They seem to forget the

wisdom of God is infinite while their own wisdom is extremely limited in comparison. Aaron lost his two sons, Nadab and Abihu, because they offered *strange fire*, Leviticus 10:1-3, *before the Lord, which he commanded them not.* Aaron seemed agitated because of the death of his sons but *held his peace* when Moses reminded him of God's word that plainly stated, *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.* They had profaned and dishonored God by offering something that God had not commanded. The church is complete. We sanctify and glorify God by accepting its completeness and refusing to permit adjunct organizations that puny man has brought into existence.

Attitudes WE Need To Manifest Today

If we are to hand the church over to the next generation in its God given form we must possess at least two attitudes. One is to be positive in our teaching and preaching. The second is to be negative in our teaching and preaching. C.T. Springs in his sermon recorded in *The Old Paths Pulpit*, p. 27, expressed important truths that it seems some have forgotten. *Man needs a church with a constructive as well as destructive program: (1) All positive preaching is inadequate for a congregation. All negative preaching likewise, is inadequate for the congregation. But, both together, you have a power; like an electric light, it takes the positive and the negative both together to make the light. So, with our preaching and teaching in the church. We must have a balanced objective. (2) In our great program of church work we must destroy human plans and purposes, in order that people may be built, rooted, and grounded in the present truth. The gospel and the church must be made the standard of the community (Eph. 4:14-16).* God expressed these same truths rather bluntly when in Jeremiah 1:10 he told the young prophet, *See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*

Why Was This Kind of Teaching Necessary Among God's People?

It was necessary because His people were making certain demands of the seers and prophets. The people tired of hearing the words of the holy one of Israel. They wanted to hear words that would satisfy their feelings, prejudices, and desires. Let one of their major prophets tell you more about it as he records God's word. Isaiah 30:8-10, *Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: 9 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: 10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits.* Isaiah was to write these words down and probably posted it in the temple area were the public

could see it. They probably did not mouth the words to the prophets that they wanted them to prophesy deceits. God, no doubt, could read their hearts and actions and knew this was in their minds. They wanted to hear smooth positive things. God wanted such attitudes and actions stopped, torn down, and rooted out. I bring this event from history to our attention because if we forget to recognize what has gone on in history we may commit the same mistakes. Anytime the leaders of a congregation wants the congregation to hear only positive preaching they place themselves and the members in a situation that is vulnerable to the devil's attacks. Anytime a preacher or a teacher limits themselves to positive preaching and instruction they weaken their true ministry and endanger the soul's salvation of the hearers. Jesus said in John 15:6, *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.* Christ exhibits the kind of teaching that contained positive and negative thoughts in John 15. The master teacher, in His infinite wisdom, evidently knew both kinds of instruction were necessary in order for the church to produce fruit. The true church today, recognizing this will heap to themselves teachers that cry out against sin and error and that will plead for the church to *grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ*, Ephesians 4:15. The church that is built by the Lord is sufficient to accomplish all of this without the aid of any other organization. If we try to improve the church's design and purpose we step over into unbelief. If we deviate from God's plan and purpose of the church or develop some human organization to do or aid its work, we knowingly or unknowingly, have elevated ourselves to the level of God. After all, was not this a part of the devil's temptation of Eve, *ye shall be as gods*, Genesis 3:5. Brethren, let us not allow the devil to be successful in deceiving us in the same manner.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIME

By C. A. SMITH

"The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and, tempting, desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, it will be fair weather, for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather today; for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Matt. 16:1-3.

There were many clear predictions in prophecy which related to the coming of the Messiah. Jacob upon his death-bed uttered the following: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen. 49:

10. The coming of Shiloh refers to the coming of Christ. In this prophecy is predicted a continuous line of rulers in the seed of Judah, which was fulfilled from David to Christ. This prophecy was given as a sign unto the chosen nation, that when they should see a foreign ruler seize the scepter they should know assuredly that the time had arrived for the Messiah to make his appearance. Herod was the first foreign prince that swayed the scepter in Judah, and it was in his reign that our Savior was born. Again, Daniel was shown the very year that the Messiah would come, as recorded in Dan. 9:25. The prophet Micah gave the name of the very place of Christ's birth. Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:3-6. The prophet Isaiah foretold that he should be born of a virgin. Isa. 7:14. Malachi described his forerunner, John. Isaiah also foretold the things that should accompany his ministry. Isa. 35:5-6. Zechariah told of the exact manner of his entry into Jerusalem.

Many more prophecies could be given which clearly related to Messiah's coming, and all of which were fulfilled to the letter when he came. Had the Pharisees and Sadducees, with the Jewish nation generally, been spiritual, they would have understood these things, and accepted Christ. Being spiritually blind, they placed wrong constructions upon the predictions of Christ's coming, and, as a result, he did not meet their anticipations; hence they rejected and stumbled at him. They expected that he would come with pomp and great display, set up an earthly kingdom, and make them a flourishing empire in the earth. But instead, he came in a humble manner, preached to the poor, associated with the despised and rejected, and taught that his kingdom was not of this world.

Thus blinded to the true mission of Christ the Jews understood not that he was the Messiah promised. However, there were a few spiritual-minded men in Israel who understood the predications of prophecy and accepted him to the salvation of their souls. The Pharisees and Sadducees desired a special sign from heaven to know that he was the Messiah. These whited sepulchers, although versed with worldly wisdom, and well read in the books of prophecy, able also to discern the face of the sky, were spiritually blinded and could not discern the signs of the time.

My friends, the same is true of the masses today. The language of Jesus is very applicable at the present time. The world is searching the deep things of science, botany, astronomy, etc. Great and mighty inventions are being invented, and in fact in all areas, the world is being enlightened; and knowledge is increasing. But in respect to spiritual things and the signs of the times the world in general is ignorant and blind. We hear the television preachers of today telling the people that the world is growing better.

Many of them are looking for a glorious reign of righteousness and peace and blessedness, universally, prior to the coming of Jesus Christ. They refer to what science and education have done and point to the

many accomplishments of the apostate churches. People assume, because sin in our day is not reaching the barbarous forms which characterized the dark ages or heather, nations, that righteousness is rapidly spreading over the world, and soon a triumphant, universal reign of peace and blessedness will be realized throughout the length and breadth of the earth; a time when righteousness will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Under such a false hope and belief the millions of earth are being lulled to sleep in carnal security while standing on the very brink of destruction and ruin, and while the judgments of God are hovering over this doomed world. Oh! may God in pity awaken men to discern the signs of the times. We have come down the stream of time until today we stand upon the very verge of eternity. Just a small step before us is the end of all things, the end of probation and salvation, the consummation of all things allotted to this earth.

As we look around in the light of truth we see that wickedness is abounding on every hand. Take up the newspaper, turn on the radio or television and you will read, see, and hear a record of facts that verifies the truth of this. All of these mediums could be used to spread the glorious gospel to the ends of the earth, but alas, are largely used by false teachers to propagate soul-destroying doctrines of devils. From this country thousands upon thousands of books, tracts, papers, etc., filled with false doctrines are sent to all nations, leading not to righteousness, but to hell! In the light of this, how dare men say that the world is growing better? The Scriptures declare: "And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. 24:12. Without a doubt this has reference to the great apostasy of the past, yet how awfully true is its fulfillment today! Beloved, how is it with you? Is that your condition?

Was there a time in your life when you loved and served God more that you do now? O dear ones, let us not sleep as do others, but, let us proclaim to this old sin cursed world, that this age will end with the coming of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment; at which time the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked punished. This being true, it follows conclusively that the gospel of Christ in this age offers the last hope of mercy to Adam's fallen race. No opportunity of salvation will ever be offered to Adam's race beyond the present gospel of Christ. Salvation can only be obtained this side the coming of the Lord. The door of the kingdom is now open. All may enter. Christ now reigns upon a mediatorial throne but the instant he leaves that throne, the world will be without an advocate, without a Savior, or further opportunity of salvation. It is high time that we get busy, get serious, get involved, and do all that we can to get the message of the gospel to all of those who are lost in the throes of the darkness of sin. How sad it will be on the judgment day to hear our friends, neighbors, relatives, and etc., cry

out, "You never mentioned Him to me. You caused me not the right way to see. You met me day by day, and you knew I was astray, yet, you never mentioned Him to me."

TEACHING FOR DOCTRINE THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN

(PART II)

BY BARNEY OWENS

This paper as indicated is a continuation of the above named subject. The doctrines imposed on others that have their authority in the minds of men are condemned in the scripture. We shall add to the list of those brought up in the previous paper, hoping to awaken some of you to the necessity of seeking the religion taught by Christ and the Apostles, whom He selected and sent forth into the world.

Human beings have the characteristic of accepting things that are the status quo—that are accepted by others. In most things, this is not a bad thing; however, when it comes to religion we must be Christian at heart and in life. If the whole world should transgress the revealed will of God, it is not acceptable for us to do so. The next doctrine we shall notice that is taught by men is:

Men Inherit Sin

The Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church, and others teach this and try to take away "original sin," or the depraved state of the child, by infant baptism. It is not as generally known, but the Baptist Church likewise teaches this doctrine. None give emphasis to it except the Primitive Baptist. When this doctrine is understood, then we are able to understand as well why they seek to have children "give their heart to Jesus." Children, six, seven, and eight years of age are encouraged to accept Jesus as their personal Savior because they are, according to this doctrine, born sinners. Of course, the consequence of this fallacious doctrine is the children who die, according to the one, without infant baptism to remove the sin from the sinner, or according to the other, accepting Jesus to take away their sin, are lost. Think about that seriously, a baby who dies in infantile years is lost because it has inherited the sins of its parents. If I had never read the Bible in my life, I would question sane men believing such a thing. Let us consider a few things in light of God's Word.

**The First Man Adam Was Made A Living Soul;
The Last Adam Was Made A Quickening Spirit.
(I Cor. 15:45)**

It is clear from the context of the passage, the first Adam is that man who lived in the garden of Eden. The second Adam is Jesus Christ. We know that it was by the first Adam that sin entered the world, "wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom, 5:12). And, it is by the second Adam (Christ) that the curse of death was

removed by His resurrection from the dead. *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."* (I Cor. 15:22). Let us consider these two men called Adam as pertaining to inherited sin.

1. *Adam #1.* He was created in the very image of God (Gen. 1:26). Luke refers to him saying *"Adam, which was the son of God"* (Lk. 3:38). If men inherit their sin from their parents, and if it is admitted that Adam was a sinner, and if it is admitted that God was the Father of Adam, then we must conclude that Adam inherited his sin from God. That is not the final step, if this be true, then we must accuse God of being a sinner.

Read that paragraph over, please. It is an inescapable conclusion. One horn of the dilemma must be loosed. Either God is accused of sin, or the doctrine of inherited sin must be abandoned. The truth of the matter is found in Genesis chapter 3. Adam had lived for a time without sin, albeit we do not know how long. He then transgressed the will of God, then became a sinner. He did not inherit sin.

2. *Adam #2.* Jesus was the son of Mary. Be it admitted that Mary was a virgin and was not guilty of the sin of fornication, she was still a sinner and like every other Jew longed for the Deliverer. When Jesus died to save, He died for her sins too. *"Jesus Christ the righteous...is the propitiation our sins: and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world"* *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* - (I Jn. 2:1-2, Rom. 3:23). If it is true that all men inherit sin, then Mary was a sinner because she inherited the sins of her parents, and if Jesus is the son of Mary, then He inherited sin from her, and if that is true, then Jesus is unworthy to be our Savior and therefore cannot save us.

The truth of the matter is that Jesus did not inherit any sin. But, He was not a sinner because He did not commit sin. *"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."* (I Pet. 2:22). Sin is defined as *"transgression of the law"* and *"unrighteousness"* (I Jn. 3:4, 5:17). Children coming into this world have not transgressed the law, they are not guilty of any act of unrighteousness.

Behold I Was Shapen In Iniquity; And In Sin Did My Mother Conceive Me. (Ps. 51:5).

I bring this passage before you because it is the candy stick of those who advocate the doctrine of inherited sin. It is contended that David was a sinner the moment he was conceived, because the sins of the mother were passed to him. (If this be true, why was it not true of Jesus?) Such is far from the meaning of David. He is reflecting upon the state of affairs in which his mother lived, not his spiritual state while in the womb. Children born into this world today are born into a state of chaos, trouble, war and heartache. Such is the state of this world, But, that is a far cry from that child being a sinner. Sinners to be saved must get back to the state of little children, *"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall*

not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 18:3).

Teaching the doctrine of inheriting sin is not of God but came from men. It must be rejected by all God-loving, truth-seeking men and women.

We Are Now Living In The Last Days

It is not unusual to hear this expression, especially when the speaker is engaged in prophetic themes or is trying to show that the end of the world is nigh at hand. Their case then takes on the characteristics of demonstrating the evil now existent along with the wars, pestilence, hunger and other calamities that fill the newspapers and news programs. The desired effect is to scare people into accepting their remedy for these "last days." The remedy might range from embracing the particular doctrines they have espoused and are teaching, to contributing financially to their "Cause."

It is true that we are living in a continuation of the "last days." However, it must not be inferred that the "last days" have just begun in the last few years, or are just about to begin, in fact the Scriptures show that the "last days" began more than 2100 years ago. Before letting the Scriptures testify to this fact, may I remind you that when the Bible pinpoints something, we are not at liberty to dissolve it. Nor can we construct a theory that fits into our fancied scheme of things.

1st The "last days" of Isaiah. Reading from Isaiah 2:1-2, "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, And it shall come to pass in the last days..." By reading the remainder of verse 2 through verse 4 in connection with the 2nd chapter of Acts, it is clear that these things were accomplished in the next decade after Christ, The point is clear: the last day referred to by Isaiah began during the Judah and Jerusalem destruction.

Judah was the larger of the two southern tribes and absorbed the lesser tribe of Benjamin. When Solomon's son Rehoboam came to the throne, most of the people rebelled against his tyranny. Following Jeroboam ten of the tribes formed the northern kingdom (Kingdom of Israel). Losing their identity, they became vain in their worship as altars were established in Dan and Bethel. The southern kingdom (Judah) retained the proper place of worship and retained their identity through genealogy. These could be traced until Jerusalem was overrun by Rome AD 70.

Jerusalem had been chosen as the place to worship God. The places chosen by the northern kingdom were rejected and remained a controversy even until the Lord's walking on the earth (Jn. 4:19-24). Of course, the visible sign of God rejecting the nation as His own was demonstrated when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed.

The last days began while these were still intact. To pinpoint it further, Peter with the eleven said on the first Pentecost after Christ resurrected. *"This is that spoken by the prophet Joel and Isaiah (BO) and it shall come to pass in the last days..."* The matter

should be settled, we are wasting our time looking for the “*last days*” to begin at a subsequent period, or even thinking these are on the horizon.

2nd *The last days of Joel*. Reading from Joel 2:2-8, “*And it shall come to pass afterward.*” Please read on through verse 32. The meaning of Joel’s expression is explained by Peter on Pentecost, when he quoted these verses. However, instead of using Joel’s words, “*and it shall come to pass afterward,*” Peter said, “*and it shall come to pass in the last days*” (Acts 2:17). How can anyone doubt that the last days were at that time as Peter used the prophesy of Joel to show they were not drunk, but the happenings were afore spoken by God’s will. Let me add, from Joel we also find that he was speaking of Judah and Jerusalem as is stated in the very next verse, Joel 3:1. If we wish to discover the *last days*, we need only look back to Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after Christ resurrection.

3rd It is admitted and preached by those who look at a time later than Apostolic days for the *last days* to begin, that these *days* are described in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 24. The only question to settle is when were these things to take place. Jesus answers it, hear Him, “*Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled*” (Mt. 24:34). When Jesus? “*Before this generation pass.*” How many of these things, Lord? “*All these things will be fulfilled.*” Let the gainsayer proclaim and search, or the faint hearted try to deceive us, but let the student of scripture accept the verdict of Christ, *The last days* began in the generation that Jesus walked upon this earth in the form of a man.

4th The Apostle writing to the Hebrews (the descendents of Judah in Jerusalem) said, “*God... Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...*” (Heb. 1:1-2). We all know the force of the word “*hath.*” It is the present tense of to have. So, when the Apostle recorded these words, the *last days* were in existence. Judah and Jerusalem were still in existence, Jerusalem had not been overrun, and the genealogy of the Jews was still intact.

Those who **teach for doctrine the commandments of men** would soon dry up if we would cease listening to them and giving heed to their speculations. May I encourage all to read the scripture, learn from the Lord the things which no man can set aside.

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (Jn. 3:39, II Tim. 2:15)

STANDING IN THE BREACH

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contend for the truth” (Jude 3). We are also given specific instructions about withdrawing our fellowship from certain kinds of sinful persons. We know, however, that divisions do occur sometimes

because of power struggles within congregations and personality conflicts among brethren. The people responsible for these kinds of divisions mask their activity under the guise of standing for the truth or obeying God. The same practice occurred during the days of Ezekiel. The wicked prophets covered their sinful activity by saying, “*thus saith the Lord, when the Lord hath not spoken*” (Ezekiel 22:28).

My greatest concern is that good people can be sucked into doing really bad things. The soldiers who massacred the innocent Vietnamese villagers were only 19, 20, 21 years old. They had been trained to obey orders, to be gung-ho soldiers. Everyone else was doing it. They thought they were showing courage and bravado. They had lost their way.

It happens all the time. We go with the flow. We follow the crowd. We step in line with the traffic, not because we are evil, not because we are animals but because we want to be accepted by others, we don’t want to be singled out, we don’t want to get into trouble with our mentors and peers. Most people either join in the blood shedding or just watch the massacre.

Therefore, when we hear unfair labeling and angry public attacks upon brethren; when we see brethren polarizing over issues not related to our salvation and rifts threatening to destroy the church, do not allow yourself to be intoxicated by your passion and join in the bloodshed. Paul cautions in Galatians 5:15, “*But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another.*” Furthermore, instead of just standing by and watching the massacre, have the courage to stand in the breach. Develop an atmosphere and setting in which we can discuss our differences of opinion in mutual respect.

Jesus says, “*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God*” (Matthew 5:9). Paul adds, “*Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another*” (Romans 14:19).

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allowed to relate. He was so excited that a “*thorn in the flesh*” (verse 7) was given him so that he would not be exalted above measure. He asked the Lord three times to relieve the burden (verse 8). What was God’s answer to him? Did He say, “*yes, Paul I will relieve this for you because you are special and a chosen vessel to me?*” Paul was indeed special and he was certainly a chosen vessel according to Acts 9:15. Yet, God said, “*... my grace is sufficient for thee...*” In other words, “*No, Paul, I will not remove the burden but I will see that you are strong enough to carry it.*”

That is the promise we have today. God will be with us and give us what we need to carry the burden, if we will put Him first and trust Him to do what He promised.

He never promised we would not have to carry a

load. He told us to take up our cross and carry it daily. Not the wooden cross upon which Jesus died. He died on that one so that we don't have to. However, there are crosses to bear for each of us as we live the Christian life. It will be different, perhaps, for you than others but every day we live we must carry our own burden or cross. We need to be optimistic as we face the future. None of us know what the future holds) but we do know who holds the future. As long as that is so, no matter what happens it will be alright. This nation may be at war soon. We trust God to see His people through. The congregation where we worship may experience trouble from any number of directions. It may come from within, as it often does. Or, it may come from without. We trust God to see us through. Is that all we are to do? No, we are to actively pursue that which -is right or scriptural. We must do everything within our power to fight evil in every form. Having done that, we trust God to see us through. There is an old sailor's saying that after a shipwreck, pray but row for the shore. No one knows what may happen to the congregation wherein one worships. Because of any number of reasons) some congregations may fade away and simply cease to exist. However, the Book tells us that when the Lord comes again, SOMEWHERE there will be brethren worshipping right, living the Christian life and ready to go home with Him to Heaven.

What we all must do is be absolutely certain that we walk as close to the Bible way as we know how to do. Preachers need to preach the truth in all its power. We need every preacher to be faithful, tried and true to the Book. Elders, deacons and church leaders need to be absolutely sure they are doing all they can to protect the church from dangerous trends which come about in nearly every generation. This is not the time to be adventurous, experimental, weak or indecisive for any of us. Brethren, take a stand for truth and never give up. We trust God to see us through. Think on these things. DLK

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Book To Be Available

The eighth volume of the "Contending For The Faith" Commentaries is in the hands of the printer. This commentary written by Brother Joe Hisle is on the book of Acts. It should be available in a few weeks. Please do me a huge favor, if your address has changed in the last three years, and you are on the book club to receive each commentary as they become available please send me your up to date address soon. If you would like to be added to the book club list, please send me your name and address. My phone number and email address in the church directory have both changed. Here is the new email address and phone number, allenbailey@email.com and phone is 972-438-1633.

OPA On The Internet

Visit <http://www.newtestamentchurch.org> for additional articles, resources (including Gospel Meetings Schedule), & links to other helpful websites.

Memorial Fund For Lynda Whitworth

It is indeed a great honor to advise brothers, sisters, and friends of Sister Lynda Whitworth's Memorial Fund set up by her family. The funds will be used in the erection of the Heartland Church of Christ meeting house in Wichita, Kansas, projected to be completed in the summer of 2003. Checks should be made to her husband: Mike Whitworth, 1454 Hornecker Wichita, Kansas 67235, Phone: 316-722-0894. Lynda's memorial fund is separate and apart from Heartland's treasury. What a worthy cause for a most beloved sister in Christ who departed this life October 6, 2002! The completion of the new meeting house was one of Lynda's fondest dreams. The family thinks that the memorial fund will be yet one other way by which Lynda can contribute to the Lord's Cause.—Don McCord

M. Lynwood Smith Is Ill

As we go to press for the month of December, we learn of the illness of Brother Lynwood Smith. We spoke briefly with him, by phone, in his hospital room. He tells us that he is improving and hopes to go home in a few days. Our prayers, and we feel sure the prayers of the brotherhood, are with him. At this time we are very mindful of the many years of faithful service he has given to the church and pray the Lord he may have many more, May God bless you, Lynwood.—DLK

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

PRINCE-SANDERSON—Jason Prince of Galey, OK and April Sanderson of Buffalo, MO were united in holy matrimony on October 19, 2002 before a large crowd of witnesses in the Buffalo church building. I have know Jason all of his life and I was honored when he asked me to officiate the ceremony. Jason and April are now making their home in Ada, and are attending the Galey congregation. We ask God's richest blessings upon this wonderful couple and their new home.—Carl M. Johnson

HISLE-YOUNG—On November 9th Wade Hisle and Melissa Young exchanged vows of holy matrimony in a beautiful, candle-lit ceremony in the Mission Hills church building in Springfield, MO. The ceremony took place before a standing room only crowd of witnesses. Wade and Melissa and their families are long-time friends of ours. Melissa's parents Larry and Jerri Young are faithful members of the Lee's Summit congregation near Lebanon, MO. Wade's parents are Butch and Claudia Hisle of Ada. Wade and Melissa

will make their home in Ardmore, OK. It is our prayer that God will bless this new couple as they keep their vows of life-long love and loyalty.-Carl M. Johnson

DAVIS-LAMPKINS-Billy Davis and Wendy Lampkins of the Clovis, CA congregation were united in marriage on September 21st, 2002.-Danny Clark

DAY-CANNON-On June 15, 2002, Bret Day and Samantha Cannon were united in holy wedlock. Bret's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Day, from Bret's former home in Brighton, England and other relatives were present for the occasion. Samantha is the youngest daughter of Dennis and Susan Cannon of the congregation here in Ardmore. The newlyweds are making their home in Norman, OK. We wish for them much happiness and success. It was my good pleasure to officiate.-Johnny Elmore

BYRD-CANNON-On September 28, 2002, I was honored to officiate at the wedding of Leighton Byrd and Linda Cannon. Leighton is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ewell Byrd, and Linda is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Cannon, all of the Paris, Texas congregation. It was a lovely occasion and a large crowd of well-wishers were in attendance. We wish them much happiness and joy.-Johnny Elmore



Jimmie C Smith, 5100 Rail Rd., Harrison, AR 72601; cjsmith@alltel.net-Since last reporting I've heard Ronny Wade at Hartwell and Reggie Kinser at Mountain Home, AR. Both did good jobs! Brett Hickey held our fall meeting and I was very impressed with his maturity as an able proclaimer of the Word. All these men we hold in highest esteem. I conducted a meeting at Harrodsburg, IN that was very well attended and resulted in one confession of faults. I found them to be in "perfect peace" internally and with sister congregations. The love and cooperation between them, Bloomington and Bedford is an example to be imitated. Walter Hunter and Floyd Harris Jr. supported the meeting faithfully. Beyond a doubt the tragic death of Brett Hanson drew them all closer, sympathy and condolences were extended and received warmly, John Strain is an aspiring young preacher that is a joy to associate with. A new day has dawned in Southern Indiana. The "Bell Girls" have good families and husbands who are good leaders in the church. I commend Harrodsburg to the brotherhood. Walter preaches one Sunday each month

at Harrodsburg, and John is afforded monthly teaching appointments in the neighboring congregations. Next weekend I will be at Galey, OK if the Lord wills; and the next I will be at Montreal, MO. Press on "weary pilgrim," Press On!

Brett Hickey; 823 W. 5th St. Tyler, TX 75701; (903)533-9782; brett-louisehickey@juno.com. November 5. The local work at Tyler has been exciting. We have nearly met the first of our goals from our recent booth at the fair. We have studies set up with 19 outsiders this week.. Seventeen of them are leads from the fair and their friends or family. We plan to have a one night gospel meeting later this month specially geared toward those we just began studying with. In order to build a relationship with them and address some of the most common objections to gospel obedience and true worship we are conducting three or four studies: The Old and New Testament; Grace and Law; Faith and Works; and, perhaps, the Lordship of Christ. Glad our family could benefit from a night of Don King's meeting at Fossil Creek (Fort Worth). Jim Hickey gave two great sermons for us recently. We look forward to being with the brethren at Athens and Allen later this month. We shall reap, if we faint not!

Cullen Smith; 4217 McNeil Ave, Wichita Falls, TX 76308; 940-689-9314; cullensmith@hotmail.com; October 28-It has been gospel meeting time in the month of October. The weekend of the 6th I was in Capitol Hill, OK for a good weekend. Many thanks to preachers Edwin Morris, Brandon Stephens, and Doug Edwards for attending the meeting. I appreciated the hospitality of Richard and Elaine Butler. I then began a 5 day meeting in Lexington, OK where we had good crowds and several visitors. I appreciate the good cooperation between the congregations in that area to support the meetings. I closed my meeting schedule out this year with a 5 day meeting in Ardmore which was during their monthly 4th Sunday singing. We had great crowds throughout the meeting. Young people invited their friends from school and were unashamed to give their peers a chance to hear the gospel preached. There were a number of people from the cups/classes churches and I appreciate the work Johnny and the rest of the membership put into the meeting. Johnny has the respect of the community and the congregation at Ardmore and for good reason. If you want to hear good singing then attend Ardmore anytime and especially when they have the 4th Sunday singing. I appreciate my cousin Daniel Smith for driving up for the weekend. He has made up his mind to preach the gospel. He possesses the talent, knowledge, and spirit for the work before him. Daniel will be an asset wherever he is called to preach and work. I look forward to some new leads from our television program here and some leads from the community. God bless the brotherhood.

Jack A. Cutter; 12321 E. 14th Street; Tulsa, OK 74128;

jacknorita@integrity.com—Recently, there have been several meetings in the area. A month or so ago, Wayne Fussell preached at the 11th Street congregation from Wed. night through Sunday. He did his usual excellent job of preaching. At Broken Arrow last month (Oct.), Terry Baze preached for us Friday night through Sunday, and a couple weeks ago, he preached at 11th Street for a whole week. He, too, did some fine preaching. The congregation at Broken Arrow continues to do well. We still are sponsoring Ronny Wade's T.V. program entitled Let The Bible Speak on Fox channels 5/23 at 6:30 A.M. It has generated some responses which we try to handle. The Jennings congregation, that had discontinued worship services several months ago, will resume services again on Nov. 17 at 2:30 P.M. All services are to be held weekly at this time. The Oklahoma New Years meeting is just around the corner. If you need information concerning this meeting, check our web site at www.gospel-tulsa.com. Pray for us and the Cause.

Don L. King, 41931 Chadbourne Dr, Fremont, CA, 94539, e-mail old_paths@juno.com; Nov. 12—The meeting with the Fossil Creek congregation in Ft Worth, TX closed with one confession of wrongs. Crowds were very good with the attendance of surrounding congregations. Several preachers were in attendance at nearly every service. A good spirit was manifested by all and we pray good was done. The hospitality shown me by the Randy Cantrell family was outstanding. In fact, the hospitality of the entire congregation was very good indeed. We are at home now for a time and enjoying it. Lord willing, we are to be at Stockton, CA next Lord's day for both services. The Fremont congregation just closed an enjoyable meeting with Carl Johnson. Carl had been here before and it was good to have him back. He did a good job and we appreciate those who came from afar to attend from sister congregations. There were several outsiders who also attended and we pray the Word will bring results in the future. It will not be long before it is time for us to make the yearly Philippine trip. Please pray for us. We look forward to having Duane Permenter help us this year.

Gayland L. Osburn, 78469 Sears Rd., Cottage Grove, OR 97424, e-mail: gaylando@teleportcom, November 7, 2002—Paul Nichols and I were invited to come to Malawi, Africa, to preach in a two day meeting at the Wendewende Village church. These meetings were scheduled as a celebration in memory of fifty years ago (1952), when Paul Nichols, with his wife Wilma, was sent to Nyasaland, British Central Africa, to preach the gospel there. They lived among the Africans in the village called Wendewende. Paul taught them the plan of salvation, scriptural worship, Christian living, and about the hope of eternal life. People began to obey the gospel, and scriptural worship was set up. These things were accomplished during Paul's first visit there. In 1958, Paul and I saw the need for someone to return to Nyasaland to strengthen the church and to do

evangelistic work there, and the church here in the States sent us with our families to encourage the church there and to help in the spreading of the gospel. Since our return back to America, many other evangelist from the States have been there. Jim Franklin has been there now for a little over ten years. Since Paul and Wilma went there on that first visit to Wendewende, thousands of people have obeyed the gospel in that country. Since our living there, the name of the country has been changed to Malawi. The church in Malawi has grown to over 1,000 congregations. Another reason for our making this trip there at this time, was to rejoice with the brethren there at the meetings which took place at Wendewende. This rejoicing was because of the reconciliation of brethren who have been estranged and out of fellowship for over forty years. This division was caused by the misbehavior of the leadership among them, and men of the cups persuasion here in the U.S. stepped in and gained the confidence of some of our brethren after Paul and I returned to the States. However, we were told that the worship was never changed from the way the people were taught on Paul's first missionary trip. Which also was the way they were worshipping when Paul and I left there in the latter part of the year 1960. From then unto now, they had continued to worship with one cup in observance of the communion. A number of things contributed to the healing of the division. Over a period of time several different brethren did what they could to encourage this end. As a result, we were told that about seventy five churches in Malawi and about fifty in Mozambique, along with Bennett Severe of the Wendewende congregation, and many other preachers, would now be working with Jim Franklin and the brotherhood represented by him. We all rejoice in the reunion of these churches in Malawi. To God be the glory for this accomplishment. While there this trip, both Paul and I were asked to preach double header sermons on both days at Wendewende, October 11 and 12. The crowd at the meetings was estimated to be upwards of a thousand people. Four countries were represented, with nearly two hundred preachers present. Paul then preached at the Blantyre congregation that Lord's day. In these three services, there were 38 confessions of faults. The people in Malawi are religious by nature and very receptive to the gospel. It is a great blessing and joy to be among them. They show their love and appreciation to those who care for their souls. We enjoyed being with Jim and Marlene Franklin. They took good care of us with their hospitality. We also were glad that Bill Davis and his family were there from Zimbabwe. Both, Jim Franklin and Bill Davis are to be commended for their dedication to preaching the word of God in a foreign country. They love the people to whom they preach. We are also grateful to Brethren Kasambwe and Steven Kasenda for translating for us. And, they are both a blessing and a help to Jim Franklin in his work there. My son, Terry Osburn, and Paul's great nephew, Matt Nichols, went with us on our trip. They were both helpful to us in a number of ways. We

were glad to have them with us.

Paul O. Nichols, 14970 Forest View Ct, Bonner Springs, KS 66012, pon.win.ks@juno.com, Nov.9–On October 7th Gayland Osburn, Terry Osburn, Matt Nichols and I left the States for Malawi, Africa and arrived October 9th We were privileged to attend the 50th anniversary celebration of the of the first overseas missionary effort attempted by the faithful brotherhood in the USA. in modern times. It was in 1952 that Wilma and I were sent to Nyasaland, British Central Africa on an appeal for someone to come and help them to know the truth. It was a wonderful celebration with around 1000 or more in attendance from four countries, including 197 preachers. It was held at Wendewende Village where the work first began and where Wilma and I lived. Gayland and I did the preaching. We also attended one service at Blantyre where we worshiped on the Lord's day. In all, there were a total of 38 confessions of fault. It was a joy to be back in the country, which is now called Malawi, where we were the guests in the home of Tim and Marlene Franklin, resident missionary and his wife. Their hospitality was unsurpassed. Two brotherhoods were united, and the preachers and about 125 churches will be working together with Jim and the hundreds of other churches in the country. It was good to see Bill and Daisy Davis, from Zimbabwe, at the meeting and the contribution they made to the celebration. After returning home I was in a meeting/study on Church Leadership at Lawrenceburg, TN, Oct. 25-27. Many questions were addressed. The people seemed to be receptive, and I hope the teaching was beneficial. It is good to be back home for awhile. May the Lord bless all our righteous efforts.

C.A. Smith, 810 N.W. 6th St., Andrews, TX 79714– Since last reporting to the *Old Paths Advocate*, I had the privilege the latter part of June 2002 to preach for the good brethren of the Planz Road congregation in Bakersfield, CA., where a precious young lady was baptized into Jesus Christ for the remission of her sins. I was told there had been those who had been studying with her, and without a doubt, her obedience was due to their planting, her receiving that which was planted, her willingness to take the steps necessary to salvation, and the Lord adding her to His body, the church. What a thrill that was for all who had a part in her obedience to Christ. We so enjoyed being with these fine folk, some of whom we had not seen for some time. We were there primarily to attend a family reunion on my wife's side. The family of Dow and Ethel Byrd, gathered at a scenic lake and spent several days there enjoying one another's company and reminiscing about days of yore. It was good also to see some of my kinsmen. Alvin Smith and Bob Smith, sons of A. G. and the late Margaret Smith. They are both zealous workers in their respective congregations. After arriving home, we attended several days of the annual 4th of July meeting in Sulphur, Oklahoma, which was ably conducted by Brother

Johnny Elmore and Brother Brandon Stephens. It was an excellent meeting, with great singing out of Lynwood Smith's new book, and great preaching by our able preachers of the gospel. We have also attended good gospel meetings in Lubbock, Texas with Joe Hisle, Levelland, Texas with Wayne Fussell, Midland, Texas with Don King, and San Angelo, Texas with Johnny Elmore. It was good to be with these fine preachers of the gospel for a short time. Then, in Andrews, we had brother Daniel Smith conduct our meeting. He pursued the very timely theme. "How Shall The Young Secure Their Hearts?" He did an excellent job of choosing his material, preparing it for presentation, and declaring it in a way that was easy to follow and understand. Daniel is to be commended for his willingness to spend and be spent in the service of the Lord. Attendance was not as we had expected, but we did have visitors from various congregations near by, and as an added bonus, we had Daniel's parents, Brother and Sister Dwight Smith from Mississippi for the entire meeting. His parents stand one-hundred % behind Daniel's yearning to preach the gospel, and I would venture to say, they will not be disappointed with their Daniel's decision. We have had set backs, such as sickness, operations, job changes, and oppositions from the devil, but none of this is deterring our efforts to be all that we can be in the army of the Lord, and if the Lord's wills, we plan to keep on keeping on until our demise, or until our Lord comes again. Will you please pray for us and if you ever get the chance come visit with us. May God bless all of His loved and own throughout the world is our humble and earnest prayer. Please note: I have a new telephone number. It is as follows (915) 523-5206.

Allen Bailey, 1633 Trinity View, Irving, Texas 75060 (972) 438-1633; allenbailey@email.com–My apologies to all the congregations and individuals who have had a hard time reaching me in the last few weeks. My phone number and email address have both changed recently. Please make a note of the new ones. We are saddened over the death of Brother Lonnie York. Lonnie spent years in service to our eternal maker. I have fond memories of times we spent together. His accomplishments and good works will continue to follow him. I will sorely miss his presence when conducting meetings in the Kansas City area. It was my pleasure to ordain Lonnie's son, Eric York as a deacon and Lonnie's brother in law, Keith Sifford as an Elder. Our prayers will be with Linda as she adjusts to life without Lonnie. Jim Crouch, Glen Osburn, Doug Edwards, and myself drove to Kansas together for the funeral. It has been one year now since we ordained Elders and Deacons in the Irving congregation. These men have done an excellent job in fulfilling their new roles in the congregation. Elders and Deacons were also ordained at the Darbonne congregation in Farmerville, Louisiana, 36th and Everett congregation, in Kansas City, Kansas, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma congregation. The Lord's plan for church government is wonderful. I

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love to see congregations reach their goals in establishing scriptural government for the church. It has been a pleasure to hear several preaching brethren in meetings in the area Don King, Don McCord, Johnny Elmore, Carl Johnson, Wayne McKamie and Mike Criswell. We have just closed a meeting at San Angelo, Texas. It was a great pleasure to meet and worship with the Christians there. The Irving congregation is getting ready for our 17th anniversary meeting with Brother Wayne McKamie on December 6-7-8. We continue to hear good news from foreign soils. Congregations are being established and established ones are growing. The Irving congregation has been excited to sponsor a new work in Cuba. At the present time we have 15 preachers and 19 congregations in Cuba. Brother Juan Rodriquez has been a valuable asset to this mission work. His brother Elias, and others have made trips with him to further the cause of Christ in Cuba. The progress made overseas is an answer to many prayers. May God bless all these efforts continually. One year draws to a close and another year is dawning. Before the year is over, Lord willing, we plan to attend the preacher's study in Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma New Year Meeting hosted this year by the Broken Arrow congregation. The Oklahoma New Year Meeting has been a great spiritual uplift to Christians for many years. We appreciate the efforts of everyone who work so hard to make this meeting great. Lord willing, this month we will publish the eighth New Testament commentary in the "Contending For The Faith" series. It is a commentary on the book of Acts written by Brother Joe Hisle. The next two volumes, we plan to publish, will be Romans by Alan Bonifay and Matthew by Mike Criswell. We are also excited to complete our most recent project. This is to publish Brother Wayne McKamie reading of the New Testament. This professional recording is available on both CD's and Cassette Tapes. Brother McKamie reading is from the King James Version, the version he loves, and has preached from, for over fifty years. I would like to say thanks to Brother Ronny Wade and Brother Don King who have asked me to write articles and field reports for the OPA. Lord willing, I plan to accommodate their request and write more often than in recent years. God Bless all of you.

Roger L. Owens, 16768 Heron Dr., Neosho, MO. 64850—To the faithful brethren in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The summer has flown by and too much work still to be done. The congregation continues to grow and prosper in every way and for this we give God the glory. Our past meeting with Johnny Elmore shall be a sweet memory for years to come and the preaching was second to none. We have always enjoyed Johnny and Sally so much but it was a needed treat to have them be a part of our lives. We still have two more meetings to work for and enjoy this year in his cause while on this earth. I will mention that we are not hosting a New Year meeting this year because so many are traveling to other places. The Neosho congregation attempts to host no less than four meetings each year to keep the cause working in our community. I want to mention Sister Betty Lawson who needs our prayers as she continues to battle against cancer. We were devastated to learn of Linda Whitworth's passing she will be greatly missed, I assure you, in Wichita. I spent time with Linda and Mike in their home this past year and she is one of the sweetest Christian ladies of hospitality I have ever known. I have enjoyed my meetings and opportunities to preach at many different and new congregations this year especially in Oklahoma. I want to mention how some are writing letters seeking support from far away places and lands. Brethren we need to support the preaching of the gospel but let us prove those that ask before we hop aboard their craft. I suggest that you contact men such as Don King, Paul Nichols, Wayne McKamie, or others that are directly involved in these mission efforts before you sign any check. I must mention the Missouri Labor Day meeting in Columbia this year and the wonderful blessing it was to be a part of it. The congregation there did a wonderful job of hosting it in every possible way. Remember what we fail to preach about today is the battlefield of our tomorrow. Pray for us that we remain steadfast in his cause forevermore.

Johnny Elmore, 419 KSW, Ardmore, OK 73401, bookman@brightok.net. November 7—This year I have been in meetings at Paris, TX May 1-5, Fossil Creek at Fort Worth, TX June 7-9, St. Albans, WV June 17-23, Sulphur, OK June 28-July 4, San Angelo, TX July 14-21, Neosho, MO August 18-26, Duncanville, TX September 27-29, and Davis, OK October 2-6. We closed a meeting here Oct. 23-27 with Cullen Smith with good crowds throughout and a great fourth Sunday singing.

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